

M222
Concerning the Man Li-dao, section one.

Sung by Tao Zi-gai.

Notes

This song is recorded in Document F (no. 17, page 14), Document K (no. 18 page 51) Document L (no. 25, page 98), Document M (no. 9, page 50) Document N (no. 34, page 510).

In the Miao text the following pairs of lines have been joined into single long lines: 25 and 26, 29 and 30, 31 and 32, 37 and 38, 39 and 40, 42 and 43, 83 and 84, 85 and 86, 104 and 105, 113 and 114.

Line 2. In Documents K, L and M the opening words have been changed to the more normal form, 𑜃𑜂𑜆 𑜃𑜂𑜆. However in lines 4 and 6 which are exactly parallel, no alteration has been made. It would appear therefore that the change in line 2 is merely a scribal error. This does not apply to Document N where all three lines begin "draos draot", that is, 𑜃𑜂𑜆 𑜃𑜂𑜆.

Line 32. The final word 𑜃𑜂𑜆 in modern Miao means "to rule over", "to control" and also "to bully". A footnote in Document M explains that here it means "to exercise authority".

Line 43. Four times in the first part of this song, (lines 1 - 89), the following line occurs:

Y⁻ 𑜃𑜂𑜆 𑜃𑜂𑜆 L^o 𑜃𑜂𑜆 𑜃𑜂𑜆 𑜃𑜂𑜆^o 𑜃𑜂𑜆.
make man Li-dao the place dwell.

On the first occurrence, at line 11 it is unquestionably correct for it forms a couplet with the exactly parallel line 12 which follows it.

At the second occurrence, line 30, it also makes good sense in the context, and is properly linked to the previous line by the repeated verb Y⁻, "make".

The third occurrence is following line 43, where it appears to be out of place, an intrusion into the text which does not make good sense. There is also no link to the previous line. One would have expected Y⁻, "make" at the end of line 43, but it is not there. Moreover line 43 is exactly parallel to line 38. The latter marks the end of a stanza, so line 43 should do the same. Thus the addition of "To make a place for the Man Li-dao to dwell" is not required by the context and also breaks the poetic sequence. The line has, accordingly, been omitted.

The fourth occurrence is clearly wrong. It follows line 55. The song at this point is dealing with the levelling of the ground to make rice fields, and the lines which immediately follow describe the flooding of the fields with water. The Man Li-dao did not live in the middle of a paddy field.

Line 57. The text followed at this point is that of Document F. In Document K, followed by all the later documents, $\text{C}\Delta\text{v}$, "flow", is omitted, and the word Ct^- , "blue", is added before $\text{D}^n \text{S}^{\text{nc}}$, "clear". The phrase $\text{C}\text{t}^- \text{D}^n \text{S}^{\text{nc}}$ is very often used in the songs and it would be easy for a copyist writing $\text{D}^n \text{S}^{\text{nc}}$ to prefix it automatically with Ct^- . However, the expression is normally used to describe a clear blue sky, not running water.

Line 77. Document F has an additional word, J^z , "flower", at the end of this line.

Line 82. Document K, followed by all the later documents reads, mistakenly, $\text{C}\text{T}\text{v} \text{J}^r \text{t}_n$ instead of $\text{S}^{\text{nc}} \text{J}^r \text{t}_n$ in this line.

Lines 88 and 89. In Document F these lines are joined in a single sentence. Instead of $\text{C}_n \text{D}^- \text{T}^n$, "thus did give" in line 88 with the repetition of T^n , "give" in the second line, there is the single word J_o , "caused".

Line 91. The expression $\text{J}^r \text{C}_n$, "collect together", was misread in Document K as $\text{J}^r \text{C}_n$, then copied in Documents L and M as $\text{J}^r \text{C}^{\text{no}}$, and finally transformed in Document N into "shak jiod", that is $\text{J}^- \overset{\text{no}}{\text{C}}$, with an added footnote seeking, not very successfully, to give the expression some meaning.

Line 97. This line is missing in Document K and all subsequent Documents.