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EVALUATIONS OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

Prepared by the
International Council on Monuments and Sites
(ICOMOS)

The IUCN and ICOMOS evaluations are made available to members of the World Heritage Committee. A small number of additional copies are also available from the secretariat. Thank you

2009
WORLD HERITAGE LIST

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1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Name of property: Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region

Inscription: 1979-1980

Brief Description: Situated on the shores of Lake Ohrid, the town of Ohrid is one of the oldest human settlements in Europe. Built mainly between the 7th and 19th centuries, it has the oldest Slav monastery (St Pantelejmon) and more than 800 Byzantine-style icons dating from the 11th to the end of the 14th century. After those of the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow, this is considered to be the most important collection of icons in the world.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

In 2007 the State Party asked the Ministry of Environment to establish an inter-ministeral expert commission to define the boundaries of the property. The commission included representatives of the Department of Nature, Division of Natural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Administration of Cultural Heritage, and the State Agency on Geodetic Affairs. Through field work and analysis of cultural heritage and archaeological sites, a logical boundary for the property was delineated.

This proposed boundary was considered by the Committee at its 32nd session in 2008 (Quebec City). ICOMOS in principle recommended approval, whereas IUCN requested the State Party to consider a more major enlargement of the boundary to encompass the whole Galičica National Park. After those of the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow, this is considered to be the most important collection of icons in the world.

Modification

The State Party is suggesting a new boundary for the property, based on the survey work carried by the expert commission. This new boundary is overall slightly smaller than the inscribed boundary. To the north and west the boundary is slightly reduced; to the east the boundary is in part reduced and elsewhere slightly increased, particularly to the south where it joins the land border with Albania. The area within the new boundary is 83.350 ha and a scaled map has been provided.

The proposals put forward are a rationalisation of the original boundary so that it better reflects the attributes of the property.

In its 2008 submission, the State Party indicated that the expert studies so far undertaken will form the basis for the development of a Management Plan for the property by the end of 2009 at the latest. In its re-submission, the State Party confirms that work has started and that a draft Plan will be submitted for review at the end of 2009.

On the request for the State Party to cooperate with the State Party of Albania on the possibility of a transboundary nomination of Lake Ohrid, it is reported that negotiation procedures have been initiated.

2. Refers the proposed modification to the boundary of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, back to the State Party for reconsideration;

3. Requests the State Party (following the IUCN evaluation) to consider realigning the boundary of the property, preferably along topographic or other features recognisable in the field, to include all of Galičica National Park and other critical areas, and creating an appropriate buffer zone to protect the catchment of Lake Ohrid;

4. Notes the ICOMOS evaluation recommending approval of the minor modification of boundary under cultural criteria for the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;

5. Encourages the States Parties of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania to cooperate towards a transboundary extension of the property to include the Albanian part of Lake Ohrid and its watershed to strengthen the values and integrity of the property;

6. Requests the State Party to submit a detailed scaled map and figures for the area of the property by 1 February 2009.

On 30th January 2009, the State Party re-submitted the same modifications, with a request that the Committee reconsider their decision. Also submitted was a detailed map, further justification for the proposed boundary and an explanation as to why a major modification to extend the boundary to cover the whole Galičica National Park and other critical areas, and the creation of an appropriate buffer zone to protect the catchment of Lake Ohrid was not in their view feasible.
3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

As in its 2008 evaluation, ICOMOS supported the rationale for defining the boundary on the basis of detailed mapping of the attributes of the property and reiterates this support for the re-submitted proposal.

ICOMOS notes that negotiations have been initiated with the State Party of Albania on the issue of a possible trans-boundary nomination of Lake Ohrid. ICOMOS considers that such a trans-boundary nomination should be for a mixed property, as is the existing property, and therefore urges consideration of the cultural aspects of the Albanian lake shore.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed boundary for the World Heritage Site of Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, be approved.
Map showing the revised boundaries of the property
Ruins of Loropéni (Burkina Faso)
No 1225

Official name as proposed by the State Party: The Ruins of Loropéni

Location: Province of Poni

Brief description:
The imposing, tall, laterite stone walls, up to six metres in height, surrounding a large abandoned settlement near Loropéni are the best preserved of ten similar fortresses in the Lobi area, part of a larger group of around a hundred stone-built enclosures. They appear to reflect the power and influence of the trans-Saharan gold trade and its links with the Atlantic coast. Recent excavations have provided radio-carbon dates suggesting the walled enclosure at Loropéni dates back at least to the 11th century AD.

The Loropéni fortress was probably built by Lohron or Koulango peoples, who controlled the extraction and the transformation of gold. They are the ancestors of the present day Touna chiefs. The area is now mostly occupied by Gan (in the West) and Lobi (in the East).

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 site.

1. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 9 April 1996

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination: 5 April 2004
9 March 2007

Date received by the World Heritage Centre: 31 January 2005
23 January 2009

Background: This is a referred back nomination (30 COM, Vilnius, 2006).

A first nomination dossier for The Ruins of Loropéni was examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006). At the time, ICOMOS recommended to defer the examination of the nomination in order to allow the State Party to:

• Explore further the values and significance of the site through surveys and targeted excavations of the ruins and their hinterland, to establish the role and function of Loropéni and its association with trade across the Sahara and towards the West African coast;

• Gather existing research on Loropéni and ruins in the wider Lobi area to strengthen understanding of the relationship between Loropéni and other fortified settlements in the Lobi area;

• Formulate a detailed project to stabilise the walls of the Loropéni ruin and suggest how this might be funded.

The World Heritage Committee adopted the following decision (30 COM 8B.31):

The World Heritage Committee,
1. Having examined Documents WHC-06/30.COM/8B and WHC-06/30.COM/INF.8B.1,
2. Refers the nomination of the Ruins of Loropéni, Burkina Faso, back to the State Party in order to:
   a) Explore further the values and significance of the site through surveys and targeted excavations of the ruins and their hinterland, to establish the role and function of Loropéni and its association with trade across the Sahara and towards the West African coast;
   b) Gather existing research on Loropéni and ruins in the wider Lobi area to strengthen understanding of the relationship between Loropéni and other fortified settlements in the Lobi area;
   c) Formulate a detailed project to stabilize the walls of the Loropéni ruin and suggest how this might be funded.

3. Recognizes that it is desirable that the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre assist the State Party in undertaking the tasks mentioned in paragraph 2 above.

4. Invites the State Party to submit an international assistance request to support the work required and to provide the information requested.

On 23 January 2009, the State Party submitted supplementary information demonstrating how the requests of the Committee had been met. This information is incorporated into this report.

Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management.

Literature consulted (selection):


Ouagadougou. Although the team considered that the time of Professor Jean-Baptiste Kiéthéga of the University of the scientific team under the supervision and the coordination of the Ministry of Culture and executed by a

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: None

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 10 March 2009

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The almost square Ruins of Loropéné encompass a large settlement some 2 km to the north west of Loropéné, in the comparatively flat landscape near Gaoua in the south-west of Burkina Faso, near the borders with Togo and Ghana.

The nominated area covers the walls and the space within, some 105 by 106 metres, an area of 11,130 sq metres. The site is surrounded by a large buffer zone of arable and forest land between the roads from Loropéné to Banfora in the west and to Obiré in the north-west, in all extending to 278.40ha. The ruins are one of over a hundred in the area and the best preserved.

The site is overgrown, which gives it an area of mystery added to by legends which explain its abandonment. At the time of the original nomination it was stated that 'there was no certainty over its history; the settlement has not been recently excavated and oral and written traditions have so far proved inconclusive. The debate it was said continues as to whether the ruins were associated with the Gan people or perhaps the Koulango who preceded them in this area'.

It was further stated that ‘Whoever built this settlement, and many others in the area, seem to have been involved in the southern part of the trade in gold from the gold fields in Ghana to the Sahelian towns of Mopti, Djenné, Timbuktu. The fortifications may reflect conflict between states controlling the gold trade and the predations of slave traders from the south’.

The ICOMOS evaluation report suggested that archaeological excavations could provide evidence to help understand the genesis of the ruins. In the intervening two and a half years a major interdisciplinary research project has considered the archaeological, oral history, historical and botanical associations of Loropéné and its associated stone structures. This work was undertaken under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and executed by a scientific team under the supervision and the coordination of Professor Jean-Baptiste Kiéthéga of the University of Ouagadougou. Although the team considered that the time allowed for the research was too little in relation to the task, the work has allowed a better understanding of the genesis of the structure, its development, later use and possible connections to the gold trade. Excavation took place over 45 days. 11 small discrete areas within the enclosure were identified for excavation and all but two were explored.

Overall a synthesis has been provided of the current state of knowledge of the history and use of the ruins, drawing together the archaeological results, a trawl of previous descriptions from the early 20th century, other published information and oral history.

Excavation finds including coal and pottery made it possible to establish the first references for the dating of the site. Results of radiocarbon dating indicate the structure was in place in the 11th century and flourishing from the 14th to the 17th century which gives the site a much longer history than had been previously suspected.

The finding of the superimposition of certain structures proves several periods of use and several modifications in the plan. It is still not possible to know precisely how the building was used and associations with the gold trade were not proved by the excavations but nevertheless they remain a strong assumption – see history below. A programme of further excavations is planned.

The site consists of:

- External walls;
- Remains of internal partition walls;
- Traces of buildings within the walls;
- Remains in the buffer zone;
- Associations with the gold trade.

These are considered in turn:

External walls

The Ruins of Loropéné are part of a complex of over 100 ruins in an area known today as Lobi country distributed between Burkina Faso, Ghana and the Ivory Coast. These ruins are divided into two principal groups, one with circular plans, and the other with square or rectangular plans. The circular ruins were initially thought to be the older and were identified with Koulango people, whereas those of square form were thought to be more recent and related to the Gan people who moved into the area and displaced the Koulango. However recent investigations have challenged this thesis.

The majority of the ruins display only vestiges of what once existed, with walls seldom higher than a metre. Around Loropéné there are ten fortresses of a similar type. The Ruins of Loropéné are the best preserved with the principal external walls rising in place up to 6 metres in height. The site is called Kpökayûga by Gan people, which means "the house of refusal" apparently reflecting the rejection of the site, following the premature death of a ruler who lived in this fortified settlement. Because of this, it has remained abandoned and unexploited and as a result its archaeology is probably intact. This is in drastic contrast to many of the other sites which have continued to be used as dwellings or for cultivation.

At Loropéné, the ruins are almost square in plan with the lengths of the peripheral walls varying between 105 and 106 m. They enclose an area of approximately 11,130 square metres. Around 80% of the external walls survive rising to some 6 metres in height. The thickness of the
walls varies considerably from 1.40 metres at the base to between 25 and 30 cm at the apex. The walls when built seem to have been almost perfectly rectilinear. Irregularities are now visible due to the impact of trees and settlement of the ground. The wall corners are of rounded form, inside as well as out. There is no convincing sign of any access gate.

The walls are built of shaped, rounded, or occasionally ovoid stones, laid in a mud mortar, strengthened with shea honey and butter. On the lower inner and outer faces the stones are laid in courses with a rubble core. The top parts of the walls are made of shaped rubble alone, a technique known as bauge. In places small pieces of ceramic have been inserted in the mortar. There is evidence that the faces of the walls were plastered both inside and out.

The materials were probably extracted not far from the enclosure. The blocks of stones could have been cut from the many outcrops of laterite near the enclosure, in the East and the South. Two places of possible extraction were identified in the recent survey, one to the West, and the other to the East of the ruin.

Remains of internal partition walls

Within the external walls are the remains of two main dividing walls running in parallel across the space.

Although metal objects were recovered in the northern part of the site, no metal objects were found in the southern compartment. It is suggested that if more complete excavations confirmed this difference, it could be possible to speculate that this southern compartment, separated from the northern compartment by a wall as high as that of the perimeter wall, could, at least for a period of time, have been the dwelling place of slaves.

Traces of buildings within the walls

Within the three compartments created by the dividing walls can be seen traces of about twenty rectilinear structures, also with rounded corners. In some places their walls rise to 3 metres; elsewhere they can only be traced at ground level.

In several places can be discerned groups of compartments, an 'open' compartment having of three surrounding walls between two closed structures, with no apparent door.

The recent excavations attempted to find the doorway to the complex but it was not possibly to identify formally a way-in. The possibility of ladder access, as still exists in certain local traditional buildings, will be investigated in the future. Similarly the excavations failed to identify a water supply.

The excavations did make it possible to highlight the role of certain buildings as dwellings, as spaces were identified as being rooms, stores or kitchens.

Remains in the Buffer zone

Within the buffer zone are several remains of buildings, both circular and rectangular, one site linked to a row of stones some 1km long. A few have domestic remains such as grind-stones, and there is also evidence of iron working and stone quarrying. These remains were surveyed as part of the recent project. Some could be precursors of the principal ruins.

The continuation of survey work and targeted excavations could make it possible to better understand the geophysical and historical context of these constructions and provide dateable evidence in order to establish whether or not there is a possible connection with the principal ruins.

Associations with the gold trade

Lobi country is at the centre of a series of gold bearing seams which were exploited from the 15th and 16th centuries. Gold mines are known along the length of River Mounhon (formerly known as the Black Volta River) from those of Ashanti in the south of Ghana, through the Baoulé country in the south-west of Côte d’Ivoire to Poura in the north of Lobi country.

It is however extremely probable that this exploitation could go back to an earlier period since the populations of Nabé, Lorhon and Koulango who exploited gold in the area had previously worked in the area of Kong (to the south-west of Loropéni in northern Ivory Coast) in the 10th and 11th centuries.

The Lorhon were goldsmiths who transformed the gold into jewellery. The Lorhon seemed to have moved into the area after the fall of the Songhai Empire (whose capital was Gao), and the exhaustion of earlier gold mines in other areas.

History and development

The recent inter-disciplinary project has allowed a reassessment of the history of Loropéni. This has pushed much further back the date of its construction from around the 17th century to at least the 11th century AD and disassociated it from the Gan people, mentioned in the previous evaluation report.

Indeed in spite of the many writings on these ruins since the beginning of the 20th century, no serious archaeological investigations have been undertaken to support information from oral traditions and the other documentary sources. The recent targeted excavations were to thus able to start to bridge this gap.

It is necessary to locate the construction of the Loropéni ruins in the geopolitical context of the sub-Saharan kingdoms. They appeared after the fall of the first empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, when there were migrations of gold miners and goldsmiths into the Lobi area, and well before the development to the south of the Akan kingdoms, such as the powerful Ashanti kingdom, which caused migrations to the north as people fled slave hunters. Around Lobi country are the remains of many gold mines such as Werimitangna, close to Loropéni.

The gold bearing region was connected by caravans to the large commercial cites to the north on the river Niger, such as Djenné, Mopti and Timbuktu and from there across the
The Ruins of Loropéni values

The values of the property are related to the way they represent the distinctive fortified structures of the area and their presumed association with the trans-Saharan gold trade.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

Although the precise history of Loropéni ruins is only recently coming into focus through the recent research programme, and their functions still remains in part speculative, the integrity of the monument in terms of its status as the largest and best preserved fortified settlement is satisfactory.

In time as more evidence emerges, it may be necessary to consider whether a larger area could encompass more of the attributes that are linked to its use, function and history.

Without knowing the precise history or function of the ruins, it is not possible to say whether sufficient has been preserved to demonstrate how the totality of the original structures were used. Nor is it possible to say whether the fortified enclosure on its own without structures in its hinterland demonstrates adequately its use and function.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the stone walls as ruins is not in doubt. ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met.

Comparative analysis

Many large towns, such as Kano and Zaria in what is now Nigeria, had impressive walls but these were largely built of mud bricks, albeit sometimes on a stone foundation. To the south of Loropéni, the Nozé kingdom in what is now northern Togo was said to be a collection of walled settlements under one ruler. Elsewhere in West Africa, the slave trade produced the need for forts for housing columns of slaves as they travelled to the coast. Some fortified enclosures have been associated with this activity.

Within West Africa, fortifications around towns and villages became widespread in the 19th century, reflecting the insecurity that pervaded much of the continent south of the Sahara at that time. Many were built of vegetable materials and few of these fortifications have survived in anything like their original form. Loropéni and the cluster of ruins in Lobi country are unusual in being built of stone; Loropéni in particular stands out in having such a large percentage of its walls surviving to almost full height. Some of the hundred or so ruins in Lobi country or...
rectangular in form, others are circular. It is not clear how these two groups relate to each other.

Taking Africa as a whole, the best known walled site is Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, whose stone remains were inscribed on the World Heritage list in 1986. Great Zimbabwe together with its successor Khami, also inscribed in 1986, and its precursor Mapungubwe, inscribed in 2003, are valued not just as fortifications but also for what they reflect in terms of the social organisations of large city states.

In terms of nominating Loropéni as the most outstanding example of the complex of stone ruins in the area, many of the extant remains have been surveyed by Henri Labouret (1920), George Savonnet (1986) and Paul Raymaekers (1996) and typologies have been drawn up which take account of the forms, dimensions, materials and techniques. However it is estimated that as many as 200 enclosures might have survived in Burkina Faso and across the border in Ivory Coast. It is also acknowledged that an inventory of these ruins is far from complete. Nevertheless they do appear to reflect a very specific sub-regional culture of which the enclosure of Loropéni is one of the largest quadrangular enclosures and considered to be the best preserved.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage list.

Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value

In the original nomination, the justification put forward by the State Party indicated that the Ruins of Loropéni were seen as an important witness of the development of kingdoms in the area of Lobi during 17th and 18th centuries. They are associated with “the exploitation of gold in the area and with its trade between the coast and the Sahel and across the Sahara Desert to North Africa. The imposing ruins testify to the strong climate of insecurity which reigned in the area at that time. The Ruins of Loropéni are also proof of the endogenous capacity of African people to develop elaborate technical solutions and to set up complex organizational structures. Difficulty in interpreting oral traditions for the Ruins of Lobi in general and of those of Loropéni in particular, mean that the mystery of the Ruins of Loropéni persists”.

As a result of the recent programme of investigation the justification has been updated.

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The construction of the fortress dates back to well before the arrival of Europeans in Africa. This place is essential and irrefutable proof of the capacity of African people and specifically the Nabé, Lorhon, Koulango, and Touma, to use the materials available in their environment, in a judicious way to develop elaborate technical solutions to meet particular needs.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv).

In the previous evaluation ICOMOS considered that without further knowledge it was not possible to say with certainty how the ruins relate to the formation of kingdoms in the area or their relationships with the gold or slave trade and thus the justification for the criteria could not be properly assessed. The recent research programme has allowed a fuller justification for the criteria to be suggested.

Criterion (ii): exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.

The State Party justifies this criterion on the basis that The Ruins of Loropéni testify to the strong development of the gold trade and the paramount importance of gold extraction from the 11th century. Trade route connected the gold bearing zones to the large commercial cities of the loop of Niger and to North Africa. The insecurity and covetousness generated by this trade led to the development of strengthened and increasingly imposing human settlements.

ICOMOS considers that although what has been suggested can be supported this does not justify this criterion which needs to show how the property reflects an interchange of ideas over a wide area. In the current state of knowledge, although the gold extraction led to diffusion of ideas, it is not clear how this related to structures.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

Criterion (iii): bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.

This criterion was not suggested by the State Party. However ICOMOS considers that Loropéni can be seen as the best preserved example of a phenomenon of fortified settlements in a wide part of West Africa, linked to the tradition of gold mining, which seems to have persisted through at least seven centuries. Loropéni, given its size and scope reflects a type of structure quite different from the walled towns of what is now Nigeria, or the cities of the upper reaches of the river Niger which flourished as part of the empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai. It thus can be seen as an exceptional testimony to the settlement response generated by the gold trade.
ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The State Party justifies this criterion on the basis that The Ruins of Loropéni are the most imposing and best preserved vestige of the impressive typology of the fortresses which have been identified in the area, created by the Nábé, Lorhon, Koulango, and Touna peoples from the 11th century onwards. These fortresses, making the best use of the possibilities offered by local building materials, enabled the organisation, extraction and transformation of gold in a safe context.

ICOMOS considers that the current research pushing the date of the fortress back much further back than previously suspected makes the Loropéni fortress contemporary with the early states of Ghana and Mali and with the foundations of the early cities of what is now Nigeria, such as Kano and Katsina. What has not been demonstrated however is how Loropéni can be linked to a significant stage in human history.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets criterion (iii) and that the Outstanding Universal Value has been demonstrated.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Development pressures

There are currently no development pressures.

Tourism pressures

Visitor numbers are currently very low, but showing a marked increase in 2008 in response to an awakening of national interest. Two guides are on the site provide a protective presence.

Environmental pressures

The risks to the ruins are from trees and vegetation. Although some trees have been cleared from the site, others remain as their removal would mean conservation of the surrounding walls. The process of tree clearing needs to be done on a regular basis to keep vegetation to a small size.

The extremes of climate between the dry and wet season put pressure on the wall structures over time making the mortar friable and the walls more prone to collapse. As the structures get older more small regular maintenance and repair will be needed to keep the ruins in a stable state.

A programme of preventative conservation which includes training technicians and craftsmen is planned for 2009-2010.

Natural disasters

The greatest natural disaster risks are from fires and flooding.

Impact of climate change

A dramatic increase in rainfall, or an increase in intensity at certain times of year, could impact adversely on the structure of the walls, either from the rain or from increased flooding.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are lack of regular maintenance and preventative conservation, both of which are now being addressed.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses the walled enclosure and the buffer zone provides protection for the immediate hinterland. Both boundaries are satisfactory. Depending on the outcome of further investigations of the setting of the monument, it might be desirable in the future to consider enlarging the nominated property.

Ownership

The ruins and the buffer zone are owned by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Communication.

Protection

Legal Protection

In September 2002 a decree was issued to include the Ruins of Loropéni as part of the National list of Cultural Inheritance under an Ordinance for the Protection of the Cultural Inheritance, 1985. This was signed and came into force in 2005.

Since the first nomination, two decrees, N°2008-430 of 11 July 2008 and N°2009-010 of 22 January 2009, put in place a framework to create:

- A conservation base for the Ruins of Loropéni;
- A Committee of Protection and Management for the Ruins of Loropéni;
- A Scientific Council for the study, conservation and development of the Ruins of Loropéni.

A further decree N°2008-075 of December 29, 2008, created the post of conservator for the site of the Ruins of Loropéni, in charge of the management of the site as well as its conservation in connection with the Committee of Protection and Management.
Traditional Protection

The Chiefs of the local villages are charged to deal with contraventions against the ruins in terms of prohibited actions. Because of its association with the disease of king Tokpa Farma, the property benefits from a certain level of sacrality.

Effectiveness of protection measures

The legal and traditional protection together are adequate.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection is adequate.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

The first stage in recording the ruins has been undertaken and a scientific committee has been set up to further this work (see below).

Present state of conservation

Approximately 80% of these original ramparts are still present and reaching sometimes more than six meters in height. A large majority of the structures located inside the main walls have collapsed, and are sometimes present only in the form of traces at ground level.

There has been no active conservation of the site, apart from the clearance of some trees near the stone walls. In spite of nominal intervention at the ruins the state of conservation is fair but could quickly reach a critical stage if no remedial work is done to replace fallen stones, stop water ingress, remove invasive vegetation and stop burrowing animals.

Once started, deterioration on stone structures such as these, unprotected from the elements, can accelerate quickly.

Active Conservation measures

The last evaluation report noted that it was necessary to activate a conservation and preventative conservation programme for the ruins as soon as possible and this was requested by the Committee.

A programme has been drawn up by CraTerre to stabilise the walls with a preliminary programme of studies to identify the best approaches, an initial emergency programme for urgent actions and a longer term programme that involves capacity building of a conservation team.

The projects will be carried out by NGO CraTerre under the direct control of the Directorate-General of Cultural Inheritance.

The project is due to start in March 2009 and last two years. The total cost is $207,148 and this will be met by contributions from the World Monuments fund (55K), African World Heritage Fund ($17.8K), the Embassy of the Netherlands ($40K) with the government ($64K).

Maintenance

The programme will include training technicians and craftsmen to undertake regular maintenance work.

Effectiveness of conservation measures

The short and longer term actions in the CraTerre programme, for which finance is now in place, will provide effective, on-going, preventative as well as active conservation measures.

ICOMOS considers that the conservation programme recently initiated is a sound basis for stabilising and conserving the ruins.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The site falls under the responsibility of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage (DPC) and more particularly of the department for Sites, Monuments and Traditional Architecture.

The local management committee consists of local representatives of the Department together with local staff and representatives of the community. It is responsible for on-going issues, such as use of funds, the appropriate use of the Buffer Zone and general protection of the site. This committee ensures the participation and support of the local community. Its members have an important role in controlling the economic activities authorized inside the buffer zone.

The scientific committee is charged with examining, conceiving and supervising archaeological conservation and research. This committee is made up of a representative of the DPC, which assumes the direction of this committee, and of the Department of Archaeology of the University of Ouagadougou, the Ministry of Tourism, the Department of the Environment, and the Committee of protection and management.

