



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Urgent Safeguarding List

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CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fifth session
Kenya
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REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION OF NOMINATION FILES NO. 00322 FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING IN 2010

Name of the examiner: Saint-Petersburg Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
Name of the expert (if different): Irina Popova
Date of the examination: (revised on) 12 July 2010
Nomination file No. 00322 State Party: China Name of element: Wooden movable-type printing of China
<p><i>Note: Information in italics in boxes is provided for the examiner's reference; it includes excerpts from the Operational Directives or from the explanations given to submitting States Parties in the nomination form. The examiner shall rely upon the information provided within the nomination file, including any photos, video or additional information that is made available as part of the nomination. The examiner shall bring to bear his/her personal and professional knowledge in assessing the credibility and completeness of the information provided within the nomination, but his/her report shall primarily address whether or not the submitting State, within the nomination, has adequately demonstrated that the criteria for inscription are satisfied. The examiner shall neither be a national of the State(s) Party(ies) submitting the nomination nor have any conflict of interest that could influence unduly the results of the examination.</i></p>

Excerpts from the Operational Directives

Examination of nominations:

5. *With a view to their evaluation by the Committee, nominations shall be examined by preferably more than one advisory organization accredited in conformity with Article 9.1 of the Convention. In conformity with Article 8.4, the Committee may invite public or private bodies and/or private persons with recognized competence in the field of intangible cultural heritage, in order to consult them on specific matters. No nomination will be examined by (a) national(s) of the State(s) Party(ies) submitting the nomination.*
6. *Examinations shall include assessment of the nomination's conformity with the inscription criteria.*
7. *Each examination shall include assessment of the viability of the element and of the feasibility and sufficiency of the safeguarding plan. It shall also include assessment of the risk of its disappearing, due, inter alia, to the lack of means for safeguarding and protecting it, or to processes of globalization and social or environmental transformation.*
8. *The reports of these examinations shall include a recommendation to the Committee to inscribe, or not to inscribe, the nominated element.*

Brief textual description of the nominated element

The examiner should provide a brief description of the nominated element, suitable for publication. This may draw upon item D of the Cover Sheet, but should also draw upon the nomination as a whole to provide a summary overview of the essential features of the element. The description should be prepared based on the information provided within the nomination file.

(175 to 225 words)

The nominated element 'Wooden Movable-Type Printing of China' is a practice invented around 1041-48 Bi Sheng (毕昇, 990–1051) in China. It was widely used in Central Asia and later on in Europe, and caused a real breakthrough in the spread of culture and popularization of knowledge. Therefore, the invention of movable-type printing had a really great impetus to the progress of world civilization. According the nomination 00322, the ancestor of Wang Caohui, from Ruian town, Zhejiang province (one of the applicants) Wang Famao at the beginning of the 14 century started to print his family genealogy with the use of movable types. This art was handed down from generation to generation, and now it still exists in the Wang family and in the families of the town engaged in the craftsmanship. It is a very important discovery even for the specialists in the field of Chinese culture to know that there still are the living bearers and transmitters of the genuine movable-type printing tradition (<http://baike.baidu.com/view/2956041.htm>). Even if we assume that the direct lineage was broken in the past for some time, the practice of movable-type printing kept in the locality of Ruian should be viewed as original and representing absolutely unique tradition of genealogical culture.

Criterion U.1 The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention.

Excerpts from the nomination form

Description of the element (Not to exceed 1,000 words)

A clear and complete description is essential to demonstrate to the Committee that the nominated element meets the Convention's definition of intangible heritage. The description should provide the Committee with sufficient information to determine:

- *that the element is among the 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated*

therewith’;

- that ‘communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage’;
- that it is being ‘transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history’;
- that it provides communities and groups involved ‘with a sense of identity and continuity’; and
- that it is not incompatible ‘with existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development’.

The description should refer to all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include discussion of its social and cultural functions at present, the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners, any special roles or categories of persons with specific responsibilities towards the element, among others. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.

Nomination demonstrates that the element satisfies Criterion U.1:

Yes

No

Examiner’s comments regarding the element’s conformity with the definition of intangible cultural heritage in the Convention

The examiner should address whether the submitting State has adequately demonstrated that the element satisfies the Convention’s definition of intangible cultural heritage.

