

M219

The descendants of the Elder Gi-yie and the Elder Gi-chi.

Sung by Zhang-ming.

Notes

This song is recorded in:- Document K (no. 8, page 26), Document L (no. 16, page 50), Document N (no. 22, page 438). The versions in Documents L and N have been copied directly from Document K.

Line 10 . In the text the name ɔ̃ⁿ ɕ^r Λ_ɕ L_ɪ, "Elder Gi-chi", is missing. It has been restored here to maintain the parallelism with line 13.

Line 15 . This line is identical with its parallel line 12. In other songs where this construction is used, ɕT^v ɕ[̄]ɕ̄, "blue sky", is normally balanced by ɕT^v l̄[̄], "clear sky".

Line 22 . Here, and again in line 27, the word ɕɔ̃^r ɪ_ɪ, "curved", is wrongly transcribed "gaot" in Document N.

Line 23 . All three documents mistakenly read S^ɪ instead of ʒ^ɪ in this line.

Line 26 . Documents K and L read "the Elder Gi-chi" in this line. Document N has "the Elder Gi-yie". Since, however, it is exactly parallel to line 21, both names should appear.

Line 29 . In the Miao text the conventional expression ɕΔ_ɪ Lⁿ ɕ[̄] L_o has been changed to ɕT_ɪ ɕ[̄] L_ɕ.

Line 35 . There is clearly a disruption of the text in this line. In all the documents it reads:-

ɔ̃ⁿ Λ^ɕ V_ɪ †_ɕ L_ɪ ɕT_o ɕ_n Yⁿ L^ɕ ɕ[̄] Tⁿ †_ɕ ɕ[̄] Tⁿ ɕɔ̃_{nc}.
Gi-yie Chinese leader with connector one classifier hand able hand skilful.

The phrase ɕT_o ɕ_n Yⁿ L^ɕ cannot possibly be followed by the rest of the line, since the noun coming immediately after the classifier L^ɕ must be a person. Moreover, if the phrase is removed entirely the line is complete in itself and links exactly with the lines that follow. The previous line, 34, tells of the Chinese leader's retreat after the initial battle, and comparison with other songs suggests that before going on to describe the Chinese ability to build boats, we might expect, though by no means necessarily so, a line saying "The Chinese Leader could not bear the thought", or "The Chinese Leader was not discouraged", or even "The Chinese Leader sought a stratagem". It is therefore just possible that what we have here is the fragment of such a missing line. However, ɕT_o ɕ_n Yⁿ L^ɕ does not remotely resemble any phrase found in other songs, so that the best solution seems to be to regard it as an intrusion into the text and leave it out altogether.

Line 45 . A note in Chinese in the text of both Documents K and L gives the meaning of ɕ_n ɕ_{no} as "saddle".

Line 48 . In the Miao text this and 49 are joined into a single long line. The same has occurred with lines 65 and 66, lines 69 and 70, and lines 73 and 74.

Line 51 . A note in Chinese in all three Documents gives the meaning of S_{nc} , the word "to covet", as "greed".

Line 52 . In Document N the word CJ'' , "blowing" is wrongly transcribed "paox".

Line 70 . In the Miao text the name $\square^n \square'' \wedge \varsigma L_{ii}$, "The Elder Gi-chi", is missing. It has been restored to maintain the parallelism with line 74.