

A Comparison of the Twenty-Eight Lunar Mansions between Dabaism and Dongbaism

Xu Duoduo

Division of Chinese, HSS, NTU, Singapore, 14 Nanyang Drive, Singapore 637332
Email: duoduo001@e.ntu.edu.sg

Abstract

The present study compares the twenty-eight lunar mansions of Dabaism and Dongbaism, from the perspective of pronunciation, writing, and star atlases, with new data of Daba calendars collected from my fieldwork. I try to decipher the questionable Dongba stars documented by scholars before according to Daba stars, since they share similarities, with reference from the commonly shared 28-lunar mansion systems among Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese. One of the differences between Dabaism and Dongbaism is the choice of starting lunar mansion. According to records about the stars “on duty” on the first day of each month in Dongba classics, I suggest the star from the constellation “human” should be in agreement with the Dongba tradition. In this case, the starting lunar mansion in Dabaism could be an additional written proof of this tradition.

Keywords: Dabaism; Dongbaism; calendar; twenty-eight lunar mansions; the starting lunar mansion

Introduction


Dabaism and Dongbaism are very ancient (primordial) local religions of Na and Naxi People living in South-West China. Dabaism and Dongbaism have the same origin and have developed in the regions where they are widespread according to an independent path for a long time in history. Systematic investigations of Dongbaism started in 19th century, with the arrival of Christian priests in South-West China. They studied the ethnic cultures of those territories. The local writing system, called Dongba scripts, is now recognized (and well-known) as the unique pictographic writing still alive all over the world. The cognate belief of Dongbaism, Dabaism, has remained untouched over time, being attested in a remote mountainous area. Traditionally, from the dawn of time, Dabaism and Dongbaism use lunar mansions in order to calculate the dates. Some of the records about their lunar mansions can be found in Dongbaism classics that have been written in Dongba scripts (as shown here in Table 2).

Since the discovery of Daba calendars in 1930s, the atavistic calendars and the only written texts of Dabaism discovered so far, some studies have been done on them in order to decipher the

ancient symbols, including [1, p. 32], [2, p. 43], [3], [4]. However, the interpretation of these symbols still needs to be worked in-depth. Firstly, they have used Chinese characters to write down the pronunciations of the symbols in local language, which is quite different from Chinese phonemic system. Secondly, the versions of the calendars have not been documented clearly in some of the publications so that the number and meanings of the symbols are varied from version to version.

During my two-month fieldwork in January and July, 2011, on the border area of Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces, I have visited ten Daba, the priests of Dabaism, and two Lama, the priests of Tibetan Buddhism. With the cooperation from them, I have interpreted eight Daba calendars from four villages¹ in the area. The Daba scripts are conventional religious symbols used to write down the lunar mansions in the calendar. However, they are not able to transcribe the target language. The interpretations I have collected for the lunar mansions include: the lunar mansions' symbols, IPA transcriptions of their names in Na, translation of Na, IPA transcriptions of the meaning of them in Na, word-by-word translation and interpretation as sentences, and, finally, the conclusion of divination meanings of the lunar mansions. In the following Table 1 it is possible to find an example elicited from my interpretation work. Basing my analysis on the roar data, there are twenty-eight symbols representing the lunar mansions of Dabaism and seven symbols borrowed from Tibetan Buddhism.

Table 1. Example of Interpretation of Dabaism stars

Daba Scripts	2. 							
IPA	zɰwæɫkɰɾɫ							
Chinese	Mǎ Xīng (Hugua)							
IPA	zɰwæɫ	te ^{hi} ɫ	mɰɫ	dzɰɫ,	ɫɛɫ	ɰwɰɫ	mɰɫ	dzɰɫ.
Translation	horse	to sell	NEG.	good,	to buy		NEG.	good.
Interpretation	(On the day of Hugua), the exchanges of horses are not auspicious.							
Divination Meaning	The day that Hugua is “on duty” is not good for horse exchange.							

Due to the sound changes happened in the local language, some meanings of the lunar mansions have remained mysterious since they could not be related to the current vocabulary. However, the designations of the lunar mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism share the same meanings, but different pronunciation according to the local dialects. This has provided more possibilities in discovering more about the meanings of the stars. In order to do this, I tried to take reference from the twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dongbaism. Many scholars have investigated the twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dongbaism. For example, [5, p. 513-517]², [6, p. 28-30]³, [7, p. 92-

¹ The four villages are: Wūjiǎo 屋脚Village, Mùlǐ 木里County, Sichuan Province; Lǐjiāzuǐ 利家嘴Village, Mùlǐ County, Sichuan Province; Qián-suǒ 前所Village, Yán-yuán 盐源County, Sichuan Province; Wēn-quán 温泉Village, Níng-làng 宁蒗County, Yunnan Province.

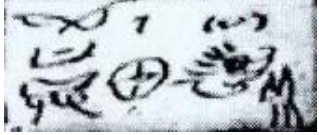











² The book of Joseph Rock was published in 1963, while the fieldwork had been conducted at the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century.

³ Yáng Zhònghóng's dictionary of the writing system of Dongbaism was written in 1930. However, it has not yet been published. In this paper I take reference from the scanned pages cited in Zhōu Yín's master degree thesis. The scanned pages have been collected by Professor Yù Suìshēng 喻遂生.

95], [8, p. 7-9], [9, p. 319-320⁴, p. 314-315], [10, p. 145-148], [11], [12, p. 377], [13, p. 33], [14, p. 226-228], [15, p. 399]. The characters of the stars have been collected from various regions and the Dongba priests had various interpretations of the stars' characters. Among these data, those provided in [8] have been considered the most convincing version, as they have reached the agreement of many Dongba priests and their locations have been checked with the stars in the sky. Besides this version, the fieldworks conducted by Zhū Bǎotián in É'yà 俄亚 Village and Lǐ Guówén in É'luòjǔ 哦洛举 Village in Dàdōng Xiāng 大东乡 have also yielded reliable roar information of the Dongba's twenty-eight lunar mansions. According to the materials published so far, the stars and their order are almost the same among different versions in Dongbaism. In most versions the twenty-eight lunar mansions starts with the star called [tʂ'waʎts'ʌ] and ends with [t'aʎkwʌ]⁵, with the exception of the Divination Figure displayed in [11], which starts with the star called [py³³bu²¹kv³³] and ends with [zy²¹pə²¹].

The pictographic writing system used in Dongba classics can write down the lunar mansions' names as well as to transcribe the language to some extent. Table 2 is an example of Dongba Classic record related to the 28 lunar mansions. It is elicited from Volume 92 of *Nàxī Dōngbā Gǔjí Yìzhù Quánjí* 纳西东巴古籍译注全集 [An Annotated Collection of Naxi Dongba Manuscripts].

