



## MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER - NOMINATION FORM

**Republic of Korea - Buljo jikji simche yo jeol (vol.II)**

### **PART A: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**

Buljo jikji simche yojeol(Hereafter Jikji) contains the essentials of Zen Buddhism compiled by priest Baegun in late Goryeo period.

The teaching of many Buddhas and Great priests was carefully chosen so that everyone can come to the core of Zen. Other names of this work are Jikji simche yojeol, Jikji simche, Jikji simgyeong, and Jikji. This book was printed at the old Heungdeok-sa(興德寺) temple in Cheongju city, using movable metal types in July 1377. Priest Seokcan and Daldam helped the publication while female priest Myodeok offered a donation for the project. Jikji was printed in two volumes; the first volume has not been found yet and the second volume has been kept in the National library of France.

While some earlier metal type printings were mentioned in the old Korean books, this book, Jikji, is the world's oldest movable metal type printing evidence available and shows us an important technical change in printing history of humanity.

#### **1. Identity and Location**

1.1 Name of documentary heritage: Buljo jikji simche yojeol(vol. II)

The second volume of "Anthology of Great Buddhist Priests' Zen Teachings"

1.2 Country

Printed in Cheongju city, Korea. Collected in France

1.3 State, province or region

Paris

1.4 Address

Bibliothèque nationale, 58, rue Richelieu, Paris

### 1.5 Name of organization or institution

Bibliothèque nationale de France

## 2 Legal Information

### 2.1 Owner

Bibliothèque nationale de France; 58, rue Richelieu, Paris

### 2.2 Custodian

Bibliothèque nationale de France; 58, rue Richelieu, Paris

### 2.3 Legal Status

- (a) Category of ownership: Public property
- (b) Details of legal and administrative provisions for the preservation of the documentary heritage : Kept and supervised in accordance with the Law of the National Library of France
- (c) Accessibility:  
In order to preserve it properly, the original work is not allowed to be displayed for public viewing. Only a photocopy may be put on public display.
- (d) Copyright status: public domain

### 2.4 Responsible Administration

- (a) Details must be given of the mechanism or organization already established, or to be established, to ensure the proper management of the documentary heritage: It is now preserved well with other collections in accordance with the general regulations of the National Library of France.

Organization: Bibliothèque nationale de France

Address: 58, rue Richelieu, Paris Tel (1) 47-03-81-26

## 3 Identification

### 3.1 Description and inventory

Background of the writing: Buljo jikji simche yojeol was published in the seventh lunar month of 1377. Examining the forwards by Yi Saek and Seong Sa-dal and

Baegun's summary, it is apparent that Priest Baegun inherited the ideas in the book when he was 54 years old from his teacher Seogok Cheonggong, a Zen(Buddhist Mediation) master. Priest Baegun wrote the book to continue and transmit the ideas of his teacher. He composed it in September 1372 at the age of 75 while staying on Mt. Seongbul, and his wish was that his disciples propagate the ideas contained in the book.

Contents of the writings: Jikji comprises historical biographies such as Gyeongdeok jeondeungnok and Seonmun yeomsong, which were to be studied by the student monks after completing the study of the teachings necessary to understand the essence of Zen, including the Buddha's sayings from his last moments, letters of praise, letters and poems on drawings, educational phrases and sentences, songs, writings, orthodox teachings, and dialogues. The key words of the title of the name of the book, "jikji simche" were derived from the famous phrase about attaining enlightenment through the practice of Zen, "Jikji insim gyeonseong seongbul" meaning the attainment of an enlightened state by direct appeal to the mind. It also means that when we come to see through Zen what the mind is, then we come to understand that mind to be that of the Buddha. Because human nature is pure from the beginning, when the mind sees that it is pure and practices asceticism, one becomes a part of Buddha and one's mind becomes that of the Buddha. In other words, when one is enlightened through Zen, one's mind becomes the Buddha. Three hundred and seven verses in 154 groups were recorded in Jikji. The old priest put together a book of high standard by selecting only the essentials of Zen to teach and propagate to pupils.

