

Identification

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| <i>Nomination</i> | The Temple of Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu |
| <i>Location</i> | Qufu City, Shandong Province |
| <i>State Party</i> | People's Republic of China |
| <i>Date</i> | 26 October 1993 |

Justification by State Party

The Temple of Confucius was built to commemorate and offer sacrifices to Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius was where he and his descendants were buried, and the Kong Family Mansion was the aristocratic mansion built by his male direct descendants on the orders of the Imperial family. All relate to the great thinker, philosopher, and educator, the founder of Confucianism and one of the greatest figures in world history.

Confucianism was considered to be the paramount philosophy of feudal society in Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and other countries, as well as China. It had a positive influence on the Enlightenment of 18th century Europe. Nowadays many developed countries are studying Confucianism to discover ways of combating the abuses of modern civilization.

More than two thousand Confucian temples have been built in the Asian world, and the temple at Qufu is the largest of these. The original three-room dwelling of the sage was expanded into a complex as large as the Imperial Palace in Beijing. Similarly, the family Cemetery was extended to over 2 million m², protected by the State, and the Kong Family Mansion grew from a simple dwelling house to a noble mansion with more than 560 rooms. These developments illustrate the great veneration accorded to Confucius and Confucianism by the feudal dynasties.

The Confucian style had a profound influence on eastern architecture, and it occupies an important position in the evolution of Chinese architecture. Above all, it remains purely oriental and traditional, without external influences.

The Temple, Cemetery, and Mansion are famous for their uniqueness and long history. In its 2500 years of history the Temple has been damaged or destroyed by man or nature many times, only to be rebuilt each time on a larger and more magnificent scale.

The buildings were designed and built with meticulous care according to the ideas of Confucianism. They are masterpieces that embody the highest achievements of Chinese architecture and art. In the Ming Period many outstanding artists and craftsmen were employed to apply their great skills in the adornment of the Temple. Similarly, in the most prosperous period of the Qing Dynasty Imperial craftsmen were assigned to build the Dacheng Hall and Gate and the Qin Hall, which are universally considered to represent the pinnacle of Qing art and architecture.

The layout of the Temple is designed to focus upon the main building. The complex is intimately linked with its surrounding wooded landscape, whilst within there is an elaborate hierarchy in the disposition of the individual components. Above all, harmony prevails, illustrating the Confucian ideal of harmony in every aspect of life - philosophy, politics, and ethics, as well as the material world - combined with honesty, sincerity, and moderation.

Although Confucius died over 2400 years ago, his philosophy still exerts a profound influence, not only in China but also in all parts of the world. The essence of his creed is the system of benevolence, to meet the needs of human existence and evolution. The declaration of the 1988 Nobel Prize ceremony asserted that "If mankind wishes to survive into the 21st century, they must go back 2500 years to draw upon the wisdom of Confucius".

The Temple of Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion are not only outstanding representatives of oriental architectural skills, but they also have a deep historical content and are an important part of the cultural heritage of mankind. The enduring and rich cultural heritage of Confucianism will assuredly bring valuable enlightenment to bear on global development and the social advancement of mankind.

History and Description

History

Confucius (551-479 BC) was a renowned philosopher, politician, and educator in the Spring and Autumn Period. The system of belief that he created was adopted as the pre-eminent ideology in feudal Chinese society for more than two thousand years: he was the "Sacred First Teacher" and Sacred Model Teacher for Ten Thousand Years".

Two years after his death Duke Gun of Lu consecrated his former house in Qufu as a temple, within which were preserved his clothing, musical instruments, carriage, and books. Emperor Liu Bang of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) visited Qufu to offer sacrifices to the memory of Confucius and his example was followed by high officials. The temple was rebuilt in AD 153, and it was repaired and renovated several times in subsequent centuries. In AD 611 the Temple was rebuilt again, and this time the original three-room house effectively disappeared as a component of the complex.

Much enlargement and extension was carried out in the 7th-10th centuries; in 1012 during the Song Dynasty it was expanded into three sections with four courtyards, containing over three hundred rooms, and in 1194 a further extension increased the number of rooms to over 400. It was devastated by fire and vandalism in 1214, but rebuilding was commenced, so that by 1302 it had attained its former scale. An enclosure wall was built in 1331, on the model of an Imperial palace. Following another disastrous fire in 1499 it was rebuilt once again, to its present scale. Further fires resulted in the rebuilding on a more lavish scale of structures such as the Dacheng Hall. From the time of Liu Bang's visit, many Emperors visited the Temple to pay homage to Confucius, and it was given the highest rank among Chinese temples at a grand ceremony in 1906.

