

**Frustration and Organizational Change: The Clash between Neoliberal Reforms
and Sustainability Mandates in Latin America's Heritage Sector.**

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Abstract:

For over a decade, heritage organizations in Latin America have faced two change drivers: neoliberal economic reforms, and a growing counter-current of indigenous social movements. This paper explores the impact of these opposing forces on the heritage sector in Latin America.

Latin America's heritage sector is wedged between two opposing forces. On one side are the neoliberal economic reforms that governments have turned to in response to serious economic crises. These reforms have decimated extant governmental funding for the arts, sparking an initial wave of organizational crisis change by compelling heritage organizations to adopt new management tools and practices to ensure their survival. On the other side are the heritage organizations' historical mandates, reinforced in the past decade by a commitment to principles of social and cultural sustainability, in direct opposition to the effects of economic restructuring.

Frustration, the result of having to satisfy irreconcilable goals and requirements, has prompted a crisis within Latin America's heritage organizations. While expanding their preoccupation with preserving heritage beyond objects to societies and cultures, they are unable to do so unless they acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to function in the market economies in which they are struggling.

Introduction

The heritage sector in Latin America is enormous. There are over five thousand natural and cultural heritage sites currently operating in the region, from the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego, the Galapagos to the Spanish-speaking islands of the Caribbean. Hailing from a rich tradition of cultural and natural diversity, these organizations have recently been buffeted by the waves of structural reform, and their social and economic consequences, and are struggling to ensure their survival and growth by adopting new strategies and tools. This paper describes how these struggles lead to organizational conflicts in the heritage sector, as well as the effects they have had on the internal workings of these organizations.

Our analysis considers both natural and cultural heritage organizations. In doing so, it subscribes to the position stated by the Latin American Institute of Museums (ILAM) on the indivisibility of natural and cultural heritage. We agree that ignoring the connections between cultural and natural heritage in Latin America leads to a partial and distorted view of reality (which undermines efforts to preserve both types of heritage). This approach also allows us to distinguish between heritage organizations and other types of cultural activity, such as performing arts and publishing, which have somewhat different constraints and dynamics.

The rationale for linking cultural and natural heritage is as follows: both deal with the preservation of objects and knowledge for future generations, both have been in Latin America) subject to near identical forces in terms of legislation, migration, social change, NGO interest and linkage, etc. Both are rooted physically in a specific geographic location, which entails interaction with a specific community. In sum, both face very similar pressures, circumstances, and, as we shall see in more detail, mandates.

Structural Reforms and their impact on the Heritage Sector

When confronted with grave economic and political crises, the governments of Latin America sought, in varying degrees, to adopt structural reforms that would transform their countries in radical ways. Among the policy mix referred to as neoliberal, or “the Washington consensus” (Williamson 1990), are privatization, market aperture and deregulation, fiscal equilibrium through fiscal reform (budget reduction and tax reforms). These reforms not only changed the economic landscape of the Latin American countries, but also had a profound impact on the role of the state, particularly in its relation to society. All of this led to two processes that affected the cultural sector in fundamental ways.

First, the quest for fiscal equilibrium was expressed through budgetary reductions in all areas, particularly in those related to social issue (with the exception of some areas of education and health). The cultural sector was one of the hardest hit by these fiscal reforms, as it had (for the most part) inherited the European tradition of state supply. The role of the state in determining cultural policy is well described by Stanziola (2002):

“In Latin America, public cultural policies are evaluated in terms of whether the many groups, ethnic communities and regions within a country are represented in each state arts budget; whether the state has altered the level of cultural support in order to gain social control or to legitimize a certain form of economic or political agenda or social imagery; and, more recently, whether the state should create barriers to protect the national identity from the effects of globalization.” (p. 26)

A second type of process (derived in part from the first, and gaining strength after the wave of democratization which swept the region in the 1980s) was state reform oriented towards decentralization. This corresponded to a political goal of transferring power from the capitals to rural areas, and to a rational-economic mandate to reduce the size and costs) of the central government’s bureaucracy (and streamline decision-making), restructuring both central and regional governments. For the heritage sector, this meant devolution of organizations onto state, regional and other types of local government, ill-equipped both technically and financial to assume the responsibility of keeping them afloat (let alone thriving).

