

M267
How Gi-dleu oppressed the Miao community.

Sung by Tao Zi-gai.

The Elder Shi-tru went to survey the land.
He surveyed the Hxu-zho plain, that wide plain,
He surveyed the Hxu-zho plain, that flat plain,
Where the ground indeed was flat and the land level .

5 The Elder Shi-tru then returned, went back to his home.
The Elder Shi-tru thought,
Thought for nine days and devised nine plans,
Thought for nine whole nights and devised nine schemes.

10 He thought through nine plans, nine schemes and combined them,
He thought through nine plans, nine schemes and linked them.
Then the Elder Shi-tru said,
"My shining silver is achieving nothing whatever!"

15 So the Elder Shi-tru paid out,
Paid out gold and shining silver in order to establish,
To establish a place on the Hxu-zho plain, that wide plain,
To establish a place on the Hxu-zho plain, that level plain.

The Elder Shi-tru built,
Built a house with a timber frame and a tiled roof in the midst of the flat land,
Built an excellent house with a tiled roof in the midst of the plain.

20 There were beehives fixed under the eaves,
With hired servants engaged to tend them,
There were beehives tied under the rafters,
With hired servants engaged to secure them.

25 The Elder Shi-tru ordered,
Ordered the herdsmen to excavate and flatten,
To flatten the Elder Shi-tru's rice fields,
To flatten them on the Hxu-zho plain, that wide plain,
To flatten the Elder Shi-tru's paddy fields,
To flatten them on the Hxu-zho plain, that level plain.

30 The Elder Shi-tru ordered,
Ordered his herdsmen to go and channel,
Channel the river Hxu-zho to flow foaming and irrigate,
Irrigate the Elder Shi-tru's paddy fields in the midst of the flat land,
To irrigate his ricefields in the midst of the plain.

35 The Elder Shi-tru ordered,
Ordered his herdsmen to plant and tend the fields,
Until the rice was fully ripe,
And the swaying millet ripened.

40 Now the Elder Shi-tru could not bear his thoughts,
 The Elder Shi-tru was sad at heart.
 So the Elder Shi-tru paid out,

 Paid out shining silver to obtain,
 To obtain an Yi girl from Lord Cai-sie to raise offspring.
 But Lord Cai-sie's Yi girl raised no offspring,
 45 For Lord Cai-sie's Yi girl had no son,
 So the Elder Shi-tru got no offspring.

 Then the Elder Shi-tru paid out,
 Paid out shining silver and gold to obtain,
 To obtain a Chinese girl to come and raise offspring,
 50 But the Chinese girl also had no son.

 While the sky remained constant,
 The Elder Shi-tru thought again,
 And the Elder Shi-tru said,
 "The shining silver and gold is achieving nothing whatever!"

 55 So the Elder Shi-tru paid out,
 Paid out shining silver and gold to hire,
 To hire Chinese to come from Chinese country,
 To hire that Race to come from that Race's place.

 60 When the Chinese arrived the Chinese quarried stone,
 When that Race came that Race quarried rock.
 Where did they go to quarry stone and quarry rock?
 They quarried the stone and quarried the rock on the plain of Mu-di.

 They chiselled the stone and chiselled the rock and broke it free.
 They split the stone and split the rock and broke it clear.

 65 The Elder Shi-tru ordered,
 Ordered the buffaloes to drag.
 Where were they to drag the slabs of stone and slabs of rock?
 They were to drag them from the plain of Mu-di.

 But the water buffaloes fell and could not stand.
 70 So the herdsmen whipped,
 Whipped the water buffaloes on their backs,
 Whipped the water buffaloes on their curving backs.

 The water buffaloes dragged,
 Dragged the Elder Shi-tru's stone pillars and pillar slabs, but dragging, they
 could not stand.
 75 And the water buffaloes' tears flowed,
 The water buffaloes' tears dripped down.

 But they dragged the slabs of stone and slabs of rock on,
 On to the plain in the Hxu-zho country, that flat plain.

80 They set upright the Elder Shi-tru's pillars of rock,
They set upright the Elder Shi-tru's pillars of stone,
They set upright the Elder Shi-tru's pillars of stone and rock upon,
Upon the plain in Hxu-zho country, that wide plain.

The Miao community had cut the paddy rice and spread it to dry in the midst of
the flat land,
They had cut the rice harvest and spread it to dry in the midst of the plain.
85 But the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen swept up,
Swept up the new rice, the rice in the midst of the fields.

Then the girl, the Chinese girl threshed,
Threshed, with her flail whirling round,
Threshed the fresh rice with her whirling flail.
90 She threshed, with her flail swirling round,
Threshed the paddy rice with her swirling flail.

She then husked the paddy rice, the fresh rice ready,
Ready for the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen to eat.

Having eaten, what did the herdsmen do?
95 Having eaten, the herdsmen went,
Went to the deep Ndi-na valley.
Then through the Ndi-na valley to the river and beyond,
To the middle of the village of Hmao-bao-di.

Thence the herdsmen carried,
100 Carried the Elder Shi-tru's barks of pine,
Carried the Elder Shi-tru's barks of timber.

