

M359
Hua Miao spirit worship.
4. Water ki-zo.

Compiled by Wang Ming-ji.

If a woman went washing clothes and got a pain in her head resulting in dizziness which would not get better, it was said that she had encountered a water ki-zo. When a person was sick in this way they would go and call the shaman-healer. (In the case of this sickness they would boil red beans, kill a chicken and buy wine in preparation for the shaman-healer's coming.) When the shaman-healer arrived, he first sent his assistant to dig a hole in the top of a bank. The shaman-healer gave a spinning cross to a person who acted as though he was unwinding yarn all the time. The shaman-healer's assistant dipped up a wooden bowl of water, covering it by turning another bowl upside down upon it. He took a length of string, tied it round the bowls three times and hung them up. The hole that had been dug was on the left. The spinning cross was on the right but on the lower side, with someone unwinding yarn. Someone else played a reed pipe, while another beat upon the bowls of water. (The bowls of water represented a drum.) The shaman-healer played a mouth harp, while one of his assistants lit a torch and another assistant brought a basin of pork fat. Then they made the person that was sick enter the hole which had been dug, entering at the bottom of the hole and coming out at the top. When the person who was sick, having entered the hole, was about to emerge, the shaman-healer took a mouthful of liquid fat and spewed it out through the torch where it caught fire and singed the head of the person who was sick, scorching the ki-zo and causing it to go back, while the person who was sick came away. Then, quickly, everyone threw everything aside, and came away together. When coming away, no one might look back. In this way water ki-zo sickness was cured. The ki-zo was a kind of spirit which lived only in water, for this was a water spirit. There was no need to worship these spirits, rather it was necessary to frighten them away.