



RedList
ListeRouge
ICOM



RED LIST OF CHINESE CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK



*The cultural heritage of China is protected
by national and international laws and agreements:*

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Article 22
(4 December 1982)

Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, Articles 151, 264,
and 324 to 329 (1 July 1979)

Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics
(19 November 1982)

Regulations concerning the Implementation of the Law
of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics
(13 May 2003)

Protection and Management Methods on Hominid and Ancient
Vertebrate Fossils (3 July 2006)

Administrative Measures for the Entry-Exit Examination
and Verification of Cultural Relics (3 July 2007)

Standards for the Entry-Exit Examination and Verification
of Cultural Relics (3 April 2007)

Interim Provisions on the Limitation of the Export of Works
of the Famous Late Painters after 1949, and Interim Provisions
on the Limitation of the Export of Works of the Famous Late
Painters from 1795 to 1949 (15 November 2001)

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

Convention
for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict
(The Hague, 14 May 1954)

UNESCO Convention
on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit
Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
(Paris, 14 November 1970)

UNIDROIT Convention
on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects
(Rome, 24 June 1995)

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

The Government of the People's Republic of China has signed
agreements or memorandums of understanding
on the prevention of stealing, excavation and illegal trafficking
of cultural goods with the following countries:
Australia, Chile, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Italy, Peru,
Philippines, Turkey, United States of America, and Venezuela.

If you suspect an item may be the object of illicit trade, please contact:

State Administration of Cultural Heritage

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Stone statue of Buddha, Tang Dynasty, 98 x 28 cm.
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Introduction

China's rich cultural heritage reflects the diversity and complexity of the cultures that have flourished there for the past ten millennia. Since the mid-19th century, large numbers of invaluable antiquities and other cultural objects have been stolen, and many of them taken abroad. During recent decades, in spite of increased efforts made by the Chinese government to protect China's past through the enhancement of national and international legislative and other collaborative efforts, the looting of Chinese sites and the illicit trade in antiquities for domestic as well as international markets have developed as serious threats that cause irreparable harm to China's unique heritage. It is therefore the responsibility of everyone – both inside and outside of China – to help preserve this heritage for future generations.

Objective

This *Red List* has been designed as a tool to assist museums, dealers in art and antiquities, collectors, and customs and law enforcement officials in the identification of objects that may have been looted and illicitly exported from China. To facilitate identification, the *Red List* illustrates a number of categories of objects that are at risk of being illicitly traded on the international antiquities market.

Objects of the types illustrated hereafter are protected by Chinese legislation that specifically prohibits their unauthorised export and sale. Therefore, ICOM appeals to museums, auction houses, dealers in art and antiquities, and collectors not to purchase such objects without first having checked thoroughly their origin and provenance documentation.

Because of the great diversity of Chinese objects, styles and periods, the *Red List of Chinese Cultural Objects at Risk* is not exhaustive, and any antiquity originating from China should be subjected to detailed scrutiny and precautionary measures.

Eleven ICOM *Red Lists* published to date:

- Red List of African Archaeological Objects*, 2000
- Red List of Latin American Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2003
- Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk*, 2003
- Red List of Afghanistan Antiquities at Risk*, 2006
- Red List of Peruvian Antiquities at Risk*, 2007
- Red List of Cambodian Antiquities at Risk*, 2009
- Red List of Endangered Cultural Objects of Central America and Mexico*, 2009
- Emergency Red List of Haitian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010
- Red List of Chinese Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010
- Red List of Colombian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010
- Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2011

THE RED LIST INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

(The photographs reproduced do not depict stolen objects; they illustrate the categories of cultural objects that are vulnerable to illicit traffic.)

ICOM wishes to thank the following institutions for the illustrations provided: China Cultural Relics Information and Consultation Center, The Palace Museum, China Numismatic Museum (Beijing), Shaanxi History Museum (Xi'an), Ethnic Costume Museum of the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, Jingzhou Museum (Hubei), and the Wudangshan Museum (Hubei). © All photographic rights are reserved by the China Cultural Relics Information and Consultation Center.

Ceramics

From the Neolithic Age (ca. 8000 BC) to 1949 AD

Monochrome, painted, glazed, and tri-coloured pottery; celadon, white, coloured, and blue-and-white porcelain; the shapes vary from bottles, jars, pots, bowls, dishes, to human figures and animal models. [illus. 1-2-3-4-5]



1. Pottery jar, Neolithic Age, 50 x 18.4 cm.

2. Five-colour porcelain covered jar, Ming Dynasty, 32 x 38 cm.

3. Painted earthenware horseman, Tang Dynasty, 32.5 x 32 cm.

4. Celadon zun vase, Southern and Northern Dynasties, 79 x 19 cm.

5. Blue-and-white porcelain vase, Ming Dynasty, 45 x 24 cm.

Sculpture

From the Neolithic Age (ca. 8000 BC) to 1949 AD

Portraits, figures and models in stone, wood, metal, and brick. [illus. 6-7-8-9]



6. Head of a Buddha statue, Southern and Northern Dynasties, 86 x 56 cm.

7. Stone stele of a Buddha and two Bodhisattvas, Six Dynasties, 37.6 cm.

8. Painted stone panel depicting a warrior, Five Dynasties, 113.5 x 58 cm.

9. Stone statue of a Bodhisattva, Tang Dynasty, 39 cm.

CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK

Metals (bronze, gold, silver, lead, tin, iron, etc.)

