Bureau of Customs and Border Protection

General Notices

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

19 CFR PART 12

CBP Dec. 06-22

RIN 1505-AB72

IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON BYZANTINE ECCLESIASTICAL AND RITUAL ETHNOLOGICAL MATERIAL FROM CYPRUS

AGENCY: Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; Treasury.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This document amends the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) regulations by reflecting that the bilateral agreement between Cyprus and the U.S. to impose certain import restrictions on archaeological material from Cyprus has been amended to include import restrictions which had been previously imposed on an emergency basis for certain Byzantine period ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The regulations are effective on September 4, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For legal aspects, George F. McCray, Esq., Chief, Intellectual Property Rights and Restricted Merchandise Branch, (202) 572–8710. For operational aspects, Michael Craig, Chief, Other Government Agencies Branch, (202) 344–1684.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

BACKGROUND

Since the passage of the Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.*), import restrictions have been imposed on ar-

chaeological and ethnological artifacts of a number of signatory nations. These restrictions have been imposed either as a result of requests for emergency protection received from those nations or pursuant to bilateral agreements between the U.S. and other countries

Pursuant to Article 9 of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and Sec. 303(a)(3) of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2602(a)(3)), a State Party to the 1970 UNESCO Convention, may request that the U.S. Government impose import restrictions on certain categories of archaeological and/or ethnological material the pillage of which, if alleged, jeopardizes the national cultural patrimony.

IMPORT RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS

On March 4, 1999, and in response to the determination that an emergency condition applies with respect to certain Byzantine ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material from Cyprus, the U. S. Government made the determination that emergency import restrictions be imposed. Accordingly, on April 12, 1999, the former United States Customs Service published Treasury Decision (T.D.) 99–35 in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 17529), which amended 19 CFR 12.104g(b) to indicate the imposition of these emergency import restrictions. In that Treasury Decision, a list designating the types of ethnological materials covered by these restrictions for a five-year period, is set forth.

These emergency import restrictions were later extended by CBP Dec. 03–25 for an additional three-year period. (See 68 FR 51903, August 29, 2003). These emergency import restrictions are scheduled to expire on September 4, 2006.

IMPORT RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED PURSUANT TO BILATERAL AGREEMENT

Pursuant to the provisions of the 1970 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention, codified into U.S. law as the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (Pub. L. 97–446, 19 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.), the United States entered into a bilateral agreement with Cyprus on July 16, 2002, concerning the imposition of import restrictions on archeological material originating in Cyprus and representing the pre-Classical and Classical periods. On July 19, 2002, the former United States Customs Service published T.D. 02–37 in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 47447), which amended 19 CFR 12.104g(a) to indicate the imposition of these restrictions and included a list designating the

types of archaeological material covered by the restrictions. The articles that were subject to emergency restrictions in 1999 were not included in the original list designated pursuant to the bilateral agreement.

AMENDED BILATERAL AGREEMENT

Since the emergency import restrictions on the Byzantine materials is due to expire on September 4, 2006, the Republic of Cyprus requested, through diplomatic channels, that the Byzantine materials that have been protected by the emergency action continue to be protected in the future by amending the existing bilateral agreement.

After reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee, the Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, United States Department of State, concluded that the cultural heritage of Cyprus continues to be in jeopardy from the pillage of certain Byzantine ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological materials ranging in date from approximately the 4th century A.D. through approximately the 15th century A.D. from Cyprus.

On August 11, 2006, the Republic of Cyprus and the U.S. Government amended the bilateral agreement of July 16, 2002, pursuant to the provisions of 19 U.S.C. 2602 and Article 4(b) of the agreement, by including the list of Byzantine ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material that were protected pursuant to the emergency action in the list of articles protected in the bilateral agreement. Please note that this amended bilateral agreement will expire on July 19, 2007, unless extended by the State Parties.

REGULATORY ACTION

Accordingly, CBP is amending 19 CFR 12.104g(b) to remove the above-referenced Byzantine materials from Cyprus from the list of import restrictions imposed by emergency action, and to reference these materials under the listing of cultural property (§12.104g(a)) protected pursuant to bilateral agreement.

LISTS OF PROTECTED DESIGNATED ARTICLES

The Designated List of articles that are otherwise protected pursuant to the bilateral agreement on archeological material originating in Cyprus and representing the pre-Classical and Classical periods ranging approximately from the 8th millennium B.C. to 330 A.D. is found in T.D. 02–37.

