

ABSTRACT - 4. CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN HERITAGE DISCOURSE - A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE STATE OF THE ART IN HERITAGE DISCUSSIONS, CONSIDERING THE EVOLVING PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES THAT HAVE EMERGED SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE VENICE CHARTER. EXAMINING THE RELEVANCE OF THE VENICE CHARTER IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT, WITH A FOCUS ON CHALLENGES POSED BY THE WESTERN DIVIDE BETWEEN NATURE AND CULTURE, THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF METROPOLISES, SOCIAL INEQUITIES, THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF HUMAN ACTIVITIES, DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS, AMONG OTHERS.

**EXPANDING THE VENICE CHARTER BEYOND 'MONUMENTS AND SITES'
TO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE, NATURE-CULTURE LINKAGES,
CULTURAL AND HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES**

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Venice charter and ICOMOS arose from the two resolutions from the same meeting, i.e. second congress of architects and technicians of historic buildings (Venice, 1964) – resulting in nomenclature of the charter and ICOMOS as focused on historic buildings, monuments and sites. However, there have been reviews and critiques of the Venice charter for being too concerned about material-authenticity and historicity. In the past half century, the needs, means and opportunities of the heritage sector has expanded significantly – which are well reflected in the approach and scope of ICOMOS members' activities through scientific committees as well as later charters, declarations and conventions. In such evolution and critical reflections of the heritage field, it is

important to situate the Venice charter in its historic context to understand why the emphasis on monuments and sites was necessary. Also, a closer reading of the Venice charter also reveals that it does have subtle references to the intangible aspects as well as the nature-culture linkages, among others.

This paper ponders upon such contexts – both pasts and present, and develops the argument to integrate the intangible cultural heritage, landscapes (both cultural and historic urban) as well as ‘nature-culture linkages’ in the scope of ICOMOS and Venice charter. It is not a question of merely the nomenclature or the terminologies, but a critical reflection on the contemporary heritage discourses and practices.

This paper first analyses the historic and professional contexts within which the Venice charter was drafted. It will also revisit the preceding charters, i.e. two Athens charters – the one drafted by the congress of the International Museums Office under the then League of Nations, as well as the other one drafted by the congress of modern architects and planners including the modernist architect Le Corbusier. The establishment of ICCROM, ICOMOS and later the adaption of the World Heritage Convention can be interpreted as a response to the similar historic needs and contexts.

Then the paper points out how the Venice charter also refers to intangible cultural heritage and nature-culture linkages although these are only brief and subtle. Then the paper explores the influence of the Venice charter in the growing scope of heritage practice in the subsequent decades. However, there have also been some critique and calls for revisiting Venice charter’s focus on materiality and historic authenticity, which led to the emergence of other subsequent developments like the Nara Document on Authenticity, Cultural Landscapes, Historic Urban Landscapes, and lately the charter for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) among others. Drawing upon such reviews, reflections and the expansion of the heritage discourse by other doctrinal documents, the paper concludes with a few recommendations to make the ideals of Venice charter relevant with a critical refinement in the text and intents. The key argument of the paper will be to expand the subtle mentions of the intangibles and nature-culture linkages in the Venice charter to make it relevant to the contemporary heritage discourse and practice, and to relate heritage practice to broader sustainable development agenda.

Palavras-chave: venice charter; icomos; athens charter; heritage discourses; intangible cultural heritage; cultural landscapes; nature-culture linkages.