Method of typesetting and publishing of Jikji: The origin of metal type printing during the Goryeo dynasty is still not correctly known. However, Jikji has characteristics which are possible only through metal typesetting. Especially when we take into consideration the fact that there are no pairs of identical type on a single printed sheet whereas the type identical to that on one page found on another, it is clear that the foundry sand-casting method which enables the production of the necessary number of a type in reverse form through the use of one model character was not used. Accordingly, the type matrices for casting the types used to print Jikji were carved one by one, and there is the possibility that wood, metal, and glue were used as materials. Considering that type carved directly on metal plate can not be regarded as movable metal type, that there are specks which are characteristic of cast metal type, and that the phrase "printed using metal types" is recorded at the end of the book, beeswax-casting is the only type-casting method that could have been used. Although Jikji is a crude book, printed with metal type at a temple, it has great significance in that it was printed at a local temple when Korea was under Mongolian dominance,

thus maintaining the Goryeo Dynasty tradition of printing with movable metal type. Jikji was printed with metal type in 1377 at the Heungdeok-sa Temple, when there was a great demand for learning the Zen way of Priest Baegun. However, the number of copies was limited because of the methods of typesetting and printing. When the original objective of propagation proved difficult, xylographic printing of the book, together with The Analects of Priest Baegun was carried out the following year (1378) at the Chwiam-sa Temple, paid for with lay donations. Accordingly, it might be said that the edition of Jikji printed with movable metal type has its significance in enabling us to understand the characteristics of the history of printing using metal types during the Goryeo dynasty, while the woodblock printing of the same book had value in propagating the Zen way of Baegun.

Restoration of metal type of Jikji: A metal type professional Mr. O Guk-jin who was designated by the Korean government as important intangible cultural properties 101, restored the types of Jikji in 1996. The method of casting he used then was the beeswax casting method. He first experimented exhaustively with both methods, i.e., foundry sand casting because he found that no other method could restore the types used in printing Jikji. Hence, there can be no other opinions about the type casting method used for the book.

### 3.2 Bibliographic/Registration details

Jikji(vol.II) is a typographic book printed from movable metal type. The priest Baegun, whose Buddhist name was Gyeonghan, contributed to its compilation. Jikji(vol.II) is made up of 39 leaves, printed on both sides, with one front cover and one back cover, It is 24.6cm high and 17.0cm wide and is bound with five saddle stitches, following the style of traditional Korean bookbinding. It is larger than Chinese or Japanese books were at that time, as was usually the case with Korean books. Because of the larger size, most Korean books were bound with five saddle stitches while Chinese or Japanese books were bound with four. Bibliographical characteristics of Jikji(vol.II): Taking the photographic reproduction of the metal printed edition of Jikji, as a point of departure, the bibliographical characteristics of the book are roughly as follows:

- The right and left margins are not straight and there are many skewed letters.
- The density of the color of the printed characters is not uniform. Some characters are completely black while others are only partly visible. This was due to the unevenness of the printing surface.
- The four edges of the printing plate have fixed, single edges. They are fixed

at the upper and lower lines, delimiting the frame of the printing plate. There is a high probability that the plate was cast by the sand foundry method.

- There are 11 lines on each page. The number of characters in each line is not the same, because the types are not all of the same size. Printed lines are composed of 18 to 20 characters each, showing a difference of one or two characters. Indentations make the lines look uneven and there are points where the upper and lower strokes of adjacent characters overlap.
- Two kinds of types, medium and small-sized, were used, with the medium-sized ones used for the main text and the small ones used for annotations. It is also observed that the small type was frequently used in place of the medium-sized type when there were not enough types of the characters needed or the correct type could not be found.
- When a character appears on a single page in several places, the type used is not uniform and the printed characters appear different. However, the same types were used again for other pages.
- Some characters are upside down.
- There are many specks in the printed characters.
- Unlike wood grain, the grain of the cut edges of the material used for the type runs in multiple directions.
- On the backside of page 2, there is a word where a character has been omitted in the casting process and a circle drawn in its place with the missing character handwritten underneath.
- Specks can be found, and there is a case where a stroke was not cut out of a type block.
- Some stretches of strokes reached the border and some crossed it.
- The folded edge of the pages has no heukgu (a blank line) or eomi (a figure that resembles a swallow's bill), underneath which the title of the book is generally printed. The page number is printed underneath this. Type was set only for the number of the page and the title of the topic. Though the titles of sessions, such as "Jikjiha," are present, the shapes of the characters are not exactly the same. Investigations of character shapes and the organization of the book reveal that two printing plates were used alternately. It was also found that one plate even lost a type block near the end of the printing.
- The place and the date of printing (Cheongju, July 1377) are printed at the end of the book. Matters about publishing, by a female Buddhist priest, are printed on the backside of this page.
- The cover and the first page were lost but were later restored.