The Designated List of Byzantine Ecclesiastical and Ritual Ethnological Material from Cyprus which is now encompassed within the bilateral agreement is set forth below.

List of Ecclesiastical and Ritual Ethnological Material from Cyprus Representing the Byzantine Period

Ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material from Cyprus representing the Byzantine period dating from approximately the 4th century A.D. through the 15th century A.D., includes the categories listed below. The following list is representative only.

I. Metal

A. Bronze

Ceremonial objects include crosses, censers (incense burners), rings, and buckles for ecclesiastical garments. The objects may be decorated with engraved or modeled designs or Greek inscriptions. Crosses, rings and buckles are often set with semi-precious stones.

B. Lead

Lead objects date to the Byzantine period and include ampulla (small bottle-shaped forms) used in religious observance.

C. Silver and Gold

Ceremonial vessels and objects used in ritual and as components of church treasure. Ceremonial objects include censers (incense burners), book covers, liturgical crosses, archbishop's crowns, buckles, and chests. These are often decorated with molded or incised geometric motifs or scenes from the Bible, and encrusted with semi-precious or precious stones. The gems themselves may be engraved with religious figures or inscriptions. Church treasure may include all of the above, as well as rings, earrings, and necklaces (some decorated with ecclesiastical themes) and other implements (e.g., spoons).

II. Wood

Artifacts made of wood are primarily those intended for ritual or ecclesiastical use during the Byzantine period. These include painted icons, painted wood screens (iconstasis), carved doors, crosses, painted wooded beams from churches or monasteries, thrones, chests and musical instruments. Religious figures (Christ, the Apostles, the Virgin, and others) predominate in the painted and carved figural decoration. Ecclesiastical furniture and architectural elements may also be decorated with geometric or floral designs.

III. Ivory and Bone

Ecclesiastical and ritual objects of ivory and bone boxes, plaques, pendants, candelabra, stamp rings, crosses. Carved

and engraved decoration includes religious figures, scenes from the Bible, and floral and geometric designs.

IV. Glass

Ecclesiastical objects such as lamps and ritual vessels.

V. Textiles—Ritual Garments

Ecclesiastical garments and other ritual textiles from the Byzantine period. Robes, vestments and altar clothes are often of a fine fabric and richly embroidered in silver and gold. Embroidered designs include religious motifs and floral and geometric designs.

VI. Stone

A. Wall Mosaics

Dating to the Byzantine period, wall mosaics are found in ecclesiastical buildings. These generally portray images of Christ, Archangels, and the Apostles in scenes of Biblical events. Surrounding panels may contain animal, floral, or geometric designs.

B. Floor Mosaics

Floor mosaics from ecclesiastical contexts. Examples include the mosaics at Nea Paphos, Kourion, Kouklia, Chrysopolitissa Basilica and Campanopetra Basilica. Floor mosaics may have animal, floral, geometric designs, or inscriptions.

VII. Frescoes/Wall Paintings

Wall paintings from the Byzantine period religious structures (churches, monasteries, chapels, etc.) Like the mosaics, wall paintings generally portray images of Christ, Archangels, and the Apostles in scenes of Biblical events. Surrounding paintings may contain animal, floral, or geometric designs.

More information on import restrictions can be obtained from the International Cultural Property Protection web site (http://exchanges.state.gov/culprop).

INAPPLICABILITY OF NOTICE AND DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE

This amendment involves a foreign affairs function of the United States and is, therefore, being made without notice or public procedure (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(1)). In addition, CBP has determined that such notice or public procedure would be impracticable and contrary to

the public interest because the action being taken is essential to avoid interruption of the application of the existing import restrictions (5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B)). For the same reasons, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), a delayed effective date is not required.

REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT

Because no notice of proposed rulemaking is required, the provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) do not apply.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12866

This amendment does not meet the criteria of a "significant regulatory action" as described in Executive Order 12866.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

This regulation is being issued in accordance with 19 CFR 0.1(a)(1).

LIST OF SUBJECTS IN 19 CFR PART 12

Cultural property, Customs duties and inspection, Imports, Prohibited merchandise.

