

[M. C. Lourenço, 2005. *Between two worlds: the distinct nature and contemporary significance of university museums and collections in Europe*. PhD dissertation, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris]

Appendix A10: Relevant Declarations and Position Statements

Magna Charta Universitatum, 1988 (English and French)	390
Declaration of Halle, 2000 (English and French)	394
Position Statement on University Natural History Museums and Collections, 2003 (American Association of Museums)	396
University Museums and Collections: Importance, Responsibility, Maintenance, Disposal and Closure, 2004 (UMAC)	397

Magna Charta Universitatum

Signed by 80 European universities, including the President of the European Conference of Rectors and a representative from the Council of Europe.

Date: 1988 (University of Bologna)

Accessible for download at: <http://www.magna-charta.org/magna.html>

Preamble

The undersigned Rectors of European Universities, gathered in Bologna for the ninth centenary of the oldest University in Europe, four years before the definitive abolition of boundaries between the countries of the European Community; looking forward to far-reaching co-operation between all European nations and believing that peoples and States should become more than ever aware of the part that universities will be called upon to play in a changing and increasingly international society, consider:

- 1) that at the approaching end of this millennium the future of mankind depends, largely on cultural, scientific and technical development; and that this is built up in centres of culture, knowledge and research as represented by true universities;
- 2) that the universities' task of spreading knowledge among the younger generations implies that, in today's world, they must also serve society as a whole; and that the cultural, social and economic future of society requires, in particular, a considerable investment in continuing education;
- 3) that universities must give future generations education and training that will teach them, and through them others, to respect the great harmonies of their natural environment and of life itself.

The undersigned Rectors of European universities proclaim to all States and to the conscience of all nations the fundamental principles which must, now and always, support the vocation of universities.

Fundamental principles

1. The university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organized because of geography and historical heritage; it produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching. To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economically independent of all political authority and economic power.
2. Teaching and research in universities must be inseparable if their tuition is not to lag behind changing needs, the demands of society, and advances in scientific knowledge.
3. Freedom in research and training is the fundamental principle of university life, and governments and universities, each as far as in them lies, must ensure respect for this

fundamental requirement. Rejecting intolerance and always open to dialogue, the university is an ideal meeting-ground for teachers capable of imparting their knowledge and well equipped to develop it by research and innovation and students entitled, able and willing to enrich their minds with that knowledge.

4. A university is the trustee of the European humanist tradition; its constant care is to attain universal knowledge; to fulfil its vocation it transcends geographical and political frontiers, and affirms the vital need for different cultures to know and influence each other.

The means

To attain these goals by following such principles calls for effective means, suitable to present conditions.

1. To preserve freedom in research and teaching, the instruments appropriate to realize that freedom must be made available to all members of the university community.

2. Recruitment of teachers, and regulation of their status, must obey the principle that research is inseparable from teaching.

3. Each university must - with due allowance for particular circumstances – ensure that its students' freedoms are safeguarded and that they enjoy conditions in which they can acquire the culture and training which it is their purpose to possess.

4. Universities - particularly in Europe - regard the mutual exchange of information and documentation, and frequent joint projects for the advancement of learning, as essential to the steady progress of knowledge. Therefore, as in the earliest years of their history, they encourage mobility among teachers and students; furthermore, they consider a general policy of equivalent status, titles, examinations (without prejudice to national diplomas) and award of scholarships essential to the fulfilment of their mission in the conditions prevailing today.

The undersigned Rectors, on behalf of their Universities, undertake to do everything in their power to encourage each State, as well as the supranational organizations concerned, to mould their policy sedulously on this Magna Charta, which expresses the universities' unanimous desire freely determined and declared.

Bologna, 18 September 1988

Magna Charta Universitatum

Signée par 80 universités européennes, le président de la Conférence européenne des recteurs et un représentant du Conseil de l'Europe.