(250 to 500 words)

The element ‘Wooden Movable-type Printing of China’ constitutes the intangible cultural heritage as defined in the article 2 of the Convention. In China it is recognized as a part of the Chinese heritage, which enriched the world civilization. This practice was first described in detail in the ‘Treatise on Agriculture (農書 Nong shu) published by an official and scholar Wang Zhen (王禎, 1290-1333) at the turn of 14 century. In its’ preface he first described the technique of the movable-type printing, which he made of wood. Later on in China the movable types were produced of tin, copper and metal, and some very important editions were undertaken with the use of this technique from Song to Qing dynasties. From 14 century the wooden movable types became prevalent in Zhejiang province in the South of China, where it still exists in its’ original state. In the South of China the Chinese culture was also always preserved in the most intact condition and was not much impacted by the foreign influences, which mostly were coming from the North. At the same time people moving there from the Central Plain tried to keep their identity and the history of their families in written form. In this extent the region has absolutely unique local traditions of genealogical culture. This printing craftsmanship was handled from generation to generation among the Wang family of the town of Ruian, it was inherited continuously in 25 generations, and now is recognized as the important cultural heritage of the area. The people of Ruian are concentrated mainly on the work of the movable-type printing, and there are about 10 households numbered of 60-80 people engaged in this kind of craftsmanship. This art needs deep sence of clan concept and high skills of Chinese calligraphy and of character cutting. Combination of original technique and unique genealogical tradition proves the cultural significance of the nominated element. The way to group the characters for picking and type facing is based on the arrangement of a special rhyme (with 32 sentences of 160 characters) in local Ruian dialect, which is very different from the Mandarin Chinese, and is kept in its’ original form only in this locality. Therefore, the practice should be viewed wider than ‘traditional craftsmanship’, because the people of the Ruian region (especially communities of Dongyuan and Xiqian villages) acknowledge it as an implementation of their local tradition, ritual

and a part of their cultural self-identification.

Criterion U.2 The element is in urgent need of safeguarding because its viability is at risk despite the efforts of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals and State(s) Party(ies) concerned.

Excerpts from the nomination form

Viability assessment (Not to exceed 500 words)

Describe the current level of viability of the element, particularly the frequency and extent of its practice, the strength of traditional modes of transmission, the demographics of practitioners and audiences and its sustainability.

Threat and risk assessment (Not to exceed 500 words)

This section should identify and describe the threats to the element's continued transmission and enactment and describe the severity and immediacy of those threats.

Nomination demonstrates that the element satisfies Criterion U.2:

Yes

No

Examiner's comments regarding whether the nomination demonstrates that the element is in urgent need of safeguarding

The examiner should address whether the submitting State has adequately demonstrated that the element's viability is at risk, that the community, group or, if applicable, individuals and State(s) Party(ies) concerned have made efforts to ensure its viability, and that it is consequently in urgent need of safeguarding.

(250 to 500 words)

This element of cultural heritage is in urgent need of safeguarding as its viability is at risk. The bearers of the tradition are 7-8 aged people, and their craft is very laborious, needs much skill, and may be viewed not so 'practical' and challenging for the young people. The people engaged into the handcraft need highly trained brush handwriting and hand-operated engraving technique, which are not commonly used in the daily practice. The bearers need also knowledge of general Chinese and local history, they should be familiar with full-form characters and the grammar of the middle Sinitic language. The process of the work is very complicated and rather slow. The people engaged into the process should move whole the set of the printing equipment into the ancestral halls of families, ordering the printed genealogies. They should manage a complicated 15-step manual process, including interviewing, compilation of the draft copy, picking out the characters, setting type, proofreading, marking the punctuation, drawing divisions, taking out the characters, arranging in order clan names, binding, cutting, threading. All their work should be done by hand. Despite the efforts of the community and local authorities to propagate this craftsmanship (organizing of the exhibition hall of movable type printing, allocation of money, listing of the printing technique bearers into the Batch of the Intangible Culture Heritage of China, etc.) it still remains not so attractive for the young people, who prefer to get the modern education. The number of the bearers of movable-type printing tradition have been rapidly decreased. Because of the low income some of them are moving to the different areas seeking for new jobs and leaving their family business. And the traditional movable-type printing technique is in danger to be replaced by computer typesetting and printing of genealogies.