AMENDMENT TO CBP REGULATIONS

For the reasons set forth above, part 12 of Title 19 of the Code of Federal Regulations (19 CFR part 12), is amended as set forth below:

PART 12 - SPECIAL CLASSES OF MERCHANDISE

1. The general authority citation for part 12 and the specific authority citation for \S 12.104g continue to read as follows:

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301; 19 U.S.C. 66, 1202 (General Note 3(i), Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS)), 1624;

Sections 12.104 through 12.104i also issued under 19 U.S.C. 2612;

2. In § 12.104g, paragraph (a), the entry for Cyprus in the table of list of agreements imposing import restrictions on described articles of cultural property of State Parties is revised to read as follows:

§ 12.104g Specific items or categories designated by agreements or emergency actions.

State Party		Cultural property		Decision No.
*	*	*	*	
	*	*	*	
Cyprus		Archaeological Material of pre-Classical and Classical periods ranging approximately from the 8th millennium B.C. to 330 A.D. and ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material representing the Byzantine period ranging from approximately the 4th century A.D. through approximately the 15th century A.D.		amended by
*	*	*	*	
	*	*	*	

3. In § 12.104g, paragraph (b), the table of the list of agreements imposing emergency import restrictions on described articles of cultural property of State Parties is amended by removing the entry for Cyprus, but by retaining the table headings.

DEBORAH J. SPERO, Acting Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.

Approved: August 25, 2006

TIMOTHY E. SKUD, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

[Published in the Federal Register, August 31, 2006 (FR 51724)]

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS.
Washington, DC, August 30, 2006

The following documents of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection ("CBP"), Office of Regulations and Rulings, have been determined to be of sufficient interest to the public and CBP field offices to merit publication in the CUSTOMS BULLETIN.

SANDRA L. BELL, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Regulations and Rulings.

PROPOSED REVOCATION OF RULING LETTER AND TREATMENT RELATING TO TARIFF CLASSIFICATION OF A CERTAIN FLORAL PORCELAIN VASE FROM CHINA

AGENCY: U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Department of Homeland Security.

ACTION: Notice of proposed revocation of ruling letter and treatment relating to the tariff classification of a certain floral porcelain vase from china.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 625(c), Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C 1625 (c)), as amended by section 623 of Title VI (Customs Modernization) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (Pub. L. 103–182, 107 Stat. 2057), this notice advises interested parties that CBP intends to revoke a ruling relating to the classification of a certain floral porcelain vase under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), and to revoke any treatment CBP has previously accorded to substantially identical transactions. The subject merchandise is a fluted porcelain vase with a floral design that is 4.5 inches in length by 4.5 inches in width by 7.25 inches in height.

DATE: Comments must be received on or before October 13, 2006.

ADDRESS: Written comments are to be addressed to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Regulations & Rulings, Attention: Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20229, Submitted comments may be inspected at U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 799 9th Street, N.W., Washington D.C., during regular business hours. Arrange-

ments to inspect submitted comments should be made in advance by calling Mr. Joseph Clark at (202) 572–8768.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher MacFarlane, Tariff Classification and Marking Branch, (202) 572–8791.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 8, 1993, Title VI (Customs Modernization) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (Pub. L. 103-182, 107 Stat. 2057), became effective. Title VI amended many sections of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended and related laws. Two new concepts, which emerge from the law, are informed compli**ance** and **shared responsibility.** These concepts are based on the premise that in order to maximize voluntary compliance with customs laws and regulations, the trade community needs to be clearly and completely informed of its legal obligations. Accordingly, the law imposes a greater obligation on CBP to provide the public with improved information concerning the trade community's rights and responsibilities under customs and related laws. In addition, both the trade community and CBP share responsibility in carrying out import requirements. For example, under section 484, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1484), the importer of record is responsible for using reasonable care to enter, classify, and declare value, on imported merchandise, and to provide other necessary information to enable CBP to properly assess duties, collect accurate statistics, and determine whether any other legal requirement is met.

Pursuant to section 625 (c)(1), Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1625 (c)(1)), as amended by section 623 of Title VI, this notice advises interested parties that CBP intends to revoke a ruling relating to the tariff classification of a certain floral porcelain vase. Although in this notice CBP is specifically referring to one ruling, New York Ruling Letter (NY) L88645, this notice covers any rulings in addition to the one listed. At this time, no further rulings have been identified. Any party who has received an interpretative ruling or decision (i.e., ruling letter, internal advice memorandum or decision, or protest review decision) on the merchandise subject to this notice should advise CBP during this notice period.

