

M373

Miao spirits that were worshipped and those that caused sickness.

11. Be-a-dli. (Sowing souls.)

Compiled by Yang Yung-xin.

There were three forms of sowing souls. One form was sowing souls for people. Each Miao family “sowed” for itself. The second form was sowing souls for crops. The third form was sowing souls for livestock.

In the course of this sowing souls ritual, the mother had to hold up the hem of her skirt to catch, and the father had to hold up the hem of his gown to catch. When they had finished catching they looked to see if it was much or little, then they took and poured it on to the bed.

In addition they had to take seven eggs, and, in the case of sowing for crops, they had to set seven baskets of grain in the loft. They also had to set seven additional baskets for the shaman–healer. Below they set out a basket of maize meal and a pot of meat. They took spoons, pushing the bowls of the spoons into the basket, with the handles of the spoons sticking up.