

M252

Song of our Miao ancestors living in Byu-no country.

Sung by Yang Sa-gai.

When the sky began
And on earth the ranges were set in place,
In earlier times our Miao ancestors
Came to the estates of Lord Hmao-byu.

5 Lord Hmao-byu lived,
Lived in a country of swaying forests exceedingly black,
Of swaying forests extremely dark,
The people's forests sighing in the wind.

10 The deer all lived there,
The stags all dwelt there,
Large animals and strong, all dwelt there.

So the old folk went to clear it.
They cleared the people's swaying forest and levelled it,
They cleared the people's swaying forest and laid it flat.
15 They sunned the soft and hard wood trees till they were very dry.

The sunshine, shining brightly,
The sunshine was good,
Good for the old people to burn off the cutting,
So they burned off the black forest and cleared it.

20 Then the old folk sowed,
Sowed millet in the clearing,
And the millet grew to full grain.

On reaching Ox-month or Rat-month,
The harvest of millet had fully ripened,
25 The millet had ripened a golden yellow,
Then the old folk reaped,
Reaped the millet and gathered it home.

The swaying forests were exceedingly black,
The swaying forests were extremely dark,
30 The deer all lived there,
The stags all dwelt there,
Large animals and strong, all dwelt there,

But the old folk, the whole community hunted,
Hunted the animals of forest and cliff wherever they went,
35 Until the animals of forest and cliff had all been caught.

The old folk would bring millet to pay the landlord's rent,
And as a gift to the landlord at New Year, they hunted deer.

40 Then Lord Hmao-byu would fill,
 Fill cups with new wine for the old folk to share and drink,
 Spreading tables for the old folk, all smiling, to eat.

 Thus it is ended.