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# (In)tangible Heritages: A Critical Review for an Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) Perspective in Sub-Saharan Africa

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## Abstract

Heritage conversation has continuously elicited genuine concern from stakeholders, evokes controversies, and creates disputes in determining its worldview that is truly considered universal. The concern on the adopted Eurocentric perspective of Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) and the emerging calls for an Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) constructivist and transformative post-modernist worldview. The sustainability concerns for all indigenous and national cultures that are in accordance with their unique value system are here considered paramount. The study essentially, undertook a critical review of the historical evolution of the heritage discourse, through the three major charters and conventions of 1964, 1972, and 2003 towards contextualising the discourse perspective. The study was undertaken through a critical review of relevant literature chronologically on the heritage subject matter. The study product is the development of a framework for ALHD that is conscious of the indigenous communities' value systems within Sub-Saharan Africa. The study recommended the use of an integrated heritage discourse framework for the identification, documentation, and conservation of indigenous heritage features and landscapes jointly by all stakeholders towards ensuring that sustainable transgenerational heritage is bequeathed.

**Keywords:** Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD), Cultural Landscapes, Indigenous Architectural Heritage, (In)tangible Heritage, Stakeholders Value Preferences, Sub-Saharan Africa

## 1. Introduction

Although the Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) perspective have dominated the heritage worldview for most of the twentieth century. However, the Post millennium, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) era has brought to question more pointily prevalent heritage tenets. The concern of relegating Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) against Tangible Heritage (TH), the stance

on indigenous architectural heritage and the critical place of socio-cultural value preferences of stakeholders and the diversity of perspectives in determining heritage value and its significance are prevalent. Furthermore, the latest discourse perspective has once more provided critical stakeholders' opportunities to contribute to the debate and propound convincing arguments for possible adaptation and mainstream integration. The chapter, therefore, calls for new questions, new responses that are holistic, integrative and sustainable for all peoples and cultures of the world in the post-modernist millennium for SDGs attainment in current and future heritage management base on a paradigm shift.

The paradigm of intangible tangibility and the tangibility of intangibles are quite contradictory and seeming divisive, however, the chapter argues that all the tangibles heritages are living and have their existence at the instance of the intangible's cultural heritage dynamisms. Therefore, all tangibles (physical) domains are first and foremost intangible (spiritual) beings; without which nothing seems to exist at the perceptual domain and the said realm of reality. The tangibility of intangible heritage features also confirms Vecco [1] argument that heritage discourse has merged into one, the past testimonies and its goods; which is being driven by the intangible resource base [2]. If Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) would remain relevant and all-encompassing, then it should therefore be true in spirit and the letter of its profession. It must be professionally guided, but socio-culturally anchored on indigenous immaterial and material societies developmental processes. The study propounded integrative heritage view is akin to the architectural 'form follows function' paradigm of Luis Sullivan in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It means space is created base on its functional requirement or necessity space or material heritage is an extension of the immaterial socio-cultural processes of any people. Frank Lloyd Wright argues however that form and function are the same further also reinforces the intangible tangible and tangible intangibility as the same. Essentially affirming that each one of the two heritage categories and domains flows into one another thereby giving birth to some of the great architectural masterpieces in the modern era of architecture. However, translating the established argument of the nineteenth century had been quite impossible due to the highly machinated arguments of the architectural modernist movement lead by Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe amongst others [3–5]. Thus the question of an integrative nature of things and thought is now even more pertinent in the post-millennium evolving heritage perspective arguments.

A chronological evolution of heritage discourse perspectives over time and their critical milestone principles and positions as well as how they foreshadow current accepted reality will be carefully analysed. Therefrom congruence viewpoints and their point of divergence will serve as a guide in critically creating a true picture for Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) for all times as the chapter's contribution. Heritage here is considered as a living socio-cultural process over time, it could be from the past, an expression of the present and could be a projected futuristic realm. Simply, heritage is considered a process that transcends time in nature (form) and operation. Heritage is beyond the past, rather encompasses the present that could be operative in the future-for all generation. At this point, the study addresses heritage definition, concepts and various discourse perspectives, while contextualising them for the study purpose. To understand the architectural heritage worldview, the study firstly highlights the broad concept of heritage definition and evolutionary process from inception to contemporary worldview. An analysis of the concept of cultural heritage and its evolution in Western Europe stated that the coinage of the

term heritage was from French Patrimoine-parent heritage that is for personal heritage which went through an epoch of evolvement to its present usage [1]. Similarly, the word monuments were originally considered as an expression of worthy historical testimonies being preserved [6]. With the French revolution, the royal properties were appropriated as that of the public based on the secularisation principle. Indigenous Architecture here has to do with the architecture that is native to a people and evolves from the socio-cultural processes and sustenance needs including the desire for the activity's habitation. Indigenous is both in terms of design concept, materials and construction techniques and distinguishes it from vernacular and traditional architecture. It is the indigeneity sustenance of heritage that requires reassessment within the global context of heritage discourse.

Study's chapter review is justified considering the prevalence of the AHD perspective which is mainly Eurocentric information and operation. Further, the exclusion of very potent indigenous heritage features across Sub-Saharan Africa on the guise of their not being of universal significance required a critical revisit. If the future and identity of the Africans and their heritage resource base would be sustained over the next century, the concept of ALHD must be appropriately integrated into the subsequent process of heritage discourse, conventions and charters. The evolutionary trend of heritage at various point in history demonstrated that just before the Second World War, the heritage concept became internationally institutionalised and did imbibe the cultural dimension with the 1931 Athens conference. The conversation translates from the objective to the subjective, which is from historic monument to logic of the heritage, and that is where the tangible and intangible heritage debates emanated. Heritage-monument discourse was however gradually merged into one by adoption without a clear statement on why and in what way the parental inherited goods and the testimonies of the past became one, but for the event(s) of history [1]. The events of history that have defined our heritage discourse for almost a century seems to have arrived at a threshold and requires a thorough reassessment to propound sound holistic heritage discourse paradigm shift. It is the examination and contextualization of the heritage discourse perspective that could halt the prevalent trend of material heritage against the immaterial heritage perspectives. This review chapter believed that the immaterial (spiritual) and the material (physical) are the same, first as a process and then secondly as a product.

The study scope is within three charter of 1964, 1972 and 2003 in the perspective of indigenous architecture of Sub-Saharan African communities. It is worthy to state that critical charters and conventions undertaken by relevant heritage organisation within the stated period do not necessarily exhaust all pieces of literature on the subject matter. Several efforts have been made on the concern of Africans on heritage discourse perspective in the global sphere. These concerns have indeed resulted in several efforts as the considerations had earlier been underscored based on 1989 (Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore). Similarly, the 2001 and 2002 United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the Istanbul Declaration respectively. In the chapter contribution context, therefore, intangible heritage serves as the heart of heritage discourse and perspectives development. Subsequently, the intangible evolves into a product in form of tangible heritage within historical or cultural settings. The duo of intangible and tangible heritages is driven by the stakeholders' significance value preferences, thereby giving birth to a global view that is considered holistic and integrative of all processes and products from generation to generation.



