

M203
A bundle of Miao traditions.

Written by Yang Ya-go.

Notes

This piece is recorded in Document F (no. 30, page 29). Document N (nos. 18/1 and 18/2, page 410). It is also found, without the prose passages, in Document K (no. 6, page 22), Document L (no. 14, page 46) and again in Document N (no. 20, page 426)

Title. The title used here is that given in Document F and is probably that which Yang Ya-go himself used. Other documents have, "The Elder Gi-zi and the Man Jio-bi-khao".

Line 1. Document N omits the word 𑍒 𑍑, "story".

Line 5. Document F omits 𑍑 𑍔𑍓𑍑, "ate wild fruit".

Line 7. The sentence 𑍁 𑍑𑍒 𑍑𑍓 𑍔𑍕 𑍖𑍗 𑍘𑍙𑍚𑍛𑍜, "must go as a group and hunt together", is not in Document F.

Line 11. The phrase 𑍑𑍒 𑍓𑍔 𑍕𑍖 𑍗𑍘𑍙𑍚𑍛- "in this way those at home" is missing in Document N.

Line 19. From the word 𑍒-, "come", in this line right to the end of the paragraph, has been re-written in Document N as follows,

- - - *hat nyul zaox qeut niob sangt, id jil*
- - - *seize their place live away, that thus*

zaox gul deuf raod leuf hib baob, yad sub
those who go out forest gone not know, must first

cod ghjwx hak hxut ngaox gof zaox vaif
blow instruments and sing songs cause those at

ngax fait daot yiul dwd nwb. Id gul taot id
home distinguish get own people. because at then

as box yaok niob ngax dab, ad yeus deuf
women young situated house only, men go out

raod leuf, max dit gul dax shuf
forest gone, there were those who came take over

lwb nief qeut niob jiet.
classifier for people steal place live completed.

" - - - come and seize their home. Since those away in the forest would not know, they would first play instruments and sing songs so that the folk at home could distinguish their own people. For at that time, when only young women were at home and the men were away, there were those who might come, take the people and steal the home."

Lines 34 and 35. The explanation that over a period of time the word $\overset{\text{nc}}{\text{C}}$, "crying", changed its tone to C^{nc} , "mother", is provided only in Document N.

Lines 38 - 41. This short paragraph is found only in Document N.

Line 42. The opening expression $\text{Y}^- \text{A}_s \text{Y}^- \text{J}'^{\text{p}} \text{D}_n$, "the ancestors" is only in Document N.

Line 43. Document N omits S^{o} , "away", and substitutes "gul dlib", "by a long distance", and then goes on, "Dad jaix niaok id", "at that time". Document F reads Y^- , "two" instead of Y^{n} , "one". See introduction.

Line 45. After the name Jio-bi-khaob, Document N inserts the following explanation:-

Gid zib yeul laol ndros yeul jiox bik khaok gul ib
Gi-zi elder with man Jio-bi-khao was one

lwb dab, jiox ib ngeul lit khaot hlaot
classifier only, carried one pair boots (?) iron

gul ndaok nzhit.
which battle.

"The Elder Gi-zi and the Man Jio-bi-khao were a single person, who used a pair of iron-shod battle boots".

The final sentence is intended to give the meaning of the name the Man Jio-bi-khao as "that man using iron-shod boots", but the explanation is less than convincing. "Jiox" certainly means "to carry" or "to use", but the remainder of the name, according to Document F is $\text{J}^{\text{n}} \overset{\text{h}}{\text{J}}$ ' (= "bib khaod"). "Boots" would be written $\text{L}^{\text{n}} \text{J}'^{\text{h}}$ (= "lit kaot") not "lit khaot"

Line 51. Document N has expanded $\overset{\text{h}}{\text{t}}$ ' $\text{J}^{\text{n}} \overset{\text{h}}{\text{t}}$ ', "millet", into "cud tieb bit caod", "yellow millet and millet". $\overset{\text{h}}{\text{t}}$ ' and $\overset{\text{h}}{\text{t}}$ ', "cud" and "caod", are different varieties of millet.

Line 52. In Document N the final phrase of the paragraph is rewritten:-

...traot lud drangt id jiox lol zos
...from the plain that place bring come reach

nid lit yas.
here so it is.

Lines 53 - 56. This passage is omitted in Document N and in its place there is a new heading, "Part two. The song of the Elder Gi-zi, the Man Jio-bi-khao."

Line 57. It is from this point onward that Documents K, L and N (second version) pick up the story. Document K, followed by Document L has a short introductory note which reads, "The time that they were living at Millet Plain (Sui-yuan Region, Shan-xi Province) Red Mud River (Yellow River) Di-ngiang-na (South of the Yellow River) The plain of Be-yi, Mang-de, Mang-li-no country". The place names in brackets are written in Chinese.

Line 58. Documents K, L and N (both versions) have $C\uparrow \text{ } \text{ } C_{no}$, "nzyux gis niaos", "the Master", where it should read, $C\uparrow r \text{ } \text{ } C_{no}$, "nzix git niaos", "the underworld".

Line 72. The first version in Document N changes "the children" to "bib lib ghak laol", "our old folk", that is to say, "our ancestors". The last three words of the line and the first word of line 73 have also disappeared, and the two lines are joined into one.

Line 76. This is missing from the first version in Document N.

Lines 83 and 84. These lines are omitted altogether in Documents K, L and N (second version).

Lines 85 - 94. This paragraph is missing in Documents K, L and N (second version). In Document N (first version) it has been moved to the very end of the piece under the title, "Matters needing explanation".

