
Valongo Wharf (Brazil) No 1548

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site

Location

Rio de Janeiro
Federal Republic of Brazil

Brief description

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is located on Jornal do Comércio Square in central Rio de Janeiro. The site demarcates the location of the ancient wharf built for the landing of enslaved Africans from 1811 onwards, which was the point of arrival for about a quarter of all enslaved Africans reaching the South American continent. In physical terms the site is composed of several archaeological layers the lowest of which illustrates floor pavings in *pé de moleque* style attributed to the original Valongo Wharf. Later, more dominant layers relate to the Empress' Wharf, constructed in 1843 for the reception of the Neapolitan princess Tereza Cristina de Bourbon.

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*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

31 January 2014

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

1 February 2016

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management and several independent experts.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 19 to 23 September 2016.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

On 19 December 2016 ICOMOS sent its interim report to the State Party which contained several questions, including a request to focus the justification of Outstanding Universal Values towards those aspects which can be represented by the tangible evidence on site, to further augment the Comparative Analysis with a specific focus on Valongo Wharf as a landing point (debarkation) of African enslaved people into the Americas and to consider the integrity of the site, in particular its relation to the seafront and propose measures to strengthen this relationship. ICOMOS also requested the protection status to be strengthened to more explicitly cover underground archaeological remains within the buffer zone.

The State Party submitted a revised nomination dossier as well as further additional materials in audio-video format on 28 February 2017. The additional material received is integrated in the respective sections below.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2017

2 The property

Description

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is located in central Rio de Janeiro at a public square named Jornal do Comércio. The property encompasses the complete square except for the road corridors. The location is the former harbour region of Rio de Janeiro in which from 1811 onwards the old stone wharf was built. The stone wharf was built over by the Empress' Wharf, a landing jetty constructed in 1843 for the wife of Emperor Don Pedro II, which now physically dominates the archaeological records. Starting from 1904 a new harbour was built based on land reclamation processes and land infills on top of both earlier wharfs leading to their removal from the contemporary seafront by 344 metres.

The site is a strong symbolic reminder of the arrival of African enslaved labour on the South American continent. Following historical records, more than 900,000 enslaved persons arrived at this destination in the final decades of the transatlantic slave trade. The physical remains of this arrival have been discovered during excavations in 2010 and are today kept exposed to the public. The deepest layer of the archaeological site, located towards its north and away from the seafront, shows fragmented remains of an irregular cut stone pavement set directly into levelled sandy soil. These pavement remains were found at depth of 1.2 to 1.8 metres when compared to the contemporary street level in this area.

The pavement remains integrate fragments of a ditch towards the west, which drained water coming down the hill as well as the road leading to Valongo Wharf. At the edge of the wharfs pavement towards the sea one finds an area covering 2.1 times 0.8 metres with evidence of two steps of cobblestones assumed to be the steps or ramp onto which passengers would have disembarked. This kind of jetty

may have had a walkway of rectangular flagstones of which only a few isolated flagstones remain. The archaeologists further identified areas of compressed soil next to these, which are assumed the locations of previous sheds or built structures. However, the only direct evidence of architectural structures at Valongo Wharf is a row of four wooden poles; however, this evidence does not allow for more than vague speculations as to its nature and function. Relics of paving stones show the likely edge of the wharf.

In 1843, these evidences were earthed over by 0.6 metres during the construction of the physically more dominant Empress' Wharf, designed by the military Engineer Grandjean de Montigny. It is constructed of fine granite flagstones of various sizes making up a wall and a pier, while the paving is made of regular, parallel cobble stones. Only a few patches of this parallel cobble stone paving survived although the Empress' Wharf must have covered a much larger surface. Most was likely damaged by the introduction of water pipes, drains, gas ducts, rain water drains as well as phone and optic cables. The around 180 flagstones preserved at the pier indicate an arrangement of a lower ramp, situated at a depth of about 2.8 metres with three steps and an upper ramp. On the side of this ramp, the excavation permits a view into remains of a large building constructed of ornamented masonry in eight layers. At present, these appear as drystone walls with occasional remnants of earth sediments. No visible evidence points towards a mortar that may have been used in construction, though its use is assumed likely by the archaeological team. There are a small number of anchorage rings embedded in the flagstones, some of which retain remains of vegetable fibre used to tie something to them.

The Valongo Wharf is not only understood as an archaeological site but as an open-air memorial of the transatlantic trade of enslaved people and as such has been fully appropriated by the public. Commercial, cultural and religious activities take place on site including the symbolic Washing of the Wharf, a ritual initiated by the excavating archaeologist, who invited priestesses of traditional African spiritual communities to see the site and who in response created a ritual of cleaning and purification to pay tribute to the spirits of their ancestors who reached this entry port in captivity. The ritual is now repeated annually on the second Saturday of July.

History and development

Rio de Janeiro was a central market and gateway for a large number of enslaved people arriving in the Americas. In the 18th century, disembarkation took place at another site at Direita Street in the city's commercial and administrative centre. Constant complaints from the city's elites who frequented this area prompted the city councillors to propose the transfer of this human marketplace in 1759. However, the merchants were strongly opposed, which created a conflict only solved by intervention of the Viceroy who confirmed the transfer in to Valongo in the city's suburbs in 1774.