## 2. Evolution of heritage discourse perspectives

Because of the transcending nature of the heritage process, the indigenous African heritage had suffered untold interruption since the colonialization adventure. In most instances, the religious and spiritual attachment of the people to their land, cultural festivities, ritual process and ancestral responsibilities are severed. The severance of the people from their socio-cultural living process has made it quite difficult for their heritage to be sustainable regardless of their designation as tangible or intangible. The Abrahamic faiths have virtually erased the African beliefs systems and thus their life processes which determine their heritage. The process of breaking the indigenous African from their cultural festivities and ceremonies through rituals started with destroying and looting their artefacts, exporting archaeological findings and indoctrinating them with a new belief system that is not compactable with their worldview. Such viewpoint still dominates the African continent and determines their perspective; however, the tide is rising in contradiction of the prevalent directing of thought. The coming tide cannot be swept away under any guise, considering the barefaced reality of past detours and the urgent cry for the truly known reality of the Africans-their customs and traditional lifestyle. On the other hand, the universal heritage concept evolved from the charters, conventions and resolution of UNESCO; which does not necessarily demonstrate the unity of the spirit and the letter as initially advocated.

A broader view of heritage concept showed that over the years' scholars have demonstrated that the heritage concept and discourse can be visualised in two dimensions (visible and the invisible; material and immaterial or tangible and intangible) components and that each is complementary to the other rather than isolated. It is, however, worthy to note that definition and identity clashes of heritage discourse across the varied socio-cultural divide have many strains [1, 7]. The varied strains are often visible across all regions of the world [8, 9]. Accumulated research demonstrated that the visible(tangible) cultural heritage as in **Table 1** is often presented as the generally accepted perspective of most discourse [13]. From such viewpoint tangible heritage is repeatedly considered as the main type of heritage that tourist admires, locals hold unto and managers pride themselves about, which is referred to as the Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) perspective. Though, AHD perception seems to be mostly Eurocentric and mainly conversed in the past; recently, the invisible(intangible) heritage as in **Table 2** are no longer glossed over. In fact, since the 2003 convention intangible(immaterial) heritage now serves as the real driving force of the material heritage [2]. It is this new perspective of the tangible and intangible heritage that provokes this study and specifically its relevance in strategic placement of architectural heritage features as they are valued amongst indigenous African communities of Sub-Saharan Africa [10, 16]. This tangible and intangible definition and discourse conflicts is illustrated in **Tables 1** and **2** and will here further analyse and synthesised for ease of understanding and subsequent applicability in the empirical conceptual studies. The specific attributes of tangible and intangible heritage attributes of tangible and intangible heritage further aggregated in the next section based on the relevant charters.

The review discourse is both thematic and typological in categorisation, where intangible and tangible heritage perspectives are considered as a process that could evolve into a product. Discourse perspectives of the tangible heritage categorisation and its subcategorization, stating implication concerning the study perspective is as indicated in **Table 1**.

S/ nos	Heritage categorisation	Sub-categorisation	Remarks
1	Cultural	Monuments: Architectural, sculpture & paintings, archaeological structures, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features.	Traditionally these were the first set of buildings that invoke the concept of architectural heritage and the need for their conservation.
		Group of Buildings: Separate or connected buildings with homogenous of place on landscape.	Group of buildings form an integral part of cultural landscape heritage features and quite relevant for this particular study.
		Sites (works of man or combined with nature, areas including archaeological sites which are of Outstanding Universal Value(OUV) from historical, aesthetics, ethnological and anthropological point of view).	This landscape features are similarly significant for the study of indigenous settlements across the study area.
2	Natural	Physical and biological formations or groups.	Most indigenous communities are an integral part of the natural and geological landscape.
		Geological and Physiographical Formations and Delineated Areas of Threatened Species.	
		Natural sites or Precisely Delineated Natural Areas.	
3	Mixed Cultural Landscape	Clearly defined landscape: Gardens and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons of not always associated with religious or monumental buildings.	The mixed cultural landscape is an integration of the man-made and naturally endowed features of a site. This is where the study cultural landscape sites could be also categorised.
		Organically Evolved Landscape: Relics or fossil landscape, continuity landscape.	
		Associated Cultural landscape: Virtue of powerful religious, artistic or cultural association with natural element rather than material cultural evidence.	

Source: Adapted from [10–12].

**Table 1.**  
*Outline of heritage discourse and categorisation (tangible heritage variables).*

The illustration shown on **Table 2** indicates the main domains of intangible heritage features including their sub-categorisation and the remarks demonstrates how each intangible heritage has a tangible equivalent space.

Heritage concept as tangible and intangible having Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) as prevailing perspective is critically analysed here. In their study, Smith and Campbell [17] argued that the term intangible heritage is a misrepresentation and contradiction of the concept of heritage based on the Authorised Heritage Discourse perspective. Their perspective of considering intangible heritage as being merely a tautology is nevertheless, both contentious and agreeable. It is first considered as agreeable because it has been argued that all heritage is intangible [2]. However, the averred perception of all heritage as intangible also believes that heritage is a process but unfortunately a process that is mainly a preoccupation of the experts or professionals. The contention here is that intangible heritage is here considered more community centred in outlook and process and enabled by professional guidance and not serving as its determinant. Intangible cultural heritage bearers are considered as a critical part of the process of heritage discourse and categorisation as well as the listing requirements. The critical role of the local community and their socio-cultural significance in intangible

S/nos	Heritage categorisation	Sub-categorisation	Remarks
1	Main domains of Intangible Cultural Heritage(ICH)	Oral tradition and Expressions	This is where most of the Sub-Saharan African civilization is currently quite visible and continually in practice as a living culture. Though there has been some transformation over the years, these heritage domain features are the essence of the visible heritage buildings and monument across most of the indigenous African communities. Intangible architectural heritage fora or physical environment in order of the presented domain could be stated as; (a) Courtyards, Fireplace & Village square; (b) Village Square; (c) Village Square, Shrine, Sacred Grove/ Forest; (d) Courtyard, Farmland, Craft centre and (e) Blacksmith hut, Crafts shed & Terra cotta centre.
2		Performance Arts	
3		Social Practices, Rituals and Festive events	
4		Knowledge and Practice Concerning Nature and the Universe	
5		Traditional Craftsmanship	

Source: Adapted from [10, 14, 15].

**Table 2.**  
*Outline of heritage discourse and categorisation (intangible heritage variables).*

heritage discourse distinguishes it from the tangible heritage; which can be argued as mainly a product of the Eurocentric world view anchored by the experts [2, 13, 18]. The consideration of intangible heritage as contentious in heritage discourse is anchored on the fact that it is the pressure from mainly excluded heritage realities of the southern hemisphere (Asia and Africa) that gave birth to the recognition of alternative heritage discourse. The intangible heritage discourse perspective has greatly questioned the 1964 Venice Charter for conservation and restoration of monuments and sites, which concretised the Authorised Heritage Discourse perspective for most of the twentieth century. In 2003 based on several contentious discourses and misrepresentation that cause misunderstanding, the convention for the Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage was born [14]. Towards furthering the diversity of views by various researchers Smith [2] argued that an increasing number of heritage studies is currently ongoing on multi-disciplinary research and practices. Smith also claimed that heritage is a process of acculturalization; which often involves diverse aspects of its study.

