

**M141**  
**Zhyu-shi-lao.**

*Sung by Yang Zhi.*

When the sky began,  
And on earth the ranges were set in place,  
When the people's Zhyu-shi-lao first arrived,  
The people's forests were extremely black,  
5 The forests were exceedingly dark,  
The people's forests whispered and sighed.

The deer all lived there,  
The stags all dwelt there,  
Tigers and lions stalked their prey among the cliffs,  
10 And kestrels lived in the gorges.

Zhyu-shi-lao turned all around and saw,  
Saw how black the people's forests were,  
How the stags all dwelt there,  
And tigers and lions all lived there.

15 To Zhyu-shi-lao the thought was unbearable,  
Zhyu-shi-lao was heavy hearted,  
Zhyu-shi-lao was sad at heart,  
Zhi-shi-lao would clear the people's forests and lay them flat.

20 So Zhyui-shi-lao devised a scheme,  
For Zhyu-shi-lao was the people's clearer of woods,  
Zhi-shi-lao was the people's cutter of forests,  
Zhyu-shi-lao was the people's cutter of woods.

While the sky remained constant,  
These tools enabled Zhyu-shi-lao to cut down the forest.  
25 Zhyu-shi-lao whetted an axe to carry in his hand,  
Zhyu-shi-lao whetted a hook to carry at his back,  
Till the day came for Zhyu-shi-lao to go out to the cutting.

30 The cutting strokes rang out from Zhyu-shi-lao away in the dense swamps,  
The cutting strokes rang out as Zhyu-shi-lao cut down the forest,  
The cutting strokes rang out from Zhyu-shi-lao away in the rushes,  
The cutting strokes rang out as Zhyu-shi-lao cut down the woods.

Zhyu-shi-lao threw down the people's forests until they lay flat,  
Zhyu-shi-lao threw down the people's forests until they fell prone.  
Zhyu-shi-lao's cutting strokes rang out for the benefit of descendants,  
35 Zhyu-shi-lao's cutting strokes rang out for the benefit of posterity.

Zhyu-shi-lao's brushwood grew dry, grew truly dry,  
And the day came for Zhyu-shi-lao to burn it off.

Zhyu-shi-lao fired the brushwood, burned the brushwood all day long.  
He burned it for a whole month,  
40 He burned it blotting out the sun's bright shining from the sky,  
Zhyu-shi-lao fired the brushwood, burned the brushwood far into the night.

It licked the tigers and singed their coats,  
It licked the lions and scorched their coats,  
It licked the snakes and burnt their skins.

45 Tigers departed and left,  
And lions departed and were gone.  
Tigers fled away,  
And lions quit the place,  
For tigers could not live there,  
50 Nor lions continue to dwell there.

So the tigers went to the forests,  
And the lions went to the woods,  
The stags went to the black forests,  
And the deer went to the foot of the cliffs.

55 While the sky remained constant,  
Zhyu-shi-lao's descendants were fruitful and spread abroad,  
Zhyu-shi-lao's posterity grew into a multitude.  
Zhyu-shi-lao cut smooth roads in the world,  
Cut them for descendants, for posterity to spread abroad.

60 Zhyu-shi-lao was the original ancestor of the people's descendants,  
Zhyu-shi-lao was the original forefather of the people's posterity.  
The descendants, the posterity of Zhyu-shi-lao, multiplied and filled the earth.

Thus it is finished.