Project Name	Building an Open International Digital Platform of Dongba Manuscripts for Inclusion in UNESCO's "Memory of the World Heritage"		
Research Type	**Interdisciplinary Research**	**Planned Completion Time**	**December 2017**
Results Approach	Platform schemes and experimental models, domestic and international seminars, monographs, theses, software, databases, patents		
Organizations Involved	**Beijing Information Science and Technology University** (Research bases: the Ministry of Education Key Laboratory for Modern Measurement and Control Technology, and the Beijing Key Laboratory of Internet Culture and Digital Dissemination Research); **Beijing Association of Dongba Culture and Arts**; **Lijiang Dongba Culture Institute** (Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences (Lijiang)）; **Diqing Naxi SocietyAcademy** (National Intangible Cultural Heritage Naxi Manual Papermaking Techniques Center)		
Chief Expert and People in Charge of Sub-topics	**Chief Expert of the project: Professor Xu Xiaoli, Beijing Information Science and Technology University** **Sub-topic 1: Research and practice on Digital acquisition of international Dongba manuscript collections; audio and video recordings of Dongba shamans in the process of deciphering and explaining the manuscripts. – Zhang Xu, Researcher** **Sub-topic 2: Research on Chinese and International efforts in deciphering, translating and cataloging Dongba pictographs – Bai Gengsheng (Naxi ethnic group), Researcher** **Sub-topic 3: Research on digital processing, retrieval and network transmission of Dongba manuscripts – Professor Li Ning** **Sub-topic 4: Research on building an open international digital platform of Dongba manuscripts and operational mechanisms – Wu Guoxin, Research Associate** **Sub-topic 5: Research on building, managing and utilizing a database and knowledge base of Dongba manuscripts and ancient texts – Professor Wang Hongjun**		

Brief Introduction to Project

The Dongba pictographs of China's Naxi ethnic group are the only pictographs still in use in the world today, and Naxi Dongba manuscripts have been incorporated into the UNESCO's Memory of the World programme.

The majority of original hand-written Dongba manuscripts are in the collections of well-known institutions of a dozen or so countries, which means academic research on them is scattered across the globe and communication between researchers is difficult. Due to the unique composition and pronunciation of Dongba pictographs, there are currently only a few Dongba priests in their 70s able to decipher them, and there is an urgent need to carry out efficient and quality rescue and preservation work.

Research on Dongba manuscripts will help to reveal the relationship between the world's primitive religions and ethnic minorities as well as the origin of changes to ancient Chinese culture. Understanding their philosophy of maintaining harmony between man and nature will help in achieving harmony and stability in today's civilized society, unity between all ethnic groups, and protection of the natural environment. Dongba manuscripts are collected around the world and they are a popular topic in international academic research. Due to the large demand created by international researchers, the open international platform, which is capable of disseminating Dongba cultural resources as well as preserving Dongba traditional culture for future generations, will have a promising future.

Main contents of the project: To research and construct an open international information platform of Dongba ancient texts in their country of origin and use digital and web technology to carry out the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of Memory of the World Dongba cultural information through interdisciplinary and international cooperation.

Key research works shall include:

1. Propose information sharing and cooperation: Cooperate with the United Nations and domestic and foreign museums, libraries, universities and research institutes to establish channels for collecting, pooling and sharing information on Dongba manuscripts and ancient texts from China and abroad, and digitally record Dongba shamans as they interpret the texts.

2. Research, collect, analyze and sort Dongba manuscripts: Carry out field collections and invite Dongba shamans to interpret manuscripts, refine interpretation methods, and catalog manuscripts digitally.

3. Provide digital processing and retrieval methods: Provide a variety of information retrieval, search and statistical methods via a search engine as well as modern means of communication and information dissemination and management methods over a digital network.

4. Research how to build a digitally networked open international information platform, and provide remote academic research and an interactive environment and technical support on an open international platform.

5. Provide a database, a knowledge base and knowledge mining tools on deciphering Dongba pictographs due to the unique form and difficulty of Dongba pictographs, provide platform-based digitized interpretation methods for Dongba pictographs and construct a digital archive.