



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY



DECLARATION ON THE NEED TO PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN.

Adopted by the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Working Group at its first meeting on 12 August 2015, at UNICAMP, Campinas, Brazil. Ratified by ABA, ALA, CASCA, CEAS, SAA, SAB, and UNICAMP. Amended on 18 November 2016, following discussion at the Working Group's second meeting on 6 August 2016, in João Pessoa, Brazil, and subsequent consultations by e-mail.

Preamble

The second meeting of the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Working Group took place during the 30th Brazilian Anthropological Meeting, on 4, 5, and 6 August 2016, in João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil. The purpose of the meeting was to advance the implementation of the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Forum. Representatives of the American Anthropological Association (AAA); the Associação Brasileira de Antropologia (ABA); the Asociación Latinoamericana de Antropología (ALA); the Society for American Archaeology (SAA); and the Anthropology Department of UNICAMP met to discuss the procedures to be adopted for the implementation of the Forum, the group's working agenda for 2017–2018, and aspects of the wording of the Declaration (23 September 2015), in response to issues raised by the AAA's Executive Board's Working Group on Cultural Heritage during the ratification of that document by the AAA and other Founding Signatories¹ of the Forum in the above-mentioned meeting and subsequent consultations by e-mail.

The following amended version addresses such concerns raised subsequent to preparation of the Declaration's original text. It has been prepared by Cristina Oehmichen (ALA), Elizabeth Chilton (AAA), and Antonio Arantes (ABA and UNICAMP) and approved by the members of the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Working Group to be sent out for ratification/re-ratification by the Declaration's Convening Signatories.²

¹ The initiative to form a working group to discuss and deliberate on this matter was taken by UNICAMP, which hosted and financially supported the inaugural meeting. The participants met in Campinas on 11–12 August 2015 in their capacity as representatives appointed by their own institutions. The expression "Founding Signatories" refers to the participants at this meeting who together made the decision to submit to their respective institutions the proposal of establishing a permanent cultural heritage forum in the region and drafted the original version of this declaration.

² "Convening Signatories" refers to the institutions represented by the drafting group participants at the inaugural meeting of the working group in August 2015. These were the institutions consulted during the

Declaration

We, the Convening Signatories of the *Declaration on the Need to Protect and Safeguard Cultural Heritage in the Americas and the Caribbean*, affirm the following agreement and encourage all those who are in sympathy with its goals and objectives to likewise affirm their acceptance.

- I. WHEREAS, cultural heritage has been defined in many ways in international conventions and charters as well as in national laws, all definitions recognize the importance of the dynamic and mutable tangible and intangible resources and cultural expressions that provide people with senses of identity and continuity, at local, national, and international scales, but differ in specifics that fit the demands of specific communities of interest; we take this common understanding as a working definition for this Declaration, and
- II. WHEREAS, in the face of social, political, and economic change, past and present, decisions are made that affect civil society in ways that disrupt traditional cultural practices, changing societies in unanticipated and often unwelcome manners, and sometimes threatening their survival, and that heritage is integral to a social group's identity, placing them in relation to others and shaping their aspirations for their future, protecting and safeguarding this heritage is critical not only to these groups but to humanity in general, and
- III. WHEREAS, recognizing that the opportunity to engage with the cultural heritage of one's choice, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, is an inalienable human right, and that heritage results from complex negotiations in the public sphere between and among social agents, state institutions, private investors, and a wide range of mediators, including academic researchers, independent consultants, and professionals working for public and private institutions, and
- IV. WHEREAS, we recognize the economic, political, and legal differences among the various countries of the Americas and the Caribbean and at the same time we acknowledge that cultural heritage, particularly that of indigenous peoples and traditional populations, is under threat from various forces throughout the region, we affirm that research on the cultural heritage of all segments of society is needed and such research should be conducted collaboratively with heritage communities as equal partners when appropriate, whereby the community is incorporated into all stages of research from planning to execution, and finally to documenting results and forwarding recommendations, and
- V. WHEREAS, cultural heritage research needs to be encouraged throughout the Americas and the Caribbean, and we need to strengthen both the methods and theories used to study cultural heritage, and

ratification and re-ratification processes.

