

---

## Archaeological Site of Ani (Turkey) No 1518

---

### Official name as proposed by the State Party

Archaeological Site of Ani

### Location

Eastern Anatolia, Province of Kars  
Turkey

### Brief description

Ani is located in the northeast of Turkey, 42 km from the city of Kars, on a secluded triangular plateau overlooking a ravine that forms the natural border with Armenia. This medieval city that was once one of the cultural and commercial centres on the Silk Road, is characterized by architecture that combines a variety of domestic, religious and military structures, creating a panorama of medieval urbanism built up over the centuries by successive Christian and Muslim dynasties. Inhabited since the Bronze Age, Ani flourished in the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, when it became a capital of the medieval Armenian kingdom of the Bagratids and profited from control of one branch of the Silk Road. Later, under Byzantine, Seljuk, and Georgian sovereignty, it maintained its status as an important crossroads for merchant caravans, controlling trade routes between Byzantium, Persia, Syria and central Asia. The Mongol invasion, along with a devastating earthquake in 1319 and a change in trade routes, marked the beginning of the decline of the city. It was all but abandoned by the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site*.

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (8 July 2015) paragraph 47, it was nominated as a *cultural landscape*. It is now nominated as an archaeological *site*.

## 1 Basic data

### Included in the Tentative List

13 April 2012

### International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

### Date received by the World Heritage Centre

30 January 2015

### Background

This is a new nomination.

### Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes and several independent experts.

Comments about the evaluation of this property were received from IUCN in December 2015. ICOMOS carefully examined this information to arrive at its final decision and its March 2016 recommendation; IUCN also revised the presentation of its comments in accordance with the version included in this ICOMOS report.

### Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 9 to 14 November 2015.

### Additional information received by ICOMOS

A letter was sent to the State Party on 23 September 2015 requesting a map showing all the nominated buildings, an expanded comparative analysis, a justification for inscription under criterion (v), additional information on the proposed boundaries, the restoration of the city walls and Seljukian Palace, the impact of livestock grazing on the property, and the ownership profile of the land in both the nominated property and the buffer zone. A response was received on 2 November 2015 providing the requested information. An ICOMOS interim report was sent to the State Party on 18 January 2016, outlining the status of the evaluation process and issues that had been raised regarding the application. In response to this report additional information on the comparative analysis, Strategic Conservation Master Plan, maps of the revised buffer zone and staged conservation works within the walled city, as well as a substantially revised and edited nomination dossier (in particular the sections concerning the executive summary, the identification of the property, description and justification for inscription) was received by ICOMOS on the 5 and 9 February 2016. This information is incorporated into the relevant sections below.

### Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

11 March 2016

## 2 The property

**Note:** Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, not all monuments in the nominated property have been described in this report. The nomination dossier provides a thorough description of the various types of building that are found in the nominated property.

### Description

Ani is located in Eastern Anatolia, 42 km from the city of Kars, on a remote triangular plateau defined by the Bostanlar Creek to the northwest, Ocaklı Village to the north, Miğmiş Creek to the northeast and Arpaçay River

to the south, which forms the natural border between Turkey and Armenia. The nominated property comprises 250.7 hectares, with architectural remains that combine a variety of domestic, religious and military structures, creating a panorama of medieval urbanism built up over the centuries by successive Christian and Muslim dynasties.

Ani is put forward as a two-component serial nomination. Component one, which is the principal nominated area of the nominated property, consists of architectural remains located in three zones: the citadel, the outer citadel (walled city) and the area outside the city walls. Component two consists of rock-carved structures on the slopes of one of the valleys surrounding the city, the Bostanlar Creek.

The *Citadel* stands on a high flat-topped hill at the southeast end of Ani and was surrounded by the city walls, presumed to be from the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the Kamsarakan dynasty ruled Ani. The existing structures of the ancient city within the citadel include the extensive ruins of the Kamsaragans Palace, the ruins of at least five churches (Palace church, Midjnaberd church, Sushan Pahlavuni church, Karimadin church and the church with Six Apses) and the ruins of several unidentified buildings. The *Kamsaragans Palace* was also the residence of the Bagratid rulers of Ani and their successors. The palace is in ruins today.

The best-known monuments of Ani are scattered in the *outer citadel (walled city)*, the area between the citadel and the *Smbat city walls* that surrounds the northern side of the city. Among these are the Fire Temple (Ateşgede), the Cathedral (Asdvadzadzin Church, Fethiye Mosque), the Gagik (Surp Krikor, Gagikashen) Church, the Church of the Holy Apostles (Surp Arak'elots, Caravanserai), the Church of the Holy Redeemer (Surp Amenap'rkitch, Halaskar, ruined), the St. Gregory of Abughamrents (Surp Krikor, Polatoğlu) Church, the Tigran Honents (Surp Krikor Lusavorich, Nakışlı) Church, the Virgin's (Bekhents, Surp Hripsime, Kusanac) Monastery, the Maiden's Monastery (Aghjakerd, Surp Hovhannes, Zak'aria Church; Maiden's Castle), the Georgian (St. Stephanos) Church, the Rock-Cut Chapel, the Ebu'l Manucehr Mosque, the Emir Ebu'l Muammeran Complex, the Royal Bathhouse (Seljuk Baths), the Small Bathhouse, the Seljuk Palace (Tacirin, Pahlavuni, Baron, Ebu'l Muammeran Palace), the domestic architecture, the market, the Oil Press (for linseed oil, Bezirhane) and the Silk Road Bridge. These buildings and architectural remains belong to various religions and cultural groups (i.e. Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, Georgians, Byzantines, Seljuks, Mongols and Ottomans) that inhabited Ani mostly between the 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.

