

## The Development and Trends Of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative List<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract**—Paper expounds the Chinese intangible cultural heritage list system by quantitative statistics and data analysis. According to analyze data and current problems of Chinese intangible cultural heritage list, it puts forward development trends and way to solving problems.

**Keywords**—China; development; trends; intangible cultural heritage; list

### I. INTRODUCTION

The UNESCO announced "human oral and non-material heritage representative work list" on May 18, 2001. It pushed the governments paid more attention to protect national intangible cultural heritage in the world. In October 2003, the 32nd session of the UNESCO conference through the convention on the protection of intangible cultural heritage, explicitly proposed "the human intangible cultural heritage representative work list" and "urgently needs to protect the intangible cultural heritage list" for the construction of the rules. As one of the contracting parties, the government of China promised to protect and inherit the outstanding human culture, promoted the sustainable development of human society from the aspects of social, economic and legal environment.

So far, the 217 projects from about 140 countries were listed in the human intangible cultural heritage representative work list, 27 projects from 16 countries were listed in the need to protect the intangible cultural heritage list. Among them, 29 projects in China were listed as human intangible cultural heritage representative work list, such as the Chinese Dragon Boat Festival, Chinese calligraphy, paper cutting, the traditional wooden construction techniques. 7 projects in China were listed as the need to protect the non-material cultural heritage list, such as spun silk embroideries tradition of Li nationality, Chinese traditional wooden arch bridge construction techniques.

Nowadays, China has become the most populous nation in the world human intangible cultural heritage representative work list.

### II. THE DEVELOPING COURSE OF CHINESE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REPRESENTATIVE LIST

In the early 1950's, the Chinese government organized departments and experts to investigate the minority cultural heritages in China, then taken measures to protect and nurture a large number of traditional arts and crafts industry. The government named 200 people as the national arts and

crafts masters [1]. This was the beginning of the heritage protection in China.

In 1979, Ministry of culture, State ethnic affairs commission, China federation of literary and art circles had jointly initiated compilation work of "China national folk literature and art books", More than 30 years, hundreds of cultural workers participated in writing the series books. In 2010, the ten sets of books were completed and contained 298 volumes of 395 of the 450 million words in total [2].

In 2003, State ethnic affairs commission, Ministry of culture, Ministry of finance, and China federation of literary and art circles had jointly launched the Chinese national folk culture protection project. The project plan cost 17 years. By 2020, China will preliminarily establish a relatively complete intangible cultural heritage protection system.

In 2004, Ministry of culture, Ministry of finance had jointly issued "Chinese folk culture protection plan". It was the first time to draw up a plan for establishing a national folk culture protection list.

In 2006, the state council of China had issued a decree which name was "The first batch of national level intangible cultural heritage list". It marked the first batch of national level intangible cultural heritage project formally established, which involving 758 units to be protected, covers 518 national catalogue.

In 2007, China had carried out the first intangible cultural heritage census all over the country. The work was a scientific, comprehensive, systematic foundation for Chinese national intangible cultural heritage system.

In 2008, Chinese intangible cultural heritage protection had made a breakthrough. The "Level 4 protection list system" has been gradually established. At the same year, the government also set up the "Intangible cultural heritage inheritance person protection system" and effectively promoted the "Cultural heritage awareness day".

In 2009, the CPC central committee and the state council of China had jointly issued a number of important documents, which established principles and tasks about intangible cultural heritage protection works in China. The documents determined the "Level 4 protection list system", which included national level, provincial level, city level and country level. The system included naming, awarding, commendation, reward and others ways for protecting intangible cultural heritage and representative inheritance persons in China.

In 2010, the first intangible cultural heritage census was over. The census cost about 800 million CNY and held more

than 71,000 times symposiums, visited more than 1.15 million folk artists, collected about 290,000 projects of precious objects and information, written 9.96 million words of census, made 234,000 hours audio records, 183,000 hours video records, 4.774 million pieces of camera shootings, more than 142,000 copies of compiled census data. The first intangible cultural heritage census counted more than 970,000 projects of intangible cultural heritage in China [3].

In 2011, "The intangible cultural heritage law" was enacted in China. It put forward normative requirements of intangible cultural heritage protection as three aspects, which include survey system, directory system and transmission system. The law especially specified intangible cultural heritage representative projects in the chapter 3. It marked that Chinese intangible cultural heritage protection took to a legal orbit.

In 2012, four provinces in China have been released the 4th batch of provincial level intangible cultural heritage protection list.

### III. THE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS OF CHINESE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REPRESENTATIVE LIST

#### A. projects Lists

Ministry of culture established the national level intangible cultural heritage representative list which must be from the provincial level. And the provincial intangible cultural heritage representative list must be from city level or country level.

In 2006, 2008 and 2011, the state council announced three batches of national level intangible cultural heritage list, a total of 1,219 projects (Table I). The system of national, provincial, city and county level list has been basically formed. From total view, Chinese governments at all levels have issued 8,786 provincial intangible cultural heritage project (Table II), 18,186 city level intangible cultural heritage projects and 53,776 county level intangible cultural heritage project [4].