This scientific committee has the role of improving knowledge on the site and of ensuring its conservation and development for the benefit of present and future generations.

Both committees were formally set up under the decree N°2008-075 of December 29, 2008. This also made provision for the post of conservator. He will draw up regular reports/ratios on the state of conservation of the site, put in place arrangements for visits and manage funds in dialogue with the Committee of Protection and Management.
The management of the site is supported by the local plan for the Commune of Loropéni and also by certain voluntary associations, such as Association for the Conservation and the Valorisation of Sites (ACVS), which 'contribute to the conservation and the valorisation of the sites in general and those of the ruins of the department of Loropéni in particular', and the French Association of the Volunteers of Progress (AFVP), which was involved with creating lodgings for tourists.

The realization of a fence delimiting the buffer zone in the form of a quickset hedge, proposed in the management plan, was the work of Association for the Development of Loropéni (ADL).

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

A detailed Management Plan has been prepared. This sets out a good visitor reception plan for the site which sees the ruins as playing a prominent role in local development through visitors and the promotion of the site. The key objectives of the plan cover protection, preventative conservation, maintenance, management, threats, promotion and archaeological investigation, as well as sustainable use of the buffer zone. The plan includes a 5-year Action Plan which has started to be implemented. So far the following progress has been made:

- quickset hedge planted to delimit the perimeter of the buffer zone;
- completion of first excavations in 2008, with mainly national financing, supplemented by contributions of the World Heritage Centre and the Norwegian Government;
- Drawing up a plan for the continuation of excavations;
- Drawing up a programme of preventive conservation – see below;
- Plan to improve the reception of the visitors to be financed mainly by the Government;
- Nomination of conservator.

It is envisaged that the management plan will be evaluated during 2010 and a revised plan prepared for the period 2011-2015.

Risk preparedness

Arrangements proposed for the buffer zone, keeping an area outside the walls clear, should provide a fire break around the ruins. Clearly sustainable management of the vegetation in the buffer zone is also needed as a prime way of preventing fires. This is envisaged in the management plan.

It is understood that water washes off a nearby road near one corner of the structures. This however has been identified and will be addressed.

Involvement of the local communities

The two local villages, through their chiefs, are involved in guardianship of the monument. The management of the property envisages improvements for the villagers through the provision of a water pump.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

The modest visitor income, from around 200 visitors a year, is distributed between the local tourist office, the tourist guides, the Commune of Loropéni and the Board of Management.

If the site is inscribed, the Ministry for Culture, Arts and Tourism will be able to assign an annual budget to the department of Sites, Monuments and Traditional Architecture for a minimum of two missions and for taking part in meetings of the Local Committee. The Directorate of Cultural Heritage will also be given an objective to assemble aid and sponsorship in order to launch as soon as possible the programmes suggested in the management plan for stabilisation of the ruins and the first stages of archaeological research.

Professional staffs are employed in the Directorate of Cultural Heritage, although it is said that these are at a minimum level. Training in conservation and management is on-going through initiatives such as Africa 2009 programmes. The Directorate also has close links with the department of archaeology of the University of Ouagadougou.

Effectiveness of current management

The management arrangements in force which combines protection of the ruins, with further training, research and exploration and controlled economic activity in the surrounding area is appropriate for the property.

ICOMOS considers that the management arrangements are adequate.

6. MONITORING

Two guides from the office of Burkina Faso Tourism, ensure a presence and a quasi-permanent monitoring of the site. A series of indicators has been developed for the ruins and the buffer zone, related to the effectiveness of maintenance, conservation and preventing harmful activities. These are linked to timescales and responsible authorities. It would clearly be desirable of this monitoring could be linked to regular photographic evidence.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring regime is adequate.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The Ruins of Loropéni are dramatic and memorable structures. They are not unique, reflecting a large group of fortified enclosures in the Lobi area. They are however some of the largest and best preserved. At the time of the first evaluation it was said that ‘tantalisingly little is know about their history and origins. Although this adds to the sense of mystery, it does not help to allow assessment of their full significances. More needs to be determined about their use and relationship to people, kingdoms and trade, both south to the coast and north across the Sahara.
... A programme of research needs to be initiated (...) to establish the role of Loropéni and its associated fortified settlements in the wider West African social and economic context.'

Such a programme has been started and the results have pushed back knowledge of Loropéni to the 11th century to 17th century thus establishing it as part of the network of settlements that developed at that time based on the trans-Saharan gold trade. The economic centre of these trade were the kingdoms of the upper reaches of the river Niger, Ghana, then Mali then Songhai, with their cities of Timbuktu, Djénne, Mopti. At the same time walled cities were developed over a wide area as staging posts for the trade, such as Kano in what is now Nigeria. Loropéni is different from all of these in first not being a city but a smaller fortified settlement and secondly being constructed within a gold mining area. Although definitive links between Loropéni have not been established, the early date for the structure and the associated evidence produce a firm case for seeing the site as part of this extraordinary, far-reaching and extremely lucrative gold trade that fostered routes across half a continent and ultimately contributed to the development of empires far outside its borders.

The second concern of the first evaluation was the need for a programme of stabilisation of the walls. Such a programme has been formulated and funds are in place for it to commence in March 2009.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that The Ruins of Loropéni, Burkino Faso, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii).

Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The dramatic and memorable Ruins of Loropéni consist of imposing, tall, laterite stone perimeter walls, up to six metres in height, surrounding a large abandoned settlement. As the best preserved of ten similar fortresses in the Lobi area, part of a larger group of around a hundred stone-built enclosures, they are part of a network of settlements that flourished at the same time as the trans-Saharan gold trade and appear to reflect the power and influence of that trade and its links with the Atlantic coast. Recent excavations have provided radio-carbon dates suggesting the walled enclosure at Loropéni dates back at least to the 11th century AD and flourished between the 14th and 17th centuries, thus establishing it as an important part of a network of settlements

Criterion (iii): Loropéni is the best preserved example of a type of fortified settlements in a wide part of West Africa, linked to the tradition of gold mining, which seems to have persisted through at least seven centuries. Loropéni, given its size and scope reflects a type of structure quite different from the walled towns of what is now Nigeria, or the cities of the upper reaches of the river Niger which flourished as part of the empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai. It thus can be seen as an exceptional testimony to the settlement response generated by the gold trade.

The authenticity of the fortified settlements as ruins is not in doubt.

Although the precise history of Loropéni is only recently coming into focus through the recent research programme, and its function still remains in part speculative, the integrity of the monument in terms of its status as the largest and best preserved fortified settlement is satisfactory.

In time as more evidence emerges, it may be necessary to consider whether a larger area could encompass more of the attributes that are linked to its use, function and history.

The Committee of Protection and Management for the Ruins of Loropéni, the Scientific Council for the study, conservation and development of the Ruins of Loropéni and the Management Plan which has been implemented since 2005 form a good basis for management of the ruins as a focal point for sustainable development within the local community.

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party submit a report to the 35th session of the Committee in 2011 to provide a progress on the:

- Implementation of the stabilisation programme;
- Structuring and implementation of a medium term research programme
Western rampart seen from the outside

View of the ramparts from the inside
Tipasa (Algeria)
No 193

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Algeria
Name of property: Tipasa
Location: Commune and Wilaya (province) of Tipasa
Inscription: 1982

Brief Description:
On the shores of the Mediterranean, Tipasa as an ancient Punic trading-post conquered by Rome and turned into a strategic base for the conquest of the kingdoms of Mauritania. It comprises a unique group of Phoenician, Roman, palaeochristian and Byzantine ruins alongside indigenous monuments such as the Kbor er Roumia, the great royal mausoleum of Mauritania.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background
Tipasa is a serial property of three sites: Tipasa: Archaeological Park west and Tipasa: Archaeological Park, east, which are separated by the port outside the nominated area, and the royal Mauritain Mausoleum, Kbor er Roumia (Tomb of the Christian woman).

At the time of inscription, no precise details were provided of boundaries of the three elements.

In response to the 27 COM 7A.17 Committee decision at its 27th session (Paris, 2003), requesting the State Party to delineate the property, a map was provided in 2005 but this showed only the locations of the archaeological parks and did not show the location of the Mausoleum.

At its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006), at the time that Tipasa was removed from the World Heritage list in Danger, the Committee requested the State Party to provide a ‘delimitation of an official perimeter for the inscribed sectors and the buffer zone based on the new cadastral plan’. (Decision 30 COM 7A.18)

At its 32nd session (Quebec city, 2008), the Committee again requested the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2008, a map clearly displaying the delimitation of all components of this serial property, and its buffer zone, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009. (Decision 32 COM 7B.56)

On 30th January 2009, the State Party submitted a proposal for a minor modification to create a buffer zone.

Modification
The proposed buffer zone extends to 71 hectares.

The proposal includes details of the area of the inscribed property which is given as 44.33 ha. However this includes the two archaeological parks (27.75. and 16.58 ha) but excludes the Mausoleum which was given as 7.83ha at the time of inscription.

The buffer zone extends to the south of the two archaeological parks, but does not include the modern port area between the two archaeological parks. The Roman wall of 2.3km ran between the two Parks and runs through this buffer zone. To the west and east the buffer zone includes sensitive archaeological areas. To the south the buffer zone includes the modern settlement. The monument of Kbor er Roumia, which is sited to the east of the other two components is not mentioned in the proposal.

No details are provided as to status of the proposed buffer zone nor the protection offered in terms of how archaeological remains will be protected nor what limitations might be established to limit or control modern development. The port area where proposals for development are already under consideration is not part of the buffer zone. It is thus not clear how the proposed buffer zone will contribute towards the protection of the attributes of the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Tipasa, Algeria, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Revise the boundary of the proposed buffer zone to include the port area;
- Provide details of the status of the buffer zone and what protection it will afford the inscribed property as well as what protection will be given to archaeological remains associated with those in the property;
- Clarify whether the Kbor er Roumia will be provided with a buffer zone.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
Medina of Tunis (Tunisia)

No 36

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Tunisia

Name of property: Medina of Tunis

Location: Governorate of Tunis

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

Under the Almohads and the Hafsids, from the 12th to the 16th century, Tunis was considered one of the greatest and wealthiest cities in the Islamic world. Some 700 monuments, including palaces, mosques, mausoleums, madrasas and fountains, testify to this remarkable past.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The inventory included in the nomination dossier of the Medina of Tunis notes that no maps were submitted together with the dossier in 1978. It was indicated that the property comprised 270ha.

A letter dated 2 July 2004 sent by the Institut National d’Archéologie et d’Art to the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Division, provided a “map for the Medina of Tunis showing the boundary of the property inscribed on the World Heritage List and the different levels of protection for the traditional urban fabric”. This map shows 7 areas surrounded by an “area of environment”, a larger zone of protection, identified as follows: historic area of the Medina of Tunis (A), Sidi El Bechir (B), Selkha (C), El Morkadh (D), Bab Souika (E), Halfaouine (F) and Tronja (G), covering an area about 70ha.

During the 1st cycle of Periodic Reporting (29 September 2000), it was stated that the buffer zone was not formally established. It was also indicated that the Institut National du Patrimoine and the Association de sauvegarde de la Medina were developing a safeguard plan.

The retrospective inventory process identified the information needs regarding the property and requested the State Party to clarify if the map submitted in 1984 was showing the boundaries of the World Heritage property and submit a large-scale topographic or cadastral map to show the boundaries of the inscribed property and the buffer zone. It was also requested that the size in hectares of both the property and buffer zone be provided.

Modification

The State Party submitted a map marking the limits of the property and the proposed buffer zone. It indicated that surface of the inscribed property is 287.73ha and the area of the buffer zone comprises 198.18ha.

Although the original nomination could consider that the property consisted of seven serial sites with a protected area around them, in the current map it is included as a whole. However, because no precise boundaries were submitted at the time of nomination it is difficult to ascertain to which extent this constitutes a modification on the boundaries.

ICOMOS notes that the area of the inscribed property was estimated to 70ha in 1984 and it is covering 287.73ha in the current proposal. This data needs to be further verified.

It is not clear what the proposed buffer zone responds to and if the areas under consideration have effective and adequate arrangements in place to guarantee its management and regulation. In some areas there is no buffer zone surrounding the property, in others it encompasses several blocks and in others it is only a street wide. The proposed buffer zone does not appear to be large enough in some areas to ensure an effective protection and conservation of the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposal for the buffer zone of the Medina of Tunis, Tunisia, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Clarify the areas of the proposed property boundary and that of the buffer zone in relation to those provided with map of 1984 showing 7 areas surrounded by an “area of environment”;
- Review the existing proposal to delineate a buffer zone so as to ensure the proper conservation and protection of the property, taking into consideration its values and its integration with the setting;
- Provide information on how the proposed area will be managed and the regulatory measures foreseen for the buffer zone. Information on how these measures articulate with other planning tools for the place and the mechanisms for implementation should be provided;
- Consider requesting a mission to the property to consider the proposed boundaries in conjunction with the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, when completed.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Tunisia

Name of property: Amphitheatre of El Jem

Location: Governorate of Mahdia

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

The impressive ruins of the largest colosseum in North Africa, a huge amphitheatre which could hold up to 35,000 spectators, are found in the small village of El Jem. This 3rd-century monument illustrates the grandeur and extent of Imperial Rome.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The decree n°103 dated 16 December 1920 established the protection of the monument and its surroundings against modern constructions by creating a building free zone with a radius of 300 m around the property. In the nomination file, a plan d’aménagement de la ville d’El Jem was included where the uses are established for the surrounding area.

On 9 June 1988, in response to a questionnaire entitled Information update on the cultural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, the State Party reported that: The buffer zone around the amphitheatre did not undergo any attack since the proposal for an inscription. However it is advisable to announce that if the adjustment of this space is practically finished in the southern sector or in a good way of completion on the north side, it is not the same for the two east and west sectors, where the extension of the buffer zone and development of the building encounters very complex land and social problems.

During the 16th session of the World Heritage Committee (16 COM, Santa Fe, 1992), the State Party reported that new constructions would be prohibited by order of the President within a radius of 100 meters around the amphitheatre (16 COM p.13). However, this was not established formally as a buffer zone. It was also considered that new construction detracted from the authenticity of the property and its character.

No details are provided of the protection offered by the proposed buffer zone nor its relationship to the area within the 100 metre radius in which construction is prohibited by Presidential decree.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Amphitheatre of El Jem, Tunisia, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Provide information on the institutional arrangements and regulatory measures to manage and control development within the proposed buffer zone.

The retrospective inventory process identified gaps in information and requested the State Party to submit the largest scale topographic or cadastral map available showing the boundary of the inscribed property and its buffer zone and to indicate the size in hectares of the property and the buffer zone.

Modification

The State Party has submitted a map for the delimitation of the property and its buffer zone. The surface of the inscribed property is 1.37ha and for the proposed buffer zone it is 26.41ha. The circular shape of the proposed buffer zone does not take into account the urban fabric or cadastral configurations. However its comparatively large size encompasses the immediate setting of the property.

No details are provided of the protection offered by the proposed buffer zone nor its relationship to the area within the 100 metre radius in which construction is prohibited by Presidential decree.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Tunisia

Name of property: Punic Town of Kerkuane and its Necropolis

Location: Cap Bon, Governorate of Nabeul

Inscription: 1985, 1986

Brief Description:

This Phoenician city was probably abandoned during the First Punic War (c. 250 B.C.) and as a result was not rebuilt by the Romans. The remains constitute the only example of a Phoenician-Punic city to have survived. The houses were built to a standard plan in accordance with a sophisticated notion of town planning.

Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The Punic town of Kerkuane was inscribed in 1985 and the nomination was revised in 1986 to include the Necropolis. At the time of nomination only basic maps were submitted. In maps subsequently submitted the delimitation of the archaeological site and particularly of the Necropolis was not precise. The retrospective inventory process highlighted this situation and requested the State Party to verify the coordinates of the serial property and to submit revised topographic maps with precise scales or a cadastral map showing the limits of the inscribed property, as well as the indication of the surface in hectares for both elements and the proposed buffer zone.

Modification

The State Party submitted a map that shows that the inscribed property has 11.19 ha and two proposed buffer zones of 61.17 ha.

The delimitation of the archaeological site differs from the previous maps that were considered for inscription, as it is marked within the cadastral map. The proposed buffer zones do not take into account the cadastral elements and no information has been provided to examine regulatory measures and management arrangements to assess the efficacy and adequacy of the proposal for ensuring the protection and conservation of the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zones for Kerkuane and its Necropolis, Tunisia, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Clearly delineate an area that promotes the integration between the two components of the inscribed serial property to adequately protect and conserve the property. Current land uses and cadastral plans should be considered for the delimitation of the buffer zone;
- Provide information regarding the administrative and regulatory measures for the buffer zone as well the prescribed policies for its management.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zones.
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Tunisia
Name of property: Medina of Sousse
Location: Governorate of Sousse
Inscription: 1988

Brief Description:
Sousse was an important commercial and military port during the Aghlabid period (800–909) and is a typical example of a town dating from the first centuries of Islam. With its Kasbah, ramparts, medina (with the Great Mosque, Bu Ftata Mosque and typical ribat (both a fort and a religious building), Sousse was part of a coastal defence system.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background
The Medina of Sousse was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1988. In 1992, the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee noted that the property comprised both public and private property and was under town-planning regulations based on those at Tunis. The place maintained economic and domestic life, with a majority of residential areas and shops and public activities in about one-sixth of the districts. Challenges were faced in balancing function, the needs of the inhabitants and heritage concerns as well as the implementation of existing regulations. Additional concerns were raised regarding legislation for town planning and legal measures to control new construction and interventions at historic buildings.

The retrospective inventory process identified information needs, in particular the precise definitions of the boundaries of the property and the lack of a defined buffer zone. The State Party was asked to submit the largest scale topographic or cadastral map available to depict the boundary of the inscribed property and its buffer zone and to indicate in hectares the size of the property and its buffer zone.

Modification
The State Party submitted a map showing the inscribed property and the proposed buffer zone. The inscribed property has an area of 32.61ha and the buffer zone 7.40ha.

ICOMOS considers that the proposed buffer zone is insufficient to effectively and adequately ensure the proper conservation of the property. The area is just a narrow strip surrounding the Medina and does not consider the setting of the property nor the potential impacts uncontrolled development or new constructions will continue to have on the integrity and authenticity of Sousse. A larger buffer zone could provide the means to ensure the protection of the Medina and to mitigate the impacts of new development on the visual integrity of the place, consequently contributing to the conservation of the property. To do so, the State Party may wish to extend the buffer zone to 200m beyond the ramparts, where possible, thus following the requirements of the Heritage regulations and the listing of the ramparts as “monument historique” (decree of 25 January 1922).

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Medina of Sousse, Tunisia, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Consider the enlargement of the buffer zone so as to effectively and adequately conserve and protect the property. The State Party may wish to extend the buffer zone to 200m beyond the ramparts, where possible, thus following the requirements of the Heritage regulations and the listing of the ramparts as ”monument historique” (decree of 25 January 1922);
- Precisely identified regulatory measures to mitigate the impact of interventions at historic monuments and of new developments on the integrity of the property. Intersectorial management arrangements should also be explored to ensure the implementation of said regulations by all stakeholders involved in the conservation and management of the property.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Tunisia
Name of property: Kairouan
Location: Governorate of Kairouan
Inscription: 1988

Brief Description:
Founded in 670, Kairouan flourished under the Aghlabid dynasty in the 9th century. Despite the transfer of the political capital to Tunis in the 12th century, Kairouan remained the Maghreb's principal holy city. Its rich architectural heritage includes the Great Mosque, with its marble and porphyry columns, and the 9th-century Mosque of the Three Gates.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 March 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background:
The nomination file for the property included a map Kairouan marking the boundaries of the property in a thick pencil line. The site is a serial property that includes the Medina, the Zawiya de Sidi Sahab and les Bassins des Aghlabides. Although the limits could be identified, a precise delimitation was needed. The retrospective inventory process further underscored the need for updated topographic maps or cadastral maps to clearly show the boundaries of the three inscribed elements that constitute the World Heritage property as well as the delimitation of the buffer zone. Indications on the precise size of the property and the buffer zone were also requested.

Modification:
The State Party submitted a map indicating the limits of the World Heritage area and the proposed buffer zones. The total surface of the property is 54 ha and the proposed buffer zones have 73.04 ha.

Although at the time of inscription the boundaries were not precisely described, the delimitation of the Medina (marked as zone I) clearly differs from the area included in the nomination map. ICOMOS considers that this reduction on the size of the property is not justified given that the area currently encompasses features which substantiate the outstanding universal value of the property and contribute to its authenticity and integrity. Although the area is included in the buffer zone, protection mechanisms might differ and this would impact the state of conservation of the property.

As for the proposed buffer zones, it is not clear how they contribute to ensuring effective protection of the property and the criteria for their definition. In some areas they are apparently ample to include features that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection whereas in other areas the buffer zone is very narrow or even inexistent (for example Zone III only has an identified buffer zone at the northeast section). This raises the question whether they are sufficient and adequate to conserve the integrity of the property. No information was provided in terms of the arrangements for the management of the buffer zones and its articulation with planning tools for the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the modification of the boundaries of the World Heritage property of the Medina of Kairouan, Tunisia, should not be approved.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zones for Kairouan, Tunisia, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

- Review the existing proposal to delineate a buffer zone so as to ensure the proper conservation and protection of the Property. The buffer zone should also seek to integrate the three components of the World Heritage property;

- Provide information on the criteria for defining the buffer zone, existing regulations and measures to secure protection and arrangements for effective management.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zones
Sulaiman-Too (Kyrgyzstan)
No 1230 rev

Official name as proposed by the State Party: The Sulaiman-Too Sacred Mountain

Location: The Osh Oblast

Brief description:

Sulaiman-Too mountain dominates the surrounding landscape of the Fergana Valley and forms the backdrop to the city of Osh. In mediaeval times Osh was one of the largest cities of the fertile Fergana valley at the crossroads of important routes on the Central Asian Silk Roads system.

For more than a millennium and a half Sulaiman-Too was a beacon for travellers along the Silk Roads and has been revered as a sacred mountain. Its five peaks and slopes contain a large assembly of ancient cult places and caves with petroglyphs, all interconnected with a network of ancient paths, as well as later mosques. Its veneration now blends pre-Islamic and Islamic beliefs.

Most of the nominated property is a relict landscape little used, although the first peak with some caves, and the lower parts of the southern slopes of the second and third peaks, are ritual sites frequented by pilgrims and tourists.

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 site. In terms of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (January 2008) paragraph 47, it is also nominated as a cultural landscape.

I. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 29 January 2001

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination: 1st October 2007

Date received by the World Heritage Centre: 30 January 2006 1st February 2008

Background: This is a referred back nomination (31 COM, Christchurch, 2007 and 32 COM, Quebec, 2008).

A first nomination dossier for Sulaiman-Too Cultural Landscape (Sacred Mountain) was examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007).

The World Heritage Committee adopted the following decision (31 COM 8B.27):

The World Heritage Committee,
1. Having examined Documents WHC-07/31.COM/8B and WHC-07/31.COM/INF.8B.1,
2. Refers the nomination of Sulaiman-Too Cultural Landscape (Sacred Mountain), Kyrgyzstan, back to the State Party to allow it to:
   a) Complete the Management Plan.
   b) Complete the protection of the nominated property by incorporating the zone of planning control and zone of protected natural setting into the city plan to give it effect, and in order to preclude new interventions on the mountain, including tree planting.
   c) Extend the Buffer Zone to incorporate part of the adjoining unbuilt plain as a means of protecting the setting of Sulaiman-Too.
   d) Consider how sites on the neighbouring peaks might be incorporated in a revised buffer zone.
   e) Complete the survey of the network of paths around the mountain.
   f) Put in place a Tourism Strategy which addresses the issues of visitor access.

3. Recommends that the name of the property be changed to ‘Sulaiman-Too Sacred Mountain’.

On 1st February 2008 the State Party submitted a Management Plan and supplementary information on development pressures and protection. This information was incorporated into an evaluation report considered by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec, 2008). In this report, ICOMOS recommended the nomination be referred back to the State Party to allow it to:

   - Stop the construction of an aerial ropeway, suspend and then revise the project for a new mosque to reduce its height and impact, and find alternative solutions to the need for more houses in the buffer zone to avoid high-rise buildings;
   - Create a Site Management Council to implement the Management Plan, and augment the Plan with an Action Plan;
   - Put in place the formal protection of the nominated site through incorporating it and the Buffer Zone into the city plan to give both of them effect as part of the overall zoning plan for the city, through finalising the Protection Zoning Project document as part of the Urban Master Plan.

This recommendation was adopted by the Committee.

On 1st February 2009, the State Party submitted supplementary information related to the requests of the Committee. This information is incorporated into this report.
Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committees on Cultural Landscapes and on Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In December 2006, IUCN provided an evaluation of the natural attributes of the property.