A market complex for the enslaved with warehouses, storerooms and outhouses developed at the new location. After arrival in Brazil of the Portuguese Prince Regent and his Court in 1808, the African trade of enslaved people intensified. The construction works for Valongo Stone Wharf commenced in 1811 and were completed around 1817. With the transfer of the African's landing, the cemetery was also transferred to facilitate the burial of those who did not survive the hardship of the passage or died upon arrival. The New Black's cemetery, also referred to as Valongo Cemetery was established near the beach and is considered the biggest slave cemetery in the Americas with approximately 20,000 to 30,000 burials. Disused in 1831, the cemetery was covered over by urban structures and only rediscovered in 1996 in the course of restoration works at house number 36 in Rua Pedro Ernesto. It was subsequently listed as an archaeological site.

The crown also motivated the traders to establish a new lazaretto in the Valongo area. However, this was demolished with the city's transformations and its exact location can no longer be defined. When the transatlantic trade of enslaved Africans was outlawed in 1831, the interprovincial trade continued to fuel the arrival of people at Valongo. In 1842 the authorities launched a new wharf project in the Valongo area dedicated to the arrival of Emperor Pedro II's wife, which occurred in 1843. Constructed on top of the old Valongo Wharf, the new representative and monumental Empress' Wharf foreshadowed a new concept of use. Trade of enslaved people rapidly declined and was substituted by coffee export.

The abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888 did not end the long connection of Valongo Wharf with African people and culture. Several communal spaces and houses of worship were established in its vicinity and when, in the 20th century, samba groups emerged to express resistance and affirmation of black culture in Brazil, the area became a central location. Even the Carnival Association of Rio de Janeiro emerged at Morro da Conceição, a hill which marks one of the former limits of Valongo Beach. In the early 20th century the Valongo Wharf region was completely altered by urban transformations. Streets were widened, modern avenues opened and a garden project implemented in the vicinity.

In 2010, when the municipal authorities initiated urban interventions for the Porto Maravilha project in Praça Jornal de Comércio, archaeological researches were undertaken. In the local community memory, the location was linked to the unloading of ships and bringing captives from Africa, but only the excavations in 2011 brought to light the modest tangible testimony of these activities. The size of the excavations covered areas adjacent to the now visible window which exposes about two thirds of the archaeological material found.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis aims at highlighting the global significance of the somewhat modest tangible remains of Valongo Wharf. To this end, the authors compare two different groups of sites: sites related to the history of enslaved people, such as trade routes or entry and exit points, as well as sensitive heritage sites, which symbolically evoke pains and fears of a people, who passed through these places in history. The initial comparative analysis was focused exclusively on sites already inscribed on the World Heritage List, which neglected several other sites, which may be comparable at a regional level.

Among the group of sites related to the history of enslaved people globally, the authors discuss sites such as the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions, Ghana (1979, (vi)), the Island of Gorée, Senegal (1978, (vi)), the Stone Town of Zanzibar, Tanzania (2000, (ii), (iii) and (vi)), or the Le Morne Cultural Landscape, Mauritius, (2008, (iii) and (vi)). The authors also draw on sites in Latin America and the Caribbean with historic relations to the trade or presence of enslaved people, including Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison, Barbados (2011, (ii), (iii) and (iv)), and National History Park – Citadel, Sans Souci, Ramiers, Haiti, (1982, (iv) and (vi)). The second analysis focused on sites of conscience includes sites like Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945), Poland (1979, (vi)), Robben Island, South Africa (1999, (iii) and (vi)), or Apravasi Ghat, Mauritius (2006, (vi)).

In comparing this variety of exceptional sites of conscience, both in relation to the history of enslaved people and beyond, the authors concluded that Valongo Wharf presents the only physical remains of an arrival point for African enslaved labour in the Americas and is hence unique and without comparators on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

ICOMOS in response considered and expressed in its interim report that the Comparative Analysis was too limited by the exclusive focus on World Heritage Sites, which prevented the authors from investigating other remains of wharfs of slave arrival in the Americas. The claim for uniqueness was only seen correct in so far as presently Valongo Wharf archaeological site was the only known stone wharf through which the enslaved people stepped onto the continent.

ICOMOS in its interim report requested the State Party to augment the initial comparative analysis presented to further focus on arrival points of enslaved persons in the Americas as well as auxiliary functions, which were established around these debarkation points. In its additional information submitted on 28 February 2017, the State Party augmented the comparative analysis towards sites documenting the arrival and suppression of African enslaved people in the Americas focusing initially on other

archaeological sites in Brazil and later expanding this analysis towards all sites related to enslaved Africans in the Americas. The comparative analysis now explicitly covers the site, which ICOMOS identified as the most relevant comparator in its review process, which is Gadsden's Wharf in South Carolina. By comparison of both the preserved archaeological remains and the historic data in terms of arrival numbers and significance in contemporary references, Valongo Wharf seems to be well suited to illustrate Outstanding Universal Value in its own right, which could eventually be augmented in the future by other archaeological records of arrival points on the American continent, such as Gadsden's Wharf, Charleston, South Carolina.