Table 2. Example of Interpretation of Dongbaism stars

Vol. 92, “Yī Sǐzhě Wánglíng de Shíri, Yuè, Xīng, Zhàn Wánglíng de Dòngxiàng 以死者亡灵的时日、月、星占亡灵的动向” [Astrology about the Movement of Deads according to the day, month, and star “on duty”] ⁶											
											
Dongba Scripts											
IPA	ia ²¹	pe ²¹	ts'e ³³	do ²¹	du ²¹	ni ³³	py ³³	bu ²¹	kv ³³	to ⁵⁵	dor ³³
Chinese	yī yuè	yuè	xiàn	yī	rì	běnbǔgǔ				shàng	lún
English	the 1 st month	month	see	the 1 st	day	Altair				Loc.	on duty
Translation	The first day of the first month, Altair is the star on duty.										

There are also atavistic figures of the 28 Mansions in Dongbaism besides the Dongba classics recording the sentences that interpret the divination meanings of the stars. One example is the Divination Figure documented in [11], as reported in Figure 1. The inner circle lists the twelve stars “on duty” of the first days of each month. The outer circle displays the twenty-eight lunar mansions.

⁴ Zhōu Rǔchéng's material has been collected in 1958. It has been cited in a confidential way in Zhū Bǎotián & Chén Jiǔjīn (1985), pp. 319-320.

⁵ The transcriptions of the stars' names are different in various versions because of the dialect issue. Here I use the transcription from Lǐ Líncàn (1972) as representatives.


⁶ The example is cited from Zhōu Yín (2008: 47-48), who has added annotations to each Dongba characters on the basis of the original philologic work in *Nàxī Dōngbā Gǔjí Yìzhù Quánjí*. According to the additional annotations in Zhōu Yín (2008: 47-48),  is a Geba Script, a branch in the pictographic writing of Dongbaism, which is generally called Dongba Scripts.



Figure 1. Divination Figure Interpreted in [11]

There are also comparative studies of the twenty-eight lunar mansions with the main cultures around Dongbaism. For example, the correspondence of the twenty-eight lunar mansions among Naxi, Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit researched by [5, II, p. 513-517]. However, there are also scholars consider the twenty-eight lunar mansions knowledge originated from the astronomical observation of ancestors of Na and Naxi People and passed down via local religious classics [16, p. 301].




Materials accessible so far suggest both similarities and differences of the twenty-eight lunar mansions between Dongbaism and Dabaism in the perspective of the stars' names and the shape of the stars' characters. In the present study, I try to compare the twenty-eight lunar mansions in the two cognate local religions in order to discover the correspondence between the two systems in an exhaustively way and to solve questions noted in previous research about the lunar mansions' names. Further on, I try to display the relationship of the twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism with those in other main-stream cultures.

Methodology

Investigating about the Dabaism lunar mansions, I have checked through the characters of the stars/asterisms in Daba's calendars and I have found out the correspondences of the characters among the eight versions of calendars. In Dabaism there are thirty days every month and twelve months in one year. Moreover, four to five days would be added according to the locations of the stars in the sky. The days are marked by twenty-eight lunar mansions in a certain order. With the repetition of the twenty-eight lunar mansions, each day of the whole year is represented by one mansion. I take the first circulation of twenty-eight lunar mansions from the beginning of the first

month, the month of tiger, in Daba's calendar, for numbering them. Among these hand-writing calendars, the ones from Wūjiǎo Village and Lìjiāzuǐ Village have been most exhaustively and correctly explained. The two Daba priests contributed to the work are *Āwō* 阿窝 and *Mùpà* 木帕. The two most ancient calendars in Qiánsuǒ Village are held by Daba *Hé Lǔzuǒ* 何鲁左 and Lama *Ā Lǔzuǒ* 阿鲁左, the two most respected priests in the village. In the Tibetan calendar held by Lama *Ā Lǔzuǒ*, the stars' names of Dabaism have been transcribed in Tibetan scripts on the pages of the first month. Lamas use the Daba calendar as an additional reference to Tibetan calendar when they have to establish days for rituals. However, they don't know exactly the meanings of the stars' names. The calendar from Wēnquán Village is very ancient and damaged. The owner Daba *Āwū* was not able to interpret the stars' symbols.

Studying the Dongbaism lunar mansions, I have selected the highly reliable first-hand materials collected by other scholars and I have compared these versions of Dongba's twenty-eight lunar mansions. These materials include: [8], [9], and [11].⁷ The nuances among different versions are annotated under star groups in Section 3.

Among the recordings of twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dongbaism, most of them start with "Liù Xīng" (the constellation "six stars"). A plausible reason for this is a kind of tradition set in the beginning of the studies on this topic, seeking for the similarity of Naxi People's lunar mansions with Chinese constellations. In Rock's dictionary, one of the earliest work on Dongbaism lunar mansions,  [3Ch'wua-1ts'er-2k'o] and  [3Ch'wua-1ts'er 1gv] are the first two stars. The second of them corresponds to "Kàng Xiù" 亢宿, the constellation of the "neck" (of the "dragon" in the east) in Chinese twenty-eight lunar mansions, which is the second in the series. Yáng Zhònghóng also connected "Liù Xīng" with "Jiǎo Xiù", the constellation of the "horn" (of the "dragon" in the east) in Chinese twenty-eight lunar mansions. Since "Jiǎo Xiù" is the first in Chinese lunar mansions, He considered "Liù Xīng" the first star in Naxi People's lunar mansions. Lǐ Líncàn followed this tradition [8], as well as Zhū Bǎotián & Chén Jiǔjīn did [9]. The only exception is the Divination Figure interpreted in [11], in which "Liù Xīng",  [3Ch'wua-1ts'er 55ts'ə21k'o33], is the eighth in the sequence of lunar mansions.

Basing my analysis on the results of the comparison within both Dabaism and Dongbaism, I analyze the two 28-lunar mansion systems of Dabaism and Dongbaism. As mentioned above, Dabaism and Dongbaism are the eastern branch and western branch of the same local religion. The local dialects of Dabaism and Dongbaism are also considered eastern and western dialects of the same language. The eastern dialect is called Na and the western dialect is called Naxi according to the endonyms in each of the dialects. People speaking different dialects, Na or Naxi, could not communicate without learning each other's dialect. However, linguistic studies have discovered systematic phonemic correspondences between the two dialects [17, p. 112-113], [18]. Considering the sound correspondences between Na and Naxi, I take the relationship of the stars from Dabaism

⁷ Data about twenty-eight stars Lǐ Líncàn (1972) were collected from Zhōngdiàn 中甸 County, Dìqìng 迪庆 Prefecture, Yunnan Province. The first-hand materials in Zhū Bǎotián & Chén Jiǔjīn (1985) were collected in their fieldwork in É'yà Village, Mùlǐ County, Sichuan Province, with three Dongba priests in 1981. The information about their fieldwork has been recorded in Zhōu Yín (2012). The translation of the Dongba classic named "Bógé 博格Figure" by Zhōu Rǔchéng is recited from Zhū Bǎotián & Chén Jiǔjīn (1985). The Chinese translation of "Bógé Figure" is "the Figure of Frog" according to Lǐ Guówén (2006: 108). The Divination Figure interpreted in Lǐ Guówén (2006) was discovered from É'luòjǔ Village, Dàdōng Xiāng, Lìjiāng, Yunnan Province.








and Dongbaism reflected by pronunciation of the stars' names into first account, while the similarities remained in the shape of the symbols/characters of the stars as secondary criteria.



