



THE COATEPEC CHARTER

"TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AS INSEPARABLE CATEGORIES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE"

All persons attending the 33rd International Symposium on Cultural Heritage Conservation organized by ICOMOS Mexicano under the auspices of the Government of the State of Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave, reunited in Coatepec, Veracruz from October 1 to 4, 2013 in order to address the issue "Tangible and Intangible Heritage as Inseparable Categories of Cultural Heritage", would like to thank the support provided by the Government of the State of Veracruz especially by the Constitutional Governor of the State Javier Duarte de Ochoa, PhD through Mr. Harry Grappa Muñoz, Secretary of Tourism, Culture and Cinematography of the State.

Our thanks go also to Karime Macías de Duarte, PhD, wife of the Governor, to 'The Institute of Ecology' (INECOL), to the Tourism Higher Education Center of Xalapa, as well as to the President of the Regional Council of Xalapa, Veracruz, for the program 'Adopt an Art Work', Ms. Alicia Ávila de Fernández, to the Magic Town Committee of Coatepec and to the ICOMOS – Veracruz Committee who made this event possible. We want to give particular thanks to ICOMOS ICICH President, Marilyn Truscott, who supported this event determinedly and passionately. This event was held jointly with members of ICICH (ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage) and participants from nine countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, United States - Turkey, Philippines, Ireland and India. National participants presented 22 papers from ten states: Federal District, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Veracruz, Yucatán and Zacatecas.

The papers presented at this 33rd International Symposium on Cultural Heritage mainly focused on five topics: 1.- Intangible Heritage and its relation with Natural Heritage; 2.- Intangible Heritage theory and methods: new approaches; 3.- Intangible heritage management: traditions and change; 4.- Making Intangible Heritage Tangible; and 5.- Intangible heritage and the permanence of memory. The purpose of these topics was to open an interdisciplinary wide forum regarding the need to promote the discussion related to tangible and intangible heritage indivisibility, and this way, to try to guarantee the unification of lectures and works conducted, as the community that keep this heritage alive recognizes it.

Background

The definition of the term "intangible cultural heritage" has been established at the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) adopted by the UNESCO in 2003:

The "Intangible Cultural Heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills -as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith- that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as integral part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response



to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

Integral, cultural and natural heritage is a material and spiritual resource that provides a chronicle of the historical development of each society. It plays an important role in modern life and it should be accessible to the general public, physically, intellectually and emotionally. Programs for the protection and preservation of physical and intangible aspects of contemporary cultural expressions, in their widest sense, should facilitate understanding and appreciating their meaning in an accessible and equitable manner.

Today, the world is experiencing deep transformations that particularly affect intangible cultural heritage. The characteristics of this type of heritage are less known and therefore, they are more vulnerable. For this reason, international organizations should broaden their area of activity in order to make sure that this kind of legacy receives protection similar to the one granted to tangible cultural heritage. This way, it becomes necessary to address not only intangible expressions already recognized such as music, literature and arts, but also those less known and politically more neglected, such as languages, myths, traditions and legends, values, religious expressions, craftsmanship techniques, uses and practices, so social and personal creativity can be allowed.

During the last decades, diverse forums have been organized all around the world regarding the issue of movable and immovable heritage and its relationship with intangible values, trying to have a better understanding of this topic. In 1979, at a meeting of Australia ICOMOS the Burra Charter was written, this document is nowadays also a key for the conservation of intangible heritage.

Such forums and conferences provided eloquent examples of the inseparable relationship between Tangible and Intangible Heritage, which became official through two UNESCO cultural conventions: the “Convention Concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972” and the “the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003”. The time distance between them, more than three decades, seems to separate these two heritage-related documents; however, the trend is to look every day for new bridges that can facilitate the integral reading of these assets, with more participation from the community.

A first precedent of this trend was the 17th ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium held in 2003 at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, which main topic was “Place – Memory – Meaning: Preserving intangible values in Monuments and Sites”.

Another one is the draft Teemaneng Declaration, drafted at an ICICH meeting held in Kimberley, South Africa in 2007, which emphasizes the importance of intangible heritage of cultural spaces, providing the general guidelines for professional practice in sites with cultural intangible heritage elements. Through this declaration, it was recommended to all ICOMOS members to remember



that intangible cultural heritage is closely related to its places of origin and it is present in every society and community. Therefore, it has to be assured that any restoration or conservation project follows the intangible cultural heritage components; this will allow experts to listen to the voice of the communities regarding their heritage.

At the 31st Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Christchurch, New Zealand, also in 2007, the role of the original communities managing their heritage was especially emphasized, this culminated with the incorporation of a fifth "C" ('Communities'),¹ to highlight the important role of local population in the preservation of heritage.

