

Harar Jugol (Ethiopia)

No 1189 rev

1. BASIC DATA

<i>State Party:</i>	Ethiopia
<i>Name of property:</i>	Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historical Town
<i>Location:</i>	Harari Region
<i>Date received by the World Heritage Centre:</i>	29 January 2004
<i>Included in the Tentative List:</i>	25 April 2001

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the nomination: 14 August 2003 (for the preparation of the original nomination document). Further assistance was provided by the French Authorities for the preparation of the revised nomination document.

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 *group of buildings*. In terms of the Annex 3 (15, ii, b) of the *Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (2 February 2005), this is a historic town which has evolved along characteristic lines and has preserved, sometimes in the midst of exceptional natural surroundings, spatial arrangements and structures that are typical of the successive stages in their history.

Brief description:

Located in the eastern part of the country on a hilltop at the height of 1885m, the fortified historic town of Harar Jugol is the capital city of the administrative region of Harari in Ethiopia. There are deep gorges on this plateau of a mountain chain surrounded by deserts and savannah. The nominated core zone consists of the entire fortified historic town. The area is a rounded area elongated towards the west. The maximum east-west dimension reaches over 1km, and in the north-south dimension ca. 700m. The buffer zone surrounds the core zone to a variable extent. In modern times, the town has developed especially towards the east from the walled city.

2. ACTIONS

Background:

At the 29th session the World Heritage Committee (Decision 29 COM 8B.21) referred back to the State Party of Ethiopia the examination of the nomination of Harar Jugol to the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural values ii, iv and v to allow the State Party to supply further detailed information on:

a) the Revision of the Master Plan to include consideration of the proposed ring road and the development of new housing in order to ensure that conservation and preservation are fully integrated into town planning;

b) the levels of protection for the nominated area;

c) the controls, levels of protection and zoning for the proposed enlarged buffer zone;

d) a defined management system or management processes to allow the city to develop in a sustainable way with respect to its outstanding universal value;

e) the archaeological context of the property;

f) the justification of the possible application of criterion iv [in order to further demonstrate the uniqueness of the Harari house type] as well as ii and v; and

g) the impact study of the infrastructure projects;

The State Party submitted complementary information on 30 January 2006.

Date of the Technical Evaluation Mission: 1-8 November 2004

Dates of request for additional information and of receipt from State Party: None

Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committees on Historic Towns and Villages and on Vernacular Architecture.

Literature: Two books have been recently published on Harar Jugol: P. Revault and S. Santelli (eds.), *Harar, a Muslim City of Ethiopia*, Maisonneuve et Larose, 2004; Harari People National State and Embassy of France, *Harar, Cultural Guide*, Addis Ababa, 2006 (in Amharic, English, French).

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 10 April 2006

3. THE PROPERTY

Description

The historic town of Harar Jugol is located in the southern part of Ethiopia at the extreme North of the basin of the river *Wabi Shebele*. The core zone (48ha) of the nominated property consists of the entire historic walled city of Jugol. The buffer zone forms a protection zone extending ca 800m to the south and 1700m to the east, while on the west side it is narrow being confined with the new town of Harar.

Harar Jugol is the fourth of the sacred towns of Islam, and it is the center of an Islamic region within the otherwise Christian Ethiopia. The Harari people speak a Semitic language related to Arabic. Harar Jugol has also been a powerful trading center. The historic town consists of a traditionally functioning community, forming a complex social-environmental whole, where each element has its symbolic and/or practical significance. The town is the centre of an agricultural area, and has been interdependent with it until recently. The name '*Jugol*' refers to the defense wall as well as to the fortified town area. The inhabitants also refer to the town as '*ge*'. The surrounding agricultural area is called '*ge-fage*', and the fallow land outside is '*gaffa*', where there are a series of small villages.

The social organization of the town is managed using two separate traditional systems which are complementary:

a) The *afocha* are neighborhood associations formed by men and women separately, each with its organizational

structure, which are involved in social activities, such as weddings and funerals,

b) Furthermore, the *jugol* is divided into seven *kebele* divisions responsible for all administrative functions.