ICOMOS considers that the augmented comparative analysis demonstrates the exceptional international status of the seemingly modest archaeological remains of Valongo Wharf as well as its global importance as a memory marker for one the largest forced migration movements in human history.

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:

- Valongo Wharf was the arrival point of about a quarter of all African American enslaved people to the Americas and can be regarded as the biggest slave harbour in human history;
- It was also linked with other parts of South America and constituted the origin of a vast web of internal distribution routes for the enslaved labours;
- Valongo Wharf constitutes the only site with tangible remains of a landing location at which the incoming Africans made their first step on American land and is therefore of utmost symbolic importance in the history of African Americans.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS suggested to further focus the justification for inscription to solely the elements which the site can represent within its boundaries by critically reviewing the contribution and inclusion of elements such as the quarantine facilities, store houses, market of enslaved people and New African's cemetery, which only in parts exist as archaeological evidence and are located outside the present property boundaries.

In the additional information submitted on February 2017 at the request of ICOMOS, the State Party specified that Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is being represented as the globally most significant remains of a landing point of enslaved Africans in the Americas. This is documented in the – though modest – archaeological remains of the Valongo Wharf, the main attributes of which are an area of beach paved with stones, whose design, form, function and materials testify to the time in which enslaved Africans arrived at the South American coast and may constitute the exact stones they stepped on setting foot on American land.

ICOMOS considers that despite the modesty of the archaeological remains, Valongo Wharf presents the most significant physical evidence of an arrival point of African enslaved people to the Americas and therefore carries enormous historical as well as spiritual importance to African Americans. Valongo Wharf can therefore be seen as unique and exceptional both from a material point of view and with regard to the spiritual associations with which it is tangibly related.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The State Party introduces the proposed statement of integrity highlighting that Valongo Wharf is the part of the slave landing harbour of Rio de Janeiro, which was paved in 1811. This part was later filled with earth and rubble for the construction of the Empress' Wharf in 1843. The State Party further suggests that the portion which is left exposed to the public encompasses almost the whole original stone disembarkation wharf and can be considered intact.

ICOMOS considers that excavations at Valongo Wharf in 2011 rediscovered a fragment of the forming landing site, much of which has been lost or obscured by the urban transformation and development of the area. Several elements explicitly referred to in the initial proposed draft statement of Outstanding Universal Value, the warehouses, quarantine facilities and the lazaretto are lost with their location unknown to date. ICOMOS therefore requested the State Party in its interim report to refocus the proposed Outstanding Universal Value towards exclusively those components which remain until present, which is the exact debarkation point of enslaved Africans onto the American continent.

However, with this revised focus, ICOMOS considers that the important relation between Valongo Wharf and the sea was missing following extensive land reclamations, which hinder the understanding of the site in its historical seaside and harbour setting. Likewise, the relationships between the site and its original suburban surroundings have fully disappeared. ICOMOS therefore requested the State Party in its interim report to propose measures which could assist in reconnecting the sea to the archaeological site for the contemporary visit.

In the additional information provided at the request of ICOMOS, the State Party introduced a revised buffer zone, which now includes the connecting stretch between the property and the current sea front. The difficulty in retaining the visual connection to the seafront lies in the fact that a warehouse building which is in itself recognized as heritage at a local level and functions as a cultural centre was constructed in the direct axis between the site and the seafront. The seafront along the warehouses at present facilitates the arrival of cruises which will allow visitors to explore Valongo Wharf walking towards it from the seafront. ICOMOS recommends that the visual connection is further strengthened through landscaping measures in this area which allow for the perception of relation between

seafront and Valongo Wharf despite the position of the warehouse at Pier Mauá, obstructing a direct sea view.

While the protection and conservation of the fragmented archaeological remains can be controlled to prevent threats of decay or deterioration, the immediate urban setting of the site, which does no longer relate to its original setting, will be further developed in the near future. The intensification of real estate development on both sides of the now designated buffer zone extension towards the sea front will continue to significantly transform the landscape and could have negative impacts on the perception of the property. ICOMOS therefore considers that beyond the direct corridor towards the sea, urban developments in the immediate surrounding of the site need to assist the attempt of reconnecting the seafront via interpretative and landscaping measures. In addition, the development in the area to the south, east and west of the property, may uncover auxiliary functions of the wharf and therefore require detailed archaeological investigations before any project is undertaken. ICOMOS notes with concern that the Special Urban Interest Area of Rio's Porto Region, which lies at a distance of about 50 metres to the site is not included in the buffer zone.

Authenticity

The State Party highlights the material authenticity of the excavated remains, which form the most important testimony of Rio de Janeiro's slave disembarkation wharf in the 19th century. Its earthen cover for the past 168 years has enabled this sensitive site to be preserved with the design of the former disembarkation slipway, drainage system and paving. No reconstruction was undertaken which retains the archaeological remains as an exact reflection of the early 19th century.

