

## THE IMPORTANT DUNG-BEETLE

Putao-Lang-Lang is a great spirit in the form of an animal who lives below the earth and the earth rests on his back.

Once long ago the dung-beetle said to himself, 'How great I am! Yet if a man treads on me I will die. I can't fight with men but I must do something to destroy them. I know what I'll do. I'll go to Putao-Lang-Lang and tell him something, falsely, to make him angry.'

Accordingly, the dung-beetle went down below the earth and found Putao-Lang-Lang sleeping in spite of the great load on his back. He woke him up and said, 'You are sleeping very comfortably down here but don't you know that up above everybody has died.' This startled Putao-Lang-Lang and he tried to get up. The whole earth shook and trembled and men cried, 'We're alive, we're alive.' When he heard this, Putao-Lang-Lang was quiet but he was so angry at being deceived that he hit the beetle on its head and ever since it has been small.

But the dung-beetle still goes from time to time to tell lies to Putao-Lang-Lang and whenever he does so it causes an earthquake. When the earth shakes, the Khampis still cry, "We're alive, we're alive"