Literature consulted (selection):

Technical Evaluation Mission: 25-28 September 2006. As this is a referred back nomination, no further mission has been undertaken.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party:
- As a matter of clarification and in order to check the understanding of the material submitted by the State Party on 1st February 2009, ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 4th March 2009.
- Further supplementary information was received on 26th March 2009 with clarification of zoning arrangements and protection. This information is included in this report.
- Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 30 March 2009

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The Sulaiman-Too Mountain is located in the eastern part of the fertile Ferghana Valley, on the banks of the Ak-Buura River, at the foot of the Kichi-Alai ridge.

The mountain overshadows the city of Osh, for centuries the largest city in the Ferghana valley and at the cross-roads of important routes along the Central Asian Silk roads. Sulaiman-Too possesses a large concentration of cult objects – shrines and petroglyphs – as well as later mosques, and is respected as a sacred mountain blending pre-Islamic and Islamic beliefs, a veneration which could date back to the Bronze Age.

The Osh oasis is identified with ancient Davan, where it was recorded in the 2nd – 1st century BC that the Chinese mounted campaigns to obtain “heavenly” horses for military use. The petroglyphs of Sulaiman-Too, and in particular those of Surotch-Tash display a collection of images, dating from the Iron Age and later, which are said to bear resemblance to the heavenly horses of Davan.

Sulaiman-Too rises to around 200 metres and dominates the surrounding plain. On three sides it is now surrounded by the city of Osh. The nominated property extends to a maximum of 1,663 metres by 820 metres and on its north-east, east and southern sides. It is surrounded by a buffer zone encompassing some of the city, the plain to the north and west extending to Orto-Too, and the peaks of Surotch-Tash. The nominated area is 112 ha and the buffer zone is 4,788 ha.

Sulaiman-Too has five peaks. Its current name first appeared in the 18th century and relates to a Muslim legend of the stay on the mountain by the Prophet Sulaiman, the biblical Solomon. Prior to that the mountain had been known by a variety of different names (see History below).

The mountain was formed during the Pleistocene-Holocene period when pressure from the Indian plate on the Asian continent squeezed and lifted up the Palaeozoic basement rocks over the younger rocks. This lifting is still in process with an average annual raise of 6 mm. Some of the peaks are highly fractured slates and schist with long smooth inclines, while others are weathered karst limestone with niches and caves of various forms and sizes which have been used since the Stone Age.

The five peaks and the mountain slopes contain remains of ancient cult places and several caves with petroglyphs dating from the Neolithic to the late Middle Ages, all interconnected with a network of still legible traces of ancient paths. The first peak with caves, and the lower parts of the southern slopes of the second and third peaks, are frequented by pilgrims and tourists, as are three Islamic monuments.

In the Middle Ages irrigation channels from the Ak-Buura River were created along the lower slopes, and one of them is still functioning on the northern side. In Soviet times further active irrigation measures were undertaken with the installation of iron water pipes to support a plantation of non-indigenous karagach-trees (a type of elm) on the lower parts of its southern and western slopes.

At the north-east, north and north-west foot of the mountain are modernised vernacular houses, providing accommodation and ritual services for pilgrims. At the eastern end of the nominated property is a public garden and modern buildings related to the site museum complex, TV centre, and tourist services. There are several new structures related to the ritual services for pilgrims near one of the mosques, the Ravat-Abdullakhan, and a large museum in the main cave. At the western extremity of the nominated property, near the foot of the mountain, there is an active frontier post of barracks and houses established in Soviet times. Also dating from the same period are the modern visitor path (partly overlapping the earlier pilgrim path), an observation platform on the top of the first peak, a TV antenna on the top of the second peak, and still active military barracks and apartment houses near the western foot of the mountain.

The key aspects of the nominated property are:
- Stone & Bronze Age settlements
- Rock engravings - petroglyphs
- Ritual sites
- Network of paths
- Islamic buildings
- Museum

These are considered in turn:

Stone & Bronze Age settlements

The Stone Age remains in the Rusha-Unkur cave on the mountain’s third peak, were discovered in the 1940s and 1950s and date to Neolithic times. Further explorations in
2000 and 2004 did not reveal any new early sites, thereby confirming the conclusions of former researchers that habitation by ancient people in the Stone Age was only occasional.

A Bronze Age settlement was located on the steep southern slope of the third peak, a site apparently chosen for its defensive properties. The remains are related to the Chust culture, which extended over large parts of the Fergana valley, and for which over 50 river side sites are known. The Sulaiman-Too settlement of over 2 ha in extent had a terrace lay-out, with fifteen terraces overlaying one another. The remains of thirteen buildings have been found, half dug-out in form with framed walls and a wooden roof. Analysis of the material remains, also confirmed by radiocarbon dates, shows the site belonged to the 15th-7th century BC. The Osh settlement is set apart from other lowland sites by its mountain top location and by the wealth of painted ceramic finds. It has been suggested that this settlement might have had ritual associations.

Rock engravings – petroglyphs

Petroglyphs are found on and around all the five peaks and also in caves, shelters and karstic tunnels, on horizontal, vertical and inclined planes. During 2005, the images were documented and 101 sites indexed.

The petroglyphs were engraved using both stone and metal tools. They can be conditionally divided into three groups: anthropomorphous, zoomorphous and geometrical signs. The most numerous group includes images of solar signs and webs. The animal images are in the minority but include a realistic group of three horses lassoed by a man standing at a distance, snakes with open mouths, predatory birds and goats with bent horns, some of them with their legs tied. The images of horses bear close similarity to petroglyphs on nearby peaks of Aravan and Surottuu-Tash (8 km to the north-west from Sulaiman-Too), dated to the Iron Age and later and demonstrating a remarkable collection of some 80 images of beautiful horses possibly bearing a resemblance to the "heavenly horses" of ancient Davan, mentioned by Chinese writers in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC as a source for military horses.

Many of the Sulaiman-Too rock drawings have not been dated; those that have, by stylistic association with other sites, appear to date from around the 15th century BC to the 7th century AD. The majority of images belong to the Bronze Age (circa 1500 BC to circa 500 AD) such as the labyrinths, solar signs, geometrical figures, birds, anthropomorphic and larva-like images. The Davan horses and some goat images date back to between the end of 1st millennium BC and the beginning of the 1st millennium AD. A considerable numbers of figures were added in the 20th century and include dates and names.

Ritual sites

These seem to have been laid out in three bands (or zones) around the mountain peaks and are strongly associated with the petroglyphs. The lower belt displays engravings on vertical surfaces. Above this are inclined plates with gullies, accompanied by more petroglyphs, and towards the top is a third belt that includes religious places with cut footprints, and places for sacrifice. All these sites are linked by paths weaving round the mountain.

The cult places which are still in use are mainly concentrated around the first peak and part of the second and third peaks. The nomination identifies seventeen sites still mostly in use, including gullies, grottoes, seats and caves, many 'labelled' with petroglyphs whose signs cannot be read. On nearly all the sites are found traces of fire, probably for burning aromatic herbs, and some sites are polished smooth by many centuries of pilgrims sliding along or touching the rock surfaces. The cult sites are associated with beliefs in cures of pilgrims sliding bornness, headaches, back pain and the blessing of longevity. The most dramatic is a cave with polished sloping floor, down which women would slide to cure barrenness, through simulating a birth delivered from the mountain.

Network of paths

Linking the cult sites is a network of paths. On the main peaks these paths have been partly overlaid by a modern tourist path.

Besides the still well-used paths to the active shrines, there are many relic paths, almost invisible, but still traceable due to polished patches on the natural steps or rock surfaces. There are also some carved ‘footprints’ found here and there, ‘showing the way’ to cult places. These traces of ancient paths, covering all the peaks, have recently been mapped.

Islamic buildings

There are three standing Islamic monuments within the nominated property, two of them situated near the foot of the mountain. The main Islamic sacred place, the little Mosque of Takht-i-Sulaiman, is on the top of the first peak. A small domed structure with large portal of burnt brick, it was built originally in the 16th century, but destroyed in 1963. In 1988 the Mosque was re-built using available documentation, on its original foundations, enclosing in its interior an ancient ritual stone with cup-marks and petroglyphs, as a manifestation of the adoption by Islam of the ancient sacrality of the Mountain.

The Ravat-Abdullahkhan Mosque was also constructed in the 16th century. Only the main part of the original complex of building survives. Used as a museum in Soviet times, it was returned to religious use in 1990. The Asaf-ibn-Burkhiya Mausoleum of portal dome construction was apparently constructed in the 16th century on the basis of an earlier, possibly 13th century building.

The Islamic monuments are actively used for religious practices and maintained by the local religious community.

Museum

The museum was constructed in Soviet times, as a restaurant, inside the Rusha-Unkur, or Eagles cave, the largest two storey cave on the mountain. Its sacred function has been lost by the interventions. In 2000 it was turned into a museum, and is now one of the main attractions for tourists. The 'Cave Museum' with its enormous round ‘window’ and concrete front staircase is well visible from the southern borders of the property.
**History and development**

The location of the city seems to have moved towards the mountain in mediaeval times. Previously it was further south at Ak-Buura, a site that has been shown by excavation to date back to the 3rd century BC.

The earliest written mention of the mountain is in a Chinese source of the 13th century which refers to ‘a town at a highly respected mountain’ and one of the Duvan towns (i.e., presumably a supplier of Duvan horses). The name Barak was recorded in the end of the 13th century and by the 15th century the mountain was know by the Farsi name Bara-Kukh meaning ‘separately standing’ or ‘a beautiful mountain’. The modern name relates to an Arabic legend of a stay on the mountain of the Prophet Sulaiman, or the Biblical Solomon, and was first recorded in the early 18th century.

Written references to the religious significance of the mountain do not appear until 19th and early 20th century. In 1812 Mir Izet Ulla, a Pakistani employee of the East Indian Company wrote in his memoirs that ‘Every spring crowds of pilgrims of different nationalities come here from all neighbouring countries.’ A Russian officer, Nazarov, visited Osh around the same time and mentioned ‘two ancient buildings, and there is a big cave below...[the] buildings are called ‘Takh-Sulaiman’, and that every year the Asians travel to this place to worship it, and they believe spirits worshipped Solomon in this place.’

In the middle of the 19th century Valikhanov, relying on the accounts of others wrote: “…Muhammad knew of the existence of this town and precepted every true believer to visit the Osh sanctuaries at least once in their life. … To worship those places, pilgrims with their families come there every year from Kokand, Margilan, Andijan and other towns of Fergana valley.”

And in 1887 Simonov wrote: “…almost on the top of its eastern peak, there is a mulushka (a kind of chapel or mausoleum) …[which] serves as an object of worship for lots of pilgrims gathering here from all even remote areas of Turkestan”.

What is clear from all these accounts is the link between the religious significance of the mountain and Islam. Simonov was however the first writer to mention the belief in the curative powers of other shrines on the mountain: ‘natives suffering from various illnesses go there because all the area around the mulushka is full of memorials (...), which can heal all possible ailments’.

In the early 20th century Masalskiy, and then Castaniye, both mentioned the curative properties of cult places as did several Soviet era authors.

Work on collecting and analysing legends associated with the mountain was begun in the 19th century by Russian scientists and students. Studies on folklore continued in the Soviet period, and in 1987-1989 a special expedition was organised by the Ministry of Culture to collect information on the Mountain and on the micro-toponymy of its peaks, caves, minor cult places and other features, but also on the worshipping and sacrifice rites practiced there.

Although there is no early documentary evidence for the pre-Islamic ritual practices on the mountain, scholars now consider that the earliest period when it was regarded as a sacred place could be the Bronze Age. There is material to suggest that the earliest cult of Sulaiman-Too could be Mithraism. Mithra, one of the most ancient Indo-Aryan gods, was later included in the Zoroastrian pantheon. He was regarded as a God of Light, Union and Agreement. According to myths, he was born from a rock in a cave. The Mithraist rites included libation of haoma, the sacred beverage. The cult places of Sulaiman-Too – stones with polished gutters for libations, caves and grottoes (especially those with inclined polished floors, imitating Mithra’s birth from the cave) might be related to those cults.

Efforts to eradicate religious practices at Sulaiman-Too in Soviet times led not only to the demolition of several Islamic buildings, but also to the non-authentic use of the mountain, which was turned into a kind of public park. Non-indigenous karagach-trees (a type of elm) were planted on the lower slopes with water supplied through iron pipes. In the same period a number of new buildings and structures were introduced including: the modern visitor path (partly overlapping the earlier pilgrim path) the observation platform on the top of the first peak, the TV antenna on the top of the second peak, the frontier post with military barracks and apartment houses near the western foot of the Mountain, the TV-centre, some administrative buildings, including those related to the museum complex, cafés and restaurants, and the memorial stele in front near the eastern foot of the mountain. The most irreversible intervention was the creation of a restaurant in the two-storey natural cave of Rusha-Unkur. This is now a museum and one of the main attractions for tourists.

During the same period, considerable changes occurred to the surrounding townscape with the demolition of the major part of the traditional housing areas and the construction of modern buildings in the historic centre of Osh, added to during preparatory work for the celebration of the 3,000-year jubilee of the city of Osh in 2001.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

**Integrity and authenticity**

**Integrity**

The integrity of the mountain relates to its intactness in terms of its relationship to the plain and the town at its foot. The three aspects, mountain, town and surrounding landscape need to co-exist in a harmonious relationship.

ICOMOS considers that the interface between these three currently creates some cause for concern and impacts on the visual aspects of the integrity of the property. The mountain is first and foremost a visual symbol of power, separate from the plain, hosting in its curious geology well-used cult sites and offering spectacular views from its peaks.
ICOMOS considers that the visual integrity of the mountain has been partly compromised by modern interventions and will be compromised further unless there is a clearer differentiation between town and mountain and between town and plain with sufficient unbuilt plain to allow the mountain to be seen to rise from it, at least from some directions. This unbuilt plain needs protection as part of the Buffer Zone.

The cult sites on the mountain and particularly the rock engravings are linked strongly to the sites on neighbouring peaks of Aravan and Surottuu-Tash. In terms of the integrity of the cultural sites, ICOMOS considers that the cult sites on Sulaiman-Too are part of a wider complex of sites and that in terms of visual images, particularly of Davan horses, some of the more significant images, in number and quality, are to be found on neighbouring peaks. These peaks need protection through the Buffer Zone.

**Authenticity**

The sacred associations of the mountain appear to be linked to its dramatic form rising out of the almost flat plain, to the contrast between the smooth rocks and its gullies and caves, and between the bare peaks and the town huddled at its base. In the past fifty years many interventions on the mountain and in the town at its foot have undermined this sense of otherworldliness and of the visual setting of the mountain in the landscape.

The viewing platforms, antennae, cave restaurant/museum and barracks have already been mentioned. The cave museum in particular is a major scar on the face of the mountain. The new main museum building at the foot closes the view towards the first peak from its eastern foot. From the upper parts of the mountain the modern structures around its foot are all visible. During the last 10-12 years, modern dwellings have been constructed on fields around the northern side of the mountain foot, and these have reduced the visual qualities of the mountain and its relationship with the open landscape of the plain framed by the mountain ranges of Ayrymach-Too and Kerme-Too. Currently, the one-storey houses, constituting a major part of this new built environment of the Mountain, do not close the important distant views towards Sulaiman-Too from the valley. ICOMOS considers that protection needs to be put in place for the unbuilt plains which are the remaining authentic setting of the mountain.

Some petroglyphs have been mistreated by inappropriate conservation or graffiti (see below). Nevertheless most of the cult sites retain their authenticity in physical terms and many retain their active cult practices.

### Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis in the nomination for the property in relation to its region and from the perspective of similar properties inscribed on the World Heritage List is weak in parts.

The functioning duration of the Sacred Mountain of Sulaiman-Too as a sacred site is said to be comparable with the Tien Shan in China, which for two thousand years had been "the Heavenly Empire’s" official symbol, visited by millions of pilgrims. Also mentioned are the Khan Khentei, the Ogon Tenger, and the Bogd Kahn Mountain, three worshiped mountains in Mongolia, which since the 13th century have been places of annual worship. The longevity of their ancient sacrificial traditions, rituals and sacrifice practices is said to make them comparable with those of Sulaiman-Too.

The significations of sacred mountains and shrines in China, India, Iran, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, Indonesia and Afghanistan could have been discussed with more specific examples of sites and ideological systems and evidence for their spiritual values.

The material in the dossier would have benefited from more exploration of the conclusions of the UNESCO expert meeting held in Wakayama, Japan, in 2001, on Asia-Pacific Sacred Mountains where there was a comprehensive analysis of Central Asian sacred mountains, and their classification and beliefs and rituals.

It would also have been valuable to have had more material on other active sacred mountains in Central Asia, where pilgrim paths lead up the mountains to caves and smooth rocks revered for their healing qualities, and where herbs are burnt for their special fragrances by visiting pilgrims.

Although other sites in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan) are not mentioned in the dossier, Sulaiman-Too can be said, on one hand, to be typical of Central Asian sacred mountains, for the way its shrines are laid out and used and have been used over many millennia.

However on the other hand Sulaiman-Too is also unusual in Central Asia for its size, shape and concentration of cult material. Sulaiman-Too mountain can be said to present a vivid evidence for existing, strong and continuous traditions of mountain worship, which has spanned several millennia and been absorbed successfully by Islam. Moreover its traditions survived in spite of severe restrictions in the recent Soviet era.

Sulaiman-Too is also one of those very rare mountains, which corresponds closely to iconic images in the Universe of Avesta and Vedic traditions: a single mountain with a peak dominating four others, standing in the virtual centre of a vast river valley, and surrounded by and related to other mountains in the landscape system.

The rich concentration of material evidence for cult practices preserved on the mountain from pre and post-Islamic times, together with its 'ideal' form, present the most complete picture of a sacred mountain anywhere in Central Asia.
ICOMOS considers that Sulaiman-Too is both typical of Central Asian sacred mountains and also an exceptional example of an ‘ideal’ mountain with a rich concentration of cult sites that provides evidence of mountain worship.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for inscription on the World Heritage List.

**Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value**

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The Sulaiman-Too is the only sacred mountain in this part of Central Asia.

- Its location on a crossing of the migratory and trading roads from ancient times until today has led to a symbiosis of various cultures and traditions for more than three millennia, reflected in rock engravings and still active cult places, beliefs and rites.

- The mountain has a dominating position over the surrounding Fergana valley. The clear-cut contours of its five peaks give it a special picturesqueness and attractiveness.

- The mountain’s geology and morphology have been skilfully utilised for three millennia. Visible and accessible vertical surfaces and cult grotoes and crevices have been ornamented with petroglyphs in a triple zoning system matching the ancient idea of the “World Mountain” and the “World Tree”.

- The Sulaiman-Too rock paintings have similar images to other parts of Eurasia, and display types of universal images such as solar signs, hands and footsteps.

- Today, rituals and prayers connected with domestic animal sacrifice, shamanism ideas of fertility, ancestors’ cults or magic treatments are still practiced at the cult sites.

- The mountain’s sacred and cultural qualities appear in early Chinese and mediaeval Arabic and Persian written sources. Western and Russian researchers in the 19th and 20th centuries noted the mountain’s sacredness, which attracted the attention of many pilgrims and visitors.

- The mountain has been nominated as a sacred cultural landscape. The sacred landscape apparently goes beyond the physical limits of the Sulaiman-Too Mountain, encompassing the neighbouring ranges of Orto-Too (eastern spur of Ayrmach-Too) and Kerme-Too (eastern spur of Chil-Mayram), the open plain they encircle, and also the separate Aravan Rock. The sites found there are partly described in paragraph 3c of the nomination dossier. All of them possess cult places and petroglyphs similar to those of Sulaiman-Too. The information available allows them to be regarded as parts of a single whole, a cultural landscape with the Sulaiman-Too Mountain standing at its virtual centre.

ICOMOS considers that the location of Sulaiman-Too on one of the cross roads of the Central Asian Silk Roads gives it prominence and influenced the cosmopolitan development of the town of Osh at its foot. On their own the petroglyphs are not outstanding as a collection: their value is related to their specific sitting in or near cult places that are still actively used.

ICOMOS considers that the value of the mountain as a single monument is linked to its dramatic sitting rising out of the plain and its large spiritual landscape with formal paths, apparent zoning system, and many cult sites, still in use and reflecting both Islamic and pre-Islamic beliefs and particularly the cult of the horse.

Sulaiman-Too is not unique as a mountain with cult sites linked by paths and still actively used; it is however the largest and most prominent mountain in this part of central Asia and its size, scale and location on one of the major arteries of the Silk Roads and the economic importance of the city of Osh, means that it is and for many centuries has been a significant spiritual landmark.

Furthermore Sulaiman-Too corresponds closely to iconic images in the Universe of Avesta and Vedic traditions: a single mountain with a peak dominating four others, standing in the virtual centre of a vast river valley, and surrounded by and related to other mountains in the landscape system.

**Criteria under which inscription is proposed**

The property is nominated on the basis of criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi).

**Criterion (iii): bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.**

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Sulaiman-Too bears an exceptional testimony to the cult sites on the mountain and their longevity.

ICOMOS considers that the rich concentration of material evidence for cult practices preserved on the mountain from pre- and post-Islamic times, together with its ‘ideal’ form present the most complete picture of a sacred mountain anywhere in Central Asia.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

**Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.**

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Sulaiman-Too presents a Bronze Age settlement site.

ICOMOS does not consider that this property, on the basis of present knowledge, can be said to have outstanding value as an individual site or even as part of the wider Chust culture of the Fergana valley.
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One was the aerial ropeway or funicular project. This was
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ded by the State Party in
2008 as having the potential to severely affect the site.
The second major proposed project mentioned in 2008 was
construction of a large new mosque, some 34 metres
square and 35 metres high inside the property boundary, to
the south of the 1st and 2nd peaks, and which it was stated
could become a ‘serious visual disturbance to the
Mountain’. The initiator of the project was the Oblast
Government and the project was said to have been given
permission by an order of the Prime Minister. The need to
revise this project and reduce the height and impact of the
building was acknowledged in the Management Plan (see
below). The Presidential Decree of 9 June 2008 deemed
that the recommendations of the World Heritage
Committee for the proposed Mosque should be respected.
Construction work was suspended in June 2008. The
Mayor’s office subsequently reviewed the permission for
the mosque and recommended that the height of the
proposed minarets be reduced to from 35 metres to 21
metres. A revised plan in accordance with these changes
was submitted to the Ministry of Culture in December
2008. Work may only commence when the revised plans
have been agreed by the relevant authorities.

The third development project mentioned in 2008 was
more generic and concerned the increase in the size of
villages on the plain in the Buffer Zone and the
replacement of one-storey houses with high-rise
apartments. One solution proposed in the supplementary
information was to relocate the apartments to the eastern
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said to have been halted at the time the nomination was
presented to the Committee in 2007. It was then revived.
The aerial ropeway would have extended from a base
behind the Takht-i-Sulaiman mosque to upper stations on
both the 1st and 2nd peaks, and with intermediate stations.
It was noted in the supplementary information provided by
the State Party that this was ‘in discordance to national
legislation’ and would impact on the physical mountain
and on its ‘unique functions and meaning’.

Permission appears to have been given for the ropeway by
the Mayor of Osh even though the ‘Academy of Sciences,
scientific, cultural and arts communities, NGO, Oblast
administration and local community’ as well as the
community (mahalla) voted against the scheme. In the
2008 evaluation, it was stated by the State Party that the
Oblast Governor had plans to approach the President
requesting a special decree to stop this project. On 9 June
2008 a special Presidential Decree came into effect that
prohibited the construction of the ropeway (and enforced
other protection, see below).

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information was to relocate the apartments to the eastern
boundaries of the Buffer Zone or further to the outside of
the zone.

The Administration of Osh Region and the Department of
Architecture and Construction of Kara-Suu confirmed in a
letter of 24 December 2008 to the Ministry of Culture that
previous decisions on constructions of high-rise buildings
in the buffer zone have been cancelled. In the future the
zone in the buffer zone delineated for individual house
construction (see below) will have a height limit of two-
stories.

More generally there were said to be plans for the
expansion of urban areas to the north and west of the city.
To control this expansion it was suggested that zoning is
needed for the Buffer Zone but this had yet to be put in
place, and the Buffer Zone did not have formal approval at
the time of the 2008 Committee. This has now been put in
place – see below.

The Presidential Decree and other decrees of the Mayor of
Osh have therefore given effect to the Emergency
protection measures listed in the Management Plan (see
below) as ways of countering the threats listed above.

Lack of conservation

The preparation of the 3000th anniversary of Osh led
apparently to an increase in funding for new buildings and
a diminution in conservation funding, as well as some
inappropriate conservation work (see below).
Tourism pressures

Uncontrolled visitor access for many years resulted in a damage to petroglyphs found in the lower parts of the first and second peaks: a number of modern graffiti, mainly painted, but also those engraved and/or pecked, cover many rock surfaces. Most of those graffiti were made before the creation of NIAMK (the Sulaiman-Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum Complex), mainly in Soviet times. However, also during the last six years, after the establishment of a permanent on-site guardianship, quite a few new painted graffiti have appeared on some easily accessible surfaces. As mentioned below, there is currently no local expertise to deal with the conservation of damaged sites.