**3. Tangible cultural heritage categorisation (1964 to 1972)**

The International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Venice charter of 1964 was a product of the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technician of Historic Monuments (ICATHM) held on 25th to 31st May 1964, further derived from the Athens Conference of 1931 and Italian Restoration Convention of 1932. During the congress, it was agreed that monuments and sites protection should be towards achieving social usefulness within the heritage historical setting and maintaining its original scale. However, since the Venice conference declaration, not much has been heard of the instrumentality of social value as the commanding light for global architectural heritage conservation. It became particularly Eurocentric and materially oriented with the promulgation of the 1964 Venice charter. The International Charter of Venice of 1964 first article did considered heritage as;

*“The concept of a 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 a historic event. This applies not only to great works of art but also to more modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance over time” [11].*

Unfortunately, cultural significance with time in most indigenous Africa cultural setting might mean nothing but an expression. After all, the concept of OUV that is supposed to guarantee authenticity, material integrity, universal significance and management practices is nebulous and ineffective in the application within indigenous cultural landscapes.

### **3.1 The Venice charter of 1964 (international charter for the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites)**

Athens Charter of 1931 laid the earliest principles that later give birth to the 1964 Venice charter that has sixteen articles commencing with the assertion that it was;

*“Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of 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” ([11], p. 1).*

Considering that a message from the past in form of historic monuments abound in virtually all cultures and communities through time; there is therefore the concern of which message is more dominant and how does preserving it preserves other people’s historical past. What is being argued here is that each people have a message for their future generation and based on their cultural values. It, therefore, becomes quite difficult to segregate some features as the sole witness of the traditional past and as a unique representative of human civilization. Similarly, though there is an observed unity of human value, they cannot be said to be the same or the listed heritage as the only representation of the common heritage for all cultures. For a fully rich authenticity assessment of heritage features, all parameter of the various heritage culture and tradition should form the core framework (tangible and intangible).

The second paragraph of the charter argued that “... with each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions.” ([11], p. 1). The concern however is that how could each country apply the plan base on the framework of its culture and tradition when in the first instance their unique culture and tradition were not fundamentally the basis of the charter. This concern ultimately was realised when the intangible heritage argument was adopted. Unfortunately, the ICH was also treated as just an alternative heritage rather than considering them as an integral part of the process of heritage development.

### **3.2 1972 convention for protection of cultural and natural heritage**

As preliminary procedures for the convention held in Paris from 17th October to 21st November 1972 the 17 sessions of the UNESCO congress noted that; heritage features are continually being threatened and often destroyed as a result of traditional causes and socio-economic dynamics, thereby aggravating the concerns of these occurrences [12, 19]. Further consideration was made concerning the deterioration and its effect on the cultural and natural global heritage. Similarly, the consideration and concern for lack of adequate resources and technical know-how amongst nation towards protecting these heritages led to the adoption and promulgation of the convention. The charter is made up of eight sections and 38 articles According to article 1 of the charter it categorised Cultural heritage as being;



S/nos	Heritage charter/convention/ recommendations	Year	Unique features	Remarks
1	Athens Charter	1931	Some international doctrines based on adopted principles were used in drafting an international practice code. This code is for the protection of monuments and sites; which can be achieved through conservation, restoration and contextual consolidation of the monument site.	Laid the foundation for the Authorised Heritage Discourse that was centred on tangible cultural heritage.
2	Italian Restoration	1932	An official “Scientific Restoration” standard was supported as a form of methodology for protective intervention on ancient monuments and sites.	As home to some of the best known classical architectural master pieces, the restoration template ultimately laid the basis for subsequent conservation activities in other heritage structures that were considered as worthy of being universally recognised.
3	Venice Charter	1964	The charter codified standards for conservation and restoration practices as it regards historic monuments and sites.	Is the framework for tangible cultural heritage identification, conservation and listing
4	Amsterdam Declaration	1975	It provided support for the integrated conservation undertakings with respect to single monuments, urban and regional planning and its processes. Here the integrated conservation was adopted that incorporated historical knowledge, conservation, socio-cultural benefits and behaviour.	The first major concern on an integrated format for heritage conservation, which ultimately has effect on the 2003 convention on safeguarding intangible heritage as being a critical aspect of true conservation intent.
5	Nara Document on Authenticity	1994	Societies are a manifestation of their heritage that is engrained in art, music and literature as their civilization often in form of tangible or intangibles value expressions that deserved noteworthy esteeming.	The significant place of society in the management of heritages was brought to bear, thereby reiterating the place for an integrated concept of conservation, that can be enduring.
6	The Burra Charter	1999	Defined subjects in relation to cultural heritage significance providing guidelines for management as well as conserving diverse sites of cultural significance. The cultural value of significant places is natural, indigenous and historic.	This Burra charter brought out the significance significant value of indigenous heritage places, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa where the place

S/nos	Heritage charter/convention/ recommendations	Year	Unique features	Remarks
7	Charter of Cracow	2000	Specific conservation interventions on architecture, urban and landscape heritage as well as artefacts are categorised as environmental control, maintenance, repair, restoration, renovation and rehabilitation.	This allow for the indigenous landscape heritage to be conserved based on various perspectives; ie; using environmental control, repairs and restoration.
8	ICOMOS-ISCARSAH Charter	2003	Cultural heritage conservation and restoration are treated as engineering and technical activity. Thus the place of scientifically based understudy of actual realities and effects on the monument or site as the principal basis for any action.	Due to the highly technical and scientific requirement for engineering conservation activities current conservation effort are better managed based on accurate data collected.

Source: Adapted from Rouhi [20].

**Table 3.**  
*Other selected charters, conventions and recommendations on heritage conservation and restoration.*

*“(i) monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science; (ii) groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science; (iii) sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view” ([12], p. 2; [19], p. 10).*

While article 2 of the charter considered natural heritage as;

*“(i) natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; (ii) geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation; (iii) natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.” ([12], p. 2; [19], p. 10).*

These natural heritage features in most instances are an integral part of the cultural landscape of indigenous communities' heritage. Therefore, even when such heritage categorisation is established, they do not necessarily affirm a definite demarcation. This is where the indigenous heritage features of most Sub-Saharan African categorisation become burdensome. In Africa, there is little distinction between the natural and cultural heritage and the tangible is seen as an evolvement of the intangible.

Furthermore, there are several other charters, conventions and recommendation during heritage discourse that need to be highlighted because of their relevance to the study as illustrated in **Table 3**. The table gives an idea of the evolution of the various heritage discourse perspectives towards giving birth to the main charters of the study.

#### **4. Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (2003 convention)**

It could be argued that some of the perspectives on the place of indigenous heritage vice-a-vice the Eurocentric world view force the emergence of the 2003 convention on intangible cultural heritage. However, it could be further posited that the current position can only serve as the impetus to further the cause of integrating indigenous heritage perspective and create alternative heritage discourse which is what the chapter contribution is currently advocating. Base on the 2003 convention held on 29th September to 17 October 2003 at the 32nd session of the UNESCO general assembly in Paris France several referrals and consideration formed the basis of the final convention draft position [14]. Referrals were derived from 1948 (Universal Declaration on Human Rights), the 1966 International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights). The considerations were based on the supposition that intangible heritage is considered as the mainspring of diversity in culture and a central supporter of sustainable development. These considerations had earlier been underscored based on 1989 (Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore). Similarly, are the 2001 and 2002 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the Istanbul Declaration respectively. According to article one of the conventions, its objectives include;

*“(i) to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage; (ii) to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned; (iii) to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof; (iv) to provide for international cooperation and assistance” ([14], p. 2).*

The stated objectives indicate that safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage, their respect, need for awareness which guarantees global assistance for the heritage indicates that the primary desire of the convention is to assuage growing calls for indigenous cultural resource acknowledgement, documentation and indeed their appropriate conservation and listing.