In our review of over one thousand Latin American heritage organizations, we observed a series of parallel trends in response to the shocks of structural reform. In some cases, the solution adopted was the fusion of different state heritage organizations or park administrations into single entities; in others, the growth of “mixed” heritage organizations (supported by both public and private funds). A third trend is the expansion of private heritage organizations (Stanziola 2002; García Durand 2000), which usually takes one of two forms (and tend to focus on cultural heritage): private patrons who establish their own heritage organizations or performing arts venues, and industrial heritage organizations (of varying museological quality), which have grown significantly in the last few years, particularly in Brazil.

The fourth type of trend is the incursion by heritage organizations into the field of commerce, through the development and sale of products and services. With the reduction of state budgets, some countries have adopted legislation allowing state heritage organizations (as well as those which depend on local governments) and mixed heritage organizations to generate income through commercial mechanisms. Because these two categories are the largest in the region, they are a good indicator of the field. These initiatives have met with varying degrees of success, as they are usually unaccompanied by training programs that would aid heritage organization personnel to successfully effect a transition of this type (Varela 2001). This oversight occurred, to a great extent, as a result of following European models of funding without first assessing if the necessary accompanying levels of state capacity were in place.

Latin American heritage organizations are certainly not alone in their preoccupation to generate revenue and ensure their own sustainability. As Boylan (2001) and others have indicated, budget reductions have occurred all over the world, as have changes in how governments perceive their obligations to the cultural sector. What is a salient feature of Latin American heritage organizations is the disparity between available resources and those that would be necessary to maintain the sector at world-class standards (Varela 2001; Varela and Jiménez-Regidor 2002).

To complicate matters further, the quantity of cultural and natural heritage institutions has multiplied exponentially in the last two decades, partly as a reaction to the effects of globalization. The amount of heritage organizations and parks in Latin America has grown nearly 200% since 1982 (see figure 1), mainly in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico (Varela and Jiménez-Regidor 2002).

INSERT Figure 1 APPROXIMATELY HERE

Budget cuts and transformation of relationships have led to many heritage organizations perceiving that they have been “abandoned” by their governmental sources of erstwhile support. Some have reacted antagonistically, reiterating their claims for government funding, in what a Museum International editorial (Who Finances Museums? The Public Sector 1988) qualified as a “regal” attitude. Others, believing this approach is futile, have launched efforts at internal re-organization, to the extent that their legal framework and their own resources (financial, personnel, time, expertise, etc.) allow, in what the editorial referred to above describe as a “realist” approach.

These attitudes have spawned a variety of new organizational forms that have been adopted by Latin American heritage organizations. Varela (2000) identified four “types” of structures toward which these have evolved. These “types” are the result of a matrix, which varies in the degree of interaction between the technical (including collections management) and administrative functions of the heritage organization, as well as the affiliation of the personnel that fulfills them (internal or external). The technical area is

defined as that which has direct contact with the collection, while “administrative” refers to all supporting functions. In brief, the four types are as follows:

- I. The Technical and Administrative areas kept separate, but staffed by heritage organization personnel in both cases. Some conflicts emerge due to a lack of coordination. It is one of the most common form Latin American heritage organizations take, and is a direct descendent of functional separation in larger state bureaucracies.
- II. The Technical and Administrative areas kept separate, but external personnel are in charge of the latter. Here the potential for internal conflict is very high, endangering the efficiency and quality of the heritage organization. Subcontracting (its most obvious manifestation) is seen as a necessary evil, but, at the same time, as a way to keep the organization from directly “sullyng its hands” with commercial endeavors.
- III. The Technical and Administrative areas collaborate, with administration carried out by an external agent (a Friends Society or a foundation, for example). Although the situation is not ideal, it allows work to flow more smoothly because the two areas are coordinated. Much depends on how the relationship with external agent was established, particularly in the case of support societies, where our heritage organizations rarely stipulate a priori conditions. Together with the first “type”, this is one of the most common forms to which Latin American heritage organizations have gravitated.
- IV. The Technical and Administrative areas, both staffed by heritage organization personnel, collaborate. This is, potentially, the ideal situation, but also the most difficult to accomplish, and is, perhaps, the organizational form that best exemplifies the conflicts inherent in trying to become an instrument of sustainable development while becoming a player in the market.