The *Fire Temple*, built from basalt stone blocks and situated between the Surp Arak'elots Church and Georgian Church, is thought to be a Zoroastrian temple constructed between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. This is probably the oldest structure in Ani and the first

Zoroastrian fire temple in Anatolia.

The *Ramparts of Smbat II*, arguably the most visually impressive part of Ani, consist of a line of double walls in the northern section of the city, that reach up to 5 metres in height in places, according to the slope of the land. The walls were constructed during the reign of Smbat II (977-989) and then substantially strengthened during the Gagik I (990-1020), Ebu'l Manucehr (1064-1110) and Ebu'l Muammeran periods. The city walls have six entrance gates which are named the Uğurun Gate, Kars Gate, Lion Gate, Satrançlı Gate, Acemağılı Gate and Miğmiş Creek Gate. Lion Gate, which was possibly the main entrance of the city in the past, is located at the western side of the walls and is the main entrance for visitors to Ani today.

The *Cathedral* is located in the upper level of the Arpaçay valley at the southern edge of the city. Its construction started in the year 989 AD under King Smbat II and was completed by the year 1001. The Cathedral was the work of Trdat, one of the most celebrated architects of medieval Armenia, and combines architectonic elements from Byzantium and Armenia. During the siege of 1064 the Turks converted the Cathedral to a mosque and renamed it the *Fethiye Mosque*. It was returned to Christian usage in 1124 under the Georgians and inscriptions tell of restoration work carried out in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century. The devastating earthquake of 1319 brought down the cupola and may have marked the end of the building's formal religious use.

The *Emir Ebu'l Muammeran Complex* was built following the Seljukian Sultan Alpaslan's concession of the administration of the city to the Shaddadid principality after he conquered Ani in 1064. The complex is based around a rectangular planned small mosque, existing at foundation level. It was constructed between 1164 and 1200 AD by Shaddadid Şahinşah, the son of Ebul Manucehr, the first Ani Bey in the Shaddadid family, who reconstructed Ani and therefore took the title of Emir Ebu'l Muammeran. The Ebul Muammeran Mosque was demolished completely in 1917 and only a ruined section of the mosque minaret can be seen today.

The *Silk Road Bridge*, with an estimated construction date in the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, provided a two-storey passage, joining the road which led to Arpaçay through Armenia to Ani, in front of the Dvin Gate. The arch of the bridge, which was constructed of smooth cut tufa stones, has been demolished completely. Only the bridge abutments on both sides of the river and traces of the pathway can be seen today.

The area *outside the city walls*, mostly on the valley slopes surrounding the city, has a great number of rock-carved structures including chapels, burial chambers, warehouses and pigeon houses. There are also water storage chambers, wine and oil cellars, stables and a large chamber that has been identified as a caravanserai. Some of the caves around the Bostanlar

Creek were used as houses until the 1950s.

Ani was originally nominated as a cultural landscape. The original nomination dossier provides a detailed description of the individual buildings and makes reference to the natural environment, flora and fauna, including the topographical position of Ani. However, ICOMOS notes that no description and analysis of the urban morphology, the townscape and the functions of this medieval historic city is provided in the nomination dossier, which makes it difficult to understand the scope and extent of the nominated property. The supplementary information provided by the State Party in February 2016, where Ani is put forward as an archaeological site, adds significantly to the description of the site and a plan of Ani indicating the location of 117 structures is presented in the revised nomination dossier.

ICOMOS notes however, that there is no correspondence between the map representing the 117 architectural structures at the property and the list of photographs provided in Annex 7.a. of the nomination dossier. Also, the additional information does not provide a map indicating the location of the more than 800 underground caves and tunnels that are mentioned in the revised nomination dossier. ICOMOS also notes that it is not clear from the description which elements are clearly visible on the ground and which are not. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that despite the improvements, the supplementary information is still not fully satisfactory with regards to the description of the nominated property and an expert field mission to the site is required to review and confirm the additional information provided in the refocused and revised nomination dossier.

### **History and Development**

Archaeological evidence suggests that the site of Ani was inhabited from the Early Iron Age (1200-1100 BC). The permanent settlement, however, only started with the construction of the Citadel, at the southern tip of the triangular plateau, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, during the Kamsarakans Period.

To the Citadel's north stand the ramparts erected by Ashot III in 960–961 CE. Ashot III (953-977), a scion of the Armenian Bagratid dynasty, made Ani his capital in 961. This was a milestone for Ani, which grew rapidly from a small village into a city as a consequence of the Silk Road trade that shifted from old centres, such as Dvin and Nakhichevan, southwards due to on-going wars between Byzantines and Arabs. Ashot's grandson Smbat II (977-988 CE) made important contributions to the development of the city, including the construction of the nearly 5 km long double ramparts to the north, and a number of churches. During the reign of Gagik (989-1020 CE), brother of Smbat II, Ani experienced its golden age and the transfer of the *Katholikos* (Catholicos, Patriarchy of the Armenian Apostolic Church) to Ani in 992 CE attributed a religious mission to

the city, which became famous as the 'city with 1001 churches'.

The location of the city on the Silk Road, as one of the gateways into Anatolia, contributed not only to the rapid growth of the city but also made it a strategic political and military target. Bagratid rule in Ani ended when the Byzantines annexed Ani in 1045 CE. Barely twenty years later, in 1064 CE, the Seljuks conquered the area. By 1072 CE, they had installed a vassal dynasty at Ani, the Shaddadid emirs of Kurdish origin. The Ebu'l Manuçehr Mosque (Mosque of Minuchir) is the best-known monument associated with this period. The Shaddadids defended Ani from repeated Georgian incursions until 1199 CE, when Queen Tamar's armies took the city. Subsequently ruled by the Georgian-Armenian dynasty of princes, Ani flourished again, with constructions such as the Church of Saint Gregory (Church of the Abughamrents; Chapel of Sushan Pahlavuni; Polatoğlu Kilisesi) in 1215 CE, sponsored by the merchant Tigran Honents.

