

ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2N3543

Date: 2008-10-14

**Title: The answer to the questions from Richard Cook and Deborah Anderson in N3442**

**Source: China**

**Action: For consideration by WG2**

### 1. Dongba/Geba Relations

Dongba and Geba function together as part of the same writing system. It is our opinion that encoding of Dongba and Geba should be addressed within a single proposal. Note that Rock's dictionary includes the Geba signs, and that a draft proposal for Geba signs is available here:

<http://www.evertype.com/standards/iso10646/pdf/naxi - geba.pdf>

Are Geba signs proposed in this proposal? If not, why not? When will they be proposed? If they are interspersed in the proposal, why are they not clearly identified?

[Answer 1]

There are two reasons why this proposal doesn't include Geba script. Firstly, Dongba script and Geba script do not belong to the same system. Dongba script is pictographic script, while Geba script is syllabic script. Secondly, there are few scriptures written in Geba, not to mention the modern application of Geba script.

We also noticed Michael Everson's proposal, but we're not clear about its status. We would like to contact himself for more information.

We do not include Geba signs in our proposal, as we think the Dongba characters and Geba characters should not be interspersed.

### 2. Lexical Sources: Mapping Data

a. Provide mappings to other lexical sources besides 《纳西东巴古籍译注全集》 *Naxi Dongba Guji Yizhu Quanji*, by creating a multi - column chart with the proposed code points in one column, page and line numbers to 《纳西东巴古籍译注全集》 *Naxi Dongba Guji Yizhu Quanji* in a second column, and page/line references to the other major works in the other columns, including:

- *Naxi Xiangxing Wenzhi Pu* by Fang Guoyu,
- *Moxi Xiangxing Wenzhi Zidian* by Li Lincan, and
- *A Nakhi - English Encyclopedic Dictionary* by Joseph Rock.

For an example multi - column chart, see that for Tangut [Xixia]:

<http://linguistics.berkeley.edu/~rscook/UTC/Tangut/>.

[Answer 2.a]

We will provide mappings to *Naxi Xiangxing Wenzi Pu* by Fang Guoyu and *Moxi Xiangxing Wenzi Zidian* by Li Lincan. Additionally, Some characters may not be collected in the above two works, we would like do our best to provide the mapping to 《纳西东巴古籍译注全集》 *Naxi Dongba Guji Yizhu Quanji*.

But 《纳西东巴古籍译注全集》 *Naxi Dongba Guji Yizhu Quanji* is a large literature work of 100 volumes. The Dongba characters appear in it many times. It's almost impossible, or require a great deal of time and effort, to provid the mapping of all Dongba characters to such source.

b. The source mappings should make clear on what basis signs are seen as minimally distinctive. How are the representative glyphs chosen? Are future additions to the proposed repertory anticipated?

[Answer 2.b]

We chose the non-splittable character as the smallest unit. It's also our basic rule for collecting character that the character cannot be split. We would add supplements later.

c. Do any of the lexical sources contain an inventory of the characters found in the large Harvard and Library of Congress manuscript holdings?

(Cf. 《哈佛—燕京图书馆藏纳西经书目录》 *Annotated catalog of Naxi pictographic manuscripts in the Harvard - Yenching Library*, Harvard University, 1997; Compiled by Zhu Baotian). Note: Richard Cook has been able to do some preliminary research into Naxi manuscripts held at the Harvard - Yenching library, and includes images (along with other information) at <http://unicode.org/~rscook/Naxi/>.

[Answer 2.c]

We collected the Dongba characters based on the *100 volumes of Naxi Dongba Guji Yizhu Quanji*, which includes more than ninety percent of Dongba classic scripture (from contact and classification). So these words should include those characters found in the large Harvard and Library of Congress manuscript holdings. Almost all the Dongba scriptures found abroad are written in these Dongba characters.

Additionally, We think the inventory of characters contained in *Annotated catalog of Naxi pictographic manuscripts, compiled by Zhu Baotian*, has problems in authority. For example, A Chinese scholar had expressed suspicion about it in February 22, 2007. Harvard and the Library of Congress have also expressed their apologies and have assumed responsibility.

### 3. Ordering, Names, and Code points

a. The proposal states that the sort order is based on the order of categories in 《纳西象形文字谱》 *Naxi Xiangxing Wenzi Pu* and 《麽西象形文字字典》 *Moxi Xiangxing Wenzi Zidian*. What are these categories?

b. Provide the names of the characters and assign tentative code points, starting from 1AAC0.

[Answer 3.a]

The Dongba pictographs in this proposal are arranged in alphabetical order, not the order of categories.

[Answer 3.b]

We will provide the names of the characters and assign tentative code points, starting from 1AAC0.

## Statement

The Harvard-Yenching Library holds a collection of 510 Naxi pictographic manuscripts and scrolls acquired by the Harvard-Yenching Institute in 1945. With the financial support of the Institute, Professor Baotian Zhu of the Yunnan Provincial Museum in China was invited to Harvard in 1995 as a Harvard-Yenching Institute Visiting Scholar to review these materials and to compile a catalogue. The Annotated Catalog of Naxi Pictographic Manuscripts in the Harvard-Yenching Library, Harvard University was published by the Library in 1997 as "Harvard-Yenching Library Bibliographical Series, Number 5".

Recently, scholars in China have called our attention to the claim that the above-mentioned catalogue contains misinterpretations of the Naxi materials in the Harvard-Yenching Library. Both the Institute and the Library deeply regret these misinterpretations, and we take responsibility for them.

The Harvard-Yenching Institute and the Harvard-Yenching Library are in the process of inviting scholars from The Dongba Culture Institute of Lijiang City in China to Harvard to study the Naxi materials in the Library and to prepare a revised edition of the annotated catalogue. We plan to take this opportunity to include other Naxi material which are held in museums and academic units within Harvard, in the revised catalogue so that all Naxi materials at Harvard University can be publicized and made accessible to scholars worldwide.

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