

[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]

5. Where are we now? Our state of knowledge

The most fundamental change that has affected museums during the [past] half-century [...] is the now almost universal conviction that they exist in order to serve the public. The old-style museum felt itself under no such obligation. It existed, it had a building, it had collections and a staff to look after them. It was reasonably adequately financed, and its visitors, usually not numerous, came to look, to wonder and to admire what was set before them. They were in no sense partners to the enterprise. The museum's prime responsibility was to its collections, not its visitors.

K. Hudson *in* Murphy (2003: 12)

These marvels (like all marvels) are mere repetitions of the ages.

Melville, 1998

The 1900s were a time of social, scientific, technological, cultural and economic changes on a scale unlike anything seen before. In the 20th century, university collections and museums⁹² became increasingly complex, grew considerably in size and number of objects and diversified their scope and publics. It would be imprudent here, indeed impossible, to attempt a detailed description of the past 100 years. Nevertheless, from the literature available it is possible to outline major trends and key turning points.

During the first half of the 20th century, there were few second generation university museums as their expansion would only occur from the 1960s-1970s onwards. Instead, the development of first generation museums and collections was in full swing. Natural history museums and botanical gardens continued to be created (or sometimes re-created), e.g. the Botanical Garden at the University of Delft, founded in 1917, and the Geiseltal Museum (Geology and Palaeontology) of the University of Halle-Wittenberg, which was founded in 1934. The development of first generation collections in the humanities – ethnology, anthropology, archaeology – started later than in natural history and many museums were established as a result of the numerous expeditions and excavations in the early 1900s. The Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Canada, was founded in 1947, the collection of the Musée Préhistorique de Penmarch was donated to the University of Rennes, France, in 1947, and the Ethnographic Museum Gerardus van der Leeuw, University of Groningen, the Netherlands, was founded in 1968.

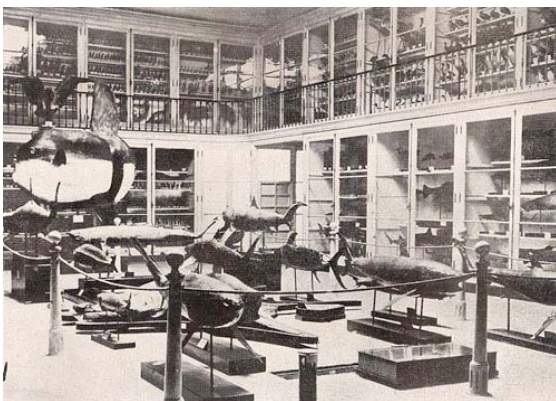


Fig. 5.1 – Museu Bocage, the zoology section of the National Museum of Natural History, University of Lisbon, photo from 1898. The Museum was tragically destroyed by a fire, 18 March 1978. “Almost nothing was left” (Almaça 1982: 35) (Museu Bocage Archives, reproduced with kind permission of the University of Lisbon).

⁹² In this dissertation, the term ‘university’ is taken in its broadest sense and to mean all European higher education institutions, including for example the *Fachhochschulen*, the polytechnics, military academies and the *grandes écoles*.



Fig. 5.2 – Museu Mineralógico e Geológico, National Museum of Natural History, University of Lisbon. Photo of the Palaeontology Room, possibly from the 1930s. This Museum was also affected by the 1978 fire mentioned above (Museu Mineralógico e Geológico Archives, reproduced with kind permission of the University of Lisbon).

During the first half of the 20th century, first generation university collections were usually intensely used for teaching and research and universities were investing in them, e.g. the University of Bologna acquired substantial zoological collections in 1932 (Scaravelli & Bonfitto 1994).

The second half of the 20th century was a period marked by considerable change at social and political levels. Three major factors directly impacting university collections and museums can be identified: a) changes in the higher education system; b) changes in the museum sector, and c) technological developments and changes in scientific research and teaching. After 1945, universities expanded significantly and the number of institutions and students increased dramatically in the 1960s, when structural reforms in the higher education systems of many countries began to be introduced (e.g. in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, as well as in the USA). Higher education reforms continued through the 1970s and 1980s and are still ongoing today. In the 1980s, Prime Minister Thatcher's reforms in the UK marked the beginning of a trend towards a lesser involvement of the State (i.e. reduction of government funding) in universities. Today, the continued validity of the classic Humboldt model is under question and major pillars such as universal and free access are being debated in many European countries.

Because of the increase in the number of museums in general, the improvement in public service and the development of the museum profession, the post-war period was also marked by significant developments in the museum sector. In the 1960s and continuing throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, accreditation and registration schemes were implemented, museum legislation was substantially reformed or created, museum journals multiplied, staff training and general standards improved, and the museum profession gradually evolved into the many specialities we see today. As I will put forward, these developments had several implications for university museums and collections.

The third major factor impacting university collections and museums was the advancement of science. Some higher education courses, such as archaeology, anthropology, life sciences and medicine, have suffered profound curricular transformations as a result of scientific advancements and trends. Teaching has also changed as a result of the introduction and generalised use of new technologies. These modifications will be addressed in the next chapter.

Over the past four decades, these three factors combined have significantly altered the landscape of university museums and collections, as well as their use and role.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the already vulnerable situation of first generation collections collapsed. Natural history museums in particular were going through a worldwide 'crisis' and several major European natural history museums vacillated (e.g. Anonymous 1990a,b, Butler 1997). In American universities, there were closures and dispersals (Black 1984). In Europe, universities gradually began to have tighter budgets and the management of space and staff became a poignant issue, with universities questioning the relevance of collections. Many second generation museums, although not directly affected by the 'crisis', also suffered from a lack of financial and staff resources, the lack of interest, and the fact that their role in the university was never clarified. Although to a different extent in different countries, by the late 1990s many university museums and collections were at best at a crossroads and at worse threatened.



Fig. 5.3 – Musée d'Histoire de la Médecine, Université Libre de Bruxelles, created in 1994. The collection (second generation) is significant and rather singular in the European context as it presents items related to the early history of health (magic and religious practices), as well as objects representative of non-Western medical practices (Pre-Colombian and African). The oldest objects are the representations of Hammourabi and the *Pazuzu* from Mesopotamia (2nd millennium BC) and pallets for ointment and oils of embalming (Egypt, 6th Dynasty, c. 2300 BC) (Archives Musée d'Histoire de la Médecine).

Confronted with this impasse, the university museum community mobilised, often with the support from the museum sector. National associations of university museums and collections were formed⁹³: the American Association of College and University Museums and Galleries (1980)⁹⁴, the British University Museums Group (1987), the Council of Australian University Museums and Collections (1992), the Brazilian Permanent Forum for University Museums (*Fórum Permanente de Museus Universitários Brasileiros*) (1992), the Dutch Foundation for Academic Heritage (*Stichting Academisch Erfgoed*) (1997), and the University Museums in Scotland (UMiS) (1998)⁹⁵. In 2002, the Spanish Association of University Museums and Collections (*Asociación de Museos y Colecciones Universitarios Españoles*) was founded (Such 2003) and, in 2004, under the auspices of ICOM-Greece, the Greek University Museums and Collections Working Group was created (Theologi-Gouti 2005).

⁹³ The Korean Association of University Museums (KAUM) had already been created in 1961 and the American College Art Association (CAA) was founded way back in 1911. See <http://www.kaum.or.kr/english/1/main.htm> and <http://www.collegeart.org/>, respectively. Both accessed 26 June 2005.

⁹⁴ See ACUMG's mission and history at *ACUMG Website*, <http://www.acumg.org/mission.html>, accessed 20 December 2004.

⁹⁵ See UMG at <http://www.umg.org.uk/>, the SAE at <http://www.academischerfgoed.nl/> and UMiS at <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/umis/>, all accessed 26 June 2005.

On an international level, the three most important initiatives were the creation of the European network *Universeum* in 2000, the foundation of UMAC in 2001 and the delivery by the Council of Europe of the *Draft Recommendation on the Governance and Management of the University Heritage* (Council of Europe 2004).

The next sections are dedicated to the present state of knowledge regarding European university collections. In the first part, a literature review will be presented, comprising main publications from the 20th century as well as dissertations. In the second part, major recent initiatives regarding university collections at national and international levels will be presented and discussed.

5.1 University collections in the 20th century museum literature

One widespread view about university collections is that publications are only of a relatively recent date. Although it is true that there has been an explosion of texts on the subject, both in number and scope, during the past two decades (particularly the past five years), the professional museum literature on university collections goes back to the early 1900s.

One of the objectives of the present research programme was to compile as many published literature sources on university museums and collections as possible. Previously, a literature review – largely restricted to papers published in English – was given by Tirrell (2000b). Recently, the *Hermann von Helmholtz Zentrum für Kulturtechnik* (Humboldt University in Berlin) has developed an online bibliographical database in German, listing more than 600 titles on university museums⁹⁶. The review presented below is restricted to a selection of articles, books and other relevant published material, addressing university museums and collections as a group or as a sub-group (university museums of art, university collections of mineralogy, etc.). For reasons of space and concision, catalogues, case-studies and descriptive papers are excluded. Literature addressing the ‘crisis’ of university collections will be discussed on the next chapter. The selection encompasses papers published in English and French (with occasional references in Dutch, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish) between 1917 and 2005. The majority of these were published in professional museum journals (e.g. *Curator*, *Museums Journal*, *Museum News*, *La Lettre de l’OCIM*, *Museum International*) and conference proceedings. Only a few are unpublished. The review has three sections: 5.1.1) fundamental papers, here to mean theoretical texts discussing nature and role of university museums and collections; 5.1.2) surveys; and 5.1.3) doctoral dissertations.

5.1.1 Fundamental papers

The literature on university museums has seen a substantial growth since the 1960s. Before, fundamental papers only appeared occasionally. Ruthven (e.g. 1923, 1931, 1939, 1963), Coleman (e.g. 1939, 1942) and Rodeck (e.g. 1950, 1952) were amongst the more prolific pre-1960s authors. The literature peaked three times in the 20th century: the first time in the 1960s, when a debate about broader audiences emerged, a second time in the 1980s, when the first alerts about the ‘crisis’ appeared, and a third time since the late 1990s till the present. Since the 1980s, a new wave of theoretical texts appeared notably by Arnold-Foster (e.g. 1989, 1993, 1999, 2000)⁹⁷, Boylan (e.g. 1999, 2002, 2003), Clercq (e.g. 2001c, 2003a,b, 2005, in press)⁹⁸, Hamilton (1995), Kelly (e.g. 1998, 1999, 2001), Stanbury (e.g. 1993, 1997,

⁹⁶ See <http://publicus.culture.hu-berlin.de/sammlungen/bibliographie.php>, accessed 18 June 2005. The bibliographical database also lists texts in other languages. At date of accession, the bibliographic database listed 656 titles in German, 242 in English, 16 titles in French, 1 title in Spanish and 2 titles in Latin.

⁹⁷ See also Arnold-Foster & La Rue (1993), Arnold-Foster & Weeks (1999, 2000, 2001) and Arnold-Foster & Mirchandani (2001).

⁹⁸ See also Clercq (1998, 2001a,b, 2004a,b) and Clercq & Lourenço (2003, 2004).

2000, 2001b, 2002, 2003a,b, 2004, 2005)⁹⁹, Tirrell (e.g. 1991, 1994, 1998, 2000a,b, 2001a,b, 2002, 2003a,b, 2005), and Warhurst (e.g. 1984, 1986).

Before the 1960s, the majority of fundamental papers were published in American journals and caution is therefore needed when transposing reflections therein to the European situation. Nevertheless, it can be speculated that the problems of European university collections were to a great extent similar to those of their North American counterparts. Judging from evidence from the field, the difference is probably one of a delay in time, with European university museums and collections lagging at least one decade behind their North American counterparts, both in respect to the public access debate of the 1960s and the impact of the 'crisis' in the 1980s.

Right from the beginning, the role and purpose of university museums has been a recurrent topic in the literature. No matter whether describing the latest temporary exhibition or discussing the importance of collections, there is probably not a single paper that does not address the role, purpose, mission or goal of the museum or collection, as well as the conditions provided by the parent institution (university, college) enabling it to fulfil or not fulfil that role. Despite the prolixity, the place of the university museum and its mission within the university has not been unequivocally and coherently defined or articulated. If we add the dynamic nature of university museums and collections and their diversity in size and type, it is hardly surprising that many have often shown no clear understanding of the museums' role in the university.