Examiner’s assessment of the viability of the element

The examiner should address whether the submitting State’s assessment of the element’s viability is accurate, realistic and complete.

(150 to 300 words)

The submitting State’s assessment of the element’s viability is very accurate, realistic and complete. From the ancient times the art of book printing and binding was highly developed and esteemed in China. Printing of the genealogies was always among the most important Chinese traditions, and existed in the Chinese families for centuries. Chinese genealogies recorded clan’s pedigree, events and biographies of the family members. A classic Chinese genealogy included also family instructions, pictures of the ancestral temple and tombs, etc. The genealogies of Chinese families are regularly recompiled, and the orders for them, still not stable, are coming to the printers nowadays. Regularly people are keeping their habitual rules of compilation, and requesting them from the publishers. In the Ruian region these rules are connected with the unique local traditions of genealogical culture. The process of printing of genealogies is rather long, needs very special skills of brush handwriting and hand-operated engraving technique. The teaching of the handicraft of movable printing needs time of at least 2 years, but the State party can recommend some young and middle-aged people, who meet the professional requirements and can be taught by the present movable-type printing bearers.

Examiner’s assessment of the risk of the element’s disappearing, due, inter alia, to the lack of means for safeguarding and protecting it, or to processes of globalization and social or environmental transformation

The examiner should address whether the submitting State’s assessment of the risk of the element’s disappearing is accurate, realistic and complete.

(150 to 300 words)

The submitting State demonstrate a realistic understanding of the risk of the element’s disappearing. It is completely understandable for the State that number of the people engaged in the field is rapidly decreased, the handicraft is in a danger to be changed out of all recognition or even replaced by modern advanced technologies. Movable-type printing is used in a few areas of China in a countryside, the income of the people engaged into the business are very low, and many of them are moving for different places for seeking new jobs. The young people do not want to learn the movable wooden characters engraving and printing techniques. The computer technologies are replacing the old printing operations, and thus the traditional cultural concept has been weakened. The spread of the modern education caused the crisis of inheritance in the traditional crafts. Young people are trying to receive modern education and insparably accept the new cultural values. The State is anxious that the enthusiasm of compiling the genealogies of clans has reduced and the market of movable-type printing is dwindled. Therefore, the State is determined to take powerfull and effective measures.

Criterion U.3 Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may enable the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned to continue the practice and transmission of the element.

Excerpts from the nomination form

Safeguarding measures

Items 4.a. to 4.c. request the elaboration of a coherent set of safeguarding measures as called for in Criterion U.3. The safeguarding measures, if effectively implemented, should be expected to contribute substantially to the safeguarding of the element within a time-

frame of approximately four years. They should include measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the element by enabling the community to continue its practice and transmission.

4.a. Current and recent efforts to safeguard the element (not to exceed 500 words)

Describe the current and recent efforts of the concerned community, group or, if applicable individuals to ensure the viability of the element. Describe efforts of the concerned State(s) Party(ies) to safeguard the element, taking note of external or internal constraints such as limited resources.

4.b. Safeguarding measures proposed (not to exceed 2,000 words)

This section should identify and describe a coherent set of safeguarding measures that, within a time-frame of approximately four years, could substantially enhance the viability of the element, if implemented, and provide detailed information as follows:

- a) What primary objective(s) will be addressed and what concrete results will be expected?
- b) What are the key activities to be carried out in order to achieve these expected results? Please describe the activities in detail and in their best sequence, addressing their feasibility.
- c) Management and implementation: describe the mechanisms for the full participation of communities, groups or, if appropriate, individuals in the proposed safeguarding measures. Describe the implementing organization or body (name, background, etc.) and the human resources available for implementing the project.
- d) Timetable and budget: provide a timetable for the proposed activities and estimate the funds required for their implementation, identifying any available resources (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

4.c. Commitments of States and of communities, groups or individuals concerned (not to exceed 500 words)

The feasibility of safeguarding depends in large part on the aspirations and commitment of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and the support and cooperation of the State Party concerned. This section should demonstrate that the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have the will and commitment to safeguard the element if conditions are favourable and that the State Party concerned has the commitment to support the safeguarding effort by creating favourable conditions for its implementation.

