IV Cultural properties

A Arab States
   New nominations

B Asia – Pacific
   New nominations

C Europe – North America
   New nominations
Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton) (China) No 1561

Official name as proposed by the State Party
Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton)

Location
Fujian Province China

Brief description
Quanzhou (known as Zayton in Arabic and western texts) was a prominent node in the maritime trading routes in the 10th to 14th centuries. This serial property consists of sixteen components, including the remains of historical dock structures, a stone bridge, pagodas, archaeological sites, important inscriptions, and statues, temples and shrines of diverse faiths (Buddhism, Confucianism, Manichaeanism, Islam). Together, these components are nominated to represent the geocultural influence and intercultural exchanges between China, southeast Asian ports and further afield. Quanzhou is therefore nominated as part of the complex phenomena of the Great Maritime Routes or Maritime Silk Routes.

Category of property
In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of sixteen sites.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List
20 January 2016

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination
None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre
26 January 2017

Background
This is a new nomination.

Consultations
ICOMOS consulted its International Scientific Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage, on Historic Towns and Villages, and several independent experts.

Technical Evaluation Mission
An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the nominated property from 24 to 29 September 2017.

Additional information received by ICOMOS
A letter was sent to the State Party on 5 October 2017 requesting additional information on the selection of components; thematic framework of maritime silk roads/routes; shipwreck protection; climate change impacts; concepts of restoration; buffer zone regulations; tourism management; and the status of the management plan.

An Interim Report was provided to the State Party in January 2018 summarising the issues identified by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel. Consultation meetings occurred between ICOMOS and representatives of the State Party to discuss these issues on 23 November 2017 and 8 February 2018.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 2 November 2017 and 24 February 2018 and has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this evaluation report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report
14 March 2018

2 The property

Description of the Serial Nomination
Note: Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, not all sites in this nominated property have been described in this report. In the nomination dossier and the additional information, each component site is described in text and images, including their individual histories, state of conservation, contribution to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the serial property, and key attributes.

This nomination consists of a series of sixteen components selected to demonstrate the historical importance of China's port city of Quanzhou (historically known as Zayton in Arabic and western texts) during the Song and Yuan dynasties. During this period, Quanzhou was a strategically important location within maritime trade routes that facilitated exchanges between Europe and Asia. These routes and their histories are referred to as the 'Maritime Silk Routes'.

The sixteen sites total 101.14 ha and each is surrounded by a buffer zone (which together total 581.82 ha).

The sixteen components are divided thematically into three groups: historic sites of maritime navigation and trade (8 components); multi-cultural sites (6 components); and historic sites of urban infrastructure (2 components).

Historic Sites of Maritime Navigation and Trade
Wanshou Pagoda Is a five-storey stone pagoda constructed between 1131-1162 (Song Dynasty), situated at the highest point of Quanzhou Bay. The State Party considers that it acted as a navigation marker for the port.
The component comprises an area of 16.7 ha, with a buffer zone of 86.03 ha. A ‘calabash'-shaped top was added in 1981.

Liushieng Pagoda is a five-storey stone pagoda overlooking Shihu Dock. Construction began in 1111 (Song Dynasty), and a restoration financed by a maritime businessman occurred in 1336-1369 (Yuan Dynasty), reflecting the prosperity of Quanzhou in the 14th century. The State Party believes that the pagoda acted as a navigation marker for the main channel. The pagoda was restored in 1982. The component is bounded on some sides by a modern container port and other industrial buildings. The component comprises an area of 2.34 ha, with a buffer zone of 29.29 ha.

Shihu Dock is located in the outer port of Quanzhou, and is believed to have been constructed between 713-741 (Tang Dynasty). The dock has an important strategic position, facing the mouth of the main channel. In 1068 (Song Dynasty) an over-water fortress was built here, along with a bridge, paths and stairs. The dock was restored several times during the Song Dynasty, and the Song Dynasty stone base remains. The component comprises an area of 3.13 ha, with a buffer zone of 11.23 ha.

The Meishan Dock and Wenxing Dock (Estuary Docks) were built in the Song Dynasty, and are located at the juncture of the river and the sea. These stone docks were important for commerce and the coastal defence of Fashi Port, one of the most prosperous of Quanzhou's ancient ports. There are temples near the docks for the worship of the sea god; and a small stone 'casket'-shaped pagoda stands on Wenxing Dock. Surveys in the 1950s and 1980s have found a shipbuilding site, stone anchors and several stone Islamic tombs in this area. There is one shipwreck located within the land area of this component. These docks were restored in 2002. The component comprises an area of 19.78 ha, with a buffer zone of 56.82 ha.

The Jiuri Mountain Wind-Praying Carvings Carvings are records of prayers and ceremonies for smooth sailing, and reflect the uncertainty of the winds. Ceremonies were organised to pray to King Tongyuan, god of the sea. There are 10 well-documented carvings, the earliest dated between 1174 and 1266, reflecting sailing traditions during different seasons of the year. In 1991, a UNESCO ‘Maritime Silk Roads' mission visited this site and left their own carved inscription. The component comprises an area of 11.4 ha, with a buffer zone of 45 ha.

Zhenwu Temple was for the worship and the offer of sacrifices to Zhenwu Dadi, a Taoist deity and god of the sea. Constructed between 967-990 (Song Dynasty), the preserved Song Dynasty features include the stone base, platform base, section of pavement, and carved lions on the staircases. The wooden features were restored in the Qing Dynasty. The component comprises an area of 3.84 ha, with a buffer zone of 72.76 ha.