According to the convention's Article 2, intangible cultural heritage is;

*“...practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as 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” ([14], p. 2).*

In providing a sense of identity and continuity of their heritage character, what the definition of intangible heritage is arguing, is its physical essence to a people's existence and subsequently bequeathed. On that basis, therefore, this thesis is equally arguing that intangible cultural heritage is in a way an integral part of the physical or visible heritage(s). There is to say, there cannot be a material heritage without its immaterial flip side. Though an immaterial heritage might not have a truly tangible component. Thus, the process-product argument of heritage is here affirmed as an integrated unit.

Further, the convention categorised Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) into five domains that include;

*“(i) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (ii) performing arts; (iii) social practices, rituals and festive events; (iv) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; (v) traditional craftsmanship” ([14], p. 2)*

Intangible Cultural Heritages (ICH) are categorised as stated above, but what comes to mind then is whether all these ICH features are spiritual, invisible and therefore immeasurable in the same sense as the tangible? While the two heritage categories measuring scale might be contested as different; this chapter review maintains that they are an integral part of the processes of evolving heritage features, whether tangible or intangible. In other words, intangible heritage does birth tangible heritages as either movable, immovable, physical and therefore tangible. They are twins and need to be valued as an integrated whole, which could be a sure medium of protecting and safeguarding both heritages through integrated conservation strategies. This argument is best demonstrated in the cultural landscapes of indigenous communities of Sub-Saharan Africa and remain the principal basis of their conservation if they are to be protected and safeguarded for current and future generation.

The various charters have been evolving since the 1964 Venice charter, it considers the historic monuments to the contemporary tradition; where the



human value is consciously acknowledged as collective heritage that requires a concerted effort in safeguarding them for the future. The safeguarding and conservation strategy can only be achievable if the value essence of heritage is assessed properly. Subsequently, the 1972 charter for the protection of cultural and natural heritage came up; where the concern was on heritage features continual threats and destruction that was due to traditional dynamics and socio-economic causes. The charter of 2003 on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage five domains is an attempt to sort the growing southern hemispheric concern on the virtual exclusion of their heritage reality based on AHD. What the three charters and conventions have shown, however, is the changing dynamics of the heritage discourse and this chapter intends to extend it further to an integrated format, where intangible and tangible heritage features are identified, documented and conserved for listing as a holistic process-product endeavour. The charters and conventions discussed, have essentially aid in establishing the study focus from its historical past to contemporary socio-cultural realities amongst indigenous communities. It argued on the integrative nature of all heritage and the need to formally acknowledge such categorisation as well as their conservation for transgenerational benefits. The call for constant reassessment and review of global perspectives on heritage discourse for future revaluation and redefinition of heritage in accordance to ALHD perspective.

## **5. Tangible heritage listing criteria (monuments, ensembles and sites)**

To understand the basis of heritage being considered and listed, the study further expounds on the various criteria necessary to list a building, monument or site in this section. Similarly, a clear understanding of the architectural heritage features as being different from the monument, ensembles and sites is undertaken. Here heritage features are considered as physical or immaterial attributes identifiable with a society, monument is however mostly multidimensional structure with art historical, political, technical or architectural relevance to a people [11, 12]. The key ingredient for heritage listing based on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is anchored on authenticity, integrity and universal value significance [19]. By authenticity, it is meant as the quality of being genuine to be acceptable or even believed. There must be no pretensions, but serving as original based on some honest essential features [21].

Based on the concept of authenticity, the credibility of truthful information is significant in value attributes. It is worthy to state here that the value attribute does vary from one culture to another and even within a culture. Therefore, the use of OUV in determining monumental heritage could be questioned even more emphatically. In examining heritage value within the cultural context the attributes for consideration are; “materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language, and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors” ([19], pp. 53–54). Correspondingly in establishing heritage integrity, the main concern is concerning the material integrity of the heritage feature specifically. To assess the extent of heritage integrity the OUV elements, their size and any effect of advertising development or neglect are established for a heritage. It is usually framed up as a statement of integrity that shows physical fabric condition, that could be the impact of controlled deterioration and the dynamism of the heritage function within the cultural landscape. Ultimately, the very critical factor for listing heritage is its value significance whether it is based on historical, art, science, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological viewpoint ([19], p. 10).

The actual component units of heritage as monuments, ensembles and sites had been established in the definitions of cultural heritage as discussed in the 1972 charter and detailed earlier [19]. Heritage management strategy is, therefore, a critical part of the criteria required for its listing. There is also the concern for heritage future maintenance of its outstanding value after it has been inscribed. The need for long term legislation, the role of regulatory agencies, institutional and traditional protection as well as heritage effective boundaries is paramount. There is the need for the allowance of a buffer zone to shield the actual property being protected is quite significant. For an effective management system of protected properties, the stakeholders should have a common understanding, maintain planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback succession. Equally, the stakeholders should always be involved in any strategy or action, allotment of basic assets, capacity building and functionally accountability.

As argued by ICOMOS [22] heritage listing were initially evolved around three (3) major frameworks of Typological, Chronological-Regional and Thematic frameworks. The World Heritage Committee (WHC) being strengthened by Global Strategy later esteemed the thematic style to heritage listing, this has since remained the accepted framework in use. The typological framework considered the various types of cultural heritage, while the chronological-regional framework has the world heritage viewed in term of time and space. It is worthy to state here that the thematic framework in listing heritage based on Outstanding Universal value (OUV) criteria did also utilised the typology of creative responses and continuity as indicated in **Table 4**. It is significant to state here that it was from the thematic framework as shown in the table that current heritage perception evolved to ultimately incorporate the concept of tangible and intangible heritage perspective being currently conversed, as the emphasis of the chapter's contribution. It, therefore, calls for a reassessment of the heritage discourse perspective that is holistic in terms of thematic, chronological-regional and typological nature. ICCROM 1976 report written by its director, similarly argued that the different heritage values that should be considered are the artistic, historic and typological values [22]. The artistic value here was concern with original and unique creation with exceptional universally acknowledged quality according to the experts. The historic value is a concern with the verification of the feature in terms of uniqueness/rarity, novelty, inspiration exercise in time and space by the heritage as well as status for the comprehension of development comparative to historic events. The typological value:

*"... would seem to require explicit identification and distinction compared to the historic value, under which it would normally be considered, to guarantee that the characteristic works of a certain tradition menaced by disappearance due to development of modern life, could be saved and conserved in the form of typical examples, representative of a culture that risks disappearance, as well as in cases where these types of works do not represent the unique character that qualify works recognized universally from the artistic or historic point of view" ([22], p. 11).*

Heritage typological classification, therefore, encourages a variety of heritage features across the different cultural settings which essentially could ensure that threatened heritages or those at risk of disappearing are appropriately identified, documented and conserved for transgenerational benefits. In short there should be develop an integrated framework for heritage identity and listing process that is all encompassing and holistic inconsideration of all cultures and peoples.