In 2012 the UNESCO launched the program "Sustainable Development and World Heritage: the role of local communities", based on the Operational Guidelines to apply the World, Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention which item 82 of the 2013 English version, emphasizes valuing the authenticity of a heritage asset taking into consideration the identification of those values that accompany it and that unequivocally ensure its credibility, among them: living traditions, local management systems, language and other intangible ways of heritage, such as spirit and feelings.

This trend clearly indicates that professionals, who work with heritage, regardless their area of specialization, need to integrally analyze the values of the site. The categories of Natural Heritage, Tangible Heritage and Intangible Heritage shall not be seen isolated one from the other.

As a result of the work conducted during the Symposium, its participants reach the following:

Conclusions

1. The draft ICICH Teemaneng Declaration provides valuable suggestions for how to include the community in all considerations related to the intangible values of place. The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, which is reviewed on a regular basis, is valuable to contribute social meaning of heritage sites and the need to involve communities in their preservation processes. The 1999 revision included intangible values among its conservation principles and guidelines. The most recent revision of this Charter in 2013 recognizes that intangible values constitute an integral aspect of the meaning of heritage. In the same manner, it recognizes that such values are not static, but they are part of a living cultural connection between past and future and that they become modified throughout time.

2. The international thought of the Twentieth Century regarding heritage management completely separated the social value of tangible assets, sites, monuments and works of art, from the value assigned by the community to those expressions and spaces where they conveyed their ancestral traditions. Intangible heritage was considered for many years as a second category heritage, limited to a folkloric vision of community participation using its collective heritage. For this reason, we require a broad effort to reconceptualize heritage categories, existing definitions, and scientific methods used in its valuation and management. Heritage, tangible and intangible, interpretation must reflect the diversity of meanings and the need to preserve our cultural heritage using a holistic approach.

¹ In accordance with the Budapest Declaration on World Heritage of 2002, four strategic objectives are needed: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building and Communication.



3. The diverse heritage assets valuations force us to establish methodologies allowing us to understand a variety of social possessions that overlap during its management. This requires designing and applying a participatory management that facilitates conflict negotiation and resolution allowing a balance while managing assets.
4. One of the most frequent difficulties in the conservation of a heritage asset is identifying its cultural tangible and intangible values. Myths, romantic and nostalgic interpretations, as well as programs and projects which only aim to obtain economic benefits provided by the asset must be avoided. It is necessary to try to do a living interpretation of the site, and local communities are the main source in order to understand it and value it.
5. Intangible Heritage conservation implies the communication of values from one generation to another one. One of the main difficulties arising from the contemporary dynamics to manage heritage is the different interpretations between such generations. It is necessary to generate projects and dynamics able to link the experience of senior citizens with those of the new generations. The first ones provide the tradition, knowledge and spirituality of the cultural asset; the second ones ensure vitality and creativity. Educational programs cannot be ignored, they can guarantee, through playful resources, the communication of social and spiritual connections to children, as well as the continuity of tradition. One of the essential factors to establish these connections is the daily use of languages, through ownership and self-esteem mechanisms.
6. A challenge to value Intangible Heritage is reestablishing lost connections. This can be clearly observed in indigenous and mestizo communities that coexist with archaeological sites who, very often, invent music, dances and traditions with limited historical support as tourist attraction. It is necessary the interdisciplinary work of archaeologists, anthropologists and historians who, together with the community and contemporary artists, allow reintegrating traditions with a clear reference to the heritage's age, without pretending false reconstructions.
7. In contemporary society, the sense of sight and the concept of “image” have sidelined any other site and cultural expression interpretation. It is necessary to rescue experiences perceived through other senses: local sounds, smells, textures and flavors, speeds and times, as fundamental components of a holistic way of valuing our heritage.
8. Community understanding of the environment and of constructing traditional knowledge and techniques are basic elements to preserve Cultural Heritage. Vernacular architecture must not be seen as a past tradition, it has to be considered as a source of information regarding materials, construction techniques, and social and economic-productive ways directly linked to the preservation of tangible heritage, physical well-being and the quality of life of its users.
9. Documentary heritage is a never-ending source to interpret natural, cultural, tangible and intangible heritage. Documentary and graphic archives, libraries, photo libraries and media libraries, must be integrated in projects that try to plan again a single structure of collective heritage.
10. Certainly, tourism is one the current sources of employment and wealth generation. However, this is not always a positive subject for the preservation of collective heritage. While natural and



cultural heritage can be seen directly impacted by opportunistic and massive projects, intangible heritage, being a much more sensitive asset, will definitely suffer any intervention. Cultural expressions survive thanks to the sustainable dynamics of the communities that generate them, for this reason it is necessary to carefully analyze the load capacity of each one of them, their cultural values, and the social sensitivity towards visitors, as a previous action to promote it as a destination imagine or attraction. In all cases, community interests and criteria must be more important than tourism interests.