Nomination demonstrates that the element satisfies Criterion U.3:

Yes

No

Examiner's assessment of the feasibility and sufficiency of the safeguarding plan

The examiner should address whether the submitting State has elaborated a coherent set of safeguarding measures that can reasonably be expected to strengthen the viability of the element within the coming four years, and assess whether they reflect the priorities and aspirations of the communities concerned, whether the measures are feasible, and whether the communities and States are adequately committed to their implementation.

(250 to 500 words)

Submitting State elaborate a set of safeguarding measures are elaborated and may enable the community to continue the practice and tradition of the movable-type printing technique. The applicants reasonably set up the priorities and scheduled their activities for 4 next years. 1. They intend to encourage the bearers over 50 years old to educate the young people of 20 to 40 years of age to become bearers of the printing technique. They intend to organize training class of movable-type printing every year, with 50,000 RMB aid from the government and to educate 7

bearers in each class. 2. In 2010, the government of the Zhejiang province will allocate a special fund of 100,000 RMB to enlarge the exhibition hall of the movable-type printing, to protect the related ancient buildings and to collect more historical objects for the exhibition. It is very important that the State pays attention for the performing of the skill of the movable-type printing craftsmen for the general public. 3. They intend to promote the movable-type printing technique through the Ruian Movable-Type Printing Technique Association, established in 2009. The future fund of the Association will come from the individual donations, local community and aid and government subsidy. 4. The local authorities intend widely publish Chinese books with the movable-type printing technique. 5. From 2009 to 2012, the local government intends to provide 20,000 RMB per year to make a general investigation of movable-type printing. 6. In 2010, the government intends to publish a monograph introducing the cultural heritage of movable-type printing technique. In 2008 the government already allocated 15,000 yuan for making a film record of the whole process of the movable-type printing. The authorities intend to publish further the books and albums to propagate the art of wooden movable-type printing. All these measures are elaborated and can enable the community to continue practice and transmission of the movable-type printing technique.

Criterion U.4 The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.

Excerpts from the nomination form

a. *Participation of communities, groups and individuals*

Describe how the community, group and, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated in the nomination process at all stages, as required by Criterion R.4. States Parties are further encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other concerned parties, including where appropriate local and regional governments, neighbouring communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and other interested parties.

b. *Free, prior and informed consent*

The free, prior and informed consent of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent rather than specifying any single standard.

c. *Respect for customary practices governing access*

Demonstrate that inscription and implementation of the safeguarding measures fully respects customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage, if such practices exist (cf. Article 13). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.

Nomination demonstrates that the element satisfies Criterion U.4:

Yes

No

Examiner’s assessment of the participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned

The examiner should assess whether the community, group or individuals concerned have participated fully in the nomination process at all stages and whether the nomination reflects their participation.

(150 to 300 words)

The element has been nominated following the wide participation of the community. According the application, at present, there are about 10 households numbered 60 to 80 people engaged in the business around this craftsmanship. The local people acknowledge the wooden movable-type printing as an important cultural heritage of the area, and the local authorities have done much for the further development of the movable-type printing technique and the dissemination of knowledge about it among the community. In 2004, the Government of Ruian set up an exhibition hall of movable-type printing of 1,670 square meters. The government is giving regular financial assistance to the bearers of movable-type printing and invites them to take part in various shows of intangible culture heritage. The local authorities are collecting the historical material on movable-type printing, they shot film and published books on the subject. A photo-album entitled ‘Genealogy Printed with Movable-Type Printing Technique’ won the HPA2009 Human Contribution Award sponsored by the UNESCO and the China Folk Photography Society.

Examiner’s comments on their free, prior and informed consent

The examiner should assess whether the submitting State has provided satisfactory evidence of the free, prior and informed consent of the community, group or individuals concerned.