ICOMOS considers that the remains of Valongo Wharf are indeed authentic in terms of their material, location, workmanship, substance and, as much as can be perceived, design. Self-evidently and gladly, they are no longer authentic in use and function which of course does not weaken authenticity in this case. On the contrary, they are highly authentic in spirit and feeling evoking a memory reference and identity marker for the large Brazilian population of African origin and African Americans beyond the national context. This aspect is further underlined by the creation of religious rituals, such as the Washing of the Wharf, created during the merely five year period that the site has been rediscovered. The single drawback in terms of the site's authenticity is the complete loss of setting, both with regard to the seafront and its urban and infrastructural context.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that while the conditions of integrity although considered somewhat acceptable require to be closely monitored, the conditions of authenticity have been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria
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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 around a quarter of Africans enslaved in the Americas reached the continent via Rio de Janeiro, thus making Valongo Wharf the biggest slave port in history. As of 1774 Africans reaching Rio de Janeiro were disembarked at Valongo Beach, where in 1811 paved stone wharf structures were built. Valongo Wharf is said to constitute the most outstanding tangible remains of slave trade in the Americas.

ICOMOS considers that the tangible remains at Valongo Wharf are the most outstanding physical testimony known testifying to the arrival of enslaved Africans in the Americas. However, ICOMOS considers that despite the enormous symbolic value of the moment of setting foot on the continent it is a very short-lived moment in relation to the overall struggle of African enslaved people during their forced migration and labour.

ICOMOS considers that criterion (iii) is usually applied in reference to the testimonies that cultural traditions or civilizations created over time and left behind as their products and achievements. However, Valongo Wharf was not constructed or sustained by the African enslaved people arriving at the South American shores and hence cannot be described a testimony they brought forth. It is rather a testimony of their despair, hardship and suffering than of the cultural traditions they brought and later revitalized. In this sense, the application of criterion (iii) could be interpreted as recognizing as universal the testimony of their subduers, who constructed Valongo Wharf to facilitate trade of the enslaved. It is exclusively with reference to the concern that its application might lead to a reversed definition of exceptionality focused on facilitation rather than endurance of slave trade that ICOMOS considers that criterion (iii) should not be applied to Valongo Wharf.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

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

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Valongo Wharf is a site that awakens memories of traumatic historic events and is bound up with aspects of pain and survival in the history of the forefathers of people of African descent, who sum over half of the contemporary Brazilian population.

ICOMOS considers that Valongo Wharf is the most important physical evidence of the arrival of enslaved Africans on the American continent. It is a site of conscience, which illustrates strong and tangible associations to one of the most terrible crimes of

humanity, the enslavement of hundreds of thousands of people, which created the largest forced migration movement in history. As the very location the African stepped onto American soil and with it into their new lives as enslaved labour, the site evokes painful memories, which many African Brazilians can strongly relate to. ICOMOS considers that despite its modest physical remains Valongo Wharf can be said the best example to represent concrete archaeological tangible association to these outstanding tragic events of forced migration to the Americas and enslavement of Africans on the continent. ICOMOS considers that despite the stipulation of article 77 of the *Operational Guidelines* that criterion (vi) should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria, Valongo Wharf constitutes an exceptional case where the sole use of criterion (vi) would most appropriately capture the values of the property.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that criterion (vi) has been justified. ICOMOS also considers that the nominated property meets the condition of authenticity and that the condition of integrity can be considered somewhat acceptable but remains vulnerable and requires attentive monitoring.

Description of the attributes

The Outstanding Universal Value of Valongo Wharf is expressed in its modest physical remains and the capacity of the location to evoke memories and spiritual associations. The physical remains include fragments of an irregular cut stone pavement set directly into levelled sandy soil, which integrates a ditch to drain water coming down the hill as well as remains of the former road leading to Valongo Wharf.

At the historic sea front edge one finds two steps of cobblestones assumed to be the steps or ramp onto which passengers would have disembarked. These can hence be seen as the most symbolic remains representing the soil onto which the enslaved Africans stepped upon reaching the South American continent. A few isolated flagstones testify to what as likely a jetty and areas of compressed soil next to these were likely the locations of previous sheds or built structures. A row of four wooden poles, however, is the only evidence for additional built structures.

The capacity of the location to evoke memories and spiritual associations is ensured by the transmission of oral traditions and preservation of associated historic finds and documents illustrating the circumstances of the arrival of enslaved Africans to Valongo Wharf.

4 Factors affecting the property

The property is challenged by urban and infrastructure developments planned predominantly towards its north, which pose a risk to further obscure the already highly compromised relationship between the site and the sea.

These include a specific development for Porto Maravilha, which is approved and will develop 90 metres tall tower blocks at approximately 100 metres distance from the property boundary.

Given that the setting is already highly modified a certain amount of development might be acceptable but should be carefully evaluated in terms of Heritage Impact Assessments to prevent further negative impacts on the physical remains. ICOMOS considers that it would be desirable that the State Party consider the integration of an Heritage Impact Assessment approach into the management system, so as to ensure that any programme or project regarding the property be assessed in relation to its impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value and its supporting attributes. ICOMOS in this context appreciates learning about the IRPH (the municipal heritage agency) and IPHAN (the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute) initiatives, proposing an ensemble of actions to alleviate the visual and social impact of the new complex, which is being built in the area. ICOMOS recommends that such measures are being documented and agreed upon with UNESCO and ICOMOS before any formal approval is granted to constructions in the Porto Maravilha project.

ICOMOS requests that any nearby development should be combined with archaeological surveys prior to any excavation for new construction as result of the high likelihood to discover further remains of Valongo Wharf's auxiliary structures.