Many visitors come to the mountain both from within Kyrgyzstan and from other countries. The local municipality is interested in encouraging tourism as a way of gaining income. The current paths and visitor facilities and guarding arrangements are inadequate for a major increase in numbers.

These issues are acknowledged in the Management Plan, which foresees the development and extension of the existing public parks/recreational areas along the Ak-Bura river, both within the city boundaries and beyond, upstream. This would include ecological revival/recovery, landscaping, planting trees and providing improved visitor facilities in those areas for both pilgrims and local teenagers, who are identified as the main affecting factor to the Mountain.

In order to welcome and host foreign pilgrims whose numbers grow gradually year by year, alternative possibilities for low-cost accommodation, services and facilities for pilgrims in the adjacent parts of the city (not disturbing the nominated area) are foreseen in the new Master Plan.

Environmental pressures

There is a need for measures which limit environmental degradation from uncontrolled access and this is acknowledged. There is also a need to limit strictly the planting of trees on the mountain which could affect the ecological balance.

Natural disasters

There are no perceived natural disasters.

Impact of climate change

Increased dryness could have the effect of increasing erosion from visitors walking the paths and severe, heavy rainfall could be equally problematic.

ICOMOS considers that the main risks to the property are uncontrolled development, the expansion of the city to the west and insufficiently controlled visitor access.

Measures under way to incorporate protected areas into the Town Plan are a major step forward. ICOMOS also considers that there is an urgent need to define activities and proposals for a tourism strategy that addresses visitor access issues and protection of the sacred sites and petroglyphs from visitor impacts as envisaged in the Master Plan.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The nominated property includes not only the open mountain, with shrines, rock art and access paths, but also at lower levels, built up areas in the town, plantations, military barracks, TV station and tourist facilities.

ICOMOS understands that some intrusive buildings have already been demolished during the last 5 years, and there are plans to remove other modern structures, replacing them with movable traditional structures (yurts) for seasonal visitor services. For the present however the Kyrgyz authorities consider the problem of transferring the military unit elsewhere and the removal of its buildings from the foot of Sulaiman-Too insolvable, because of its importance as a post in the vicinity of the Uzbek frontier.

On its north-east, east and southern sides, the nominated property is surrounded by a buffer zone encompassing some of the city. To the north and west the buffer zone includes within its boundaries the Kerme-Too and Orto-Too mountain ranges, with their archaeological sites and petroglyphs, situated west and north-west of the city, along with the rural landscape of the valley that they and Sulaiman-Too encircle. This buffer zone has been much enlarged since the nomination was first submitted and now has adequate boundaries.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated area of Sulaiman-Too, and that the enlarged buffer zone adequately encompass the extent of the mountain’s unspoiled setting to the north and west, and the related peaks of Kerme-Too and Orto-Too.

Ownership

The nominated property is a national property of the Kyrgyz Republic.
Protection

Legal Protection

The nominated property is inscribed within a larger Protection Zone formally established by the Decision of the Kyrgyz Government No 638 of the 8 September 2006. Sulaiman-Too is one of two exceptional cultural reserves in Kyrgyzstan having not only the status of National Cultural Heritage Reserve, but also clearly defined and legally approved boundaries. This Zone comes under the responsibility of the Sulaiman-Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum Complex, and any new constructions within its extended boundaries are prohibited, unless a special agreement is obtained from the relevant national authorities responsible for the protection of cultural heritage and natural environment.

The nominated property is also inscribed on the National List of Properties and given a formal status of National Historical and Archaeological Museum Complex. It is also covered by the provisions of:

i. Use of the Historical and Cultural Heritage, No 91 (with Amendments of 2005)


iii. 1999 Law On the Protection of Nature

According to (i) and (ii), in order to provide proper protection and use of the cultural properties, zones of legal protection (Protection Zone, Zone of Planning Control and Zone of Protected Natural Setting) need to be established and incorporated in regional and urban development plans and projects.

The Protection Zone for Sulaiman-Too had already been established at the time of nomination but the boundaries and regulations for the Zone of Planning Control and for the Zone of Protected Natural Setting to provide extra physical and visual protection around the property were still at the stage of preparation work in 2008 and had not yet been incorporated in the regional development plans of Osh oblast, nor in the urban development master plan of the city of Osh. This urban master plan was approved in the Soviet times, but it still serves as formal guidelines for developers. According to this plan, the traditional housing in the area surrounding the Sulaiman-Too Mountain is to be demolished and replaced with new public and apartment buildings up to 5 storeys in height. This master plan is no longer valid, and a need for its revision has been recognised.

In 2008, the Committee requested that formal protection of the nominated site should be put in place through incorporating it and the enlarged Buffer Zone into the city Master plan to give both of them effect as part of the overall zoning plan for the city, through finalising the Protection Zoning Project document as part of the Urban Master Plan.

The supplementary information provided by the State Party in January 2009 reported that development of the new Master Plan had started in January 2008 with national funding. It also reported that work on developing protection zones for the historic centre of Osh, and the adjacent Kara-Suu region of Osh oblast, within the Master Plan, had been started in May 2008 by Kyrgyzrestoration (Scientific Research and Design Bureau under the Ministry of Culture).

On 19th December 2008, local and national authorities agreed that Protection Zones for the nominated property and the Buffer Zone should be included in the new Master Plan and that these will respect the proposed boundaries. It was further agreed that restrictions and regulations for every sub-zone within the nominated area will be put in place. These sub-zones include:

- Sulaiman-Too legal protection zone
- Zone of planning control, within the City of Osh
- Zone of archaeological protection for Kerme-Too and Orto-Too
- Existing village zones
- Planning control zones in the rural area
- Zones of protected agricultural landscape
- Protected areas for further archaeological surveys.

To protect the property and its buffer zone against modern developments during the period before the completion and final approval of the Legal Protection Zoning Document and the Osh Urban Master Plan, a map showing the agreed boundaries of the nominated area, of the buffer zone and its sub-zones have been distributed as a reference to the responsible agencies of the Osh oblast, Osh city, Karasu district and Kyzylkyshtak rural area.

As well as the proposals above, it is also agreed at the December meeting that activities on protection and revival of traditional dwelling quarters and their infrastructures (mahalla) are to be foreseen, that continuation of works on the removal of existing unsightly modern structures from the nominated area will be planned, as suggested in the Management Plan and that removal of existing unsightly modern structures from the Buffer Zone will be continued.

It is stated that the revised draft and progress achieved will be reported to the State Agency on Construction and Architecture, the Ministry of Culture, the Public Council for consideration by March 2009.

It is understood that the Master Plan will be finalised at the end of 2009 and come into force in 2010. In the meantime the zoning arrangements will be respected under the terms of the Presidential decree. (see above)

Traditional Protection

The sacredness of the shrines is a key attribute of the mountain and one that should be seen as part of traditional protection.

Effectiveness of protection measures

The current and anticipated protection measures are adequate.
ICOMOS considers that although the nominated area has legal protection, this needs to be incorporated into the city plan to give it effect as does the buffer zone as part of the overall zoning plan for the city. Considerable progress has been made on establishing protection zones, which will come into effect under the Protection Zoning Project document as part of the Urban Master Plan. In the meantime they are given effect under the Presidential decree.

**Conservation**

*Inventories, recording, research*

During Soviet times although the mountain was de-spiritualised, it was protected. After independence and before alternative systems were put in place some damage was done in the form of new petroglyphs and burials.

Defensive enclosures were put up on the northern-eastern, eastern and partially on the southern mountain sides, conservation of the petroglyphs started, and partial restoration works on the Rafat-Abdullakhana mosque and the Asaf-ibn-Burkhiya Mausoleum were conducted. Work was also undertaken on the main visitors’ routes. Since national protective status was gained in 2004, visitor protection and conservation have been funded as on-going activities.

**Present state of conservation**

In spite of the many negative interventions on the mountain, a large part of it remains unspoiled and still retains its spiritual qualities respected by visitors.

**Active Conservation measures**

The property is now actively protected and the Management Plan sets out a strategic approach for on-going preventive conservation measures as well as for remedial measures to tackle damage to the petroglyphs at certain sites, and on-going maintenance of the paths. Implementing this approach will need improved decision-making (see below).

**Maintenance**

On-going maintenance needs to be improved and this is envisaged in the management plan.

**Effectiveness of conservation measures**

The effectiveness of the overall conservation of the mountain and its shrines, paths and other structures will rely on the combined efforts of authorities, local residents and visitors.

ICOMOS considers that conservation of the property is stable but needs to be supported by delivery of the conservation approaches set out in the Management Plan.

**Management**

**Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes**

The management of the nominated property is the responsibility of the Sulaiman-Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum Complex (NIAMK), which comes under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, and is financed from the national budget. The Management Plan sets out the intention to further upgrade the status of NIAMK, through subordinating it directly to the Government which would apparently improve its funding. The office of NIAMK is situated on the property.

**Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation**

A Management Plan was submitted as supplementary material in January 2006. This was approved by the Ministry of Culture on 24th January 2008. The Plan was prepared by a multidisciplinary Project Team headed by the archaeologist from the National Academy of Sciences and composed of NIAMK staff members, specialists from universities and representatives of national and local organisations. Advice was provided by two external experts from Kazakhstan and Japan. The Plan was financed by the World Heritage Fund.

The Plan is an aspirational document that sets out strategic direction for the nominated property and its buffer zone. These respond to key management issues. What is not set out however is the outstanding universal value of the property and thus what is being protected. A Section on this needs to be added. The need to protect not only the mountain’s physical heritage but also its intangible heritage is however stressed.

The Plan sets out a detailed list of Emergency Protection measures such as cancelling the aerial ropeway project, revising the proposed mosque, finalising legal protection, approving the buffer zone and prohibiting further new construction within he nominated area.

The need for capacity building within NIAMK and improved decision making is highlighted. The creation of a Site Management Public Council foreseen in the Plan was established on 20th June 2008. This involves 20 representatives of all responsible agencies and stakeholders concerned as the main coordination body on the management of the site and its Buffer Zone. It is co-chaired by the Vice-Governor and the supervising Deputy Minister of Culture. Statutes for the Council’s activities in four main fields are being developed, and corresponding groups formed, one of which will be responsible for monitoring the execution of recommendations of the World Heritage Committee and the activities included in Management Plan. The new Council is said to demonstrate the increasingly active participation of scientists, the National Committee of ICOMOS and the local community in the property.

In order to raise awareness of the value of the nominated area, including its visual aspects and relationship to its setting, and to encourage visitors to respect its fragility, an outline of a project is set out which would re-organise the cave museum and turn it into an exhibition on the history
of the mountain and its sacral organisation. Delivering such a plan is not currently the responsibility of any of the partner organisations, whose roles are identified in the plan.

An Action Plan for 2008-2010 has been developed by a Working Group jointly with the Ministry of Culture, the Academy of Sciences, and the State Administration of Osh region. This was approved by the Ministry of Culture on 26th June 2008. It consists of immediate actions to be taken according to the Management Plan and its two sub-plans. The Action Plan consists of the following parts:

I. Legal and Organizational measures (development and approval of a state program, development and approval of a new Master Plan for Osh city, to incorporate protective zones and buffer zones of the property, tourism management programs, etc)
II. Improvement of the structure of the museum, and capacity building
III. Improvement of conservation and protection
IV. Improvement of on-site facilities
V. Publications and promotional activities

Risk preparedness

This is an area where little planning has yet been put in place.

Involvement of the local communities

There is some engagement of the local community and the possibility for more engagement, particularly of local young people.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

NIAMK is headed by a Director-General recently appointed by the Governmental Commission for Cultural Heritage with the agreement of the Governor of Osh Oblast. The permanent staff of NIAMK includes two Assistant Directors, clerical staff, several specialists of different professions (including historians and biologists), and also site personnel. Currently there is no expertise available on the conservation of petroglyph sites.

The municipal police have been involved in patrolling the property since July 2006, as a necessary measure against visitors (mainly local teenagers) leaving graffiti on the rocks with petroglyphs.

The annual budget allocations for NIAMK are limited. It is anticipated that the proposed upgrading of the NIAMK’s status will bring benefit in respect of funding, staffing and increased possibilities for capacity building.

ICOMOS considers that the strategic approach set out in the Management Plan is to be commended and the creation of a Site Management Council and a short-term Action Plan.

6. MONITORING

All archaeological reports from the 1940s to the present are kept in the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences. A solid package of documentation of the petroglyphs has been produced during last three years, within the framework of a UNESCO Project on the creation of the Central Asian Rock Art Database. The documentation of petroglyphs and ancient cult places continues at the adjacent sites of Surottuu-Tash (Orto-Too) and Kerme-Too, with the aim of providing the necessary documentation and justification for the establishment of enlarged zones of legal protection.

Detailed mapping of the paths on the property and their relationship to the cult sites has begun. There are no other approved plans for further research work, due to a lack of funding.

A few monitoring indicators have been put in place, including temperature, vegetation, visitor numbers and sedimentation. The most valuable is an annual photographic record of the main archaeological and architectural monuments.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring is adequate.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Sulaiman-Too is a spectacular site and one that deserves protection and full understanding.

ICOMOS considers that the property has Outstanding Universal Value as a spiritual landscape with formal paths, apparent zoning system, and collection of cult sites reflecting both Islamic and pre-Islamic beliefs (particularly the cult of the horse), many of which are still in use, as well as for its associations with cult practices that had a profound effect over a wide area of Central Asia.

ICOMOS commends the State Party for its strategic approach set out in locally developed Management Plan and for enlarging the Buffer Zone to incorporate the wider setting in the plain and its neighbouring peaks, both as requested by the Committee when the nomination was referred at its 31st Session.

In response to the requests made by the World Heritage Committee at the 32nd session, ICOMOS commends the State Party for putting in place a presidential decree that effectively stops the aerial ropeway, aims to reduce the impact of the proposed mosque, reverses decisions on high-rise buildings in the buffer zone and agrees that the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone shall be incorporated into the Master Plan, currently being re-drafted protective zoning of both should be implemented in line with the Committee recommendations.

ICOMOS further notes that the proposed zoning addresses the needs of the property and its buffer zone.

ICOMOS also notes that a Site Management Council has been set up to take forward the Management Plan and a two year Action Plan developed.

ICOMOS considers that considerable progress has been made to ensure the protection of the wider landscape which is so necessary to ensure the spectacular visual and spiritual aspects of the property, through the Presidential Decree which ensures that governmental decisions must be
in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee and progress with the Master Plan and defining protection for specific zones.

**Recommendations with respect to inscription**

ICOMOS recommends that Sulaiman-Too Sacred Mountain, Kyrgyzstan, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (iii) and (vi).

**Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value**

Sulaiman-Too Mountain dominates the surrounding landscape of the Fergana Valley and forms the backdrop to the city of Osh. In mediaeval times Osh was one of the largest cities of the fertile Fergana valley at the crossroads of important routes on the Central Asian Silk Roads system, and Sulaiman-Too was a beacon for travellers.

For at least a millennium and a half Sulaiman-Too has been revered as a sacred mountain. Its five peaks and slopes contain a large assembly of ancient cult places and caves with petroglyphs, all interconnected with a network of ancient paths, as well as later mosques.

The mountain is an exceptional spiritual landscape reflecting both Islamic and pre-Islamic beliefs and particularly the cult of the horse.

Sulaiman-Too corresponds closely to iconic images in the Universe of Avesta and Vedic traditions: a single mountain with a peak dominating four others, standing in the virtual centre of a vast river valley, and surrounded by and related to other mountains in the landscape system.

**Criterion (iii):** The rich concentration of material evidence for cult practices preserved on Sulaiman-Too mountain from pre- and post-Islamic times, together with its ‘ideal’ form present the most complete picture of a sacred mountain anywhere in Central Asia.

**Criterion (vi):** Sulaiman-Too presents exceptionally vivid evidence for strong traditions of mountain worship which have spanned several millennia and been absorbed successfully by Islam. It has had a profound effect over a wide part of Central Asia.

The authenticity of the mountain, its cult places, uses and functions are without doubt, even given the numerous interventions over the past 50 years. However, since the sacred associations of the mountain are linked to its dramatic form rising from the surrounding plain, it is highly vulnerable to continuing new development on it and around its base. In order to protect its majesty, spirituality, visual coherence and setting and thus the full authenticity of the property, great vigilance will be needed in enforcing protection of its setting.

The integrity of the mountain relies on protection of the cult places and their connecting paths as well as their visual linkages and views to and from the mountain.

The management of the mountain and its setting is coordinated by a Site Management Council who oversees the implementation of the Management Plan and Action Plan. Its effective protection relies on approval of an agreed zoning arrangement within the Osh Master Plan. To protect the property and its buffer zone against modern developments during the period before the completion and final approval of the Legal Protection Zoning Document and the Osh Urban Master Plan, a map showing the agreed boundaries of the nominated area, of the buffer zone and its sub-zones have been distributed as a reference to the responsible agencies of the Osh oblast, Osh city, Karasu district and Kyzylkyshtak rural area.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party should give consideration to the following:

- Define urgently a tourism strategy that addresses visitor access issues and protection of the sacred sites and petroglyphs from visitor impacts;
- Ensure that the proposed upgrading of the Sulaiman-Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum Complex’s status will bring benefit in respect of funding, staffing (expertise on the conservation of petroglyph sites) and increased possibilities for capacity building.
Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property
General view of the Sulaiman-Too Mountain

Stone and Bronze Age site on the 3rd peak
Petroglyph representing a labyrinth

Ancient sanctuary
Gate at the starting point of the main pilgrim path
The Potala Palace, Lhasa (China)

No 707ter

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: China

Name of property: Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa

Location: Province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the central government of Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region


Brief Description:
The Potala Palace, winter palace of the Dalai Lama since the 7th century, symbolizes Tibetan Buddhism and its central role in the traditional administration of Tibet. The complex, comprising the White and Red Palaces with their ancillary buildings, is built on Red Mountain in the centre of Lhasa Valley, at an altitude of 3,700m. Also founded in the 7th century, the Jokhang Temple Monastery is an exceptional Buddhist religious complex. Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's former summer palace, constructed in the 18th century, is a masterpiece of Tibetan art. The beauty and originality of the architecture of these three sites, their rich ornamentation and harmonious integration in a striking landscape, add to their historic and religious interest.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

In 1994 the Potala Place was inscribed; in 2000 and 2001 first the Jokhang Temple and then the Norbulingka were added.

Since 1994, there has been some unclear demarcation regarding the nominated area and buffer zones of Potala Palace as there was a difference between details in the 1994 and later dossiers and in the Periodic Report, 2003. The 2006 joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to Lhasa, asserted that the original boundary, delineated in the first nomination dossier in 1993, still stands as approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 18th session. 'The other delineation should be corrected in due course by Chinese authorities'.

At the time of inscription the Jokhang Temple was said to have a buffer zone of 7.5ha and a further wider protective zone of 130ha; and Norbulingka was said to have a construction control zone of 200m from its surrounding wall.

The protective buffer zones were different in the World Heritage extension nomination files from those mentioned in the National Periodic Report (2003). The mission also noted that ‘In its recommendation of December 1994, the World Heritage Committee requested the Chinese authorities to consider an extension of the Potala Palace to include the Lukhang Temple and the DZongyab Park (also called Willow Park) and the Chapori Hill. The mission members found out that the Lukhang Temple and the surrounding Park behind the Potala Palace were included, at least on the maps, in the nomination file of 1993. The Chapori Hill was included in the buffer zone of the 1993 World Heritage nomination of the Potala Palace’. The mission recommended that the original boundary of the Potala Palace World Heritage protected area and its buffer zone, delineated in the first nomination dossier in 1993 should be maintained, which means that the DZongyab Lukhang Park area to the north of the Potala Palace should remain within the nominated area, and the Chapori Mountain (Yuwang Shan) area to the southwest of the Potala Palace should remain within the boundary of the buffer zone’.

For the Jokhang Temple the mission noted ‘There has been a slight misunderstanding about the World Heritage boundaries and buffer zones (construction-limitation zone in Chinese terms) of the Jokhang Temple Monastery, because several different demarcations existed, as stated previously. The mission confirmed that ‘The nominated area and buffer zone of the Jokhang Temple World Heritage Site should be reaffirmed and the nominated area should include not only the Jokhang Temple compound but also Barkhor Street, with the buffer zone covering inside the whole circle of the Lingkor kora, a total area of 1.3 square kilometers’.

For Jokhang Temple: the buffer zone should encompass the whole circle of Lingkhor Kora and the new boundaries of the buffer zone could be therefore demarcated as East: Lingkhor East Road; South: Jiangsu Road; West: Duosenge North Rd and South Road; North: Lingkor Beilu, amounting to a total area of 1.3 square kilometres of the historic centre.

Norbulingka, the mission noted ‘The Western and Southern sides of the nominated area are being rapidly redeveloped. Since the lot size of these areas is considerable, relatively severe height control should be enforced to protect the green landscape area of the property’.

The mission also recommended that the overall zoning delineation for the three World Heritage sites in Lhasa be drawn up on a single map so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding about the boundary of each site of the property.

Furthermore, since the development pressure in the historic centre of Lhasa is increasing, the mission recommended that an extension of the buffer zone for the three sites should be seriously considered in order to protect the traditional urban fabric, while taking into consideration the heritage values of the surrounding landscape and environment.
At its 29th Session in Durban (29 COM 7B.50), in order to strengthen the protection of the Potala Palace, the Committee requested the State Party to evaluate and possibly redefine the buffer zones pertaining to the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and Norbulingka and submit detailed maps indicating the World Heritage boundary and protective buffer zones to the World Heritage Centre for the examination by the Committee at its 31st session (2007).

In January 2007, as part of its State of Conservation Report, the State Party submitted location maps for three new buffer zones and descriptions of their extent. The maps provided were however not to scale and no coordinates or areas had been submitted. The buffer zones put forward did not appear to increase the protected zones around each property and in the case of Norbulingka, there seemed to have been a slight decrease.

Three separate maps were provided rather than the one recommended by the mission. No information was provided as to the restrictions in force in the buffer zones and therefore whether height restrictions were in place around the Norbulingka.

The Committee considered these modifications at its 30th session and adopted the following recommendation (Decision 31 COM 8B.58):

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-07/31.COM/8B.Add and WHC-07/31.COM/INF.8B1.Add,

2. Refers the minor modification to the boundaries of the Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa, China, back to the State Party to allow it to supplement the information provided on the proposed buffer zones for the three properties by providing:

   a) areas and coordinates of the three buffer zones;

   b) details of the protective policies in place;

   c) rationale for the suggested buffer zones and whether consideration was given to enlarging the area protected.

Modification

On 20th March 2008, the State Party submitted revised proposals as part of their State of Conservation report. This stated that new buffer zones had been drawn up by experts from the Cultural Heritage Bureau, the Department of Construction of Tibet autonomous region, and the Lhasa Municipal Government. The new buffer zones had been approved and encompassed the following areas:

1. Potala Palace Buffer Zone

   North: Lingkhor North Road

   West: Lingkhor West Road and area of Mount Yaowang

   South: Northern wall of government building

   East: Niangre Road, including Beijing Middle Road in the north section and Kang’ang East Road in the southern section.

   The area is said to be approximately 1 million square metres. This is said to increase the original buffer zone to include Zongjiao Lukang Park, a garden related to the Potala Palace. However, this is the area that the mission considered should be part of the property, as was indicated in the 1993 dossier. The overall buffer zone is smaller than that shown in the 1993 nomination file.

2. Jokhang Temple Buffer Zone

   East: Lingkhor East Road; South: Jiangsu Road; West: Duosenge Road; North: Lingkhor North Road.

   The area is said to be 40,000 sq. metres. The area is considerably smaller than that shown in the 2001 nomination and as recommended by the 2006 mission which described a buffer zone of 1.3 square kilometres.

3. Norbulingka Buffer Zone

   The buffer zone extends around the inscribed zone by 150 metres to the east and 200 metres to the north, south and west.

   The area is said to be approximately 1.3 million square metres. This is smaller than in the 2001 nomination – particularly to the south.

   The areas proposed are similar to that put forward in 2007 for the Potala Palace and Norbulingka, but considerably smaller for Jokhang Temple. These proposals rationalise the buffer zones, reducing them from the 2001 plans where the areas have been developed, for instance to the south of Norbulingka and to the north of Jokhang Temple.

   Annotated aerial photographs have been provided but these are not scaled.

Protection

The Master Plan for the City of Lhasa (1995-2015) is said to provide protection for the buffer zones through limiting height in levels I, II and III areas to 8, 15, and 21 metres based on an analysis of the vision corridors to Sera and Deprung monasteries to the north against Mount Wuzi. It is not clear how these three levels relate to the buffer zones.

Within the buffer zones buildings are said to be in harmony with traditional appearance in terms of form, size, colour and layout.

It is said that the latest Urban Development Plan for Lhasa, which is being revised, includes further instructions on World Heritage Site and protected sites.