From our interviews¹ with heritage managers and personnel from nine Latin American countries (Guatemala, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Colombia, Dominican

¹ Conducted in some cases also with Sigfrido Jiménez-Regidor.

Republic, Panama and Honduras) we have found considerable supporting evidence to Varela and Jimenez-Regidor's (2002) claim that a major problem resides with how Latin American heritage organizations define administration/management in the first place. It is generally conceived as an external, or supplementary function to "true" (collections) management is the source of the greatest number of tensions within these organizations (Varela 2000; Boylan 2001). In fact, many of them perceive the heritage sector as a bastion for communities against the effects of markets, and resist the idea of being involved in such "noxious" activities such as marketing, management, or financial planning. In fact, we have repeatedly observed a grudging acceptance that state support will not be forthcoming, but many seem to expect that their organizational sustainability will merely be a fact of finding an enlightened private donor that will continue to support them (some notable exceptions to this can be observed in Mexico, Chile and Brazil).

The Sustainability Mandate

One of the prime effects of neoliberal economic reforms has been the disruption of extant forms of relationships between the state and society, and between many of the state's institutions and private entities. We have not found evidence that heritage organizations, as traditionally conceived in Latin America, were focused on any particular form of community relation, let alone assistance in terms of development. In fact, there is evidence that organizations which were heavily dependent on the state (or even part of the same) played a very important role in defining (or preserving) national identity, and in state-building.

This begins to change in the 1980s, when the first effects of structural reform were making themselves on the general population, and when the great majority of Latin American countries either returned to democracy or began to experience it for the first time. This greater political openness went along with a greater economic openness to the rest of the world, and increased the connectivity of many Latin American heritage organizations to their international peers.

Although this is an avenue for further research, our primary findings indicate that this was a key moment in these organizations' history, as some of them begin to utilize

vocabulary inherent to arts management as it is understood in Europe and the United States. We do not believe it is a coincidence that the first attempts at establishing arts management training (through certificates, diplomas, and, later, university degrees) happen precisely at this time – in the late 1980s, growing though the 1990s. However, it should be noted (and this is another question for further research) that the students in these programs appear to be mostly from the performing arts or for-profit arts sectors, less so from the cultural heritage sector, and even less from the natural heritage sector.

The continued resistance of the heritage sector to involve itself with what it deemed to be the world of commercial enterprise led, not surprisingly, to its allying itself (to a great extent) with efforts geared to resist or palliate the effects of restructuring and development. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 marked a watershed in this respect, with heritage organizations beginning to define a new role for themselves in terms of sustainable development. As the decade progressed, many of these organizations reinforced by commitment to principles of social and cultural sustainability², as a response to the economic and political restructuring discussed earlier in this paper.

In the past two decades, a veritable avalanche of documents and declarations has, directly or indirectly, proclaimed the centrality of heritage organizations in sustainable development. Among these are the Mesa de Santiago (1972), the Santa Cruz Manifesto (2000), the Declaration of Cuenca (1995), the Declaration of Oaxatepeque (1984), the Declaration of Quebec (1984), the Declaration of Santa Cruz de la Sierra (1997), the Agenda for Action for Museums and Sustainable Communities (*Agenda for Action 1998*).³ Two key events, the Summit of the Museums of the Americas (1998), and the World Bank meetings on Culture and Sustainable Development (1998-2000), served to further strengthen this resolve.

² We should point out that our comments reflect the evidence garnered from medium and small organizations (the vast majority of the heritage organizations in Latin America), not the national museums or parks, as these, to some extent, persist in the historical tradition.