The results of the comparison are presented in the following section. I have chosen the symbols from Lijiāzuǐ Village as the representative scripts of Dabaism stars, since they are ancient but also clearly written. The interpretations of the symbols and the meanings of the stars are based on the interview with Daba priests from Lijiāzuǐ Village, Wūjiǎo Village, and Qiánsuǒ Village, with justification according to my knowledge of the local language. For Dongbaism stars, I have used Zhū Bǎotián's material from É'yà Village as the main object for comparison and the stars atlases drew by Zhōu Rǔchéng as additional references for the interpretations of the stars' names. The variations appeared in other versions of twenty-eight stars systems are noted at the end of each group of the stars. The starting point is the constellation of "human", with respect to the habits of Daba priests I have interviewed in fieldwork, who always explain the 28 lunar mansions from "Pami".

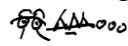
In Section 5 I try to present the 28 lunar mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism in the Cultures' background by listing the corresponding stars in Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit, with reference to the comparative studies of the 28-lunar mansion systems in different cultures in [19, p. 50-52], [20, p. 308-309], and the table comparing 28 (or 27) lunar mansions of Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese in [21] and [22]. For the additional reconstructions of mid-Chinese and old-Chinese, [23] and [24] have been referred. Most of the locations of Daba and Dongba lunar mansions and their relationship with Chinese and European star names have been discovered by Lǐ Líncàn [8], with the cooperation from Dongba priests. Later on, Zhū Bǎotián [9] has made complementary discoveries and observations for some of the non-identified stars on the basis of that.

The Comparison of the 28 Lunar Mansions of Dabaism and Dongbaism

In this section I explain the details of the comparison between Dabaism and Dongbaism stars. The stars have been grouped according to the meanings of their names. These star groups can be considered as constellations of Dabaism and Dongbaism, since they are generally body parts of animals or human.

Daba Scripts	28 	1 	2 
IPA	p ^h æˈlmi ˧	ŋi˧˥dɿ˧	zʷæ˧˥kɯ˧˥
Chinese	"Pami"	"Nizhi"	Mǎ Xīng 马星
Dongba Scripts	22 	23 	
IPA	pyɿbu˧	zɯ˧˥dze˧˥	
Chinese	Háozhū Xīng 豪猪星	Mǎ Xīng	
Star Atlas			
Annotation	1) In Dabaism "Pami" and "Nizhi" are from "Rén Xīng人星", the constellation "human". According to Daba Āwō, this constellation corresponds to "Niúlán Xīng牛郎星" in Chinese ("Deneb" in English). In the materials of Lǐ Líncàn and Zhōu Rǔchéng "Háozhū Xīng" (literally it means "the star of 'porcupine'") is the Dongbaism designation for Chinese constellation "Niú牛". According to the notes of Zhōu Rǔchéng, there are two		

the constellation “six stars” has been chosen to mark the days. It is written as  [tʂʰwaʎtsʰʌʎ] and translated as “Xiōngdì Xīng 兄弟星”, literally means “the star of the brother”. In [11] “Liù Xīng Jiǎo” is written as  [tʂʰua⁵⁵tsʰə²¹kʰo³³].


2) “Hóngyǎn Xīng” is the constellation “red eye”. In [11] the name of  “Hóngyǎn Xīng” is [miə²¹hy²¹no⁵⁵kə²¹].



Daba Scripts	10 	11 	12 	13 	
IPA	soʎtʰaʎkoʎ	soʎtʰaʎloʎ	soʎtʰaʎtʂʰwaʎ ʎmiʎ	soʎtʰaʎkuʎtʰuʎ	
Chinese	Sān Xīng Tóu 三星头	Sān Xīng Shǒu 三星手	Sān Xīng Chuōmī 三星“戳咪”	Sān Xīng Bái Xīng 三星白星	
Dongba Scripts	4 	4-b 	5 	6 	7 
IPA	suʎtʰoʎkʰa ʎ	suʎtʰoʎʎaʎ	suʎtʰoʎgo ʎmoʎ	dziʎkuʎ	dziʎmæ ʎ
Chinese	Sān Xīng Jiǎo 三星角	Sān Xīng Shǒu	Sān Xīng Shēn 三星身	Shuǐtóu Xīng 水头星	Shuǐwěi Xīng 水尾星
Star Atlas					











Annotations


1) “Sān Xīng Tóu” is the head of the constellation “three stars”, “Sān Xīng Shǒu” is the hand of the “three stars”, “Sān Xīng Chuōmī” is the “Chuōmī” (the meaning of the word remains unknown) of the “three stars”, “Sān Xīng Bái Xīng” is a white star from the “three stars”; “Sān Xīng Jiǎo” is the horn of the “three stars”, “Sān Xīng Shēn” is the body of the “three stars”.











2) The latter two lunar mansions in Dongbaism corresponds to “Sān Xīng Bái Xīng” in Dabaism according to the pronunciation of their names. “Shuǐtóu Xīng” means the head of the “water” and “Shuǐwěi Xīng” means the tail of the “water”.



















3) The lunar mansion numbered as “4-b” is the second star from the constellation “three stars” in [8], which is different from the second star from this constellation in other Dongba materials that numbered as “5”. The star atlas of “Sān Xīng Shēn” in Zhōu Rǔchéng’s data is . It has the similar shape with the symbol of the 11th star in Dabaism. Moreover, the meaning of “Chuōmī” remains unknown. The evidence for “Sān Xīng Shēn” correpond to the 12th star in Dabaism is slim. In order to sum up, the first two stars from the constellation “three stars” chosen to mark the days are the head and the hand of the “three stars” in Dabaism. While in Dongbaism, they are the horn and the body of the “three stars”, or the horn and the hand of it, according to varies versions.