The report also provides information on protection of the inscribed areas. Measures for the Protection of the Potala Palace drawn up in 1997 have been revised and in 2007 the Cultural Heritage Bureau of the Autonomous Region invited the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage and the Henan Research Institute to draw up Conservation Plans for the Potala Palace and Norbulingka and is discussing the protection of Jokhang Temple. It is said that these plans and the revised Urban Plan for Lhasa will be implemented through appropriate laws and regulations, but no timetable has been provided.

Within the old city, it is stated that certain blocks are protected for their traditional architecture (these are to the east of the Potala Palace and Norbulingka and around Jokhang Temple).
3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

The buffer zones show a reduction in the protected area compared to the boundaries shown in the 2000 and 2001 nominations for Jokhang Temple and Norbulingka, and in the case of Potala Palace, an area, Zongjiao Lukang Park, now proposed for the buffer zone was originally shown as in the property in the 1993 map and the 2006 mission confirmed that this area was an integral part of the Potala Palace and should be within the property.

ICOMOS considers that the recommendations of the 2006 mission, as endorsed by the Committee, should be respected for the boundaries of the property and its buffer zones.

For protection, it is not yet precisely clear how development will be regulated in respect of height restrictions within these buffer zones. Further information is needed on ‘levels’ within these buffer zones, along similar lines to that provided in the 2001 nomination.

ICOMOS recommends that the minor modification to the boundaries of the Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa, China, be referred back to the State Party in order to allow it to:

- Reconsider to supplement the delineation of information provided on the property and the buffer zone for the Potala Palace, to bring the boundaries in line with the 1993 nomination map;
- Bring the buffer zone for Jokhang Temple in line with that shown in the nomination file;
- Bring the buffer zone for Norbulinka in line with that shown in the nomination file;
- Provide a scaled map of the three buffer zones;
- Provide details of height restrictions for the buffer zones, related to the protected vision corridors;
- Submit, when completed, a copy of the revised Urban Plan for Lhasa.

To allow the proposals to be considered at the 34th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2010.
Map showing the revised boundaries of Norbulingka

Map showing the revised boundaries of Potala Palace
Map showing the revised boundaries of Jokhang Temple Monastery
Causses and Cévennes (France)

No 1153 rev

Official name as proposed by the State Party: The Causses and the Cévennes

Location: Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées and Rhône-Alpes Regions France

Brief description:
The shale and granite Cévennes mountain chain, interspersed by wide deep valleys, rises above the plains of Languedoc and the Mediterranean and is the southern end of the Massif Central. Its dispersed farms on the mountain slopes, oases of green set amidst deep terraces and thick woodlands of chestnut and pine, are linked by high level tracks across the undulating plateaux of the mountain summits. In distinct contrast are the limestone uplands of the Causses to the west and granite uplands of Mont Lozère to the north. Both are open almost treeless expanses of grazed grassland supporting scattered farms, the limestone areas dissected by deep gorges which carry the torrents of the western Cévennes down to the Mediterranean.

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 site. In terms of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (January 2008) paragraph 47, it could also be a cultural landscape.

1. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 1st February 2002

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the nomination: No

Date received by the World Heritage Centre: 25 January 2005
27 January 2009

Background: This is a referred back nomination (30 COM, Vilnius, 2006).

The original nomination was submitted in 2005 and considered by the Committee at its 30th session in 2006. At that time ICOMOS recommended that “the examination of The Causses and the Cévennes, France, be deferred to the World Heritage List to allow the State Party to consider further the qualities of the property.”

The World Heritage Committee chose to refer the nomination back to the State Party without any recommendation and adopted the following decision (Decision 30 COM 8B.44):

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-06/30.COM/8B and WHC-06/30.COM/INF.8B.1,

2. Refers the nomination of The Causses and the Cévennes, France, back to the State Party;

A supplementary nomination was submitted by the State Party on 27 January 2009. This relates to the same boundaries as the original nomination, but sets out a new justification based on a new comparative analysis.

Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes.

Literature consulted (selection):
Extensive literature on many aspects of the landscape such as transhumance, archaeology, history, the Templars, vernacular buildings, silk production etc. Transhumance and Biodiversity in European Mountains. Report from the EU-FP5 project Transhumount. Edited by R.G.H.Bunce, M. Pérez Soba, R.H.G. Jongman, A. Gómez Sal, F. Herzog and I. Austad.

Date of the Technical Evaluation Mission: A joint ICOMOS/IUCN mission visited the site from 18 to 23 September 2005. As this is a referred back nomination, no further mission has been undertaken.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: None

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 10 March 2009

2. THE PROPERTY

Background

In its evaluation of the 2005 nomination, ICOMOS noted that the nominated area was large and diverse and its three natural units have led to the development of quite different traditional practices, reflected in grasslands shaped by agro-pastoralism and wooded valleys shaped by chestnut and mulberry cultivation. It further noted that the area was an interesting example of where there is great local support for sustaining the landscape and trying to reverse the trend in movement of farmers away from the area.

ICOMOS considered that what had not emerged clearly from the nomination was the rationale for nominating the area as a whole and how the property might be perceived as an entity nor why it should be considered to have outstanding universal value.

ICOMOS recommended deferral and suggested that the State Party consider further the qualities of the property.

The supplementary information re-focuses the justification for inscription on the persistence of agro-pastoralism and the way this has shaped the landscape. This new focus is supported by a new comparative analysis.
Description

The nominated area covers the Parc national des Cévennes (PNC), the Parc naturel régional des Grands Causses (PNR), and the Causses méridionaux and Centre permanent d’initiatives pour l’Environnement des Causses méridionaux (CPIE), in all an area of 4,764 sq km. It is surrounded by a Buffer Zone of 1,626 sq km.

Four towns, (Millau, Mende, Alès, and Ganges lying within the buffer zone to the west, north, east, and south respectively, are nominated as villes portes (gateway towns) where tourist and educational facilities will be installed for the benefit of visitors.

The Cévennes, Mont Lozère and the Causses together form a large upland region in the southeast of the French Massif Central. The Cévennes range forms part of the Mediterranean-Atlantic watershed. West draining streams join rivers such as the Lot and the Tarn which drain to the Atlantic. On the east and southeast sides of the range, streams drain into rivers which join the Ardèche and the Gard, part of the Rhône drainage system which flows into the Mediterranean through the delta of the Camargue. The nominated area is thus made up of two opposites: the northwestern granite and shale slopes that face towards the Atlantic to which their water drains, and the southeast limestone slopes of the same uplands that face towards Mediterranean. Yet the development of the area has been marked by ceaseless relations between these two slopes, based on agro-pastoralism. The uplands with their farming culture are quite distinctive from the surrounding comparatively urbanised plains.

The nature of the precipitation – much in winter and a shortage in summer led to the need to collect and store water. A mastery of water management was a precondition of settled agriculture and this is reflected in a range of different solutions and complex solutions for channelling and storing water.

High level roads passing along the summits of the mountains mark out the drove roads that in many cases followed even more ancient track ways. Along these roads diffused ideas, particularly Protestantism, which gained a foothold in the mountains and led to religious wars with Catholics in the 17th century, still reflected in the remains of fortifications in some villages.

The shale and granite Cévennes mountain chain, interspersed by wide deep valleys, rises above the plains of Languedoc to the south and is clothed in dense woodlands of chestnut and pine. The villages and substantial stone farmhouses perched on deep terraces midway down the valleys reflect the organisation of the large abbeys of Languedoc and Ardèche from the 11th century, particularly in water irrigation, and the later prosperity brought by intensive chestnut and then silk cultivation, between the 16th and early 19th centuries. To the north around Mont Lozère the more open granite landscape supports cattle and sheep farming and is one of the last places where summer transhumance is still practiced.

In contrast the Causses to the west is a high altitude grazed grassland steppe of karst limestone, one of the largest expanses in Europe. The area is sharply dissected by steep often wooded valley with Gorges that channel the water from the western Cévennes to the Mediterranean Coast. On the grasslands, substantial stone-built farm complexes support sheep farming, their sitting and boundaries reflecting the development of large-scale agro-pastoralism by the Knights Templars and then the Hospitalers between the 12th and 14th centuries, made possible as in the Cévennes by the control of water. The Causses became the centre of trade between the Mediterranean and the flat lands to the north.

Both the Cévennes and the Causses landscapes reflect wars, pestilence, periods of high level prosperity followed by rapid decline and most markedly the migration of people away from the hills in the 19th and 20th centuries. Between 1846 and 1975 the area lost two thirds of its inhabitants.

Like many uplands areas of Europe, the Cévennes and Causses were discovered in the 19th century first by scientists, in this case geologists and geographers recording distinctive gorges, ‘swallow-holes’ and caves, and then by writers and tourists appreciating picturesque features. Robert Louis Stevenson’s book of his travels with a donkey at the end of the 19th century brought the Cévennes landscape to wide attention, through his depiction of a pilgrimage to Protestant sites.

In detail the nominated property consists of the following:

Structures related to water collection and management

The influence of Abbeys which controlled many valleys of the Cévennes in the 11th and 12th centuries transformed the landscape from small-scale, isolated, subsistence farmers into a well ordered and structured landscape of mixed farms with irrigated terraces growing grain, hay and chestnuts, and with chickens, goats, sheep and cattle grazed on the high pastures and pigs and bees kept in the forests.

The water flowing off the mountains was directed into conduits or underground mined channels, which when they reached the farm branched into feeder channels for steep stone walled terraces. Below the farmhouse these terraces were used for grain and hay; above for chestnut trees, pollarded to keep them to a manageable height. The summits of the mountains above the tree line were grazed by sheep and cattle.

In the Causses the Knights Templars provided the organisational impetus for the development of agro-pastoralism in the 12th century, systematically exploiting the resources of the areas over which they gained control. Huge quantities of grain were produced, in stone walled fields, and then stored in towers such as at Tour du Viala du Pas de Jaux. Water resources were organised for large farms – roof cisterns and ponds - and for the vast flocks of sheep which moved to into the Causses pastures in the summer months from the plains and traversed back again on the autumn along draillies or drove roads.
Draillles or Drove roads

The northern part of the Cévennes National Park encompasses the grazed granite uplands around Mont Lozère. Here year round cattle farming is supplemented on the good summer grazing by large flocks of sheep travelling north from farms to the south of the National Park in Languedoc near the coast, a system of transhumance that has persisted since the 12th century and is still worked by a few farmers today.

300 kilometres of drove roads criss-cross the area. These high level routes are said to be related to early high level Bronze Age tracks, which later were developed into an extensive network linked to monastic establishments in mediaeval times. There is now a somewhat simplified network based on three main drove roads: Aubrac, Margeride and Gévaudan, which link together subsidiary routes for 28 major mountain pastures and are used by 125 stockbreeders and their 25,000 ewes when they move to summer pastures.

Sheep housing

The vast flocks of sheep keep on the Causses were in the winter housed in long low stone buildings known as les Jasses. Often more than 10 metres in length and containing water tanks and hay stores, they have come to be seen as the emblematic buildings of the Causses. Milk from the sheep goes largely to the making of Roquefort cheese – outside the nominated area to the west.

Forest

The grazed areas have been created over millennia through the clearing of forests. In the east of the area, remnants of beech forest survive as well as considerable areas related to chestnuts and later mulberry cultivation. Some areas in the Cévennes landscape reflect the impact of recent small plantations of exotic species. In other areas indigenous species have been planted over larger areas, resulting in an incongruous monoculture. In recent years attempts have been made to introduce mixed-species planting in order to achieve landscapes that are closer to the natural forest cover in appearance and species diversity.

In the 20th century, there has been limited reforestation of the Causses. In the Causse Méjean, in particular, there are stark, rectilinear plantations of conifers.

Farmhouses

The traditional buildings of the southern Cévennes are characterised by dry rubble shale stone construction plastered on the inside and sometimes on the outside too. Roofs are of shell-shaped slates with rows of slates interlocking to protect the ridge. To the north around Mont Lozère the granite buildings are built of shaped square stones and are much squatter in character. Barley straw was widely used on roofs until the 17th century when it was replaced by slate.

The wide open Causses landscape has some remarkable examples of fine stone farmhouses such as the farm complexes of Les Monziols. Farmhouses and farm buildings were built of dry limestone blocks plastered both inside and outside. They are characterised by dressed stone lintels and door jambs and by the use of fine stone arches over doors and to support roofs in houses. The vaulted ground floors of houses often contained water storage cisterns.

Villages

Villages in the Cévennes reflect their founders: many names begin with Saint reflecting the various Abbeys that owned land in the 12th and 13th centuries. The houses cluster together along narrow streets.

The limestone of the Causses has resulted in the impressive medieval military architecture of the Templar and Hospitaller towns such as La Cavaclerie, La Couvertoirade, and Sainte-Eulalie de Cernon.

Chestnuts cultivation

In the 16th century a rapid expansion of chestnut farming led to the creation of many new terraces rising up the hillsides sometimes at considerable distances from their farms. Trade in chestnuts contributed to an increasing prosperity in the area, reflected in the re-building of more substantial farmhouses and two-storey buildings for drying the shelled nuts. For around 150 years chestnuts where the main cash crop. The creation of new terraces, the improvements to farmhouses and the creation of buildings for processing the chestnuts all contributed to establishing the bones of the Cévennes landscape as they exist today.

Silk cultivation

After a particularly severe winter in 1709 which decimated many of the chestnut trees, many farmers change to growing silk worms and planted their terraces with mulberries, particularly in the warmer valleys that faced south to the Mediterranean Sea. Mulberries where the last addition to the landscape, together with the large multi storey buildings, magnaneries, with regular rows of windows and many chimneys constructed to grow and process the silk worms. These were often built as extensions to the existing farm complexes.

Memories of Religious wars

In the 16th century Protestantism spread into the Cévennes along the trade routes from Geneva. Many merchants, traders and craftsmen became converts, forming islands of Protestantism amidst Catholic farmers.

An explosion in numbers and the development of bastions of the faith in towns in the west, led to increasing tension which erupted into guerrilla type warfare over a period of 60 years with many defensive structures being erected, particularly in towns and villages.

Conflict again in the early 18th century centred on the Camisards Protestants of the Cévennes who revolted against the forces of Louis XIV, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes which had brought an uneasy peace between Protestants and Catholics. The clandestine meetings of the Camisards were known as assemblées du Désert. The fighting was brought to an end in 1706 but the rebellion came to be seen as the symbol of the fight for the liberty of conscience and the rights of man and many
claimed that this sowed the seeds for the revolution that destroyed the Ancien Régime in France in 1789, and was to spread over much of Europe and North America.

History and development

During the Bronze Age there appears to have been large-scale clearance of the forest to create pastures for sheep and cattle. Roman rule touched the areas comparatively lightly. The Romans did not impose social organisation on the small scale farmers. However the landscape was exploited for its resources, minerals and particularly timber and the breeding of cattle and sheep. During Roman rule much of the Causses was cleared of its pine trees. Pliny mentions cheeses from the area being marketed through Nîmes along trade routes across the summits of the hills, probably of much earlier origin and which have by and large persisted to the present day.

The end of Roman rule heralded hostile incursions from Visigoths and then the Franks in the 6th and 7th centuries which seem to have prompted the development of settlements in areas that could be defended readily.

The fundamental changes to the landscape that can still be perceived today took place between the 12th and 14th centuries when several monastic orders, including Benedictines, Hospitaliers and Knights Templars gained control of extensive lands and put in place strong social systems in order to harness water supplies and exploit more systematically the forests and particularly grazing lands.

In the Causses, the landscape structures put in place in the 12th and 13th centuries are still reflected in the commune boundaries of today. By the 16th century trade in sheep and cloth put the area at the centre of trade between the plains to the south and north.

The golden age of the Cévennes economy, was between the 16th and 18th centuries when prosperity first from chestnuts and sheep and then also silk fostered the building of large farmhouses and established trade and permanent relations with the plains, the valley of the Rhone and the Mediterranean. In the 1840s the longest railway line of the time connected Grand Combe to Beaucaire. Silk production brought another boom era at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. By 1810 the number of peoples living in the region reached its apogee. The re-distribution of land after the Revolution of 1789 to the farmers added to the economic impetus: new techniques were introduced and successful farms absorbed others, leading to the demise of many smallholdings.

Boom was quickly followed by decline: disease amongst the silk worms in the mid 19th century started migration away from the mountains to the towns. Between 1856 and 1894, Cévennes lost 40% of its population to the urban centres and the mines. The war of 1914-1918 accentuated the demographic loss and this continued after the armistice. 20% of the men and 25% of the women between 20 and 40 years old left the area to find work in the cities. Sericulture and silk production finally came to an end in the 1950s.

By 1975, at the end one hundred twenty-five years of decline, only around 11,500 inhabitants remained - a loss of two thirds, the losses being most strong on the Atlantic slopes. Ruins invaded the territory, and many hamlets died.

Gradually the trend is reversing: in the last thirty years people have slowly begun to move back to some areas and reclaim the lands.

The traditional transhumance of vast flocks of sheep seasonally from the plains of Languedoc to the uplands of the Causses and the Cévennes has now dwindled drastically. However there is now a determined move to support agro-pastoralism which is beginning to have a marked effect on its revival.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Integrity and Authenticity

Integrity

In terms of how the boundaries encompass all the attributes necessary to demonstrate outstanding universal value, this has not been demonstrated in sufficient detail to allow an understanding of whether the boundary is entirely rational or of appropriate size. The attributes that reflect the agro-pastoral landscape need to be defined more clearly – in order to define a boundary that reflects fully where these are strongest.

The wholeness or intactness of the cultural landscape is related to the survival of the forces that shaped the landscape as well as to the symptoms that those forces produced. The aim is to maintain these through the perpetuation of traditional activities and the support of those activities through Park staff and external grants.

In many places the landscape is almost relic – particularly the terraces in the Cévennes, where only a fraction are actively managed. In some place, the systems of transhumance along drove roads barely survives – only a few flocks make the long journeys each year and many of the tracks are beginning to be covered with scrub. However there is now increasing attention being paid to supporting and reviving these processes. The water systems that once were the lifeblood of the fields and bergeries are now only maintained in places.

Where integrity has been compromised is in the peripheral areas of the PNC, where new building has impacted on the farmed landscape.

Authenticity

The key structures of the landscape: buildings, terraces, walls and watercourses retain a high degree of authenticity in terms of their built fabric, but many particularly the terraces need conservation.

As for the authenticity of the processes that shaped the landscape, these are just about surviving but not across the whole of the nominated area and are vulnerable.
Comparative evaluation

For the revised nomination a new comparative analysis has been prepared. This has been based on the conclusions of an expert meeting on agro-pastoralist cultural landscapes of the Mediterranean region held at the property in September 2007.

This meeting defined a Mediterranean agro-pastoralism as a discrete system of land management based on the Mediterranean climate, (dry summer with very dry, soft winter cold); soil of relatively low productivity, changes in altitude that allowed transhumance, proximity to the sea; system largely based on sheep but also associated with cattle and in place camels and other animals, and shaped by monotheistic religions and the common use of resources. The system has high immaterial values and delivers high environmental values. It also has considerable diversity within different areas.

The analysis suggests that Mediterranean agro-pastoralism is one of the great agro-pastoral systems of the world, the others being:

- the nomadism of the tundra, based on reindeer;
- the civilizations of Central Asia, which have domesticated the horse;
- transhumance in semi-arid context of the Mediterranean basin and the Middle-East;
- Bedouin civilization of the Saharan desert and Arabia based on the camel;
- the nomadism of sub-Saharan Africa;
- Short transhumance such as in the Alps, the Pyrenees, Tatras, Carpathians;
- Andean pastoralism;
- Ranching of the New World, e.g. US, Australia, New Zealand;
- Small scale distinctive pastoralism in discrete areas e.g. Scotland; Hungary or with distinctive animals such as the two-humped camel.

Having established that Mediterranean pastoralism is one of the major systems world-wide, the analysis considers how the Causses and the Cévennes compare with other areas within the Mediterranean. Four sub-regions with discrete characteristics are defined. These are put forward as an initial analysis which will be further refined at future meetings on the Mediterranean area. The Causses and the Cévennes is seen as part of the southwest of Europe which includes areas of Spain, North Africa, France and Italy. These regions are described in terms of their topography, cultural systems, types of pastoralism – robustness and stability, whether evolving or declining, whether still on foot, architectural attributes – buildings, tracks, wells etc.

In comparison with other areas, the analysis shows that the Causses and the Cévennes has shorter transhumance routes than in other places, but they are still used on foot, the landscape show well the evolution of the system, there is a vitality to the agro-pastoral system in comparison to many other areas, local sheep breeds persists, the architectural legacy is well represented in drove roads, water management, buildings, etc. The landscape also has aesthetic qualities that are highly valued.

The conclusion drawn is that the Causses and the Cévennes can be seen to illustrate particularly well one aspect of the diversity of Mediterranean cultural landscapes worked by the activities of breeding. It also constitutes an emblematic example of experimental techniques for the management of such landscapes.

Currently there are no sites inscribed on the List that reflect large-scale agro-pastoralism of the Mediterranean region. The current state of research does not allow for an over-view of what other sites might come forward in the future.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis sets out well the rationale for considering Mediterranean agro-pastoralism as a major type of pastoralism within which there are significant variations. It also shows that in many parts this agro-pastoralism is externally vulnerable. The Causses and the Cévennes can be seen to represent one specific response. It is a response that is still viable and crucially is reflected in the landscape.

On the issue of other sites that might be nominated in the future, ICOMOS considers that there would be room on the List for other properties that might be exemplars of other variations of Mediterranean pastoralism - which may reflect distinctive and outstanding cultural responses.

Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value

The revised justification by the State Party has changed the focus away from the area being part of the wider common rural inheritance of southern Europe to a focus on agro-pastoralism and its impact on the way the landscape has developed. The justification is based on the exceptional representativeness and rich inheritance of landscapes worked by three millennia of agro-pastoralists and structured by medieval monastic activity. The landscape evolution has been underpinned by three emblems: Pasture, Lamb and Earth. Threatened by decline a hundred years ago, it has in the last four decades become a model for agricultural management that respects its cultural and natural qualities.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criterion (v) but it is suggested that criteria (iii) and (vi) might also be relevant.

Criterion (iii): bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.
This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the agronomy of the Causses and the Cévennes can be seen as an exceptional testimony to the tradition of Mediterranean agro-pastoralism.

ICOMOS considers this criterion could be justified in terms of the Causses and the Cévennes, or parts of the area, manifesting an outstanding example of one type of Mediterranean agro-pastoralism, but that the effects of this socio-economic system on the landscape needs defining more closely in order to set out more clearly the specific physical attributes and rational boundaries.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion could be justified if the attributes were more clearly defined.

Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the landscape of medium height mountains demonstrates a unique example of the practice of Mediterranean agro-pastoralism persisting over three millennia, which became vulnerable but which is now being regenerated through adapting to new political, economic and social considerations.

ICOMOS considers that the Causses and the Cévennes, or parts of the area, could be said to be an exemplar of Mediterranean agro-pastoralism and specifically to represent a response common to the south-west of Europe. It considers, however, that the specific response in terms of how the socio-economic system is reflected in the landscape needs to be better described and recorded and related to a discrete part of the landscape that manifests exceptional responses.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion could be justified for the Causses and the Cévennes, or part of the area, based on a more detailed inventory of those aspects of the landscape related to agro-pastoralism in order to justify the boundaries of a discrete area encompassing exceptional responses.

Criterion (vi): be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

This criterion was initially justified in connection with the association of the area with memories of struggles related to the diffusion of Protestantism. In its original evaluation, ICOMOS did not consider that this criterion had been justified and no new justification has been proposed.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

ICOMOS does not consider that the criteria and the Outstanding Universal Value have been fully demonstrated at this stage.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Development pressures

- Construction

The area has recently come under greater pressure for development as a result of the greater access permitted by the construction of a “meridian” highway, the A75.

- Farming regression

The farming community has declined over the past half century, particularly in the Cévennes area. Many properties are now only inhabited in summer months as holiday homes. Some farmers are moving back but the long-term stability of farms is in question. The income of many farmers has been supplemented by grants for landscape maintenance. The wide ‘morale’ support demonstrated currently by the different authorities might not be sufficient in the future to ensure the maintenance of activities which sustain the cultural landscape with its richness and diversity.

In the Causses farming depends on the existence of cheese making companies (Roquefort, Feta, etc) which collect the milk from more than 1,600 family farms. The dependence on a few big external (to the region) owned and commercially orientated companies constitutes also a risk; a slight change in the marketing condition could lead to a large scale abandonment of the traditional activities with severe consequences for the landscape and the rich biodiversity.

In the Causses, the sheep farmers still manage to survive largely through supplying ewes’ milk for Roquefort cheese production. There has however been a marked increase in the size of farms needed to create viable units and this means there are many less people per hectare to manage buildings and the landscape generally. In places in the Causses, some land is turning back to scrub and trees where transhumance paths are no longer use or the land has been acquired for hunting. As with the Cévennes, the economy of sheep farmers is fragile. The nomination of the site for World heritage statues is seen as a way to boost tourism particularly in the Causses. It is also seen as a way to strengthen the resolve to sustain the agro-pastoral traditions.