Date: 1988 (Université de Bologne)

Site de téléchargement: <http://www.magna-charta.org/magna.html>

Préambule

Les Recteurs des Universités européennes soussignés, réunis à Bologne à l'occasion du IXe centenaire de la plus ancienne d'entre elles, quatre ans avant la suppression définitive des frontières intra-communautaires et dans la perspective d'une collaboration élargie entre tous les peuples européens, estimant que les peuples et les Etats doivent prendre plus que jamais conscience du rôle que les universités seront appelées à jouer dans une société qui se transforme et s'internationalise, considèrent:

1. que l'avenir de l'humanité, en cette fin de millénaire, dépend dans une large mesure du développement culturel, scientifique et technique qui, lui, se forge dans les centres de culture, de connaissance et de recherche que sont devenues les vraies universités;
2. que la tâche de diffusion des connaissances que l'université doit assumer envers les nouvelles générations implique aujourd'hui qu'elle s'adresse également à l'ensemble de la société - dont l'avenir culturel, social et économique exige notamment un effort considérable de formation permanente;
3. que l'université doit assurer aux générations futures une éducation et une formation leur permettant de contribuer au respect des grands équilibres de l'environnement naturel et de la vie.

Ils proclament devant les États et la conscience des peuples les *principes fondamentaux* qui doivent soutenir dans le présent et le futur la vocation de l'université.

Principes fondamentaux

1. L'université, au coeur de sociétés diversement organisées du fait des conditions géographiques et du poids de l'histoire, est une institution autonome qui, de façon critique, produit et transmet la culture à travers la recherche et l'enseignement.

Pour s'ouvrir aux nécessités du monde contemporain, elle doit être indépendante de tout pouvoir politique, économique et idéologique.

2. Dans les universités, l'activité didactique est indissociable de l'activité de recherche afin que l'enseignement soit à même de suivre l'évolution des besoins comme les exigences de la société et des connaissances scientifiques.

3. La liberté de recherche, d'enseignement et de formation étant le principe fondamental de la vie des universités, les pouvoirs publics et les universités, chacun dans leur domaine de compétence, doivent garantir et promouvoir le respect de cette exigence fondamentale.

Dans le refus de l'intolérance et dans le dialogue permanent, l'université est donc un lieu de rencontre privilégié entre professeurs, ayant la capacité de transmettre le savoir et les moyens de le développer par la recherche et l'innovation, et étudiants, ayant le droit, la volonté et la capacité de s'en enrichir.

4. Dépositaire de la tradition de l'humanisme européen, mais avec le souci constant d'atteindre au savoir universel, l'université, pour assumer ses missions, ignore toute frontière géographique ou politique et affirme la nécessité impérieuse de la connaissance réciproque et de l'interaction des cultures.

Moyens

La réalisation de ces objectifs, dans la cadre de semblables principes, exige des *moyens* efficaces et donc adaptés à la situation contemporaine.

1. Pour préserver la liberté de recherche et d'enseignement, les instruments propices à sa réalisation doivent être fournis à l'ensemble des membres de la communauté universitaire.

2. Le recrutement des enseignants, ainsi que la réglementation de leur statut, doivent être commandés par le principe de l'indissociabilité de l'activité de recherche et de l'activité didactique.

3. Chaque université doit garantir à ses étudiants, tout en respectant la spécificité des situations, la sauvegarde des libertés et les conditions nécessaires pour atteindre leurs objectifs en matière de culture et de formation.

4. Les universités - et notamment les universités européennes - voient dans l'échange réciproque d'informations et de documentation comme dans la multiplication d'initiatives scientifiques communes les instruments fondamentaux d'un progrès continu des connaissances.

C'est pourquoi, retrouvant en cela leurs sources, elles encouragent la mobilité des enseignants-chercheurs et des étudiants et considèrent qu'une politique générale d'équivalence en matière de *status*, de titres, d'examens (tout en préservant les diplômes nationaux), et d'attribution de bourses, constitue l'instrument essentiel garantissant l'exercice de leurs missions contemporaines.

Les Recteurs soussignés, au nom de leur Université, s'engagent à tout mettre en oeuvre afin que chaque État et les organisations supranationales concernées puissent s'inspirer progressivement des dispositions de cette Charte, expression unanime de la volonté autonome des universités.