	<p>4) The star  [kuɿp'urɿdzɿkɿɿ] in [8, p. 7] is identified as “Tiānláng Xīng 天狼星” (“Sirius”). Its short form, [dziɿkuɿ] “Shuǐtóu Xīng”, appears in Zhū Bǎotián [9, p. 314] and Zhōu Rǔchéng [9, p. 320]. Similarly, the star _kuɿp'urɿdzɿlmæɿ] in [8, p. 8], located as “Nánhé Xīng 南河星” (“Procyon”), is shorten as [dziɿlmæɿ] “Shuǐwěi Xīng” in Zhū Bǎotián and Zhōu Rǔchéng’s materials. However, the transcriptions in [11] are similar to those in [8, p. 8-9].</p> <p>5) Basing my analysis on the pronunciations of the two stars’ names transcribed in [8, p. 8-9] and [11] I connect “Tiānláng Xīng” (or “Shuǐtóu Xīng”) and “Nánhé Xīng” (or “Shuǐwěi Xīng”) to the star “Sān Xīng Bái Xīng” in Dabaism, since the first two syllables of two stars in Dongbaism are the same as the last two syllables of the star in Dabaism.</p>
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Daba Scripts	14 	15 
IPA	hoɿkuɿɿ	kɿkɿkuɿɿ
Chinese	Yějī Xīng 野鸡星	Yīng Xīng 鹰星
Dongba Scripts	8 	9(22-b) 
IPA	fvɿkuɿɿ	gəɿkuɿɿ
Chinese	Yějī Xīng	Yīng Xīng
Star Atlas		
Annotations	<p>1) “Yějī Xīng” is the constellation “pheasant” and “Yīng Xīng” is the constellation “eagle”.</p> <p>2) The constellation “pheasant” is Beehive Cluster in Western stars. In [8, p. 8] “Beehive Cluster” is  [tʂ'ɿk'ɔɿ] “Guǐ Xiù 鬼宿” (the constellation/lunar mansion of “ghost” in Chinese constellations). There is the record of the similar star in Zhōu Rǔchéng’s data. In [11] it is written as  [tʂ'u²¹k'o³³], with similar pronunciation to “Guǐ Xiù” in [8, p. 8].</p> <p>3) “Yīng Xīng” in [8, p. 8] is [ʂuaɿk'uaɿ] and written as , which is quite different from the character in [9, p. 314] but similar to the 26th star in Dabaism. On the other side, “Jí Xīng 吉星” in [8, p. 9] is written as . The pronunciation of the star’s name is [fvɿleɿkɿkɿ]. The corresponding star in [9, p. 319] is named as [fvɿluɿkɿ]. Considering the pronunciation and shape of the character, the Naxi name for “Jí Xīng” in [8, p. 9] and [9, p. 319] should be the name for “Yīng Xīng”, i.e.: the Naxi name for “Yīng Xīng” is [fvɿleɿkɿkɿ] or [fvɿluɿkɿ], while the name for “Jí Xīng” is [ʂuaɿk'uaɿ]. Further on, since the stars atlases, instead of pictograms of the stars, presented in [9, p. 319] depict the stars as they were in the sky, the star atlas for “Jí Xīng” should correspond to the star [ʂuaɿk'uaɿ].</p> <p>4) In [11] the one before  is called [fv⁵⁵kə⁵⁵], written as a</p>	

	combination of two ideograms, pheasant and eagle:  . It could be the lunar mansion for “eagle”.
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Daba Scripts	16 	17 	18 	19-b 
IPA	boJk ^h wΛ↑	boJdzu↑	boJmæ↑	boJma↑
Chinese	Zhū Zuǐ Xīng 猪嘴星	Zhū Niào Xīng 猪尿星	Zhū Wěi Xīng 猪尾星	Zhū Yóu Xīng 猪油星
Dongba Scripts	10 	11 		12 
IPA	buJk'ʉ↑	buJtɔ↑		buJma↓
Chinese	Zhū Zuǐ Xīng	Zhū Yāo Xīng 猪腰星		Zhū Yóu Xīng
Star Atlas				
Annotations	<p>1) “Zhū Zuǐ Xīng” is the mouth of the constellation “pig”, “Zhū Niào Xīng” is the urine of the “pig”, “Zhū Wěi Xīng” is the tail of the “pig”, “Zhū Yóu Xīng” is the fat of the “pig”, and “Zhū Yāo Xīng” is the waist of the “pig”.</p> <p>2) Most of the versions of twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism have three stars from the constellation “pig” for marking the days, with the exception of the calendar from Lǐjiāzuǐ Village, which has four stars from the constellation “pig”. The third one, numbered as “18”, is the one not included in other calendars of Dabaism. The similar pronunciations of the two words, “tail” and “fat”, could be the origin of this additional star.</p>			

Daba Scripts	19 	20-b 	20 	21 	22 		23 
IPA	ziJzy↑	ziJzy↑q ^h ↑	ziJq ^h ↑	ziJhi↓	ziJnjΛ↑		ziJgy↑
Chinese	Piānniú Sì 犏牛四	Piānniú Sì Jiǎo 犏牛四角	Piānniú Jiǎo 犏牛角	Piānniú Ěr 犏牛耳	Piānniú Yǎn 犏牛眼		Piānniú Zhǎng 犏牛掌
Dongba Scripts	13 		14 	15 	16 	17 	18 
IPA	zyJnv↓		zyJk'a↓	zyJhə↓	zyJmiə↓	zyJtəər↓	zyJgu↓
Chinese	Zhīnǚ Zuǐ 织女嘴		Zhīnǚ Jiǎo 织女角	Zhīnǚ Ěr 织女耳	Zhīnǚ Yǎn 织女眼	Zhīnǚ Bó 织女脖	Zhīnǚ Shēn 织女身
Star Atlas							
Annotations	<p>1) The phonemic transcription of the constellation’s name in Na is [ziJ], whose Romanized transcription is “Zi”. The Daba priests from Wūjiǎo 屋脚Village and Lǐjiāzuǐ 利家嘴Village did not give a shared and well-established translation of the name of the constellation called “Zi”. They consider it just as a name. The priests from</p>						

Qiánsuǒ 前所 Village translated it as “mdzo”. “Mdzo” is the Tibetan form for a kind of local livestock, which is also called “Yak-cow hybrid” in English. In various versions of Dongba’s 28 lunar mansions the constellation of “Zi” is read as [zy] or [dzy] (Zhōu Rǔchéng’s work cited in [9]). Lǐ Línàn [8, p. 8] and Zhōu Rǔchéng [9, p. 320] have kept the symbol as the translation of this word in all the related entries. Zhū Bǎotián ([9, p. 314-315]) has translated it as “Zhīnǚ”, the legendary fairy in the story of “Deneb and Vega”. Lǐ Guówén has used the Chinese character “Ruǐ蕊” as a close transliteration of the local word and suggests that it could be a kind of animal [11]. Since the pronunciation of the constellation’s name is similar among all the versions of calendars, while the translation has not yet been recognized and shared, I propose an interpretation, in this paper, according to hints from the different points of view: a) the stars from this constellation are different parts of its body including “horn”; b) Daba priests from Qiánsuǒ Village have given a plausible explanation, indicating this animal, which is common in their region. For that reason, I prefer to call it “Piānniú Xīng” in the current stage, using the translation of Qiánsuǒ Dabas.