3.3 Visual documentation, if appropriate (for example, photographs or a video of the documentary heritage)

## Four photocopies

### 3.4 History

Jikji(vol.II) is the world's oldest existing book printed with movable metal type. Information of the book, chronologically arranged, is as follows:

1. The book became known to the world when Maurice Courant published a supplement to the Bibliographie Coréenne in 1901. However, the actual book and contents could not be confirmed.
2. The circumstances under which the book left Korea were as follows. It had been in the collection of Collin de Plancy, a chargé d'affaires with the French Embassy in Seoul in 1887 during the reign of King Gojong. The book then went into the hands of Henri Vever, a collector of classics, and when he died in 1950, it was donated to the Bibliothèque nationale de France, where it has been ever since.
3. The book was placed on public display for the first time during the "International Book Year" in 1972. At this time, it was recognized as the oldest existing book printed with movable metal type.
4. The location of Heungdeok-sa Temple, where the book was printed, was confirmed when the museum of Cheongju University published the "Report on the Excavation of Temple Sites at Yeondang-ri, Uncheon-dong, Cheongju" in 1985.
5. An academic seminar on the Heungdeok-sa Temple site in Cheongju was held in June 1986 for the commemoration and academic recognition of the results of the excavation.
6. This academic meeting and on other continuing efforts led to the opening of the Cheongju Early Printings Museum at Cheongju City in March 1992.
7. In May 1995, the first academic meeting on international printing and publishing culture was held in Cheongju with "The Place of Korean Printing and Publishing Culture in the World" as its theme.
8. In February 1996, the metal type of Buljo jikji simche yojeol was replicated by Mr. O Guk-jin.

9. An international symposium on printing cultures of the East and West was held in September 1997 by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, the German Commission for UNESCO, and the Cheongju city. The fundamental objective of this symposium was to secure solid international recognition that Jikji is the world's oldest existing book printed by movable metal type.

### 3.5 Bibliography

The list of documents referenced is as follows:

1. Mourice Counrant, *Bibliographie Coréenne*, Paris 1894, 1901
2. *Bibliogthèque nationale, Le Livre*, Paris, 1972
3. *Bibliogthèque nationale, Trésors d'orient*, Paris 1973
4. Sohn, Pow-key, *Early Korean Typography*, Seoul, 1971
5. Korean Overseas Information Service, *Fruhe Koreanische Druckkunst*, Seoul, 1983
6. Ch'on, Hye-bong, *Buljo jikji simche yojeol*, Seoul 1987
7. Park, Moon Year trans., *Yeokju buljo jikji simche yojeol*. (Translations and annotations *Buljo jikji simche yojeol*) No. 1 of Cheongju Early Printings Museum Collection of Translations). Cheongju Early Printings Museum
8. Final Report of the International Symposium on Printing Cultures in East and West, by Korean National Commission for UNESCO, German Commission for UNESCO and Cheongju Early Printings Museum in 1997.

## 4 Management Plan

Today Jikji is kept and supervised at the National Library in France. However, more efficient supervision is expected if a committee for preserving it and supervising access to it is run jointly by Korea and France.

## 5 Assessment against the Selection Criteria

### 5.1 Assessment of the documentary heritage against each criterion

#### **Criterion 1 – Influence:**

The development of the human civilizations is accomplished through the spread of the knowledge, which started from efforts to organize and communicate information that led to the invention of languages, writing, printing, and the computer.

Printing has had the broadest influence. Woodblock printing has developed for the purpose of propagation of Buddhism at the beginning of the 8th century in

Korea. Buddhist sutras were carved under the auspices of the kingdom and representatives of the Buddhists. Huge projects to print Korea Tripitaka were carried out in the 11th and 13th centuries. The blocks were carved on both sides for a total of 162,000 folio pages. When valuable books of many libraries were lost in fires at the beginning of the 12th century, a new printing method using movable metal type was invented at the beginning of the 13th century so that the lost books could be reprinted. Movable type continued to be used for making more expensive books – for example, books for selected people or books on specialized themes. Some of the examples are Nammyeong cheon hwasang songjeungdoga (Poems of Priest Nammyong) and Gogyeum sangjeong yemun (Book on National Ceremony and Procedures), which are not extant today.