The transhumance system involves animals coming from outside the area into the Causses and Mont Lozère in the summer months and then heading back to the southern plains of Languedoc in the winter. This system is therefore to a degree outside the control of those working in the nominated area. There is also the movement of sheep within the nominated areas, particularly in the north, up to summer pastures.

- Afforestation

In certain areas extensive planting of exotic species by private landowners has introduced a discordant note. In others indigenous species have been planted over large areas, resulting in an incongruous monoculture. In recent years attempts have been made to introduce mixed-species planting in order to achieve landscapes that are closer to
the natural forest cover in appearance and species diversity. The more limited reforestation of the Causses, has followed a similar development. The Causse Méjean, in particular, with its stark, rectilinear plantations of conifers, is less pleasing aesthetically and equally unacceptable in terms of biodiversity.

- Wind energy

Threats from large-scale windfarms have been identified in the supplementary information.

Tourism pressures

World Heritage recognition might lead to a significant increase of visitors in some parts of the sites which are already overcrowded in summer for instance St Guilhem, Gorges du Tarn, etc.). Measures might need to be taken to control car and visitor flows, which might prove to be quite unpopular. The public transportation system is almost non existent within the site, and this has not been addressed in the nomination file.

Natural disasters

Forest fires are a threat to all parts of the nominated area, but particularly the coniferous plantations in the Cévennes. The large areas of chestnut trees that are no longer maintained and thus cleared at ground level are also vulnerable. Since 1995 a fire prevention plan has been put in place to minimise fires and contain those that do break out.

ICOMOS considers that the main threat to the property is farming regression, but there is a concerted effort to encourage and support farming activities through a structured approach.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The precise boundaries for the first nomination were the result of studies carried out by representatives of the public administrative authorities involved working closely with the three major state-run management agencies (PNC), (PNR) and (CPIE). The nominated site excluded areas where the cultural and natural values were said to have largely disappeared or where potential threats could be foreseen as a result of unavoidable infrastructural developments.

However in re-defining the value of the property as an exemplar of agro-pastoralism, there has been no reassessment of boundaries in relation to attributes, with the result that it is not clear how the entire property can be said to reflect the processes of agro-pastoralism in an exceptional way.

The main objective in defining the buffer zone boundaries in the original nomination was to ensure that entire communes are linked with the site, and not just those parts of them which lie within the nominated area, in order to establish a global commitment on the part of those communes.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated area and buffer zone have not so far been satisfactorily defined in relation to the proposed outstanding universal value and attributes.

Ownership

Nearly all the nominated property is in private ownership.

Protection

Legal protection

The whole of the nominated areas is protected either for natural or cultural heritage but only the core of the Cévennes National Park is protected for both. This is a weakness as outside the core area of the park there is less control over changes to buildings and new development.

The totality of the nominated area is protected in a variety of different forms, but only part is protected for cultural attributes. The Parc national des Cévennes (PNC), with its headquarters at Florac, is a public national administrative body (établissement public national à caractère administratif) created in September 1970 under the provisions of the Law of 22 July 1960. There are 117 communes within its 321,380ha. It has been a biosphere reserve as part of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere programme since 1985. In the core area of the park, cultural property is protected and no new building is allowed. In the peripheral area there is no protection for cultural property.

The Parc naturel régional des Grands Causses (PNR) was founded in 1995 under the provisions of the Law of 5 July 1972 which established the category of Regional Natural Parks. At 315,949ha and covering 94 communes it is almost as large as the PNC. Its status and powers are broadly comparable with those of a national park. Its policies are determined by a Syndicat de collectivités, a public body which brings together communes and other entities with the objective of carrying out works and providing services for the communities involved. The park exists to protect natural attributes.

The Centre permanent d’initiatives pour l’Environnement des Causses méridionaux (CPIE), set up in accordance with 1901 legislation and representing 28 communes in the Départements of Gard and Hérault, is a body which enables these collectivities to prepare and implement policies and activities of common interest.

These regulations do not extend to all private property, which represents some three-quarters of the area nominated for World Heritage inscription. Landowners in France have virtually absolute rights over the development and management of their own properties, unless these are covered by specific legal instruments such as the classement of historic monuments which override the rights of private landowners.

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The Gorges du Tarn and de la Jonte, which extend over some 29,000ha, were classified as protected sites on 29 March 2002, as a result of which any proposed changes in their condition or character must be approved by the relevant Minister or by the Prefect of Aveyron. At the present time active consideration is being given to the designation of this site as one of the Grands Sites de France. This initiative has three objectives – the creation of a sustainable and autonomous management policy, restoration from the ecological and landscape point of view, and ensuring that any measures that are adopted will benefit local development. This designation would supplement existing ones.

In addition, a large number of historic buildings and architectural ensembles are protected under the provisions of the 1913 historic monuments legislation. A number of architectural groups and small villages are designated as Zones de protection du patrimoine architectural, urbain et paysager (ZPPAUP). These are listed in detail in Annexe 1 of the dossier. There are also a considerable number of measures for the protection of areas of special natural interest.

The supplementary information acknowledges the need for tighter protection for the overall landscape in response to the shift in emphasis of the nomination and the identified threats and sets out a range of complementary measures to coordinate and strengthen existing protection. This will be put in place by 2015.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place is weak in parts in terms of protecting the cultural attributes. This is acknowledged by the State Party who has initiated complementary protective measures for the property to be put in place over the next 6 years.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

The property is well researched from the point of view of stock-breeding. It is acknowledged that more research is needed on physical aspects of the landscape such as prehistoric remains in the Cévennes and also field structures in order to have more precise understanding of landscape history. The Strategic Plan (see below) sets out a programme to record the material and immaterial attributes of the agro-pastoral system.

Present state of conservation

On the more open, flatter Causses, field boundaries dating back to the Middle Ages (and in some cases even earlier) are well maintained and still in use. Similarly, the ancient pools known as lavognes (some natural, some man-made) used for watering stock are for the most part kept in excellent condition by local communities working collectively or by individual landowners. With the gradual disappearance of transhumance many of the ancient droveeways (dralles) are now barely visible, but certain stretches that are still in seasonal use are well cared for.

In the Cévennes the decline of population has led to the decline in traditional active management of terraces, watercourse and chestnut trees. Many of the terraces are now not maintained at all: walls are beginning to crumble, water course channels are little maintained and the chestnut trees suffering from lack of pruning. As a result of this, and the resulting natural processes of recolonization, terrace systems are difficult to discern, except where they have been brought back into active use for growing chestnut trees and in the few green areas around farmhouses where some are used for hay and grazing. Maintenance of the terraces presents a huge conservation problem. The active encouragement given to farmers to return to this area has helped with the maintenance of the landscape associated with the farms still farmed, but this is a very small proportion of the whole. Sustaining the traditional farming practices with so few people and with comparatively low prices being paid for farm products makes maintaining the landscape increasingly difficult to achieve. Many of the medieval and early modern buildings and settlements within the nominated site have been maintained or conserved with care and respect for their historic values. There are also some cases of what must be judged to be poor restoration, involving the use of inappropriate materials and unsympathetic extensions or conversions, particularly in the peripheral zone of the PNC, in the nominated area, where buildings are not protected and it is difficult to impose conditions.

There have been some new recent interventions in this area and also notably along the Gorges du Tarn, where tourism over the past half-century has led to the appearance of hotels, restaurants, and the like along the roads linking the small towns and villages.

Steps are being taken in parts of the proposed site: for example, the Conseil d’Architecture, d’Urbanisme et de l’Environnement du Gard (CAUE 30) selected the Rietord Valley in 2000 as a case-study for developing detailed practical recommendations regarding the conservation of the architecture and the landscape.

Active Conservation measures

The conservation of the landscape is encouraged through support for the farmers who are its custodians.

Maintenance

Maintenance of drove roads, water storage ponds, walls etc is largely the responsibility of farmers. In the case of protected buildings, grant aid is available for some aspects of their repair. More details on materials and methods of maintenance need to be collected – as envisaged in the Strategic Plan – see below.

Effectiveness of conservation measures

The effectiveness of the conservation measures is difficult to measure in the absence of detailed inventories and monitoring arrangements.

ICOMOS considers that the overall conservation of the agro-pastoral landscape relies almost entirely on the farming community and that its effectiveness and targeted support need to be more clearly defined and monitored in more detail.
Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

With the objective of preparing the nomination to the World Heritage List, and following the successful precedent established by the Val de Loire in 2001, an ad hoc structure was set up, known as the Conférence Territoriale, to oversee the preparation of the nomination. Under the chairmanship of the Préfet de La Lozère (the Préfet coordonnateur), its membership consisted of the presidents of the relevant Conseils généraux and régionaux, the presidents of the PNC and the PNR des Grands Causses, and representatives of the CPIE, the Grands Sites, the association of mayors, and the four villes portes. Specialist advice was provided by the Comité d’Orientation, made up of experts in a wide variety of fields, whilst the Préfet coordonnateur headed the mission responsible for setting up the partnerships and contracts between the different stakeholders.

The PNC is governed by a Conseil d’Administration of 52 people (civil servants, representatives of local administrations, and specialists). It employs some sixty staff, working either from its Florac headquarters or around the Park. The PNR is governed by a Syndicat Mixte made up of representatives of collectivities, the state, and private property owners. Its management team is divided into six sections, including heritage and landscape, maintenance of the rural environment, and socio-economic development. Analogous but smaller structures exist for the CPIE and the Grands Sites. All these bodies have structure plans of some kind governing their actions in the short and medium term.

It is envisaged that, in the event of the site being inscribed on the World Heritage List, the Association de Valorisation des Espaces des Causses et des Cévennes AVECC – that was set up on 15 September 2005 will function as the overall coordinating body for policy-making and overall management.

While these three main authorities (PNC, PNR, CPIE) have a very good collaboration, they have a limited power on land use and even cultural heritage conservation, most of the land being private property. Even on nationally owned land, the Park has not been able to prevent reforestation with exotic species for wood production. In some areas, particularly the outer zone of the national Park in the nominated area there is evidence of development with houses being constructed on former fields for tourism purposes.

Many of the key built features of the landscape such as buildings terraces, stone walls and the water distribution systems, based on numerous dams and lengthy underground channels (known as béals) need continuous maintenance and reconstruction, and this work is carried out not by a central authority but by the communities whose needs they serve. As the communities are now much reduced from their numbers a century ago, it is not possible to maintain more than part of what remains.

The same applies to many of the natural aspects of the landscape such as chestnut trees.

The management structure put in place is a collaborative one bringing together the key main players from all the main organisations to allow coordination and shared aims and objectives. This is very much in line with similar arrangements for other large scale expansive World Heritage sites which encompass several units of local control such as such as Hadrian’s Wall (United Kingdom), the Route of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), the Loire Valley (France), and the Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany), where a number of local administrations at different levels have been involved.

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

A management plan was drawn up for the original nomination with the support of the five principal stakeholders and with the agreement of the others. This has the following main objectives:

- Conservation, restoration, and management of the cultural and natural heritage;
- Making this heritage available for the benefit of the general public;
- Contributing to the social and economic development of the area;
- Coordination of the work of the various authorities involved in the management of the area;
- Creating a management structure for this purpose.

For the revised nomination this has been supplemented to identify the characteristics of the pastoral landscape. These are seen as:

- Valley and gorges
- Landscapes of the high plateau
- Landscapes of the peaks and summits

However these are only defined in very general, visual terms rather than in relation to how the agro-pastoral system, in a specific way, has shaped these areas and thus what needs to be managed in physical terms as well as through sustaining the agro-pastoral way of life.

The threats are said to be:

- pressure of construction and installation
- demise of agricultural and pastoral life
- development of new energy landscapes

The response to these threats is through the structures listed above: no detailed action plan has been provided but an action plan for 2006-8 sets out the progress so far.

However a Strategy for 2007-2013 has been drawn up which encompases key themes related to improving and sharing knowledge, promoting an understanding of the living landscape and encouraging the participation of all the key players. The Strategy includes completing an atlas of the landscape, drawing up an inventory of attributes of the landscape; developing knowledge of the landscape; acquiring a common language for the landscape; developing a decision-making tool for the restoration and
the management of the landscapes; and identifying emblematic sites of the cultural landscape.

This Strategy should deliver, through the necessary research, the much needed detailed knowledge of the agro-pastoral landscape, its structures and intangible heritage, as a basis for defining the boundary, for restoration and protection, and for monitoring this large complex, and in some respects vulnerable, landscape to ensure its value is being sustained.

**Involvement of the local communities**

There is huge involvement and support of the local farming communities in sustaining the agro-pastoral landscape.

**Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training**

The Strategy for 2007-2013 anticipates EU support funding of up to 7 million euros over its five years duration.

**Effectiveness of current management**

Implementation of the Strategy is urgently needed to underpin the whole rationale for identification, protection and management of the agro-pastoral landscape.

ICOMOS considers that currently the management system for the property lacks the level of knowledge necessary to define clearly what needs to be protected, managed and monitored. Such knowledge will emerge from the Strategy and this should form the basis for a more targeted management system.

ICOMOS considers that the original nomination dossier has been supplemented with new information on the agro-pastoral aspects of the landscape but without withdrawing any of the initial information. What is now needed is an overall coherent nomination dossier that sets in more detail the boundaries adequately reflect the disposition of attributes related to the exceptional manifestation of agro-pastoralism and to link management to those attributes, it is essential that they are more clearly defined.

The nominated area is very large and complex and not without threats. Managing the attributes will present considerable challenges over and beyond fostering the agro-pastoral way of life which is being done at the moment. ICOMOS considers that more work is needed on defining the attributes that need managing and in putting place a more detailed management plan with an associated action plan. The basis for this has been set out in the Strategy.

The original nomination dossier has been supplemented with new information on the agro-pastoral aspects of the landscape but without withdrawing any of the initial information. What is now needed is an overall coherent nomination dossier that sets in more detail the manifestations of agro-pastoralism and provides a clear main focus on its history and development and attributes.

**Recommendations with respect to inscription**

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the nomination of The Causses and the Cévennes, France, to the World Heritage List be deferred in order to allow the State Party to provide:

- A more detailed inventory of the attributes of the property that relate to agro-pastoralism, in order to:
  - Justify the boundary of the property;
  - Provide a basis for managing and sustaining the attributes, including processes and practices, that relate to agro-pastoralism.

- Provide an overall nomination dossier that reflects the revised focus on agro-pastoralism and its manifestations.

ICOMOS considers that any revised nomination would need to be considered by a mission to the site.
Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property
Village in the Cévennes

Roof of shell-shaped slates
Cros Roux – Causse Méjean

Roof shaped for collecting water (Saint Jean de Balme)
The Triple-arch Gate at Dan (Israel)

No 1105

Official name as proposed by the State Party: The Triple-arch Gate at Dan

Location: Upper Galilee region

Brief Description:
The nominated property is the archaeological remains of a gate formed of three arches in sun-dried mudbrick. The arches are semicircular and have a span of 2.5 metres. They form part of city rampart fortifications dating back to the 18th century BCE, i.e. the Middle Bronze Age. Amongst the earliest known arches, they are the most complete with the largest span. The arches make partial use of the voussoir system.

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.

1. IDENTIFICATION

Included in the Tentative List: 30 June 2000

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the nomination: No

Date received by the World Heritage Centre: 28 July 2003 1st February 2007

Background: The nomination was examined by ICOMOS in 2005 and withdrawn by the State Party before the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee (Vilnius, 2006).

A new nomination dossier was submitted on 1st February 2007 and was examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (32 COM, Quebec, 2008).

At the time, ICOMOS recommendation was as follows:

ICOMOS recommends that the Triple-arch Gate at Dan, Israel, should be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (ii).

The World Heritage Committee adopted the following decision (32 COM 8B.34):

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-08/32.COM/8B and WHC-08/32.COM/INF.8B.1;

2. Recognizes that the nomination entitled “Triple Arch Gate at Dan” brings to the attention of the Committee one of the elements of a technological innovation that has Outstanding Universal Value on the basis of criterion (ii);

3. Refers the nomination entitled “Triple Arch Gate at Dan”, back to the State Party to present further information and legal and technical data to enable its formal inscription by the Committee at its 33rd session in 2009.

The State Party submitted additional information on 27 January 2009.

Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage management.

Literature consulted (selection):


Van Beek, G.W., “Pre-classical developments in domical construction”, Domes from Antiquity to the present, 1988.

Technical Evaluation Mission: 4-8 September 2007. As this is a referred back nomination, no further mission has been undertaken.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 10 December 2007 concerning the following points:

- The need to produce a detailed and definitive plan covering the nominated property and to confirm the area of the nominated property.

- The need to produce a detailed and definitive map of the buffer zone indicating in particular the paths, parking areas, visitor reception buildings and annex buildings, and confirming the area of the buffer zone.

- The guarantee that the part of the buffer zone outside the natural park is used only for agricultural purposes.

- The need to confirm the implementation of a conservation plan in line with the best international standards in force, and to indicate the timetable for such implementation.

In reply, ICOMOS received additional documentation on 11 February 2008.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 10 March 2009

2. THE PROPERTY

Description
The triple-arch gate is at the south-eastern end of the fortified ensemble of Tel Dan dating from the Middle Bronze Age. This is a large tell where there was a
settlement over a long period at the start of historic time, but this settlement was not continuous. The fortified ensemble constituted the Canaanite town of Laish or Leshem, which is mentioned on several occasions in the Bible. It is surrounded by a region made naturally fertile by the presence of water.

Tel Dan is at the foot of Mount Hermon and the Golan Heights, near one of the three sources of the River Jordan, in the upper valley of the river, forming part of the Syro-African Rift Valley.

Nowadays, the Tel Dan site as a whole has a near-rectangular shape with rounded corners, with a basically oblong crater-like interior, a shape that is the result of the early fortifications that are underground for the most part. The total dimensions of the tell are roughly 400 m x 500 m.

The nominated property consists solely of the triple-arch gate and the immediately adjacent area. The gate is situated in a corner of the ramparts. Its own overall plan is close to a square (external dimensions: 15 m x 13.5 m), two sides of which join it to the ramparts. The two other sides consist of thick walls, one facing outside and the other inside the town, through which two great access arches have been opened up. They are set back from the main walls, whose four corners form defensive salients. A third arch passes through an inner separating wall. The span of the arches allowed a passageway of about 2.5 metres in width, which is considerable, and about 2.5 metres high to the top of the arch, and the thickness of the arches is around 2 metres. The built structure of the gate also contains four inner chambers.

The three arches have a massive appearance, and their shape is a slightly flattened half-circle. They are made up of three arcs of sun-dried mudbricks on top of each other, which pass on the loading to the piers. The bricks are sun-dried clay mud bricks. Two types of brick are present on the site. One is whitish because of the presence of calcareous aggregate, and the other is brownish. The shape, hardness and constructive use differ depending on the type of brick, and so does the state of conservation. The built structure of the gate probably had a roof, and thanks to the arch system it ensured the continuity of the fortified enclosure.

The imposing earthen ramparts that encircled the town were built on foundations consisting of basalt boulders; above them was the sun-dried mudbrick wall. A large part of these fortifications still exists: two short sections next to the gate are included in the nominated property. The rest of the fortifications are located in the buffer zone.

From the outside, the gate was approached by twenty basalt steps rising from the plain. On the town side, a short cobbled way led to stone steps descending towards one of the town's cobbled streets.

Excavations revealed the presence of the gateway (see below). None of the three arches has been entirely exposed in the interest of conservation. No evidence survives for the structure of the roof, which could have been either of cedar beam or of mud brick vault construction, overlain with mud plaster. Traces of mud and lime plastering on the wall surfaces have been found and remains of a thick layer of plaster that covered the cobblestone floor. These traces provide compelling evidence that the gatehouse was originally plastered and painted.

**History and development**

The land known as Canaan was situated in the territory of the southern Levant, in what is now Israel, the Palestine Authority, Jordan, Lebanon and southwestern Syria. The inhabitants of Canaan were never ethnically or politically unified as a single nation. They did, however, share sufficient similarities in language and culture to be described together as "Canaanites."

City-states developed in Syria-Palestine around 3100, serving as mediators between the cultures of Mesopotamia and Gerzea in Egypt. At this time the dominant town was Ebla. Texts from the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (2040–1786) show that Egypt exercised a degree of political control over the area between 2040 and 1786 BCE, ruling through local vassal kings. This led to much dislocation and a decline in urban settlements.

The Golden Age of Canaan was between 1800 and 1450 BCE when strong urban centres were re-established, towns such as Hazor, Qatna, and Ugarit flourished as centres of power in the region and the Canaanites became famed as traders across the Near East, particularly for purple dye obtained from sea-molluscs found along the Mediterranean coast.

The gate and ramparts of Tel Dan were constructed, it is now believed, in the 18th century BCE, when Canaan was at the height of its power and influence. A second period of Egyptian control between 1450 and 1365 BCE preceded the break-up of the Egyptian Empire that enabled the Hebrew invasion into the land of Canaan around the 12th century BCE and, in time, the creation of the ancient Kingdom of Israel. According to Biblical evidence, Laish was conquered and renamed by the Hebrew tribe of Dan. Tel Dan flourished as the northernmost city of ancient Israel and is mentioned many times in the Old Testament. Excavations have been carried out on the northerly part of the site.

Laish (Dan) was strategically situated on the road from Damascus, in Syria, to Tyre on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The north-south route from Hazor to Lebanon passed through Abel-beth-maachah, just west of Dan. At the northern end of the upper Jordan Valley, Dan was sited in one of the most productive parts of the region where there is abundant rainfall. At the foot of the tell mound are extensive springs that represent one of the sources of the River Jordan.

Tel Dan was destroyed when the city was captured by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, in 732 BCE. It was partially restored, but never regained its former importance. By the 4th century BCE it was described by Eusebius as being a village (Onomasticon 369).

Rescue excavations began at Tel Dan in 1966 by the Israeli Department of Antiquities and Museums, as there was a potential threat from military activities because of proximity to the Syrian frontier. Excavations in the southeast sector did not begin until 1977, and the top of the first
arch was discovered in 1979. The two other arches, and then the passageways were uncovered in the ensuing years.

The excavations were then developed into a full research project, which continued until 1999, covering both the gate of the Canaanite town and the later "Biblical" city. After more than 30 years of work, less than 10% of the site has been excavated. The digs were interrupted in 2006 because of the war between Israel and Lebanon. They are scheduled to restart in 2008.

**The Triple-arch Gate at Dan values**

The fortified ensemble of Tel Dan constitutes an example of the architectural techniques of the Middle Bronze Age and of the urban development of the Canaanite civilisation.

The nominated arches demonstrate great accomplishment in arch building techniques at this period. This is a consummate example of an architectonic principle of great technological value through the way the forces of gravity are converted into lateral thrust. The arches are the largest and the best conserved of the ancient vaults and arches discovered by archaeologists.

The triple-arch gate shows the diffusion of the true arch technique, and was built using sun-dried mudbricks and partially using voussoirs (trapezoidal bricks made to fit together).

### 3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

#### Integrity and Authenticity

**Integrity**

The built part of the gate is complete. It includes in particular the three true arches on which its value is founded. Despite the lack of superstructure, even in the form of archaeological traces, the gate's overall integrity has been maintained, both in terms of its architectural plan and elevation views.

Sun-dried mudbrick constructions are furthermore relatively fragile over time, and a process of deterioration of the immediate built environment of the arches (spandrel and side walls) has begun since they were uncovered by the excavations. For about 25 years now this has raised significant conservation problems. The integrity of the construction has been affected at certain points, as the natural elements (water, wind, sun) have removed portions of material and made the structure fragile to the north-east. (See 5, conservation).

With regard to the integrity, in the sense of completeness, of the nominated property, a question is also raised concerning the relationship of the gate to its environment of fortifications; the fortifications are in the buffer zone but not in the nominated property zone.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party should give due consideration to this aspect, particularly bearing in mind that another later gate exists inside the archaeological ensemble included in the buffer zone.

**Authenticity**

The authenticity of the excavated arches is not in doubt. However the precise dating of the gate is based on indirect elements. Many vestiges have been found in the excavations of the tell settlement area, near to the gate. They provide evidence of dates going back to the 18th century BCE. Furthermore, the use as an urban passageway gate of the three arches seems to have been limited in time. The gate was blocked up with earth, to ensure the continuity of the ramparts, which in fact ensured its conservation up until the contemporary excavations.

Furthermore, for the arches to be fully authentic, their immediate architectural environment must also be fully authentic, which again raises the issue of the recent process of decay and how to overcome it. Elements of reinforcement for the structures undergoing decay have been applied, taking care to ensure reversibility. Elements of restoration have also been considered.

The main challenges in the future will be to keep interventions to a minimum, without any significant reconstruction, to ensure the authenticity of the gate and the arches.