Before the 1960s, the university appears to have been the *raison d'être* of university museums and collections¹⁰⁰. Although access to broader segments of the public would not be denied, the goal and purpose of university collections, at least as expressed in the literature, seemed to be teaching and research. One of the earliest texts in which university museums are mentioned as a group was published by Smith (1917). In a paragraph detailing the function of university museums, he wrote: "University museums give opportunity for professors and students to do scientific research work and supply labeled [*sic*] specimens, casts, models and maps to illustrate the courses of study, just as the university library supplies literature" (Smith 1917: 101). Baker (1924) addressed the function and role of university museums of natural history, noting similarities and contrasts between them and university museums of art. He wrote, "[...] a well arranged museum can make a science course much more intelligible to an undergraduate", adding that specimens are "absolutely essential for the proper teaching of many subjects" and that these specimens "should be in a museum where they may be rationally arranged to bring out some principle" (Baker 1924: 82).

Although not often cited, the first important writer to reflect on the mission of university museums was probably Ruthven (1923, 1931, 1939, 1963). Ruthven wrote about the differences between local, national and university museums, while at the same time stressing the twofold mission of the latter. He argued that the university museum's fundamental mission is twofold: a) research through collecting and study and b) teaching through exhibition. "As a general rule", he maintained, local museums should aim mostly at "popular instruction", national museums "should combine instruction and research about equally" and the university museum "should strongly emphasize research, that is, the obtaining and study of collections for the advancement of science" (Ruthven 1931: 31). Noting that the university museum does not attract masses of visitors, it should therefore – instead of canalising resources into exhibitions that are not looked at – limit exhibits "to those which are needed

⁹⁹ See also Stanbury (2001a).

¹⁰⁰ There are, of course, exceptions. For example, Luigi Rolando, the founder of the Museo di Anatomia Umana at the University of Turin clearly wished the Museo to be accessible to the general public from the start. In 1830, he located it at the Palazzo dei Regi Musei, in the center of Torino, together with the Museo di Storia Naturale and the Museo di Antichità ed Egizio (G. Giacobini, interview 31 March 2003). See more on the Museo di Anatomia Umana in Giacobini (1993, 1997a,b).

to illustrate elementary facts to the class of students who come in contact with them" (Ruthven 1931: 32). Likewise, Harden (1947) briefly discussed the history of university museums and explained why university museums primarily serve the university community: "[...] the end in view [of the university museum] was always the same, namely to ensure that university teachers and students had the means of supplementing their book-learning with a study of objects and specimens" (Harden 1947: 142). Later in the text he asks: "Should a university museum [...] cater more directly for the general public? One thing is certain, and that is if its exhibition galleries are arranged in a way which will provide the greatest benefit to university classes and students it will not help to render them attractive to the general public", concluding: "For this reason the service of the general public must always be the secondary consideration. But it would be a great mistake to exclude the general public altogether" (Harden 1947: 143). It was Harden (1947) who – possibly for the first time – mentioned the role university museums should play in the training of museum professionals, writing that "Existing in the midst of a body of students and having good general collections, it [the university museum] is very well placed for training museum workers" (Harden 1947: 143).

The twofold mission – research and teaching – was also subscribed to by Coleman (1939, 1942). Contrary to Ruthven, Laurence Vail Coleman is frequently cited, possibly because he was Director of the American Association of Museums from 1927 to 1958 and wrote the monumental three-volume work *The Museum in America*. Coleman vehemently defended that the university museum's principal duty was to serve the university community in internal education and research. As he poignantly stressed public service "is no more the first business of a [university] museum than that of a [university] library" (Coleman 1942: 5). Although he recognized that some university museums "try to be all things to all men", the first duty of a university or college museum "is to its parent establishment and students and faculty have prior claim to that of outsiders in general"¹⁰¹ (Coleman 1942: 5).

I should pause to note that we are in the 1940s, thus in the almost exclusive domain of first generation university collections, i.e. those that since the late 16th century were assembled precisely for teaching and research.

Rodeck (1950, 1952) also wrote extensively about the mission, role and audience of university museums. He was probably the first to call for a clarification of their missions: "Museums forming part of a university may legitimately have one or several functions, but in any case these should be clearly defined and well understood" (Rodeck 1950: 7). "For their own protection [...]", he wrote, "[university] museum people had better define and restrict the meaning of the term 'museum'" (Rodeck 1952: 5). It is curious to observe that the currently *en vogue* 'university museum as a showcase for the university' has existed at least for 50 years. Borhegyi (1956a: 3) is likely to have coined the term "show windows" for the university. In his paper, a clear case for university museums as powerful public relation tools for universities is made. He writes "excellent and specialised research collections in the campus museum may serve a highly important drawing card to attract [...] students to the university" (Borhegyi 1956a: 3). Nowadays, this 'fourth mission' of university museums is especially popular among university administrators. In a second paper published the same year, he repeated the message, stressing however the need to primarily serve the university community in the widest sense, i.e. encompassing students from all disciplinary interests (Borhegyi 1956b).

With papers increasing in volume and depth, the 1960s represent a turning point. During this period, university museums became apparently more concerned with the demands of public service and the need to serve broader audiences. University museums of the second generation initiated their growth in numbers, both in Europe and the USA. In the museum

¹⁰¹ Note that 'faculty' has a somewhat different meaning in North America and in Europe. In North America, faculty means the members of the teaching staff and, occasionally, the administrative staff of an educational institution (college or university). In Europe, faculty is a division of a university (e.g. Faculty of Medicine).

sector at large, the educational role of the museum, professional training, development and standards began to be more regularly debated (though perhaps later in Europe). These factors may have contributed to a redefinition of the purpose of university museums and collections, as well as to a reflection on the quality of the public service provided.

In reality, museum standards became an issue. For the first time topics such as public access to exhibitions (Hill 1966, Reimann 1967, Rodeck 1968, Crompton 1968, Williams 1969), the distinction between permanent and temporary exhibitions (Hill 1966), educational programmes designed specifically for broader audiences (Matthews 1962, Reimann 1967), and public image (Rodeck 1968) were discussed in the university museum literature, along with conservation (Reimann 1967, Williams 1969), the need for collections policies (Hill 1966), and associations of friends of university museums (e.g. Williams 1969, Martins 1982). Moreover, authors demonstrated an increasing self-criticism and more openly denounced deficiencies. Reimann (1967: 36) complained about “rows and rows of glass jars” that could only be seen through the glass of locked doors. Odegaard (1963: 33) saw a tendency for ‘territoriality’ that put the museum in the situation of “finding itself in, but not of, the University, a kind of Bastille within the heart of the University”. A similar view was put forward by Rodeck (1968: 34), who wrote about some university museums as being scientific ivory towers, “in which the inhabitants [...] talk only occasionally [...] to each other”. Rodeck even wondered why so many university administrations had continued supporting these museums, suggesting that lack of interest and neglect may arise from the fact that “the museum makes no observable, positive contribution to the educational activities of the university” (Rodeck 1968: 34). Realising that many of the problems resulted from the lack of qualified staff (i.e. museum-qualified staff), a reassessment of profiles and training of staff, including directors, was demanded (e.g. Rodeck 1968, Reimann 1967, Crompton 1968, Fleming 1969, and later Rosenbaum 1988).

It is interesting to note that many, if not all, of these themes persist in the agenda of university museums and collections today (as if these papers were written yesterday). However, in the 1960s university museums were merely echoing similar claims made by the museum sector in general: an increase in public service, better museography and interpretation, more attention to the visitor, definition of museum careers. Although these issues continue to be discussed by the museum sector, after 40 years their substance is not questioned anymore – public service, professional standards, training, conservation and careers are now all taken for granted worldwide. In other words, general museums changed, while the large majority of university museums have remained as they were in the 1960s – except that their problems are now even more severe.

It was also in the 1960s that the idea of the university museum as the ‘ideal museum’ appeared. At the 8th General Assembly of ICOM held at the Deutsches Museum in Munich in 1968, Rodeck stated: “When one considers the natural advantages of a museum in a university community, one wonders whether any other kind of museum may not be under a handicap in one respect or another!” (Rodeck 1970: 39). Likewise, Fleming (1969: 10) said, “[...] the university museum [...] represents what seems to me to be in theory the ideal relationship of two institutions”. Other authors agree (e.g. Meneses 1968, Wittkower 1968, Auer 1970), with their arguments ranging from ‘the academic atmosphere being more suitable for creativity’ to ‘the privileged access to information, equipment and scholarship’. Thus, at this time, university museums were not only claiming a change in the *status quo* – in tune with other museums – but they were also suggesting that their strategic position provided them with a prominent role in the museum sector at large. It is also in this context that university museums appear in the literature as potential leaders in the provision of museum courses and in the training of museum professionals (a role they actually never played). As Burcaw (1969: 15) put it, “[...] university museums, to a much greater extent than is now the case, should initiate and offer museum training courses; [they] are not doing their duty to students, public, or the museum profession in this respect”. The same position was taken by other authors (e.g. Harden 1947, Borhegyi 1958, Odegaard 1963, Burcaw 1969,

Williams 1969)¹⁰². Already in the 1940s, Harden (1947) had highlighted the role of university museums in assisting small museums with expertise – an idea that was to be ‘re-invented’ in England in the new millennium, with the active participation of some university museums, for example the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology (University College London), in ‘museum hubs’ (S. MacDonald, interview 25 November 2002). There were, however, dissonant voices. For example, Manning (1980: 6) stated that “university courses are essentially academic, and are rarely intended to be a form of vocational training. Their aim is not to produce museum assistants, field archaeologists, or any other type of specialist, but to produce a graduate who has the basic knowledge [at disciplinary level] on which a more specialised training can be built”.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there seem to be fewer papers addressing career development and professional standards (e.g. Zeller 1984, Freedman-Harvey 1989). Nonetheless, the function and role of university museums (Petreo 1971, Strachan 1979, Waller 1980, Guthe 1983, Schmidt 1987), the dilemmas resulting from multiple audiences (Arth 1974, Lopez 1977) and, in particular, the problem of combining students and general visitors in one single exhibition continued to be addressed (e.g. Seyd 1971, King 1980, Warhurst 1984, Craig 1988). From the 1980s onwards, papers addressing the positive aspects of partnerships between universities and museums written by non-university museum authors also became more frequent (e.g. Selig & Lanouette 1982, Butler & Horn 1983, Rosenbaum 1988, Solinger 1990, Lauret 1997).

In 1984, possibly for the first time, university museums were granted a distinct chapter in a major museology manual, the *Manual of Curatorship: A Guide to Museum Practice* (Warhurst 1984): the chapter covers the function of university museums, their history (focused on the UK), buildings, administration, finances, and staff. At the time, most university museums continued to focus on internal audiences. As Warhurst states, “although most university museums would not refuse organised visits by school children, few provide anything that can be called an educational service for this purpose” and those museums “which are strictly departmental teaching museums will clearly aim their arrangements at the [...] student in the department” (Warhurst 1984: 81). This focus on internal audiences is confirmed by available museum statistics. Danilov (1996) confirmed that attendance in many campus museums and galleries in the USA was quite small (i.e. between 5,000 and 10,000 a year), the majority being students, researchers and staff. He recognises, however, that some larger institutions attracted more than 300,000 visitors a year, from school groups to residents and tourists (Danilov 1996).

Nevertheless, the issue dominating the university museum literature in the 1970s (e.g. Davis 1976, Minsky 1976) and particularly during the 1980s is the ‘crisis’. During this time, more papers from Europe appeared. The nature and reasons for the ‘crisis’ will be discussed in the next chapter. At this point, I would simply like to signal the appearance of the ‘crisis’ and to identify a number of consequences brought forward in the literature. Probably the first article mentioning a ‘crisis’ in university museums in general (not specifically in natural history university museums) at a national scale and in a professional journal of international distribution appeared in 1986. Warhurst (1986) announced that English university museums were going through a ‘triple crisis’: a crisis of identity and purpose, a crisis of recognition and a crisis of resources. Warhurst’s article, together with one by Willet (1986) revealing a crisis in Scottish university museums¹⁰³, were widely cited and represented a turning point for university museums in the UK (Merriman 2002). Around the same time, Black (1984)

¹⁰² In fact, university museums were among the first to provide programmes and courses for the museum sector. In the USA, the first course to train professionals for natural history museums was put forward by the Museum of Natural History of the State University of Iowa as early as 1908. The second course for the training of art museum professionals in the USA was implemented by the Farnsworth Museum of Wellesley College in 1910, the Philadelphia Museum of Art being the first (Cushman 1984).