The historic city is surrounded by a fortification wall, which has six gates, including the recent Harar gate, from where the main streets lead to the centre. The principal public functions are concentrated in the central public area, which forms a triangle. The main street from the west, Amir Urga, enlarged by the Italian administration in 1936, leads to Ferez Magala (Horse Market) with the Municipal Hall and Orthodox Church. To the south-east of this square there is Gider Magala (central market), and to the east the main mosque (Mosque Jamia), forming the three points of the triangle.

According to some historical accounts, the city walls, Jugol in Harari language, are supposed to have been built in the 13th century. Other sources date the walls to the time of Emir Nur ibn al-Majid (1551-68), who wanted to protect the city against the Christian threat. The walls were built according to the topography, enclosing also water sources. The five historic gates corresponded to the main roads to the town. Originally, the city was also divided into five neighborhoods corresponding to the gates, but this division is not functional anymore.

Commercial facilities were essential to the functioning and survival of the town. Most of the shops are grouped along the main street from the west to the centre and in relation to the market areas: Andinnya manget, Amir Urga Street, Faras Magala and Gidir Magala. The south-west gate opens to two large market areas outside the city wall.

Harar Jugol, having an important spiritual significance has a large number of religious buildings. There are currently 82 mosques and 102 shrines, which are distributed in all parts of the old town. The oldest mosques date from the 10th century. The traditional Harari mosque is a building. With simple forms, one can distinguish three types: the basic traditional type (consisting of a prayer room and courtyard), the five old grand mosques (which are very similar, but with twice as many pillars), and the sanctuary mosques (with some tombs). There are also a number of tombs of saints, either consisting of natural elements or being manmade.

There are three types of houses in Harar Jugol. The most common is the traditional townhouse. One such unit is called *ge gar*, which consists of three rooms on the ground floor with service areas in the courtyard. A group of several units is called *ge abad*. Traditionally, such compounds were used by members of the same family. Today people of different origins may share them. The second type is called the Indian House, built by Indian merchants who came to Harar after 1887. Most of these houses are built on the highest point of the city. They are simple rectangular buildings with two stories. The first floor veranda of the main façade overlooks the street or the courtyard. They are covered with a roof and are higher than the average. There are about a dozen of the most important of these merchant houses in the centre. The third type is called the combined or mixed type, which brings together elements from the other two.

History

The origins of Harar are obscure, and the main source of information is oral tradition. There is a myth, according to which, in July 1256, there arrived from the Arab Peninsula 405 sheikhs who chose this site to found the city. Some sources indicate that Harar came into being around the 10th century or even earlier. Islam was introduced to Ethiopia in the 9th century. Three mosques of Harar have been dated to the 10th century (Aw Mansur and Garad Muhammad Abogh in Jugol, and Aw Machad Mosque outside). Between 1277 and 1285, a neighboring lord created a coalition of five Muslim principalities. From that time on, the trade was in the hands of the Muslims, and Harar became a principal trading post.

In the 16th century, Harar was established in its present urban form and from 1520 to 1568 it was the capital of the Harari Kingdom. From the second half of the 16th century until the 19th century, Harar was noted as a centre of trade and Islamic learning in the Horn of Africa. In the 17th century it became an independent emirate. Nevertheless, this was also a period of decline, and the population fell from some 50,000 to ca. 12,000.

Due to its fame, Harar attracted the interest of the Egyptians, who occupied it from 1875 to 1885. Following this, in 1887, Harar was conquered by Menelik, the king of Asmaadin and later Emperor of Ethiopia. At this time, the Great Mosque at Faras Magala was destroyed and replaced by an octagonal Orthodox church. Menelik also opened the sixth gate and cut through a new street in the east-west direction. At the end of the 19th century, there was immigration of Indian merchants, who introduced the Indian house type and the combined version.

From 1938 to 1942, Ethiopia was occupied by the Italians. In the subsequent period, due to various problems, Ethiopia and with it also Harar have been subject to famine, civil war, and economic decline, including for example land reform, which in reality decreased productivity of agriculture. After the end of the dictatorship in 1991, there was a slight improvement until the war with Eritrea. At the moment, Harar Jugol needs to rebuild its economy on the basis of sustainable development.

Protection and Management

Legal provision:

In 1974, the DERG (The coordinating Committee of the armed forces) undertook to nationalize the land. This led to a new administrative division of the town and the region and to a change in the property law concerning land and dwelling places. The agricultural area surrounding Jugol as well as a large number of traditional houses came under the authority of the federal State. In 1994, almost 40% of the houses were the property of the State.