ICOMOS considers that the triple-arch gate at Tel Dan meets the criteria of integrity and authenticity. ICOMOS is however concerned about the process of decay of the immediate built environment of the three arches, which has set in motion a process of decay of the property's integrity in a way that is difficult to reverse.

### Comparative analysis

The key elements at the heart of the nomination are the three arches of the gate, which constitute a very ancient and technically accomplished example of the true arch. These are the rationale for the nomination.

The true arch differs from corbel arches and other older types of arches in that its arch-shaped structure converts the naturally downward pressure of gravity of the upper built structure into lateral thrust against the piers, solely by compression exerted on the construction elements.

The oldest examples of primitive vaults and arches appeared in the 4th millennium BCE in Mesopotamia during the Uruk period (Tepe Gawra about 3300 BCE). They are also present in the first dynasty in Egypt, c. 3000 BCE and under the fourth dynasty, c. 2580-2560 BCE. The true arch was found in the development of the city states of the Middle East during the 3rd millennium, for openings, vaulted ceilings, tombs, etc.

A move towards a more accomplished architectural form, the true semi-circular vault, took place as early as the 3rd millennium ceramic relief in Tell Asmar, period Ur I). Vaults and arches made of square or rectangular hewn brick, with mortar in the extrados, were quite widely present at the start of the 2nd millennium in the Middle East (Tell el-Rimah).
Simultaneously, the semicircular arch was improved by the voussoir system (trapezoidal bricks made to fit together); this is sometimes referred to as the true radial vault. The first genuinely accomplished vaults and arches of this type have spans of 0.8 m to 1 m, and the function of supporting the weight of the superstructure is fully expressed.

Some authors (Heinrich, for example) consider that true arches were built over gates from the end of the first dynasties in Egypt, and above the gates of cities and temples from ancient times in Babylonia.

The construction technology of the three large arches at Tel Dan is relatively sophisticated and expert, rather than experimental. The openings and elevations are large. This suggests the existence at the same period of other arches, probably in a relatively large perimeter from Mesopotamia to Egypt, which have either been destroyed or are as yet undiscovered.

One similar arch does exist at Ashkelon, Israel, from the same period (Middle Bronze Age II A), but this is damaged and less complete. It also forms part of a fortification system, and was rebuilt twice during the Middle Bronze Age. No absolute dating has been achieved for the Dan arches or for the Ashkelon arch, but the arches at both sites appear to be very close in period. In the case of Dan, the gatehouse is linked to the city's 18th century BCE defence system.

Two arch gateways, built of brick and forming part of a fortification system, also exist at Mumbaqat in Syria. They too date from the Middle Bronze Age, but their construction technique is slightly different.

ICOMOS considers that, in the light of the above, the arches of Tel Dan do not represent the earliest example of the true radial arch or the earliest example of the brick voussoir type arch. However, in the current state of archaeological excavations, the Tel Dan arches are the largest early arches and demonstrate an early use of the voussoir type arch.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative information known about vestiges of the earliest true radial arches and vaults justify consideration of the inscription of the property as an outstanding example of the diffusion and flourishing of a construction technique at the start of the 2nd millennium.

**Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value**

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to have outstanding universal value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The three arches of the gate at Tel Dan are the only complete arches forming part of a fortification system known at the present time for the Middle Bronze Age (18th century BCE).
- They bear witness to a knowledge of the principles of construction of true radial vaults at the period in question in the Middle East.
- Their span is exceptionally large (2.5 metres).

- They bear witness to the apogee of the art of massive earthen fortifications during the Middle Bronze Age II, including sophisticated gateways with arches, and to the urban development of this period.

**Criteria under which inscription is proposed**

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (i), (ii) and (iv).

**Criterion (i): represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.**

For the State Party, although the three arches of the gate at Tel Dan are not the earliest known examples, they are the first example of a complete true arch. They meet all the criteria of this principle of construction. They are an exemplary representation of human creative genius in the technical and architectural mastery of the true radial vault and arch.

ICOMOS considers that the three arches of Tel Dan demonstrate complete mastery of the true arch technique, using the combined method of rectangular bricks and trapezoidal bricks, in the context of massive fortifications and the urban development of the Middle Bronze Age or slightly later.

The three arches of Tel Dan demonstrate how man adapts to his environment by the use of sun-dried bricks, made of mud and clay.

However, this technical expertise is neither unique at the time nor the earliest known. Clearly the earliest examples of voussoir arches were built earlier than at Tel Dan, in the 3rd and 4th millennia, in Egypt and in Mesopotamia. It seems that the arches of Tel Dan are not the oldest example of a complete true radial arch, nor the oldest example of a voussoir arch. The dating of the Tel Dan gate moreover is indirect, and its monumental and defensive use seems to have been of short duration.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

**Criterion (ii): exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.**

For the State Party, the three arches of Tel Dan represent a new architectural principle originating from Mesopotamia and largely disseminated in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. As there is no complete architectural example in Mesopotamia, it is the Tel Dan site which is the most significant example of mastery of this architectural principle and its dissemination. More generally, most mudbrick arches collapsed and disappeared as early as the Iron Age.

Since this initial dissemination of which Tel Dan is an example, the architectural principle of the true radial arch has been widely adopted in the Mediterranean world and in Western civilisation.
ICOMOS considers that Tel Dan bears witness to the early diffusion of the architectonic principle of the vault and the voussoir arch, in the Middle East during the Middle and Late Bronze Age, and in particular its developed version including trapezoidal bricks for significant spans.

The integrity of the arches is however threatened by the intrinsic difficulty of conserving sun-dried mudbrick architecture for future generations, particularly for a structure as elaborate as an arch. The initial excavation periods, which re-exposed the edifice to the elements, did not fully allow for this consideration and have compromised chances for conservation in the long term.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

In the view of the State Party the Tel Dan gate is the only conserved example of gates of massive fortifications, a defensive system that was used during the development of the civilisation of the city-states of the Middle Bronze Age. It is a unique example of a very important feature of civilisation, which is widely encountered in the Middle East.

In the view of ICOMOS, the nominated property is the triple-arch gate alone; the fortified ensemble is not nominated and its outstanding universal value does not seem to be justified. The nominated property does not present all the characteristics of the feature of civilisation referred to, i.e. the flourishing of fortified city states in the Middle Bronze Age in the Middle East.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Human factors

Economic development is not exerting any pressure on the Tel Dan site. All projects must moreover be authorised by INPA, the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority. There are no inhabitants either in the nominated property zone or in the buffer zone.

In response to the request by ICOMOS, the State Party has given guarantees that the area (about 6 hectares) of the buffer zone that does not form part of the natural reserve will be used exclusively for agricultural purposes.

Military risk

Situated close to the border with Lebanon and the border with Syria, the Tel Dan region could be affected by war risk.

Tourism

Up to now tourism has been kept well under control, and relatively limited numbers of tourists have visited the three-arch gate itself. Tourism could grow significantly inside the Reserve, without posing a particular threat to the archaeological site.

Any risks of vandalism are prevented by the presence of wardens on the archaeological site and the physical protection of fragile or dangerous archaeological elements. Routes inside the Reserve are indicated and signs are installed to encourage good behaviour. The real quantitative limit at the moment is the capacity of the parking area (up to 1,000 visitors at any one time). The annual average number of visitors for the Reserve is around 200,000, but only 80 days a year are considered to be peak days for visits.

Natural factors and impact of climate change

The main natural risk threatening the nominated property is torrential rainfall. There is also a certain degree of earthquake risk in this zone. In view of the dominant vegetation cover, a brush fire could, in the dry season, spread as far as the site. It is not however directly exposed to this risk as vegetation is cleared away on the approaches to the site. There is no pollution in the site environment, and there are no climatic particularities.

Risk preparedness

In the short term, the conservation plan aims to ensure better protection for the nominated property against torrential rain, and in a longer-term perspective it aims to include earthquake risk in the protection of the property.

The natural park personnel are trained to deal with the various everyday risks mentioned. In the case of brush fire, equipment is in place, it is regularly inspected and the personnel are trained in its use.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are torrential rainfall, possibly combined with the action of the wind and sun.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

Nominated area:

The nominated property consists of the triple-arch gate and its immediate surroundings: the connections to the north and south-west rampart wall, and the external and internal gate access staircases. The property boundary is a rectangle of approximately 4,800 sq.m. around the gate.
Buffer zone:

The Tel Dan archaeological site forms part of a protected nature reserve that represents the bulk of the buffer zone. Since the 2005 nomination and the ensuing recommendations, the buffer zone has been extended to the south-east beyond the nature reserve zone, to include an agricultural zone belonging to the Snir kibbutz, to a depth of at least 150 metres. The total area of the buffer zone is 37.2 hectares.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property are adequate. ICOMOS considers that the revised buffer zone boundaries are adequate.

Ownership

The nominated property is owned by the State of Israel. It is situated in the nature reserve of Tel Dan. It therefore has the legal status of a nature reserve and an archaeological site.

Protection

Legal protection

The nominated property is defined and protected by the following legal texts:
- The Israel Lands Administration Law of 1960.
- The 1965 Planning and Building Law and its amendments.

Under the law of 1960, the property is governed by the powers of the state vested in the Nature Reserves Authority (Act of 18 September 1987), and the confirmation of a 49-year transfer of rights dated 7 May 2006.

Buffer zone:

Most of the buffer zone (84%) is under the protection of the natural reserve. The rest is a zone exclusively reserved for open-field agricultural activities. All requests for a waiver from this allocation rule (e.g. for a building) have been made impossible in view of the guidelines for the implementation of land use planning.

ICOMOS consiers that the buffer zone protection measures are adequate.

Effectiveness of protection measures

The legal measures taken to protect the nominated property seem to be adequate.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place is adequate.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

The archaeological study has been underway since the late 1970s. The archaeological documentation thus gathered on the site is considerable. It consists of several types of documents:
- Excavation reports for each campaign.
- The Tel Dan reserve annual report, published since 2001. This is a sort of log book compilation of all actions and observations on the site.
- The site dossier, which brings together all basic documents, plans and decision relating to the site. It is regularly updated.

The IAA/Getty Report provides an in-depth study of the archaeological situation of the property and any changes in its state of conservation since the property was uncovered at the start of the 1980s. It provides a solid technical basis for the updating and improving of the property's conservation plan.

Present state of conservation

This monument is made of sun-dried mudbricks, which by their very nature are fragile, and the state of conservation of the arches and the mural elements of the gate is not good. Its survival since its creation was only possible because the site was buried quite rapidly, probably in the 8th century BCE. Once the structure was uncovered, in around 1980, it began to deteriorate because of the nature of its material of construction.

Recent excavations show the very probable presence of plastering on the surface of the joints between the bricks, and perhaps over the whole of the facades. This again attests that this construction was sophisticated and well mastered, rather than being a still experimental construction.

Active conservation measures

Following the uncovering of the gate in the late 1970s and early 1980s, an initial shelter was constructed above the gate in 1982. This protection however turned out to be only partial and inadequate. From 1985 to 1988 moreover, the protective roof deteriorated, and water penetrated into the north-east tower.

In 1992 the western facade and the interior of the gate were filled in, as a preventive conservation measure. A new and more complete roof was built in 1993, and another layer of protective fill was added.

From 1997 to 1999, the IAA (Israeli Antiquities Authority) and the Getty Conservation Institute drew up documentation of the archaeological structure, and analysed its conservation. Their report was completed in 2000. It provides a detailed chronology of the deterioration, with some examples of serious losses on the north-east tower. The report draws a distinction between intrinsic factors (linked to materials and construction technology) and extrinsic factors (recent preservation history). This report is comprehensive, and provides a
thorough analysis of the causes and rates of deterioration of the monument.

The report suggested some reburying, some areas filled with sandbags to prevent access, some parts to be covered with geo-fabric textile, and basalt stones to provide support in some places.

In response to this report, in 2000-2005, discrete structural support elements were designed, in accordance with international reversibility standards, as appropriate for a monument of such fragility. Some structurally supportive reconstruction in limited areas, especially to the East tower or the gate, was undertaken. Discussions are under way about the replacement of the present shelter structure with a more minimal one, and then by a complete system in future years.

This programme however illustrates the current difficulties, at an international level, of recommending long-term conservation methods for sun-dried mudbrick structures.

In addition to observation of the state of the property, the everyday surveillance of the site by guards involves the checking of water drainage during rainy weather, and the action of the protective roof.

ICOMOS, in its 2005 evaluation, stated that the conservation measures undertaken at the time were inadequate. The technical appraisal mission in 2007 indicates that substantial progress has been made in this area. Work is in progress to put in place structural support and stabilising elements; the work is carried out with great care, paying attention to issues of quality and possible reversibility.

ICOMOS considers that recent efforts concerning the scientific and technical management of the process of deterioration of the sun-dried mudbrick architecture of the property have been substantial, and in some cases exemplary. ICOMOS recommends however that a very stringent conservation plan should be put in place, in line with the best international standards for the preservation of sun-dried mudbrick architecture. The changes occurring in the structure remain however partly unpredictable, and call for a flexible and adaptable action plan, without sacrificing scientific rigour.

In response to ICOMOS’s request concerning the conservation plan, the national authorities in charge of management of parks (INPA) and management of antiquities (IAA) have provided details of the implementation schedule and given guarantees about their long-term commitment to the process of conserving the property.

**Management**

**Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes**

The three-arch gate of Tel Dan is managed as part of the Natural and Archaeological Reserve of Tel Dan. It is the responsibility of the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority (INPA), in accordance with its hierarchical organisation chart: national directorate, professional divisions, Northern District and Golan Region, and finally the Tel Dan Reserve echelon.

The site is managed in accordance with several national plans and programmes. As a result funding and personnel are allocated to the Nature Reserve.

The Israeli Council for the Preservation of Monuments and Archaeological Sites is also involved, and cooperates with the management authority.

All projects for site management and archaeological works are supervised by the IAA (Israeli Antiquities Authority) from a scientific viewpoint.

**Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation**

Conservation plan: A master research plan for the conservation of the archaeological site was requested when the 2005 nomination was examined. It was presented in 2006 under the name "Conservation Plan". It was to be based on the IAA/Getty evaluation report and on experience gathered during recent work. It will take over from the existing conservation measures, which have moreover improved markedly over the last two years (see Conservation). The plan must however retain a degree of flexibility in order to deal with the unpredictability of changes in the condition of the structure.

Archaeological excavation and visitor presentation plan: After a two-year break in excavations, a master plan for future excavations is to be started up in 2008. It will complement and assist the conservation plan. It has been drawn up by the Gluek School of Biblical Archaeology, in conjunction with the Reserve and the INPA. It also concerns other elements of the fortification wall and the interior of the town. It involves work both for conservation and for presenting the site to visitors.

The Natural and Archaeological Reserve management plan: it manages the organisation of the site and the facilities for accommodating the public, including:
- Daily inspection of the site,
- Annual drainage system maintenance work,
- Seasonal cleaning of vegetation and prevention of bird nesting.

A detailed plan indicating the roads and access paths, the car park and the reception facilities has been provided in response to the request made by ICOMOS.

ICOMOS considers that a detailed site conservation management plan is necessary, while considering that this plan must remain flexible in order to be adaptable to
changes in the structure and improvements in conservation techniques (See Conservation).

In a long-term perspective, ICOMOS recommends that the presentation of the three-arch gate should be more closely linked to the rest of the fortifications and urban centre of Tel Dan. In particular, there is on the site another gate with arches, which is made of stone, dating from the Iron Age, enabling interesting comparisons with the sun-dried mudbrick gate. This would involve enlarging access around the nominated property and a stabilised situation in terms of protection – conservation.

The three-arch gate is located in a nature reserve that receives a relative large number of visits and is popular in Israel, but its entrances are strictly controlled. The Reserve is entirely fenced in, and the archaeological site of the gate has an additional protection, with an access gateway. The archaeological site is only accessible to a limited number of visitors at any one time, but this point is basically positive in view of the current state of conservation, excavations and work on the site. It is not however possible for people with disabilities to access to the site.

Routes are proposed to visitors, together with large numbers of signs and interpretation points, with the following objectives:

- Presentation and interpretation of the site's major features;
- Encouragement of good visitor behaviour and protection of the site itself;
- Visitor guidance and safety.

The signs and information are in three languages: Hebrew, English and Arabic. They were completely renewed in 2004, but on the basis of the visit plan drawn up in 1995.

Involvement of local communities

There is no institutional programme with local or regional communities. However, the Tel Dan local authority is active in that it organises regular educational visits for school groups, and provides information to the population about the archaeological and natural site.

Archaeological research partnerships

As regards the excavations, various educational institutions are in regular contact with the site: the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, the Hebraic Union College of Jerusalem. These institutions play a substantial role in funding excavations and publishing their results.

ICOMOS notes that no management plan is proposed with regard to the nominated property. However, ICOMOS considers that the property is included in the larger context of a Natural and Archaeological Reserve whose management rules are long-established and well-defined. The measures in place are those of a state organisation whose operation has been tried and tested. They are under the scientific control of the IAA.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

The Natural and Archaeological Reserve currently has eight full-time employees. Their activities however range over the whole spectrum of tasks required in managing a nature reserve receiving a significant number of visitors, in which the nominated property is only one part among others.

Personnel are all recruited following appropriate academic training. They are given short complementary training at INPA and they are only taken on definitively after a two-year trial period.

Temporary employees are hired during periods of high frequentation. Workers and contractors are required for maintenance and cleaning work.

At regional and national level INPA has a number of professionals specialising in the various questions that arise in the management and conservation of the site: a scientific director for the site, specialist archaeologists and architects.

Furthermore, the site can call on the national specialists of the IAA.

The IAA provides a 2-year course to professionals recruited by the INPA, who are then put in charge of monitoring sites such as Tel Dan.

As far as earthen architecture conservation is concerned, the IAA specialists have taken international courses at the Getty Institute of Conservation and CRATerre in Grenoble (France).

Depending on the difficulties encountered, external institutes and consultants are called in, as was the case of the Getty Institute to evaluate the structure in the late 1990s.

Architects and conservators specialising in the devising and conservation of architectural vestiges intervene on the site. The reproduction of sun-dried mudbricks was undertaken in this way.

The excavations are guided by archaeologists of national and international reputation, both from the INPA and from the Hebrew Union College (HUC).

ICOMOS considers the training of the personnel with scientific responsibilities to be of a good level, in line with international standards for the subject concerned. ICOMOS recommends however the stepping up of continuing education of the other INPA personnel working in fields related to the nominated property, on the conservation and preservation issues with which they are specifically concerned.

ICOMOS commends the measures in place constituting the management plan, and considers that the management system for the nominated property is adequate. ICOMOS recommends that the continuing education of personnel should be extended.

6. MONITORING

The visual monitoring of the condition of the nominated property takes place at least once a day, and often twice a
day, by the Reserve personnel. The personnel is trained for this purpose, as part of the overall surveillance of the site.

The basic monitoring indicators are as follows:

- Observe the appearance of brick debris at the foot of the arches.
- Very rapidly locate incipient signs of damage to the arch surface to prevent them from becoming irreversible.

Under the conservation plan, the INPA team of professionals carries out regular scientific monitoring of the site. This monitoring includes systematic photographs of the gate from fixed points, and regular comparison of the photographs taken. The conservation plan monitoring reports are approved by the INPA and the IAA.

Site water drainage and cleanliness are monitored annually.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring of the property is adequate. In view of the fragility of the property and the speed of changes that can occur, monitoring could be improved by permanent surveillance using a laser theodolite and 3D digital display.

7. CONCLUSIONS

ICOMOS considers that the changes made since the property was first nominated for the World Heritage List in 2005 have been positive, particularly with regard to the enlargement of the buffer zone and the marked improvement in property conservation work.

ICOMOS took note of the additional documentation submitted by the State party on 27 January 2009.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the Triple-arch Gate at Dan, Israel, should be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (ii).

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The three-arch gate of the Triple-arch Gate at Dan has outstanding universal value:

- It bears witness to great mastery of the technique of building a true arch with a significant span (2.5 metres) during the Middle Bronze Age or slightly later.
- It was built using sun-dried mudbricks, with the arch bricks making partial but unquestionable use of the innovative voussoir system.
- In the current state of archaeological knowledge, it constitutes a unique example of a gate with three complete arches, each with three successive arcs of brick, both for its early date and its state of conservation.
- Through its integration in massive fortifications, it bears witness to the importance of the move towards urbanisation in the Middle Bronze Age and to its technical advances.

Criterion (ii): The Triple-arch Gate at Dan bears witness to the early diffusion of the architectonic principle of the true radial arch, in the Middle East during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, particularly in its most complete version, including voussoir bricks, for wide spans.

The authenticity of the Triple-arch Gate at Dan is proven. However, the integrity of its sun-dried mudbrick structure raises considerable conservation problems with regard to the presentation of its outstanding universal value in a long-term perspective. A substantial conservation effort has been planned and begun by the State Party to achieve this aim. It must be continued with great determination, in view of the still imperfect state of expertise in the conservation of such structures. This calls necessarily for a stringent conservation management plan.

The legal protection in place is adequate. The site is managed by the authority of the Natural reserve of the Tel Dan Park, which is attached to the governmental organisation for nature and parks (INPA). Conservation management is conducted under the authority of the governmental antiquities organisation (IAA). The set of measures presented forms a satisfactory management plan for the expression of the property's outstanding universal value.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party should give consideration to the following point:

- Make sure that an exacting conservation management plan, in accordance with the best international standards for the preservation of sun-dried mudbrick architecture, is implemented.

ICOMOS also recommends that:

- In view of the fragility of the property and the rapidity of possible changes in its state of conservation, monitoring could be improved by permanent surveillance using a laser theodolite and 3D digital display.
- Consideration should be given to the relationship of the nominated property, as defined in the dossier, i.e. the three-arch gate only, with the fortified and urban ensemble of the archaeological site of Tel Dan.
- The continuing education of the non-scientific INPA personnel working on the nominated property should be stepped up, with regard to the conservation and preservation issues with which they are specifically concerned.
Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property
The Eastern Façade

Steps leading up from the city to the gate
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Finland

Name of property: Old Rauma

Location: Region of Satakunta, Province of Western Finland (formerly Province of Turku-Pori)

Inscription: 1991

Brief Description:

Situated on the Gulf of Botnia, Rauma is one of the oldest harbours in Finland. Built around a Franciscan monastery, where the mid-15th-century Holy Cross Church still stands, it is an outstanding example of an old Nordic city constructed in wood. Although ravaged by fire in the late 17th century, it has preserved its ancient vernacular architectural heritage.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The site was inscribed in 1991 on the basis of criteria (iv) and (v) as an outstanding example of an old Nordic city constructed in wood, typical of the architecture and urbanism of old North-European cities. No buffer zone was included in the nomination although a plan showing a buffer zone was subsequently provided by the State Party in 1991. During the 1st Cycle of Periodic Reporting in 2005, documentation was received from the State Party with an attached plan showing the buffer zone established nationally in 2003. This buffer zone had different boundaries from that shown in the 1991 plan. In the context of the Retrospective Inventory process and the clarification of Boundaries of World Heritage Properties, it was realized that the buffer zone established by the State Party for the World Heritage Site in 2003 had not been submitted for consideration by the World Heritage Committee. In January 2009 the State Party submitted a request for approval of the current national buffer zone as the buffer zone for the World Heritage Site.

Modification

The State Party reports that the proposed buffer zone, which is as established in the Local Master Plan of 2003, is intended to “preserve a large enough urban zone around the World Heritage Site, with special aim to preserve the visual integrity and urban fabric of Old Rauma”. The buffer zone comprises 15 specified areas of which maps and pictures are provided. In brief the State Party reports that the areas to the west and south west include the city’s commercial and cultural centre with the town hall, library, theatre and business areas. The building stock is mostly post-war but the area was laid out in the late 19th C. The areas in the north are both residential and commercial including public buildings, blocks of flats and a recently built major shopping centre close to the commercial centre. The visual impact of the shopping centre development was carefully considered in relation to Old Rauma’s silhouette and the church tower. Height limits were imposed as well as restrictions on advertisements, and careful attention was paid to the design of car parking and landscaping. The area between the shopping centre and Old Rauma is a homogenous and well-maintained residential area of the 1950s. The buffer zone includes fourteen individually protected monuments and areas, two of which areas are identified as being of historic and cultural significance nationally, and many other protected buildings and smaller areas.

The surface area of the inscribed site is 29 ha.

The surface area of the proposed buffer zone 142 ha.

ICOMOS notes that no mention is made of specific view points within, or from outside the buffer zone - for instance the approach from the harbour.

ICOMOS notes also that there is no mention of archaeological remains of fortifications or waterways around the old town, although there appear to be remnant waterways/canal system in several of the parks (State party report appendix XV – map of parks).

Protection:

Under the regulations of the Local Master Plan all constructions (buildings and roads) and activities within the buffer zone have to be planned “in conformity with the safeguarding of the integrity and historic urban setting of Old Rauma”. When detail plans for areas within the buffer zone are revised they will have similar regulations, and inventories will be updated in conjunction with the National Board of Antiquities, who will be required to review all plans and projects within the buffer zone.