¹⁰³ Providing numerous examples from Scottish universities such as Glasgow, Aberdeen, St. Andrews and Stirling, Willet (1986) was critical of the formula-funding and denounced situations where curators were forced to be shop managers and security officers for the museum to open its doors.

reported that university museums of art, history and natural science in the USA “were either closed or had their programs drastically curtailed” (Black 1984: 20). In France, a dramatic report on the state of the museums under the jurisdiction of the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale was published in 1991 (Héritier-Augé 1991). This report raised awareness about problems related to French university museums and collections, the majority of them similar to those reported by Danilov (1996) in the USA and denounced by Warhurst (1986) in Britain. Héritier-Augé's report would also set in motion a series of initiatives at the political level in France.

Elsewhere in Europe, museum professionals raised the topic of the often deplorable state of university museums and collections. There was a meeting organised by the Portuguese Association of Museology at the University of Coimbra in 1978 (Associação Portuguesa de Museologia 1982), where several case-studies were presented (e.g. Almaça 1982, Coelho & Canêlhas 1982, Encarnação 1982, Firmino 1982, Gil 1982, Gouveia 1982a,b, Lima 1982, Martins 1982, Meneres 1982, Teixeira 1982). The 1970s university museum reality in Portugal was generally very poor. Unfortunately, there were no significant improvements resulting from the meeting. The first concerns in the Netherlands had been raised as early as 1977, in connection with ‘orphaned’ natural history collections at the University of Utrecht (S. de Clercq, *in litt.* 7 February 2005).

The ‘crisis’ had three major consequences for the literature. Firstly, surveys were initiated in different countries. Secondly, university museums and collections began a period of increasing collaboration, both at national and international levels – this has resulted in the creation of the national and international associations mentioned earlier, and a pronounced growth in texts, conference proceedings, and other publications. In particular, *Universeum* and UMAC have produced a significant number of publications, amongst which the already mentioned *Declaration of Halle: Academic Heritage and Universities: Responsibility and Public Access* (2000) (see appendix A10), two volumes of *Museum International* (Vols. 206 & 207, 2000), and *Treasures of University Collections in Europe* (Bremer & Wegener 2001). UMAC has published its annual conference proceedings since its creation in 2001 – in the journal *Museologia* for the 2001 and 2002 conferences and as an independent publication for the 2003 conference (Tirrell 2005). Also worth mentioning were a publication sponsored by the OECD (Kelly 2001) and a special issue of *ICOM Study Series* (No. 11, 2003). Thirdly, the literature clearly indicates a whole new range of issues being under discussion, including a strong political dimension. More papers on university museums and collections have been published in the past five years than during the previous 100 years together. It would be impossible to cover the large number of recent publications in detail and I will merely identify major points of discussion and give a few illustrative references. At the end of this section a selection of published references arranged by discipline is given (Table 5.1).

The accumulated effects of years of limited resources, a “flurry of dispersals” and “mistakes”¹⁰⁴, an apparent decline in the use of collections for teaching and research (questioning their role in the university) and an explosion in the number, scope, and variety of museums worldwide (which significantly increased competition and standards, while at the same time highlighting the poor public service offered by university museums) have placed university museums and collections at the crossroads. The challenge was summarised by Kelly (2001: 8): “[The university museum] must protect the scholarly values appropriate to its position within an institution of higher learning whilst at the same time providing the stimulating environment demanded by an increasingly sophisticated and diverse audience”, and this with less financial and staff resources than 40 years ago. The post-1980s literature exhaustively examines this challenge, the circumstances that led to it and the long-term consequences. Three major groups of – often overlapping – issues can be identified.

¹⁰⁴ K. Arnold-Foster in Mulhearn (2003: 33) in relation to the situation in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s, although the remark is extensive to other European countries.

Firstly, many authors stress the importance and relevance of university collections, both of the first and second generation. When discussing what he considered to be the three imperatives for university museums, Boylan (1999) singled out the first as being 'relevance' (the other two being 'collaboration' and 'autonomy'). He stated: "It is essential that the museum [...], or a particular large and important collection within it, is made relevant to present-day needs. This does not mean that areas of collections or study which no longer relate to the current teaching curriculum should be abandoned, but the value and potential future importance of historical material should be emphasised" (Boylan 1999: 52-53). Furthermore, university museums and collections feel the vulnerability of the situation; threats loom. Papers are increasingly titled 'Why do universities have museums?' in its multiple variants (e.g. Kemp 1994, Deloche 1995, Gil 1998, Clercq 2003b, Rorschach 2004). There is a parallel flow of papers addressing the topic of the future of university museums (e.g. Spencer 1971, Almaça 1982, Coor 1986, Canelhas 1987, Turk 1994, Casaleiro 1996, Hudson & Legget 2000). The importance of collections for the university and for society in general is stressed repeatedly. As Yerbury (1993: 1) stated, "university museums and collections are as important [...] as libraries and laboratories. They play a very valuable role as information resources for teaching and research". Black (1984: 21) argued that university museums have "a unique and vital role" to play in reminding people of western society's qualities and achievements. Associated with relevance comes the perpetual unfulfilled potential of university collections. MacDonald (2003: 25) mentioned the "strengths and potential" of university museums and collections, comprising: "specialised collections accumulated for teaching and research, specialised supporting libraries and archives, access to cross-disciplinary expertise [...], tradition of quality provision (e.g. hands-on access), access to higher education and research funding, [and] higher public profile through association with an academic institution". Scheiner (1992: 18) agreed that university museums have an "enormous potential" and regrets that so much remains to be done in terms of public access. Diamond (1992: 92) bluntly stated that the unfulfilled potential is due to the lack of resources: "public programs in many university museums have not had the resources to keep up with current museum practice". Moreover, "many university museums have little contact with new educational research [...]. They may have no ties to the departments on campus that conduct educational research, and their staff often have little credibility with educational researchers", concluding that "It is as if these public programmes activities existed in an entirely separate sphere from the rest of the university" (Diamond 1992: 92). The potential of university museums is further addressed in e.g. Marandino (2001), Ferriot (2003b), Gil (2002).

A second group of issues raised in the literature is related to the identity challenges, dilemmas, and the risks ahead. Clercq (2003b: 152) asked: "Who are we [university museums and collections], what are we and for whom do we work? How does the museum fit into the mission of our university? How can we consolidate our position within our parent institution? [...] What is our relation with ongoing research and teaching programmes [...] and with students? How do university museums succeed in making science interesting, thus inspiring young people to pursue science as a career? What is the 'public quality' of our museums? What is our role in the museum community at large? [...] What kind of leadership is required?". Murphy (2003: 9-10) discussed "multiple identity issues" and "tensions [that] can pull people in university museums in many different directions simultaneously". Black (1984) summarised by posing the question: 'university museums – open door or ivory tower?' Another distinction based on role and users was bluntly put forward by King (2001: 23): "We are becoming less university museums and more museums at universities". Already in the 1990s, Scheiner (1992) had distinguished two types of university museums: the "museum of the university" and the "museum for the university" (*museu da universidade vs. museu para a universidade*). 30 years earlier, Odegaard (1963: 33) had noted the difference between a museum that is "in, but not of, the University". Mere word games or symptoms of intrinsic dilemmas?

Further dilemmas were recognized by Wallace (2003b: 8): “How can university museums better respond to society’s need for lifelong learning? How can university museums improve learning environments in universities? And what is their role in contributing to universities ‘research’, ‘academic citizenship’ and community service?”. All these questions remain unanswered today. Wallace also warned for the risk of alienation when pursuing a broader audience: “When university museums chase the public outside the university campus, it seems they lose touch with the point of difference that makes them unique – the relationship with the university itself” (Wallace 2003a: 28, see also Wallace 2000, 2002).

Apart from teaching, research and public display, the ‘fourth’ mission occurred more frequently in the past five years’ literature than before: the university museum as a ‘showcase’ for the university. The concept was summarised by Haan (2001: 121), when referring to the Utrecht University Museum: “[...the Museum serves] as a centre of expertise that professionally manages the academic history collection of the university and demonstrates the achievements of Utrecht science, both past and present, to a broad public. In other words, it is the showcase of Utrecht University”. As indicated above, the ‘museum as a showcase’ has existed in the literature at least since the 1950s (Borhegyi 1956a). Potentially, it has advantages for both sides: the university uses the collections to promote its social image and recruit future students in an increasingly competitive higher education ‘market’ and university museums and collections acquire the much-needed staff and financial stability. However, university museums should not be reduced to mere marketing tools and this ‘fourth’ mission needs to be carefully reconciled with the relevance and use of collections for present-day teaching and research, as well as more meaningful collections-oriented public service.

A third group of papers discusses structural difficulties and suggest tools to improve the situation, including more collaboration, raising public standards, governance, management, leadership profiles, autonomy, repositioning of the museums and collections in the university structure (e.g. Tirrell 1991, 1994, Boyd 1995, Hamilton 1995, Jonaitis 1995, 2003, Genoways 1999, Stanbury 2001b). For example, Tirrell (1994) examined major difficulties facing many university museums, such as heavy bureaucracy, dwindling support, inconsistent evaluation criteria, constantly changing administrations, and special interest pressures. Stanbury (2001b) alerted to the potential deadly spiral of isolation of staff responsible for the care of university collections: “some may feel anxiety or shame about the collection’s condition and in such circumstances [...] may seek to protect the university’s or the department’s reputation by discouraging access to the collection or limiting information about it. [...] The feeling of isolation is often increased because [...] [they] believe they are powerless to make changes. Support from supervisors may be lacking, resources may be inadequate, few people may use the collection, modern syllabus content may appear to bypass the collection area, and colleagues working in the same field may be distant” (Stanbury 2001b: 70). Isolation is further discussed in Weeks (2000).

Also at the structural level and for the first time, governance and the positioning of university museums within the university structure are singled out as a tool to improve their recognition within the university. Providing data from the field of natural history, Humphrey (1992a: 59-60) stated: “Based on my own impressions, effective, successful, nationally recognised university museums [...] are administered as independent units that report to a dean, vice-president, or the equivalent”. Likewise, Birney (1994: 99) argued in favour of greater autonomy, stating that university museums are “best viewed and administered as a university resource and responsibility rather than as a departmental or collegiate unit” and explained “the higher the authority level of the administrator immediately above the director, the greater the probability that they will be making budgetary decisions based on the museum’s actual nature and importance rather than just on the short-term needs of associated academic departments” (Birney 1994: 106). Autonomy can be a two-sided sword for university museums, though – particularly first generation university museums as I will demonstrate in the next chapter.

