

Hua Miao spirit worship**1. The Spirit Zu-gi-za and the ancestors. 2.***Compiled by Wang Ming-ji.*

Calling the shaman-healer in a case of sickness. When a member of a family became sick, they called the shaman-healer. The shaman-healer would enquire, “Which day did this person become sick? In which direction did he travel that day? What places did he reach?” If the patient could not recall which direction he went that day or what places he reached, the shaman-healer would say, “Oh, it is because a spirit has arrived!” Then the family would say, “Old man, you look carefully for us!” and the shaman-healer would reply, “Grandmother’s and grandfather’s house is leaking!” The head of the house would say, “Must it be a full thirteen years?” (“A full thirteen years” means one year only.) The shaman-healer would answer, “It must be within the next full year”. (So the family, whether it were children or parents, sons or daughters, old or young, whoever it was who was sick, had to devote a large pig and quickly prepare for the time when it would be killed to worship the Spirit Zu-gi-za.)

Words chanted by the zu-mu when worshipping the spirits.

Yeu-su-mu look after the children
Plant them firmly as trees,
Plant them firmly as rocks,
Set them firmly as cliffs.

5 If Yi or Chinese swords
Threaten tumult from the south,
Then parry them on the south,
Or threaten tumult from the north,
Then parry them on the north.

10 If they threaten tumult from the east or from the west,
Then parry them on the east or on the west.
In full thirteen years we will bring you food and drink.

When the zu-mu has finished chanting, the head of the house himself would seek his own time, in the year of the sickness, in Ox, Tiger or Rabbit month, on Ox, Tiger or Rabbit day to offer livestock to the ancestors.

Offering livestock to the ancestors. During the day rituals for Yeu-su-mu were performed. In the evening livestock was offered to the ancestors. First they drove the ancestors to the place where they had to come, (“drove” meant that they called, and caused the souls to come) in order that they might receive the livestock to be offered in worship. The words that were chanted,

May the children live to fill the land and fill the place!
May the children’s food fill the baskets to overflowing!
Come take your wine to drink,
One cup one bowl.

(At this point a large, flat basket was held overhead like a little house.)

5 Do not be critical, do not be sullen,
 From colds and coughs,
 Grandmother, Grandfather protect them.

(At this point the zu-mu said,)

 Let the slashing knife slash the chicken,
 Let the slashing knife slash the pig!

(That meant to kill the chicken and the pig for the ancestors. A cup of wine was “i-zu-i-za”. Two cups of wine were “a-zu-a-za”. Three cups of wine were “zi-zu-zi-za”.)

The old folk had a saying,

 By obeying the shaman-healer you cannot live,
 By obeying the zu-mu, though you do nothing, yet you will eat.