The advent of Mongol rule in 1239 CE until 1358 CE, Ilkhanids and Calayirs between 1358 CE and 1380 CE, and Karakoyunlus between 1380 CE and 1386 CE, which turned Ani and many cities in the region into warzones, combined with a devastating earthquake in 1605 and the reorientation of trade routes to southern Anatolia and Mesopotamia, led to the eventual decline and abandonment of Ani as a viable city. Ani became part of the Ottoman Turkish Empire between 1579 and 1918.

ICOMOS notes that the original nomination dossier does not refer to recent historical events that have had an impact on the nominated property. In the official Turkish historiography put forward, Ani's connections to an Armenian past are acknowledged sparingly, with historical inaccuracies. ICOMOS commends the State Party for the additional information provided which attempts to rectify this situation, indicating for instance the occasional cultural use of Ani since the year 2000. Nonetheless, ICOMOS is of the view that the inclusion of important events concerning the complex history of Ani post-1918 is still required to fully understand the political and cultural context in which the nominated property sits today.

## **3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity**

### **Comparative analysis**

The extensive comparative analysis put forward by the State Party in the original nomination dossier is structured under three major headings – medieval walled cities, Armenian sites, and individual buildings. With regards to Medieval Armenian settlements, Ani is compared with ancient Armenian capitals ruled by the Bagratid dynasty (Dvin, Bagaran, Shirakavan, and Kars), all in Anatolia and Armenia, as well as other cultural centres in the region (Mren, Ketchivan, Tignis,

Magazberd, Sis), concluding that Ani is the largest and most advanced in many qualities and the best-preserved remains of the Medieval Kingdom of the Bagratids. Ani is further compared with the World Heritage sites of the Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran, Iran (inscribed in the list in 2008 under the criteria (ii), (iii) and (vi)), and the Cathedral and Churches of Echmiatsin and the Archaeological Site of Zvartnots, Armenia (inscribed in the list in 2000 under the criteria (ii) and (iii)), and with historic walled cities which are living cities today (Nicaea, Ankara, Sinope, Konya, Dyarbakir, Baku), concluding that Ani as an archaeological site has a higher level of authenticity and purity since it was largely unoccupied from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. After comparison of Ani as a whole, the individual monuments of the nominated property are compared with relevant sites. Different typologies of churches and mosques are compared with equivalent monuments of the same typology from Armenia, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis is insufficient to demonstrate that the property is an outstanding example of a cultural landscape. The comparison of Ani with historic walled cities that are living cities today (e.g. Nicaea, Ankara, Sinope, Konya, Dyabakir, Baku) and medieval 'mega cities' (e.g. Constantinople, Bagdad or Damascus), or the comparison of individual elements of Ani with elements of other properties, is considered inadequate and irrelevant. Considering that Ani is essentially a medieval historic city that was once one of the cultural and commercial centres on the Silk Roads, ICOMOS considers that an augmented comparative analysis of a refocused nomination dossier should compare the nominated city to other multi-cultural cities and urban centres along the Silk Roads in order to demonstrate its exceptionality. This should describe how Ani contributed to, and was shaped by, the Silk Roads' trade.

In the augmented comparative analysis provided by the State Party in February 2016, Ani is first compared with the "medieval fortified towns", the so-called "ghost towns" or "lost cities" and similar archaeological sites that are already inscribed on the World Heritage List, so as to demonstrate that Ani provides a complete picture of medieval architectural development and is the most representative example of its type of fortified settlement in this cultural region, being distinguished from other "medieval towns" by its authentic state since the abandonment of the site in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. ICOMOS commends the State Party for the substantial improvement in the revised comparative analysis. However, ICOMOS considers that, despite listing 13 sites from different geo-cultural regions, with some exceptions (e.g. Petra), the comparative analysis needs strengthening with regards to the comparison of Ani with properties that express similar values encapsulated in the same criteria as the ones put forward by the State Party to justify the nomination of Ani.

ICOMOS further notes that the comparison of Ani with urban centres and cities located on the Silk Roads concludes that Ani is unique amongst them because all of the others are living cities today, and have been continuously developed until modern times. However, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis falls short in explaining how Ani compares to other similar multi-cultural cities and urban centres along the Silk Roads outside of Turkey.

---

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis will fully justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List provided that it focuses on the comparison of Ani with properties expressing similar values, such as other multi-cultural urban centres, along the Silk Roads outside of Turkey.

---

#### **Justification of 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:

- Ani is a unique medieval settlement that has strong traces of Armenian history, culture and architecture, between 961-1045 CE when it became the capital of the Bagratid dynasty, and an important centre for Turkish history since it was conquered in 1064 AD.
- The location of the city on the Silk Roads, as being one of the gateways to Anatolia, contributed to the rapid growth of the city as well as the transmission and amalgamation of different cultures. Architectural traditions that evolved in the Caucasus, Iran, Turkestan and Khurasan, were translated into stone, creating a unique medieval city.
- The religious monuments of Zoroastrian, Christian and Muslim influence, as well as public and domestic buildings, are witnesses to Ani's multiculturalism. It was a multi-cultural centre, with all the richness and diversity of Medieval Armenian, Byzantine, Seljuk and Georgian urbanism, architecture and art development.
- Rock-cut dwellings constructed in the valley take advantage of the natural topography and show great skill in their construction and a symbolic interaction with the surrounding landscape.