Another key challenge to the site will be its new susceptibility to processes of decay and deterioration caused by water and wind erosion, from which it was protected while it remained buried. The remains, which are already modest and fragmented should be carefully monitored to ensure their state of conservation remains constant. Specific care needs to be taken concerning drainage of rainwater to ensure it does not gather within the archaeological site. At present, a pump is being used to ensure this, which requires regular maintenance to stay functional when needed.

Since the property was excavated in 2011, it has been prepared for visitation through arrangement of slopes and terraces which allow visitors to access elevated platforms from which the historic remains can be seen. However, physical access to the historic remains is only made possible in exceptional circumstances, such as during ICOMOS technical evaluation mission. ICOMOS hence considers that even a considerable increase of visitors does not constitute a significant challenge to the site, as long as access restrictions are continued to be observed.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are negative impacts of urban development as well as decay and deterioration of the exposed archaeological remains.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The nominated property has a size of 0.3895 ha and is surrounded by a buffer zone of 41.6981 ha; amounting to a total area of 42,0876 ha. The boundaries of the property encompass all the archaeological remains, which were discovered in 2011, including the portion of the finds which was reburied under the view platforms. However, ICOMOS notes that the initially proposed draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value referred to elements not included in the boundaries, most notably the warehouses, quarantine quarter and the New Black's cemetery. It is known that all these features existed within the immediate surroundings of Valongo Wharf but with exception of the New Blacks Cemetery they were destroyed or obscured by urban developments. ICOMOS considers that the value of the property would be considerably strengthened if some of these elements were to be rediscovered, but at present the boundaries encompass the core area in relation to the arrival of African enslaved people on the American continent.

ICOMOS considers that several historic maps presented in the nomination dossier indicate historic architectural structures near the property. The buffer zone has accordingly been defined to include these structures, in particular the New Blacks Cemetery, which has been located by archaeological excavations under existing houses. ICOMOS considers it important to undertake, wherever possible in the context of new constructions or restorations, additional surveys to investigate whether some of the other auxiliary functions related to the property can be located.

The nomination dossier does not provide an explicit rationale for the definition of the buffer zone. However, it seems to correspond to a Cultural Protected Area at the municipal basis covering the historic urban centres of Saúde, Gamboa and Santo Cristo. Fortunately, this zone also includes the areas in which additional structures related to the arrival of enslaved Africans might be located. The buffer zone is relevant in providing protection to potential additional buried archaeological remains. Such is provided in compliance with Municipal Decree 22872 of 7 May 2003, by which any urban interventions must be accompanied by archaeological research in areas of historical interest, and as such must include historical studies and archaeological research.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property cover the currently known archaeological resources. The buffer zone includes areas, which in light of future research might enhance and complement the understanding of the property. ICOMOS considers that urban expansion in areas beyond the buffer zone, in particular to the north and east of the property has potential for negative impacts on the property and therefore Heritage Impact Assessments

should be undertaken before any construction is approved.

Ownership

The archaeological site of Valongo Wharf is owned by the Brazilian state. The Municipality of Rio de Janeiro represents the owner for its management and cooperates with the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN).

Protection

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is listed as an archaeological site at the federal level following its registration on 25 April 2012, with the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) mandated to coordinate its protection and management. The buffer zone is protected both by IPHAN directive 135 of 13 March 2013, which sets guidelines for the management of areas around listed federal sites as well as on the municipal level as a cultural protected area. In addition to the protection of architectural remains, Municipal Decree 22872 of 7 May 2003 provides for protection of unknown underground archaeological remains through stipulating that prior to any urban development, archaeological research is to be undertaken.

Since the site is highly cherished by the African-Brazilian society, the community is committed on a daily basis to the site's care and preservation. This is not only expressed in the religious value the site has been attributed and the associated ritual of Washing the Wharf in which the stones are cleaned under supervision of religious leaders. The physical proximity of these actors, and even the fact that a church of the African cult (Iglesia Universal) will be next to the site to organize regular meetings, creates a strong feeling of community guardianship of the property.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place for the property and buffer zone is adequate. ICOMOS considers that developments beyond the buffer zone need to be analysed in terms of potential negative impacts on the property before any construction approval is granted.

Conservation

The archaeological site has been documented and inventoried in much detail during its excavation. These reports are in progress of being made accessible to the specialized professional community and the wider public. Following its excavation, the state of conservation seems fair and the archaeological site has been framed by the new square intended to protect it while allowing for public accessibility to view the most essential remains. During this process the archaeological structures have been conserved, not always to the ideal possible but adequate to ensure their transmission. Tricky challenges in terms of conservation are the lack of a rainwater drainage in the lower sections of the archaeological site, which required the installation of rainwater pumps as well as the slopes of the terrace structure, which seem to be exposed to erosion processes. In addition, mortar and ferrous elements seem

very prone to degradation from exposure to atmospheric contaminants and detrimental mechanical erosion processes due to human and natural influences. Both aspects will require regular monitoring and maintenance to ensure future preservation of the site. Regular maintenance of the visited parts of the site is carried out by the municipality and guardian communities under the supervision of IPHAN. A conservation plan was developed and officially approved by IPHAN in 2015 and in the process of being implemented.