One which still exists today is Jikji, which was printed at Cheongju Heungdeok-sa Temple in July 1377. It is the oldest book printed with movable metal type in the world.

This printing method influenced the history of Oriental printing, and it is thought that it spread to Nuremberg-Strassburg-Mainz via Tabriz. The fact that European alphabets consist of only twenty-some letters made it easier to produce the type, and the matrices could be easily reused. Europeans worked out European methods of printing with movable metal type and developed the German printing press, using type cast using a mixture of lead and antimony. Korean printers used brass type, which contains zinc. Zinc disappears very easily at high temperatures.

The mechanization of printing brought about by the introduction of movable metal type has today been carried to its extreme with the development of computerized printing. In other words, the invention of printing with movable type was the turning point, which led to the transformation of the medieval mind into the modern one. In order to be able to study the development of printing with type and of communication, we have to cooperate to preserve the records of human achievement.

**Criterion 2 - Time:**

Jikji was written by Priest Baegun at Cheongju Heungdeok-sa Temple in September 1372, which was printed into the metal ones by his students Seokchan and Daldam under the auspices of Myodeok, who was a Buddhist nun. This was 70 years before the “42-Line Bible,” which was printed by Gutenberg in Germany between 1452 and 1455.

**Criterion 3 - Place:**

Cheongju Heungdeok-sa Temple, where Jikji was printed, was a Buddhist

temple in which many relics were found in the course of earthwork for a housing project in the Uncheon area by the Korean Land Development Authority in 1985. The housing project was stopped and the area was excavated by a team from the Cheongju University Museum. Although we do not know the year the temple was built or its size, there is an inscription at the last page that the second volume of Jikji were printed with movable metal type at Cheongju Heungdeok-sa Temple at the reign of King U in 1377. The time was 70 years earlier than the Gutenberg Bible printed in Germany. It was introduced in one of the articles of the UNESCO Courier in 1972 that the work is the oldest extant example of printing with movable metal type in the printing history of the world.

However, no one knew the exact location of Heungdeok-sa Temple until a drum and Buddhist bowls made of bronze and inscribed with the word Heungdeok-sa Temple were unearthed.

From excavations, we have found out the placement of the middle gate, a pagoda, the main hall and another large hall as well as some other buildings surrounding them. Here, archeologists had found a roof tile inscribed "Taejung Samnyeon('great works of three years')." This would mean that the building of the temple started in the 11th year of King Munsung of Shilla Dynasty (849). After the excavation was completed, the site was designated Historic Site No. 315 and government budget were allocated to build the Cheongju Early Printings Museum, a restoration of the main temple hall, with eighteen supporting columns arranged in six rows of three and double eaves, and a three-story pagoda. The construction took five years, from 1987 to 1991.

#### **Criterion 4 – People**

One hundred and forty-five Priest and Monks of India, China, and Korea are related in the contents of the book.

#### **Criterion 5-Subject/Theme**

The second volume of Jikji presents knowledge needed in order to understand Zen (Buddhist meditation) and recognize the truths propounded by all the Buddha of the past and their followers, from Priest Ahodaeyi to Priest Godeok. In the first part of the book the followers discuss truth in a question-and-answer format, while the last part contains ten poems of 'Great Success', which sing the happiness of arriving at the truth, fourteen poems which tell us that human beings are originally lonely, and a poem about the profound feelings that people often experience, and others.

Jikji simche, the central theme of this book, came from five famous precepts of the Buddhism which state that we are Buddhists in mind only if we see the minds of others through Zen (Buddhist meditation).

### **Criterion 6 – Form and Style**

All kinds of literature were introduced. Letters of inscription, Buddhist text in verse, songs, chants, scripture, letters, poems of 145 priests are selectively included in the book. All aim at providing an understanding of Buddhism.

### **Criterion 7 – Social Value**

Buddhism, a national religion, had become corrupt at the end of the Goryeo Kingdom. During this time, some priests and monks particularly from Imje Sect, one of the many branches of Buddhism, sought to purge and revive it. Jikji was compiled by Priest Baegun to reduce Buddhist secularism - one of the reasons Buddhism had become corrupt - and get the Buddhists to focus on meditating again.