Papers addressing:	References
The distinct nature of university museums and collections as a group	Smith 1917, Harden 1947, Rodeck 1950, 1952, 1968, 1970; Borhegyi 1956a,b; Odegaard 1963, Meneses 1968, Guthe 1966, Swanson 1969, Auer 1970, Seyd 1971, Piper 1972, Arth 1974, Reynolds 1979, Gouveia 1982a, Tandon 1983, Warhurst 1984, 1986; Huntley <i>et al.</i> 1986, Willet 1986, Canelhas 1987, Schmidt 1987, Craig 1988, Rosenbaum 1988, Bruno 1992, Scheiner 1992, Holo 1993, 1993-94, Yerbury 1993, Hamilton 1995, Lénard 1996, Clercq 2003b, Clercq & Lourenço 2003, Gil 1998, 2002, Boylan 1999, 2002, 2003, Lord 2000, Silva 2000, Stanbury 2000, 2001b, 2002, 2003a,b, 2004, 2005, Tirrell 2000b, Weeks 2000, Bremer & Wegener 2001, King 2001, Taub 2001, Geysant 2002, Lourenço 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, MacDonald 2003, Mulhearn 2003, Murphy 2003, Wallace 2002, 2003a,b, Reynolds 2004, Rorschach 2004, Van den Driessche 2005a, Willumson 2000
The governance of university museums	Davis 1976, Rosenbaum 1988, Diamond 1992, Hoagland 1992, Humphrey 1992a,b, Alarcão 1993, Cato 1993, 1994, Birney 1994, Cannon-Brookes 1994, Boyd 1995, Genoways 1999, Carradice 2001, Kelly 2001, Mack 2001, Heinämies 2001, Oster & Goetzmann 2002, Munktel 2003, Tirrell 2003a,b, Mares 2005
University museums and students: teaching function	James 1960, Duggan 1964, Kinsey 1966, Reimann 1967, Battcock 1968-69, Baramki 1970, Johnson 1971, Ortner 1978, Eldredge 1978, Holo 1985, King 2002, Heinämies 2003, Weber 2005a
University museums and research: research function	Grinnell 1910, Auer 1970, Rodeck 1970, Tucci 2000, Jonaitis 2003, Clercq 2004a, Clercq & Lourenço 2004
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of natural history	Ruthven 1923, 1931, 1939, 1963, Baker 1924, Guthe 1966, 1983, Reimann 1967, Rolfe 1969, Minsky 1976, Strachan 1979, Wilson 1988, Kohlstedt 1988, 1991, Humphrey 1991, 1992a,b, Tirrell 1991, 1994, 1998, 2000a, Lazare 1996, Leypold 1996, Mares & Tirrell 1998, Cordell 2000, Diamond 2000a,b, Lanyon <i>et al.</i> 2000, MacFadden & Camp 2000, Tirrell 2000a, Mares 1999, 2001, 2003, Verschelde 2001, Simpson 2003a,b, 2005, Clercq 2003a, Hutterer 2005, Loneux 2005
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of art	Coolidge 1956, 1966, James 1960, Freundlich 1964-65, Sawyer 1964-65, Hill 1966, Hester 1967, Jaffé 1967, Wittkower 1968, Battcock 1968-69, Johnson 1971, Petheo 1971, Zeller 1984, 1985, 1986, Heffernan 1987, Lyons 1991, Cuno 1992, 1994, 1995, Curnow 1993, Stone 1993, Drucker 1994, Deloche 1995, Fleury 1996, Mossière 1996, Wallace 2000, 2003a, Balandraud & François 2001, Van den Driessche 2001, Collet 2004, Snell 2004
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of medicine	Duggan 1964, Turk 1994, Horder 1999, 2001, 2003, Wakefield 2002
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of archaeology and anthropology	Matthews 1962, Crompton 1968, Williams 1969, Baramki 1970, Lopez 1977, Manning 1980, Pihlman 1995, Mériot 1996, Lima 1982
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of social history	Fleming 1969, Schlereth 1980, Martin 2004, Nemec 2004
The distinct nature and role of university museums and collections of history of science, mathematics, technology & science centres	Gil 1982, Artu 1996, Ferrarese & Palladino 1998, Giacardi & Roero 1999, Savini 2001, Salmi 2001, Tucci 2002, Ferriot 2003a,b, Taub 2003, Theologi-Gouti 2003a,b, Clercq 1998, 2001a,b,c, 2005, in press

Table 5.1 – Literature on the distinct nature and function of university museums and collections (as a group and at disciplinary level). The table is not exhaustive and it does not include descriptive papers.

Recently, the term 'university heritage' or 'academic heritage' was introduced in the literature. The term was used in the Netherlands in the report *Om het Academisch Erfgoed*, which means *For the Academic Heritage*, in the 1990s (Adviesgroep Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst 1996) and at an international level it was possibly first used in 2000 by the European network *Universeum* in the Halle Declaration (see appendix A10) and later adopted by other authors (e.g. Bell 2000, Sanz & Bergan 2002a, Boylan 2003, Bulotait 2003, Associazione Nazionale Musei Scientifici 2004, Council of Europe 2004, Ferriot & Lourenço 2004, Gesché-Koning 2005a,b).

To summarise this section, few fundamental papers were published before the 1960s. Significant changes in the 1960s resulted in an increasing debate regarding professional standards and the need for a broader public service. The 'crisis', first diagnosed in the 1980s, resulted in a substantial growth in the quantity and quality of fundamental papers focusing on issues such as the relevance and importance of university collections, identity dilemmas and governance issues – namely profiles of staff, management and autonomy.

5.1.2 Surveys of university museums and collections

University museums are dealt with in multiple European yearbooks, surveys and directories (e.g. Doughty 1981, Ruppli 1991, 1996, Wijgengangs & Kati 1996, Spronsen 1998, Pezzali 1998, Davoigneau & Le Guet Tully 1999). However, in these cases they are grouped with non-university-affiliated museums of similar disciplines – e.g. directories of museums of science. This specialised literature is too vast and dispersed to review here and, in any case, beyond the scope of this research. Instead, I will exclusively focus on comprehensive surveys and directories exclusively presenting university museums. Such publications are not numerous.

Survey studies can be done at a multidisciplinary level (encompassing all disciplines) or at disciplinary level (encompassing a sub-group of university museums or collections). They can be based on a selected sample (e.g. Humphrey 1992a,b) or assume the form of a nation-wide census (e.g. Coleman 1942). Surveys may moreover investigate multiple theoretical and practical aspects (from mission and function to exhibitions, conservation, staffing, and funding) or look into one particular aspect, for example management (e.g. Birney 1994, Kelly 1999) or visitor studies (e.g. Almeida 2004). Comprehensive surveys conducted at national scale, focusing on multiple aspects of museum theory and practice and multiple disciplines, are relatively recent. They are likely to have resulted from a situation of instability or 'crisis' and often present detailed recommendations, including at political level.

Coleman (1942) was possibly the first to carry out a systematic multi-disciplinary survey of university museums, complemented with extensive comments on their philosophy and background. His book was the result of more than 200 study visits to university museums in the USA. Coleman identified c. 700 museums in 400 universities, mostly large and well-established higher education institutions. He grouped museums into three major categories: art museums (c. 100), museums of science (including both natural history and science and technology) (c. 500) and history museums (c. 100). Previously, in the third volume of his *The Museum in America*, Coleman (1939) had listed 66 university museums. A decade later, Rodeck (1952) sent questionnaires to 527 universities in the USA, asking if they had museums (173 replies received). Art museums came first in number, closely followed by life sciences museums and museums of geology, anthropology and history in smaller numbers. Rodeck was, however, sceptical of the large number of art 'museums' because he suspected many to be simple galleries without collections – "empty rooms to hang pictures" as he called them (Rodeck 1952: 5) – and objected to these being called museums.

In the 1990s, Victor J. Danilov compiled the latest exhaustive directory of American university and colleges museums and galleries (Danilov 1996). The first 140 pages include an in-depth discussion of several key issues, e.g. role, history, types, governance, collections and

research, exhibitions and funding. The survey was conducted between 1993 and 1995 and covered 1,108 museums, galleries and related facilities, although the author recognised that the total number would certainly be much higher. The precise number of university museums and collections was hard to determine due to the lack of consistent definitions and the low profile and informal nature of many museum-like facilities – this is also the case in Europe. The survey was organised typologically and Danilov identified 24 types of university museums, ranging from art galleries and museums to textile and costumes museums; historical museums, houses and sites; marine science museums and aquariums; science and technology museums and centres, planetariums and observatories; religious museums and sculpture gardens, among others. Following a period of great expansion and growth in the 1960s and 70s (Bryant 1967, Rosenbaum 1988), Danilov found that many American university museums in the 1990s were facing multiple needs, typically around the areas of funds, space and staff. Allen Rosenbaum, director of the Princeton University Art Museum, suggested that some museums have become bigger than their parent institutions: “[...] the university is not always prepared for the museum to take on a complex life of its own as a more sophisticated professional organisation, one no longer manageable by an active member of the faculty” (Rosenbaum 1988, quoted in Danilov 1996: 141). In the USA, the 1990s were a decade of economic expansion, following the rather agitated 1980s, which witnessed the ‘first crisis’ of natural history museums and the creation of the Association of University Museums and Galleries (ACUMG)¹⁰⁵. Thus, several surveys of university museums of natural history were undertaken, encompassing issues such as history, relevance, organisation and governance (e.g. Armstrong *et al.* 1991, Kohlstedt 1991, Humphrey 1991, 1992a,b, Diamond 1992, Cato 1993, 1994, Tirrell 2000).

Art on Campus, another US directory, exclusively listed university art museums and galleries (Russell & Spencer 2000). This directory was sponsored by the College Art Association (CAA), created in 1911¹⁰⁶. *Art on Campus* listed more than 700 art museums, galleries and sculpture parks, a smaller number than listed by Danilov (1996). The directory aimed to be a practical guide, listing institutions by State and in alphabetical order by university or college. For each museum, collection or gallery, basic information is presented, as well as descriptions of collections and facilities. Earlier, a survey of US university museums of art had been published by Sloan & Swinburne (1981).

In Australia, not much was known about university museums and collections before the 1990s¹⁰⁷. In 1975, the Pigott Report (Pigott *et al.* 1975) noted the plight of many university museums and recommended ways of appropriately funding them on a level consistent with other types of museums. Two preliminary surveys of university collections were published in 1993 – one addressing university collections of all disciplines (Stanbury 1993) and the other addressing university art collections (Curnow 1993). The nation-wide *Cinderella Collections: University Museums and Collections in Australia* was published in 1996 (University Museums Review Committee 1996), after considerable influence by the Council of Australian University Museums and Collections (CAUMAC), which had been formed in 1992 (Simpson 2003a, Stanbury 2003a). The *Cinderella* survey identified 256 university museums and collections in Australia. Among its most important findings, the Committee identified a widespread poor level of awareness on the part of universities of their museums and collections, with “many university administrations with little if any idea of the number and range of museums and collections that existed within their universities” (University Museums Review Committee 1996: 3). The appendices included two lists of university

¹⁰⁵ David Huntly, who was president of the ACUMG, also did a survey of university museums in the late 1980s-early 1990s, but the survey was not published (P. B. Tirrell, *in litt.* 9 February 2005).

¹⁰⁶ According to the CAA’s website, over 13,000 artists, art historians, scholars, curators, collectors, educators, art publishers, and other visual arts professionals are individual members. Another 2,000 university art and art history departments, museums, libraries, and professional and commercial organizations hold institutional memberships (in CAA’s website, <http://www.collegeart.org/aboutus/>, accessed 8 February 2005).

¹⁰⁷ There had been a publication in the 1930s, but it described Australian museums in general, not only university museums (Markham & Richards 1933).

museums and collections organised by Australian State and by subject, as well as important kick-off resources such as a selected bibliography, guidelines for writing a university museums policy and a set of performance indicators.

A second Australian report followed in 1998, allowing a wider range of university collections to be included (University Museums Project Committee 1998). This second report, *Transforming Cinderella Collections*, aimed at gathering new information and monitoring the implementation of recommendations made two years before. Like the first, it also includes a larger and substantially more detailed directory of university museums, collections and herbaria (143 pp.), organised per State and per university. The two reports had a considerable impact on Australian university museums and collections, particularly at the level of awareness of, and responsibility for, such a significant proportion of national scientific, cultural and artistic heritage. These reports also had consequences in relation to university collections staff: standards of collections care were improved and opportunities for exchange experiences were provided (Stanbury 2003). The two *Cinderella* reports were discussed in Stanbury (2001b), Yerbury (2001), Reynolds (2004), and a follow-up regarding geology university collections was published by Simpson (2003a,b).

In Europe, the first major initiative to survey university collections at the national level took place in the Netherlands. After almost three decades of instability, neglect, department closures, reorganisations, de-accessions and c. 2,000,000 orphaned specimens, keepers and curators gathered forces and created the LOCUC¹⁰⁸ (Clercq 2003a). Sponsored by the Dutch Ministry of Culture, the LOCUC group published a report on their findings about the situation of Dutch academic heritage (LOCUC 1985). LOCUC used the *collection* as their unit – which obviously varied in size – and identified 224 collections in a total of 13 universities surveyed. Methodologies used were questionnaires and study visits. The appendices include, among others, the number of collections per university, a list of collections per university, and a list of botanical gardens per university. The survey depicted a generally deplorable situation and recommended urgent action. It identified 18 threatened collections – seven partly or exclusively due to poor housing and conservation and eleven due to reorganisations, including closures of departments or faculties. These threatened collections belonged to the University of Amsterdam, the Free University of Amsterdam, the University of Groningen, the University of Utrecht and the Technical University of Delft. LOCUC's survey caused embarrassment and possibly represented a turning point in Dutch university heritage: another report was commissioned and LOCUC's early findings were confirmed¹⁰⁹. However, significant strategic action at national level would not occur before the merging of the Ministry of Education (responsible for higher education) and the Ministry of Culture (responsible for museums, collections and heritage) in 1995 (Clercq 2003a).