Tianhou Temple is the oldest and highest-level existing temple for worship of the sea goddess Tianhou (or Goddess Mazu). The temple was constructed in 1196 (Song Dynasty). The Song Dynasty stone foundation remains, and the wooden structure preserves the original features of the Qing Dynasty. The main hall houses a statue of Tianhou, and a large-scale wall painting titled ‘Crowning the Heavenly Queen'. The Temple was restored in the 1990s with money from overseas Chinese philanthropists. The component comprises an area of 0.78 ha, with a buffer zone of 4.31 ha.

The Kiln Sites at Jinjiaoyi Hill of Cizao Kilns were built in the 10th century and abandoned in the 14th century; and were important sites of production of export porcelain, evidence of the prosperity of trade in these periods. Quanzhou has a high density of such kilns - more than 150 are known. Cizao kiln products have been found in archaeological excavations in south-east Asia, South Asia and East Africa, and in shipwrecks in the Xisha Islands and South China Sea. Excavations in 2002-2003 have identified four dragon kilns, a workshop, and many artefacts. The component comprises an area of 6.45 ha, with a buffer zone of 61.7 ha.

Multicultural Sites
Located in the centre of the ancient city, the Confucius Temple of Quanzhou is the largest existing complex featuring architectural elements of the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties in south-east China. Constructed from 976 to 984, the temple is notable for its age and grand size. The component comprises an area of 3.59 ha, with a buffer zone of 8.15 ha.

A Stone Statue of Lao Tze (the founder of Chinese Taoism) made in the Song Dynasty is located in a scenic reserve outside Quanzhou, and represents the cultural diversity of this area. This component comprises an area of 1.9 ha, with a buffer zone of 4.25 ha.

The Kaiyuan Temple is one of the oldest structures in Quanzhou, and is notable for its incorporation of Asian and western cultural influences, including Buddhist and Hindu elements. The temple was built in 686 (Tang Dynasty), and its layout has changed over time. There are many structures within the temple, including a scripture repository with 27,000 scriptures. This component comprises an area of 7.23 ha, with a buffer zone of 9.06 ha.

Two Islamic Tombs for the Third and Fourth Sahabahs in China date from the 7th century (Tang Dynasty) and feature Chinese and Arabic architectural styles. They were restored in the Yuan Dynasty, and again in 1962. Zheng He visited these tombs in 1417 (Ming Dynasty) before his voyage to the west. This component comprises an area of 4.08 ha, with a buffer zone of 17.58 ha.

Located in downtown Quanzhou, the Qingjing Mosque (Masjid a-Ashab) is one of China’s earliest mosques, and demonstrates the introduction of Islam to China via the maritime trading routes. Constructed in 1009 (Song Dynasty),
Dynasty), the mosque was restored by a famous pilgrim from Shiraz, Ahmad Bin Muhammad Quds in 1310. Inscriptions demonstrate that the mosque was built by business people involved in maritime trade. This component comprises an area of 2.15 ha, with a buffer zone of 5.23 ha.

The Statue of Mani in the Cao’an Temple is the world’s only remaining stone statue of Mani, the founder of Manichaeism or Zoroastrianism, which was introduced to China around the 6th-7th century. Originally built in a thatch building between 1131 and 1162 (Song Dynasty), the stone temple was built in the Yuan Dynasty. Some Yuan Dynasty features remain, and other elements were rebuilt in the modern period. This component comprises an area of 2.69 ha, with a buffer zone of 6.91 ha.

Related Historic Sites of Urban Infrastructure
The site of Deji Gate (south city gate) is an excavated archaeological site, located in downtown Quanzhou. Built in 1230 (Song Dynasty), with repairs in the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, this is the only site remaining of the seven gates of Quanzhou. Archaeological excavations in 2001-2002 revealed the extent of the site, and carvings of Hinduism, Nestorianism, Islam and Buddhism in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. This component comprises an area of 0.39 ha, with a buffer zone of 4.7 ha.

The Luoyang Bridge (Wan’an Bridge) was built between 1056 and 1059 (Yuan Dynasty), and was the first flat-beam cross-sea stone bridge in China. The bridge made land-sea transport possible and made Fuzhou and other cities within the reach of Quanzhou port. The Song Dynasty foundations are preserved, along with Ming Dynasty restorations, and further restorations in 1993-1996. There is also a memorial to Cai Xiang (prefecture chief that facilitated the bridge project), Zhaohui Temple, and a number of pagodas, steles and statues. The component comprises an area of 14.69 ha, with a large buffer zone of 209.8 ha.

History and development
The movement of peoples, cultures, philosophies, technologies, religions and commodities via maritime travel has a deep and continuing history in every region of the world. By the 2nd century BC, there were significant movements between Japan, Korea and China, and between China and the Malay Peninsula and Straits region, connecting with Indian traders and beyond. This network of maritime transportation and trade ran through the waters of the Western Pacific Ocean, the Strait of Malacca and the Indian Ocean using the monsoon weather patterns to guide navigation. This nomination is associated with these complex maritime transportation corridors and nodes.

The relatively recent term ‘maritime silk routes’ (or ‘great maritime routes’) is not straightforward, as it describes a number of historical periods, regional encounters and diverse outcomes. The overland and maritime ‘silk routes’ that connected goods and people in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Eastern Africa were also not single continuous avenues, but represent multiple smaller movements that, together, connected vast territories.

Quanzhou is located in at a junction between the ocean, rivers and inland. The serial property proposed by the State Party is oriented around the transcontinental maritime trade that flourished during China’s Song (960-1279) and Yuan Dynasties (1279-1368), creating intensive flows of knowledge, culture and commodities. China’s Quanzhou (known historically as Zayton) is therefore likened to Venice in terms of its central importance, influence and prosperity during the 10th to 14th centuries.

In China, maritime trading shifted to coastal areas in the southeast, aided by favourable policies for trade in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. During the Northern Song Dynasty, Quanzhou became one of the two most important strategic ports of China, together with Guangzhou, and experienced prosperity, trade and cultural exchange.