This book was printed using movable metal type, which is more convenient and economical and easier to correct than earlier methods. This method contributed to the fast production and dissemination of books. It gave people an incentive to invent oil-based inks, which are optimal for printing.

### **Secondary Criterion 1 – Integrity**

Although Buljo jikji simche yojeol consists of two books, only the second volume is currently kept at the National Library in France. It originally consists of 39 chapters, of which the first chapter is missing.

### **Secondary Criterion 2 – Rarity**

Buljo jikji simche yojeol was printed with the movable metal type at Cheongju Heungdeok-sa Temple in Korea in July 1377. It is the oldest extant printing materials with movable metal printing type.

5.2 Contextual assessment, including an assessment of the importance of a series of documents, the importance of a series of documents in a particular setting, and the assessment against other documentary heritage.

Jikji was printed with movable metal printing type at Heungdeok-sa Temple in July 1377 and is the oldest extant example of printing with movable metal type. It was 70 years sooner than Gutenberg in German.

5.3 An Evaluation of the Authenticity

The colophon of the book and the inscription at the end give the date of printing as 1377, the location of printing as the Cheongju city, the publisher as Heungdeok-sa Temple, and the printing technique as Juja (cast metal type).

#### 5.4 An Assessment of Rarity (if appropriate)

There is one copy in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in the world.

## 6 Consultation

### 6.1 Details of consultation about the nomination with the a), b) Owner (Custodian):

The requested documentary heritage was firstly introduced to the international intellectual community at the exhibition of book (La Livre) which was held by the National Library of France in commemoration of the International Year of Book 1972. Scholars and experts of Korea and France have recognized the values of the book in the printing history of the world. The use of metal movable type, techniques, format are the very essential evidence explaining the development of printing culture of humankind. It also provides us with the different patterns of development in printing technology in the East and West.

There have been some discussions at the government/ national commission/ private levels to explore ways of cooperation in applying this book to the Memory of the World Registry. Both sides, the Republic of Korea and France, felt that Jikji is one of the important assets to be preserved for the future of man. However, due to the delicate issue regarding the return of Korean cultural properties in two countries, which is not directly related to the Jikji's application to the MOW Register, it would be expected that the joint application of both countries will take more time.

## 7 Nominator

### 7.1 Name

Rha, Ki-jeong, the Chairman of the Committee of Memory of the World Register  
Buljo jikji simche yojeol, Mayor of Cheongju, Republic of Korea

### 7.2 Relationship to documentary heritage

France: Bibliothèque nationale; owner

Korea: Cheongju Early Printings Museum

Contact person (if appropriate)

France: Director of Bibliothèque nationale de France

Korea: Rha, Ki-jeong, the Chairman of the Committee of Memory of the World Register Buljo jikji simche yojeol, Mayor of Cheongju

### 7.3 Contact details

France: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Supervisor of oriental documents, 58, rue Richelieu, Paris / Tel) (331) 47-03-81-26

Korea: Mr. Kim Jong-byuk, Director of Cheongju Early Printing Museum

866 Unch'on-dong, Heungduk-gu, Cheongju City, Chungcheongbuk-do, Republic of Korea

Tel (82) 43-276-4197 Fax (82) 43 220-6757

## PART B – SUBSIDIARY INFORMATION

### 8 Assessment of Risk

#### 8.1 Nature and Scope of threats to the documentary heritage

##### - Environmental conditions:

The temperature, humidity, lighting, and air quality provide the optimum conditions for the preservation of this documentary heritage. Table 1. Lists the present condition

**Table 1.**

Item	Preservation State
Air quality maintenance	Automatic air-conditioning system
Temperature	18 – 22 degrees Celsius
Relative humidity	40 - 60%
Lighting	Stored underground away from sunlight

- **Physical condition:** Good because it was printed on traditional oriental paper made of the bark of the mulberry trees.

- **Preservation budget:** By the budget of National Library in France

- **Prohibition of any random changes to the current conditions:** No problem as long as there is no change in temperature, humidity, or the intensity of illumination.

## 9 Preservation assessment

### 9.1 An assessment of preservation of the document

- **Present physical state:** good

- **Chronology of the preservation of the document:** Traditional oriental paper is added to papers in books since it is too thin and the books are kept in the wooden case in a strongbox.

- **Current preservation policies in relation to nomination of this document** as a cultural property

- **Person or organization responsible for preservation:** Bibliothèque nationale de France.