ICOMOS considers that active conservation measures undertaken have been adequate. Regular monitoring and maintenance is needed to ensure protection of the site against erosion and the functionality of the rainwater drainage system via pumps.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The management of the property is steered by the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN). It is not clear whether a site management unit has been established or is foreseen to be established. The nomination refers to a steering committee, which is to be created at a municipal basis, which will be responsible to coordinate action of the different management partners. The steering committee is to be further subdivided into two bodies, a curatorial advisory body and an executive committee. The advisory body will be composed of 13 members mostly representing civil society, while the executive committee unites the concerned governmental institutions. The fact that IPHAN as the responsible management agency is foreseen to be given only one seat on this executive committee in the view of ICOMOS is of concern.

ICOMOS regrets that the plans outlined for the establishment of these management bodies are rather tentative and have not yet been put into place. There is also no envisaged timeline presented as to when the management shall be set up in the anticipated way. No risk management procedures or plan exist despite urgent needs to adapt and mitigate the challenges caused by rain water. ICOMOS recommends to design an adequate management structure and put this into place.

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

The nomination foresees the preparation of a management plan, which is still in progress. Presented in the nomination is a tabular summary listing broadly various actions that are envisaged under three different domains related to conservation of archaeology, management of the urban setting and integration of the social and cultural dimension of the site. A clear key management concern at present is the development of the urban surroundings, for example through housing plans, tunnel construction etc., the

mitigation of potential negative impacts towards the property and the establishment of cultural initiatives and presentation formats. ICOMOS recommends finalizing the development of a strategic management plan to guide future management processes, including a dedicated section on risk management.

The present interpretation of the property is not well conceptualized as it does not provide adequate information on the multi-layered nature of the site, providing the wrong impression that the later additions of the Empress Wharf are components of the earlier Valongo Wharf. The recently opened museum provides 3-D models and further information add this missing information. ICOMOS recommends developing a minimalistic interpretation format on site, possibly with means of digital technology, to allow visitors who may not visit the museum a correct understanding of the site.

Involvement of the local communities

The community, through African-Brazilian societies, have taken part in the preparation of this nomination. The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission met community representatives and discussed with them the nomination proposal and future management of the site. The various African-Brazilian communities involved are very enthusiastic about and supportive of the proposal. The historical and spiritual value attributed to the site by the local community will ensure their long-term participation.

While more complex management structures are envisaged for the future, at present IPHAN is solely responsible for management with municipal bodies and community representatives acting as partners in daily maintenance and upkeep of the site. ICOMOS considers that in this context management processes are driven from a distance and in response to the current challenges may not be effective. In terms of strategic and planned processes towards the establishment of a well-equipped management system, further steps need to be taken and a management plan prepared.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the site management unit should be formally established and the management plan, with a special section on risk management, be finalized and adopted.

6 Monitoring

The nomination provides a theoretical concept for monitoring aimed at the development of participative, indicator-driven processes organized in various stages of implementation. Part of this system is a regular survey involving all concerned stakeholder groups to ensure their expectations and concerns are being responded to. ICOMOS considers that while this envisaged participative monitoring approach is commendable at a theoretical level, further attention should also be given to the monitoring of the physical archaeological remains to ensure that processes of decay and degradation are fully controlled.

ICOMOS supports the envisaged participative approach to monitoring but recommends to also focus on the monitoring of the state of conservation of the archaeological fabric.

7 Conclusions

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is very important for the African-Brazilian community but also the African-American community at large. It was in fact the society's demand for the protection and presentation of the site, following its discovery in 2011, which led the authorities to modify agreed upon development plans to fully recover and preserve it. The African-Brazilian communities have since become important partners in the site's maintenance and interpretation.

Although the physical remains of Valongo Wharf appear fragmented, modest and isolated in their current context, ICOMOS confirms that they are the most exceptional physical remnants illustrating the arrival of enslaved Africans on the American continent. It is a site of conscience, which illustrates strong and tangible associations to one of the most terrible crimes of humanity, the enslavement of hundreds of thousands of people, which created the largest forced migration movement in history. At this location, the African stepped onto American soil. The site therefore evokes painful memories, which many African Brazilians and African Americans at large can strongly relate to.

Yet, with the arrival being such a brief moment in the long hardship of enslaved people, the property has limited capacity to convey the cultural traditions and life of Africans on the South American continent as suggested in the justification of criterion (iii). The property illustrates a specific but crucial moment in the lives of African enslaved people, the arrival and physical setting foot on American soil. ICOMOS considers that despite the modest tangible remains at Valongo Wharf, this moment is crucial in symbolizing painful memories for generations of African enslaved and their descendants. ICOMOS therefore considers that Valongo Wharf should be recognized as the best example to represent concrete archaeological tangible associations to these outstanding tragic events of forced migration to the Americas and enslavement of Africans on the continent in line with criterion (vi). ICOMOS considers that despite the fact that the *Operational Guidelines* recommend that criterion (vi) be preferably used in conjunction with other criteria, Valongo Wharf constitutes an exception case for which the sole application of criterion (vi) is recommended.

