

M366
Hua Miao spirit worship.
11. Ndao-shu.

(A daughter had polluted the house.)

Compiled by Wang Ming-ji.

This ritual did not count as spirit worship, but was used when a daughter, who had gone to her mother and father-in-law's home, returned and had her child in the home of her parents and relatives. This was reckoned to have polluted the house making it unclean. It was therefore necessary to come and cleanse the house.

First the shaman-healer had to be called. A dog and a chicken were required. Having prepared everything they came from the home of the in-laws. When they arrived they had to set out nine baskets or seven baskets of "horse food". They then had to cut nine lengths or seven lengths of hemp stalk. These had to be tied with nine bands of red yarn. If they had cut seven lengths of hemp stalk these had to be tied with seven bands of red yarn around the hemp stalks. They also had to provide a length of cloth for a pair of trousers, together with one thousand two hundred cash and a chicken, all to be placed in the baskets of "horse food". (Explanation. The "horse food", cloth, cash and chicken all had to be given to the shaman-healer.)

Next they set up a table in the middle of the house and put the nine lengths of hemp stalk on the table. There was one person who swept up the dust in the room both front and back, putting it under the table. The shaman-healer took a hi-zhi (a hi-zhi was a bamboo stick which the shaman-healer had split into four) and poked out anything from under the bed and from under the shelf, putting it also under the table. While stirring a basin of water the shaman-healer recited at length an incantation. One of his helpers leading the dog went ahead, and another carrying the chicken followed, going round the floor of the room and the fire place, three times to the right and three times to the left. Then another helper using a washing dolly struck nine times or seven times. (According to the number of baskets of "horse food" he struck that number of times.) The washing dolly with which he was striking, was struck in the place where they had put the hemp stalks. The yeu-hi-se (the yeu-hi-se was what the master of the house was called) spoke no word, but with his foot indicated the place where the child had been born. At this time the father-in-law who had come to cleanse the house, wrapped up the child in a felt cape, and spreading the skirt of his gown, gathered up the spirit of the child and the spirits of his descendants. He also gathered up the blood (that is, wrapped up the dust). The shaman-healer went ahead leading the dog and carrying the chicken, and they all went outside together. Without looking behind they went straight back home. However, if the in-laws had come by one road, they had to return by another. In this way the blood was removed and the house was cleansed.