Harar has been officially registered as an Ethiopian national heritage since 1974. The legal instruments which protect Jugol include: "Heritage Conservation Draft Proclamation of Harari People National Regional State" (January 2000), "The Establishment of Harar Heritage Conservation Office", (proclamation No 21/1992), and

"Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage" (proclamation No 209/2000).

Management structure:

The general management control and authority to ratify decrees and laws is with the Harari Council. The Centre for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) was established in 1976. It is responsible for the inventory, the definition of conservation policies, support for restoration work, and decisions about grants and permits. The local authority and the Kebele act as administrative offices in the process.

A Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage in Ethiopia (UNESCO, F. Aalund, 1985) provided an outline of preservation needs in Harar. This is integrated by a restoration and training project prepared by the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Addis Ababa (2001), and the support of AEPAMED, Paris 2003-2006.

Following the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee in 2005, the State Party has taken the following actions:

A contract was signed in December 2005 between the local authorities (Harari National Regional State) and the Federal Urban Planning Institute (FUPI) for the preparation of the revised urban master plan to be completed within 2006. The work is expected to be carried out in collaboration with the French Ethiopian Cooperation Programme and the Jugol Heritage Conservation Office (J.H.C.O.).

The project for an asphalted ring road around the old town has been cancelled in December 2005. At the same time, the buffer zone has been extended to cover the landscape area on the east side of the historic town. In the buffer zone, only agricultural activities will be allowed. New constructions can only consist of simple barracks in earth and wood for agricultural use. All waste will be removed from this area, and waste disposal areas will be strictly controlled.

J.H.C.O. will identify four levels of protection: principal monuments, important historic buildings, contextual urban fabric, and 'out-of-context buildings'. The last category contains buildings of no architectural, urban or typological interest; these can be replaced in agreement with J.H.C.O. This office will work as a flexible link between the Regional Government and the representatives of the administrative and social structure of Jugol.

The office will be responsible for the elaboration of a project for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage and a project for the enhancement and sustainable development of the city of Harar. These two projects will run parallel and mutually reinforce each other.

A new archaeological survey of Harar was conducted in December 2005.

Resources:

The main source of funding comes from the government. However, there has been cooperation between the local authority, the Urban Development Support Service, and the German Technical Organization, which is aiming at improving the financial base. These funds are expected to

be used for the improvement of the facilities of the new Heritage Conservation Office.

In recent years, there has been collaboration with French universities to carry out an inventory of Harar involving local architects in the conservation work. In 2003, the first architect settled in Harar to open a practice there.

Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value by the State Party (summary)

The property is nominated on the basis of criteria ii, iii, iv and v.

Harar expresses the influence over a long period of an original Islamic culture on the development of a city and its typical urban planning. The creation of religious buildings, mosques and tombs, as well as specific original houses in Harar give evidence of a Harari cultural tradition still alive, practiced and well preserved by the inhabitants.

The city offers a very good and complete example of a traditional human settlement which illustrates a significant Islamic culture in Ethiopian history. The structure of the city, with its central core occupied with commercial and religious buildings, refers to the traditional Islamic urban structure and presents, with its original housing typology, a very significant cultural artifact. It is an outstanding example of a human settlement whose occupancy in the territory represents a specific culture, now vulnerable in view of contemporary demographic changes.

Harar is said to be the fourth holy city of Islam, partly based on the fact that the Ethiopian kingdom welcomed the Prophet's followers when they had to escape from Arabia in the beginning of the 7th century. The great number of religious buildings within the historic town demonstrates this.

The city developed as a major centre of commercial products which were transported from and to Ethiopia via the port of Zeila by camel caravans.

The Harari people are known for the quality of their handicrafts, including weaving, basket making and book binding. Hand-written Korans were produced in Harar and circulated in the surrounding regions.

The most spectacular part of the cultural Heritage is certainly the traditional Harari house, whose architectural form is typical, specific and original, different from the domestic layout usually known in Muslim countries, although reminiscent of the coastal Arab architecture. Their style is unique in Ethiopia and their interior design quite exceptional. When Harari people mention the "Harari culture" they actually refer to the beauty of their houses, which they are very proud of. At the end of the 19th century Indian merchants built new houses whose wooden verandas defined a different urban landscape and influenced the construction of Indian/Harari houses. Their architectural and ornamental qualities are now part of the Harari cultural heritage. The city is very well preserved, and few modern buildings have damaged the traditional architectural typologies.