In terms of integrity, ICOMOS considered that the important relationship between Valongo Wharf and the sea was disturbed or even missing entirely following extensive land reclamations, which at present hinders the physical interpretation and understanding of the site. The State Party in response to ICOMOS' request extended the buffer zone to cover the area between the property and the

seafront and is committed to explore further landscaping measures to reconnect the two elements despite an early 20th century warehouse, which was built along this corridor and obstructs a direct sea view.

Likewise, the relationships between the site and its original urban surroundings have largely disappeared. ICOMOS notes with concern that the Special Urban Interest Area of Rio's Porto Region, which lies at a distance of about 50 metres to the site is not included in the buffer zone. Large scale urban developments are envisaged in this area although no concrete plans are presented at this stage. Given that the setting is already highly modified a certain amount of development might be acceptable but should be carefully assessed through Heritage Impact Assessments to prevent further negative impacts on Outstanding Universal Value. ICOMOS in this context appreciates initiatives, proposing an ensemble of actions to alleviate the visual and social impact of these new developments and recommends that such measures are being documented and agreed upon with UNESCO and ICOMOS before any formal approval is granted to constructions in the Porto Maravilha project area.

The remains of Valongo Wharf are authentic in terms of their material, location, workmanship, as well as spirit and feeling evoking memory references and identity markers for the large Brazilian population of African origin.

The key threats to the property are further negative impacts of urban development as well as decay and deterioration of the exposed archaeological remains. ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property cover the currently known archaeological resources, while the buffer zone includes areas, which in the future might enhance and complement the understanding of the property. ICOMOS considers that the formally designated buffer zone with its legal requirement to undertake archaeological studies whenever further developments are envisaged, ensures that additional remains which might in the future enhance the value of the property are being protected. ICOMOS considers that active conservation measures undertaken have been adequate. Regular monitoring and maintenance is needed to ensure protection of the site against erosion and the functionality of the rainwater drainage system via pumps.

ICOMOS regrets that the plans outlined for the establishment of site management bodies remain rather tentative and presented without date of foreseen establishment. ICOMOS recommends to formally appoint an adequate management unit and to finalize the strategic management plan to guide future management processes, including a dedicated section on risk management. ICOMOS recommends to install in addition to the museum which has recently been opened to the public, an interpretation approach on site which allows visitors who may not visit the museum to gain a general understanding of the site's multi-layered character. This should be minimalistic and could perhaps make use of information technologies. ICOMOS considers that while the envisaged participative monitoring approach is commendable, further

attention should also be given to the monitoring of the physical archaeological remains.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site, Brazil, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criterion (vi)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is situated on Jornal do Comércio Square in the dock area of Rio de Janeiro city. The wharf started being built in 1811 to facilitate the debarkation of enslaved Africans arriving in Brazil. It is estimated that up to 900,000 African captives entered the Americas via Valongo.

In physical terms the property consists of several archaeological layers. The lowest of these with floor pavings in *pé de moleque* style represents the remains of the Valongo Wharf. Later, more dominant layers relate to the Empress' Wharf, constructed in 1843. The property's characteristic is that it is a beach that was covered with extensive paving made of hewn stones of different sizes, forms and functions, with a ramp and steps leading down to the sea. It was built in an apparently simple process, not on a landfill, as was customary, but directly on the sand of the beach, following its natural contours.

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is the globally most significant remains of a landing point of enslaved Africans in the Americas and therefore carries enormous historical as well as spiritual importance to African Americans. Valongo Wharf can therefore be seen as unique and exceptional both from a material point of view and with regard to the spiritual associations to which it is tangibly related.

Criterion (vi): Valongo Wharf is the most important physical evidence associated with the historic arrival of enslaved Africans on the American continent. It is a site of conscience, which illustrates strong and tangible associations to one of the most terrible crimes of humanity, the enslavement of hundreds of thousands of people creating the largest forced migration movement in history. As the very location the African stepped onto American soil and with it into their new lives as enslaved labour, the site evokes painful memories, which many African Brazilians can strongly relate to. Preserving these memories, the vicinity of Valongo Wharf has become an arena for various manifestations celebrating African heritage on an ongoing basis.

Integrity

The modest fragments of Valongo Wharf, which were left exposed to the public after their excavation in 2011,

encompass the complete remains of the original stone disembarkation wharf. The wharf's function was originally related to auxiliary structures, such as warehouses, quarantine facilities, the lazaretto and the New African cemetery. These are either lost or preserved only as underground remains in the buffer zone and are legally protected.

As the debarkation point after long and painful journeys across the Atlantic Ocean, Valongo Wharf and the sea were closely related. Therefore, integrity is presently reduced by the disconnection between the archaeological site and the seafront which is removed as result of land reclamations in the dock area. To ensure legibility of the property, it is essential to undertake measures, which assist in reconnecting the sea to the archaeological site.

The intensification of real estate development on all sides of the property and, in particular, towards the sea front is of concern as it will continue to significantly transform the landscape and could have negative impacts on the perception of the property. As future excavations may uncover further auxiliary functions of the wharf, it is essential that detailed archaeological investigations are conducted before any project is undertaken. While the Special Urban Interest Area of Rio's Porto Region, which lies at a distance of about 50 metres to the site, is not included in the buffer zone, it will be necessary to ensure that developments will not negatively impact of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

Authenticity

Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site preserves the remains of Rio de Janeiro's slave disembarkation wharf in the 19th century. Its earthen cover for the past 168 years has enabled this sensitive site to be preserved with the design of the former disembarkation slipway, drainage system and paving. No reconstruction was undertaken which retains the archaeological remains as an exact fragmented reflection of the early 19th century. These remains are authentic in terms of their material, location, workmanship, substance and, as much as can be perceived, design.