From the Xia Dynasty (ca. 2070 BC) to 1949 AD

Bronze: food, wine and water vessels, musical instruments, weapons, chariot and horse hardware, everyday utensils, and other ornaments. [illus. 10-11-12-13-14-15]



10. Bronze *gui* container, Western Zhou Dynasty, 24 x 26 cm.

11. Bronze *ding* tripod, Western Zhou Dynasty, 46 x 32 cm.

12. Bronze mirror, Han Dynasty, Ø 18 cm.

13. Bronze bell, Spring and Autumn period, 70 x 23 cm.

14. Bronze *gu* vessel, Shang Dynasty, 15 x 10.7 cm.

15. Bronze *jue* vessel, Shang Dynasty, 22.8 cm.

Gold and silver: religious or utilitarian objects, and ornaments. [illus. 16-17]

16. Gold plaque, Warring States period, 8 x 13.8 cm.

17. Gilded silver pitcher, Southern Song Dynasty, 23.4 cm.

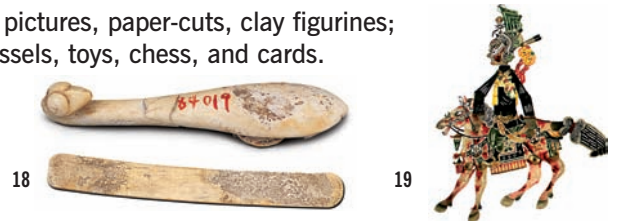


Folk objects

Everyday utensils and folk arts, such as New Year pictures, paper-cuts, clay figurines; also objects such as lamps, locks, tea and food vessels, toys, chess, and cards. [illus. 18-19]

18. Ivory belt hook (5.8 cm) and tablet (8.2 cm), Sui Dynasty.

19. Leather silhouette puppet, Qing Dynasty, 16 x 8 cm.



Jade and semi-precious stones

From the Neolithic Age (ca. 8000 BC) to 1949 AD

Ritual tools, burial objects and everyday utensils. [illus. 20-21-22-23-24]



20. White jade *bi* disc, Warring States period, Ø 22 cm.

21. Jade "pig dragon" (*zhulong*), Neolithic Age, Ø 7.2 cm.

22. White jade ornament, Yuan Dynasty, 4.1 x 7.1 cm.

23. White jade *apsara*, Song Dynasty, 2.7 x 5.8 cm.

24. Jade *cong* tube, Neolithic Age, 31.5 x Ø 7.8 cm.

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Painting and calligraphy

Prior to 1949 AD

Painting and calligraphy including text, portraits, landscapes, birds and flowers. [illus. 25-26-27-28]

25. Painting hand scroll, Ming and Qing Dynasties, 120 x 200 cm.

26. Wall painting from a tomb, Tang Dynasty, 110 x 68 cm.

27. *Thangka*, Qing Dynasty, 90 x 54 cm.

28. Calligraphy hand scroll, Qing Dynasty, 103 x 63 cm.



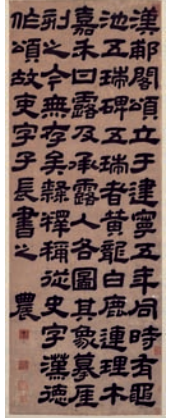
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26



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Inscriptions

From the Shang Dynasty (1600 BC) to 1949 AD

Ancient characters cast, engraved or impressed on such materials as animal bone, turtle shell, pottery, stone, clay, bamboo, wood, metal, etc. [illus. 29-30-31]

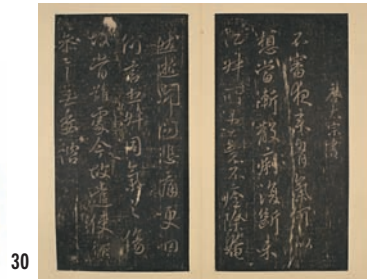
29. Oracle bone, Shang Dynasty, 29.8 x 22.2 x 4.4 cm.

