

M374

Miao spirits that were worshipped and those that caused sickness.

10. Worship of the door a-nzhang.

Compiled by Yang Yung-xin.

(The old people used to say this was worshipping the spirit a-nzhang)

When there had been sickness in a family and they had called the shaman-healer to come and investigate it, then they would worship. A gilt which had had no progeny was required, one which had no blemish at all.

First it had to be killed at the foot of the door, and then lifted to the fireside for the removal of the bristles, which were burned in the fire hole. At the foot of the door a pit was dug. The washings from the intestines, the dung and the blood were all buried in the pit. The meat was brought and boiled in the pot.

The time for doing this could only be an Ox, or a Horse-day, and it had to be a time when there was no thunder. Only the father of the family himself could officiate. On the night that they did it, no Chinese person might come into the house, and no word of Chinese at all might be spoken, for fear of invalidating the sacrifice. Only Miao might be spoken.

When the meat was cooked, the four trotters were cut off. Early in the morning, when it was getting light, the father rose and took the brothers to eat the meat before going outside. Only the father, mother and the sons ate, the daughters did not eat it. When they had eaten the meat the father went and opened the door and said,

Open that prosperity may come in,
Close that calamity may be shut out.
When the family, all its many members,
Keep going and coming and knocking against you, do not be angry.