

Introduction to the Database of Ethnological Scripts of Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

Chijui HU
Academia Sinica
huchijui@asihp.net

Between 1929 and 1943, the researchers of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica carried out planned, scientific, and inter-provincial investigative field work in southern, southwestern, and northeastern China on a historically unprecedented scale. They collected and left for future scholars a very rich resources of artifacts, documents, and photographs relating to modern China's ethnic minorities. Their reports on these ethnic minorities are important, valuable, and informative for research of the contemporary Chinese nationalism and the historical and anthropological research of the ethnic minorities in China.

Since 2001, National Digital Archives Program and the Institute of History and Philology have used the newest technology to digitize these archives and public these information through the internet and the database. The database of ethnological scripts is one of the most important works in this project.

There are six kinds of ethnic groups scripts, including Hunan Miao (湘苗), Buyi (布依), Dai (傣), Yi (彝), She (畲), and Naxi (納西), in the Institute of History and Philology. The quantity of these scripts is more than 800. Through the means of digital scan or photography, we made them into digital files for preserving and researching.

Through these ethnic scripts we can understand the religions, rituals, history and customs of these ethnic minorities. It concludes with the suggestion that in order to understand the cultures of the ethnic minorities in the southwest China, we can use this database and website to introduce the information to not only scholars, but the public.