ICOMOS considers that the justification originally provided by the State Party is not grounded on sufficient evidence to substantiate the consideration of the property as a cultural landscape. Although the characteristics of urban elements and features (individual buildings, rock-cut dwellings) are set out, the overall urban ensemble does, however, need to be better understood through more specific details of its form and layout. The supplementary information provided by the State Party in February 2016 responded to this need, providing more clarity on how the multiple cultural traditions are reflected in the urban layout of the city, and how the individual monuments inter-relate with the overall pattern of the city. ICOMOS also acknowledges that the supplementary information

include a revised justification of Outstanding Universal Value for the nominated property.

ICOMOS further notes that the justification for inscription as outlined in the third point ('multiculturalism') could apply to several other multi-cultural centres along the Silk Roads. ICOMOS considers that this point, as well as the others summarizing the justification that were put forward by the State Party, may well prove to be appropriate, however they will only be adequately justified once the comparative analysis has fully demonstrated how the nominated property stands out in respect to other similar properties inscribed, or not, on the World Heritage List.

### **Integrity and authenticity**

#### **Integrity**

The State Party considers that all the elements that constitute the basic values of Ani are located within the boundaries of the nominated area. The city walls, religious and domestic buildings, as well as the rock-cut constructions along parts of the Arpaçay and Bostanlar Creeks, are all located within the boundaries of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation area.

ICOMOS notes that the majority of structures having monumental characteristics are still standing on site. However, there is not a single monument that is not facing serious structural problems of stability, either missing parts of the fabric, due to seismic action or human destruction, or problems of unsuccessful reconstruction interventions. In addition, the property has problems which affect its integrity due to the continuation of the traditional way of life of the local villagers (e.g. pastures within the archaeological site, stables inside the rock-cut caves) as well as the quarrying machinery on the east side of Arpaçay Creek (in Armenia) which has considerable impact on the visual integrity of the landscape.

ICOMOS further considers that the property's integrity as presented is not yet adequate considering the highly vulnerable state of conservation of key attributes of the nominated property. However, ICOMOS is of the view that the conditions of integrity could be met, provided a comprehensive conservation strategy and action plan (for individual monuments) outlining the corrective measures required to control and mitigate the impact of deterioration processes on the property, is undertaken.

ICOMOS acknowledges the Strategic Conservation Master Plan for the nominated property provided as part of the supplementary information but considers that Plan needs finalisation. The Plan is discussed further below.

ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the whole series and that of the individual sites that comprise the series will be met when the key instrument for implementing a comprehensive conservation strategy (i.e. Strategic Conservation Master Plan) is finalised and in place.

#### **Authenticity**

The State Party considers that, generally speaking, the authenticity of the property has been retained, considering that the structures that remain standing retain their original form, but it also acknowledges that earthquakes, the harsh climate and human destruction have, to a limited extent, affected its overall authenticity.

However, with regards to authenticity of material, substance and workmanship, ICOMOS is concerned that a large amount of new fabric was introduced in a number of restoration projects, causing significant loss of the original building fabric of a number of monuments (e.g. the Smbat II city walls after restoration in 1995, or the Seljuk Palace after the 1999 restoration). In these restoration projects there was extensive use of stone masonry that is entirely different in size, colour and quality from the original and there is no archaeological evidence to show that the rebuilt monuments are true to their original form.

In addition, ICOMOS considers that the degree of authenticity and ability of the nominated property to truthfully convey the significance of Ani is still reduced by omissions of significant stages of the history and development of the property in the nomination dossier.

Nevertheless, ICOMOS agrees with the State Party that the remoteness of the uninhabited city of Ani provides a mostly unaltered window onto the past.

---

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the whole series and for the individual components have been justified, although they remain vulnerable due to the variable state of conservation and adverse effects of past restoration efforts on some of the elements.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the condition of integrity of the whole series and that of the individual sites that comprise the series will be justified once the tools for implementing a comprehensive conservation strategy are in place. However, the condition of authenticity of the whole series and for individual sites has been justified, despite being vulnerable due to the variable state of conservation and adverse effects of past restoration efforts on some of the elements.

---

#### **Criteria under which inscription is proposed**

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

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;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Ani was a meeting place for Armenian, Georgian and diverse Islamic cultural traditions that are reflected in the architectural design, material and

decorative details of the monuments. The remains of this multi-cultural life in Ani are easily traced in the use of architectural techniques and styles belonging to different civilizations. New styles, which emerged as a result of cross-cultural interactions, have turned into a new architectural language peculiar to Ani – the “Ani school”. The creation of this new language expressed in the design, craftsmanship and decoration of Ani has also been influential in the wider region of Anatolia and Caucasia.

ICOMOS acknowledges the supplementary information provided by the State Party with the revised justification for criterion (ii) and partially agrees with the State Party that the history of the region wherein Ani is located, at the Silk Roads, was a meeting point and melting pot for diverse cultures. However, ICOMOS is of the view that what has not yet been fully demonstrated is how these elements of ‘cultural exchange’ have come to be of outstanding importance when compared to many other places with similarly strong multicultural and economic centres.

---

ICOMOS considers this criterion will be fully justified for the whole series once the comparative analysis has been expanded upon.

---

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 Ani was a centre for a multi-national and multi-religious population who left their artistic and architectural traces there. Ani bears exceptional testimony to Armenian cultural, artistic, architectural and urban design development and it is an extraordinary representation of Armenian religious architecture, reflecting its techniques, style and material characteristics. Ani is also a significant place for Turkish history. Grand Seljuk traditions met with structures in Ani for the first time and spread to Anatolia from there.