For the current data of Chinese intangible cultural heritage projects, there have been more than 70,000 projects in the 4 level intangible cultural heritage protection systems [5]. But it only occupied 7% in the total 970,000 projects of Chinese intangible cultural heritage resources. From these data, we can know the Chinese intangible cultural heritage resources have a large exploring space and a serious protection pressure.

TABLE I. THE NATINAL LEVEL OF CHINESE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

Element	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch
Folk literature	31	53	41	125
The traditional music	72	67	16	155
Traditional dance	41	55	15	111
Traditional operas	92	46	20	158
Traditional art	51	45	13	109
Traditional skills	89	97	26	212
Traditional medicine	9	8	4	21
shuochang	46	50	18	114
Folk customs	70	51	23	144

Element	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch
Traditional sports, recreational and acrobatics	17	38	15	70
Total	518	510	191	1219

TABLE II. THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL OF CHINESE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

Rank	Province	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch	Total
1	Zhejiang province	64	225	246	202	737
2	Hebei province	130	97	139	111	477
3	Guizhou province	91	202	147	/	440
4	Sichuan province	189	137	89	/	415
5	Henan province	148	129	95	/	372
6	Jiangxi province	62	102	206	/	370
7	Shaanxi province	145	100	116	/	361
8	Guangdong province	78	104	123	52	357
9	Fujian province	101	98	82	73	354
10	Shanxi Province	105	141	82	/	328
11	The Tibet autonomous region	38	83	101	101	323
12	Shandong province	157	150	/	/	307
13	The guangxi zhuang autonomous region	58	63	86	98	305
14	Inner Mongolia autonomous region	140	111	48	/	299
15	Jiangsu province	123	112	63	/	298
16	Chongqing city	62	97	119	/	278
17	Yunnan province	147	124	/	/	271
18	Gansu province	85	88	91	/	264
19	Anhui province	83	90	81	/	254
20	Hubei province	97	66	90	/	253
21	The xinjiang uygur autonomous region	108	77	52	/	237
22	Beijing city	48	105	59	/	212
23	Hunan province	74	84	50	/	208
24	Liaoning province	60	54	41	35	190
25	Heilongjiang province	57	79	47	/	183
26	Jilin province	75	105	/	/	180
27	Shanghai city	83	45	29	/	157
28	Qinghai province	33	69	48	/	150
29	Tianjin city	30	50	/	/	80
30	Hainan province	/	/	/	72	72
31	The ningxia hui autonomous region	31	23	/	/	54
32	Taiwan province	/	/	/	/	/
33	The Hong Kong special administrative region	/	/	/	/	/
34	The Macao special administrative region	/	/	/	/	/
Total		2774	3010	2330	672	8786

According to the provincial and city governments published data sorting

### B. Representative Inheritance Person Lists

To strengthen the protection of representative inheritance person, the ministry of culture named four batches national level representative inheritance person lists which included 1986 people (Table III). And the provincial level representative inheritance person lists also contained 9,564 people. Since 2008, the central government has appropriated 8,000 CNY per person per year for supporting inheritance person to inherit intangible cultural heritage. Since 2011, the subsidy standards have been improved to 10,000 CNY per person per year [6].

TABLE III. THE FOUR BATCHES NATIONAL LEVEL OF CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE INHERITANCE PERSONS

Element	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch	Total	Proportion
Folk literature	32	/	25	20	77	3.8%
The traditional music	/	104	96	31	231	11.7%
Traditional dance	/	72	56	49	177	8.9%
Traditional operas	/	304	196	111	611	30.8%
Traditional art	72	/	83	76	231	11.7%
Traditional skills	78	/	136	112	326	16.4%
Traditional medicine	29	/	24	21	74	3.7%
shuochang	/	66	51	34	151	7.6%
Folk customs	/	5	25	31	61	3.0%
Traditional sports, recreational and acrobatics	15	/	19	13	47	2.4%
Total	226	551	711	498	1986	100%

According to the state council published data sorting

Through the Chinese national level representative inheritance person lists and data analysis, this paper can get the following conclusions.

1) *The age structure was obvious too old (Table IV):* 63.2% of people distributed from 60 to 90 years old (1920-1949). Considering the intangible cultural heritage skills need 5-8 years to full inheritance, the government must increasing investment and training speed to reverse the adverse situation of intangible cultural heritage skills.