The five old Dutch universities – Amsterdam, Groningen, Leiden, Utrecht and Delft – saw the merge as an opportunity to raise awareness about their historical heritage and at the same time present a strategic-rescue plan to safeguard it. As a result, *Universitaire collecties en cultuurschatten* (University collections and treasures of culture) was published in four volumes (Anonymous 1995, 1997, Stoop 1999, Galen & Stoop 2000). This 'rescue-plan' made four key-points: a) the five 'old' universities, and the national museums in Leiden¹¹⁰, kept the overwhelming majority of the Dutch academic heritage; b) many university collections were poorly housed and needed urgent conservation action; c) not all university collections were worth being preserved; d) many collections were still considered as important resources for

¹⁰⁸ LOCUC stands for *Landelijk Overleg Contactfunctionarissen Universitaire Collecties* (Survey Group for University Collections).

¹⁰⁹ *Advies betreffende de bedreigde universitaire collecties*. Rijkscommissie voor de musea en Commissie van advies voor de natuurhistorische musea, 1986. See more in Clercq (2003a).

¹¹⁰ Rijksmuseum voor natuurlijke historie, Naturalis (natural history); Rijksmuseum voor de geschiedenis van de natuurwetenschappen en geneeskunde, Boerhaave (history of science and medicine); Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (anthropology) and Rijksmuseum voor Oudheden (archaeology).

teaching and research; and d) the fact that a university considered a collection 'worthless' or 'orphaned' was no accurate measure of their intrinsic significance (Clercq 2003a).

These observations, in combination with increasing political pressure, a growing awareness of the cultural role and responsibility of universities towards their heritage, and the conviction that action had become inevitable, led to the establishment by the same five universities of a foundation for academic heritage – *Stichting Academisch Erfgoed* (SAE) – in 1997. The aim of this collaborative network was to improve the quality and accessibility of university collections, as well as to intensify their present and future use through selection, de-accession, collection mobility, or even disposal (Clercq 2003a). Meanwhile, the Ministry for Education, Culture and Science commissioned a second survey, which was published in 1996 (Adviesgroep Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst 1996). This survey, entitled *Om het Academisch Erfgoed* (For the Academic Heritage) used a broader definition of academic heritage than the earlier one: i) encompassing not only universities but also other research institutions like the Dutch Academy of Sciences; and ii) comprising museums, collections, libraries and archives and a total of c. 35 million items.

In the UK, specific issues related to university museums have been addressed at the political level at least since the 1960s. Since then, both independent and governmental surveys have been conducted regularly (Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries 1968, 1976; Museums and Galleries Commission 1987, Higher Education Funding Council for England 1995, Bennett *et al.* 1999).

Two surveys of British university collections were undertaken in the 1980s: one on university collections in South Eastern England (Bass 1984a) and another on collections at the University of London (Bass 1984b). However, detailed and systematic surveys of British university collections were only conducted between 1989 and 2002. The UK surveys were commissioned by the Museums and Galleries Commission and conducted progressively and region by region, starting with a survey for the University of London (Arnold-Foster 1989). Eight more surveys followed: Scotland (Drysdale 1990), Northern England (Arnold-Foster 1993), Southern England (Arnold-Foster 1999), South West (Arnold-Foster & Weeks 1999), Midlands (Arnold-Foster & Weeks 2000), South East (Arnold-Foster & Weeks 2001), Wales (Council of Museums in Wales 2002) and Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Museums Council 2002). These surveys looked into several issues, such as governance, management, exhibitions and collections care. Like their USA, Dutch and Australian counterparts, the UK surveys confirmed the diversity and complexity in size and type of university museums and collections. About 400 museums and collections were identified, representing 4% of the UK's museum sector. Of these, 25% were regularly open to the public, while 75% were mostly used by academics and students. The main findings were summarised in Arnold-Foster (2000), Arnold-Foster & Mirchandani (2001) and Merriman (2002)¹¹¹.

The UK surveys represented a significant breakthrough for university collections. It is mostly because the diagnosis had been done thoroughly at the national level that key advocacy documents such as *The Oxford and Cambridge University Museums: A global contribution to widening knowledge and deepening understanding* (Roodhouse 2003), *University museums in the United Kingdom: A national resource for the 21st century* (University Museums Group 2004) and *Opening doors to learning - University museums for 21st century Scotland* (University Museums in Scotland 2004) were accomplished. The UMG text, in particular, was well-received by universities and the museum sector in general (T. Bestermann *in litt.* 18 October 2004, K. Arnold-Foster *in litt.* 3 November 2004) and it has already achieved concrete results (see next section).

¹¹¹ At the time of these surveys, a similar survey was carried out for archives in universities (Everitt 2002). The resulting 1997 report *Survey of Needs of Holdings of Archives in UK Higher Education Institutions* was compiled by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), a group that provides strategic guidance, advice and opportunities to universities on the use of ICT to support teaching, learning, research and administration.

In France, the survey of university museums and collections is an ongoing process and no results have as yet been published. At present, the unofficial working list provided by the *Bureau des musées et du patrimoine scientifique et technique* (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Recherche) identifies 22 French university museums (R. Bertrand, *pers. comm.* 8 July 2004).

An important report on the state of the museums of the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale from the early 1990s (Héritier-Augé 1991) omitted university collections due to the lack of reliable lists: "il n'existe rien [...] pour les collections universitaires [...] dont l'inventaire systématique reste à dresser par une enquête appropriée" (Héritier-Augé 1991: 6). Only the national museums were included. The author painted a solemn picture of decades of "intellectual and moral" abandonment, lack of adequate funding, lack of space, and low professional standards – which contrasted sharply with the immense importance of the heritage involved. "Tout garder pour n'en rien faire" is how the author portrayed the situation of the national collections, an appraisal likely to apply to university museums and collections as well. Héritier-Augé described the role of a higher education museum consistent with its European counterparts and based on the triple mission: research, teaching and public display (Héritier-Augé 1991: 33). Subsequently, the Musée des Arts et Métiers (fig. 5.4)¹¹² and the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle underwent museographic and structural renovations. At present, part of the collections of the Musée de l'Homme are being included in a major new project – the Musée du Quai Branly (Desveaux 2004, Mohen 2004, Naffah 2003, 2004).



Fig. 5.4 – One of the priorities in the renovation of the Musée des Arts et Métiers was the construction of a new 7,500 m² off-site storage building (Saint-Denis, architect François Deslaugiers), equipped with state-of-the-art conservation facilities, study rooms for researchers, technical and maintenance workshops, restoration and photographic labs, and a documentation centre. The building was completed in 1994, upon which the move from Paris could begin. At the same time, a complete reformulation of the catalogue and database system was carried out, coupled with an ambitious publications policy. See Picard (1998, 2000a,b) and *La Revue* (Musée des Arts et Métiers), 15, 1996 (photos Pascal Dolémieux, Métis, reproduced with kind permission of the Musée des Arts et Métiers).

¹¹² The renovation of the Musée des Arts et Métiers began in 1990 (formal integration in the Grands Travaux de l'État) and the new musée was inaugurated 10 April 2000. The project took place in three parallel axes. As Dominique Ferriot explains: "[la] rénovation 1990/2000 [...] recouvre trois 'chantiers', celui des collections (nouvel inventaire, restauration, numérisation et acquisitions), celui des publics (en particulier études d'attentes et représentations, évaluation des expositions temporaires) et bien sûr chantier bâtiment." (D. Ferriot, *in litt.* 22 July 2005). See *La Revue* 28/29 (double issue, 2000) for a more detailed account of the project, as well the Musée's website at *Chronique de la rénovation*, <http://www.arts-et-metiers.net/magic.php?P=149&lang=fra>, accessed 22 July 2005.

Geyssant (2002) gave an overview of French museums and scientific culture centres under the jurisdiction of the ministries of Education and Research, with emphasis on the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, the Musée des Arts et Métiers, the Palais de la Découverte, la Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie and the two networks of local museums and scientific culture centres (CCSTIs). References to collections in French universities *sensu strictu* were limited to the University Louis Pasteur of Strasbourg. Chamoux (2002) presented a brief overview of scientific instruments, mostly in French *lycées*¹¹³.

Additional knowledge about French university collections can be found in a special issue of *La Lettre de L'OCIM* (No 44, 1996). Apart from papers presenting overviews of herbaria (Lazare 1996) and plaster casts collections (Mossière 1996), there are several case-studies of university collections: scientific instruments at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon (Artu 1996), a plaster plan of 4th century A.D. Rome at the University of Caen (Fleury 1996) and the ethnography museum at the University of Bordeaux II (Mériot 1996).

As in Australia, the initiative to survey Italian university heritage came from the conference of rectors, the *Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane* (CRUI). Before 1999, knowledge about university museums and collections in Italy was incipient and fragmentary, although museums had been included in general directories. Cipriani *et al.* (1986) published a survey listing 98 university museums and 23 botanical gardens. In 1999, CRUI created a committee – the *Commissione dei delegati rettorali per i Musei, gli archivi e i centri per le collezioni universitarie di interesse storico-scientifico* (Committee of university delegates for museums, archives and centres of historically and scientifically significant university collections), which I will refer to as Commissione CRUI. The Commissione CRUI has conducted a systematic and in-depth survey of university museums and collections in Italy, with results gradually being made available on the web¹¹⁴. For that purpose, two distinct databases were designed: one for museums and archives (including botanical gardens) and a second for collections (including arboreta and herbaria), both organised by subject. In February 2005, the Commissione's web portal listed c. 180 university museums and archives and c. 350 university collections (although there is overlap between the two databases).

In Germany, published surveys are scarce too. Like Italy, the only recent and comprehensive census of university museums and collections at the national level has adopted the internet as a dissemination platform. In 2001, the *Helmholtz Zentrum für Kulturtechnik* at the Humboldt University in Berlin initiated a project of surveying German university museums and collections (excluding libraries and archives). Results are gradually being entered in the database, designated *Universitätsmuseen und Sammlungen in Deutschland*¹¹⁵. In July 2005, the database held information on 545 German university museums and collections. Data on university museums and collections are retrievable per locality, university, discipline, and institutional form (aquarium, house museum, etc.). Weber (2003) presented the first results of the German census, discussed the advantages of choosing a web-based platform, and outlined its potential both for the recognition of German university heritage and as a tool for graduate and post-graduate museology teaching and research (Weber 2005a, see also Weber 2004, 2005b).

Apart from the surveys and directories mentioned above, overviews of university museums and collections have been published for Belgium (Van den Driessche 2000), Brazil (Almeida & Martins 2000), Spain (Such 2003), Philippines (Labrador 2000), New Zealand (Hudson &

¹¹³ See the inventory online at the site of the Service d'Histoire de l'Éducation (Institut national de recherche pédagogique, which is also responsible for the French Musée national de l'Éducation à Rouen), in <http://www.inrp.fr/she/instruments/index.htm>, accessed 22 June 2005. On the date of accession, there were c. 1,200 instruments inventoried and described from all over the French territory.

¹¹⁴ For museums, see *Scelta del Museo* at <http://www1.crui.it/musei/mainmenu.asp?Scelta=Musei> and for collections see *Scelta della Collezione* at <http://www1.crui.it/musei/mainmenu.asp?Scelta=Collezioni>, both accessed 21 April 2005.

¹¹⁵ See <http://publicus.culture.hu-berlin.de/sammlungen/>, accessed 5 July 2005.

Legget 2000), Australia (Wallace 2000), Japan (Kinoshita & Yasui 2000, Adachi 2003), Mexico (Herreman 2000) and India (Tandon 1983). At a disciplinary level, Almeida (2002) presented an overview of university art museums in Brazil. Geological university collections were discussed in Simpson (2003a,b) for Australia and Clercq (2001c, 2003a) and Kriegsman (2004) for the Netherlands.



