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文化多样性的多学科综合研究

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46 Dongba pictographic and Geba writing systems iconographic and thematic index plates and classification

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My aim is writing a complete system of iconographic and thematic index plates, with the purpose of studying, collecting and classifying the whole Dongba pictographs and Geba significants corpora in a complete Dongba Geba annotated catalogue.

Each plate will be tagged by a letter; and each Geba/pictograph gathered within a plate will be progressively numbered. Thus each entry is identified by a compound label (letter + number), and it will show latinization and transcription (following [IPA] standard), and a list of references and quotations from major Dongba/Geba dictionaries available at present.

Pictograph plates resources conception is derived directly from Egyptian Dictionary structure written by Sir Alan Gardiner in its landmark work “Egyptian Grammar”, where he settled some indexed categories under which he collected Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Iconographic and semantic indexed plates of Gardiner's Egyptian Dictionary constitute a very useful tool for faster identification of hieroglyphics, and its adoption (once fitted to the Dongba pictographic system) will systematize other researcher's efforts in documenting the Dongba written language.

It is important to keep apart Gebas characters and pictographs because of the structural differences between these two writing systems, while the last is pictographic the former is syllabographic. Such distinction has also to be preserved in their classification and grouping, because appropriate and efficient solutions in exposition and classification of pictographs could not be as good as for Geba symbols.

Pictographs will be then classified by their own characteristics, of which the most important seem to be: 1. iconography and (for unidentified pictograph) 2. shape. Both will be indexed.

1. Iconographic classification of pictographs should coincide with the identification of the prominent pictographical aspect of the significant operation, in other words what the analysed pictograph is depicting (in ex. The head of a bird, part of human body, a craft, etc...) must be identified

2. By Grouping of unidentified pictograph by shape an operation is meant, founded on a preliminary aesthetic/geometric normalization of dubious and unidentified pictograph to fit them into a geometric standard whole, as round, vertical, orizzontal, crux, elliptic, dots, etc... Such classification should be the most useful and the only efficient for attested but unidentified or uncertain pictographs.

Gebas will be presented by a double plate system too: Gebas should be sorted in a 1. syllabary and by 2. number-of-stroke plates. Both will be indexed.
Each entry in Pictographs and Gebas plates will show, from top to bottom

- Significant representation,
- latinization
- [IPA phonetic standard] transcription
- references and quotations of the main Dongba/Geba dictionaries work:

方国瑜; 和志武 - Fang Guoyu; He Zhiwu, 1995 “纳西象形文字谱 - Naxi xiang xing wen zi pu" 云南人民出版社

Dragan Janekovic, 2005 "Na-si: srpski recnik" - Beograd: Narodna biblioteka Srbije
Joseph Francis Charles Rock, 1963: "A 1Na-2Khi-English encyclopedic dictionary", Serie Orientale Roma, XXVIII, 1(e.g. Rock, 1939; He Zhi Wu, Janekovich)

47 “A Comparison Between the Development of the Chinese Writing System and Dongba Pictographs”

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The Naxi Dongba pictographic script is strikingly different from Chinese characters in the complexity of graphs. To draw an analogy with ancient Egyptian, even the traditional Chinese characters still in use in Hong Kong and Taiwan are like a simplified ‘hieratic’ or ‘demotic’ script when compared with hieroglyphic Dongba texts. In terms of the environment for their genesis, Chinese and Dongba pictographs could also not be more different. Whereas Chinese writing was a new invention ex nihilo, Dongba pictographs developed in the presence of other scripts, including an alphabetic one. Nonetheless, the central thesis of this paper is that the inventors of the Dongba script followed the same process for creating graphs as has been well established for Hanzi. William Boltz’s The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System (1994) forms the theoretical framework for how writing systems develop. Data demonstrating the structural graphic similarities is drawn from Naxi xiangxing wenzi pu 納西象形文字譜 by Fang Guoyu and He Zhiwu (1995).

Pictographs—drawings of “things”—are the first graphs to appear in a fledgling script. Paranomasia, also known as the Rebus Principle, allows one to write words for abstract concepts by using the graphs for homophonous or nearly homophonous words—at this point true writing, rather than inchoate proto-writing, is possible. Disambiguation occurs when various semantic classifiers are added to a phonetic component to distinguish words with similar pronunciations; these xingsheng 形聲 or