Carrying the barks of pine, the barks of timber, they forced a way through the
river.
They carried the barks of pine, the barks of timber, across,
Across the river Gi-jiai lower down, but then,
105 Carrying, they had to climb the Ndi-na range where it was most difficult.

The Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen raised their voices in a chant,
In a high pitched chant, along the river banks.
The Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen raised their voices in a chant,
In a high pitched chant, around the mountain side.

110 Their high pitched chanting sounded through the valley,
Their high pitched chanting sounded over the mountain range,
Their high pitched chanting sounded along the river.

The Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen carried,
Carried the barks of pine, the barks of timber, and climbed,
115 Climbed from the level banks of Ndi-na,
Climbed the Ndi-na range, following around,
Following around the long Gi-bai ridge.

So having reached the pass of Gi-dre, the rock-piled pass,
 The herdsmen set down the balks of pine, the balks of timber,
 120 And the herdsmen lit a fire and slept,
 Slept in the pass of Gi-dre, the rock-piled pass at the top of the ridge

When the next day came,
 The herdsmen carried,
 Carried the balks of pine, the balks of timber, across,
 125 Across the valley of Zi-to, that wide valley.

The herdsmen's loud chanting shook the river,
 The herdsmen's loud chanting resounded round the mountains,
 Till, pressing forward, they reached the river Gi-trao in the middle of the
 valley.
 Then they carried the balks of pine, the balks of timber, and reached,
 130 Reached Hmao-di-ze at the top of the ridge.

At night they had no supper,
 The herdsmen just lit a fire and slept,
 Slept at Hmao-di-ze at the top of the ridge.

When the next day came
 135 The herdsmen carried,
 Carried the balks of pine, the balks of timber, chanting,
 And their high pitched chant sounded along the mountain ridge,
 As they reached the narrows in the pass of Ndrang-kao.

In the brightly shining sunlight,
 140 Where was there standing a grove of pine and fir trees?
 There by the road in the narrows in the pass of Ndrang-kao.
 The grove would have covered nine market squares,
 And the trees must have numbered nine hundred.

The grove provided,
 145 Provided eagles with a place to build their eyries,
 While the trees provided,
 Provided the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen with a place of shelter in the shade.

The grove provided,
 Provided eagles with a place to raise their young,
 150 And the trees provided,
 Provided the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen with a place to eat their lunch.

The Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen carried,
 Carried the balks of pine, the balks of timber, and reached,
 Reached the plain in the Hxu-zho country, that wide plain.

155 The Chinese took,
 Took the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen to erect,
 To erect the Elder Shi-tru's pillars of wood,
 And to erect the Elder Shi-tru's pillars of stone.

The stone pillars, the monuments, stood up firmly, rising skywards,
 160 The wooden pillars stood up firmly pointing toward the sky.
 The precinct had nine steps,
 And the pagoda nine storeys.

The wooden pillars stood up firmly to become,
 To become for the people a place to remember,
 165 While the precinct and the wooden pillars were sufficient,
 Sufficient for Moon-youth's phases to be observed plainly,
 For the pagoda had nine storeys.

The whole site provided,
 Provided a place for people to forgather,
 170 And provided kings and governors with a place to visit.

The stone steps, the steps of rock were sufficient,
 Sufficient for the people's old folk to sit in lines,
 And sufficient to muster a whole squad of soldiers.

The stone steps, the steps of rock were sufficient,
 175 Sufficient to gather a whole herd of deer,
 Sufficient to gather a whole drove of roebuck.

The pagoda had space sufficient,
 Sufficient to house a small dragon,
 Sufficient to house a small elephant!

180 But the people took a different view,
 For all the people recalled,
 Recalled how hard was the compulsory labour.

The people all remembered,
 Remembered how the water buffaloes wept as they dragged,
 185 Remembered the people carrying who could not even undress to sleep.

There were bells of iron hanging on the pagoda,
 There were bells of copper hanging in the precinct,
 In the brightly shining sunlight.

As the wind came blowing,
 190 It blew on the bells of copper and the bells of iron until they sounded,
 And the sound, rising and falling, carried to the Chinese king's land.

When the Chinese king came to hear it,
 The Chinese king paid a visit to see for himself.
 Then the Chinese king praised,
 195 Praised the Elder Shi-tru as a man of ability.

So the Chinese king engraved,
 Engraved the Elder Shi-tru's name and style on the wooden pillars,
 Engraved the Elder Shi-tru's name and style on the middle of the rock,
 In order that the Elder Shi-tru's name might never be lost.

200 In time the Elder Shi-tru died,
And the Elder Shi-tru's herdsmen carried,
Carried the Elder Shi-tru out for burial.

They buried him at Shi-bw, at the sheep path beyond the tiger path,
Buried him face towards the sun's rising,
205 Buried him feet towards the moon's setting.

The Elder Shi-tru's Miao community killed,
Killed a number of young pigs,
And for the funeral rites slaughtered a number of young sheep.
The mourning for the Elder Shi-tru lasted seven days,
210 The mourning for the Elder Shi-tru lasted seven nights.

Thus it is ended.