2) “Piānniú Sì” is the constellation of “mdzo”. Literally, the name means the whole body of “mdzo”. “Piānniú Sì Jiǎo” means the horns of the “mdzo” on four facets. “Piānniú Jiǎo” is the horn of the “mdzo”, “Piānniú Ěr” is the ear of the “mdzo”, “Piānniú Yǎn” is the eye of the “mdzo”, “Piānniú Zhǎng” is the foot of the “mdzo”. In Qiánsuǒ Village, there is not the star named as “the foot of the ‘mdzo’”, but “Piānniú Shēn” (“the body of the ‘mdzo’”), which is written as .

3) “Zhīnǚ Zuǐ” is the mouth of the “mdzo”, “Zhīnǚ Jiǎo” is the horn of the “mdzo”, “Zhīnǚ Ěr” is the ear, “Zhīnǚ Yǎn” is the eye, “Zhīnǚ Bó” is the neck, “Zhīnǚ Shēn” is the body.












4) The 19th star in Daba’s calendar has similar star atlas with the 13th in Dongba’s 28 lunar mansions documented in [9, p. 314].








5) The lunar mansion numbered as “20-b” in Dabaism scripts comes from the calendar in Lijiāzuǐ Village. The name is the combination of the 19th and 20th lunar mansions from the calendars in the versions from Wūjiǎo Village and Qiánsuǒ Village considering the syllables in the names.

6) The first in the star group from the constellation “Ruǐ” in [11] is རྩི་རྩི་མེད་ [zy²¹kv³³ly³³] “Ruǐ Tóu Xīng蕊头星” (the head of the “mdzo”). While “Ruǐ Zuǐ Xīng蕊嘴星” (the mouth of the “mdzo”) is not included in the Divination Figure.

7) There is not the star of the eye of the “mdzo” in the Divination Figure interpreted in [11], which is included in other versions of Dongbaism twenty-eight lunar mansions. However, as a compensation for the number of stars, it contains [zy²¹tə³³] “Ruǐ Bó Xīng蕊脖星” (the neck of the “mdzo”) and [zy²¹ts‘i²¹] “Ruǐ Jiān Xīng蕊肩星” (the shoulder of the “mdzo”), while in other versions of Dongbaism twenty-eight lunar mansions exists either of these two stars.

8) There is not the body of the “mdzo” in the Divination Figure interpreted in [11]. In [8, p. 8] there is a star written as རྩི་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ [zy|t‘ur] “ལྷོ་ལྷོ་མེད་ Xīng Zhī Yāo” ལྷོ་ལྷོ་མེད་星之腰 (the waist of the “mdzo”). According to the annotation of this entry, it could also be read as [zy|zy|gv], the body of the “mdzo”.

Dongba Scripts	19 	19-b 	20 	21 	21-b 
IPA	zy dv	zy t'w	zy ba	zy bə	zy mə
Chinese	Zhīnǚ Dù 织女肚(胃)	 Xīng Zhī Yāo 星之腰	Zhīnǚ Yīn 织女阴	Zhīnǚ Jiǎozhǎng 织女脚掌	Zhīnǚ Wěi 织女尾
Star Atlas					
Annotations	<p>1) Here are the five stars from the constellation “mdzo” only spotted in Dongbaism materials, but not in Dabaism.</p> <p>2) “Zhīnǚ Dù” is the stomach of the “mdzo”, “ Xīng Zhī Yāo” is the waist of the “mdzo”, “Zhīnǚ Yīn” is the vagina of the “mdzo”, “Zhīnǚ Jiǎozhǎng” is the foot of the “mdzo”, “Zhīnǚ Wěi” is the tail of the “mdzo”.</p> <p>3) There is not the lunar mansion named as the waist of the “mdzo” in Zhū Bǎotíán (1985) and [11].</p> <p>4) In [8, p. 8] the star “Zhīnǚ Wěi” is documented. It has similar pronunciation as the 24th star in [11]. However, Lǐ Guówén interprets it as “Ruǐ Yóu Xīng 蕊油星” (the fat of the “mdzo”) [11].</p>				

Daba Scripts	24 	25 	26 	27 
IPA	la thỹ k ^h wΛ	ʂi dʒi dɣ	ʂwæ tq ^h wΛ	mæ lq ^h wΛ
Chinese	Hǔ Zuǐ Xīng 虎嘴星	Ròu Shí Xīng 肉食星	Tóu Xīng 头星	Wěi Xīng 尾星
Dongba Scripts			11-b 	12-b 
IPA			ʂua k'ua	hy k'ua
Chinese			Jí Xīng 吉星	
Star Atlas				
Annotations	<p>1) The 24th and 25th stars in Dabaism have not been spotted in Dongbaism materials of the twenty-eight lunar mansions. “Hǔ Zuǐ Xīng” literally means “the mouth of the ‘tiger’”. “Ròu Shí” is called “Shezidu” in local language. According to my knowledge of the language, the first syllable could mean “meat” and the second syllable could be “to eat”.</p> <p>2) The stars numbered as “11-b” and “12-b” are listed among the twenty-eight lunar mansions in [8, p. 8], but not in [9, p. 314-315, p. 319-320], or [11]. They are the 11th and 12th stars in [8, p. 8] that are similar to the 26th and 27th stars in Daba’s calendars according to the shapes of the characters and the names of the stars, while the 22nd star in [8, p. 9] could be the counterpart of the 15th star in Daba’s calendar. As noted by the annotations of the entries, the locations of these two stars, “11-b” and “12-b”, had not been confirmed in the sky. According to the meaning of the syllables, the two stars’ names mean “the higher star” and “the lower star”.</p>			

The Correspondence of the 28 Lunar Mansions between Dabaism and Dongbaism

Starting from the detailed comparison among the stars in last section, we can realize that the twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dabaism are quite unified, shared, and widespread, since they are almost the same in five versions of the calendar from four villages. Conversely, the four versions of Dongba’s twenty-eight lunar mansions show various differences, from the stars’ names to the order of the stars. Some of the variations could be errors generated when the knowledge about astrology was passed down from masters to disciples.

In this section I present the simplified table about the correspondences of the twenty-eight lunar mansions between Dabaism and Dongbaism. Data in Table 3 are the conclusion of the analysis done in last section, from multi-perspectives including pronunciation of the star’s name, the meaning of the star’s name, the stars’ atlas, and the order of the stars. As mentioned before, I consider the constellation “human” as the starting point, following the interpretation habit of Daba priests spotted in my fieldwork. The number in the brackets is the number of stars/asterisms chosen from that constellation in order to mark the days.