4. EVALUATION

Conservation

Conservation history:

In recent decades, the historic town of Harar Jugol has been subject to a problematic period marked by wars and famine, poverty, nationalization of private property during the dictatorship (the DERG regime), and growing popular pressure. As a result of this, the state of conservation of the buildings has suffered.

State of conservation:

The ICOMOS expert has indicated that there are gradual changes that are affecting the authenticity of the historic fabric, such as plastering the houses and changing doors from wood to metal.

The environmental context of Jugol has been retained particularly on the eastern side of the fortified city. There are however problems in the surrounding area, where the riverbanks are currently used as public dumping grounds.

Protection and Management:

Following the recommendation by the World Heritage Committee at its 29th session in 2005, the State Party has responded actively involving a team of French experts. A contract has been signed for the revision of the urban Master Plan taking into account the protection and conservation of the historic town with its surroundings, to be completed by the end of 2006. The duly protected buffer zone has been extended to include the whole agricultural landscape to the east of the walled city. The earlier ring road project has been abolished. It is noted that the new town developed on the west side in the 1930s. Here the buffer zone is relatively narrow, but this part of the territory is however under planning control based on the urban Master Plan, which can be taken as a reasonable guarantee for the protection.

The Jugol Heritage Conservation Office (JHCO), established in 2003, has been allocated the coordinating role in the management system involving relevant local authorities and central government offices. An action plan has been prepared for the conservation management of the historic town. An archaeological survey of the context of the historic town has been carried out in 2005. There are three infrastructure projects related to renovation of the sewage system (to be completed in 2007), a new water supply requiring a pipeline of 75km, and the establishment of an appropriate solid waste management system. The projects will be managed in coordination with JHCO.

Risk analysis:

While the historic town of Harar Jugol is relatively well preserved, it has various problems related to lack of maintenance and repair. The ICOMOS expert has observed various risks regarding the gradual alteration of the building fabric of Harar Jugol, e.g. plastering of external walls that used to be bare, replacing original wooden doors in metal, building in nontraditional materials, introduction of TV aerials, dumping waste in river beds, etc.

The development of the Harar region has been modest in recent decades due to a number of reasons. However, new perspectives are now being presented, and it is vital to anticipate any decisions so as to avoid any negative impact

on the cultural landscape of Harar. It is necessary to examine the impact of proposed development on the traditional way of life and the traditional environment. The challenge is to provide a quality of life to the inhabitants that respects traditional values without sacrificing the essentials of modern facilities.

The strategic decisions taken by the authority Harari authorities in 2005, however, are expected to contribute to counteract and mitigate the above problems over the coming years.

ICOMOS considers that the actions taken by the State Party have adequately responded to the recommendations by the World Heritage Committee, and are expected to contribute to the sustainability of the conservation and development of the historic town.

Authenticity and integrity

Authenticity:

Harar Jugol is a rare example of a relatively well-preserved historic town which has also retained its traditions till the present day. It is one of the holy towns of Islam in Africa, as well as the capital of a minority region within the otherwise Christian Ethiopia.

Integrity:

The traditional integrity of the urban and rural areas is an important part of its significance and traditional value. While there has been some modern development towards the west and the north, the essential relationship has remained intact on the eastern and south-eastern sides.

Except for the changes which took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the walled city, such as the replacement of the principal mosque with an Orthodox church and the enlargement of the main street leading to the west gate, the area of Jugol has kept its traditional housing reasonably intact. There are however indications of emerging trends for alteration in the traditional buildings, which need careful monitoring; there is also a need for awareness raising, and the development of preservation attitudes amongst the population.

Comparative evaluation

Most of the old Islamic towns of East Africa are located on the coast line. In this regard Harar is an exception. It has been considered the only inland city worthy of the title in East Africa between the Ethiopian city of Gondar North of Lake Tana and the Arab city of Zanzibar on the East African coast before the rise of Addis Ababa and Nairobi.

