

M232
Customs devised by twelve Miao clans for their protection.

Sung by Yang Zhi.

Notes

This song is recorded in Document N (no. 33, page 505).

Title. In the title and throughout this song the word "xi" meaning "clan" has been written with the tone letter "f". This has been changed to "k" to bring it into line with other songs where the word is used. Two words in the title are misspelled, "riet" as "rlet", and "yiul" as "uyul". There are many similar mistakes throughout the song which have been corrected, but only the more significant have been noted.

Line 6. In the text the last two syllables of the name of the river are wrongly printed "jil mol", followed immediately by the same two words but in the correct form "yil mol".

Line 13. A note in the text explains that "zas shak" means "fighting".

Line 20. In the printed text the word "njiub" is misspelt "nzhiab". "njiub" also occurs in lines 21, 22, and 23, and in the note that follows line 21. Now "njiub" means "limp", which simply does not fit the present context. It can be read in other tones, but none give a sensible meaning. It is therefore likely that the word intended was "nzhub" which means a turn of duty, generally a spell on watch, guarding crops, cattle or property.

Line 21. Following this line there is an insertion into the text. It begins with "Hik ntrail" (the latter word being misspelt "trail") which means "explanation", but what follows is printed in three lines just as though it were part of the song. It reads,

Explanation: preparing corn meal to make food, and seeking vegetables to make meals ready for the return of the young men who were guarding the road, this, by people of a later date, was said to be eating "rock-watch" food.

Line 24. The last word of this line is wrongly printed "deb". However, there is a footnote in which the correct word "beb" appears.

Line 48. A footnote explains that "dub gil raod" means "people who resist in the forest".

Line 60. The word "ntrail" meaning "clear" is printed "trait"

Lines 62 to 66. Each of these lines begins with the conjunction "jil", "thus", but in every case it has been printed with the tone letter "d".

Lines 62 to 64. These three lines all contain the word "ndangb" meaning "hillside", but in lines 62 and 63 it is printed "dangb" while in line 64 it appears as "dlangb".

Line 62. There is a reference to a footnote against the final word "ncib" in this line. The footnote says that the last three words of the line mean "wild pig". This is identical

with the next footnote referring to line 64. In the latter case it is correct, but here it is clearly a printing error, and there is no way of knowing what the note should have been. **Line 64.** The word "ntaot", "surroundings" is printed "trait". Also the final word in the line printed "shied" cannot be correct as the initial "sh" may not be followed by the vowel "i". However the required initial is "zh", and the tone letter "x", for the word is "zhiex" meaning "to live" or "to thrive".

Line 65. The second word in this line appears as "aeuf" which cannot be pronounced. Presumably the required word is "leud" meaning "to pursue" or "to hunt". In this line also the word for "tiger" is printed instead of that for "wild pig".

Line 66. A footnote explains that "lit ghat zhok" which means "the upper arm", is here used metaphorically for "strength". It is in fact parallel to "lit nghwt nbangb" in line 69 which is "the worth of the arm" and means "power" or "control".

Lines 68 to 70. In the printed text the material in these lines is somewhat confused and it has been necessary to rearrange it to preserve the parallelism with lines 65 to 67.

Line 83. In the text this line is identical with line 79.