Fig. 5.5 – Musée de Louvain la Neuve, Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium). The Museum, comprising art, anthropology and archaeology collections, has an innovative concept underpinning its museological programme. Defined by its founder Ignace Vandevivere as a ‘musée du dialogue’, the Museum aims at blurring the conventional divisions between artist, museologist and visitor (see e.g. Vandevivere 1979, 1996, 2001, Van den Driessche 2002) (photo reproduced with kind permission of the Musée de Louvain-la-Neuve).

Recently, n° 107 (January-February-March 2005) of *Les Nouvelles du Patrimoine*, a journal published by the Association des Amis d’UNESCO, Belgium, was entirely dedicated to Belgian university museums and collections. It included review papers by Van den Driessche (2005a) and Geshé-Koning (2005a,b), papers on the heritage of the Université Catholique de Louvain (Robert 2005, Van den Driessche 2005b), the Université de Liège (Drouguet & Gob 2005), the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Séjournet 2005, Geshé-Koning 2005c), the Facultés Universitaires Catholiques de Mons (Caltagirone 2005), and statements by the corresponding rectors (Dorchy 2005a,b,c). A similar volume published by the Musées du Service du Patrimoine culturel du Ministère de la Communauté française de Belgique is currently in press (N. Nyst, *in litt.* 21 January 2005).

To the best of my knowledge, no published surveys on university museums and collections at the national level have been carried out in Portugal, Finland, or Sweden. A list of Portuguese university museums and collections was presented in Lourenço (2002).

5.1.3 Doctoral dissertations

Four doctoral dissertations, specifically addressing university collections, are worth mentioning. In 1956, Cecilia H. Peikert conducted a survey of art museums on college and university campuses in the USA (Peikert 1956). Also in the USA, Alva G. Huffer looked into the management and administration of university museums (Huffer 1971). Education of

adults in North American university museums was discussed by M. Hurst (1991), whereas Adriana M. Almeida discussed mission and origins of the art museums at the University of São Paulo, Brazil (Almeida 2001).

Although these were significant contributions to our understanding of university museums and collections, the small number of doctoral dissertations is an indication of the theoretical and empirical weakness of the field, particularly in Europe. Clearly, there is a need for more comprehensive research at doctoral level. At present, I know of eight dissertations specifically addressing university museums and collections being prepared: Helen Rawson and Zenobia R. Kozak at the University of St. Andrews, UK, Barbara Rothermel and Wahiza A. Wahid at the University of Leicester, UK, Placide Mumbembele at the University of Cairo, Egypt, Thijs van Excel and Claudia de Roos at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Yaqoub S. Al-Busaidi at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, UK. These encompass fundamental issues such as the history and role of university collections and museums, the concept of university heritage, the relation between university heritage and the tourism industry, the interdisciplinary potential of university museums, and selection and disposal of university collections.

5.2 National and international initiatives

In the current post-‘crisis’ era, different European countries have employed different approaches to tackle the challenges posed by university museums and collections. Universities have at times made attempts to come up with solutions, but many of the challenges are too complex and diverse to be solved without coordinated approach at a national level. Without dealing in depth with each country’s specific circumstances and problems, I will discuss recent initiatives and challenges at national levels, with an emphasis on the more positive developments. A combination of circumstances, as well as a considerable growth in awareness, leave the Netherlands, UK, France, Germany and Italy better prepared to face the challenges posed university heritage. Some brief comments on the situation in Spain, Greece, Estonia and Eastern Europe are also included.

5.2.1 United Kingdom

In the 1980s, university museums and collections in the UK were in a deplorable state (Warhurst 1986, Willet 1986). Since then, their role in universities has been clarified, their profile within the university and community raised, professional standards improved, while many have received substantial funding, many collections are – often in innovative ways – used for teaching and research, and their situation now seems generally stable. Undoubtedly, UK university museums still face challenges (Merriman 2002), but they have come a long way during the past 25 years or so, particularly when compared with their continental European counterparts.

These positive developments are the result of three factors. Firstly, the strategic collaboration between all parties involved has been crucial: universities, the university museums groups UMG and UMIS, museum authorities (national and local), and the Museums Association (MA), UK’s association of museums and museum professionals. Secondly, detailed knowledge of the realities of the field has played an important role: an extensive survey of university museums and collections was undertaken from the late 1980s until 2002. The information obtained has paved the way for sustained and coordinated advocacy. Finally, the resulting investment was strategically planned and executed, starting with the cataloguing of collections and an assessment of their accessibility, both of which were appropriately funded in the majority of cases. This was a difficult – often tumultuous – process (T. Berstermann, interview 3 February 2004; K. Arnold-Foster, interview 6 February 2004), yet it did not result in the need for major de-accessions and the operation is already beginning to bear fruit.



Fig. 5.6 - The Cole Museum of Zoology, University of Reading (reproduced with the kind permission of University Museums and Collections Services, University of Reading).



Today, 32 UK university museums receive direct funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB¹¹⁶), the UK's funding body for research in arts and humanities, including structural funding such as staff and collections care (note that the AHRB funds university museums on the basis of the significance of their collections and the relevance of projects, regardless whether they are science, natural history, archaeology, or art collections). In the aftermath of two recent advocacy publications (University Museums Group 2004, University Museums in Scotland 2004) in which 38 recommendations were presented (34 of which aimed at universities and four at the British government), UK university museums have obtained exemption from VAT (HM Treasury 2003, Museums Association 2004a,b, Taylor 2004)¹¹⁷.

5.2.2 The Netherlands

The situation of Dutch university museums is changing rapidly at present, making a general evaluation somewhat premature. However, some general reflections are already possible.

The Netherlands owns a rich and centuries old academic heritage and enjoy the rare privilege of being a country in which museums and universities are regulated and funded by the same ministry (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*). Theoretically, this should be beneficial for university collections, which so often are divided between a ministry of education holding that collections are 'culture' and therefore none of their business and a ministry of culture that says that they come under the jurisdiction of universities and therefore are none of their business either. However, despite increasing efforts to establish bridges and growing interest from the Culture and Heritage section of the Dutch Ministry (C. van Rappard-Boon, *pers. comm.* 7 May 2003), the divide between culture and science persists even when the two are departments of the same ministry.

The already mentioned *Stichting Academisch Erfgoed* (SAE), a foundation established in 1997 by the five 'old' universities (Amsterdam, Delft, Groningen, Leiden and Utrecht) has been the main actor in the strategic selection and promotion of Dutch university heritage. In parallel to the surveys mentioned earlier, the SAE has been coordinating and implementing

¹¹⁶ In April 2005, the AHRB changed the name to Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

¹¹⁷ Previously, publicly funded museums, except university museums, in the UK were exempted from VAT. In Portugal the situation is even worse as university museums pay VAT for which universities receive a refund at the end of the year because they are exempted, but often the refund is not canalised back to the museums.

national projects funded by the Dutch Government¹¹⁸. The implementation plan was divided into five thematic/disciplinary projects: i) geological collections, ii) botanical gardens, iii) *beeldcollecties* (collections of pictorial art, including portraits, plaster casts, posters), iv) medicine collections and v) collections of historical pedagogical panels. The geological collections project was concluded in April 2003 (cf. Kriegsman 2004) and the reorganisation of botanical gardens in December 2004 (cf. Stichting Nationale Plantencollectie 2001). The remaining projects are near completion, if not completed altogether. An aspect of the SAE worth mentioning is that it has an independent chair and each university is represented by two members: one museum professional and one close to the Board of the University.

SAE's projects have two broad aims: a) to increase the accessibility of university collections for both researchers and the general public and b) to promote new ways of cooperation in and around the field of university heritage (T. Monquil, interview 8 May 2003). They involve three consecutive steps: a) diagnosis and inventory of the existing situation, b) pragmatic and strategic assessment, and c) deciding on the appropriate measures to be taken – these may vary from conservation and restoration to de-accession and re-distribution of the collections. The evaluation criteria are of particular interest to the university museum community and deserve to be more widely known and discussed¹¹⁹.



Fig. 5.7 - The renovated University Museum at the University of Groningen. Created in 1934 as a second generation university museum, it now incorporates both first and second generation collections from the University of Groningen. The reorganisation and renovation took place in the past two years (photo Groningen University Museum Archives).

Not all projects involve the five universities simultaneously. For example, the project on pedagogical panels involves all five, but the one on medical collections does not include TU Delft. Furthermore, projects employ a broad concept as to what should be regarded as academic heritage and, hence, this may also involve non-university collections. For instance, the project on botanical gardens involved 17 botanical gardens, of which only seven were university gardens (G. van Uffelen, interview 29 April 2003).

¹¹⁸ The Governmental grant – which is administered by the Mondriaan Foundation – covers 40% of the total cost while 60% is paid by the universities, leading to a total budget of 25 million €. See more in Clercq (2003a).

¹¹⁹ The evaluation criteria include working at sub-collection level (e.g. looking at a particular coherent collection, say resulting from a PhD study, within a larger collection) and their categorisation into four types – from A to D – according to value and significance. For a concise description of the criteria, see Clercq (2003a).

The collaborative aspect of the ‘Dutch approach’ should be underlined because collaboration seems to be something that everybody recognises and appreciates, yet often without significant consequences at a practical level. In the Dutch example, collaboration meant looking at the promotion of collections strategically, at a national scale, and coordinating an action plan. For example, the Universities of Leiden, Utrecht and Wageningen joined their herbaria, resources and staff in order to create the *Nationaal Herbarium Nederland* (NH-NL).



Fig. 5.8 - Research at the *Nationaal Herbarium Nederland*, University of Leiden branch. Above, research collections of DNA samples (photo © S. Ober, Gorlaeus Lab).

The NH-NL encompasses more than 5.5 million specimens and the herbaria were re-organized, with each branch having its own geographical specialisation in line with traditional research and the strengths of the individual collections (Leiden specialises in the Indo-Pacific, tropical Asian and European floras; Utrecht in the Neotropical flora, and Wageningen in cultivars and the African flora). Before the merging, the situation at the three different herbaria was seriously stagnated, yet after the reorganisation the NH-NL is a success in terms of funding (from research councils, government agencies and the private sector), as well as in terms of teaching and research output (B. Gravendeel, interview 29 April 2003), demonstrating that herbarium specimens are still important for science¹²⁰.

The downside of the ‘Dutch approach’ is that it involved considerable movements and reorganisations of university collections, resulting in de-accessions and dispersions. The long-term impact of these de-accessions on Dutch higher education, training of students and research remains to be seen (see also next chapter).

5.2.3 France

As detailed before, France has remarkable university collections, covering all disciplines from natural history to the history of science, medicine and pharmacy, Egyptology to art and anthropology. Apart from the national collections (Musée des arts et métiers, Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle¹²¹, Musée national de l’éducation in Rouen, the Musée du Quai Branly) and the network of 66 regional muséums, the significance of some of the lesser known collections in the European context cannot be emphasized enough: the notable ‘Prix

¹²⁰ For more on the NH-NL, see <http://www.nationaalherbarium.nl>, accessed 22 June 2005.

¹²¹ Both the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers (CNAM) and the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle (MNHN) are *établissements publics à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnel constitués sous la forme de grands établissements* (Statutes of the CNAM and the MNHN, decrees published 22 April 1988 and 3 October 2001, respectively).

de Rome' collections at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, the collections of Palaeontology at the University of Lyon I, the collections of history of medicine in Paris, Montpellier, Strasbourg and Lyon (together practically covering the whole history of research and teaching in surgery and medicine up to the 20th century), the herbaria at Lyon I, Toulouse Paul Sabatier and Montpellier II, the scientific instruments at the École Polytechnique, Strasbourg Louis Pasteur, Lille and Montpellier II, the exquisite Cabinet d'Estampes Atger at the University of Montpellier I, the Musée d'Ethnographie of Bordeaux II and Strasbourg Marc Bloch, the Egyptology collections at Strasbourg Marc Bloch, the mineralogy collections at Strasbourg Louis Pasteur and the École des Mines, the history of pharmacy and *materia medica* collections at Montpellier I, the moulages at the University of Lyon Lumière and Montpellier Paul-Valéry (see also Ruppli 1991, 1996).