When Confucius died in 479 BC he was buried on the bank of the Si River, 1 km north of Qufu, beneath a tomb in the form of an axe, with a brick platform for sacrifices. When Emperor Wu Di of the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 24) accepted proposals to "eliminate the hundred schools of thought and respect only Confucianism", the Tomb became an important place of veneration and pilgrimage, and it was progressively enlarged and ornamented in the following centuries. By the 2nd century AD more than fifty tombs of Confucius's descendants had accumulated around the main tomb. Stelae commemorating him began to be erected in 1244 and in 1331 Kong Sihui began building the wall and gate of the Cemetery, and this work continued with the addition of gate towers, arches, pavilions, and the access road from the north gate of the city of Qufu (1594). By the late 18th century the Cemetery was extended to cover an area of 3.6 km², enclosed by a perimeter wall of over 7 km.

The descendants of Confucius lived and worked in the Kong Family Mansion, guarding and tending the Temple and Cemetery, and were given titles of nobility by successive Emperors. The hereditary title of Duke Yan Sheng granted by Emperor Ren Zhong of the Song Dynasty ((960-1279) was borne by successive direct male descendants until 1935, when the title of the 77th generation direct descendant was changed to "State Master of Sacrifice and First Teacher".

The site of the Mansion was moved in 1377 a short distance from the Temple, with which it had formerly been directly linked. The new Mansion was expanded in 1503 to comprise three rows of buildings,

with a total of 560 rooms, and nine courtyards. It was completely renovated in 1838 at Imperial cost, but the new structure was destroyed by fire in 1885, only to be rebuilt, once again at Imperial cost, two years later.

Description

The gateway to the Temple is flanked by cypresses and pines on either side. The main part is arranged on a central axis and has nine courtyards. The first three, with their small gates and tall pines, lead the visitor into the heart of the religious complex. From the fourth courtyard onwards the buildings are stately structures with yellow tiled roofs and red-painted walls, set off by dark green pines, epitomizing the profundity and harmony of Confucianism.

In all there are over a hundred buildings making up the Temple, with a total of 460 rooms covering an area of 16,000 m². The main buildings are the stele pavilion of the Jin and Yuan Dynasties (1115-1368), the Kuiwen Tower of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Xing Tan Pavilion, De Mu Tian Di Arch, and Dacheng Hall rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty, and the Hall of Confucius's Wife. Over 1000 stelae recording Imperial donations and sacrifices from the Han Dynasty onwards are preserved within the Temple, along with outstanding examples of calligraphy and other forms of documentation, all priceless examples of Chinese art. There are many fine carved stones, among the most important being the Han stone reliefs (206 BC-AD 220) and the stone pillars and carved pictures depicting the life of Confucius of the Ming Dynasty.

The exterior gate of the Cemetery is connected with the north gate of Qufu by a straight road 1266 m long and lined with cypresses and pines. There is a narrow walled enclosure leading to the second gate, which gives access to an open area containing grass, trees, and a river. To the west, after crossing the Zhu River Bridge and passing through the gateway of the tomb, the visitor comes upon the tomb of Confucius.

The Cemetery contains more than 100,000 tombs of the descendants of Confucius, bearing stelae, stone figures, celestial pillars, and other funerary furniture. There are over sixty structures (gates, sacrifice halls, and stele pavilions) for ceremonial and sacrificial use.

The Kong Family Mansion follows the traditional Chinese layout, with the official rooms (offices, study halls, etc) at the front and residential quarters at the rear. The central of the three main buildings was the residence of the senior descendant (Duke Yan Sheng); the Yi Gun hall to the east is where his younger brother lived. This is an embodiment of the Confucian principle of order and hierarchy, which is in turn to be observed in the buildings themselves, with clear spatial distinctions between men and women, masters and servants.

At its apogee in the 16th century the Mansion was made up of 170 buildings with 560 rooms, but only 152 buildings with 480 rooms survive, covering 12,470 m². Most of the principal buildings date from the Ming Dynasty, with additional structures of the Qing Dynasty. Many important cultural relics are preserved within the Mansion, including scrolls and paintings. The interior decor is that of the later Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China (1912-49).