Bologne, 18 septembre 1988

Declaration of Halle

Academic Heritage and Universities: Responsibility and Public Access

Organisation: UNIVERSEUM Network

Date: 2000 (Martin-Luther University of Halle Wittenberg, Germany)

Accessible for download at: <http://www.universeum.de/>

Universities must acknowledge their wide cultural roles. Academic collections and museums provide special opportunities for experiencing and participating in the life of the University. These collections serve as active resources for teaching and research as well as unique and irreplaceable historical records. In particular, the collections of the oldest European universities provide windows for the public on the role of the university in helping to define and interpret our cultural identity. By valuing and promoting this shared academic heritage, our institutions demonstrate a commitment to the continued use of these resources by a broad public.

The Royal College of Surgeons of England, the University of Amsterdam, the University of Humboldt Berlin, the University of Bologna, the University of Cambridge, the University of Groningen, the University of Halle-Wittenberg, the University of Leipzig, the University of Oxford, the University of Pavia, the University of Uppsala, the University of Utrecht.

Halle, 16 April 2000

Déclaration de Halle

Patrimoine académique et universités: Responsabilité et accès au public

Initiative: Réseau UNIVERSEUM

Date: 2000 (Université de Halle Wittenberg, Germany)

Site de téléchargement: <http://www.universeum.de/>

Les universités doivent avoir conscience de l'importance de leur rôle culturel. Les collections et les musées universitaires fournissent des occasions particulières de réaliser des expériences et de participer à la vie de l'université. Ces collections servent de ressources actives pour l'enseignement et la recherche tout en constituant des archives historiques uniques et irremplaçables. En particulier, les collections des plus anciennes universités européennes sont des témoins du rôle joué par l'université dans la définition et l'interprétation de notre identité culturelle. En valorisant et en développant ce patrimoine académique commun nos établissements témoignent de leur engagement pour une utilisation continue de ces ressources par un large public.

Royal College of Surgeons of England et les universités d'Amsterdam, Humboldt Berlin, Bologne, Cambridge, Groningen, Halle-Wittenberg, Leipzig, Oxford, Pavie, Uppsala et Utrecht.

Halle, 16 avril 2000

AAM Position Statement

University Natural History Museums and Collections

Initiative: American Association of Museums (AAM)

Date: November 2003 (published in *Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections Newsletter* **18** (2004): 2).

The American Association of Museums (AAM) expresses its deep concern that a significant number of America's natural history museums and collections affiliated with universities are currently threatened with severe financial cutbacks, dispersal of collections, and outright closure. At risk are collections of irreplaceable objects, such as geological, palaeontological, zoological and botanical specimens, anthropological and historical artifacts, and archives. These collections are held in trust for the public; they are the priceless heritage of this and future generations; and they constitute critically important resources for new knowledge.

University museums provide unique contributions to the public good through education and research. Their collections are a shared legacy, serving as a constantly growing database to document the diversity and history of life on earth, to develop strategies for the management of natural resources, and to find solutions to some of the world's most pressing problems, from biodiversity conservation to the discovery of new medicines. In addition, exhibits and programs in university museums help to advance broader understanding of the scholarly and scientific enterprise.

AAM urges university administrators, trustees, state legislators, and alumni to do everything in their power to preserve, protect and support their university museums and collections of natural and cultural history. Temporary financial difficulties must not be allowed to interfere with the overriding responsibility of the governing authority to be effective stewards of these collections and to safeguard the public interest by assuring continued access to them.

AAM strongly urges the leadership of universities, and their museums to work together to develop creative financial and organizational strategies that will secure their museums and collections for future generations.

AAM also strongly urges universities, museums, governmental agencies, foundations, and other stakeholders to begin a national dialogue with the aim of providing long-term stability for America's university museums of natural history and their irreplaceable collections. A major aim is to strengthen connections to constituencies that can speak in support of these important museums.

University Museums and Collections

Importance, Responsibility, Maintenance, Disposal and Closure

Organisation: UMAC, the International Committee of ICOM for University Museums and Collections

Date: 2004

Accessible for download at: <http://publicus.culture.hu-berlin.de/umac/guidelines.html>

Importance

University collections reflect the history, heritage and standing of a university and the nation. Collections are the contributions of generations of scholars and other dedicated persons. A collection made over years or a century or more that has been dispersed by a decision of the moment can never be re-assembled.