³ For a full listing of all related documents, as well as links to the full texts, see the “Documents” section at the Latin American Institute of Museums website, www.ilam.org. ILAM participated as the academic coordinator of the Summit of the Heritage organizations of the Americas, “Heritage organizations and Sustainable Communities”, in Costa Rica (1998). The “Agenda for Action” (*Agenda for Action 1998*) was a product of this Summit, and establishes the main guidelines for heritage organizations’ relation to their communities.

But in order to promote sustainable development in their communities, the organizations had to show they were capable of sustaining themselves. With government support dwindling and, in most cases, disappearing, many of them turned first to the identification and cultivation of private sources of support, such as private benefactors or businesses. The main problem with this approach is that, in Latin America, political and social instability had not contributed to the emergence of a strong private cultural sector, and, in any case, these were often subject to strong state controls (Garretón 1993; Stanziola 2002). Legislation to reduce these state controls was slow in coming, and even in the most progressive cases (Chile and Brazil), tax deductible contributions to culture are filtered through a pre-selected pool of cultural projects, where firms must register with the Ministry of Culture as potential donors (Stanziola 2002).

The next step, then, was the slow realization that earned income and rationalizing of operations might be a necessary avenue to explore, albeit one perceived as a potential source of, as one director expressed to us, “harm to the institution’s soul.” It is this struggle for the organizational soul that occupies us in the next section.

Organizational Culture, Frustration, and the Heritage Sector

One characteristic of complex environments is the increased frustration of agents (Bar-Yam 1997). Psychologists have long explored the concept of frustration. According to Brown and Farber (1951) an individual faces frustration having to meet irreconcilable demands (identified by Amsel (1992) as first order frustration). Among its effects are innovation, increased activity, and creativity. When managers confront this type of demands, they need to create innovative systems in order to obtain those expected outcomes. This opens the opportunity for mistakes and change, crucial in the process of adaptation to fluid environments.

Frustration, the result of having to satisfy irreconcilable goals and requirements, has prompted a crisis within Latin America’s heritage organizations. While expanding their preoccupation with preserving heritage beyond objects to societies and cultures, they are unable to do so unless they acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to function in the market economies against which they are struggling. In essence, the struggle is not

merely one of adapting skill sets and knowledge in a changing world, but one of organizational culture resistance to transformation.

Organizational culture is defined as the values and norms shared by the members of an organization (Hofstede 1985). It shapes the solutions (strategies) that its members will adopt when facing different problems. In that sense, organizational culture shares with reward systems the role of controlling the behavior of organizational members. It is the interaction between organizational culture and formal systems of incentives and goal - setting what finally shapes the behaviors of members. Disregarding any of these factors means looking only at part of the problem, which is why we have sought to combine a discussion of structural, cultural and individual issues in our analysis.

Bednar and Page (2001) adopt a game theoretic perspective to show that past history reduces the number of applicable solutions, because individuals develop their set of strategies (culturally dependent) based on the “games” they play. Organizational culture is parallel to their conception of “set of strategies,” a set of actions accepted by the group as the appropriate response to a problem. Likewise, a reward system is comparable to a “game,” rewards and punishment resulting by taking different actions. Sets of strategies are developed after playing the game repeatedly, and they are not necessary transferable to any other “game.” Moreover, the number of games individuals can play successfully is constrained by the games played recently and when the new game has payoffs uncorrelated with the pay offs of the old game, the organization is inefficient playing the new one.

In the case of Latin-American heritage organization administrators, we have observed that the new demands collide with the cultural view of what is appropriate: heritage organizations are pushed to generate their own revenues, which they often view as heretic (and, in some cases, as contradictory to their missions), and this situation generates the state of frustration. In addition, the “new game” (generate resource and decrease expenses) is contradictory with the “old game” (conserve the cultural heritage and share it for free with the people) and this is likely to make the organizations inefficient when “playing” this “new game.” As a result, this inefficiency is also likely to increase the

public and government scrutiny of the sector, harming these organizations' chances to garner desperately needed support. In our conversations with heritage organization managers and personnel, these stressed their unhappiness at the decline in “culture” in the population, alternately expressed as a failure of the general population to “defend their own cultural institutions” (in the face of various threats, from budget cuts to vandalism, and compared to an earlier “golden age” of apparent civic commitment).