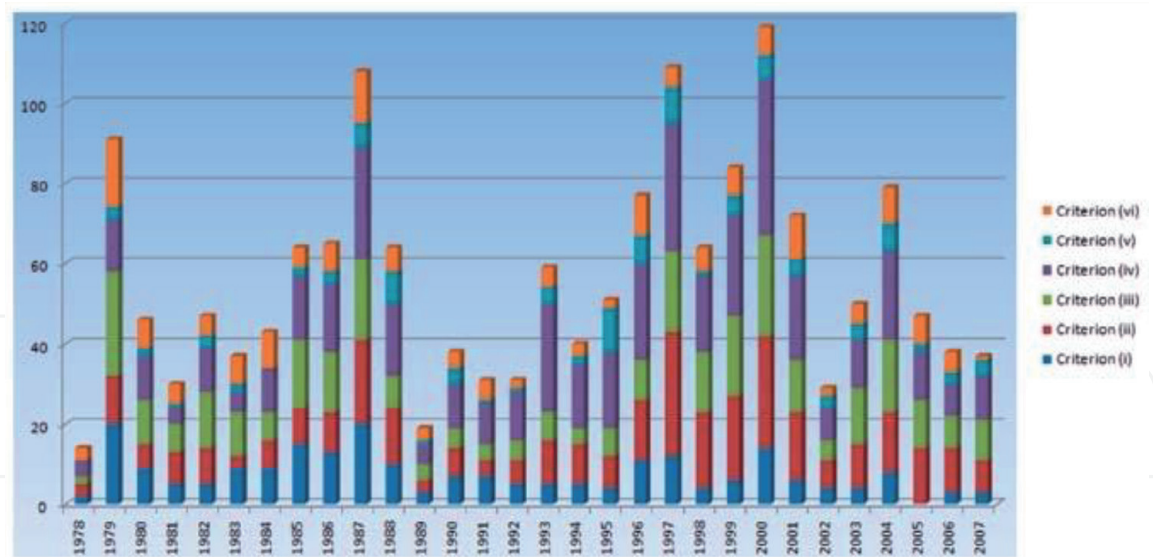
In the course of listing various heritage features, UNESCO with the technical support of the World Heritage Committee utilised some criteria to arrive at the

S/nos	Criteria	Features	Remarks
1	A masterpiece of human creative genius.	A piece of the history of humankind.	Aesthetic/artistic value plays a role in exchange of artistic trends.
2	An important interchange of human values over time within cultural area on architectural and related developments.	Happens over a span of time or within a cultural area, thus is within a historical framework and periods.	Exchange of artistic trend with respect to monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.
3	A testimony to a unique cultural tradition or a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.	Concerns cultural history or civilization.	Applicable to virtually all heritage features and sites.
4	Significant stages in human history with outstanding types of building, architectural, technological. Ensemble or landscape.	The outstanding examples of the different types and categories of monuments, ensembles and sites are meant to stand for.	Concern certain historical types of buildings and ensembles have aesthetic dimensions.
5	An example of a traditional human settlement, land-use or sea-use etc	Represents a piece of human history.	Similar to criteria (iv) above and true for settlements.
6	Part of the history of a place Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance	The association with events is mainly referring to historical events or domicile traditions.	Associated with artistic works and depictions.
7	The major stages of earth's history Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.	History also plays a role with regard to natural heritage, in the case of this criterion.	Areas of exceptional beauty and aesthetic importance on natural phenomena.
8	The biological processes in the evolution and development of ecosystems.	Are a part of the history of the earth.	Often remote and unique natural features that unveils the history of our planet.
9	An outstanding example of eco-biological and continuing evolutionary processes.	Involves terrestrial, fresh water plants and animals as well as marine life.	These are continuing significant evolutionary processes of all things on earth.
10	Encompass substantially critical natural habitat of biological species.	That should be in-situ as well as being threatened	Most features have scientific and conservation universal relevance.

*Note: In most instances scientific value and ethnological or anthropological values could be combined with different criteria as they are being assessed. These OUV are variously presented in the different countries' protection laws as a reflection of their cultural heritage features that are mostly identified as monuments. However, they are usually an expression of the classical historical values, aesthetic/artistic values in their wide-ranging form. Authenticity and integrity are core requirement that are reinforced by the OUV in heritage listing.*  
*Source: Variously adapted from [11, 19, 22, 23].*

**Table 4.**  
*Framework of criteria for cultural heritages listing based on OUV.*

selected features and based on its recommendation the features are treated as being of significance to be protected for the benefit of the global community. **Figure 1** graphically illustrated the various criteria that were used in listing the different heritage features from 1978 to 2007. The Orange colour indicated criteria six (6),



**Figure 1.**  
*The different criteria used annually for cultural heritage listing. Source: ICOMOS ([22], p. 16).*

Light Blue colour stood for criteria five (5), Purple for criteria four (4), Green was for criteria three (3), while the red colour stands for criteria two (2) and Deep blue stood for criteria one (1). A further look at the graph showed that the most commonly used criteria were six, while the least used was criteria one. However, as a general guide, there are ten (10) criteria that are used, which were derived from the ICOMOS operational guidelines ([22], pp. 13–14). For a heritage feature to be listed, the selected and documented feature is expected to meet any one or more of the value criteria in addition to integrity and authenticity. Since these value criteria deal with significant value in terms of OUV, detail and contextualised further discussion shall be undertaken on the actual placement of value in examining the architectural heritage on other related studies.

However, it has also been opined that though geo-cultural balancing of heritage list may not necessarily lead to an immediate and automatic paradigm shift; it will nevertheless ensure heterogeneity of the list and broader value-based perception for all heritage regardless of the current stereotyped concept of their monumentality [10]. It is the argument that has further inflame the study's passion towards a broad base architectural heritage categorisation that could serve as an Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) that is sensitive to indigenous cultural resources.

## 6. Intangible cultural heritage listing criteria (convention on safeguarding)

To understand the placement of the thesis argument it will be important to also understand the criteria used in the assessment of intangible heritage features. The basis for the safeguarding of these ICH features is as stated in the convention which is either as representative list or those in need of urgent safeguarding. The selection committee meets and proposed criteria for their listing on receipt of a nomination from member countries and forwards selected ones to the general assembly of UNESCO for ratification [15]. There does not seem to be specific criteria enumerated for the listing of the ICH, indicating that there seems not to be definitive particulars that can be universally applied. It seems the ICH option was just brought up to satisfy agitations rather than setting them on the same pedestal with the tangible heritage features. However, according to the Convention on Safeguarding ICH, article 13(c),



which has to do with other measures of safeguarding; it argued on the need to; “*foster scientific, technical and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies, with a view to effective safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular the intangible cultural heritage in danger*” ([15], p. 6).

The convention document, however, gave room for further research and could effectively aid in safeguarding the ICH. The thesis argues that the surest safeguard is to identify heritages (tangible and intangible) as the same and undertake relevant studies that would substantiate its integrative nature. Since the enactment of the Convention for Safeguarding ICH, about 508 elements within 122 countries have been listed as intangible cultural heritage as of 2018 [24]. Accordingly, Nigeria had only four elements listed as part of the ICH, amongst which are Argungu International Fishing and Cultural Festival in 2016, Ijele Masquerade in 2009 and Ifa divination System in 2008, the Oral heritage of Gelede in 2008 (also found in Benin and the Togo Republic) were listed as a representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. It shows that none is listed due to the need to safeguard them, could then be argued that no ICH in Nigeria is threatened or in danger of being lost that is worthy of being listed. This position will need to be re-evaluated for substantiation or otherwise which, is what this study sort to highlight.