Lines 95 - 99. This short paragraph, omitted entirely by Documents K, L and N (second version), has been re-written and considerably extended in the explanatory note at the end of the piece in Document N (first version), as follows.

Taot gul yeul Jiox bik khaok das leuf dangl nyul
when man Jio-bi-khao dead gone finish his

dub Gid Myub yeul laol hit nies hlob died ad hlak
son Gi-myub elder not yet big become youth

sib. Khab byul jil Ad vaos hit daot hnod gul nyul
yet. beginning thus Chinese not get hear that he

das leuf. ndrux ghwb pat yaot zhangd dwd nwb daot
dead gone. afterwards other kinds people get

baob gul Gid-zib yeul laol das leuf dies dangl.
know that Gi-zi elder dead gone truly finish.

pat yaob zhangd dwd nwb dax dyud cid hak ndaok
other kinds people came insult and attack

nyul zaox, dit box nief dit ngaox ncail gul
them, the women of age the girls daughters who

raot ngaox draos nyul zaox hal jaob dab dies leuf
good looking by them seize many very gone

dangl. Nyul zaox zhid gyub daot ib zak.
finish. they evil pass get one period

Taot vaix Gid myub yeul laol hit nies hlob died
at that time Gi-myu elder not yet big become

dwd nwb sib. Bot gul Shak ndraos jiox dis vaos
person yet. saw that Ruling Race

dub zib dub dros mab Ad hmao ngaox ncaik as box
retainers soldiers took Miao girls daughters women

niel gul raot ngaox jaob dat dies leuf, nyul
of age who good looking many very gone, he

dut sieb, hxek ad hlak dub maol ntried ndaot
grieved, led youths all go seek tree

hnwd dlat ad zak lol, hxek ad hlak dub mis
crossbow go to cliff come, led youths all plural

zut dros, dad liel hxek dros ndaok
train soldiers, presently led soldiers attack

Ad vaos, nyul zaox dad liel daot raot hnuv niaol
Chinese, they presently get good days times

gyuf. Max ngaox hxut hik,
pass. there was song sang said,

"Ndux daot ndux tes mes,
"sky get sky constant,

Gid zib yeul laol das leuf dangl,
Gi-zi elder dead gone finish,

Shak ndraos jiox dis vaos jil mas dax,
Ruling Race thus did come,

mas dax Shak ndraos jiox dis vaos dib,
did come Ruling Race country,

dax mab las dik yaok ndros leuf dangl".
came take children with gone finish".

(hnwd gul traot nid byul jios).
(crossbows were from this beginning so it is).

When the Man Jio-bi-khao died, his son, the Elder Gi-myu was not yet even a youth. To begin with the Chinese had not heard that he had died, but later other folk learned that he was actually dead, and the other folk came to humiliate and attack them. Very many good-looking young women and girls were carried off, and the Miao went through a very bad period. At this time the Elder Gi-myu, though still not an adult, saw how the soldiers and retainers of the Ruling Race were taking very many of the good-looking young women and girls, and he was incensed. He led the youths out to the cliffs in search of trees for making crossbows, he trained them as soldiers and presently he led his soldiers and attacked the Chinese, and thus restored good times again. There is a song which says,

While the sky remained constant,
The Elder Gi-zi having died,
The Ruling Race came,
Came from the Ruling Race's land,
Came to take and carry off the children, - - -.

Crossbows had their origin here.

Lines 99 - 195. Throughout this section which describes the flight of the Miao before the ever advancing Chinese, the latter are always referred to as J̄ CT_{ii} C^{no} Tⁿ V_{ii}. Document N, in transcribing the name into Latin letters shows considerable uncertainty. J̄ is sometimes "shak" and sometimes "shad", C^{no} is sometimes "jiox" and sometimes "jox", Tⁿ can be "dix" or "dis", while capital initials for one, two, or even three of the constituent syllables appear quite indiscriminately. Just occasionally one or other of the syllables is missing altogether.

Lines 118 and 120. In Document K followed by Document L the word T_i, "destined for", has been changed to T², the intended meaning of which is unclear.

Line 135. In all the documents this line is joined to line 136, a cumbersome arrangement which upsets the balance of the song.

Line 156. Document F says that the cotton heads were as big as L^u CT^o, and this reading is retained in Documents K, L and N (second version). CT^o, in various tones, has a number of meanings, but none fit the present context. Prolific cotton plants are, however, described in a number of other songs, where the cotton balls are always said to be as big as J² Y_o "ducks' eggs". The first version of the song in Document N has indeed altered the text to read, "ghet ok", "egg duck". It seems likely, therefore, that the word CT^o, in Document F is a mistake for J_o which is another word for "egg".

Line 171. The place name written Tⁿ C³ C₋, "Di-njiang-na", appears in the first and second versions of the song in Document N as "Dib jial nal" and "dib jal naf" respectively. A note in Chinese in Documents K and L suggests that this place was "South of the Yangtzi River".

Lines 173 - 182. These lines do not appear in Document F, but they are present, with slight variations, in Documents K and L, and in both versions of the song in Document N. Line 172. "This place Di-njiang-na was good land", seems to require some further

amplification, which Document N supplies most effectively, but whether these additional lines are part of Yang Ya-go's original manuscript or are a redaction compiled from material in this and other similar songs, is difficult to determine.

Line 195. In the first version of this song in Document N the names "Hmao-de" and "Hmao-li-no" have been changed to "Mang-de" and "Mang-li-no" to indicate that these were not places where originally the Miao, the "A-hmao", lived, but were Yi, or "A-mang", settlements.