Referring to the new information provided by the revised nomination and taking into account that contemporary urban settlements along the coast were dependent on harbor facilities, ICOMOS considers that Harar Jugol represents an inland urban settlement with a distinct architectural character and social organization, which cannot be compared to any other town in East Africa. As the commercial centre of trade with the interior, as well as a centre for the propagation of Islam, the town has exercised tremendous historic influence and represents -

together with Axum, Gondar and Lalibella the main stages in Ethiopia's history.

The comparative study provided by the revised nomination stresses the specificity of the Harar Jugol house, demonstrating that it differs from the general Arab typology that can be found in cities in North Africa or on the eastern coast. The Harari type has similarities with the typology found in the city of Zabid, Yemen. Nevertheless, the Harari house is considered to have developed from Argoba house, which developed distinguished by the complex set of spaces (namely: *Ge Gar*, *Qeh Afar*, *Kirtat*, *Dera*) and masonry platforms, representing specific social and family functions, which make Harari unique. In fact, the comparative study demonstrates that the Harari house type is deeply rooted in Africa and developed especially in southern Ethiopia. ICOMOS considers that this interpretation is valid, and that it does provide a specific quality to Harar Jugol, which justifies the inscription on the basis of criterion iv.

Outstanding universal value

General statement:

Harar Jugol developed as a trading post between the coast and the interior highland as well as serving as a commercial centre for the surrounding sedentary agricultural populations. The town also relied on farming, which gave rise to close urban-rural linkages. The trade connections and migrating groups have contributed to the multiethnic composition of the population through a complex network of cultural interchange by such ethnic groups as the Oromo, Amhara, Argobbe, Hamrari, Gourage and Somali. The Harari domestic house type and the numerous Islamic shrines, tombs and mosques give the immediate impression of an Islamic town characterized by a maze of narrow alleyways and the forbidding external appearance of the houses. Of particular significance are two issues:

- a) the social organization of the communities through the *Afocha* and the *Kebele* administration,
- b) the close urban-rural linkages, which are also significant in the Harari language by the reference to *ge-usu* and *gaffa* (meaning 'people of the town', 'gardens of the town people' and 'fallow land further away from town').

Harar Jugol is considered to be of outstanding universal value having also exceptionally well preserved its social and physical inheritance.

Evaluation of criteria:

The property is nominated on the basis of criteria ii, iii, iv and v. Complementary information has been provided by the State Party in January 2006 for the justification.

Criterion ii: Harar Jugol exhibits an important interchange of values of original Islamic culture. Such influences have continued from the Middle Ages till today, and are expressed in the social and cultural development of the city enclosed within the otherwise Christian region. Such influences have been merged with traditions that relate to the inland of Africa and particularly to southern Ethiopia, giving a particular characteristic form to its architecture and urban plan. ICOMOS considers that the property meets this criterion.

Criterion iii: Harar Jugol bears exceptional testimony to cultural traditions related to Islamic and African roots. It is considered “the fourth holy city” of Islam, having been founded by a holy missionary from the Arabic Peninsula. Though a trading place and thus a melting pot of various influences, Harar has been in relative isolation in its region, contributing to a cultural specificity, expressed in its characteristic community structure and traditions, which are still alive. ICOMOS considers that the property meets this criterion.

Criterion iv: Harar Jugol is an outstanding example of a type of architectural and urban ensemble which illustrates the impact of African and Islamic traditions on the development of specific building types. The building types and the entire urban layout reflect these traditions, which give a particular character and even uniqueness to Harar Jugol. ICOMOS considers that the property meets this criterion.

Criterion v: Harar Jugol with its surrounding landscape is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, representative of cultural interaction with the environment. The town developed from the 8th century, first as a group of villages, forming a common defensive system under obedience to the saint Aw Abadir. Due to the fertile soil and abundant water, and through the fusion of the villages, Harar Jugol gradually developed into a city, which was fortified. The social and spatial structure (*afocha*) and the language of the people all reflect a particular and even unique relationship that there developed with the environment. The territory was articulated into five sectors, reflected in circular dynamics in the urban structure and its relationship with the surrounding landscape. The innermost circle is at the centre of the city. Even though the city has been subject to modern development towards the west, the eastern part of the surrounding landscape has retained its integrity. The cultural and physical relationships with the territory have thus survived till today, but they have become vulnerable to irreversible change under the impact of modern globalizing world. ICOMOS considers that the property meets this criterion.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historical Town, Ethiopia, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria ii, iii, iv and v:**

Criterion ii: The historic town of Harar Jugol exhibits an important interchange of values of original Islamic culture, expressed in the social and cultural development of the city enclosed within the otherwise Christian region. Such influences have been merged with traditions that relate to the inland of Africa and particularly to southern Ethiopia, giving a particular characteristic form to its architecture and urban plan.

