

ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/ WG2 N4641

DATE: 28 September 2014

DOC TYPE: Working Group Document

TITLE: Feedback on Naxi Dongba Supplement document (N4633)

SOURCE: Deborah Anderson, Script Encoding Initiative, UC Berkeley

STATUS: Liaison contribution

ACTION: For consideration by WG2

DISTRIBUTION: ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2

The new document from China on Naxi Dongba is welcome and answers one of the key questions about the intended use of the Naxi Dongba script (that is, the encoding is intended to address its modern, revivalist use, and not the traditional use).

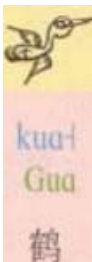
The information provided in N4633 raises a few questions, however, which we recommend be answered and taken into account in a future, revised proposal.

1. Image 1 from the book POPULAR DONGBA SCRIPT suggests that the script might be a logography instead of a syllabary. Is Naxi Dongba a logography or a syllabary? For example, "GUA" is glossed as he4 (U+9DB4), which means 'crane'. Is the character only used as the syllable GUA? Or is it like U+9DB4 – that is, is it used as a logograph meaning 'crane', which is pronounced GUA?
2. The examples in Image 1 show variation in the glyphs, so it is unclear what the difference indicates.

For example, the following two glyphs appear for GUA:



(3x in Image 1, and once at the very top of the page)



(3x in Image 1)

Are these the same character (that is, are they all GUA)? If they are the same, why are there two different glyphs? If they aren't the same character GUA, what is different and why are they different?

3. We recommend an analysis of the entire proposed repertoire be done, with the following information provided for each character:
 - Glyph in the Dongba script (addressing any glyph variation questions, such as raised in #2 above)
 - Transcription (in IPA with tone letters)
 - Romanized orthography
 - Chinese gloss for each syllable
 - English translation of each Chinese gloss

A spreadsheet with such information would serve as a critical reference and can be used for checking.