A very important aspect of the concept of frustration is that it is the result of an interaction. Taken on its own, each demand is, in most situations, feasible and coherent, with no evident contradictions. In the case of the Latin American heritage organizations, seeking to ensure sustainability through the development of commercial activity (even if only through charging admission, for example), is no less coherent than striving to provide assistance for communities dealing with the effects of political, economic and social reform. However, it is the interaction of both demands that causes the impossibility of satisfying both simultaneously. A simple example can be observed in ferromagnetism. Ferromagnetic crystals adopt geometric structures in order to minimize their energy. When taken in isolation, the spin of an element (N or S) is not relevant. When the interactions with neighboring elements are taken into account, energy decreases when neighbors have opposite spins. If we take two neighbors with opposite spins (N and S) and add a third to both, what spin is the latter to adopt? To minimize the energy of the crystal, the third element is facing contradictory demands. On one hand it should adopt an S spin (because of the N neighbor), on the other, it should take an N spin (because of the S neighbor). It is the simultaneity of both demands what causes the conflict and then frustration.

Our argument here is that the complexity faced by the heritage organizations in Latin America has increased as result of new agents and demands imposed on them. Historically, the majority of the Latin American heritage organizations have obtained their funding from the State. Simultaneously, they also developed an organizational culture that, since they were a national service, saw heritage organizations as the prime guardians of the national treasures (both cultural and natural), ensuring free access to everyone.

But as we have discussed above, today, Latin American governments are constrained in their ability to fund heritage organizations. This has limited seriously the resources available for the heritage organizations and they are required to contain and minimize their spending (governmental demand). On the other hand, also discussed above, heritage organizations are imposed with broader missions (international heritage organization organizations), which requires increased resources. The simultaneity of these conflicting demands generates frustration in the Latin American heritage organization sector.

This frustration has prompted a veritable crisis in these organizations, where the initial wave of change has compelled heritage organizations to assume business tools and practices to ensure survival, at the same time that they continue to regard themselves as defenders of the public, the national, and the non-commercial. Managers must now comply with the requirements described by DiMaggio (1987), namely: seeking private funding or support, and taking care of the organization's image so as to maintain its legitimacy and maintain its capacity to attract stable economic results. Seen in this light, the uneven innovations in matters of heritage financing, as well as the lack of cohesion in the sector in addressing the state, should not come as a surprise. As we shall see in the next section, there is a theoretical basis, taken from the fields of management and sociology, for why these outcomes have occurred.

Outcomes and Approaches

When a demand is imposed on a group of people, multiple decisions are made in parallel. But these decisions are not made independently: people interact, talk with each other, and mimic each other's behavior. Decision-making in these circumstances, then, is not merely an individual weighing pros and cons and deciding based only on his/her own interest. Social interactions play an important role in this decision making process.

Very simple models of this type of systems are difficult to predict because intuition usually fails us (i.e., tipping model of segregation (Schelling 1978), the termites model (Resnick 1997)). The main reason for this difficulty is the fact that we tend to think in terms of averages, which does not apply here because the interactions among actors create a population without a normal, independent distribution in the variables we take

into consideration. The average individual may not represent anyone in the population, hence the average decision may not be taken by anyone in the group. The effect of the interaction between actors reaching a decision is nicely captured in Reginald Rose's play "Twelve Angry Men." The play shows how the interactions between the twelve jurors transform a decision of "guilty", based on the average juror the decision was 11/12 guilty at the start of the deliberations, into a unanimous "non guilty" verdict.

Theoretically, we would expect that heritage organizations would become more creative and innovative in their ways to achieve their goals, and more active in their efforts. But is this the case for Latin American heritage organizations?