ICOMOS acknowledges the additional information provided by the State Party with the revised justification for criterion (iii) and considers that Early Medieval Ani had a strong Christian and Armenian identity, while the impact of its specific geopolitical location on the crossroads between different civilizations and historic processes can be traced in its multi-cultural layers – Zoroastrian, Byzantine and Seljuk – preserved at the site.

Although the revised justification provided by the State party is potentially appropriate, ICOMOS considers that this criterion can only be fully justified once the comparative analysis has been strengthened.

---

ICOMOS considers that this criterion will be fully justified for the whole series once the comparative analysis has been further developed.

---

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 with its military, religious and civil buildings, Ani offers a wide panorama of medieval architectural development thanks to the presence at the site of almost all the architectural types that emerged in the region in the course of the six centuries from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. It is also considered a rare settlement where nearly all of the plan types developed in Armenian Church architecture between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries AD can be seen together. The urban enclosure of Ani is also an important example of a medieval architectural ensemble with its monumentality, design and quality.

ICOMOS acknowledges the supplementary information provided by the State Party with the revised justification for criterion (iv) and considers that this criterion will be met once the comparative analysis has been strengthened.

---

ICOMOS considers this criterion will be fully justified for the whole series once the comparative analysis has been further developed.

---

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 Ani exhibits a unique example of human use of the natural topography. Triangular in plan, sitting atop a narrow plateau above the confluence of rivers, deep valleys formed by the rivers, the city walls and low bastions bordering the city, rock-cut dwellings, chapels and pigeon houses, are the crucial elements that contribute to the creation of the unique cultural landscape of Ani.

ICOMOS considers that the rock plateau surrounded by cliffs and rivers plays a significant role in the overall set-up of the medieval urban settlement, expressing an intentional utilisation of the natural environment. The rock-cut dwellings contribute to the diversity of the architectural typologies preserved in Ani. However, ICOMOS is of the view that the skilful use of the natural topography for the built environment of Ani as an outstanding representation of human interaction with the environment or an outstanding example of traditional land-use practice, has not been demonstrated. There is a great diversity of magnificent rock-cut complexes of the same period in the region, and it is not clear from the original nomination dossier if Ani is a strong representative of this tradition.

Supplementary information was provided by the State Party in February 2016 in response to ICOMOS's request for an augmented justification of criterion (v). However, ICOMOS notes that this information did not strengthen the justification for the use of this criterion.

---

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified for the whole series and is inadequate to substantiate the potential outstanding universal value of the nominated property.

---

ICOMOS considers that the serial approach has not been justified and the selection of sites is not appropriate at this stage.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) will be fully justified for the whole series once the comparative analysis has been further developed.

#### **4 Factors affecting the property**

Stone quarries on the Armenian side of the border, at the east and south side of the Arpaçay Creek, have been operated extensively in the past and the explosions have had a negative impact on the static condition of the monuments in the nominated property. Although the use of explosives has ended, ICOMOS notes that the mining activity by mechanical means is still continuing and the negative effects of the deposition of products of mining are visible on the opposite side of the river, just across from the south-eastern side of the city walls. ICOMOS acknowledges that these are not included in the buffer zone as they fall outside Turkish territory. However, ICOMOS considers that international cooperation for the protection of the monuments and essential views across the river should be encouraged to ensure protection of the property's landscape character in all directions.

Part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Site area which touches the west boundaries of the archaeological site (Bostanlar Creek area) and the area south of the archaeological site borders, above the Arpaçay Creek, are both defined as pasture area on the Conservation Plan and on the Ownership Plan, and used by the villagers as pasture. However, in these areas there are a considerable number of rock-cut structures that are threatened by their use to house animals. Despite the existence of a guard at the entrance gates of the property (Smbat II city walls), the animals continue to enter the site through the unsecured wire fence that has been breached in several places and through many points where the city walls have collapsed. ICOMOS notes that large areas of the site are not controlled and protected efficiently.

Ani is located in a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree seismic belt. The city has suffered from several earthquakes through its long history and these have caused structural damage.

---

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are stone quarrying, animal stabling in rock-cut structures, and earthquakes.

---

#### **5 Protection, conservation and management**

##### **Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone**

The nominated property covers an area of about 250.7 hectares classified as a 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Site area, the highest level of legal protection as regards conservation status, and has a buffer zone of 292.8 hectares designated a 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Site area.

ICOMOS notes that, as presented in the original nomination dossier, there is a gap on the lower southwest side of the property. Here the boundary of the nominated property following the slopes of Büyük Altıncı coincides with the buffer zone boundary. A similar problem occurs on the extreme southeast part of the buffer zone boundary, converging on Arpaçay Creek. The supplementary information provided by the State Party indicates that the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree archaeological conservation zone boundaries for the Archaeological Site of Ani have been extended to 432.45 hectares by the Regional Conservation Council's decision dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2015 and numbered 1105. ICOMOS commends the State Party for its efforts to ensure that the additional buffer zone is legally protected and for providing a map illustrating the extent of the new buffer zone.

However, ICOMOS notes that no written description or photographs of the extension to the proposed buffer zone are provided. Therefore, although the additional buffer zone may well be adequate, ICOMOS considers that a field mission will be required to review the proposed changes to the boundaries of the buffer zone, on site.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that a field mission will be required to review the proposed changes to the boundaries of the buffer zone.