Collections within universities are built with scholarship over time and show the evolution of knowledge and scholarship. University collections often contain unique material not represented in other museums.

The objects in collections contain information of importance to future research. Interest in specific fields of knowledge waxes and wanes over time; therefore, it is not possible to predict a collection's value, or lack of it, to future scholars.

University collections and their curators are important interdisciplinary links for the community. Collections enhance teaching and research. They promote a positive image of the institution and provide welcoming access points to the campus. The collections in universities are ideally placed to connect disparate pieces of knowledge into lucid maps.

University collections stimulate intellectual development. The important role that collections play in our heritage is deepened during a student's time at the university. Commitment to preservation is fostered and influences decisions made throughout life in both work and leisure.

'Reading information' contained within an object is a significant source of new knowledge. The real objects in university collections are important research tools in an increasingly digital world and are ideally adjacent to scholars.

University collections are an appreciating research asset and often appreciate financially.

Responsibility

Any collection within a university initiated by a member of staff and subsequently maintained by university funds, whether formally authorised or not, is the responsibility of the university. The university is responsible for the tangible and intangible heritage inherent in the collection, which is part of the regional, national or global distributed collection.

Senior university management are responsible for university collections. They have, *de facto*, been entrusted with this duty. The actual ownership and relevant legal obligations may vary from place to place, but the responsibilities must be ascertained and clearly understood.

A university having one or more collections should have a policy regulating and guiding the operation of its collection/s. In general these will reflect the goals of the university as well as the aims of research, teaching and community service. In turn the role of museums and collections should be mentioned in the university's own strategic plan. Examples of

exemplary university museum policies are available on the Internet (select references available free of charge from UMAC).

Professional ethical standards must guide the way in which collections are run. In addition, the policy will, in some detail, address the procedures for acquiring objects, initiating new collections or closing existing collections. UNESCO, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and local and National museum associations publish information on professional museum standards.

Maintenance

A person should be designated as responsible for a collection or museum. This responsibility should be recognised in that person's duty statement. If the person designated does not have museum experience, training must be provided. Adequate funds, time and on-going training should be available to enable the discharge of the responsibility.

A senior officer should be delegated to supervise the person responsible for the collection or museum.

The collection should have a formal policy. At the very least this should state that the objects will be legally obtained, documented records will be kept, preventive conservation will ensure the long-term survival of the collection, and it will be regularly accessible.

The existence of the collection should be made public and the needs of visitors (in person or by virtual means) facilitated, especially in regard to research and/or publish material in the collection.

Disposal and Closure

The disposal method/s must be in conformity with professional ethical standards and legal requirements.

Professional museum ethics require funds raised by disposal to be re-utilised in the remaining collection/s.

The request to close or disperse should provide evidence of written documentation indicating that the university (or other authority) is the legal owner of the objects and is entitled to dispose of them. Reference to the terms of bequests or source/s of funding is essential.

Collections or museums should never be sold, dispersed or closed for reasons such as a sudden requirement for space, financial savings, the resignation or termination of staff or for any capricious reason without wide and sustained consultations. Dispersal or disposal of collections reduces resources available to teachers, students, scholars and the national and international community.

Publicity surrounding disposal of objects may endanger future donations and research funding.

The consultation process should be followed by a formal written request detailing the reasons by the head of the appropriate unit or Faculty to the Chief Executive Officer (such as the Rector, Principal, Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Principal or Provost).

Each and every object to be de-accessioned should be documented.

The reason/s for closure or dispersal should be clearly stated. Where the reason/s is/are lack of relevance, poor condition, inadequate funds or requirement for the space, details of the consultations and the arguments for and against, should be given.

The recommended method/s of disposal (for example, transfer firstly to another university museum, secondly to any other museum) should be listed in order of priority. Each must safeguard the long-term survival of objects of scientific, artistic, social and educational value.

The aim of a closure procedure should be first and foremost to safeguard the long-term future of the objects in order to preserve the knowledge contained therein, and secondly to make adequate provision for affected staff.