## 7. Heritage stakeholders and socio-cultural value significance

Stakeholders are those affected and can be influenced by a group's conduct, thereby bearing varied possibilities as a consequence [25, 26]. The varied social perspective of heritage does require adequate understanding considering its diversity; while other concerns of preserving its physical features and ensuring alternative responsive tourism development also need urgent deliberation [27]. Hadjri and Boussaa further argued that the opinion of experts as stakeholders, actors (tenant or owners) of the structures, as well as those who use it either as foreign or local visitors including heritage development partners is critical in determining the suitable heritage management strategy. While the physical and spatial features of heritage are critical, its most significant variable is the social factor that is often a concern with the local stakeholders. Avrami, Mason & Torre [28] stated that the main stakeholders for heritage valuation should include, art historians, conservators, anthropologist, natural scientist as part of broad multidisciplinary team members. Similarly, Mason [29] listed stakeholders to include professionals like architects, planners, curators, tourist and investors. Analysis on tourism and cultural development considers tourist and the community bearers as the key stakeholders [30]. Rojas [31] stated that heritage stakeholders can be considered as social actors and he categorised them into promoters, beneficiaries and financiers. In that instance, he considers the promoters as cultural elites, beneficiaries as local community members and tour operators. Similarly, Rojas considered government and private philanthropists as being financiers. However, in this study, the philanthropist and financiers are considered heritage development partners. Broadly, heritage tourism stakeholders are said to incorporate the host community, facilitators, facility users, design experts and the regulatory agencies as was variously adduced in Oluigbo [32]. Conversely, Smith [2] posited that heritage can be expressed as a form of museum activity involving activity processes and focused on technical experts that can be categorised as institution and government, then communities as well as individuals. The communities according to Smith are made up of the site holders, professionals, researchers, museum and heritage staff. In his argument, Szmelter [33] argued that strategic heritage valuation decisions are dependent on

various stakeholders amongst which are conservators, curators, scholars of different background in culture and science. Similarly, he reasoned that for conservation to be worthwhile, it must be broadly based and emanates from the due social dialogue.

The critical stakeholders in the case of this chapter contribution are categorised as the local community members (Heritage Bearers), the Experts and the Development Partners. Therefore, apt heritage valuation should serve as an impetus for appropriate and sustainable conservation as perceived by critical stakeholders. Imalwa [34] reaffirmed the stated contention by arguing that the prerequisite for resounding heritage conservation and management is the stakeholders with interest and ownership of the site(s). Sroczynska [35] categorised heritage stakeholders as those that monuments should be protected for as owners/users, tourist, residents within heritage area and those with no social usage. Sroczynska's study considers 95.49% of Polish respondents as a tourist, being the most important user of monuments for economic reason, the second significant group of users were acknowledged as the local community bearers at 61.19%. This finding reinforced the significant place of community bearers in heritage management even in highly commercialised (tourist biased) heritage perceptual environment.

Towards having a broad spectrum of stakeholders to benefit from the heritage broader perspective as against Smith [2] argument on AHD based on the views of experts; the study sort to involve all parties to the wider heritage discourse towards enhancing the prospect of arriving at a perspective of True Heritage Discourse (THD) as ALHD. The stakeholders' perspective indicates how diverse the concept is, as it is viewed differently by the various groups and individuals. For the chapter contribution, however, the stakeholders are categorised into the Heritage Bearers (indigenous communities), the Experts and the Development Partners as shown in **Figure 2**. In the stakeholders' categorisation, it indicated the critical place of the heritage bearers at the base of the pyramid and the supporting role of partners on these heritage features and site. The experts often also referred to as the professionals sit at the peak of the pyramidal jigsaw. Here the professionals' evolution of the perceptual opinion of the pyramid base (Bearers), and the development partners that will provide the raw data and serve as the real custodian of the heritage for current and future generation. Therefore, stakeholders in this study will serve as the major repository of research information considering their interest and possible benefits from the identification, documentation and conservation for tourism valorisation and development of the heritage features within each study area. The variance of the public opinion with that of the professional has often been observed in virtually all fields of endeavour, however effective management of stakeholders in any project can give excellent result as was demonstrated by Charles Birnbaun article on managing change and modern landscape indicated how public opinion prevail over that of the experts' proposition in heritage development options [36].

Equally, Charlottesville Mall in Virginia was designed by Halprin with inclusive community participation in the 1970s, however, due to years of neglect the city council mould remodelling the mall to remove the signature bricks. The proposal was strongly opposed due to public outcry and they ultimately got what they wanted [36]. It is therefore pertinent to have a more holistic strategy where the views of all stakeholders are sort at the inception of projects that ensures community participation in the project planning and its implementation. For this chapter review, therefore, to be contextualised the varied stakeholders' preferences are placed appropriately to ensure the sustainability of the resource base and the continual beneficiation for all key stakeholders within any specific cultural landscape.



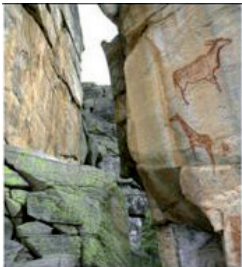


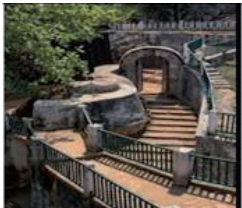




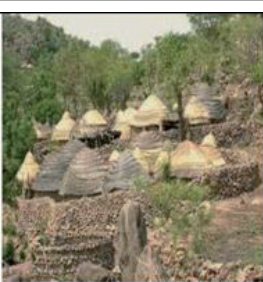



**Figure 2.**  
*Stakeholders categorisation for integrated alternative heritage discourse (ALHD). Source: Adapted from [2, 27–29, 33, 34].*









## 8. Indigenous Architectural Heritage Sites and Features in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan African is replete with assortment of architectural heritage sites, features and the driving forces of their socio-cultural essence. Whether they are categorised as tangible or intangible, cultural, natural or mixed and in some instances rural or urban, their design, development and continuous evolution over time is anchored on the socio-cultural process. In Africa, particularly the Sub-Saharan areas, the architectural heritage within their indigenous settlement has been and continuous to remain the community social process. It has also been affirmed that for their sustenance, their social process, must of necessity be maintained through the process of sanctuarisation, sacralisation, consecration and development of conventions in each community [37, 38]. The lone contemporary conservation process of preservation, restoration, repairs, maintenance and treatment, adaptation and reconstruction cannot protect the indigenous African heritage across generations [39–41]. The ineffectiveness is due to the fact that African indigenous heritage is not a mechanical process; it is first a communal, emotional and spiritual essence then a technical procedure with involvement of the indigenous bearers. It is worthy to note that once the inert and lethargic socio-cultural force of the heritage is lost, its dynamic vigour for existence cannot be sustain amongst African societies. Subsequently such heritage features are gradually left or abandoned to deteriorate, decay, become destroyed and often lost to future generation. The integrated nature of indigenous architectural heritage sites and features are as further graphically illustrated in **Table 5** for better aesthetic appreciation.



