

Nzyu-fao-lao, channelling water and shooting the great snake.

Recorded by Wang Jian-guo.

Where does the river Gi-jai rise?
It rises in the Swallow Range, twisting beyond the Land of Silver.

Nzyu-fao-lao channelled,
Channelled the river Gi-jai until it reached,
5 Reached Walnut valley, that deep valley.
Here Nzyu-fao-lao constructed,
Constructed a bridge fitted together with a keystone like a ploughshare.

Nzyu-fao-lao channelled,
Channelled the river Gi-jai until it reached,
10 Reached a point there under the cliff at Hmao-ngga-nbe.

The great snake did no good,
The great snake took,
Took the big goat from Hmao-ngga-nbe and climbed,
Climbed up there below the cliff at Hmao-ngga-nbe.

15 What should Nzyu-fao-lao do?
Nzyu-fao-lao took,
Took his black, curved cross-bow and stretched it,
Stretched it, and Nzyu-fao-lao shot,
Shot, and the big goat got away,
20 Shot, and the great snake retired into the cliff.

This is set forth that earth-people may recall it,
This is set forth that sky-people may speak of it.

So Nzyu-fao-lao channelled,
Channelled the river Gi-jai until it reached,
25 Reached a point below the cliff at Hmao-ngga-che.

The great snake did no good,
The great snake took,
Took the Yi woman from Hmao-ngga-che away and climbed,
Climbed up there below the cliff at Hmao-ngga-che.

30 What should Nzyu-fao-lao do?
Nzyu-fao-lao shot,
Shot, and the Yi woman fell gently away,
Shot, and the great snake retired into the cliff.

35 He shot that earth-people may all recall it,
He shot that sky-people may all speak of it.

Nzyu-fao-lao fell into a trance,

He fell into a trance at Fao-tlyu,
Nzyu-fao-lao fell into a trance at Nghao-nkhang.

40 Nzyu-fao-lao slept on until mid-day,
He slept on until noon.
Nzyu-fao-lao awakened suddenly from his trance,
And saw the river Gi-jai had been flowing till it filled,
Filled the fertile level plain.

45 What should Nzyu-fao-lao do?
Nzyu-fao-lao arose, set out and took,
Took his slender staff and made a hole,
Made a hole in the bottom of the river Gi-jai freeing the obstruction at the gap.

The river Gi-jai and the river Gi-trao were not yet united like a bride and groom.
Where did the two watercourses join?
50 The two watercourses joined away at the high range of Gha-bi-ka.
The two watercourses joined and nurtured,
Nurtured the people's land so that the millet ripened a golden yellow,
Nurtured the people's land so that the variegated millet ripened to maturity.

Thus it is ended.