

M241
The times of the Man Li-byu.

Sung by Zhang Shu-wei.

When the sky began,
The sky began really to continue.

As it came about, who instituted marriage bonds?
As it came about, who instituted marriage unions?
5 The Man Li-byu instituted marriage bonds.

The Man Li-byu having nothing to use as a name,
The Man Li-byu took their situation as a name,
Calling them the "Miao marriage bond tribe",
Calling them the "Miao marriage union tribe".

10 The Man Li-byu gathered,
Gathered in-laws and cousins to celebrate marriage.
Gathered cousins, young women and young men, to dwell as families.

The cousins, young women and young men, came together,
Came together making places to live on the plain of Yi-bang,
15 Came together making places to rest on the plain of Yi-bang.

The cousins, young women and young men, raised,
Raised nine sons, nine alike in stature,
Raised nine sons, nine alike in appearance.

20 So the cousins, young women and young men,
Their descendants spread to fill the land,
Their descendants spread to fill the plain,
Their descendants spread so as to fill the district,
Their descendants spread so as to fill the country.

As it came about, who was it took,
25 Took the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, to till crops?
As it came about, the Man Li-dao took,
Took the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children to till crops.

30 The Man Li-dao took,
Took the children to plant crops,
To come every day and plant cotton on the plain,
To come every month and plant cotton on the plain,
And, year by year, at the right time, to gather the crops,
35 Year by year, at the right time, to gather the harvest.

The cotton on the Yi-bang plain,
The cotton came into bloom,

And as the flowers came out they brightened the land,
As the flowers came out they brightened the plain.

40 Then the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children carried on their backs,
Carried big baskets, carried large baskets to go and pick,
To pick the cotton on the plain each day,
To pick the cotton on the plain each month,
45 And sell it to the Ruling Race.

The young women, both Yi and Chinese spun,
Spun skeins of yarn for the whole wide world,
Spun skeins of thread for the whole wide world.
They wove rolls of cloth for the whole wide world,
50 And provided the whole wide world with clothes to wear.

The cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, by selling cotton,
By selling cotton, obtained from the Ruling Race a store of silver,
By selling cotton, obtained from the Ruling Race a store of treasure.

55 The Man Li-dao brought out,
Brought out the Man Li-dao's store of silver,
And built for the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, a town with a water pool,
A town with a water pool, a pool four-square.

60 Then the Man Li-dao brought out,
Brought out the Man Li-dao's store of silver,
And built houses with timber frames and tiled roofs adjoining one another,
Built houses with timber frames and tiled roofs standing together.

65 The houses, timber framed and tiled, stood in a curve like a chicken's claw,
The houses, timber framed and tiled, stood in a curve like a pig's hoof,
Where the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, might live.

As it came about, who was it did no good?
The Ruling Race did no good, and in this manner.

70 The Ruling Race dispatched,
Dispatched from the Ruling Race,
Retainers and troops each day to attack,
To attack the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, in the middle of the plain.

75 So the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, could not continue to rest there,
The cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, could live there no longer.

As it came about, who was it came making crossbows?

80 As it came about, who was it came making swords?
As it came about, who was it came making soldiers?
As it came about, the Man Li-dao made crossbows.
As it came about, the Man Li-dao made swords.
As it came about the Man Li-dao made soldiers.

85 The Man Li-dao came and made,
Made ninety nine smart soldiers.
They exercised with crossbows over thirty mountain ranges,
And they exercised with swords through thirty valleys.

90 So they repelled the Ruling Race,
Repelled the retainers and soldiers upon the sheep paths,
Repelled the retainers and troops along the sheep tracks,
Protecting the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, in the middle of the plain.

95 Thus the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, could continue to rest,
The cousins, young women and young men,
And their children, could rest secure.

The Ruling Race was flustered, impatient and frustrated,
As the Ruling Race sought for a solution.

100 So the Ruling Race offered,
Offered to young women of the Ruling Race,
To their pretty young daughters, bangles of silver,
To their pretty young daughters, bangles of gold,

105 For coming to deceive the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops,
Deceive them upon the sheep paths,
For coming to deceive the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops,
Deceive them along the sheep tracks,
To deceive the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops into making families to live,
To deceive the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops into making families to dwell.