30. Rubbing book, Song Dynasty, 18 x 24 cm.

31. Wooden slip, Han Dynasty, length: 37 cm.



29



30



31

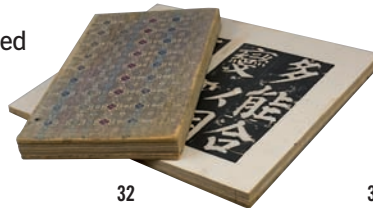
Rubbings

From the Tang Dynasty (618 AD) to 1949 AD

Calligraphy or images taken from steles, cliffs, inscriptions and decorations of vessels; reproduced on paper in black or red ink. [illus. 32-33]

32. Stone stele rubbing, Qing Dynasty, 59 x 52 cm.

33. Rubbing of bronze inscriptions, Ming and Qing Dynasties, 46 x 32 cm.



32



33

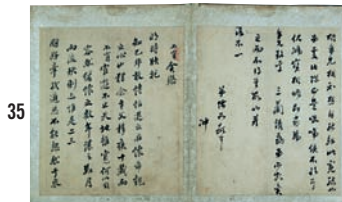
Books and documents

From the Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC) to 1949 AD

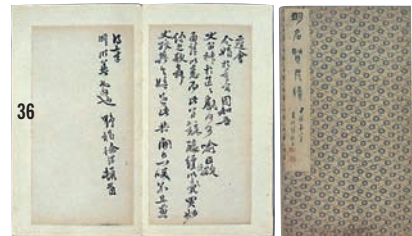
Inscriptions and decorative patterns written, carved or printed on a wide variety of materials such as bamboo, wood, silk or paper. These include bamboo and wood slips, woodblock-printed books, rare archival documents, letters, maps and handwriting. [illus. 34-35-36]



34



35



36

34. Bamboo slips, Han Dynasty, 2.1 x 23 cm (one slip).

35. Letters, Ming Dynasty, 30 x 41 cm.

36. Handwritten letter from a literatus, Ming Dynasty, 32.5 x 28.5 cm.

CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK

Architectural elements

Prior to 1949 AD

Architectural elements and ornamental objects made of wood, stone, brick, tile, and metal. [illus. 37-38]

37. Glazed decorative element, Ming Dynasty, 85 x 80 cm.

38. Wooden ridge beam decoration, Ming Dynasty, length: 150 cm.

37



38



Lacquer

From the Neolithic Age (ca. 8000 BC) to 1949 AD

Cups, boxes, containers and desks, with wooden or fabric surfaces painted with lacquer. [illus. 39-40]

39. Oval lacquer cup, Western Han Dynasty, 17.5 x 9.2 x 5.4 cm.

40. Painted lacquer container, Western Han Dynasty, 34 x 24 cm.

39



40



Numismatics

Prior to 1949 AD

Coins and paper currency, moulds for casting coins. [illus. 41-42-43-44-45]

41



42



43



44



45



41. Bronze spade-shaped currency, Spring and Autumn period, 5.8 x 2.8 cm.

42. Gilded bronze coin, Tang Dynasty, Ø 2.4 cm.

43. Silver ingot, Southern Song Dynasty, 11.4 x 7 x 4.7 cm.

44. Mould for casting coins, Southern Dynasty, 10.5 x 10.8 x 10.6 cm.

45. Paper currency, Qing Dynasty, 18.9 x 9.4 cm.

Textile and accessories

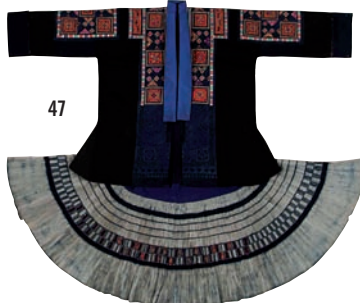
Prior to 1949 AD

Garments and personal adornments of various ethnic groups. [illus. 46-47-48-49]

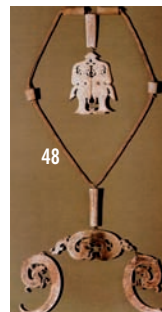
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48



49



46. Embroidered silk robe, Qing Dynasty, 130 x 95 cm.

47. Dress of the Miao people, Republican period, 120 x 60 cm.

48. Pendant, Spring and Autumn period, 5.9 x 4.8 x 1.5 cm.

49. Jade hair ornament, Neolithic Age, 23 cm.



The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is the main international organisation of museums and museum professionals committed to promoting and protecting the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

With almost 30,000 members in 137 countries, ICOM is an international network of museums and museum professionals specialised in a wide range of museological and heritage-related disciplines.

Created in 1946, ICOM is a non-profit non-governmental organisation (NGO) maintaining formal relations with UNESCO and having a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural objects is among the top priorities of ICOM. The *Red List of Chinese Cultural Objects at Risk* has been designed to prevent looting, theft, and the illegal export and sale of cultural objects of China, and thus to help protect the country's cultural heritage. This publication is an addition to the collection of *Red Lists* already published by ICOM for Africa, Latin America, Iraq, Afghanistan, Peru, Cambodia, Central America and Mexico, Haiti, and Colombia.

<http://icom.museum>

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