

Imperial Tombs (China)

No 1004 ter

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: People's Republic of China

Name of property: The Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Liaoning (the Yongling Tomb, the Fuling Tomb, the Zhaoling Tomb)

Location: The Yongling Tomb is in Fushun City, the Fuling Tomb and Zhaoling Tomb are in Shenyang City. All three properties are in Liaoning Province.

Date received: 22 January 2003

Category of property:

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *monument*. In terms of *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* this is a serial nomination. The property is an extension to the *Imperial Tombs of the Ming and Qing Dynasties* inscribed in 2000 and extended in 2003, on the basis of criteria i, ii, iii, iv and vi.

Brief description:

The Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Liaoning Province include the Yongling Tomb, the Fuling Tomb, and the Zhaoling Tomb, all built in the 17th century. The tombs were built for the founding emperors of the Qing Dynasty and their ancestors, and complete the picture of the history of the development of the funeral architecture of this dynasty, integrating the tradition inherited from previous dynasties with new features from the Manchu civilisation.

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The nominated properties are generally called the 'Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Shengjing', and they are located in Liaoning Province, in Manchuria, in the north-eastern part of China. The Fuling Tomb and Zhaoling Tomb are in the suburbs of the city of Shenyang, the provincial capital and a large industrial centre, some 600 km east of Beijing. The Yongling Tomb is near the Fushun City some 50 km further east. The tombs have been built following the traditional Chinese geomancy and Fengshui theory. The Tombs have been provided with rich sculptural decoration of stone statues and carvings and decorated tiles with dragons, illustrating the development of the Qing Dynasty funeral architecture.

Yongling Tomb was built for the ancestors of the first Qing emperor, Nurhachi (1559-1626), and contains the burials of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather. It is located at the foot of the Qiyun Mountains, near the Suzi

River, northwest of Yongling township. Originally it was known as Xingjing Tomb, but renamed Yongling in 1659. The ensemble of the tomb is composed of the Front Courtyard, the Square Castle (*Fabcheng*) and the tombs surrounded by high walls (*Baocheng*). The whole is surrounded by another wall painted red. The area is entered through the Red Gate, which has pavilions with stone tablets. On the both sides there are teahouses and service buildings. The main building in the centre of the Square Castle is called Qiyun Hall, which served for offering sacrifices. Behind this hall is the Treasure City with the the domed tombs of the first Emperor's ancestors.

Fuling Tomb, the East Tomb, is the tomb of Nurhachi (1559-1626), the founder of Qing Dynasty and his empress Yehenala. It is built against Mount Tianzhu and faces River Hun, in the eastern suburb of Shenyang. It has been designed so that the terrain rises gradually from south to north. The tomb has a complete architectural system aligned symmetrically along the central axis. The Stone Archways, the Main Red Gate, and the Sacred Way are the introductory section. The Square City forms the principal section of the ensemble, enclosing Long'en Hall, the Treasure City and the Treasure Peak. Starting from the south, there is Zhenghong (Red) Gate, decorated with glazed tiles representing dragons. In front of the Gate, there are cloud pillars, stone lions, stone tablets, and a Horse Dismounting Tablet. The Sacred Road starts from the Red Gate and ends at the back of the Long'en Hall, having the length of 566 m. It is flanked by stone statues representing lions, horses, camels and tigers. After a bridge, there are 108 steps to the top of the mausoleum, representing the cosmos. Here, under the Treasure Peak lies the Underground Palace of Fuling, which encloses the tombs.

Zhaoling Tomb, the North Tomb, is the tomb of the second Qing Emperor Huantaiji (and Empress Xiaoduanwen). It is the largest of the three tombs, and has a well preserved crematory system. The ensemble is strictly axial, oriented from south to north. From the south, the Treasure Peak is entered through the Main Red Gate and the ceremonial way with pairs of stone statues (cloud pillars and animals), reaching the Stand Stele Pavilion, flanked with other four pavilions for ceremonies. The Long'en Hall, used for sacrifices, is enclosed within a rectangular walled structure that anticipates the Treasure Peak with the tomb chambers at its back.

History

The Qing dynasty was established in 1636 by the Manchus to designate their regime in Manchuria. The three Imperial Tombs were built in the period when their capital was in Shenyang. In 1644, the capital was transferred to Beijing and the Manchus established their dynasty for China.

The first phase of building the Yongling Tomb was in the late years of the Ming dynasty; it was used as family graveyard of Emperor Fuman. In 1636, Emperor Huantaiji of the Qing dynasty conferred the title of Xingjing Tomb on this graveyard. In 1648, emperor Fulin conferred the posthumous title of emperor on the four ancestors and in 1651 named the mountains where the tombs are situated: the Qiyun Mountains.

