

M365
Hua Miao Spirit Worship.
10. Be-a-dli. (Sowing souls.)

Compiled by Wang Ming-ji.

There are three forms of sowing souls.

- 1 Sowing souls of people. Because of weakness, they performed the ritual with chicken and pigs.
- 2 Sowing souls for livestock. Because the livestock was not prolific, they performed the ritual.
- 3 Sowing souls for crops. Because the crops were not good, they performed the ritual.

In these three cases when sowing souls, it was necessary to kill a pig for the master of the house and to kill a pig for the shaman-healer; to prepare a steamer full of maize meal for the master of the house and to prepare a steamer full of maize meal for the shaman-healer; to fill a flask of wine for the master of the house and to fill a flask of wine for the shaman-healer. It was necessary, in sowing souls, to set in the loft on behalf of the family of the master of the house seven baskets of maize, and each basket of maize had also to contain an egg. It was necessary to set for the shaman-healer as well, seven baskets of "horse food" in the loft. Below, a basket of maize meal was set out. Into this basket of meal spoons were pushed until it was quite full of them. A basin full of meat was also set in place.

When the sowing of souls was finished, the man, the woman and the children all held up the hem of their skirts or the hem of their gowns in order to catch the spirits of the cattle or the spirits of the crops. When all had been caught, everyone carried them in and poured them out on the bottom of the bed where they slept.

- 1 They were poured on the bed in the case of sowing spirits for children and descendants.
- 2 They were poured out in the loft in the case of sowing spirits for crops and corn.
- 3 They were poured out in the cattle house in the case of sowing spirits for flocks and herds.