

M377

**Miao spirits that were worshipped and those which caused
sickness**

3. Water Ki-zo.

Compiled by Yang Yung-xin.

If a woman had been washing clothes and returned with a pain in her head, it was said that she had encountered a water ki-zo, and it was therefore necessary to call the shaman-healer to come and cure it. They had to set out a basket of "horse food", kill a chicken and boil meat in preparation. When the shaman-healer arrived, first they had to go and dig a hole to separate the water ki-zo. When he was going to take the sick person to separate the water ki-zo, it was necessary to carry a cross for winding yarn, and one person unwound it, except that this cross had no thread on it. Then another assistant was required to bring a wooden bowl of water and place it at the top of the hole. The hole was on the left and the bowl of water was on the right side. The cross was below the bowl of water. One person unwound yarn, another played a reed pipe, another beat on the bowl of water (the bowl of water represented a drum), while the shaman-healer played a mouth harp. There were also two assistants one of whom lit a torch and the other brought a bowl of pork fat, or else vegetable oil. It was necessary to heat this until it was very hot. When the person who was sick had entered the hole that had been dug and was about half way through, the shaman-healer who had been playing on the mouth harp, took a mouthful of liquid fat and spewed it on to the torch setting it alight. The person who was sick was startled and as a result the sickness recovered. In this way it was reckoned that the water ki-zo had been separated. At once the sick person came away and all the people who were there scattered, each going his own way. When all was finished, the water in the bowl was thrown out by hand, the cross and the reed pipe were dropped, and all came away to the house. They might not look back.