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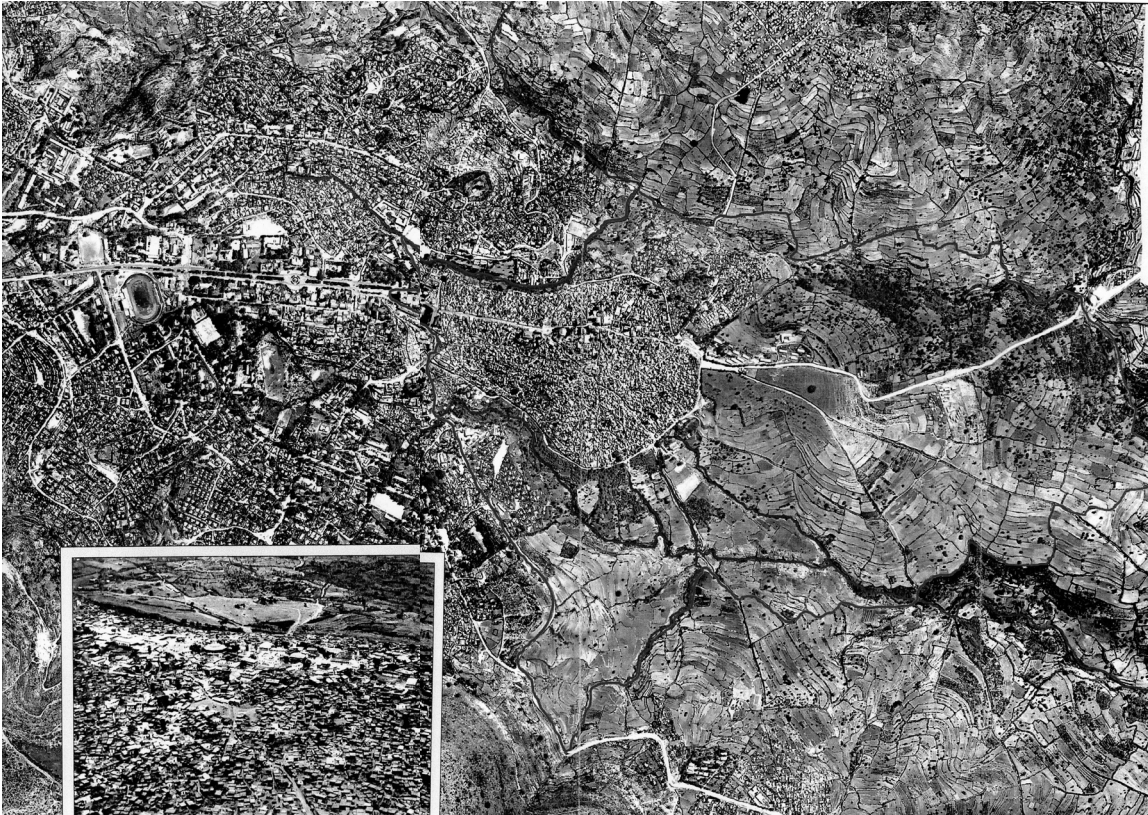
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Criterion v: Harar Jugol with its surrounding landscape is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, representative of cultural interaction with the environment. The social and spatial structure (*afocha*) and the language of the people all reflect a particular and even unique relationship that there developed with the environment. The cultural and physical relationships with the territory have survived till today, but they are also vulnerable to irreversible change under the impact of modern globalizing world.

ICOMOS recommends that the name of the nominated property be changed into: “Harar Jugol, the fortified historic town”.

ICOMOS also requests the State Party to inform the World Heritage Committee at its next session on the completion of the Urban Master Plan revision.

ICOMOS, April 2006



Map showing the revised boundaries of the nominated property



Emir Nur Tomb



Indian House