Nature & type of heritage (category/domain)	Listed cultural heritage sites & features	Selected feature layouts and plates			Remarks
Cultural Landscape made up of four chief hills with collection of rock art, rock shelters, depressions and eaves.	Botswana (Tsodilo Hill) Listed during the 25 <sup>th</sup> WHC session held in 2001 based on criteria i, iii & iv.				The site has religious and spiritual significance to the indigenous people. It was observed to be a place of rituals animal sacrifice about 70,000 years ago by the San people of the Kalahari Desert.
Cultural Landscape fortified royal settlement on one of the twelve Imerina hills.	Madagascar (Royal hill Ambohimanga) Listed in 2001 based on criteria iii, iv & vi having the royal settlements				Place of worship and pilgrimage for over 400 years since 15 <sup>th</sup> century by the Merina people. An archaeological site, ruined city, burial sites and sacred places.
Natural and Cultural Landscape on the escarpment within the 300M height and 150 KM long sandstone cliff	Mali (Bandiasara Escarpment) Listed in 1989 based on criteria v & vii. The Dogon Toucouleur Empire was preceded by the Tellem.				Has archaeological, geological xtics. Earth-brick and thatch dwellings on high cliff for security and climatic comfort. Inhabited since the 3 <sup>rd</sup> century, Dogon people arriving in the 17 <sup>th</sup> century AD.
Cultural Landscape on the Mandara mountains of Madagali LGA in Adamawa State, Nigeria	Nigeria (Sukur) Listed in 1999 based on criteria iii, v & vi. The Sukur people are headed by a political and religious leader the Hidi.				Known for iron smelting technology, since 16 <sup>th</sup> century. Build with dry stones, mud walls, granaries, thatch and has terrace farmlands, paved walkways, sunken animal pens.



Nature & type of heritage (category/domain)	Listed cultural heritage sites & features	Selected feature layouts and plates			Remarks
Cultural Landscape on the Kasubi, Uganda.	Uganda (Kasubi, 2001) Listed based on criteria i,iii,iv & vi in 2001. Tombs of the Bagundu Kings housing four Kabaka's as a mausoleum.				Ancient civilization of the Baganda people since 13 <sup>th</sup> century, representing their spiritual heart. Destroyed by fire in March 2010, being reconstructed based on traditional skills and craftsmanship available
Cultural Landscape at the Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, Osun State, Nigeria.	Nigeria (Osogbo Sacred Grove) listed in 2005 based on criteria ii, iii & vi. Serves as the unifying factor of the people.				Has more than 700 years religious history and practices amongst the Yorubas of Osogbo. Encompasses traditional cleansing, concern with art in drumming, dancing, music & weaving.
Cultural Landscape of Koutammakou, Togo along Benin North-Est border in West Africa	Togo (Koutammakou) Listed based on criteria v and vi, serves as an environmental and belief system village architecture.				Mud built 'takienta' integrated complex linked rooms, upper level floors on flat roof as homesteads. Has conical shrines at entrances, cylindrical mud towers, thatch roofs

Source: Adapted from [42–49].

It is worthy to note that most of the highlighted listed landscapes in Sub-Saharan Africa are typically integrated together covering, cultural, natural and mixed features and in some instances the intangible cultural rituals, festival and artforms keeps the site relevant in the past and in some instances even currently. This further reinforced the nature of heritage sites, their features and cultural festivities as an expression of the Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) perspective being conversed in this chapter made up of tangible and intangible features typical of African heritage dimensions.

**Table 5.**

Selected world heritage sites of cultural landscapes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## **9. Alternative heritage discourse (ALHD) template for Sub-Saharan Africa**

Current and future heritage discourse perspectives must be holistic, integrative and an all-encompassing framework to guarantee the sustainability of all peoples and nations' socio-cultural value significance of their bequeathed patrimonial allotments of indigenous architectural heritage. Most early studies of the indigenous architectural heritage of Africa seems to consider them as not worthy of serious research and or critical discourse and examination [50]. Prussin argued that the model of permanence base on Eurocentric architectural ideals should be a challenge. He rather argued that indigenous architectural placemarks are considered sacred through ancestral abode. Therefore, the indigenous settlements sacredness is critical in African socio-cultural value perceptual preferences and their significance of place and its architecture. The indigenous architectural heritage perspectives here cover the heritage, their conservation, alternative tourism prospects within the socio-cultural prism as the context for ALHD.

The prevailing loss of indigenous architectural heritage culture, knowledge and environment in Sub-Saharan Africa due to western imposed values is indeed a cause for concern [51]. Scott further argued that westernisation has striped most of SSA of their cultural pride particularly for architecture that had earlier been quite sustainable. The study by Scott, therefore, encouraged an African architecture that is considered aesthetically appealing, environmentally responsive, culturally mesmerising and adapts to the socio-economic realities of the people. Such a projected future for African architecture can however not be achievable if the existing heritage features are abandoned or left to decay. As such, the African heritage features will not be available for further research towards being adaptable for contemporary requirements. Ndoro, Mumma and Abungu [52] likewise, argued that heritage definition in SSA goes beyond the visible immovable features, as it incorporates different facets of culture, mode of communication, spiritual belief system, sacred groves, rivers and forest including their monuments. Indigenous heritage studies were said to have been reinforced after the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit and the commitment of governments to preserving their heritage.

Currently, heritage studies are established on the UN 2030 agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-11) that is anchored on "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage" ([53], p. 12). Similarly, this heritage goal is set to pursue in addition the challenges of poverty, social justice, climate change that guarantee the preservation of the ecosystem. Therefore, this study is premised on World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy (WH-SDP) as well as the African Union's 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want', where local community participation and heritage resources are to be utilised for enhanced peace and prosperity in Africa ([54], p. 22). Mainstreaming of WH-SDP that is based on regional and national policies is considered pivotal to this study. Policy statements are to be such that the key stakeholders as bearers, experts and partners are considered as a critical part of the heritage management process the local community. World heritage discourse based on SDG's was anchored on three dimensions of environment, economics and society under peaceful and secure context [53]. Moukala and Odiaua further argued that despite African heritage place in its development, the complex perceptual and relational features are not adequately tackled; particularly if viewed in the setting of centralised national resource management against diverse local community's interest.

Myriad of challenges were further highlighted by the Index of Economic Freedom [55], which contended that Sub-Saharan Africa is ranked amongst the lowest in economic freedom leading to the erratic transformation of most sectors. Therefore, for

Sub-Saharan Africa where current heritage listing criteria does not seem to have been adaptable enough; the intangible is being argued as the basis for the tangible [56]. In fact, for most African societies where the traditional practices are still prevalent, dead ancestors are an integral part of the living generation of believers in terms of their folklores and ritual practices indeed even their built settlement habitation [57]. Similar arguments are being advanced by several African scholars towards reasserting the Afrocentric viewpoint and voice in global heritage discourse [58, 59]. Africa heritage components, its list as approved by UNESCO and perspective of discussion is contentiously down the piking order despite being the cradle of human civilization. This reality despite abounding socio-cultural resources requires critical research for appropriate placement of the discourse and subsequent acknowledgement for more heritage listing in Sub-Saharan Africa and indeed Nigeria.

Conservation is significant and urgently required for Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan African. Catering for African heritage towards reasserting its relevance in global discourse is best presented in Pan African cultural manifesto where it was argued that;

*“The conservation of culture has saved the various African peoples from the attempts at erasing the history and soul of Africa’s peoples... and if it (culture) binds humans together, it also impels progress. This is the reason why Africa has gone to such great lengths and taken such care in recovering its cultural heritage, in defending its personality and tending to the flourishing of new branches of its culture” [60].*

The soul of the African people has remained and continues to be reflected by their heritage features, either as an artefact or built structures. It is these heritage features and their impact that bound the African people together and will determine their destiny amongst contemporary societies. The current reawakening of the socio-cultural values of the African societies has provoked a rethink on the imposed culture and architectural edifices across the continent. For securing the future of African people and thus their heritage, there is the need for contemporary heritage discourse to be further broadened beyond the categorisation of tangible and intangible heritages. Rather, the heritage discourse should be an integrated whole that evolved into features with physical and spiritual impact on our environment.