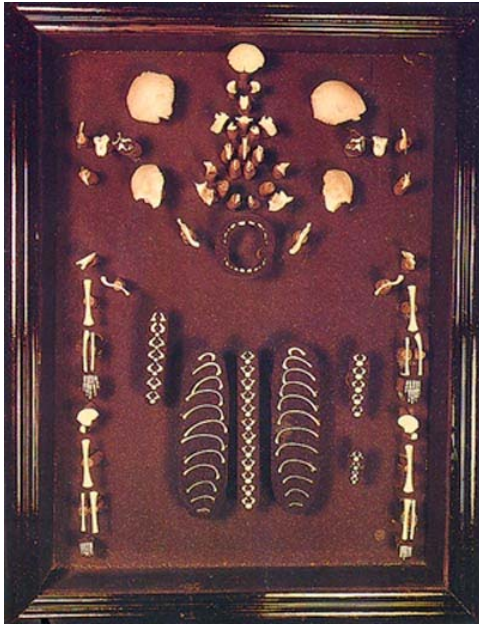


Fig. 5.9 - Skeleton of a five month foetus. Musée Anatomique, Faculté de Médecine de Strasbourg (Jardin des Sciences Archives, reproduced with kind permission of the University of Strasbourg Louis Pasteur).

Based on the ratio museum/university of similar countries (e.g. UK and Germany), I estimate that there are at least 400-500 collections in French universities, *instituts nationaux polytechniques*, *grands établissements*, and *écoles normales supérieures*, and certainly more if research laboratories (CNRS etc) are also included. Although there have been some encouraging developments recently, a significant proportion of this huge heritage – particularly the collections held by universities *sensu strictu* – is virtually unknown to the French public and has received little attention from the relevant authorities so far. In this section I will mostly refer to the lesser known university collections.

The lack of recognition starts within the universities themselves. During the early stages of this research, I did a survey of 101 websites of French institutions of higher education¹²². Of these, only 34 mentioned the existence of museums and collections. Several that I knew had collections and museums made no reference to them (contrary to libraries). Of the 34 universities that cited museums and collections, only four did so in their main webpage (commonly designated 'home page'): the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers, the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique and the Université Henri Poincaré-Nancy I. Given that three of these four higher education institutions either manage or actually are national museums¹²³, the general visibility of

¹²² The survey was conducted in 13-14 January 2002 (all websites accessed during these two days). As a departing source the French higher education web portal was used (<http://www.education.gouv.fr/sup/default.htm>) and the survey encompassed universities, écoles normales supérieures, grands établissements, and other higher education institutions.

¹²³ The Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique runs the Musée National de l'Éducation in Rouen.

museums and collections in websites of French higher education institutions is minimal. Two institutions cited their museums and collections under '*présentation de l'université*' (Université de Caen and Université René Descartes-Paris 5). As for the remaining 28 websites, one had to dig deep through multiple layers of web-information in order to find one brief allusion to museums or collections¹²⁴. Apart from the lack of recognition, French university collections suffer from the same problems as their foreign counterparts: lack of resources (funds and staff), lack of a clear identity, lack of a clear role within the university, uncertainty regarding the future, and alienation from the university middle- to long-term strategic planning. In addition, the size and international importance of the French national collections is likely to have absorbed the attention and public resources from governments. However, in terms of legislation and structure, France is one of the countries in Europe better prepared to protect and promote its university heritage.

France has the appropriate legal instruments concerning university collections. It is possibly the only country in Europe to have the study and care of collections explicitly mentioned in the law on higher education. The reference dates at least from the Loi Savary in 1984 (Law No. 84-52 on Higher Education, 26 January 1984), which states in article 7:

Article 7 – Le service public de l'enseignement supérieur a pour mission le développement de la culture et la diffusion des connaissances et des résultats de la recherche. [...] Il participe à l'étude et à la mise en valeur des éléments du *patrimoine national et régional*. Il assure la conservation et l'enrichissement des *collections* confiées aux établissements (italics added).

Although universities may not be given the necessary resources (or may use them for purposes other than collections), no French university administration can comfortably say that 'collections are none of our business' without breaching the law¹²⁵.

Apart from the legal framework, France also has a permanent structure within the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, Recherche et Enseignement Supérieur, devoted to the coordination, surveying, policy-making, supervision and funding (on a four-year project-basis) of university museums and collections: the Bureau Musées¹²⁶. As far as I know, this structure is also singular in the European context. As a result of the Report Héritier-Augé mentioned before, the Bureau initiated in 1993 a policy to promote French university collections (Lénard 1996). The Bureau is equally responsible for the Office de Coopération et d'Information Muséographiques (OCIM)¹²⁷, an important instrument in the training and dissemination of knowledge among museum professionals. The Bureau has a staff of six, with jurisdiction over the museum network, the Musée des arts et métiers, the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, the Palais de la découverte, the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, the Musée du Quai Branly, the Musée National de l'Éducation and French university museums and collections of unknown total number. The Bureau's jurisdiction is restricted to the

¹²⁴ This low profile of museums and collections in the websites of universities compared to libraries is not specific for the French higher education system. A similar survey conducted at the same time found that only two Portuguese universities mentioned their museums and collections in their 'home' webpage (universities of Lisbon and Porto) – out of a total of 14 public universities, of which at least seven were confirmed to have museums and collections.

¹²⁵ Another relevant French law is Decree No. 2002-677 (29 April 2002, latest version). This decree states that public construction works must be decorated [sic] with one or more pieces of contemporary art, which in turn should cost at least 1% of the total construction costs. Universities also count as these are public buildings. This law (that also exists in other European countries, if not in the form of law at least as a common practice, e.g. Germany, the Netherlands), is likely to have less impact on collections than on artistic and architectonic heritage (e.g. sculpture parks, etc).

¹²⁶ The Bureau Musées resorts directly under the Mission de la culture et de l'information scientifiques et techniques, which in turn is a division of the Direction de la Recherche at the Ministère délégué à la recherche (since June 2005 under the Ministère délégué à la recherche et à l'enseignement supérieur, therefore possibly a political move with beneficial results for university museums and collections). The objectives of the Bureau can be read at <http://www.recherche.gouv.fr/recherche/cism/musee.htm>, accessed 23 June 2005).

¹²⁷ OCIM was created in 1985 as a special service of the University of Bourgogne in Dijon. For details on OCIM's mission and activities, see <http://www.ocim.fr/sommaire/ocim/index.html>.

'patrimoine scientifique', although it employs a broad concept of 'patrimoine' (R. Bertrand, pers. comm. 8 July 2004). French university collections of arts and humanities thus pose a challenge as they run the risk of falling into 'no man's land' – certainly more so than their scientific counterparts. As for university collections, the Bureau Musées main priorities at present are: a) create a working group for university museums and collections (ongoing); b) intensify relations with the Conférence des Présidents des Universités, c) keep the information regarding university museums and collections up-to-date; and d) produce a publication on university museums and collections in 2005 (R. Bertrand, *pers. comm.* 25 June 2005)¹²⁸.

In the immediate future, the challenges for French university collections are extraordinary. Perhaps the first and foremost step is getting to know what exists and where. Given the importance of the heritage at stake, this should be given the highest priority. The survey should comprise the state and use of collections, storage conditions, immediate needs (restoration, security), status of present staff and funding, and legal status. Without this survey, sustainable and stable long-term strategies, policies and actions cannot be planned at the national level.

The second challenge is one of collaboration and integration. Due to its intrinsic nature, university heritage cannot be promoted without the involvement and cooperation of the Ministère de la Culture, the Conférence des Présidents d'Universités (CPU), the national museums and, naturally, the Ministère de la Recherche and the university museums and collections themselves. The national museums in particular have a crucial role to play given their visibility, expertise and credibility. In the UK, during the 1990s, the British Museum and its former Director played an active role in the promotion of university museums and collections (R.G.W. Anderson, pers. comm. 29 June 2002). There is a growing interest in university heritage from the part of French cultural authorities, particularly at local levels (e.g. Direction régionale de l'action culturelle [DRAC] Alsace). This interest has translated into an increase in exchanges among professionals from both parts. At the national level, the Ministère de la Culture has been involved in the promotion of collections of science before, namely in the notable survey of astronomical observatories¹²⁹. Some regional museums are looking with growing interest at the developments around university collections (C. Schlecht, J. Clary, interviews 18 May 2004). The conditions for enduring partnerships do therefore exist. Collaboration among universities themselves is also vital. There are already good examples (see below), but clearly more needs to be done. Moreover, university heritage should be approached in an integrated way, both at the level of national policies and at university level. Objects, artefacts, books, libraries, laboratories, archives, amphitheatres, drawings, paintings need to be looked at integrally by an interdisciplinary and professional team. As more research into the history of French university collections is gradually done, their complex and dynamic ramifications will inevitably surface, making them difficult, if not impossible, to fit inside rigid compartments.

The third challenge is one of debate and exchange. Until recently, the debate around university museums and collections in France had to a great extent been incidental and fragmented. The interest for university heritage in France has grown considerably over the past couple of years and hopefully the stage is being set for the situation to change positively. Two recent conferences, at the University of Lille (April 2004) and University of Montpellier

¹²⁸ The Proceedings of the Conference *Journées nationales de réflexion et d'étude sur le patrimoine scientifique des universités*, held at the University of Montpellier 18-19 November 2004.

¹²⁹ See databases of the *Ministère de la Culture* (particularly the databases *Palissy* and *Mérimée*) in <http://www.inventaire.culture.gouv.fr/culture/inventai/presenta/bddinv.htm>, accessed 24 June 2005. For more information on the inventory, see Davoigneau & Le Guet Tully (1999), Le Guet Tully & Davoigneau (2002) and, in particular, No 84 of *La Lettre de l'OCIM* (November-December 2002), which includes articles on the subject by Jérôme Lamy, Béatrice Motard, Anthony Turner, Paolo Brenni, Laetitia Maison, Soraya Boudia, and Françoise Le Guet Tully and Jean Davoigneau, among others.

(November 2004)¹³⁰ enjoyed the active participation of museum professionals (university and non-university) and of rectors from France and abroad. The momentum exists and there is genuine enthusiasm for discussing common issues.

Like the Netherlands, France has also seen inter-university collaborative projects to promote its university heritage. Perhaps the most ambitious, given its scope and the importance of the heritage involved, is the *MuseUM* Project (Musée des Universités de Montpellier, provisional title), aiming at studying, protecting and interpreting the scientific, artistic, and architectonic heritage of the three universities of Montpellier – from the Jardin des Plantes to the herbier, from natural history and medical collections to scientific and astronomical instruments, as well as pharmaceutical and art collections, and important architectonic elements such as the *theatrum anatomicum*. *MuseUM*, currently being developed under the framework of the Pôle Universitaire Européen de Montpellier et du Languedoc-Roussillon, remains largely singular at the European scale as it transcends not only traditional disciplinary borders, but also the limits of a single university.

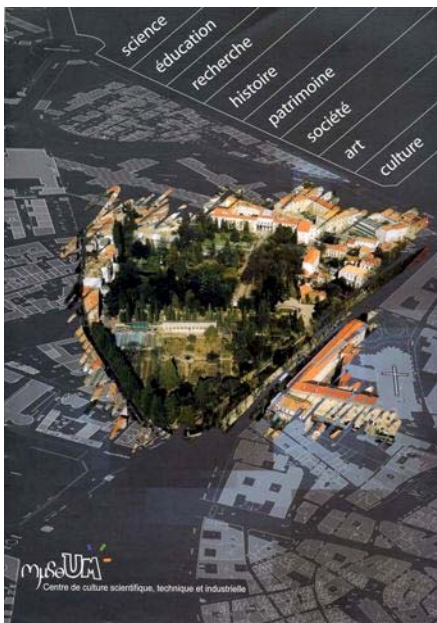


Fig. 5.10 – Leaflet of the *MuseUM* project, highlighting the Jardin des Plantes, the Institut de Botanique and the Herbarium (central area) and the Faculty of Medicine (on the right) (reproduced with kind permission of *MuseUM*).

The integration presents major challenges in terms of public interpretation (the appropriate storyline that binds the elements together), physical accessibility (the elements are scattered across the town of Montpellier), management (the nature and positioning of the coordinating structure, funding, the status and ownership of the collections, the status of staff, etc.), and academic culture (traditional resistance to inter-institutional approaches, etc.). The *MuseUM* project clearly presents an innovative and experimental proposal that potentially opens a new window for the promotion of university heritage in Europe.