11. The deep community dimension of Intangible Heritage poses a challenge for its protection on the topic of the legal sphere because it requires a review of the basis that support human rights, due to the fact that we are talking about new and complex realities. As part of this, legal concepts need redefining that will allow us to discover the same essence of cultural rights, as it is important to overcome extreme visions of the human rights universalism theory (that considers cultural diversity as an obstacle to institute a liberalism imposed from the exterior, without considering old visions of regional and local realities) and cultural relativism (that limits cultural expressions to an utilitarian vision converting them into simple ways to justify political and group interests). Therefore, the protection of Intangible Heritage assets and expressions should be supported by the radical relationship between humankind and its community, including material works and the environment; establishing criteria and processes to identify and effectively protect the elements that provide meaning, sense and transcendence to such heritage; promoting the coordinated participation of different governmental levels, and totally involving communities in the preservation of a common heritage.

Recommendations

In accordance with the conclusions of the 33rd International Symposium on Cultural Heritage Conservation organized by ICOMOS Mexicano held in Coatepec, Veracruz, presenters, attendees and members of the Symposium organization and academic committee issue the following recommendations, acknowledgements and observations to federal, state and municipal authorities, as well as to involved specialists and researchers, ICOMOS members and the civil society in general:

a.- To the Legislative Power in its Federal, State and Municipal bodies,

- To update legal instruments (laws, regulations, plans and programs) in order to incorporate, according to the 2012 Toluca Charter content, an integral vision of Cultural heritage in accordance with the holistic nature described thereby, specifically under paragraphs related to Heritage and Territory as well as Tangible and Intangible Heritage.

b.- To Federal Authorities,

- To the Federal Ministry of Tourism (SECTUR), to review and update the Magic Towns program, taking into consideration sites individuality, uniqueness and diversity, including all elements of intangible heritage value at each place, with community inclusion and appreciation mechanisms.



- To the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), to impulse the work still to be done for the Management Plan (Preservation and Management) and to define, if applicable, buffer stripes expansion for sites and monuments located at the *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, as well as to encourage all intangible heritage elements record and integration in this cultural route.
- To the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI), to cancel protection policies for Mexican traditional food as part of Intangible Cultural Heritage and to protect, and in several instances to reactivate, the local and traditional production of this element, which strongly qualifies as heritage, especially intangible.
- To the Ministry of Tourism, to CONACULTA, to INAH, and to the Government of Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave, to promote the integral retrofitting of the San Carlos Fortress located in Perote, taking into consideration a Preventive Preservation and Participatory Management Plan. This must include the historical record of its different functions, as well as the memory of the times it was used as jail and foreign communities' oppression site (graffiti, photos and other graphic expressions) related to its old inhabitants.

c.- To the State Government of Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave and to Papantla Municipality,

- To salute and celebrate the work conducted in the process to value and promote tangible and intangible heritage through the Indigenous Arts Center "Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana" located in Tajín, which is an example of participatory management recognized by the UNESCO in 2012 both at a national and international level as 'Program, project and activity to rescue intangible cultural heritage that best reflects the Convention principles and objectives'.

d.- To the Municipal Government of Coatepec,

- To recognize the social importance of the San Jerónimo Festival in Coatepec, as a significantly important collective expression for value appropriation, and value transmission through generations, example of a healthy and balanced relationship between inhabitants and visitors.
- To promote the reduction of vehicular traffic at the downtown, especially trucks and large vehicles, in order to reduce noise and visual pollution, helping this way to keep traditional ways of living in this area of town.
- To carry out an Integral Preservation Plan that includes the topics of mobility, soil use, commerce (established and street vendors) regulation, visual pollution (electric cables and advertising), as well as the conservation of vernacular architecture traditional typology (materials, eaves).
- To ensure that the José Iturriaga library in Coatepec will continue open to the public; this is an important legacy publicly inherited by its owner to the community.

e.- To the Municipal Government of Perote,



- To support preventive restoration and conservation proposals for the Tenex-tepec heritage, as a unique opportunity to integrate natural, cultural, tangible and intangible assets in a sustainable proposal designed to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants.