Table 3. The Correspondence of the 28 Lunar Mansions between Dabaism and Dongbaism



Dabaism	Rén Xīng (2)	Mǎ Xīng	Wā Xīng (4)	---	“Kezha” Jiǎo	“Kezha” Shēn
Dongbaism	NiúlángXīng (1-2)	Mǎ Xīng	Wā Xīng (3-4)	Shíwěi Xīng	“Liù Xīng” (1-2)	
Constellation	“human”	“horse”	“frog”		“six stars”	
Dabaism	Hóngyǎn Xīng	Sān Xīng (3)	Sān Xīng (No.4)		Yějī Xīng	Yīng Xīng
Dongbaism	Hóngyǎn Xīng	Sān Xīng (2)	Shuǐtóu Xīng	Shuǐwěi Xīng	Yějī Xīng	Yīng Xīng
Constellation	“red eye”	“three stars”		“pheasant”	“eagle”	
Dabaism	Zhū Xīng (3-4)	Piānniú Xīng (4-5)	Hǔzuǐ Xīng	Ròushí Xīng	Tóu Xīng	Wěi Xīng
Dongbaism	Zhū Xīng (3)	Piānniú Xīng (9-11)	---	---	“the high star”	“the low star”
Constellation	“pig”	“mdzo”	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown

Table 3 shows the similarities of the twenty-eight lunar mansions between Dabaism and Dongbaism. The twenty-eight mansions can be divided into several star groups, which could be called Daba/Dongba constellations. The ten constellations in both Dabaism and Dongbaism include: the constellation “human”, the “horse”, the “frog”, the “six stars”, the “red eye”, the “three stars”, the “pheasant”, the “eagle”, the “pig”, the “mdzo”. The star of “head” and the star of “tail” in Dabaism are named as “the higher star” and “the lower star” in Dongbaism. “Shíwěi Xīng” (the tail of “time”) in Dongbaism has not a counterpart in Dabaism, while “Hǔzuǐ Xīng” and “Ròushí Xīng” in Dabaism have not counterparts in Dongbaism.

The fixed order of these star groups provides an important clue in order to figure out the locations of some stars that have been noted in researches as questions. For example, “Tóu Xīng” and “Wěi Xīng” are two stars spotted in all the eight versions of Dabaism calendars, but not included in most of the Dongbaism twenty-eight lunar mansions with the exception in [8, p. 8]. In that dictionary two stars with similar names and written in similar ideograms have been recorded.

However, the locations of them in the sky have remained unknown. In this case, the relatively unified Dabaism calendars could be a reference for discovering the identities of these two stars.

Table 3 also summarizes the nuances between Daba priests and Dongba priests in selecting stars in order to mark the days. For example, 1) two lunar mansions from the constellation “human” are chosen in Dabaism, while one or two stars are chosen in Dongbaism; 2) the constellation “frog” is used to mark four days in Dabaism, while four to five days in Dongbaism; 3) two stars are from the constellation “six stars” in Daba’s lunar mansions, while one or two come from this constellation in Dongbaism; 4) in Dabaism three stars are from the constellation “three stars”, while in Dongbaism the number is two; 5) there are two stars, “Shuǐtóu Xīng” and “Shuǐwēi Xīng”, from Dongbaism, corresponding to the fourth star from the constellation “three stars” in Dabaism; 6) the stars from the constellation “mdzo” in Dabaism are four to five, while in Dongbaism, nine to eleven stars from this constellation are among the 28-lunar mansion systems.

Here I discuss now about the first star in these twenty-eight lunar mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism. In most versions of Dongba’s materials the twenty-eight lunar mansions begin with the constellation “six stars”. One exception discovered so far is the Divination Figure interpreted in [11]. The stars from this Divination Figure have been deciphered with the contribution from Dongba *Hé Kāixiáng* 和开祥 from Lüdiàn Xiāng 鲁甸乡. They start with  [py³³bu²¹kv³³], the star from the constellation “human”. Dongba classics with the records of the stars “on duty” on the first day each month have also been presented in [11]. According to these records, the star “on duty” on the first day of the first month is  [py³³bu²¹mæ³³], which also belongs to the constellation “human”. Zhōu Yín has collected the records about the star “on duty” on the first day of each month among the one-hundred volumes of *Nàxī Dōngbā Gǔjí Yìzhù Quánjǐ* 纳西东巴古籍译注全集 [An Annotated Collection of Naxi Dongba Manuscripts] [6, p. 47-54]. These records show that the star [py³³bu²¹kv³³] (the body of the “human”) is “on duty” of the first month and the star [tʂhua⁵⁵ tshər²¹gv³³] (a star from the “six stars”) is “on duty” of the fourth month. Since the twenty-eight lunar mansions follow a certain order in order to mark the days, the starting point does not add much change to the interpretation of them. However, the records about the star “on duty” on the first day of each month in Dongba classics could be a proof of the tradition that the constellation “human” is the starting point of the 28-lunar mansion system. The ‘exceptional’ case in Dongbaism stars, actually, coincides with the situation in Dabaism stars, as the Dabaism calendars I have seen during fieldwork all start with the star from the constellation “human”. Nevertheless, I suggest the star called [py³³bu²¹kv³³] “Bǐbǔgū 比补姑” from the constellation “human”, being the first star of the twenty-eight lunar mansions, should be more consistent to the tradition of Dongba culture.

The Correspondence of the 28 Lunar Mansions among Dabaism, Dongbaism, and Mainstream Cultures in Neighborhood and Their International Designations

As mentioned above, the constellations have their own names in Dongbaism and Dabaism. The different designations from Chinese or European constellations reflect different perspectives and imaginations about the stars. The designations of the stars in Dabaism and Dongbaism show their own cultural characteristics, which are also shared among the ethnic groups in South-West China: the notions of animals are widely used in order to give the stars their names (stars’ naming process). For example, the constellation covering the same area as “mdzo” is called “bharal” in Pumi’s lunar

mansions [25, p. 81], while the corresponding region in Yi People’s lunar mansions is occupied mainly by the constellation “rhinoceros” [26, p. 106].

However, the 28-lunar mansions system is shared among India, Babylon, Arabia, and China. A (especially Tibetological and Indological) comparison could provide more perspectives in order to identify the position of Dabaism/Dongbaism as a local religion in the whole cultural background. Table 4 shows my work for this comparative attempt. The reference to the International star names could be found in the last two columns as well.