Fuling Tomb was first built starting from 1629 (during the reign of Tiancong in late Jin) to 1644 (reign of Emperor Shunzhi of the Qing dynasty). The site was expanded and rebuilt from 1645 (Emperor Shunzhi) to 1688.

Zhaoling Tomb was first built from 1643 to 1651. It was subject to expansion and reconstruction during the reigns from Emperor Kangxi to Emperor Qianlong, in the second half of the 18th century.

Management regime

Legal provision:

The Three Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Shengjing are owned by the central government and protected as a national-level key cultural relic by the Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics. Zhaoling Tomb was listed in 1982. Yongling Tomb and Fuling Tomb were listed in 1988.

Management structure:

Yongling Tomb: the local authority in charge of the daily management of the site is Fushun City and its Xinbin Man Nationality Autonomous County.

Fuling Tomb: the local authority in charge of the daily management of the site is Shenyang City (Dongling Park Management Agency, Dongling District, Shenyang City).

Zhaoling Tomb: the local authority in charge of the daily management of the site is Shenyang City (Beiling Park Management Division, Shenyang City) with appropriate staffing both in number and levels allocated to the management level.

Resources:

The main sources of finances include the State and County budgets, as well as funds raised directly by the administration.

Justification by the State Party (summary)

The Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Shengjing constitute an important component part of the imperial tombs of the Ming and Qing dynasties. They have carried down in one continuous line the tradition of other imperial tombs of the Ming and the Qing dynasties in terms of either their methods of construction complete system of architecture, over-elaborateness of sacrificial rituals, and system of ranking of the officials in charge of tomb management. Meanwhile, the Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Shengjing is a product of the special historical period of the emerging of minority emperors in Northeast China, and as such has conserved large amounts of cultural information about the ideological concepts, aesthetic taste, architectural level, and customs and habits of a minority people during this period of time. Each of the Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Shengjing has developed a system of its own. Though small in scale they are perfect in system arrangements, complete with ritual facilities, and attentive to integrating the religion, beliefs, and folkways advocated in China's ancient environmental geography with the natural location, planning and designing. They stand as a historical evidence for us to study today the form, engraving and

painting of China's ancient buildings and a material substance for modern connoisseurs. ...

Criteria proposed by the State Party:

Yongling Tomb is representative of the burial convention and rule of mausoleum construction practised by the Nuzhen and Man nationalities in the early Qing Dynasty; criteria ii, iii and iv.

Fuling Tomb is an outstanding example of Chinese ancient architecture and collective embodiment of the cultural achievements of Man Nationality in its rising period. The tomb integrates the architectural arts of Man and Han nationalities; criteria i, ii, iii, iv and vi.

Zhaoling Tomb is an outstanding example of Chinese ancient architecture and collective embodiment of the cultural achievement of the rising Man Nationality. It blends the architectural styles of Man and Han nationalities ...; criteria ii, iii, iv and vi.

3. ICOMOS EVALUATION

Actions by ICOMOS

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the nominated properties in September 2003.

Conservation

Conservation history:

Zhaoling Tomb was listed for protection in 1982. Yongling Tomb and Fuling Tomb were listed in 1988.

State of conservation:

The general condition of the tombs is reported to be good. In general, the quality of repair works is considered in conformity with the international conservation standards in all three tomb ensembles.

Yongling Tomb: There are 16 buildings in the complex. Although some secondary buildings are reconstructions (storage and kitchen buildings), all major buildings in the main mausoleum compound remain intact retaining the original layout without any additional new constructions. The buildings underwent major repair works in the 1980s. Although minor cases of damage such as rotten column bases or partial roof damage are observed in some buildings, the overall condition of the buildings is good.

Fuling Tomb: There are 32 buildings in the complex. Among these buildings, the Daming Pavilion is a reconstruction completed in 1982 after it was destroyed by lightning in 1962, following the original model. However, all major buildings in the main mausoleum compound remain intact retaining the original layout without any additional new constructions. The management authority has been continuously maintaining and repairing buildings as needed.

Zhaoling Tomb: There are 38 building in the complex. Among buildings the Daming Pavilion is a reconstruction completed in 1939 after it was destroyed by lightning in 1936. The management authority has been continuously maintaining and repairing the buildings as needed.

Management:

The three imperial tombs have each a management plan, and they are under the management responsibility of respective local authorities. The Central Government provides the overall criteria and coordination including also the already inscribed tombs of the Ming and Qing dynasties. This management system is considered adequate.