As proposed by March (1991), organizations facing changing environments should engage in exploration to adapt to their new reality. Unexpected organizational outcomes generate a variation that can be exploited by the organization when it is aware of and purposely nourishes and learns from those internal "mutations" (an online or offline learning processes, according to Gavetti and Levinthal (2000)). These "mistakes", or unexpected results, can become the source of innovative strategies. For this reason, organizations in an exploration mode need to develop systems to detect unexpected results in order to enlarge their pool of alternatives. Retention of those innovations becomes crucial in this offline learning process (Miner, Bassoff, and Moorman 2001).

This is particularly important because, as discussed by Winter (2000), organizations follow a satisficing logic. A larger pool of alternatives increases the chances of finding the best solution. Another characteristic of the exploration mode is that organizations are prone to move to exploitation without searching for more alternatives. McGrath (2001) has shown organizational learning effectiveness is diminished for projects that operate with low autonomy with respect to goals and supervision. The particular organizational structure of the Latin American heritage organizations creates a situation where the system is loosely coupled, which relaxes the supervision of the organizations. As discussed above, the demands on reducing spending and self-generation of resources come from the governments. However, heritage organizations administrations are quite isolated from the control of government officials and able to decouple their policies from

practices. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977) organizations may decouple their formal structures from the actual structures. By this mean they are able to buffer internal routines from external demands, improving their flexibility while maintaining their legitimacy.

What we have seen is a huge increase in the number of heritage organizations in Latin America (see figure 1), combined with a change in the demands imposed on them, increased communication across countries and a marked growth in the demand for actualization courses and seminars. The greatest demand has been in the field of heritage management, particularly fund development, followed by marketing (with very low demand for personnel and volunteer management).

The increase in communications and attendance to courses and seminars are consistent with the exploration process described by March (1991). Heritage organization managers are trying to make sense of an environment that does not fit their cognitive maps. The rapid increase in the number of heritage organizations and the new demands have created very complex, changing, and high-velocity environments (Brown and Eisenhardt 1998), where organizations would be better of de-emphasizing the importance of goal setting in order to increase adaptability and organizational learning. By means of this loose coupling organizations are able to learn about the many hidden interactions among their strategic variables. The turbulence caused by a disruption in the environment may impede managers' ability to identify behaviors that lead to success.

An example of this limitation can be found in the Polaroid story (Tripsas and Gavetti 2000). Senior managers' cognitive map constrained any capability development not related to their adopted business model. As a result, although Polaroid invested heavily in developing digital imaging technology, it did not invest in developing digital camera, which it was inconsistent with its business model. In particular, any Latin American heritage organization, which, generally, is small in size, does not have the resources to understand the new environment and adjust their operations accordingly by itself. By exchanging experiences with other heritage organizations across the Latin America in seminars, courses and conferences, the administrators are able to develop an

understanding of their new reality and to acquire knowledge about a large number of alternatives and their performance.

The exploration in what the heritage organization community has engaged in is also favored by the appearance of a large number of new heritage organizations. The increased number of heritage organizations has also increased the variety of alternatives by bringing a number of new administrators, many formed in for-profit organizations, who are learning the job with fresh perspectives. Although this is a fairly recent development, reports from various cultural management training center in Latin America indicate that these numbers are growing.

Another interesting development has been the growth in intra- and inter-regional communication between heritage organization personnel and managers. Posting on electronic forums, from the Latin American Institute of Museums (based in Costa Rica) to Escenacultural.com (based in Spain), managers are speaking to each other, seeking answers to common problems and dilemmas.