(150 to 300 words)

In my view the submitting State has provided very clear evidence of the free and fully informed consent of the community over the safeguarding of the nominated element. The application is attached by the Letters signed by Wang Chaohui and Lin Chuyin, the bearers of the movable-type printing, who demonstrate their readiness to carry out the related rights and obligations by the bearers of the nominated practice. It is clear that they and the other people involved into the handcraft are ready to develop the movable-type printing technique, which is a subsistence for their life and part of their cultural self-identification. It is impressive to know that on learning the news that the item has been applied for the List of Urgent Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the people from the Ruian town have raised a fund of 50,000 yuan and established the Ruian Movable-Type Printing Association in 2009. The Dongyuan Movable-Type Printing Exhibition Hall is providing the State with materials for the application. The Broadcasting and Television News Publishing Bureau of Ruian, the Chinese Academy of Arts and some other Chinese associations of culture (see, for example: <http://www.worldfpa.org/poto.asp?id=135>) are supporting the project and are ready to participate in its’ further promotion.

Examiner’s comments on respect for customary practices governing access to the element, if applicable

The examiner should comment on whether the submitting State has adequately addressed the question of any customary practices that might govern access to the element.

(not to exceed 300 words)

No

Criterion U.5 The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) as defined in Articles 11 and 12.

Excerpts from the nomination form

The submitting State should identify the inventory in which the element has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory. The description also should demonstrate that the inventory has been drawn up in conformity with Articles 11 and 12, in particular Article 11(b) that stipulates that intangible cultural heritage shall be identified and defined 'with the participation of communities, groups, and relevant non-governmental organizations' and Article 12 requiring that inventories be regularly updated.

The nominated element's inclusion in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to nomination. Rather, a submitting State Party may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but has already duly included the nominated element on an inventory-in-progress.

Nomination demonstrates that the element satisfies Criterion U.5: Yes
No

Examiner's comments on the nomination's conformity with Criterion U.5

The examiner should comment on whether the submitting State has adequately demonstrated that the element is included within an inventory, and has shown that the inventory was drawn up in conformity with the Convention, especially Article 11(b) requiring the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations.

(100 to 200 words)

The element was included into an inventory of intangible cultural heritage of the submitting State. In June 2008 it was listed in the 2nd Non-Material Culture Heritage Protection List of China. The Chinese state authorities are propagating the movable-type for the general public. The movable-type printing technique was demonstrated at the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. In 2008, wooden movable-type printing was listed on the 2nd Batch of The Intangible Culture Heritage at National Level. In 2009, the State Council of China, listed Wang Chaohui and Lin Chuyin as Representative Bearers at the national Level. It is clear that the State can define the various elements of the nominated intangible cultural heritage present on its territory with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

The examination report shall include 'a recommendation to the Committee to inscribe, or not to inscribe, the nominated element'.

Recommend to inscribe:

Recommend not to inscribe:

Examiner's comments on the overall recommendation

To be inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, an element must satisfy all of the criteria. If the examiner concludes that any criterion is not satisfied, the overall recommendation cannot be to inscribe the element. The examiner may wish to offer further explanation of any such negative conclusions, or may wish to suggest to the Committee certain conditions it might consider attaching to a favourable decision to inscribe the element.

(150 to 300 words)

In my view, the element of 'Wooden Movable-Type Printing' deserves to be listed on the Urgent Protection of Non-Material Cultural Heritage List of the UNESCO. It is necessary much propagate this cultural heritage around the world. It is a valuable achievement of Chinese culture, which enriched the world civilization. The convenience and easy use of the movable-type printing was evaluated by the peoples with the alphabetical system of writing, and when around 1450, Johannes Gutenberg introduced what is generally regarded as an independent invention of movable type in Europe, it caused a real breakthrough in the spread of culture and popularization of knowledge. Thus, the invention of movable-type printing in China had a really great impetus to the progress of world civilization. The element constitutes the intangible cultural heritage as defined in the article 2 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Unfortunately it is in a risk of radical changing or even disappearance. The living bearers of the tradition are aged people and they are quite few in number. The young people are seeking the modern education and unfortunately are not too much interesting to inherit this laborious craft, Still, there is a need to publish traditional Chinese genealogies in the modern Chinese society, and there is a chance to save this unique and worth art. The submitting State's assessment of the element's of the risk of the element's disappearing and its valuability is accurate, realistic and complete. The safeguarding measures are elaborated (actually the people engaged into the craft and local authorities have done a lot on the project) and may enable the community to continue the practice and tradition of the movable-type printing technique.