The State Party notes that Marco Polo, Odorico da Pordenone and Ibn Battuta, three famous travellers of the Middle Ages, described the prosperous city of Zayton in their writings. Chinese and Arab merchants settled in Quanzhou, facilitating exchanges between the Central Plain area and the southeast coastal area.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis
The comparative analysis has been presented by the State Party on two different levels. The first is to compare Quanzhou with relevant properties on the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists; and the second aims to justify the selection of the sixteen nominated components within the context of all available sites and features.

For the first part, the State Party has compared Quanzhou with other port cities on the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists. Detailed comparisons are made with four major World Heritage port cities associated with maritime routes between Europe and Asia: Goa (India), Venice and its Lagoon (Italy), Macao (China), and Malacca (Malaysia). The State Party points out that unlike Quanzhou, these were colonial ports and that they are not associated with trading in the 10th to 14th centuries. The State Party also provided comparative information for other port cities in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean, six of which are on the World Heritage List: Kilwa Kisiwani (Tanzania), Vigan (Philippines), Hoi An (Vietnam), Zanzibar (Tanzania), Lamu (Kenya), and Jeddah (Saudi Arabia); and four on Tentative Lists: Alexandria (Egypt), Butuan Archaeological Sites (Philippines), Qalhat (Oman) and Jakarta (Indonesia).

It also draws many comparisons worldwide with the individual components that comprise the nomination.
The State Party has compared Quanzhou with other Chinese port cities that form parts of the ‘Great Maritime Routes’, including: Guangzhou, Ningbo, Yangzhou, Beihai, Zhangzhou, Fuzhou, Nanjing and Penglai. Each of these has important cultural heritage features relating to maritime routes and trade. The State Party considers that Quanzhou preserves the largest number of historic buildings with different typologies linked to the maritime trade. The analysis also emphasizes the significance of the proposed property during the Song and Yuan dynasties.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis has provided a relevant overview of historical port cities, demonstrating the contrasts and continuities across the geo-cultural region, including inter-cultural exchanges and urban morphologies. However, in the additional information provided in February 2018, the State Party states that Quanzhou is not nominated as a port city, but as a combination of historic and cultural monuments and sites that have functional links oriented in a particular period of openness in Chinese history. ICOMOS considers this to be an important clarification, but that it has not been the subject of comparative analysis.

The State Party also makes reference to the role of Quanzhou in the larger system of maritime routes in order to justify the Outstanding Universal Value. However, the State Party does not include any cultural routes on the World Heritage List or Tentative Lists in the comparative analysis.

The State Party’s argument relies on a UNESCO study ‘Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue 1988-1997’. However, ICOMOS considers that the extensive work associated with the inscription of sections of the land-based Silk Routes in China and Central Asia is relevant, as it provides an important methodological model for the consideration of the maritime routes. ICOMOS also notes that new transnational thematic work on the concept of ‘Maritime Silk Routes’ has recently commenced, and that an expert meeting to consider the chronological and geographic scope of the Maritime Silk Routes (MSR) and the potential for serial World Heritage nominations was held in London in May 2017 (although no reports are yet available). Therefore, the essential strategic work needed for this vast transnational theme is just beginning. While ICOMOS understands that the State Party has decided not to propose this nomination as a cultural route, ICOMOS nevertheless considers that this is a gap in the comparative analysis.

ICOMOS is concerned that the current global thematic studies are not yet able to establish a clear overall thematic framework on the maritime silk routes that could guide the consideration of properties for the World Heritage List. The State Party acknowledges the importance of this work, and has indicated its willingness to work cooperatively to further develop the thematic framework for the ‘maritime silk routes’. However, the State Party does not consider it necessary to wait for this work to be completed in order to recognize the Outstanding Universal Value of the monuments and sites in Quanzhou, and has not indicated its future intentions for future nominations within the thematic framing of the maritime silk routes.

ICOMOS agrees that the maritime routes, connections and legacies are worthy of greater attention. While the State Party recalls that the ICOMOS Gap Report (2004) identifies maritime routes as a gap, this is not entirely relevant as the current nomination is a serial nomination within a single locality and is not nominated as a cultural route. The ability of the serial nomination to be considered in the manner in which it is proposed therefore heavily relies on the ability of the selected components to represent this early period of maritime trading and prominence.

In relation to the second dimension of the comparative analysis, the State Party has justified the selection of the components on the basis that they are outstanding examples of the cultural heritage of China, and that many of them are also rare masterpieces of art, history, religion and architecture. The State Party argues that many of them could be nominated for inscription in the World Heritage List in their own right. Furthermore, the State Party considers that the sixteen components are those that best meet the requirements for authenticity and integrity, have the needed levels of protection and management, have appropriate settings and are supported by local stakeholders. However, a systematic analysis within the context of the overall number and types of extant sites in Quanzhou from this period has not been provided. In the additional information, the State Party acknowledges that there are some other sites that were not selected, such as the Meiling Site of Dehua Kilns, Tukeng Village and the larger area in the Qingyuan Mountain area (where the Statue of Lao Tze is located). However, the State Party does not consider that the integrity of the nominated serial property is affected by the absence of further components.

The comparative analysis presented by the State Party compares Quanzhou as a major hub or ‘node’ within the complex histories of the ‘maritime silk routes’, and has presented a nomination of a group of monuments and sites from this period. The comparative analysis does not clearly justify the selection of the sixteen individual components within the context of the city of Quanzhou. ICOMOS notes that while some of the components seem potentially outstanding within China, others are not; and together they are too disparate to express the history of maritime trade that is central to this nomination. These issues are explained in more detail in the section on ‘Integrity’ (below).