The size of the core and buffer zones, the legal status and the management plans set up for the three tombs are considered appropriate. The efforts by the authorities to improve the environment of the nominated sites should be commended, such as removing buildings and structures in the vicinity of the sites which were affecting the landscape of the sites. Each site has organized a fire prevention system. Indeed, Fuling Tomb and Zhaoling Tomb have special site offices for this purpose. In the case of Yongling Tomb, the installation has been made but the site depends on collaboration with local fire stations. In fact, attention is required to develop a well exercised coordination between the fire brigades and the site management team in order to reduce the damage to the minimum in case of fire.

Particular mention should be made of the excellent documentation, including computerised records and databases as well as archives, which have been established for the sites.

Considering the importance of the maintenance and development control of the existing conditions of the landscape designed on the base of China's traditional geomancy and/or Fengshui theory, the authorities are encouraged to continue their efforts to keep the integrity of the sites.

Risk analysis:

The risks faced by each of the nominated properties vary somewhat depending on the location of each, including earthquakes, fire, flood, and pests.

Authenticity and integrity

The Three Tombs all meet the qualifying conditions of authenticity and integrity.

The sites are mausoleum complexes that were built by a feudal power which has disappeared, and the site is therefore no longer used for the original purposes. Its value is to be judged by its physical/material expressions such as the architectural value of the individual buildings which can be judged by the degree of the remaining amount of the original design-material-craftsmanship (authenticity) as well as the wholeness of the site composition together with the surrounding natural landscapes which is sufficient evidence of their design concept (integrity). In this regard, no points have been found to raise any doubt about their authenticity or integrity. Both in the individual buildings and in their compositional layouts including historical environmental features such as lakes, rivers, forests and topographical features in the mausoleum area, the original design is well maintained. In the case of Yongling Tomb, where the surrounding historical setting and the distant landscape are particularly important for China's traditional geomancy theory, these are also well maintained.

Comparative evaluation

Together with the two major tombs already inscribed on the World Heritage List (Dongling Tomb and Xiling Tomb), the proposed extension of the inscription to Yongling Tomb, Fuling Tomb and Zhaoling Tomb completes the picture of the history of the Qing Dynasty. The three imperial tombs now proposed follow most of the traditions elaborated by the previous dynasties, but they also introduce some new features, e.g. related to the location of burials. The Yongling Tomb forms a synthesis of the various features relevant to Ming and Qing dynasties, but it proposes a very particular interpretation of these reflected in the layout of the ensemble. Moreover, the tombs introduced various local traditions in the imperial tradition.

Outstanding universal value

General statement:

The nomination of the Three Imperial Tombs of the Qing Dynasty is closely related with the other proposed nomination re the Imperial Palace in Shenyang. Both properties are interrelated closely representing the outstanding universal value of the culture developed by the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The new extensions represent the founding stage of the Qing Dynasty before the dynasty expanded its power to central China and moved its capital to Beijing, a stage that is currently not represented among the existing World Heritage sites. The nominated sites are smaller in scale and less gorgeous compared to the sites which were built later during the highest stage of the Qing Dynasty in and around the capital city of Beijing after the capital was moved to Beijing. However, the nominated sites have high historical importance in defining the founding history of the Qing Dynasty, especially in regard to the geographical location and the dynasty's cultural identity in the Manchu.

Compared to the Fuling Tomb (the tomb of the founding emperor Nurhachi) and the Zhaoling Tomb (the tomb of the second emperor Huantaiji, a son of Nurhachi), which are rich in design and scale but which were both constructed following the architectural style of the imperial tombs of the Ming Dynasty, the Yongling Tomb (a tomb for the ancestors of emperors of the Qing Dynasty) is smaller in scale and simpler in architectural style, but the site is important because of its ethnic Manchu style complementing the existing World Heritage Site.

The properties qualify on the basis of the same criteria that have been used for the already inscribed tombs of the Ming and Qing dynasties, i.e. i, ii, iii, iv and vi.

Evaluation of criteria:

Criterion i: the Three Imperial Tombs integrate innovative creative features from Manchu and Han traditions with the imperial funeral architecture inherited from previous dynasties. Within its environmental context, especially the Fuling Tomb represents a complete and outstanding example of early Qing Dynasty funeral architecture.

Criterion ii: the tombs represent a phase of development, where the previous traditions are integrated into the forms of the Qing Dynasty, also becoming the basis for the subsequent development.

Criterion iii: the tombs are exceptional testimonies to the artistic and building traditions of Nuzhen, Man and Han nationalities in north-eastern China.

Criterion iv: the Three Imperial Tombs represent outstanding and complementary examples to the development of the funeral architecture in the early phase of the Qing Dynasty.

Criterion vi: the tombs represent an exceptional testimony to the ritual activities of the imperial family of the Qing Dynasty, reflecting Confucianism and the respect of ancestors.

4. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation with respect to inscription

That this extension be approved on the basis of the existing criteria *i, ii, iii, iv and vi*.

ICOMOS, March 2004