Management and Protection

Legal status

The complex of monuments associated with Confucius, which belong to the People's Republic of China, are protected by a series of legal instruments deriving from the Constitution of the People's Republic of China; among these are the Penal Code of the People's Republic of China, the Laws on the Protection of Cultural Relics and Ruins of the People's Republic of China, and the Environmental Protection Laws of the People's Republic of China. This is comprehensive interlocking legislation with severe penalties for transgression.

Article 2 of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Relics states that:

The State shall place under its protection, within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China, the following cultural relics of historic, artistic, or scientific value:

- 1 Sites of ancient culture, ancient tombs, ancient architectural structures, cave temples, and stone carvings that are of historical, artistic, or scientific value;
- 5 Typical material objects reflecting the social system, social production, or life of various nationalities in different historical periods.

The monuments were on the first list of national protected monuments designated by the State in 1961.

Management

The official agencies responsible for the protection and management of the Temple of Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion are the State Bureau of Cultural Relics (Beijing), The Qufu Cultural Relics Management Bureau, and the Qufu Confucius Birthplace Museum.

After designation of the monuments in 1961, substantial funds were allocated to them, even during the Cultural Revolution. With the opening up of Qufu in 1979 these funds were increased to permit complete restoration. In 1985 the State Council made 10 million yuan available for this work. In recent years revenue from entrance tickets has been available to supplement these funds.

Conservation and Authenticity

Conservation history

As a result of the substantial funds available over the past thirty years, the ancient buildings are all in a satisfactory condition, with vegetable and insect attack under control. The ensemble is in a better condition than it has been for the past two centuries.

The main threat at the present time is from fire, but measures taken by the local government management bodies have prevented any outbreaks of fire for several decades. Smoking and the lighting of fires are strictly forbidden, a water supply line has been installed in the Temple and the Mansion, fireproof electricity cables are used everywhere, lightning conductors are installed on all the buildings, and hollow ancient trees are sealed.

The problem of weathering of stone stelae and other carved stones that are exposed to the elements is still under study. Many have been temporarily brought under cover while research is in progress.

There is regular clearance of weeds from roofs, and broken tiles are replaced. Restoration work is restricted to maintenance of the *status quo*, without attempting reconstruction. New materials are only used where the originals have deteriorated beyond repair or conservation.

The ancient trees that are an essential feature of the monumental ensemble are the subject of special recording, research, and treatments.

Authenticity

There is a high level of authenticity in the group significance of these monuments, although a long period of neglect has meant that some of the components have been heavily restored. However, the restoration policy makes every attempt to preserve original material components and reconstruction is kept to a minimum.

Evaluation

Action by ICOMOS

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the property in May 1994. The mission was impressed by the high standard of management of the site, where 700 people are employed. The members studied the proposed buffer zone on the ground and found that it provided adequate protection of the setting.

ICOMOS also consulted Mme Michèle Pirazzoli, an expert on Chinese art and history of this period, who supports the outstanding universal values of the complex.

Qualities

Because of its special connection with the revered philosopher and teacher Confucius, this group of monuments was the object of many rich donations from successive Imperial dynasties over more than two thousand years. As a result its buildings represent the most exceptional examples of Chinese religious art and architecture over this long period (though successive fires have resulted in most of the surviving monuments being in the styles of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, in which they were rebuilt).

Comparative analysis

By its very nature as the home and burial place of Confucius, the Qufu group of monuments is unique.