TABLE IV. THE AGE STRUCTURE STATISTICAL TABLES OF NATIONAL LEVEL OF CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE INHERITANCE PERSONS

Age Group	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch	Total	Proportion
And before 1909	0	1	1	0	2	0.1%
1910-1919	3	7	2	0	12	0.6%

Age Group	The 1st batch	The 2nd batch	The 3rd batch	The 4th batch	Total	Proportion
1920-1929	44	55	64	39	202	10.2%
1930-1939	47	122	189	98	456	23.0%
1940-1949	61	185	246	162	654	33.0%
1950-1959	52	84	130	99	365	18.4%
1960-1969	17	83	70	86	256	12.8%
1970-1979	2	14	9	14	39	1.9%
In 1980 and beyond	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	226	551	711	498	1986	100%

According to the state council published data sorting

2) *The gender structure was relatively stable (Table V):* The gender structure was relatively stable (Table V). The ratio was stable at 7:3. It showed that the men have more opportunities to contact and learn intangible cultural heritage projects than women in China in history. On the other hand, it also showed that the Chinese government should create more educational opportunities to expand cultural heritage space for women.

TABLE V. THE GENDER STATISTICS TABLES OF NATIONAL LEVEL OF CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE INHERITANCE PERSONS

Batch	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	
The 1st batch	184	81.4%	37	18.6%	226
The 2nd batch	401	72.7%	150	27.3%	551
The 3rd batch	542	76.2%	169	23.8%	711
The 4th batch	372	74.6%	126	25.4%	498
Total	1499	75.5%	482	24.6%	1986

According to the state council published data sorting

3) *Ethnic composition changed significantly (Table VI):* The proportion of minority intangible cultural heritage representative person gradually increased from 18.9% to 26.2% in the national level of Chinese representative inheritance persons lists. This showed that Chinese government put more attentions on the minority intangible cultural heritage protections. But on the whole, the proportion of minority intangible cultural heritage representative person was also low.

TABLE VI. THE ETHNIC STATISTICS TABLES OF NATIONAL LEVEL OF CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE INHERITANCE PERSONS

Batch	The Han Nationality		National Minority		Total
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	
The 1st batch	174	77%	52	23%	226
The 2nd batch	447	81.1%	104	18.9%	551
The 3rd batch	534	75.1%	177	24.9%	711
The 4th batch	368	73.8%	130	26.2%	498
Total	1523	76.7%	463	23.3%	1986

According to the state council published data sorting

#### IV. THE TRENDS OF CHINESE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REPRESENTATIVE LIST

##### A. Systematic Improvement of intangible cultural heritage representative list

Intangible cultural heritage was promoted by UNESCO as a counterpart to the World Heritage that focuses mainly on tangible aspects of culture. According to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the intangible cultural heritage was defined as follows: Intangible cultural heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage [7]. There have been 12 projects belong to "cultural space" class in the UNESCO representative lists of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity (Table VII).

TABLE VII. THE STATISTICS TABLES OF CULTURAL SPACE PROJECTS IN HUMAN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REPRESENTATIVE WORK LIST

Batch	Year	Element	Member state
The 1st batch	2001	The Cultural Space of the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit of the Congos of Villa Mella	Dominican Republic
		The Cultural Space of Sosso-Bala	Guinea
		The Cultural Space of Jemaa el-Fna Square	Morocco
		The Cultural Space and Oral Culture of the Semeiskie	Russian Federation
		The Cultural Space of the Boysun District	Uzbekistan
The 2nd batch	2003	The Kihnu Cultural Space	Estonia
		The Cultural Space of the Yaaral and Degal	Mali
The 3rd batch	2005	The Cultural Space of Palenque de San Basilio	Colombia
		The Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum	Jordan
		The Space of Gong Culture	Viet Nam
The 5th batch	2009	The Candombe and its socio-cultural space: a community practice	Uruguay
		Suiti cultural space in Alsunga	Latvia

According to the UNESCO published data sorting

From the Angle of the convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO, or from the intangible cultural heritage practice point by the governments all over the world, it all showed that the "cultural space" was an important element in the intangible cultural heritage system. The state council of China also issued the "the interim measures of national intangible cultural heritage representative work", which ruled the specific requirements about "cultural space" in the 3rd chapter 6 parts in the article [8].

So, the Chinese intangible cultural heritage representative list should be with the international trend as soon as possible and create the "cultural space" element as a new type in intangible cultural protection system.

##### B. Systematic Reorganization of intangible cultural heritage representative list

In the first paragraph of article 2, the UNESCO definition of intangible cultural heritage was oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage. From the above definition of UNESCO, the national language was also the 1st type of "the code table of national folk culture protection project survey manual" in China [9]. So, the language was an important component content in the UNESCO representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

The inheritance of languages and dialects is a kind of group behaviors. But existence intangible heritage protection works have based on the individual inheritance person and project. The group protection works were a new field, which have some great operating difficulties. On the other side, many minorities gradually gave up national language with Chinese historical process of popularizing mandarin. the "national language" and "folk literature" has not been distinguished in the classification system of Chinese intangible cultural heritage. People often think that myths, legends, stories, songs, epic, proverb and long poem were the language.

So, the Chinese intangible cultural heritage representative list should be optimized on the basis of its historical and social value.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

<sup>1</sup> major program of key research base focused on the humanities and social science of Ministry of Education: Reach on the Construction and Service of Archival Information Resources based on Public Requirement (Grant No. 2009JJD870001)

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