---

##### **Ownership**

The entire 85 hectares area surrounded by city walls belongs to the State and is assigned to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Of the remaining land outside the city walls, 0.9 hectares belong to the State, 73.8 hectares are forage areas, Provincial Special Administration owns 7.4 hectares, 23 hectares are privately owned, and 6.1 hectares belong to the Village Legal Entity. The remaining 54.5 hectares are in the scope of out of land registration. In its response to ICOMOS's request for further clarification on the implication of the different land ownership regimes for conservation of the nominated property, including the existing arrangements for conservation of buildings such

as the Virgins' Monastery, which are located on the area designated 'out of land registration scope', the State Party replied that the matter requires detailed academic research.

### **Protection**

According to the nomination dossier, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which is the main responsible government body for conservation and management of the site, is organized at both central and local levels. The General Directorate of Culture Heritage and Museums centrally regulates the activities of its local branches and fulfils certain tasks regarding monument restoration and World Heritage issues. Local branches, which are relevant in this case, are the Kars Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage, the Erzurum Directorate of Surveying and Monuments, and the Directorate of the Kars Museum. All conservation and development activities take place according to the national Law on the Preservation of Cultural and Natural Property, with the approval of the Regional Conservation Council.

The nominated property has been registered on the national inventory since 1988 as a 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Site. Additionally, certain parts of Ocaklı village, adjacent to the site, were designated as a 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Site, while the rest of the village, together with the agricultural areas to the east and northeast and grazing areas to the west, were registered as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation Area in 2010. Since then, the development of settlement in the village and the effects of farming and animal husbandry have been controlled.

ICOMOS considers that despite the problems in preventing animals from grazing at the site, the protection measures at both the national level and in particular for the nominated property are adequate and will, if consistently reinforced and implemented, prevent negative impacts to the property.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the legal protection and the protective measures are in general adequate, but mechanisms need to be put in place to make the protection more effective.

---

### **Conservation**

The protection measures taken in recent years by the State Party have greatly protected the most important monuments of the nominated property. Despite the Turkish authorities' huge undertakings, ICOMOS observes that there are still serious conservation problems to be addressed. As ICOMOS noted during the technical evaluation mission, visiting some of the monuments is problematic due to the non-preparation (cleaning) of the surroundings (e.g. Gagic Church, Surp Arak'elots Church). Visiting some monuments is even dangerous, due to the instability of the walls and overlying constructions (e.g. city walls, Surp Arak'elots

Church, Palace Church) or because of the dangerous paths leading to them (e.g. Maiden's Monastery).

Two structures are currently undergoing restoration: the Surp Amenap'rkitch Church (1035 CE) and the Cathedral (989–1001 CE). This restoration is conducted within the framework of a partnership between the Ministry of Culture and the World Monuments Fund, with support from the US Department of State's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation. The cooperation was announced in 2009 and has been realized since 2012. The restoration of Surp Amenap'rkitch Church and Cathedral ("Ani Cathedral Project Preparation Work" and "Monitoring of Ani Cathedral Structural Movement Project") is the most advanced restoration project in the archaeological site, including emergency measures, evaluation of research and investigation results, intervention for the stabilization and rehabilitation of the static condition of the monument, and everything is conducted in an exemplary manner.

Despite these encouraging developments, there are still serious issues remaining to be addressed. At the Cathedral, there are problems connected with the completion of missing parts of the main supporting columns and of the destroyed fabric and the definition of the form of the missing dome. ICOMOS recommends that a restoration plan for the dome be developed with the cooperation of Armenian specialists, who have deep knowledge and have made comparative studies of relevant monuments, analysing in detail their systems of geometric design.

With regards to the small-scale monuments, for which officially the process of consolidation and conservation has been completed, ICOMOS notes that many important monuments still face maintenance problems due to substantial gaps in terms of restoring the original appearance/form as well as practical deficiencies. For instance, the use of cement mortar is evident in many places on the wall exterior surfaces of the Tigran Honents Church, restored to its current condition between 2008 and 2010.

Currently, preservation work at Ani targets the emergency condition of vulnerable structures and thus proceeds monument by monument. ICOMOS considers that the nominated property lacks a detailed study that presents the needs of each listed monument, by type of intervention (consolidation, partial reconstruction), intervention areas, priorities scaled on action plan (urgent, mid-term, long-term), the cost budget operations and possible sources to finance such conservation works.

The supplementary information provided by the State Party responded to this need by presenting a Strategic Conservation Master Plan for the nominated property. This plan divides the intervention into short-term (2016-2022), medium-term (2022-2027) and long-term (2018-onwards) goals. Based on a set of reasons for their



prioritization (importance and uniqueness of the monuments, their structural condition, location on the visitation route, nature of past restoration interventions, availability of approved projects, as defining elements of the city's integrity, visitor safety, and stabilization of existing structures), eight monuments are identified as a priority (the Ebu'l Manu'çehr Mosque, Tigran Honents Church, Surp Amenap'rkitch Church, St. Gregor (Polatoğlu) Church, Great Cathedral (Fethiye Mosque), City Walls and Bastions, Seljuk Palace). Specific actions and interventions for each monument are presented under "Conservation, Presentation and Social Policies & Principles". ICOMOS commends the State Party for its efforts in producing this Master Plan.