Table 4. 28 Lunar Mansions in Dabaism and Dongbaism Compared to those in Tibetan, Chinese, and Sanskrit Cultures / Traditions

	Dabaism	Dongbais m	Constellation in Dabais m and Dongbaism	Chinese	Tibetan	Sanskrit	English Name of the Star/Asterism	European Constellation
28	p ^h æ ^t mi ^t	py ^t bo ^l /	“human”	Hégū-2 河鼓二 ⁸ ha←*gaj kuX←*ka?	(gro bzhin)	(viṣṇu)	Altair	Aquila
1	ŋi ^t dji ^t	py ^t by ^l ky ^t & py ^t by ^l m æ ^t						
2	zwa ^t ku ^t	zua ^t mo ^t t se ^l ku ^l / zua ^t dze ^t	“horse”	Húguā 匏瓜 ⁹ bæw←*bru kwæ←*k ^w ra	(byi bzhin)	(abhijit)	Hugua	Delphinus
3	pa ^t k ^h wa ^t	pa ^t k ^o t	“frog”	Shì 室 syit←*s-tit	khru ms stod	pūrva- proṣṭhap adās (pūrva- bhādrapa dās)	Markab and Scheat (α Peg and β Peg)	Pegasus
4	pa ^t dzua ^t	pa ^t by ^t		Bì 壁 pjiek←*pjek	khru ms smad	uttara- proṣṭhap adās (uttara- bhādrapa dās)	Algenib and Sirrah (γ Peg and α And) ¹⁰	Pegasus and Androme da
5	dzu ^t ku ^t	(pa ^t mæ ^t)		(Kuì 奎 kwej←*kkhwe)	(nam gru)	(revatī)	(Legs)	Androme da and Pisces
6	pa ^t ku ^l p ^h u ^l	na ^l ŋgv ^t		Lóu 娄 luw←*C-ro	tha skar	aśvayuja u	Bond (Asteris m) ¹¹	Aries
		t ^o a ^l ku ^l		Wèi 胃	bra	bharaṇī	Stomac	Aries

⁸ “Hégūèr” belongs to the Chinese constellation “Niú 牛” (ngjuw←*ŋwi).

⁹ “Hugua” belongs to the Chinese constellation “Nǚnǚ” (nrjoX←*nra?).

¹⁰ The combination of “Shì” and “Bì” in Chinese constellations is the “Great Square of Pegasus” in European constellations.

¹¹ The Chinese constellation “Lóu” refers to the asterism “Bond”, which includes Hamal (α Ari), β Ari and γ Ari.

				hɟwɟH←*gwit s	nye		h (Chinese Constellation) ¹²			
7	q ^h ɟltsæ ^l q ^h ɟɟ	tɕ ^ʰ wa ^l ts ^ʰ Λɟ / tɕ ^ʰ ua ^l ts ^ʰ	“six stars”	Mǎo 昴 mæwX←*mm ru?	smin drug	kɾttikās ---	Pleiades	Taurus		
8	q ^h ɟltsæ ^l gɟɟmiɟ	Λk ^ʰ a ^l & tɕ ^ʰ ua ^l ts ^ʰ Λɟoɟmo ɟ		unknown ¹³						
9	ŋjæ ^h ɟɟ	miΛɟhyɟ	“red eye”	Bi 毕 pjit←*pit	snar ma	robiṇi (brāhmī)	Aldebaran			
10	soɟ ^h aɟkoɟ	suɟ ^ʰ oɟ	“three stars”	Shēn 参 srim←*s-r-lim	lag	ārdrā (bāhū)	Orion's Belt	Orion		
11	soɟ ^h aɟloɟ	suɟ ^ʰ oɟla ɟ		Fá 伐 (Punishment) bjot←*bjat			Orion's Broads word			
12	soɟ ^h aɟts ^h waɟ miɟ			unknown			---		---	unknow n
13	soɟ ^h aɟkuɟ ^ʰ ɟ ɟ	kuɟɟ ^ʰ urɟ dzΛɟkyɟ		Tiānláng Xīng天狼星 then←*hlin lang←*C-rang			(nabs so)		(punarva sū [yamaka u])	Sirius
		kuɟɟ ^ʰ urɟ dzΛɟmæɟ	Nánhé Xīng南河星 ¹⁴ nom←*nim ha←*gaj	Procyon	Canis Minor					
14	hoɟkuɟ	tɕ ^ʰ vɟk ^ʰ oɟ	“pheasa nt”	Guǐ 鬼 kjwɟX←*kwɟ ?	rgyal	bṛhas- pati	Beehive Cluster	Cancer		
15	kaɟkuɟ	fvɟlɟkɟ kuɟ	“eagle”	Wūdizuò- 1五帝座一 nguX←*nga? tejH←*teks	---	---	Denebola	Ursa Major		
16	boɟk ^h waɟ	boɟk ^ʰ oɟ	“pig”	Xuānyuán Shísi轩辕十四 xjon←*xjan hjwon←*wjān	(mch u)	(maghās)	Regulus	Leonis		
17	boɟdzurɟ	boɟɟ ^ʰ oɟ		Xuānyuán Shí'èr 轩辕十二 ¹⁵			Algieba			

¹² The asterism “Wèi” includes 35 Ari, 39 Ari, and 41 Ari.

¹³ According to Zhū Bǎotián (1985), [tɕ^ʰua^lts^ʰΛɟoɟmoɟ] is split from the Chinese constellation “Bi毕”, even if the pronunciation of the stars suggests these two stars belong to the same constellation in Dabaism/Dongbaism constellations.

¹⁴ “Tiānláng Xīng” and “Nánhé Xīng” are two stars belonging to the Chinese constellation “Jǐng井” (tsjengX←*s-kenn?).

¹⁵ Lǐ Líncàn (1972) describes “Xuānyuán Shí'èr” and “Tàiwēiyòuyuán” as the head and leg parts of the constellation “Leonis”. They have been specified as the Chinese stars corresponding to [boɟɟ^ʰoɟ] and [boɟɟmaɟ] in Zhū Bǎotián (1985).