In addition, the modest physical remains are highly authentic in spirit and feeling evoking a memory reference and identity marker for the large Brazilian population of African origin and African Americans at large. This aspect is underlined by creation of religious rituals, such as the Washing of the Wharf, during the merely five years period that the site has been rediscovered.

Management and protection requirements

The Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site is protected by federal Law number 3924, of 26 July 1961 through its official registration on 25 April 2012. The stipulations of this protection are enforced by the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) as the responsible body for its conservation and management.

The property is cherished by the African-Brazilian society, with communities committed on a daily basis to the site's

care and preservation. This is not only expressed in the religious value the site has been attributed but also the associated rituals established. The physical proximity of these actors, and even the fact that a church of the African cult (Iglesia Universal) will be next to the site to organize regular meetings, creates a strong feeling of community guardianship of the property.

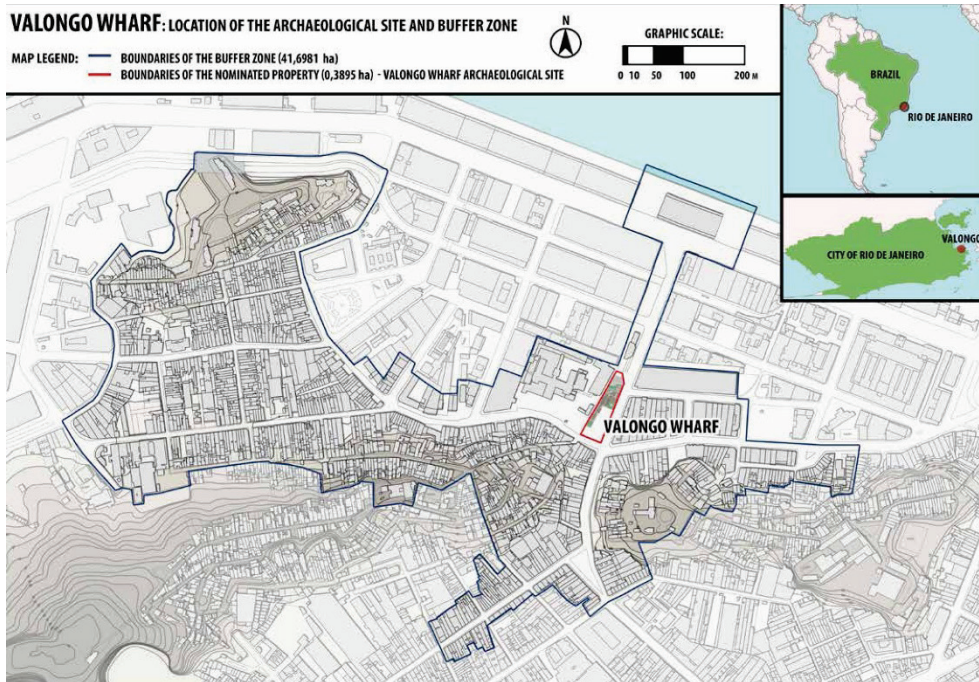
The conservation of the site is supervised by IPHAN and supported by the Companhia de Desenvolvimento do Porto of Rio de Janeiro (CDURP). A conservation plan has been adopted to guide these processes. Regular monitoring and maintenance is needed to ensure protection of the site against erosion and the functionality of the rainwater drainage system via pumps. The conservation and management of the site will be overseen by a council instituted by IPHAN and involving civil society and federal, state and municipal institutions committed to the preservation of cultural heritage and/or linked to questions of interest to the population of African origin.

The site management plan requires to be finalized and an adequately resourced site management body needs to be created. Further minimalistic interpretation on site will allow visitors who may not visit the museum to gain a general understanding of the site's multi-layered character. Special attention should be given to evaluating further urban developments in terms of their potential negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property before any construction approvals are granted as well as measures which aim at re-establishing the relationship between the property and Guanabara Bay.

Additional recommendations

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

- a) Swiftly finalizing the strategic management plan, formally adopt it and establish the management unit on site,
- b) Strengthening through landscaping measures the relation between the seafront and Valongo Wharf, despite the fact that the warehouse at Pier Mauá, obstructs a direct sea view,
- c) Undertaking detailed Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) before any formal construction approvals are granted in the vicinity of the site, including areas outside the buffer zone, which have a potential to negatively impact the property, especially in the Special Urban Interest Area of Rio's Porto Region,
- d) Giving further attention to the monitoring of the physical archaeological remains and seeking alternative solutions to address the challenge of rain water collection in the archaeological area,
- e) Developing a holistic interpretation concept to communicate the multi-layered character of the site, including to visitors who may not opt to visit the nearby museum;



Map showing the revised boundaries of the nominated property



Aerial view of the property



View of Valongo Wharf



View of Valongo Wharf



Symbolic washing of the Wharf