However, ICOMOS is of the view that the Master Plan needs improvement as it presents proposed actions without a proper assessment of the state of conservation of the monuments. For instance, with regards to Tigran Honents Church, which benefited from consolidation and restoration projects between 2008 and 2010, the only planned action in the conservation plan is "fulfilling floor covering researches for entrance, bema and niches". However, ICOMOS has noticed with regards to the intervention, which officially has otherwise been completed, that:

- The uncompleted restoration of the dome and fixing of a temporary protective shelter in the form of a truncated pyramid at the site constitutes a distinctive feature - a result that undermines the authenticity, integrity, and the final appearance of the monument.
- The roof of the existing part of the narthex has been restored with a different type of stone slab and is thus aesthetically unpleasing.
- The shelters, placed to protect the frescoes on the western façade of the church and on the south side of the narthex, are fixed in an inappropriate way and are practically ineffective: they need to be replaced with a single, larger, suitably-designed shelter construction.
- The use of cement mortar is evident on several parts and joints of the wall exterior surfaces.

Similar situations are noticeable on almost all the other monuments identified as being priority for intervention in the Strategic Conservation Master Plan. Therefore, ICOMOS recommends that the State Party improve the Master Plan by presenting a more comprehensive evaluation of the conservation needs of each listed monument. ICOMOS further considers that in order to ensure the effectiveness of the finalised Master Plan, a field mission would be required to evaluate the adequacy of the assessment of the state of conservation of individual monuments and related proposed interventions outlined in the Strategic Conservation Master Plan.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the overall conservation of the nominated property is currently the main urgent problem faced by the archaeological site as

a whole. The Strategic Conservation Master Plan which presents long-term conservation strategy supported by a detailed road map on how to turn around the fortunes of the nominated property through stabilising and conserving the historic buildings, still needs to be finalised.

## Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

ICOMOS notes that there is a complexity to the responsibilities referred to different decision-making bodies and monitoring concerning the effectiveness of the whole mechanism. ICOMOS considers that the planned results can be achieved in good time if the Coordination and Audit Board, formed in 2014 and authorized to approve and supervise the implementation of the management plan, is able to mobilize effectively all the actors involved in the implementation of the project and can ensure appropriate economic conditions.

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

The Management Plan for the nominated property was approved on 30 March 2015. During the planning process of the Plan two stakeholder workshops took place: the first workshop on capacity building (4-9 December 2009) and the second workshop on management plan development (29 May-2 June 2010). The action plan of the Management Plan illustrates the priorities, the responsible institutions, the related institutions, the terms and the financial resources.

According to the nomination dossier, Ani received a total of 25,000 visitors (including 13,000 foreigners). ICOMOS observes that the tourist infrastructure at the site is basic. There is a fixed area planned for a new visitor reception centre with a suggested parking area with a capacity for 30 automobiles and 13 buses. The signage is quite rudimentary and in a poor state. There are no outdoor sheltered areas for recreation or sight-seeing and, in the case of inclement weather, a visit becomes problematic to impossible. There are no toilets inside this extensive archaeological site, where the walking distances between the monuments are long.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party, as part of the already approved Landscaping Project for an area of 69.9 hectares within the nominated property, constructs the new visitor reception complex further on from the Ramparts of Smbat II so as to minimize the effect of the structure on the general view of the property; constructs a protective shelter for visitors to rest at the end of the long visitor route, in an appropriately selected place; and improves the explanatory signposts to the monuments at footpath crossroads so as to guide visitors.

## Involvement of the local communities

ICOMOS notes that there are a number of local people engaged in the nominated property as permanent personnel: two ticket officers, one shop assistant, seven cleaners and four security staff. In addition, 40 people are employed seasonally (2-3 months) on excavations. This brings them into contact with the archaeological site and its importance. However, ICOMOS observes that local residents have not been informed so far about the Management Plan, with the exception of the Ocaklı Village Governor.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, that are directly and closely associated with the property, in the management of Ani. ICOMOS further acknowledges and encourages the cooperation and involvement of Armenian specialists, who have a deep knowledge of Armenian architecture, in the restoration and conservation work at Ani.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the management system for the property is adequate and that the management plan provides a good basis for the implementation of specific action plans and protection strategies, but the coordination between different decision-making bodies needs strengthening.

---

## 6 Monitoring

The nomination dossier presented a number of aspects that would be considered key indicators for measuring the state of conservation of the property, that are to be monitored regularly by the local branches of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, such as the Kars Museum, the Kars Regional Conservation Council, as well as the related excavation team and technical control team within the General Directorate. ICOMOS considers that the set of indicators proposed by the State Party are mainly addressed to monitoring the state of conservation of the archaeological components, but these should be further elaborated once the scope and Outstanding Universal Value of the property have been defined and related to the attributes.

---

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that these indicators are not adequate to support the effective monitoring of the state of conservation of the nominated property.

---

## 7 Conclusions

The nominated property has the potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value, but the original nomination of the property as a cultural landscape was inadequately developed. Hence, it failed to demonstrate that Ani is an outstanding example of a cultural landscape. The supplementary information provided by the State Party addressed this issue by submitting a substantially

revised nomination dossier where Ani is nominated as an archaeological site.

Despite the commendable improvement in the revised nomination and other additional information provided by the State Party, ICOMOS considers that the justification for inscription of Ani as a multicultural and economic centre along the Silk Roads is not yet substantiated by sufficient and focused comparative analyses, based on the values of the nominated property, to demonstrate that Ani stands out in respect to other similar properties inscribed, or not, on the World Heritage List. ICOMOS further considers that the overall conservation of Ani is the main urgent concern but that the state of conservation and the overall integrity of the property would potentially improve with the improvement and finalisation of the Strategic Conservation Master Plan for the nominated property.

ICOMOS acknowledges that the State Party has responded energetically to the issues raised during the evaluation period. This is particularly demonstrated in the additional information provided in February 2016, which offered a much clearer understanding of the nominated property. However, ICOMOS considers that it is impossible to appropriately consider and evaluate these changes without the opportunity of a mission and the time available to the State Party and to ICOMOS during the formal evaluation process is not sufficient to reformulate a nomination on this scale. ICOMOS therefore concludes that a recommendation to defer the nomination is necessary in order to resolve these matters.