18	boJmaɿ	boJmaJ		Tàiwēyòuyuán 太微右垣 thajH ← *hlats Mjij ← *mjij hjuwX/H ← *w jiʔ(s) hjwon ← *wjan	---	---	Two among σ Leo, ι Leo, θ Leo, and δ Leo	
19	ziJzyɿ	zyJnvɿ	“mdzo” ¹⁶	The area between “Jiǎo 角 kæwk ← *krok ” and “Jī 箕 ki ← *ki”, i.e.: “Azure Dragon”, one of the four Symbols in Chinese constellations, located in the east part of the sky	(nag pa - chu stod)	(svāti - pūrvāṣāḍ hās)	The area between the Horn mansion (Spica) to Winno wing Basket	Mainly located in the area covered by Scorpius.
20	ziJqʰɿɿ							
21	ziJhiɿ	zyJheɿ						
22	ziJŋjɿɿ	zyJmiɿɿ						
		zyJteʰɿɿ						
23	ziJqyɿ	zyJtʰuɿ						
		zyJdvɿ						
		zyJbaɿ						
		zyJbɿɿ						
		zyJmæɿ						
24	laʰhʃjɿkʰwɿɿ		unkown	unkown	---	---	---	---
25	ʃiJdziJdyɿ		unkown	unkown	---	---	---	---
26	ʃwæɿqʰwɿɿ	ʃuaJkʰua ɿ	unkown	(Jī 箕 ki ← *ki’)	(chu stod)	(pūrvāṣā ḍhās)	Winno wing Basket (γ Sgr, δ Sgr, ε Sgr, and η Sgr).	Sagittariu s
27	mæJqʰwɿɿ	hyJkʰuaɿ		(Dǒu 斗 tuwX ← *toʔ)	(chu smad)	(viśve- devās)	Dipper	

From Table 4 we can see that besides the local cultural elements in naming the stars, the etymological traces indicate plausible deep correspondences among some of the lunar mansions in different cultures. For example, the name for Pleiades in Tibetan means “six girls”. It is analogous to the Indian idea according to which the six stars of this constellation are six nannies of the god Skanda even if the Sanskrit name for it means “something sharp for cutting” [21, p. 6-7]. In a similar way, the Pleiades in Dongbaism have an informal name meaning “six brothers” that defines the constellation. It is said that there were sixty stars in the asterism. They would have been eaten by ‘Big Dipper’ and only six would have been retained, which are now called “six brothers” [8, p. 7]. Taking “Aldebaran” as another example, the Tibetan name derives from the adjective “red” and

“Xuānyuán Shí’èr” (γ- Leo) belongs to the Chinese constellation “Xīng星” (seng ← *seŋ). “Tàiwēiyuán” belongs to “Tàiwēiyuán” (the Supreme Palace Enclosure), one of the three enclosures in traditional Chinese astronomy.

¹⁶ This asterism has been located in the region between “Jiǎo 角 kæwk ← *krok” and “Jī 箕 ki ← *ki” and mainly coincides with the constellation “Scorpius” (Lǐ Lín càn 1972: 8; Zhū Bǎo tián 1985: 323). The star in Dongbaism called [zyJdvɿ] is interpreted as “Dàhuǒ Xīng 大火星” in Chinese, corresponding to “Antares” (α Sco) in English. It belongs to the Chinese constellation “Xīn心” (sim ← *sim).

means “red girl”, while the Daba/Dongba name for it means “red eye”. Moreover, “The Orion’s Belt” and “the Orion’s Broadsword” are one constellation in Tibetan (*lag*) and Sanskrit (*bāhū*) that means “the two hands”. Further on, the two lunar mansions named as “chu stod” and “chu smad” in Tibetan (literally meaning “upper water” and “lower water” [21, p. 7-8]) are also a pair with similar meanings in Dabaism and Dongbaism. The main syllables of the lunar mansions’ names, [qʰwɿɿ] in Na and [kʰuɿ] in Naxi, could be “footprint” in the vocabulary. This interpretation could also correspond to the illustration of “Jī” and “Dǒu” as “footprint of ox” and “footprint of elephant” in *Módēngjiā Jīng* 摩登伽经 [A Classic of Buddhism Entitled *Matangi*] [27]. The two modifiers in the lunar mansions’ names mean “upper” ([ʃwæɿ] in Na and [ʃuɿ] in Naxi) and “lower” ([mæɿ] in Na and [hyɿ] in Naxi), respectively.

There are also traces of the original naming process of the 28 lunar mansions in Dabaism/Dongbaism, Tibetan, Indian, and Chinese. Some stars in Dabaism and Dongbaism are the same with the ones in other main cultures. As it is shown in Table 4, the stars from the constellation “frog” coincide with four stars in the commonly shared 28 lunar mansions; the “Beehive Cluster” is also chosen in all the five 28 lunar mansions listed above. However, some are chosen from the same constellations, even if not being the determinant stars used to name the constellations in other 28-lunar mansion systems. For example, “Hégǔ-2” (Altair) and “Húguā” (Hugua) in Dabaism and Dongbaism belong to the constellations called “Níú牛 (ngjuw←*ŋwi)” and “Nǚ女 (nrjoX←*nra?)” in Chinese, respectively. Moreover, besides some non-identified stars, Wūdizuò-1 (“Denebola”) and Tàiwēiyòuyuán (“Right Wall”, two among σ Leo, ι Leo, θ Leo, and δ Leo) are two stars/asterisms from the Sānyuán 三垣 (“Three Enclosures”) system located in the central area of the sky surrounded by the 28 lunar mansions. The use of stars in the middle area of the sky could be a relic of ancient astrological systems recorded in Chinese literature, where the sky is divided into five regions: east, south, west, north, and middle [20, p. 290].

I have also discovered an interesting ‘error’ in transmission of astronomical knowledge. In the fifth row, the star [paɿmæɿ] in Dongbaism is spotted only in the materials of [9, p. 315]. The star’s name means “the tail of the ‘frog’”. According to [25, p. 81], it is the Naxi translation from Yi People’s star called [noŋ tsu], which is a localized name for Tibetan “nam gru” by Yi People. As a ‘shift’ of stars, the star located as “Lóu娄” (Bond) in Dongbaism refers to “Kuí奎” in Tibetan system, while “Wèi胃” (Stomach) is indeed the Tibetan designation for “Lóu娄”.

Conclusion

In this paper I have summarized the interpretation of the eight Daba calendars (the only ancient [proto-]literature of this local religion available so far) analyzed during my fieldwork and the available materials of Dongba twenty-eight lunar mansions, explaining the differences among various versions.

The high uniformity among Dabaism calendars could suggest that they were records of a commonly used calendar in that region at a certain period in history and could provide data in order to explore the Dongba’s twenty-eight lunar mansions.

I have also tried to clarify the issue concerning the choice of the first mansion in the twenty-eight lunar mansions. Since the classics and knowledge of Dabaism and Dongbaism have been mainly transmitted orally, variations have been generated among different family / clan factions. The Daba calendars contain relatively concise information compared to Dongba classics, as they are written with isolated symbols for the stars. However, they coincide with the records in Dongba

classics about the stars “on duty” on the first day of each month, which show to be different from most of the materials of Dongba’s twenty-eight lunar mansions. In this case, the starting star recorded in Daba’s calendars could be an additional written evidence of the first star throughout the tradition.

The comparative study conducted among Dabaism/Dongbaism, Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese has provided a comprehensive perspective aimed at considering the relationships of Dabaism/Dongbaism with the main stream neighboring cultures. Moreover, it has been helpful in finding out possible answers to unclear stars noted in previous research.

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