Management:

The State Party reports that the Local Master Plan is the steering instrument for detail planning processes, which also involves the Ministry of Environment. Building permits within the World Heritage Site are reviewed by a special advisory committee, which includes the National Board of Antiquities. This committee also reviews detail plans in the buffer zone.

ICOMOS notes that there is apparently no Management Plan as such for the World Heritage Site and its buffer zone.
3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Old Rauma, Finland, be approved.

ICOMOS also recommends that the State Party clarify whether the proposed buffer zone includes all remnants of Old Rauma’s original canal system, and to provide information on this (such as a map showing the original canal system) and its relationship to the harbour, to the World Heritage Centre.

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- The designation of viewpoints within and outside the buffer zone from which view corridors will be protected in the case of development within the buffer zone.

- The development of a comprehensive Management Plan to cover the nominated area, the buffer zone, and view corridors from any designated locations outside the buffer zone, such as the approach to Old Rauma from the harbour.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Chartres Cathedral

Location: Département of Eure-et-Loire, Centre Region

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:
Partly built starting in 1145, and then reconstructed over a 26-year period after the fire of 1194, Chartres Cathedral marks the high point of French Gothic art. The vast nave, in pure ogival style, the porches adorned with fine sculptures from the middle of the 12th century, and the magnificent 12th- and 13th-century stained-glass windows, all in remarkable condition, combine to make it a masterpiece.

Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

During the 1st cycle of Periodic Reporting for Europe in 2005, the State Party noted that although the limits of the site were adequate, there was a need to define a buffer zone.

It was noted that although legislation in place protected the surroundings of the Cathedral since 1964, a new area was under review in 1991 to address potential concerns.

Modification

The inscribed property encompasses 1.064 ha and the State Party is now proposing a buffer zone of 62.412 ha which coincides with the area safeguarded by current urban codes. No further information is provided about the specific legislative or management arrangements that are either in place or will be implemented for the buffer zone.

The proposed buffer zone is large enough to protect character-defining features surrounding the property and its integrity.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Chartres Cathedral, France, be approved.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
Aachen Cathedral (Germany)

No 3

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Germany

Name of property: Aachen Cathedral

Location: State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Inscription: 1978

Brief Description:

Construction of this palatine chapel, with its octagonal basilica and cupola, began c 790–800 under the Emperor Charlemagne. Originally inspired by the churches of the Eastern part of the Holy Roman Empire, it was splendidly enlarged in the Middle Ages.

Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

Aachen Cathedral was inscribed in 1978 as the Palace Chapel and Shrine of Charlemagne, a unique artistic achievement and key edifice of the Carolingian Renaissance. At the time of inscription no buffer zone was defined for the World Heritage Site.

The State Party has now requested a modification to the World Heritage Site boundary under paragraphs 163 and 164 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, with the required plans, and also a modification to the name under paragraph 167. The State Party has also advised that a buffer zone proposal is being prepared and has submitted the draft plan showing its proposed boundary, although is not asking for approval at this stage. The buffer zone is expected to be established by the Aachen City Council by mid 2009.

Modification

The proposed modifications to the boundary are aimed at including the area of archaeological remains of the Carolingian Palace to the north of the Cathedral, including the royal throne room beneath the existing Town Hall and the long porticos and adjacent square that originally linked it to the Cathedral. To the immediate north and south of the Cathedral the boundary modification includes the areas of archaeological remains of original chapels/annexes off the Cathedral. To the west the boundary modification includes the area of the Cathedral’s atrium. The total area of the World Heritage Site will be 12,869°square meters.

The State Party submits that the focus of the proposed enlarged property would reflect the Carolingian significance of Aachen Cathedral and its ‘significance as a coronation church and one of the key medieval pilgrimage churches, as well as the site’s place in the history of architecture’.

Therefore the State Party also requests a modification to the name of the property, which would become ‘Aachen Cathedral with the Carolingian Palace Complex’.

ICOMOS notes that it is difficult to explicitly define the boundaries of the Carolingian Palace remains as these have not been fully investigated.

The State Party proposes to defer the revision of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value to the next Periodic Reporting cycle in order to allow all the latest, so far unpublished, research findings to be incorporated.

No information is provided by the State Party on protection and management of the proposed enlarged area.

Anticipated Buffer Zone

The buffer zone anticipated by the State Party includes the area of the old town around the Cathedral within the inner ring road (presumably the line of the medieval wall). No justification for the boundary is provided. The proposed buffer zone also includes view corridors extending out beyond the inner ring road, along the major approaches and connecting other monuments with the World Heritage Site. No information is provided on how the buffer zone and view corridors will be protected and managed.

Ownership

The State Party reports that while the Aachen Cathedral World Heritage Site is owned by the Cathedral Chapter, parts of the extended site would be either in joint ownership of the Cathedral Chapter and the Aachen City Council or solely owned by the Aachen City Council.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS considers that the extension of the boundaries of the property to include the palace would change the focus of the nominated area. At the time of inscription the ICOMOS evaluation was focused on the exceptional nature of Charlemagne’s palatine chapel and the justification for the four criteria are all related to this building.

If the boundaries were extended to include the palace, the value extended to include the significance of the ensemble as a Coronation church and the focus of pilgrimages, and the name changed to reflect these new significances as well as the existing, this would in effect be introducing a new justification for the property.

Such a modification would not be minor, as it would involved proposing revised justification for the criteria and a statement of Outstanding Universal Value that brought in new significances and new attributes.
Such a major modification would need a new nomination with details of protection, management, authenticity and integrity.

If the State Party wishes to consider a minor modification to create a buffer zone for the existing property, ICOMOS suggests the proposal should provide information on protection and management and on how the view corridors to the property will be sustained.

ICOMOS recommends that the modification of the name ‘Aachen Cathedral’ to ‘Aachen Cathedral with the Carolingian Palace Complex’ should not be approved.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed modification to the boundary of the World Heritage Site of Aachen Cathedral, Germany, should not be approved as a minor modification.
Map showing the revised boundaries of the property
Hanseatic City of Lübeck (Germany)
No 272 rev

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Germany
Name of property: Hanseatic City of Lübeck
Location: State of Schleswig-Holstein
Inscription: 1987
Brief Description:
Lübeck – the former capital and Queen City of the Hanseatic League – was founded in the 12th century and prospered until the 16th century as the major trading centre for northern Europe. It has remained a centre for maritime commerce to this day, particularly with the Nordic countries. Despite the damage it suffered during the Second World War, the basic structure of the old city, consisting mainly of 15th- and 16th-century patrician residences, public monuments (the famous Holstentor brick gate), churches and salt storehouses, remains unaltered.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 March 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background
The Hanseatic City of Lübeck is a serial inscription of three historic parts of the old town of Lübeck that exemplify the power and the historic role of the Hansa:

Zone 1 - Burgkloster – Aegidienstrasse contains a Dominican convent (the Burgkloster) including the original foundations of the castle built by Count Adolf von Schauenburg on the Buku isthmus; Koberg late 18th century neighborhood built around a public square bordered by two important monuments, the Jakobikirche and the Heilig-Geist-Hospital; medieval structures between the Glockengiesserstrasse and the Aegidienstrasse.

Zone 2 - Petrikirche to the north and the Cathedral to the south with rows of patrician residences from the 15th and 16th centuries between them; the enclave on the left bank of the Trave including salt storehouses and the Holstentor.

Zone 3 - Marienkirche, the Rathaus and the Marktplatz at the heart of the medieval city.

The inscription excludes the part of the old town (the central business area around Zone 3) that was destroyed during World War II, due to concerns about authenticity and integrity in relation to the Outstanding Universal Value of the site, which was inscribed on the basis of criterion (iv). The destroyed part has been reconstructed, generally maintaining its medieval morphology and preserving archaeological evidence, but with some widened streets. No buffer zone was included at the time of inscription, although the ICOMOS evaluation in 1987 expressed the wish that the peripheral areas extending beyond the Trave and the Wakenitz rivers should constitute a buffer zone governed by specific urbanization regulations compatible with those of the historic city.

The creation of a buffer zone at the national level for the World Heritage Site was reported in the 1st Cycle Periodic Report received in 2005. The State Party was subsequently advised that for this buffer zone to be accepted by the World Heritage Committee as the buffer zone for the World Heritage property, it should be formally submitted to the World Heritage Centre as a “minor” boundary modification, so that it can be reviewed by ICOMOS and adopted by the Committee. The State Party submitted this request in January 2009, together with the required maps. However no additional information such as pictures or plans of the Hanseatic town’s former fortifications in the proposed buffer zone was provided.

Modification
The State Party reported the following objectives for the proposed buffer zone:

- The historically developed city view and city silhouette of the old part of town with the seven towers and the en bloc old part of town quarters are to be preserved.
- In the buffer zone, protection must be given to the view perspectives and vista correlations towards the old part of town which constitute the particular monument value of the old part of town.
- The three dimensional view of the historic old part of town is to be protected. It is decisive for the height development and the proportions of the development structuring in the buffer zone.
- Also archaeological interests must find consideration when establishing the buffer zone.

This last objective presumably refers to the remains of the former bastion and moat fortifications that surrounded the town in the 16th and 17th centuries, as shown in early images (Frans Hogenberg / Georg Braun 1572, Civitates Orbis Terrarum and Matthäus Merian, 1641 - Lübeck Germany).

The proposed buffer zone includes the central part of the old town around Zone 3 that suffered destruction in World War II, and thereby unites the three parts of the World Heritage Site. It also extends around the whole old town island, taking in its rampart bastion embankments, the surrounding Trave and Wakenitz waterways and canal, and adjacent urban area, and it takes into account open view lines, especially in the Trave river valley from the northern and southern directions, and also along key access routes into the city.

The surface area of the inscribed site is 81.1 ha.

The surface area of the proposed buffer zone is 693.8 ha.
ICOMOS notes that information on the archaeological remains and urban area within the buffer zone should be provided by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre.

**Protection**

The buffer zone within the municipal area is protected legally as a preservation area according to §172 of the Federal Building Code. It will also be protected under the monument protection law in the Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein.

The State Party reports that it has also considered views of the World Heritage Site from outside the buffer zone from 11 key viewpoints and appropriate designations have been made in the town’s zoning map for four sites located inside the municipal area and in local and regional development plans for seven sites located outside the municipal area. This enables restrictions on height and use to be decreed in the case of building projects within the field of vision.

**Management**

The State Party reports that a Management Plan is to be compiled for the World Heritage Site.

ICOMOS notes that the Management Plan should encompass the buffer zone as well as the World Heritage Site, and also the view corridors from locations identified by the State Party that are outside the buffer zone.

**3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS**

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Hanseatic City of Lübeck, Germany, be approved.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- The Management Plan currently being prepared for the World Heritage Site should be comprehensive and cover the nominated areas, the buffer zone and the view corridors from the designated locations outside the buffer zone;

- Information should be provided to the World Heritage Centre on the archaeological remains and urban area within the buffer zone, particularly in relation to the bastion fortifications, which make an important contribution to the understanding of the power and historic role of the Hansa.
Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone
1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Germany

Name of property: Völklingen Ironworks

Location: State of Saarland

Inscription: 1994

Brief Description:

The ironworks, which cover some 6 ha, dominate the city of Völklingen. Although they have recently gone out of production, they are the only intact example, in the whole of western Europe and North America, of an integrated ironworks that was built and equipped in the 19th and 20th centuries and has remained intact.

Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The extension of the boundary for the World Heritage Site was suggested in the 1st Cycle of Periodic Reporting received in 2005. The State Party reported that the current boundaries of the property were not considered adequate to reflect the site’s significance:

'The area of the World Cultural Heritage Site ought to be extended to cover no. 1 ore silo and the timber yard - as a historically functional component of the industrial plant.

This area is already part of the Völklingen Ironworks monument complex, but was excluded at the time of application on account of some road planning which was being done. Besides the area around the basins of slag-granulation ought to be part of the world culture heritage.'

The State Party was subsequently advised that for this modification of the original delimitation of the World Heritage Site to be accepted by the World Heritage Committee, it should be formally submitted to the World Heritage Centre as a ‘minor’ boundary modification, so that it can be reviewed by ICOMOS and adopted by the Committee. The State Party submitted this request on 26 February 2009, together with the required maps.

Modification

The State Party submitted a request in February 2009 for a boundary modification that includes the following:

1) Ore silo and timber yard
2) Slag granulation
3) Remains of the benzene plant (1907)

The ‘ore silo and timber yard’ represent an extension of the current World Heritage Site boundary to the east. The ‘slag granulation’ represents an extension of the current World Heritage Site boundary to the south-west. The ‘remains of the benzene plant’ represent an extension to the south of the World Heritage Site. The surface area of the current inscribed property is 7.46 ha. The proposed additional surface area in hectares has not been provided.

The State Party also reports that a buffer zone proposal for the Völklingen Ironworks World Heritage Site is currently being prepared.

ICOMOS notes that the currently proposed boundary modification is more extensive than indicated in the periodic report, which nominated areas (1) and (2) above. It now includes the remains of the benzene plant to the south (area (3)). No justification is offered for any of the areas. Nor is information provided on protection and management of the extended area, but protection, management and the Management Plan for the World Heritage Site were all reported as effective in the 2005 periodic report.

ICOMOS notes that there is still no buffer zone to protect the surroundings and that there is decay and a lack of maintenance in certain areas (power station I; dry gas purification plants I, II, III).

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS considers that it is necessary to have a full description of the additional components submitted for inclusion in the boundary to justify their relevance as part of the attributes that reflect outstanding universal value, together with details of their protection and conservation and how they will be managed as part of the property.

As a buffer zone is being prepared for the property, it would be desirable to consider this element of protection at the same time as an extension of the boundary.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed modification to the boundary of the World Heritage Site of Völklingen Ironworks, Germany, be referred back to the State Party to allow it to provide:

- Descriptions of the ore silo, timber yard, slag granulation basins and remains of the benzene plant to justify how they are attributes of the outstanding universal value of the property;
- Details of the protection and state of conservation of these additional areas and how they will be integrated into the management plan;
- The area of the proposed extension to the property;
- Details of the proposed buffer zone, including how it will provide protection for the property.
Map showing the revised boundaries of the property
Old Town of Ávila (Spain)

1. BASIC DATA

**State Party:** Spain

**Name of property:** Old Town of Ávila with its Extra-Muros Churches

**Location:** Province of Ávila, Autonomous Community of Castilla y León

**Inscription:** 1985

**Brief Description:**

Founded in the 11th century to protect the Spanish territories from the Moors, this ‘City of Saints and Stones’, the birthplace of St Teresa and the burial place of the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, has kept its medieval austerity. This purity of form can still be seen in the Gothic cathedral and the fortifications which, with their 82 semicircular towers and nine gates, are the most complete in Spain.

Date of ICOMOS’ approval of this report: 10 April 2009

2. ISSUES RAISED

**Background**

At the time of inscription a buffer zone was not established. The vulnerability of one of the extra mural churches was demonstrated by developments in the Plaza of Santa Teresa between the town walls and the extra mural church of San Pedro. This was discussed by the Committee at its 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th sessions. As a result of concerns for the setting of the extra mural churches, at its 29th session, the Committee requested an updated report on the designation of buffer zones, in the context of the Periodic Reporting exercise.

At its 30th Session (Decision 30 COM 7B.79) the Committee noted that the State Party had reported that it had designated a buffer zone, and requested the State Party to submit detailed maps presenting the boundaries of the property and its buffer zones, and ICOMOS to review the boundaries of the property once the boundary modifications have been presented. The Committee further requested the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with a progress report on the legal status and the implementation of the protection zones by 1st February 2007 for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st session (2007).

At the 31st session, the Committee considered a proposal put forward by the State Party for an extension of the nominated area to encompass six churches and for a buffer zone that encompassed the three extra mural churches which were part of the original inscription and six further churches.

The Committee approved the extensions to the boundary, and requested that an adequate buffer zone be established and submitted for approval to the Committee, and that further explanations for the choice of the boundaries to protect the setting of the town and its extra muros churches and views to and from it should be provided.

At its 32nd session, the Committee considered a proposal for a buffer zone submitted by the State Party. This buffer zone encompassed the old town, the three extra mural churches which were part of the original inscription, and the six further churches approved at the 31st Session.

Although the Committee asked at its 31st session for a justification for the way a buffer zone would offer protection to the property and views to and from it, no such justification was provided.

The Committee agreed to refer the decision on the proposed buffer zone back to the State Party (Decision 32 COM 8B.66) to allow it to provide more details on the justification for the boundaries for the close surroundings of the property and visual identity as well as for the protective policies in place in its buffer zone.

**Update**

On 30 January 2009, the State Party submitted a report on progress with meeting the requirements of the Committee. This report listed the legal instruments on urban planning and cultural heritage available to protect the inscribed area. It also set out details of the development a strategic plan for the Historic Heritage of the Community of Castilla y León that would address the comprehensive management of historic heritage, and would be based on the ‘conceptual and physical link between heritage and territory’. This strategic plan would include consideration of an urban heritage system that acknowledges ‘fundamental elements or nodes and their relationships, which define the value of the heritage of a city, regardless of the degree in which they manifest themselves from a visual point of view’.

A management plan for Ávila would be part of this strategic framework. To take forward this management plan, the Department of Culture and Tourism for the Regional Government of Castilla y León and the Ávila Town Hall signed a framework agreement in September 2006. The plan process was launched in September 2008. It is stated that the Plan will ‘enable the city to be governed in a flexible way with regard to the incorporation of new values, as long as they make way for global improvement without compromising any existing values’.

The State Party proposes to consider the appropriateness of the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone as part of the development of this management plan – which should be completed at the end of 2009 – and then submit a proposal to the Committee.
3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the Committee *takes note* of the information provided by the State Party with regard to the development of a management plan, as a precursor to the delineation of an appropriate buffer zone with adequate protection, as requested at the 31st and 32nd sessions.
Map showing the boundaries of the buffer zone
Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia)

No 724 bis

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Serbia

Name of property: Medieval Monuments in Kosovo

Location: Autonomous province of Kosovo

Inscription: 2004, 2006

Brief Description:
The four edifices of the site reflect the high points of the Byzantine-Romanesque ecclesiastical culture, with its distinct style of wall painting, which developed in the Balkans between the 13th and 17th centuries. The Dečani Monastery was built in the mid-14th century for the Serbian king Stefan Dečanski and is also his mausoleum. The Patriarchate of Peć Monastery is a group of four domed churches featuring series of wall paintings. The 13th-century frescoes of the Church of Holy Apostles are painted in a unique, monumental style. Early 14th-century frescoes in the church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša represent the appearance of the new so-called Palaiologian Renaissance style, combining the influences of the eastern Orthodox Byzantine and the Western Romanesque traditions. The style played a decisive role in subsequent Balkan art.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

Dečani Monastery was inscribed in 2004 on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv), as follows:

Criterion (ii): Dečani Monastery represents an exceptional synthesis of Byzantine and Western medieval traditions. The monastery and particularly its paintings also exercised an important influence on the development of art and architecture during the Ottoman period.

Criterion (iv): Dečani Monastery represents an outstanding example of the last phase of the development of the Serbian-Slav architecture. The construction has integrated Eastern Byzantine and Western medieval traditions.

In 2006 three further properties were added to form a serial nomination under the name of Medieval Monuments in Kosovo and inscribed under criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) as follows:

Criterion (ii): The Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša played a decisive role in the development of ecclesiastical building and mural painting in the Balkans between the 14th to the 16th centuries, in the discrete Balkan Palaiologian Renaissance architectural style, which reflects a fusion of eastern Orthodox Byzantine with western Romanesque styles.

Criterion (iii): The wall paintings in the three churches are an exceptional testimony to the manifestations of the cultural tradition of the Palaiologian Renaissance of Byzantium in the Balkans. They show the height of the development of Balkan art from the first half of the 14th century in Gračanica and Ljeviša, similar only to the church of the Holy Apostles in Thessaloniki and the Monastery of Protaton at Mount Athos, while the paintings at the churches at Peć, dating from around 1300 until 1673/4, are a powerful demonstration of the emergence of this style and its aftermath.

Criterion (iv): The Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša reflect the development of a discrete Palaiologian Renaissance style of architecture and mural decoration in the Balkans in the 14th century, when the combined forces of Church and State were harnessed to create a strong identity for Serbia, in line with its political orientations.

Modification

The State Party is proposing a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for all four properties, as follows:

The Serbian mediaeval monuments in Kosovo and Metohija constitute a unified group of churches built within the Byzantine spiritual domain, but with an outstanding mark of unified spiritual and secular authorities of the mediaeval Serbia which was turned to both the Orthodox East and Catholic West, not only in the geographical and political sense, but in cultural, as well.

Hence two styles developed simultaneously in Serbian mediaeval architecture, and their final accomplishments, in their integral and authentic form, have been preserved in Kosovo and Metohija. The complex architectural unit of churches and exonarthex of the Peć complex, serving numerous both religious and secular functions, came to be under the influence of the so-called Ras style, representing a special synthesis of Byzantine and Western European architecture, a combination of an Orthodox ground plan and spatial building construction with a Romanesque and Gothic exterior decorations, and the greatest and most imposing expression of the style is manifested in the church of the Dečani monastery.

The second style, taken from Byzantium – cruciform with five domes – characteristic of the renaissance of Palaiologos, is manifested in its initial stage in the church of the Virgin of Ljeviša, whereas in the Gračanica monastery the style reached its peak, with ideal rhythm of proportions and volumes and extraordinary harmony accomplished in cascading façades.

Frescos in all the four temples represent an outstanding testimony to the late Byzantine painting, manifesting all the leading style tendencies (Gračanica, Patriarchate of Peć, Dečani), unique works of the renaissance of...
Palaiologos (Virgin of Ljeviša) and the best preserved treasury of iconography (Dečani). Apart from particular subject and composition features, the wall paintings and largely preserved interior elements of these churches (floor paved with differently coloured stone with incrustations, church furniture) yield exceptional information on all the aspects of the mediaeval life in Byzantium.

Closely related to the most prominent persons and events concerning the 14th century Balkans, a direct influence of these four monuments could have for centuries been traced in art and architecture in this part of Europe during the Ottoman period.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the following Statement of Significance for the Medieval Monuments in Kosovo, Serbia, be approved:

The Serbian mediaeval monuments in Kosovo constitute a unified group of churches built within the Byzantine spiritual domain, but strongly reflecting the unified spiritual and secular authorities of mediaeval Serbia, which faced both the Orthodox East and Catholic West, not only in the geographical and political sense, but in cultural, as well.

Two styles developed simultaneously in Serbian mediaeval architecture, and their final accomplishments, have been preserved in Kosovo. The complex architectural unit of churches and exonarthex of the Peć complex, serving numerous both religious and secular functions, reflects the so-called Ras style, representing a special synthesis of Byzantine and West European architecture, a combination of an Orthodox ground plan and spatial building construction with Romanesque and Gothic exterior decorations. The greatest and most imposing expression of this style is manifest in the church of the Dečani monastery.

The second style, taken from Byzantium – cruciform plan with five domes – characteristic of the of Palaiologos renaissance style, is manifested in its initial stage in the church of the Virgin of Ljeviša, whereas in the Gračanica monastery the style reached its peak, with ideal rhythm of proportions and volumes and an extraordinary harmony accomplished in its cascading façades.

Frescos in all the four churches represent an outstanding testimony to late Byzantine painting. Gračanica, Patriarchate of Peć, and Dečani manifest all the leading style tendencies; the church of The Virgin of Ljeviša displays unique examples of the Palaiologos Renaissance style, and the best preserved treasury of Byzantine iconography is at Dečani. The wall paintings and largely preserved interior elements of these churches (coloured stone floor paving, church furniture) yield exceptional information on all the aspects of mediaeval life in Byzantium.

The churches were closely related to many of the most prominent people and events in the 14th century Balkans, and these four monuments had a direct influence on art and architecture in this part of Europe throughout the Ottoman period.

Criterion (ii): Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša played a decisive role in the development of ecclesiastical building and mural painting in the Balkans, between the 14th to the 16th centuries, and reflect in the discrete Balkan Ras and Palaiologian Renaissance styles, a fusion of eastern Orthodox Byzantine with western Romanesque styles.

Criterion (iii): The wall paintings in the four churches are an exceptional testimony to the manifestations of the cultural tradition of the Palaiologian Renaissance of Byzantium in the Balkans. They show the height of the development of Balkan art from the first half of the 14th century in Gračanica and Ljeviša, similar only to the church of the Holy Apostles in Thessaloniki and the Monastery of Protaton at Mount Athos, while the paintings at the churches at Peć, dating from around 1300 until 1673/4, are a powerful demonstration of the emergence of this style and its aftermath. At Dečani the paintings are the best preserved treasury of Byzantine iconography.

Criterion (iv): The Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša reflect the development of a discrete style of architecture and mural decoration in the Balkans in the 14th century, when the combined forces of Church and State were harnessed to create a strong identity for Serbia, in line with its political orientations.