Alternative tourism is a form of sustainable tourism and specifically concern with the responsive utilisation of heritage resources, and in this case, are the resources of indigenous communities within the Sub-Saharan Region of Africa. Van Zyl [61] argued on the significant place of tourism in the conservation of cultural heritage in South Africa. He further argued that global tourists are craving for responsive tourism that support conservation of cultural and natural resource. The preservation of these resources could serve as an impetus for cultural identity and sustenance. Nnabuogor [62] stated that alternative tourism is mainly an individualised plan to gain experiences within a host community or setting about their culture and environment. Alternative tourism emphasises social, natural and indigenous communities value systems. Here the alternative form of tourism provides opportunities for both the host and the tourist in a sustainable manner.

Moukala and Odiaua observed that Africa being the cradle of human civilization and blessed with abundant natural and cultural heritage is not proportionately represented on the World Heritage List. Therefore, at the 2016 Tanzanian conference, where the Ngorongoro Declaration on African sustainable development of heritage features was made has now become the platform of most sustainable heritage tourism development [53]. These heritage features with the distinct architectural identity indeed form the essence of socio-cultural tourist arrivals. Thereby serving



as a medium for identifying with the African culture, the built heritage and the socio-cultural landscape of the indigenous communities.

Nigeria is one of the four African countries that joined the WHC at its inception in 1974 along with Sudan Niger and DR Congo, however, their proportionate heritage features amongst other continents that have been listed are insignificant [63].

Ifechukwu [64] also posited that African heritage perspectives and their socio-cultural value concepts are premised on extended family, relationships emphasis, communal affluence, mutual concern, respect for elders, compromise, contest and hero adoration. Similarly, is the argument for the human hierarchy of needs being cyclically interconnected rather than hierarchical as postulated by Maslow [65]. It is worthy to contend here that with such a belief system Africans have been managing their resources (tangible and intangible). This has been from time immemorial basically through oral tradition, which is a form of intangible heritage. Therefore, architectural heritage value is considered as both an enduring belief system and an end-state of human existence [41, 66, 67].

Base on the critical variables review in line with the ALHD perspective, the chapter, therefore, proposed an ALHD that is in line with **Figure 3** as the framework within which viable discourse on alternative heritage could be sustained. Alternative Heritage Discourse (ALHD) template perspectives are to be strictly base on critical stakeholders' opinions and preferences, particularly the indigenous



Figure 3.  
Alternative heritage discourse template for Sub-Saharan Africa. Source: Authors desk research (2019).



communities who serve as the heritage bearers within a cultural landscape, anchored by the experts and supported by the development partners. The apex place of experts in decision making on alternative heritage perspective must be review and the bearers serve as the base of the process pyramid, with partners at the centre and experts at the zenith in processing resource base of the community. However, in exploiting and developing conservation options for any specific site, the process is revised, such that it could start with the expert through the partners and end with the bearers. In other words, in the ALHD perspective, the heritage discourse starts and end with the bearers. This template could encourage sustainability of the resource base and its active sustenance by the bearers for the benefit of all partners under the guidance of the expert.

Due to the recent critique of the OUV concept of authenticity ICOMOS-ISCARSAH (2021) in a webinar on authenticity and reconstruction stated that the question of authenticity is a recurring concern in the discourse of heritage and its construction and require continuous critical dialogue for a productive position. Historically, the Venice charter of 1964 projected a Eurocentric view on the material component of heritage. By the Nara document on the authenticity of 1994, it affirms the strategic place of culture in heritage authenticity discourse. Burra charter of 1999 brought about the critical qualities of heritage as intangibles. It clearly shows the evolving discourse and concern demonstrated concerning diverse concern by heritage professionals. As the authenticity question become open to different international views, perspectives are more dynamic and far from the supposedly and imposed roles to determine authenticity for ascertaining OUV of heritage. Material originality definition of wood, masonry and earth for heritage authenticity becomes a challenge given the immaterial location, culture, spirit and form of heritage. It seems that considering authenticity as a “one size fit all” has hit a dead-end in heritage discourse. Therefore, it would be sustainable to provide authenticity understanding in different cultures that could reinforce or question viewpoint on any heritage conservation perspectives. Hence the proposed template for Alternative Heritage Discourse within indigenous cultural landscape communities of Sub-Saharan Africa.

## **10. Conclusion, recommendations and future ALHD research perspectives**

In conclusion, the chapter review contribution has been able to expound the spring board of AHD and the foundational deviations from its set out objectives of asserting the logic of each heritage. The transition of heritage discourse from objective to subjective gradually however merged into one as AHD that birth the first charter of 1964. However, the AHD perspective is at a threshold that will require collective and holistic proponents of the ALHD viewpoint to adduce relevant discourse options for transgenerational sustainability of the heritages. The study further surmised that there is no heritage without the intangible process which could create a tangible product in some instances while in others it is sustained at its immaterial form driven by the people traditions and customs. Socio-cultural value significance therefore should remain the main driving force of true heritage discourse amongst professionals based on indigenous societies and settlements in Sub-Saharan Africa within the ALHD perspective. The advocated perspective should henceforth drive the revised charters, recommendations, principles and protocols of heritage globally concerning their identification, documentation for conservation and listing. Such positions could ensure sustainable heritage management now

and in the future amongst indigenous communities of Sub-Saharan Africa. The study, therefore, recommends as follows;

- a. The concept of ALHD should be jointly developed in consultation with all stakeholders within the relevant regional and sub-regional organisation. It would bring about a broad-based contribution that could act as foundational material for ALHD integration into mainstream heritage discourse perspectives.
- b. Professional as key stakeholders are to serve as moderators of such discourse with other relevant stakeholders rather than being the drivers. This is important to avoid falling into the same mould of AHD, where professionals are considered as experts and their opinion serve as the mainstay for heritage-based activities.
- c. The significant place of the socio-cultural value of heritages in consonance with the bearers and partners contribution should be specifically treated as a central concept towards the authenticity of indigenous architectural heritage within Sub-Saharan Africa.
- d. Responsive alternative form of tourism concept should be the platform for tourist arrivals within the Sub-Saharan Region as a sustainability strategy. Essentially all stakeholders mutual benefit analysis should be the main drivers of the alternative form of tourism rather than the mainly monetary profit.
- e. Conservation strategy of indigenous architectural heritage should incorporate traditional and conventional systems within heritage sites and features. Here the traditional systems of consecration, santuarisation, sacralisation and conventions development should act as the drivers for implementation of conventional strategies of preservation, repairs, treatment and maintenance, restoration, adaptation and reconstruction.
- f. In identification, documentation, conservation and tourism development, all stakeholders should be involved from inception to the closing of each project. Here while the bearers should form the base for the initiation of heritage documentation, then the partners and ultimately the experts. During implementation the professionals and government agencies could lead the way, then partners and ultimately the local bearers in execution, as an integrated bottom-top and top-bottom approach.

In future research, the proposed ALHD template could encourage the development of an integrated framework charter that encompasses the thematic, chronological-regional and typological framework perspective of heritage debates as a holistic strategy that is beneficial to all stakeholders. It could be a charter that could guarantees the sustenance of indigenous architectural heritage within Sub-Saharan cultural landscapes. It is expected that further reviews and empirical studies will be undertaken to substantiate the proposed template or create its variant for the continuation of the Alternative Heritage Discourse amongst indigenous communities of Sub-Saharan Africa that should ultimately create an acceptable charter for use in conservation and listing of its unique cultural landscapes as integrated unit(s).

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