

M144
The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao, a farming song.

Sung by Pan Xie.

Notes

This song is found in Document E (no. 18, page 45), Document K (no. 3/2, page 12) and in Document L (no. 8, page 26). Some lines are also found in the conflated version in Document N (no.14, page 388).

Line 10. In Document E the word 𠄎 in the expression 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 is missing.

Line 15. A note in the text in Documents E, K and L explains in both Miao and Chinese that 𠄎 means "cucumber". The Miao grew ridge cucumbers which ripened to a yellow colour and were eaten either raw or cooked.

Line 20. Documents K and L have a note in the text in Chinese explaining that this means "she picked cucumbers".

Line 21. All three documents have a note in Miao which says that this means, "did not tell her father".

Line 22. A similar note explains that this means, "did not tell her mother".

Line 25. A note in Chinese in Document K gives the meaning as "the edge of the crops".

Line 32. In Document E a note in Chinese explains that '𠄎' 𠄎 means "lower place".

Line 35. A note in Chinese in Documents K and L explains that 𠄎 is a porcupine.

Line 36. Document E has a note that 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 means "the tiger's body". In subsequent lines in all three documents it some times appears as 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎.

Line 37. This line is not found in any of the documents but is demanded by the poetic form of the song. Its parallels are lines 43 and 52.

Line 38. Documents E and K read 𠄎 instead of 𠄎. A Chinese note explains that '𠄎' 𠄎 means "Higher place".

Line 45. In the copy of Document E annotated by Wang Ming-ji the meaning of 𠄎 𠄎 is given as 𠄎 𠄎, "like snow".

Line 50. All three documents have spelt 𠄎 𠄎 incorrectly as 𠄎 𠄎.

Line 54. Document E uses the alternative pronunciation $\text{ㄓ}^{\text{u}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄍ}^{\text{h}}$. It also reads ㄌ^{h} instead of ㄌ^{n} .

Line 62. A note in Miao in Documents K and L gives the meaning of $\text{ㄌ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄉ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄉ}^{\text{h}}$ as "sharp knives". In fact ㄉ^{h} means "to take off", "to strip off" or "to pull to pieces". In the case of an animal skin it means "to flay".

Line 63. This line is missing from Documents K and L.

Line 65. In Document E the two words $\text{ㄌ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄍ}^{\text{h}}$, "thus nine" have been mistakenly interchanged. Document K followed by Document L wrongly corrected the error to read $\text{ㄌ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄍ}^{\text{m}}$ which means 90, and thereby not only destroys the parallelism but makes a nonsense. There was no way that 90 portions could be made from a single carcass.

Line 66. In Document E $\text{ㄐ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄒ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}}$ is written $\text{ㄐ}^{\text{n}} \text{ㄒ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}}$.

Line 67. In Document E $\text{ㄔ} \text{ㄒ}^{\text{h}}$ is written ㄒ^{h} .

The inserted lines.

Line 5. Documents E and K have a note in Chinese giving the meaning of $\text{ㄔ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄌ}^{\text{h}}$ as "lark".

Line 6. In the Miao text this line and line 5 are joined together. So long a line upsets the balance of the stanza. This has been restored by splitting the line into two and repeating ㄌ^{h} at the beginning of line 6. The same has been done with the identical lines 17 and 18. In Document K there is a note in Miao in the text which explains that $\text{ㄌ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄔ}^{\text{h}}$ means "all around the sky".

Lines 9 and 10. In the documents these are joined into a single long line. This has been split into two to restore the balance of the stanza. The same has been done with the identical lines 21 and 22.

Line 11. This line is omitted from the text. It has been restored simply by copying line 23. Without it line 12 does not follow properly. $\text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄔ}^{\text{h}}$ means "below the houses", but since Miao houses are nearly all built on a hill-side facing down the slope, $\text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄐ}^{\text{h}} \text{ㄔ}^{\text{h}}$ also means "the front of the houses".