## 8 Recommendations

### Recommendations with respect to inscription

While ICOMOS acknowledges that the State Party has responded energetically to the issues raised during the evaluation period, ICOMOS considers that it is impossible to appropriately consider and evaluate these changes without the opportunity of a mission and the time available to the State Party and to ICOMOS during the formal evaluation process is not sufficient to reformulate a nomination on this scale.

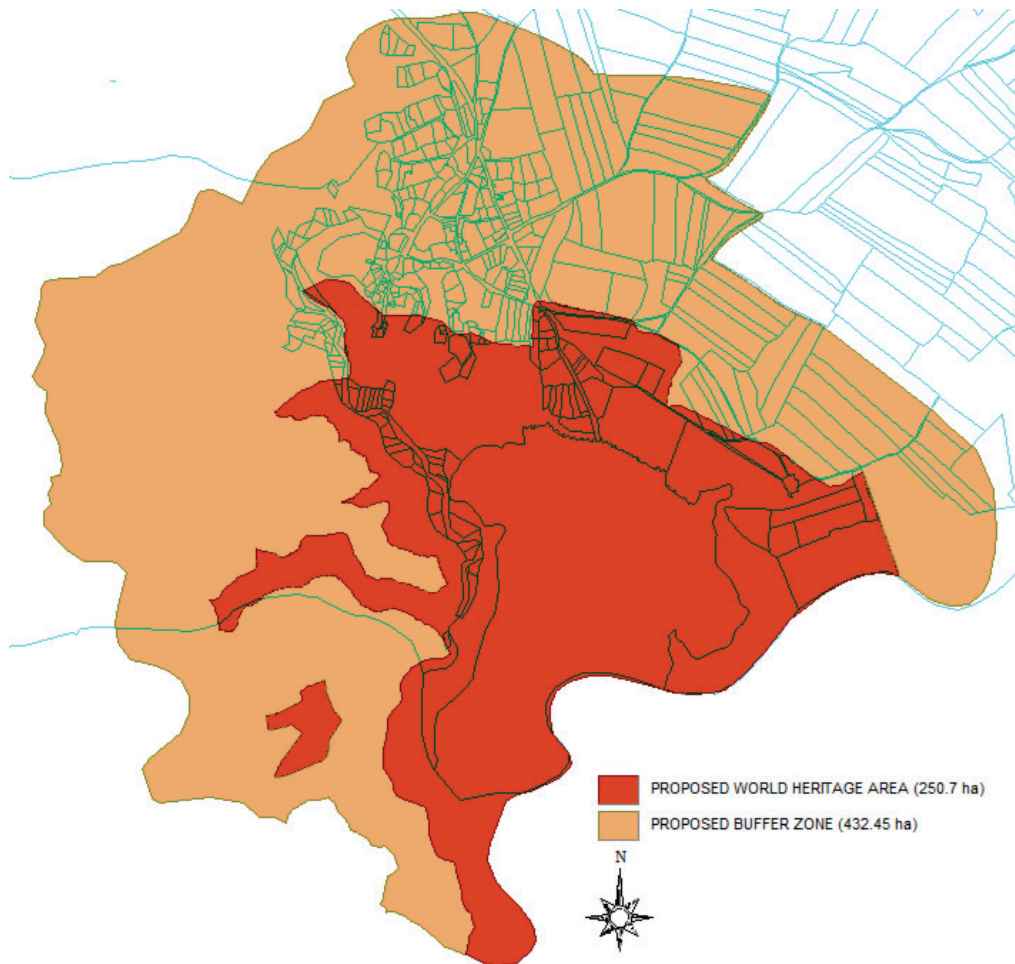
ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the nomination of Archaeological Site of Ani, Turkey, to the World Heritage List be **deferred** in order to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, if requested, to:

- Improve the description of the historic city of Ani in order to enhance the understanding of the scope and extent of the nominated property, including:
  - List of photographs to illustrate the 117 architectural structures indicated in the revised nomination dossier;
  - Map indicating the location of the more than 800 underground caves and tunnels that are

- mentioned in the revised nomination dossier;
  - Description of the areas and elements added in the proposed extended buffer of the nominated property.
- Further present an accurate and balanced representation of the complex history and development of the nominated property;
  - Further improve the comparative analysis to fully demonstrate how the nominated property compares to other typologically-relevant properties in a defined geo-cultural area;
  - Further improve the Strategic Conservation Master Plan in order to present a more comprehensive needs assessment of each listed monument, as well as the required interventions and priority areas, as the basis for conservation and monitoring of the property;
  - Find alternative solutions for the current inappropriate use of pasture areas and of the rock-cut caves in Bostanlar Creek and Arpaçay Creek within the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Archaeological Conservation area;
  - Improve the interpretation and presentation of the nominated property;
  - Ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the management of the nominated property, as well as international cooperation for conservation and restoration work;
  - Develop a monitoring plan for the seismic activity of the micro-zone of the nominated property;
  - Integrate a Heritage Impact Assessment approach into the management system, so as to ensure that any project regarding the property be assessed in their impacts over the attributes that would potentially convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

ICOMOS considers that such a revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site.

ICOMOS remains at the disposal of the State Party in the framework of upstream processes to advise on the above recommendations, if requested to do so.



Revised map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Virgins Monastery



Cathedral (Fethiye Mosque)



Tigran Honents Church, scenes related to life of St. Krikor Lusavoric



Tigran Honents Church



Tatarcik Creek, rock carving structures



Silk Road Bridge