- VI. WHEREAS, we recognize the responsibility of consultants as well as the agents of private and public institutions, all cultural heritage research should be conducted according to the ethical codes of each academic society, and all research products, including collections (i.e., artifacts and records), should be curated following protocols and codes of ethics of contemporary museology and collections management, those adopted by International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and additional relevant contributions, compatible with the ethical principles of anthropology and related disciplines, and
- VII. WHEREAS, the state is a key stakeholder in the safeguarding of heritage, we must work to strengthen laws and regulations protecting cultural heritage and urge state's agents to enforce their legal mandates through transparent processes for safeguarding heritage in the public interest, and
- VIII. WHEREAS, social agents such as non-governmental organizations and the affected populations³ should be empowered in their negotiations with public or private agencies directly or indirectly responsible for the implementation of cultural heritage policies or projects,

NOW, THEREFORE, the professional societies and academic institutions signing this declaration will endeavor to carry out—to the best of their abilities and recognizing that this Declaration is signed solely on a voluntary basis with no obligations—the following:

1. Through the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Forum, coordinate efforts to establish a network of partners in our efforts and encourage collaboration among heritage researchers in all subfields of anthropology and related disciplines.
2. Promote symposia, workshops, or other activities as a way of contributing to the exchange of experiences and to improving our knowledge about cultural heritage, particularly on the following themes, among others:
 - a. Relationship between tangible and intangible heritage;
 - b. Relationships among heritage, land rights, and customary representations of territoriality;
 - c. Relationship between heritage and economic development;
 - d. The role of heritage, including traditional knowledge, in sustainable development;
 - e. Intellectual rights related to cultural expressions and traditional knowledge;
 - f. Effects of heritage policies on the lives of those affected by such policies, either as holders or practitioners of intangible cultural heritage, or as landowners or inhabitants of protected sites, conservation units, or historic city centers;

³ The term “affected population” is used here in the broadest sense possible to include social groups that use heritage as a means of self-identification. The term includes, but is not limited to, what others have variously termed indigenous, local, descendant, migrant, traditional, and ethnic social groups.

- g. Threats of economic, political, moral, military, ecological, demographic, or other nature to the continuity of cultural heritage.
3. Stimulate and encourage research and the publication and dissemination of works on cultural heritage, both printed and electronic.
4. Support the creation of independent, fair, and open-minded bodies to monitor the effects of cultural heritage policies and to promote the establishment of safeguards and policies for cultural heritage when they are lacking.
5. Stimulate capacity building among groups affected by heritage projects or policies as well as among professionals working in public or private institutions.
6. Stimulate the inclusion of themes related to cultural heritage in formal and informal education, and promote capacity building among educators.
7. Incorporate other professional societies and academic institutions into the Forum as partners at the discretion of the Convening Signatories, per the working procedures to be established by them.

FOUNDING SIGNATORIES

Jeffrey **Altschul** (Past President, Society for American Archaeology); Antonio Augusto **Arantes** Neto (Professor, Anthropology Department, UNICAMP); Michel **Bouchard** (President, Canadian Anthropology Society/Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie); Flávio Rizzi **Calippo** (Vice President, Sociedade de Arqueologia Brasileira); Artionka **Capiberibe** (Assistant Professor, Anthropology Department, UNICAMP); Renata Sá **Gonçalves** (Co-chair, Heritage and Museums Committee, Associação Brasileira de Antropologia); Teresita **Majewski** (Co-chair, Cultural Heritage Task Force, American Anthropological Association); Cristina **Oehmichen** (President, Asociación Latinoamericana de Antropología and Colégio de Etnólogos y Antropólogos Sociales, México); Silvana **Rubino** (Assistant Professor, History Department, UNICAMP); Antonio Carlos de **Souza Lima** (President, Associação Brasileira de Antropologia); Izabela **Tamaso** (Chair, Heritage and Museums Committee, Associação Brasileira de Antropologia); Claudia Marinho **Wanderley** (Researcher, Center for Logic, Epistemology and History of Science, UNICAMP).

CONVENING SIGNATORIES

AAA - American Anthropological Association; **ABA** - Associação Brasileira de Antropologia; **ALA** - Asociación Latinoamericana de Antropología; **CASCA** - Canadian Anthropology Society/Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie; **CEAS** - Colégio de Etnólogos y Antropólogos Sociales, México; **SAA** - Society for American Archaeology; **SAB** - Sociedade de Arqueologia Brasileira; **UNICAMP** - Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Departamento de Antropologia.