In conclusion, ICOMOS does not consider that the sixteen sites collectively portray the historical narrative to which they have been associated in the nomination dossier or the additional information provided by the State Party.
While the geo-cultural comparisons presented by the State Party are sound and demonstrate that maritime trading routes are indeed a gap in the World Heritage List, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify the specific serial approach undertaken or the selection of the components of the property. ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

**Justification of Outstanding Universal Value**

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

- Quanzhou established itself as China’s most prosperous port city and trade nexus for maritime trade in the specific historical period of the 10th to 14th centuries;
- Quanzhou fostered an exceptional maritime cultural tradition, manifested by its inter-connected and efficient land-sea-river transportation infrastructure, and its traditional techniques of shipbuilding and craftsmanship of stone architecture;
- The maritime trade routes can be seen as equivalent or parallel to the land silk routes across Eurasia from the 13th-14th centuries;
- Together the sixteen components are complemented by a wealth of moveable heritage that provides a testimony to the peaceful co-existence and fusion of diverse cultures during this period;
- The nominated components exhibit a unique ocean-river-land transportation system that supported the flourishing of trans-regional trade and inter-cultural exchanges through the great port known historically as Zayton;
- The nominated property can demonstrate the growth of industries associated with the trade in a wide range of material products (such as porcelain, tea and silk);
- Multicultural existence in Quanzhou is demonstrated by the diverse religious components, as well as local belief systems and practices concerning safety at sea.

In the Additional Information provided by the State Party in February 2018, several additional bases for the Outstanding Universal Value were given, including its ability to portray three types of social and cultural traditions that are demonstrative of interchanges through trade:

- an outstanding tradition of stone architecture and stonework craftsmanship;
- a tradition of maritime culture based on the richness of culture and the arts and respect for religious beliefs in ancient China;
- a tradition of mutual respect, inclusion, peaceful co-existence and common prosperity and diverse cultures.

ICOMOS considers that the last two of these new Justifications were already presented in the nomination dossier, although at a high level of generality; and that the first seems inconsistent with the case made in the initial nomination dossier which focused on the maritime silk routes. These additional elaborations were submitted late in the evaluation cycle without the further comparative analysis that they suggest. ICOMOS therefore considers that these are therefore unable to be supported within the context of the evaluation of this nomination.

The serial approach is justified by the State Party in order to represent the most significant characteristics of three identified dimensions of Quanzhou’s maritime trading prominence in the 10th to 14th centuries, namely: the port and the city’s infrastructure (docks, city gate, landmarks); the religious diversity of Quanzhou, including evidence of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Manichaeism, Nestorianism, Hinduism, and local belief systems; and the industrial production of trade products (porcelain kilns). ICOMOS considers that the establishment of three different typological groupings, and three different criteria have impacted negatively on the clarity of the nomination, and that the serial approach has not been convincingly applied.

ICOMOS notes that, for the most part, the idea of ‘marine silk routes’ underpins the justification for Outstanding Universal Value, but that this concept is not yet well established. The network of trade routes across the East and South China Seas and across the Indian Ocean region changed significantly over time as certain polities embarked on trade and military campaigns, and port cities waxed and waned in their importance. The city formed part of a cluster of port cities in China and was part of a wider network of port cities in the Indian Ocean Region. It is important to read the significance of Zayton within this larger picture.

The strength of this justification is dependent on the selection of the components, and how they can be seen to comprise an exceptional testimony to these histories, and in this location. In the same way that the overland silk routes have been unable to be represented by single locations (or even single countries or regions), ICOMOS questions the basis of the serial approach adopted for this nomination.

**Integrity and authenticity**

**Integrity**

The rationale of this nomination rests on the serial approach, and the justification of the 16 components. As noted above, the State Party describes these according to three themes, and focuses on the period from the 10th to 14th centuries. The integrity of the serial nomination is therefore presented on two levels. The first argues that the inclusion of sixteen sites ensures that the ability of the serial property to convey its Outstanding Universal Value; and the second discusses the various dimensions of the integrity of the individual sites included in the nomination.

The State Party asserts that the serial nomination provides a full picture and typical representation of various site types of the cultural heritage associated with
the important historical period for the City of Quanzhou (10th to 14th centuries) when it functioned as a prosperous international hub of maritime trade between east Asia, Europe and the Arab region. As a result, the State Party considers that all the elements necessary to express the Outstanding Universal Value have been included; and that pressures of urban development and tourism are well-controlled.

However, as noted above, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify the selection of the components in relation to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. Many of the components are weakly associated with the maritime trading routes that are central to this nomination. ICOMOS also notes that the components of the property are spread across a relatively extensive area, and that the historical connections between them are not intact or well-understood. The visual integrity of some components has been impacted by developments; and many have been reconstructed or substantially restored since the period when Quanzhou played its pivotal role in the maritime trading networks.

On the second measure, the material presented by the State Party is comprehensive, and describes the state of conservation, conservation history and intactness of each component. In relation to the requirements of integrity for a serial nomination, ICOMOS notes several issues:

- There is minimal evidence provided that Wanshou and Liusheng Pagodas were navigational aids; and the setting of Liusheng Pagoda is affected by the surrounding modern container port and other industrial buildings.
- Shihu Dock and the Estuary Docks are of interest to the articulation of Quanzhou as a port, however, the estuary docks are a combination of older dock foundations with newer upper parts that have been restored in recent times and are affected by modern developments that disrupt their context; and Shihu Dock has been impacted by the nearby construction of a modern harbour.
- The Stone Statue of Lao Tze is an interesting feature but has a relatively weak relationship with the proposed importance of Quanzhou and the maritime trading routes.
- The landscape context of the Kiln Sites of Jinjiaoyi Hill of Cizao is somewhat overwhelmed by the shelter covering the site and other new constructions. There is also the construction of a new highway near the buffer zone which has had an impact on the setting.
- The Kaiyuan Temple is significant within China, although its associations with the maritime trading routes is not well-established.
- The Islamic Tombs are important within the Chinese context, although not rare; and the setting of the Qingjing Mosque is affected by urban development pressures.
- The site of the Deji Gate is an important local archaeological site, although the specific links with the maritime history of Quanzhou are not strong.

ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the whole series is not justified due to the unresolved questions concerning the selection of the components. The integrity of the individual components varies, and some are vulnerable to development pressures.

Authentication

The authenticity of the serial nomination is based on the ability of the nominated components to express their historical processes and associations with the period of Quanzhou’s maritime trading ascendancy (10th-14th centuries). The authenticity of each component is also described by the State Party, focused on the material elements that can be sourced to the Song Dynasty. Past restorations are identified.

- Zhenwu Temple features some stone elements from the Song Dynasty, but the wooden elements date to the Qing Dynasty;
- The Confucius Temple features elements from the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties;
- Tianhou Temple has stone architectural elements dated to the Song Dynasty, but the wooden elements are dated to the Ming and Qing Dynasties.
- The tomb pavilion of the Islamic Tombs was restored in 1962, and there were extensive conservation works to the tombs in the 1990s. Conservation work to the Qingjing Mosque also occurred in 2002.
- The Statue of Manu in the Cao’an Temple was built in the 12th century, but was rebuilt in 1339 in stone, with other elements were rebuilt in the modern period.
- Major conservation work was undertaken at Luoyang Bridge in 1993;
- The Kaiyuan Temple dates back to the Tang Dynasty (686) and has been restored several times.

ICOMOS notes that many components have been extensively restored or reconstructed. The State Party explains that these restorations have been done according to the original, but limited evidence has been provided. In some cases, the State Party acknowledges the need to rectify some losses of authenticity through unsympathetic conservation treatments.

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the individual components is variable, especially given that the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the serial property is situated in relation to the Song and Yuan Dynasties.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

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

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 the selected components demonstrate the
importance and prosperity of the transcontinental maritime trading routes during the 10th to the 14th centuries. Quanzhou was the largest maritime trading port in Asia during this period when the so-called ‘Great Maritime Routes’ reached their full extent, enabling substantial cultural exchanges. These exchanges are demonstrated by the selected components through their diverse religious beliefs and practices, urban cultures, architectural design and art. In additional information, the State Party claims that the evidence for this criterion is based on the writings of Marco Polo, Odorico da Pordenone and Ibn Battuta, and the remains of the docks, shipwrecks and porcelain. The State Party also argues that the components can demonstrate the easternmost dissemination of several world religions during this period.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is relevant to the important history of cultural interchange that occurred through transcontinental maritime trading in the 10th-14th centuries. However, not all components of this nomination are relevant to this criterion, and ICOMOS considers that the components weakly demonstrate the arguments put forward. Further transnational thematic research about the histories of the maritime trading networks could assist in making a strengthened argument for this criterion, but as it stands, it is not demonstrated.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been demonstrated.

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

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Quanzhou (Zayton) became a prosperous port of inter-cultural exchange and trade in the period from the 10th-14th centuries, part of the ‘Great Maritime Routes’ (also referred to as the ‘maritime silk routes’). The sixteen nominated components demonstrate the prosperity and inter-cultural encounters, based on the maritime routes and port functions of the city. In additional information, the State Party argues that the components demonstrate a fusion of diverse cultures, pointing to the different religions represented by the nominated components.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is potentially appropriate for a port city or cultural route associated with the maritime trading networks of the 10th to 14th centuries, but that it is not demonstrated at this stage due to the inability of the selected components to sufficiently convey the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. ICOMOS also considers that there is insufficient evidence presented about the ‘fusion’ of different cultures during this period.

The State Party also suggests that the nominated property is demonstrative of the outstanding significance of the Min-nan Culture, which is a mixture of the agricultural civilisation of China’s Central Plain and the maritime civilisation, featured by its strong openness and inclusiveness. Min-nan Culture developed around China’s southeast coastal area, and Quanzhou is considered to be its birthplace and centre. ICOMOS considers that this aspect is not well integrated into the arguments for Outstanding Universal Value, and that too little information is presented to sustain this as a possible justification for criterion (iii). More work is needed to integrate an understanding of the relevance of Min-nan culture with the justifications based on the history of maritime trade, and to demonstrate the relevance of this aspect for the selected components.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been demonstrated.

Criterion (vi): to 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 is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the nominated components are directly associated with the significant events of Zheng He’s voyages to the west, and the spread of Islam, Manichaecism, Hinduism and Nestorianism in the southeast coastal region of China. The State Party also notes the direct associations with important literary works, such as The Travels of Marco Polo, The Travels of Friar Odoric, Ibn Battuta’s Rihla, Records of Foreign Countries, and A Synoptical Account of the Islands and Their Barbarians.

In the additional information provided, the State Party notes that Marco Polo is named in the justification for criterion (vi) of Venice and its Lagoon (Italy). On this basis, the State Party has asserted that this criterion can be justified due to the associations of Quanzhou with Marco Polo, Zheng He, and others.

ICOMOS considers that the multicultural character of this period of Quanzhou’s history is potentially demonstrated by the nominated components associated with various religions. While this is a notable aspect of Quanzhou’s history and development, there is insufficient comparative evidence to establish that this is outstanding within its geo-cultural context.

ICOMOS further considers that while Quanzhou is mentioned in various literary texts in relation to its maritime trading history, the associations drawn by the State Party to the voyages of Zheng He are not supported. There is no correlation between the period of Quanzhou’s peak (10th-14th centuries) and the later voyages of Zheng He. ICOMOS also notes that there are contested interpretations about the regional historical impacts of Zheng He’s voyages because they involved military campaigns and battles in Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. ICOMOS therefore considers the linking of this later period of history, and the voyages of Zheng He in this nomination to be controversial; and that neither the associations with Zheng He or Marco Polo are directly relevant to this serial nomination.