110 The king of the Ruling Race enquired,
"What do you need for the marriages?
What do you need for the weddings?"
The Ruling Race's daughters said,
"We need bowls of clear wine for the marriages".

115 Then the Ruling Race devised a plan.
The Ruling Race took out,
Took out bowls of clear wine to make them drunk.

120 They made the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops drunk,
Made them drunk upon the sheep paths,
Made the retainers and troops drunk along the sheep tracks.

Then they killed the Man Li-hxai's retainers and troops,

Killed them upon the sheep paths,
Killed the retainers and troops along the sheep tracks.

125 When the cousins, young women and young men,
And their children's daughters heard it, they covered their faces and wept.
They raised their voices, calling all the family together,
"Is it true that the youths all together are no longer alive?"

130 The Chinese retainers and troops came and arrested,
Arrested the Man Li-hxai there,
There at the town with a water pool, in the middle of the town.
They tied the Man Li-hxai's wrists together,
They tied the Man Li-hxai's ankles together,
And carried him on a pole to the City of the Ruling Race's king.

135 The Ruling Race killed the Man Li-hxai there,
There in the City of the Ruling Race's king,
Killed him on the fifth day of the fifth moon.
Then the Ruling Race came to destroy,
To destroy the children at the town with a water pool.

140 As it came about who was it led,
Led the children in flight?
As it came about the pillar-builder from Ya-shyu,
Together with the pillar-builder from Fa-na led,
Led the children in flight out of the town.

145 They fled from the red river, the river like blood,
But having climbed from the fertile country of the valleys,
In what land would they want to rebuild and settle,
In what country would they care to rebuild and settle?

150 The cousins, young women and young men,
And the young folk, daughters and sons of their children,
Called to the youths in songs and in words for answers.
"Having climbed the mountain range of Fa-na, that high mountain range,
And having reached Fa-na, will the children still be alive?
Having reached Fa-na, will the old folk still be alive?"

155 When they fled from the plains to the mountains,
The young women, the daughters lamented and grieved,
Grieved for the town with the water pool each day.
The young women, the daughters lamented and grieved,
Grieved for the plain of Yi-bang each month,
They grieved, but could not regain them.

160 The young women, the daughters took,
Took silk thread and satin thread to embroider,
Embroider a pattern of the town with a water pool, a pool four-square,
Embroidering gathered squares for aprons, squares of cloth for carrying a child.

The young women, the daughters took,

165 Took silk thread, and satin thread to embroider,
 To embroider the plain of Yi-bang, making clothes to wear,
 Making the costumes with the nza-nzyu pattern which they wore.

Fleeing from the valley of the elderberry river, the valley of the river of reeds,
 The young women, the daughters, picked elderberries and fed the children.

170 Having fled the domain of the black-hearted Ruling Race,
 They fled to the lands of the Black Yi Landlord.

They fled there and farmed their crops,
 And, for a twelve year period, approaching thirteen years,
 The Black Yi Landlord knew nothing about it.

175 Then some of the Black Yi Landlord's slaves came and saw
 The young Miao women, the daughters' hair cones resembling sprouting horns.

When the Black Yi slaves returned,
 They said, "We went and we saw
 People who grow horns! Whoever can they be?"

180 The Black Yi Landlord replied,
 "You go and call them for me to see".

So the Black Yi Landlord's slaves came to call them.
 A call in the Yi language, and they ran away.
 A call in Chinese, and they stood and looked.

185 A further call in Chinese persuaded them to go and see the Landlord.
 All the Miao sons and daughters went,
 Went together for the interview with the Landlord.

When the Landlord saw them he was moved with pity and said,
 "These are from long, long ago,
 190 When the Deluge had at last abated,
 The survivor's eldest son was a Miao, these are his descendants".

Then the Black Yi Landlord said,
 "You return to your farming,
 Raise corn and raise crops to live on.

195 Later we will come and talk about the rent".

So the Miao sons and daughters came and worked,
 Worked through a twelve year period, approaching thirteen years.
 Then indeed the Landlord came and said,

"In a good season, a good year, the Landlord will be good,
 200 In a bad season, a bad year, the Landlord will not be good!"
 For slaves of the Yi the compulsory labour is never easy.

Thus it is ended