Similarly, pursuant to section 625 (c)(2), Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1625 (c)(2)), as amended by section 623 of Title VI, CBP intends to revoke any treatment it previously accorded to substantially identical transactions. Any person involved in substantially identical transactions should advise CBP during this notice period. An importer's failure to advise CBP of substantially identical transactions or of a specific ruling not identified in this notice, may raise issues of rea-

sonable care on the part of the importer or his agents for importations of merchandise subsequent to the effective date of the final decision on this notice.

In NY L88645, dated November 28, 2005, a certain floral porcelain vase was classified in subheading 6911.90.0050, HTSUS, which provides for: "tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles of porcelain or china: other, other." NY L88645 is set forth as "Attachment A" to this document.

It is now the position of CBP that this merchandise is classified in subheading 6913.10.5000, HTSUS, which provides for: "statuettes and other ornamental ceramic articles: of porcelain or china: other: other." Pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1625(c)(1), CBP intends to revoke NY L88645 and any other rulings not specifically identified to reflect the proper classification of the merchandise pursuant to the analysis in Headquarters Ruling Letter (HQ) 968347, which is set forth as "Attachment B" to this document.

Additionally, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1625(c)(2), CBP intends to revoke any treatment it previously accorded to substantially identical transactions. Before taking this action, we will give consideration to any written comments timely received.

DATED: August 28, 2006

Myles B. Harmon,

Director,

Commercial & Trade Facilitation Division.

Attachments

[Attachment A]

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION,

NY L88645 November 28, 2005 CLA-2-69:RR:NC1:126: L88645 CATEGORY: Classification TARIFF NO.: 6911.90.0050

MS. FRANCINE MARCOUX HAMPTON DIRECT 350 Pioneer Drive P.O. Box 1199 Williston, VT 05495

RE: The tariff classification of a floral porcelain vase from China

DEAR MS. SCHMIDT:

In your letter, dated November 11, 2005, you requested a tariff classification ruling regarding item number 52150, a floral vase.

A photograph was submitted with your ruling request.

The product is a fluted vase suitable for holding flowers. The article is embellished with a floral design.

In your letter you stated that the vase is made of porcelain.

The measurements of this article are 4.5 inches in length by 4.5 inches in width by 7.25 inches in height.

The applicable subheading for the porcelain vase will be 6911.90.0050, Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS), which provides for tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles of porcelain or china: other. The rate of duty will be 5.4 percent ad valorem.

This ruling is being issued under the provisions of Part 177 of the Customs Regulations (19 C.F.R. 177).

A copy of the ruling or the control number indicated above should be provided with the entry documents filed at the time this merchandise is imported. If you have any questions regarding the ruling, contact National Import Specialist Jacob Bunin at 646–733–3027.

Robert B. Swierupski, *Director;* National Commodity Specialist Division.

[ATTACHMENT B]

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION,

HQ 968347 CLA-2 RR:CTF:TCM 968347 CAM CATEGORY: Classification TARIFF NO.: 6913.10.5000

MS. FRANCINE MARCOUX HAMPTON DIRECT 350 Pioneer Drive P.O. Box 1199 Williston, VT 05495

RE: Proposed Revocation of NY L88645; Floral Porcelain Vase From China Dear Ms. Marcoux:

In New York Ruling Letter (NY) L88645, dated November 28, 2005, a floral porcelain vase from China that your company manufactures was classified in subheading 6911.90.0050 under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), which provides for: "tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles of porcelain or china: other, other." Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has reviewed NY L88645, and has found that ruling to be in error.

FACTS:

The subject merchandise is a fluted vase made of porcelain that measures 4.5 inches in length by 4.5 inches in width by 7.25 inches in height. On the

side of the vase is a floral design. The descriptive information concerning the vase indicates that it is suitable for holding flowers.

In NY L88645, the floral porcelain vase was classified in subheading 6911.90.0050, HTSUS, which provides for: "tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles of porcelain or china: other, other." Classification in subheading 6913.10.5000, HTSUS, which provides for: "statuettes and other ornamental ceramic articles: of porcelain or china: other: other" was never considered. Based on our review of this matter, CBP is of the view that the floral porcelain vase should be classified in heading 6913, HTSUS.

ISSUE:

What is the proper classification under the HTSUS of the subject floral porcelain vase?