In the additional information received in February 2018, the State Party added new strands to its justification of
this criterion. The first is that the use and working of stone in the components is evidence of traditions that resulted in rare masterpieces of craftsmanship. The second makes reference to the sea-river-inland connectivity that underpinned Quanzhou’s prominence and prosperity. ICOMOS considers that these arguments are both underdeveloped, and are not supported with sufficient evidence. Each of these requires thorough further attention to their comparative context.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been demonstrated.

ICOMOS considers that the selection of the components of the nominated serial property has not been justified, that it does not meet the requirements of integrity and authenticity, and does not meet any of the cultural criteria for inclusion in the World Heritage List. Furthermore, ICOMOS considers that the strategy of nominating sixteen sites in three different categories has made it difficult to effectively apply three criteria across the entirety of the property.

4 Factors affecting the property

The State Party considers that the major threats to the nominated components are development pressures, tourism pressures, environmental issues and natural disasters.

Development pressures are associated with rapid social and economic transformations since the 1980s, and population increases. A number of components are located within the central urban area and are affected by urban development. Luoyang Bridge, the Islamic Tombs, Estuary Docks and Zhenwu Temple are located within the suburban areas affected by nearby construction activities. The Klin Sites are located in an outer suburb, with nearby workshops; and the Stone Statue of Lao Tze and Jiuri Mountain Wind-Praying Carvings are located within a relatively undeveloped scenic area. Development pressures are managed by the Conservation and Management plans and regulations of the Quanzhou Municipal Government.

There are no inhabitants in any of the nominated components, however, there are inhabitants living within some of the construction control belts in the buffer zones.

Environmental impacts from factories located near the Kaiyuan Temple and Tianhou Temple have been removed. Recorded earthquakes have been relatively minor, and the most significant natural disasters in this region are typhoons and rain storms. The Shihu Dock and the Estuary Docks are potentially vulnerable to climate change impacts. The nominated components are given some protection by recently constructed levees, and flood control measures are implemented by the Quanzhou Municipal Government, as well as fire control to wooden structures, and lightning protection for the pagodas. Wooden structures are monitored for termites. The Quanzhou Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage has designed monitoring systems to address the identified pressures, including disaster prevention and early warning systems. The State Party has provided additional information about the removal of modern but poor quality constructions within the boundaries of some nominated components in order to improve their setting.

Quanzhou has experienced increasing visitor numbers. In 2014, the number of visitors was 44.283 million. The State Party has clarified that tourism is currently oriented around other destinations in the Quanzhou area, and that visitor levels to the nominated components is not high. Nevertheless, some properties are considered to experience visitor pressure.

The Quanzhou Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage and the Quanzhou Tourism Bureau have carried out research to determine the tourism carrying capacity of the nominated components, and have established monitoring indicators. These are described in the Conservation and Management Plan.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property vary due the diversity of the nominated components and their urban, suburban and scenic area settings. In general, the most significant pressures are those associated with urban development; and, future tourism is likely to increase the pressures on some of the nominated components.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

Due to the diverse nature of the components, and their varied settings, the boundaries of each of the nominated property components are based on different needs, but most are conventionally delineated and align with the systems of legal protection at the Provincial and local levels of government. At this stage, ICOMOS has not identified any specific issues, although the relationship between the boundaries and the proposed Outstanding Universal Value could be more explicitly provided.

Each nominated component is surrounded by a buffer zone. The boundaries for the buffer zones are based on the immediate urban context in some cases, and include the larger visual setting in others. The State Party has identified up to four categories of buffer zone for some of the components (eg. Estuary Docks, Zhenwu Temple, Luoyang Bridge); while the others have one, two or three categories of buffer zone. The Category 1 Buffer Zones are generally applied to the areas nearest to the nominated protected area. Different rules are applied to each category. ICOMOS finds that the rationale for this complex set of arrangements is unclear, and has concerns about the
practicability and coordination that would be involved in implementing this scheme.

Associated with the buffer zone protection, the State Party has established ‘construction control zones’ for each of the nominated components. This relates to the frameworks of legal protection; and much of the State Party’s description of various potential pressures, and the number of inhabitants focuses on these areas.

The nominated components and their buffer zones are protected through the provisions of the national Law on the Protection of Cultural Relics, and associated Provincial and local laws, and the Management Plan.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property are adequate, but that they could be better described in relation to their ability to enclose and protect the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the serial property. The system of establishing various categories within the buffer zones is complex, and ICOMOS has concerns about their implementation and coordination. ICOMOS notes that some components are vulnerable due to urban development and port improvements.

Ownership
The land within each nominated component is owned by the state. The land management authority is the Quanzhou Bureau for Land and Resources.

Protection
The 16 nominated components are protected at the national level through the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics, Administrative Measures for the Protection of World Cultural Heritages, Administrative Measures for Monitoring and Inspection of Chinese World Cultural Heritages and the conservation plans established for the nominated components. At the Provincial level, the Fujian Provincial Cultural Heritage Protection and Management Regulations and the Measures on Protection and Management of the Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton) of Fujian Province provide day-to-day protection and management of the components.

Three components are additionally designated as National Scenic and Historic Areas, protected by national and Province Regulations (Stone Statue of Lao Tze, Jiuri Mountain Wind-Praying Carvings and Islamic Tombs); twelve components are located in the historical downtown conservation areas, protected by the Regulations on the Conservation of Historic and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages (2008).

