

## Study on the Dongba Script Compound Glyph in Lijiang Area

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### Abstract

Dongba scripture is an important hieroglyphs, and the study of dongba script helps to study the origin and development of writing. Through Lijiang dongba scripture, we find there are many compound glyphs. Compound glyph refers to a combination of more than two glyphs or non-morphed components, which collectively represent a segment larger than the term. This article researches on the compound glyph.

**Key words:** Dongba script; Compound glyph; Lijiang area

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### INTRODUCTION

The Dongba Manuscript in Lijiang region centers on the Dayan Town, including the surrounding Baisha Town, Tai'an Town, Huangshan Town, Qihe Town and other places.

Because there have been many famous dongba in Baisha Town, Dayan Town and other regions on history, and Dongba culture are more popular in these places, so we select four sites in Lijiang as the typical study of

Dongba Manuscript and Dongba script in Lijiang area, of which is Baisha Town, Dayan Town, Huangshan Town and Qihe Town.

*An Annotated Collection of Naxi Dongba Manuscripts* is the biggest collection of Dongba manuscripts until now, being published in 1999, covering almost all areas of Lijiang Dongba manuscripts, we selected the Dongba manuscripts in Dayan Town, Huangshan Town, Qihe Town to study. And the materials quoted from the *An Annotated Collection of Naxi Dongba Manuscript* will mark the volume and the page, "37.21" means the materials come from volume 37, page 21.

But *An Annotated Collection of Naxi Dongba Manuscripts* misses famous Dongba manuscripts in Baisha area, we are lucky to find them in *Naxi Dongba manuscripts collected by Harvard—Yenching Institute*, which is also a big collection of Dongba manuscripts, and the materials comes from Harvard—Yenching Institute. And the materials quoted from the *Naxi Dongba manuscripts collected by Harvard—Yenching Institute* will mark the volume and the page, "H4.471" means the materials come from volume 4, page 471.


### 1. COMPOUND GLYPH IN DONGBA MANUSCRIPTS

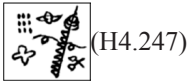
Compound glyph refers to a combination of more than two glyphs or non-morphed components, which collectively represent a segment larger than the term.

Compound glyph is a relatively primitive way of recording language in Dongba language, which shows strong characteristics of segment. Compound glyph has the following characteristics:





First, compound glyph consists of two or more glyphs or non-morphed components, representing a greater unit of speech than word.



2.6  (H4.247)







The translation of the scriptures is “tie nine kinds of auspicious items with the cedar ladder”

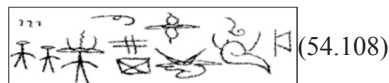
Compound glyph  is consisted by “ladder” , “cypress” , “rope” , according to a certain relationship of location and logic, indicating “tied on the cypress”.

2.7  (54.95)

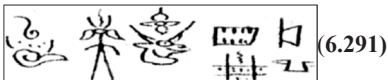
The translation of the scriptures is “Shalagongbu takes a turquoise bow, and takes roe-skin pocket with field rations”.

The compound glyph is consisted by “person” , “roe pocket” , “bow” , according to a certain relationship between the logical relationship, indicating a complete paragraph.






2.8  (54.108)



The translation of the scriptures is “Sha Xu’s three sons, wish you low sound and peaceful soul, pond full of water, no disease, happiness and good luck.”

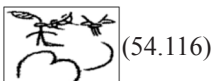


The translation of the scriptures is “willing for peace of mind, pond full of water, willing to give birth to children, willing to live a prosperous life.”





The above two materials ,  [dɛi<sup>21</sup> i<sup>33</sup> dər<sup>33</sup> ʂər<sup>33</sup>] is a compound glyph.  [hu<sup>55</sup>] “lake”, Here read as [dər<sup>33</sup>] “pond”,  [dɛi<sup>21</sup>] water, glyph  also add some points to express the meaning of more water. According to the sequence of events, the water is placed on the pond, indicating that the water overflows.

The water full of ponds is a Naxi saying, generally refers to the smooth family, prosperous prosperity.

2.9  (54.116)






The translation of the scriptures is “Gao Lequ go to the hillside to see.”

 is consisted by the Gao lequ , “look”  and “feet:” , basing on a certain positional relationship together, indicating a complete discourse.

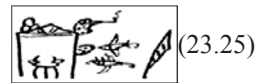
2.10  (26.119)







The translation of the scriptures is “Meilidongzhu says: ‘My father is a heavenly clan.’ He fled to heaven. Dongruoalu says: ‘My uncle lives in a lake.’ Then he hid in the lake and hid.”

 is consisted by  [du<sup>21</sup>] Dong and  [hu<sup>55</sup>] lake, which means Dongruoalu is hiding in the lake.

2.11  (23.25)




The translation of the scriptures is “the demon ghost stoned to the room, a demon ghost made cuckoo calling on the roof, and a demon ghost who made wasp built house on other’s house.”

 is consisted by a number of glyphs, expressing several paragraphs. In this compound glyph, the combination position of the roof stone  and cuckoo , and the honeycomb  on the house, participates in the sense of meaning. Stone is on the roof, said to be thrown on the roof.

2.12  (26.130)



The translation of the scriptures is: “There are severe disastrous years in the twelve years. In twelve months of the year, there was an unforgiving disaster. To solve the problem of disastrous diseases and painful disasters, goat’s head should be thrown out as a substitute.”

Here , the long line behind the sheep means that it will be taken away the disastrous diseases and painful disasters

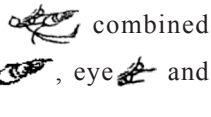




### 3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIJIANG COMPOUND GLYPH

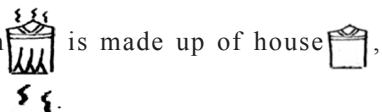



Compound glyph is a relatively common phenomenon in Dongba. Forming a compound glyph with the multiple glyphs, and representing a complete passage is one

convenience way for Dongba to write the scripture, using the compound glyph can save the trouble of writing all the scripts of the scriptures.

### 3.1 Composing of Two or More Glyphs to Form a Composite Body




Complex glyph is consisted by more than two glyphs, sometimes include non-glyphs.

For example, compound glyph  combined by lying human shape , hand , eye  and foot .

Compound glyph  is made up of house , fire  and symbol .

From the material above, we can conclude that the composition of compound glyph is relatively extensive, which is also the reason that so many compound glyph exists.


### 3.2 The Relationship Between the Location of Words and Participation in the Meaning

Such as compound glyph , expressing the meaning that Dongruoalul hides in the lake. The glyph  Dong is included by the glyph  Lakes, and

through this positional relationship shows Dongruo Road hides in the lake.

### 3.3 There Is a Logical Relationship Between Words and Words

Logical relationship between words and words is very important in compound glyph.

Such as compound glyph , in order to express the meaning that the stones thrown on the roof, and indicate cuckoo tweeted on the roof, the layout of stone and cuckoo should be on the roof according to the logic.

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