

THE VENICE CHARTER LA CHARTE DE VENISE

1964 - 1994

Charte de Venise - 1964
Le but d'un monument comprend, non seulement la création architecturale
soignée, mais aussi le cadre où il s'insère. Le monument est inséparable de
l'histoire où il se situe et de l'histoire dont il est le témoin. En conséquence, les
mesures monumentales doivent tenir un grand compte des conditions architecturales, qu'elles
soient matérielles ou non acquises, avec le temps, sans dénigrement historique
et humain.

1. La conservation et la restauration des monuments constituent une discipline
qui fait appel à toutes les sciences et techniques qui peuvent contribuer à
l'étude et à la sauvegarde des faits et monuments.

Elle vise à sauvegarder tout autant l'œuvre d'art que le témoin d'un site.

La conservation des monuments est toujours favorisée par leur affectation
à une fonction utile à la société, mais cette affectation ne peut altérer
leur valeur.

C'est dans ce limite qu'il faudra concevoir et que l'on pourra autoriser la
renovation ou la restauration des monuments, en fonction des usages et des contenus.

2. La conservation des monuments impose d'abord le respect de leur
authenticité.

3. La restauration est une opération qui doit garder son caractère
inséparable. Elle vise à conserver et à révéler le mieux possible le
monument. Elle s'appuie sur le respect de la structure
originelle ou de documents authentiques et s'écrit en conséquence
l'hypothèse. Au cas où, tout travail de conservation implique une action
de comparaison à l'architecture ou l'œuvre de l'époque.



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
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CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS

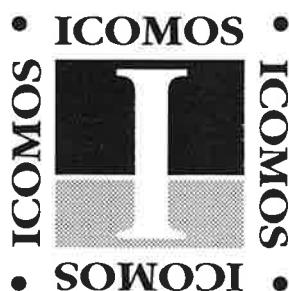
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Cover: First page of the original manuscript of the Venice Charter

Frontispiece: Pages from the manuscript of the original Venice Charter, Archives, University of Leuven

The Venice Charter

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INTERNATIONAL CHARTER FOR THE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS AND SITES

IIInd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, Venice, 1964. Adopted by ICOMOS in 1965.

Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses to their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.

It is essential that the principles guiding the preservation and restoration of ancient buildings should be agreed upon and be laid down on an international basis, with each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions.

By defining these basic principles for the first time, the Athens Charter of 1931 contributed towards the development of an extensive international movement which has assumed concrete form in national documents, in the work of ICOM and UNESCO and in the establishment by the latter of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property. Increasing awareness and critical study have been brought to bear on problems which have continually become more complex and varied; now the time has come to examine the Charter afresh in order to make a thorough study of the principles involved and to enlarge its scope in a new document.

Accordingly, the IIInd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments which met in Venice from May 25th to 31st, 1964, approved the following text:

DEFINITIONS

ARTICLE 1.

The concept of an historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or an historic event. This applies not only to great works of arts but also to more modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.

ARTICLE 2.

The conservation and restoration of monuments must have recourse to all the sciences and techniques which can contribute to the study and safeguarding of the architectural heritage.

ARTICLE 3.

The intention in conserving and restoring monuments is to safeguard them no less as works of art than as historical evidence.

CONSERVATION

ARTICLE 4.

It is essential to the conservation of monuments that they be maintained on a permanent basis.

ARTICLE 5.

The conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose. Such use is therefore desirable but it must not change the lay-out or decoration of the building. It is within this limits only that modifications demanded by a change of function should be envisaged and may be permitted.

ARTICLE 6.

The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting wick is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification wick would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed.

ARTICLE 7.

A monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it is located. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interests of paramount importance.

ARTICLE 8.

Items of sculpture, painting or decoration which form an integral part of a monument may only be removed from it if this is the sole means of ensuring their preservation.

RESTORATION

ARTICLE 9.

The process of retoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins and in this case moreover any extra work wick is indispensable must be distinct from the arcitectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

ARTICLE 10.

Where traditional techniques prove inadequate, the consolidation of a monument can be achieved by the use of any modern technique for conservation and construction, the efficacy of which has been shown by scientific data and proved by experience.

ARTICLE 11.

The valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected since unity of style is not the aim of a restoration. When a building includes the superimposed work of different periods, the revealing of the underlying state can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and when what is removed is of little interest and the material wick is brought to light is of great historical, archaeological or aesthetic value, and its state of preservation good enough to justify the action. Evaluation of the importance of elements involved and the decision as to what may be destroyed cannot rets solely on the individual in charge of the work.

ARTICLE 12.

Replacement of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or historic evidence.

ARTICLE 13.

Additions cannot be allowed except in so far as they do not detract from the interesting parts of the building, its traditional setting, the balance of its composition and relation with its surroundings.

HISTORIC SITES

ARTICLE 14.

The sites of monuments must be the object of special care in order to safeguard their integrity and ensure that they are cleared and presented in a seemly manner. The work of conservation and restoration carried out in such places should be inspired by the principles set forth in the foregoing articles.

EXCAVATIONS

ARTICLE 15.

Excavation should be carried out in accordance with scientific standards and the recommendation defining international principles to be applied in the case of archaeological excavation adopted by UNESCO in 1956.

Ruins must be maintained and measures necessary for the permanent conservation and protection of architectural features and objects discovered must be taken. Furthermore, every means must be taken to facilitate the understanding of the monument and to reveal it without ever distorting its meaning.

All reconstruction work should, however, be ruled out *a priori*. Only anastylosis, that is to say, the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts can be permitted. The material used for integration should always be recognizable and its use should be the least that will ensure the conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form.

PUBLICATION

ARTICLE 16.

In all works of preservation, restoration or excavation, there should always be precise documentation in the form of analytical and critical reports, illustrated with drawings and photographs.

Every stage of the work of clearing, consolidation, rearrangement and integration, as well as technical and formal features identified during the course of the work, should be included. This record should be placed in the archives of a public institution and made available to research workers. It is recommended that the report be published.