The State Party has provided additional information about the surveys for underwater cultural heritage. Some shipwrecks have been salvaged, and the materials incorporated into museums. The Director of the Institute of Underwater Archaeology has indicated that there is an intention to undertake an underwater cultural heritage survey in Quanzhou in 2018.

The State Party has provided a list of relevant scientific research, and acknowledges the need to improve the focus of scientific programs, as well as the coordination of data collection and cooperation between different agencies.

For several components, ICOMOS considers that the context and state of conservation need to be updated, including: the recent restoration works to the Shihu Dock and Luoyang Bridge; the construction of a new highway near the buffer zone for the Kiln sites which has had an impact on the setting; and, the current setting of the remains of the Wenxing dock structure (Estuary Docks) which has changed considerably since the pictures provided. The specific conservation histories are not explained in sufficient detail for a number of components, including: Tianhou Temple, Confucius Temple, and the Kaiyuan Temple.

As noted above, most of the components have been subject to processes of restoration and reconstruction, sometimes over several phases in the past three centuries or more. At some sites, historical processes of restoration are recorded on steles. While variable across the series, ICOMOS considers that the modern conservation work is of a high standard. ICOMOS considers that continuing work is needed to deepen the documentation of intangible aspects of the nominated components.

While there are some site-specific issues requiring better documentation, ICOMOS considers that the nominated components exhibit a good/adequate state of conservation.
Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The nominated components are managed through a number of government and community structures that operate at the national, provincial and local levels. Provincial governments have the administrative responsibility for the development of conservation and management plans for State Priority Protected Sites in China. These have been prepared for the Kaiyuan Temple and Confucian Temple but are still under preparation for the remaining components. The ‘General Plan for Qingyuan Hill National Scenic Historic Area’ applies to a larger area than the nominated components of the Stone Statue of Lao Tze, the Jiuri Mountain Wind-Praying Carvings, and the Islamic tombs.

The structures for management vary, although the Quanzhou Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage is responsible for their conservation and long-term management; and most are managed and monitored by the relevant City/district administration and their enforcement squads. Several sites are associated with museums, and some other specific arrangements include:

- Zhenwu Temple is managed by the Zhenwu Temple Cultural Relics Management Committee;
- The Statue of Lao Tze is managed by the Quanzhou Qingyuan Hills Scenic Area Administrative Committee;
- Kaiyuan Temple and the Qingjing Mosque are managed by the Quanzhou Municipal Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs;
- The Jiuri Mountain Wind-Praying Carvings are maintained by the Jiuri Mountain Rock Carving Conservation Institute;
- The Statue of Mani in the Cao’an Temple is managed and maintained by the Cultural Relics Management Bureau of Cao’an Temple.

The coordination of the management across these different arrangements is provided by the Quanzhou Maritime Silk Roads Office and the Quanzhou Municipal Bureau of Cultural Heritage. The Conservation and Management Plan identifies the establishment of a platform for coordination as a future requirement.

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

The ‘Conservation and Management Plan for the Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton) 2016-2030’ was officially approved and issued by the Fujian Province on 22 January 2016. This is a legal document that gives effect to the management framework. It provides some overarching goals and principles and identifies measures for each nominated component. There are also principles and measures for conservation, research, coordination of stakeholders, interpretation and tourism, and monitoring.

The Management Plan outlines the arrangements for funding the implementation of the measures. Funds provided by all levels of government are allocated on the basis of the approved conservation and maintenance plans. The administrative arrangements are overseen by the People’s Government of Quanzhou. The State Party advises that there are currently 374 employees involved in the administration, protection and daily management of these sites, including professional staff. The Management Plan outlines specific arrangements for capacity building and training.

In addition, there are several plans established by the Government of Quanzhou and/or the Fujian Province that are relevant to the nominated property and the control of developments in the buffer zones: Master Plan of Quanzhou (1995-2020); Land Use Plan of Quanzhou (2006-2020); and Master Plan of Tourism of Quanzhou (1997-2020). There are also plans for several historic districts in Quanzhou.

As noted above, tourism levels to Quanzhou are relatively high (more than 44 million visitors per year), but this figure applies to the whole city and visitor levels at the nominated components are lower: in 2016, the total number of visitors to all 16 nominated components was 10,414,600. The State Party considers that there are currently no adverse impacts of tourism at any of the nominated components but acknowledges that visitor numbers could put pressure on the environment and heritage values of the sites and surroundings in the future.

The State Party has calculated the tourism carrying capacity for each component. According to the legal framework, the Quanzhou Municipal Government is responsible for implementing the principles and guidelines for cultural heritage management, including tourist activities. If visitor pressures increase in the future, there are plans to introduce ‘real-time restrictions’ on visitor levels. This is dependent on the monitoring systems in place for each component.

A tourism service and presentation system has been developed for the nominated property, and priorities for improvement have been identified in the Management Plan. This involves the establishment of visitor centres, museums and exhibition halls, interpretation, and the use of video, internet and virtual technologies. Where exhibition halls are not provided, open-air interpretation signage is in place. The Kiln Sites component features a porcelain-making studio for demonstrating porcelain making skills to residents, students and visitors. In general, the State Party has identified the need for presentation to focus more specifically on the heritage of the maritime silk routes.
Involvement of the local communities

Villages, urban areas and other settlements are found in the buffer zones of some of the nominated components. The State Party has provided additional information regarding the consultations undertaken with residents and villagers about the implications of heritage designations and World Heritage nomination, including the regulations concerning height controls and other restrictions on new constructions.

The stakeholders identified by the State Party are diverse, including various government agencies, religious communities and local residents. These have different levels of knowledge about the significance and conservation needs of the significance of the selected components.

ICOMOS is unaware of any significant issues for community involvement, although the management system could be further strengthened to address the needs and interests of the identified stakeholders.