f.- To the Municipal Government of Xalapa,

- To carry out an Integral Conservation Plan that includes the topics of mobility, soil use, commerce (established and street vendors) regulation, visual pollution (electric cables and advertising), as well as the conservation of vernacular architecture traditional typology (materials, eaves).
- To reverse the works conducted at Juárez Park, in order to safeguard tangible and intangible elements of the site in relation to its history and its urban and architectural features. The works started in Juárez Park not only damage its intangible value for Xalapa's collectivity, but they also damage its coherence and physical integrity. New interventions, such as the concrete serpent covered with an imitation of Catalan *trencadis*, threaten those values, when in reality this space of natural and urban characteristics only requires good cleaning works, phytosanitary pruning and vegetation restitution, as well as the careful removal of many paint layers located on balustrades reliefs.
- To salute and celebrate the work of professors and researchers of the Universidad Veracruzana for their effort to study and value 20th Century Heritage in the state. However, it is necessary to request to the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA), to the Associations of Architects, and to college and preservers associations, to formalize and disseminate a catalog of works to be preserved, in order to have previous arguments, known by those responsible, before getting involved in works from this period. There are good examples of modern architecture throughout the state that require urgent documentation.
- To request protection and conservation for Palo Verde and Xalapeño cemeteries, that are totally abandoned, as well as for the old cemetery 5 de Febrero, which was declared historical monument by Presidential Decree in 1986.

g.- To the Municipal Government of Orizaba,

- To generate protection and conservation integral policies for the nursing home of the Mier y Pesado Foundation, This property has strong tangible and intangible heritage elements, linked to the history of the city, state and country.

h.- To the Municipal Government of Veracruz,

- To promote protection and conservation integral policies to manage the city and Port of Veracruz. Particularly, to rescue the popular character of la Huaca neighborhood and its inhabitants' traditions, as well as the natural and urban landscape of Salvador Díaz Mirón Avenue (la Alameda).

i.- To the Government of the Federal District,



- To promote the rescue of *chinampas* agricultural and productive activity in Xochimilco, Tláhuac and Milpa Alta, as a sole mechanism to ensure natural and cultural values permanence for this important heritage. *Chinampas* also constitute a sustainable mean to improve the quality of life of these areas' inhabitants, mainly producing vegetables, ornamental plants and flowers for Mexico City.
- To promote a regulation for the uses of the Main Square (Zócalo) in accordance with its iconic character of historical, political and cultural center of the country, full of intangible heritage values. Such regulation shall discourage uses that are incompatible with those attributes and that also attempt against citizens' rights.
- To regulate and activate a scholars and experts city council to prevent management by personnel who is not qualified to manage works of art, as it happened with the Carlos IV sculpture, by Manuel Tolsá ('el Caballito'), as well as to manage heritage public buildings and spaces.
- To promote official recognition for intangible heritage values around danzón music and to recognize danzón dancers as holders and transmitters of this music genre. In the same manner, to recognize and promote famous ballrooms still existing, such as Salón México and Salón Los Ángeles.

j.- To the State Government of Puebla,

- To reverse the recent installation of a cable car located between the Loreto and Guadalupe Fortresses Mountain and Puebla's historical center, which permanently affects the urban landscape, heritage properties and the uses and practices of inhabitants that interact and live in these sites.

k.- To the State Government of Morelos, ecclesiastical authorities of Morelos and Municipal Government of Cuernavaca,

- To reverse the works of the 'Museum of Religious Art of the Cuernavaca Cathedral', promoted by Adopt a Work of Art in Morelos, Civil Association, which metallic structure will affect the 16th Century Franciscan convent complex, both because of the place where the structure is being installed, as well as for the works of art (of high symbolic value) relocation proposal.

l. – To the State Government of Zacatecas,

- To request to the Zacatecas Municipality and to the Assembly for the Protection and Preservation of Monuments and Traditional Areas of the State of Zacatecas, more support in the process of urban and landscape planning at the Alameda, as well as at Lomas de Bracho, basic pillar of the city and place where las morismas festival is conducted, this festival is an intangible heritage element closely linked to the site and to the city's history.

m.- To the State Government of Campeche,



- To evaluate and consider again the process to rebuild the city's old walls, demolished during the 1970s, in order to avoid "historical fakes" in contrast with the restoration criteria that consider authenticity and integrity as fundamental values to preserve in heritage assets. Such rebuilding project represents a waste of economic resources that not necessarily will increase tourist activity and much less benefit the quality of life of citizens.

n.- To the State Governments of Jalisco, Nayarit, Zacatecas, Durango and San Luis Potosí,

- To foster respect towards all heritage elements, tangible and intangible, of the Wixáritari people, especially those elements related to the use of San Blas ceremonial centers and vernacular architecture, wixárika sacred sites, including the sacred route and mountain of Wirikuta.

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