What is interesting is that even though heritage sector personnel is apparently (if albeit slowly) opening up to new forms of “doing business”, they have not been too heavily involved in curricular design. Greater participation by local heritage organization personnel and academic institutions is necessary to effect change with the relevance and effectiveness that are so desperately needed.⁴

Conclusions

In their discussion of quality in museums in Latin America, Varela and Jiménez-Regidor (2002) describe the situation faced by administrators:

“We have witnessed how curricula and training guidelines proposed by both ICOM and the Smithsonian (CMS) are ignored (and unknown) in many of these cases, and we have

⁴ Two notable exceptions are the Latin American Institute of Museums (www.ilam.org), which routinely combines European, North American and Latin American scholarship with Latin American practice, and the Museum Studies program of the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

had occasion to “introduce” them to several academic departments. When institutions make a significant effort to bring in distinguished colleagues from the United States and Europe to lead short courses or conduct lectures, frustration is often the result. This is due to the fact that, although the exchange of knowledge and experience is recognized as invaluable, there is also an enormous gap between the economic, social and political reality of these regions and that of Latin America, which makes much of the advice, practices and standards inapplicable in practice.”(p.47-48)

As they have pointed out, the problem is that experiences from other regions do not translate into solutions for Latin America. In addition, the old know-how and skills of administrators are not of much help either, due to the changes in state policies.

Despite the frustration experienced by administrators, and the apparent inefficiency that their organizations sometimes show, the fermental state of today's heritage management is encouraging. The engagement of the sector in an exploration to find new solutions has already, in many cases, been crowned with success. We have identified many signals that indicate that the conditions to generate innovative solutions are present.

Research on heritage management in Latin America has the opportunity to contribute in two crucial activities in this process. First, by identifying the best practices that Latin American organization develop in their search for solutions. This will yield responses that, in some cases, may be similar to those developed in the United States and Europe, but, in other cases may be vastly different. Second, by facilitating the diffusion of that information through appropriate channels across the region, research can contribute to the formation of a new epistemic community, promoting the development of even more innovative and effective practices.

We are confident about the future success of the sector, measured not just by its ability of overcome its financial constraints, but also in achieving its goals regarding to heritage conservation and diffusion. The conflicting demands imposed on it have triggered a process that, in our view, has reached a tipping point and is leading to a sector with higher efficiency and efficacy.

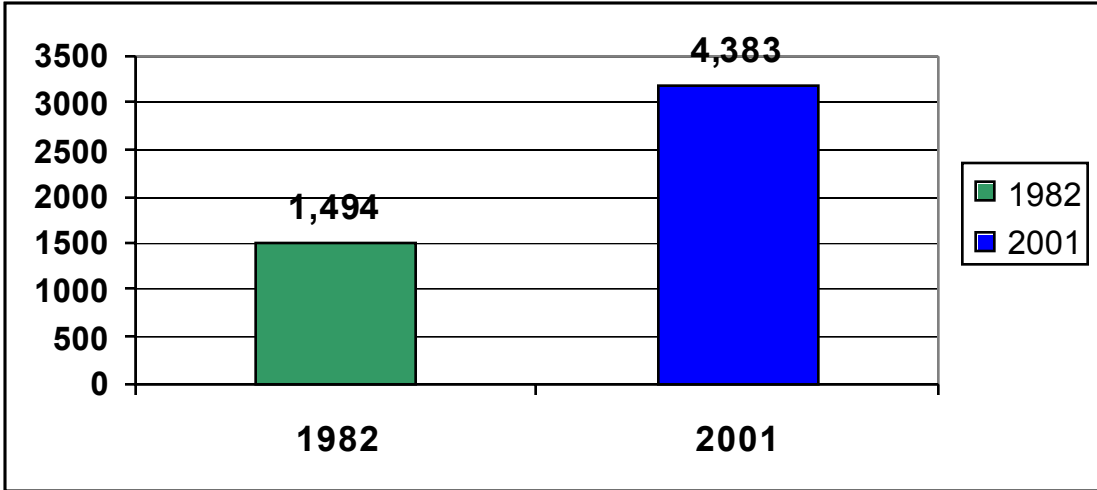
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Figure 1: Growth of cultural and natural heritage institutions in Latin America between 1982 and 2001



Sources:
De la Torre y Luis Monreal, *Heritage organizations an Investment for Development*, ICOM, Paris, **1982** and Red-ILAM, *Heritage organizations and Parks Directory*, October Statistics, **2001**