ICOMOS recommendations for future action

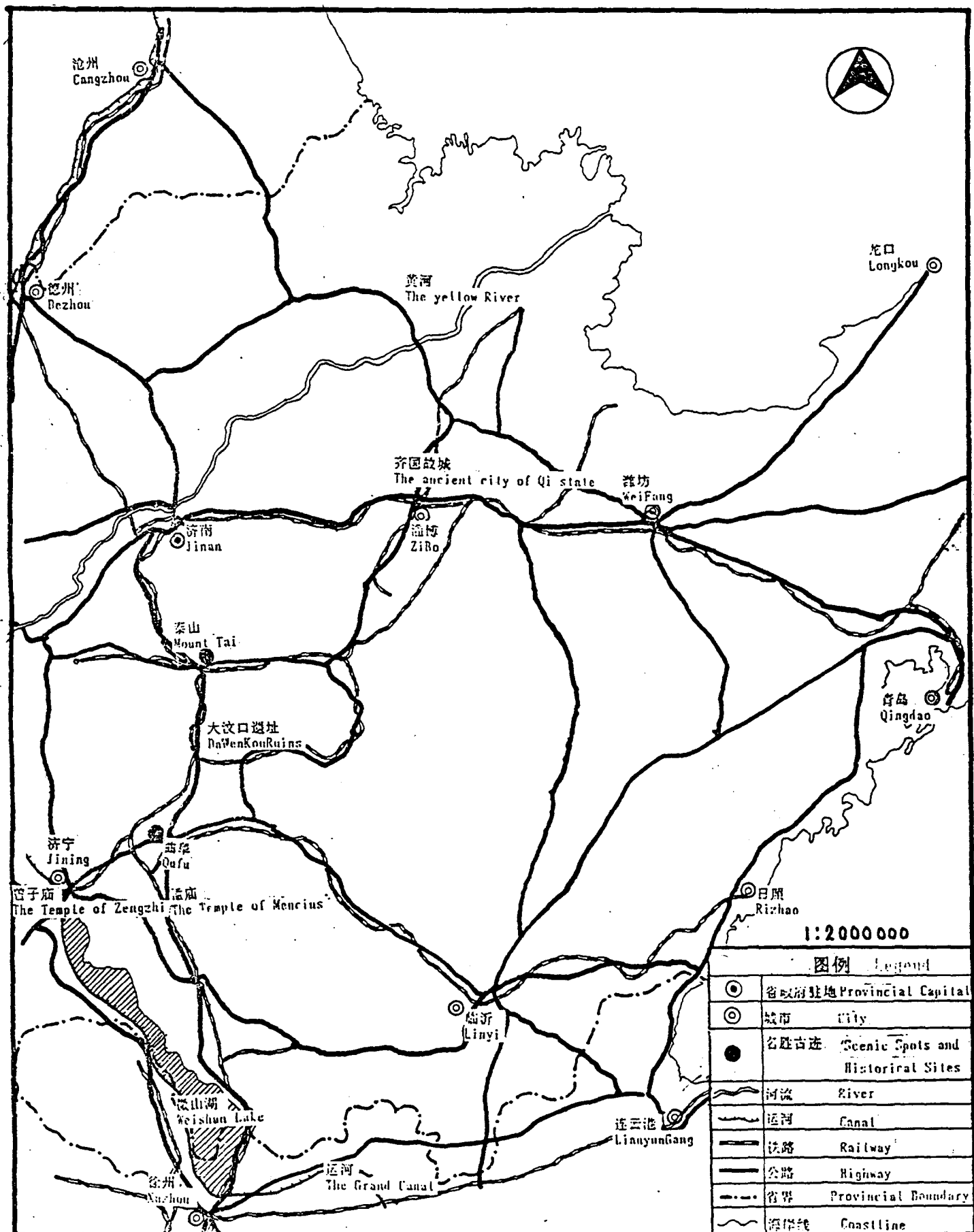
There are two major problems for which international technical assistance should be sought by the Chinese authorities: fire prevention and stone conservation.

Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria i, iv, and vi:

- **Criterion i** The group of monumental ensembles at Qufu are of outstanding artistic value because of the support given to them by Chinese Emperors over two millennia, ensuring that the finest artists and craftsmen were involved in the creation and reconstruction of the buildings and the landscape dedicated to Confucius.
- **Criterion iv** The Qufu ensemble represents an outstanding architectural complex which demonstrates the evolution of Chinese material culture over a considerable period of time.
- **Criterion vi** The contribution of Confucius to philosophical and political doctrine in the countries of the East for two thousand years, and also in Europe and the west in the 18th and 19th centuries, has been one of the most profound factors in the evolution of modern thought and government.

ICOMOS, October 1994



Temple de Confucius, cimetière de Confucius et demeure de la famille Kong : plan de la zone de protection

The Temple of Confucius, the Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion : map of the protection area



Vue aérienne du temple de Confucius /
aerial view of the Temple of Confucius



Cimetière de Confucius : arc Wan Gu Chang Chun /
Cemetery of Confucius : arch Wan Gu Chang Chun