ICOMOS considers that the management system for the serial property is appropriate. The coordination of management is important for the nominated property given the number of site-specific management arrangements and the number of local governments involved. ICOMOS considers that a stronger engagement with maritime and port organisations within the management system would be desirable.

6 Monitoring

A monitoring system is set out in the nomination dossier covering indicators, collection methods, frequency and responsible institutions. The State Party has usefully established tables for establishing the baseline state of conservation for each of the components. For some indicators, electronic or other automated approaches to the collection of some forms of data, but others are the subject of periodic checking by relevant professional and/or management personnel.

Due to the diverse pressures and contexts of the sixteen components, the State Party has provided detailed information about monitoring for specific issues and pressures. There are various electronic monitoring systems in place at a number of the sites, in particular to monitor visitor levels. Meteorological monitoring is also included, and all significant timber constructions are regularly monitored for termites, water damage and mildew.

The monitoring system has a three-tier implementation, with the national State Administration of Cultural Heritage responsible for formulating overall approaches, technical criteria and policies; the Fujian Province Bureau of Cultural Heritage responsible for integrating the monitoring in to the management systems, and organising the collection of monitoring data; and the Quanzhou Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage and Quanzhou Maritime Silk Routes Office responsible for day-to-day coordination.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring system is appropriate for the nominated serial property.

7 Conclusions

The State Party believes that the serial nomination provides a full picture and typical representation of various site types of the cultural heritage associated with the important historical period for the City of Quanzhou (10th to 14th centuries) when it functioned as a prosperous international hub of maritime trade. The case made by the State Party for the World Heritage listing of this serial property centres around the idea of maritime trade routes that are similar in scope and significance to the overland Silk Routes.

In support of this nomination, the State Party has referred to a UNESCO study on this subject from the 1990s but has not incorporated the much more substantial and recent thematic frameworks prepared for the overland silk routes; or the newly initiated transnational dialogue on maritime silk routes. The State Party considers that this nomination does not rely on this new thematic work, citing several examples of properties that were individually inscribed before the thematic work on the overland silk routes was completed (such as Bukhara in Uzbekistan or the Mogao Caves in China). However, ICOMOS considers that these examples point to the need for the nominated property itself to have sufficient capacity to express its proposed Outstanding Universal Value; and that this has not been established for the present nomination.

ICOMOS agrees that the histories of Eurasian trade and cultural exchange have privileged the overland, rather than the maritime connections and legacies. Much of the global history of maritime connectivity has focused on the ‘age of discovery’ or on periods when maritime trading routes were entangled with the globalising effects of colonisation. There is therefore a potential to shine a light on what was happening in other geo-cultural regions and periods, but this is a complex theme and the needed work is just beginning.

ICOMOS considers that without further progress on the international thematic work, there are unresolved questions about the historical significance of Quanzhou and the degree to which the 16 components of this nomination can express its importance as a ‘node’ in the maritime silk routes.

ICOMOS recalls that the World Heritage category of cultural routes was developed and has been applied over large areas in order to demonstrate significant histories of movements of peoples, cultures, ideas and commodities over large territories. This approach generally involves the selection of a series of components which are individually
unable to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value and are often typical or representative of their time and place. ICOMOS considers that this could possibly be a more effective approach for Quanzhou, but that this would need to be entirely reconceptualised, researched and joined with sites elsewhere in China or in other countries.

The State Party has stated that it has not nominated Quanzhou as a cultural route, but as a group of monuments and sites that demonstrate the history of the city as an important node of trading networks. According to the State Party, the components are presented as linked in their ability to express a specific historical period. ICOMOS does not consider that the potential Outstanding Universal Value is clear if linked only to its historical period, and, as explained above, the components do not convincingly establish the specific significance of Quanzhou within the larger maritime networks.

In its dialogue with ICOMOS, the State Party has also stated that it has not nominated Quanzhou as a port city. However, the comparative analysis compares Quanzhou with other port cities, so the comparative context is not clear if this framing is removed. There are many port cities in east and southeast Asia of historic significance, and many shipwrecks built in many locations. Likewise, Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta spoke of many places in their writings.

As a node within a maritime trading network in a specific historical period, ICOMOS considers that the nomination has not met the needed requirements for inclusion in the World Heritage List, due to the varied evidence carried by the sixteen components. Many of the components are not individually exceptional within the Chinese context, or within the relevant geo-cultural setting. There are almost no components of the urban fabric of the city itself presented; and little of the port itself remains. The sites of various religions are of national significance, but do not sustain the proposed Outstanding Universal Value.

For these reasons, ICOMOS concludes that while the global comparative analysis demonstrates that there is room on the World Heritage List for properties that can represent the histories of maritime trading routes, this does not justify the consideration for the inscription of the proposed serial property. ICOMOS has therefore found that the 16 selected components cannot demonstrate the proposed Outstanding Universal Value.

Because the particular history of Quanzhou from the 10th to 14th is potentially significant in global and geo-cultural terms, ICOMOS considers that the State Party needs to thoroughly review and reconceptualise its nomination to adequately demonstrate this history. At the moment, this nomination presents as an interesting story, but without the needed sites that can tell it. ICOMOS has concluded that the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated serial property is not demonstrated; that none of the cultural criteria have been demonstrated; and that the requirements of authenticity and integrity are not met. The additional information provided in February 2018 adds some new arguments, but these are not supported by sufficient analysis and evidence.

Because of the work that has just commenced to thematically frame the ‘maritime silk routes’, ICOMOS considers that this nomination is currently premature. For this reason, ICOMOS welcomes the commitment of the State Party to actively contribute to the current transnational dialogue on this theme.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription
ICOMOS recommends that the Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton), China, should not be inscribed on the World Heritage List.
Map showing the location of the nominated property