LAW AND ANALYSIS:

Classification of merchandise under the HTSUS is in accordance with the General Rules of Interpretation (GRIs). GRI 1 provides that classification shall be determined according to the terms of the headings and any relative section or chapter notes. In the event that the goods cannot be classified solely on the basis of GRI 1, and if the headings and legal notes do not require otherwise, then CBP may apply the remaining GRIs.

In interpreting the headings and subheadings, CBP looks to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System Explanatory Notes (ENs), which constitute the official interpretation of the HTSUS. While not legally binding or dispositive, the ENs provide a commentary on the scope of each heading of the HTSUS and, generally, indicate the proper interpretation of headings. See T.D. 89–80, 54 FR 35127, 35128 (August 23, 1989).

The HTSUS provisions under consideration are as follows:

Tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles, of porcelain or china:

* * *
Other

6911.90.0050 Other

6911.90.00

6913 Statuettes and other ornamental ceramic articles:

6913.10 Of Porcelain or china:

Other:

* * *

6913.10.5000 Other

The Explanatory Notes (ENs) to heading 6911 direct us to the ENs to heading 6912 for guidance. The ENs to 6912 list the following merchandise as coming within the scope of that heading, which provides for, in relevant part:

(A) Tableware such as tea or coffee services, plates, soup tureens, salad bowls, dishes and trays of all kinds, coffee-pots, teapots, sugar bowls, beer mugs, cups, sauce-boats, fruit bowls, cruets, salt cellars, mustard pots, egg-cups, teapot stands, table mats, knife rests, spoons and serviette rings.

* * *

(C) Other household articles such as ash trays, hot water bottles and match box holders.

* * *

In the instant case, the subject merchandise is not specifically listed in the items enumerated in the above-described ENs.

More significantly, the ENs to heading 6911 state that the heading excludes "statuettes and other ornamental articles of heading 6913." Accordingly, the floral porcelain vase is not classified in heading 6911, HTSUS, if CBP determines that the subject merchandise is classified in heading 6913, HTSUS.

CBP finds that the subject merchandise meets the terms of heading 6913, HTSUS, because the floral vase is an ornamental article made of porcelain. The ENs to heading 6913, HTSUS, support the inclusion of the subject merchandise in that heading. The ENs state that heading 6913 includes the following:

(A) Articles which have no utility value but are wholly ornamental, and articles whose only usefulness is to support or contain other decorative articles or to add to their decorative effect, e.g.:

* * *

(3) Purely ornamental table-bowls, vases, pots, jardinières.

Like the merchandise described in EN (A), the subject merchandise is "wholly ornamental" and has the primary function of containing "other decorative articles," in this case flowers, in order to add to the decorative effect. Additionally, EN (A)(3) specifically states that heading 6913, HTSUS, covers vases. The description provided in the ENs to heading 6913, HTSUS, supports CBP's finding that the subject merchandise is classifiable in that heading.

As the subject merchandise is classifiable in heading 6913, it is excluded from classification in heading 6911. This classification is supported by several rulings in which CBP has classified porcelain vases like the subject merchandise in heading 6913, HTSUS. In Headquarters Ruling Letter (HQ) 951608, dated August 12, 1992, CBP determined that an 11-inch round porcelain vase was an ornamental article classifiable in heading 6913, HTSUS. In that ruling CBP referenced EN (A)(3) to heading 6913, HTSUS, and noted that the primary use of the vase was to support other decorative articles. Likewise, in HQ 952168, dated August 20, 1992, CBP classified porcelain vases shaped like bags, napkins, fans, and bouquets in heading 6913, HTSUS. Various other rulings have classified similar merchandise in heading 6913, HTSUS. See HQ 966040, dated April 1, 2003; HQ 086100, dated April 3, 1990; see also NY J83610, dated April 29, 2003; NY F84574, dated April 5, 2000; NY B85211, dated May 7, 1997; NY B88384, dated September 8, 1997; NY A86551, dated August 30, 1996.

HOLDING:

By applying GRI 1, the floral porcelain vases are classified in heading 6913, specifically subheading 6913.10.5000, HTSUS, which provides for: "statuettes and other ornamental ceramic articles: of porcelain or china: other: other." The text of the most recent HTSUS and the accompanying duty rates are provided on the World Wide Web at www.usitc.gov.

EFFECT ON OTHER RULINGS:

NY L88645, dated November 28, 2005, is revoked.

Myles B. Harmon,

Director,

Commercial & Trade Facilitation Division.