Another collaborative project involving several universities was initiated in 1999 by the universities of the Pays de Loire region: the project *Patrimoine Scientifique et Technique Contemporain*¹³¹, aimed at interpreting contemporary second generation university collections. Although photographing, inventorying and describing the instruments and equipment was of specific concern, the project also included interviews with researchers who invented, improved and used the equipment (C. Cuenca, interview 26 May 2004).

¹³⁰ The former jointly organised by the Ministère de la Culture & le Ministère de la Recherche and the latter by the Bureau Musées (Ministère de la Recherche) and sponsored by the French Conférence des Présidents d'Université (CPU).

¹³¹ See <http://patrimoine.atlantech.fr/atlantech/foffice/portail/accueil.html>, accessed 23 June 2005. The project has meanwhile been expanded to the national level and the Musée des Arts et Métiers is coordinating its implementation (C. Cuenca & D. Thoulouze, interview 26 May 2004).



Fig. 5.11 – The project ‘Patrimoine Scientifique et Technique Contemporain’, developed by the GIP ATLANTECH and the University of Nantes of the Pays de la Loire region. The resource is available on DVD and on-line¹³². On the left, the WWW-menu allowing the user to explore both the equipment and the researchers who developed and used it; on the right, the main DVD-menu (images reproduced with the kind permission of GIP ATLANTECH, Université de Nantes & Iht-A).

The project is detailed and multi-leveled – integrating objects, documentation and the *savoir faire* of researchers (fig. 5.11). The incorporation of contemporary equipment and, generally, second generation collections is a challenge for universities across Europe given the extraordinary pace with which apparatuses are dismantled and laboratories re-equipped. The equipment itself also poses major challenges in terms of collecting, storing and public interpretation (see e.g. Brenni 2000, Caro 2004, Jacomy 2004).



Fig. 5.12 – Leaflet of the project *Jardin des Sciences* (reproduced with kind permission of the University Louis Pasteur of Strasbourg).

¹³² DVD *Patrimoine Scientifique et Technique Contemporain*, coordinated by C. Cuenca & Yves Thomas, GIP atlantech, Université de Nantes & Iht-A, Nantes 2001. The project is available online at <http://patstec.fr/> accessed 13 July 2005.

For the moment involving only one university and benefiting from a privileged historical relationship with and the physical proximity of the Muséum de Strasbourg, the project *Jardin des Sciences* at the University Louis Pasteur of Strasbourg (fig. 5.12) is also worth mentioning. The project revolves around the main objective of providing a bridge between contemporary research at the University Louis Pasteur and society, using the collections as vessels to establish connections with past research and at the same time promoting them (H. Dreyssé, interview 7 December 2003). The *Jardin des Sciences* involves collections of natural history, medicine, history of physics, and astronomy from the University Louis Pasteur of Strasbourg, the natural history collections of the Muséum de Strasbourg and, possibly, the arts and humanities collections of the University of Strasbourg Marc Bloch (of which the most significant are the archaeology and Egyptology collections, the ethnology collections and the musée de moulages). The definite aims, scope and format of the *Jardin des Sciences* are still under discussion. It has been supported by a regular programme of public activities (debates, conferences, exhibitions, publications), coupled with continuing in-depth research into the University's archives, particularly into the history of the collections of physics¹³³.

5.2.4 Italy

Italy holds university heritage of great international significance, including the first botanical gardens, anatomical theatres, herbaria and medical collections. The Botanical Garden of the University of Padua is the only university collection classified by UNESCO as World Heritage Site. Many Italian university museums remained untouched for decades and represent extraordinary examples of the golden age of first generation university museums and collections. Thus, the national and international importance of Italian university heritage is not only relevant – indeed unique – scientifically, artistically, and architectonically, but requires a multi-layered perspective of which the history of collections and museums is an important component to promote and interpret to the public.

Since 1999, when the Commissione Musei was created, the promotion of Italian university heritage at the national level has been in the hands of the Conference of Rectors. The Commissione Musei is chaired by a Rector (Professor Vincenzo Milanese, Rector of the University of Padua, at the time of writing)¹³⁴. The principal aim of the Commissione is to develop a structural programme promoting the heritage held by Italian university museums, collections, archives, and botanical gardens (Garuccio 2005). Such integrated approach is most welcome and the similarities between the Italian and the Dutch approaches are worth observing: in both cases, the initiative to promote university heritage came from the universities (in the Dutch case the five oldest universities, in the Italian case the conference of rectors), both initiatives show a broad scope and include collections of all disciplines, but also archives and libraries, and both brought rectors and university museums' professionals to work together.

In a document dated 2000, outlining the present and future situation of Italian university museums, the Commissione Musei acknowledged the relevance of Italian university museums and collections, their typological and historical diversity, and the need for increased recognition at the national level (CRUI 2000). The document recognizes that collections represent the overwhelming majority of Italian university heritage, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. The majority of Italian university museums are small to very small, often closed to the public, inadequately staffed in terms of collections care, preservation skills and competences, and maintaining close and regular links with research groups. Funding is modest, irregular and often not guaranteed (CRUI 2000). Many

¹³³ See MCST-IRIST 2004-2007. *Sauvegarde du patrimoine de la physique à Strasbourg. Recherches et mise en public* [Programme financé dans le cadre de l'ACI «culture scientifique» du Ministère de la recherche et par les Amis du centre d'histoire de la physique de l'American Institute of Physics/DRAC Alsace]. Université Louis Pasteur Strasbourg, Strasbourg.

¹³⁴ All documents produced by the Commissione Musei since its creation in 1999 are available at <http://www.cruui.it/link/?ID=1350>, accessed 5 July 2005.

university museums rarely develop any significant activities in the public sphere, such as exhibitions, films, publications, etc. Given the multiplication of isolated and fragmented initiatives and the heterogeneity of standards at different levels (catalogues, inventories, statutes, missions, public service), the document calls for better coordination and collaboration among universities, aiming at more consistent and homogeneous policies and practices. It is in this context that the Commissione proposed the creation of an Italian Network of University Museums (*Rete Nazionale di Sistemi Museali di Ateneo*). The creation of the National System encouraged Italian universities to create their own systems of university museums, to be implemented according to the particular histories and contemporary roles of the different museums and collections involved (before, proto-museum systems had been developed in at least Bologna and Pavia). Pugnaroni (2001, 2003) discussed several aspects of the Italian Network – feasibility, legal, mission and activities.

In May 2005, a proposal was presented in Rome with the aim of providing a legal framework – the National Observatory for Museums of Science – for future protection, promotion and collaboration of university museums and collections at the national level¹³⁵. Although still in a preliminary stage, the proposal was developed with the active participation of the Commissione Musei, the Italian Association of Museums of Science (ANMS) and ICOM-Italy. The Observatory, provided it is given the adequate resources and conditions, may represent a major step towards the recognition of university heritage in Italy.

At present, the main challenge for Italian university heritage is to translate the reflections and surveys of the past 12 years into practical measures, so that, like in the UK, the long process of awareness, framed by the necessary political and legal tools and provided with the much needed resources, begins to bear fruit.

5.2.5 Germany

Germany has an impressive academic heritage. Many German universities have 20 to 30 university museums and collections which have not yet been subject to major reorganisations, including collections of major international significance such as the Museum of Musical Instruments at the University of Leipzig, the Natural History Museum at Humboldt University Berlin, the Berlin-Dahlem Botanical Garden and Museum at the Freie University Berlin, the Virchow Collection at Humboldt University Berlin, and the Geiseltal Museum at the Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, among many others. Moreover, Germany holds the legacy of the Humboldt university model. However, like in other countries, German university heritage is barely known outside the boundaries of the university.

Some museums and collections suffered severe damage during World War II, for example the destruction of part of the collections (and building) at the Museum of Natural History at Humboldt University Berlin (fig. 5.13), and the looting and dispersion at the Museum of Musical Instruments at the University of Leipzig (Fontana & Heise 1998). More recently, while other European countries were going through the 1990s economic boom, Germany was paying heavily for its reunification and is currently going through a complex economic situation. In 2004, universities underwent severe budget cuts, endangering some collections (F. Riesbeck, interview 2 June 2004), while in other cases their future is as yet unclear. The Geiseltal Museum at the University of Halle-Wittenberg faces an uncertain future due to the new Science Museum being projected for the *Neue Residenz*, the Geiseltal's present venue (G. Berg, interview 8 June 2004). The Zoology Museum at the University of Hamburg is presently endangered. The collections of the Department of Geology and Paleontology of the Technical University of Clausthal were in danger due to imminent closure of the department (L. Schmitz, *in litt.* 11 October 2003; could not confirm what happened subsequently), and

¹³⁵ Proposta di Legge "Istituzione dell'Osservatorio nazionale sui musei scientifici" (Camera dei Deputati No. 5839, iniziativa del deputato Mazzuca), 2005.

the same is likely to happen with the anthropology collections at the Institute of Anthropology, Humboldt University Berlin (U. Kreuz, interview 10 June 2004). The Robert Koch Museum at Humboldt University of Berlin is also facing an uncertain future given that the University sold the building of the Institute of Microbiology/Charité, where it is housed (W. Donath, *in litt.* 12 July 2005). The 'crisis' of German natural history collections, aggravated by bureaucratic collecting procedures and other structural problems, has recently been discussed in *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* (2003; reviewed by Krell 2004).



Fig. 5.13 - Museum of Natural History, Humboldt University Berlin, damaged by World War II bombings. Photo taken in July 2004.



Fig. 5.14 – Museum of Anatomy at the Charité, Humboldt University Berlin (reproduced with the kind permission of Humboldt University Berlin).

In other disciplinary areas, German university collections seem to be actively used for teaching and research while at the same time maintaining vivid ties with the general public. One remarkable example is the Museum of Musical Instruments at the University of Leipzig, which is also one of the finest reference collections of musical instruments in the world. Born as a first generation university collection, it is active today in its teaching and research relations with several departments across the University as well as applied research for the Leipzig community. The Museum founded the Institute for Research of Musical Instruments

(E. Fontana, interview 3 June 2004). Another example is the collection of 300 mathematical models – mostly made by Martin Schilling; c. 1875-1920 – at the Department of Mathematics and Computer Sciences of the Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. The collection is used in the teaching of geometry, topology and mechanics, as well as for the history of mathematics (K. Richter, *in litt.* 23 June 2004).

In the near future, the challenges for German university museums and collections will be substantial. Being a federal state, there is no centralised jurisdiction over the higher education system in Germany and universities are administered and funded by the different *Länder*. Therefore, it may be more difficult to coordinate measures at the national level. Additionally, there is no association of university museums and collections that could assume leadership in the recognition process. Nevertheless, basic preparatory work has been done, mainly at the initiative of the *Helmholtz Zentrum für Kulturtechnik* (Humboldt University Berlin), which has been compiling data on German university museums and collections since 2001. Presently, a research project on the history of Germany university collections is being developed.



Fig. 5.15 – Robert Koch Museum at the Charité, Humboldt University Berlin: a biographical museum devoted to the life and work of Nobel-prize winner Robert Koch (reproduced with the kind permission of the Robert Koch Museum).



5.2.6 Other countries

In other European countries, the problems are basically the same as those described above, but initiatives at the national level have been rare until now. This situation will possibly change in Greece and Spain, where national associations of university collections were created recently. In Spain, an online directory of university museums is currently being developed (Such 2003). In Norway, university museums have developed a collaborative project to increase access to university collections (Ore 2001).

Apart from Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and the former DDR, little is published in English about university collections in eastern European countries. Often universities have gone through a turbulent political past and collections have been dispersed, transferred or lost. For example, important geological collections from the University of Tartu, Estonia, were transferred to the Academy of Sciences in Tallinn, including type collections of Estonian palaeontology (M. Isakar, interview 9 October 2003). The same applies to the historical collection of archaeological originals and oil paintings from the 16th to 19th centuries, which were transferred to Russia during World War I and are still held at the Art Museum of

Voronezh (I. Kukk, interview 9 October 2003). Judging from the situation in Estonia and Lithuania, the Soviet period appears to have caused significant stagnation for first generation university collections, partly stemming from the restricted access for, and contact with, non-Soviet researchers, the lack of access for Estonian researchers to collections and journals outside the Soviet sphere of influence, and because of the small number of tourists visiting the countries at the time. Given that they have remained inaccessible to the wider scientific community for so long, university collections of natural history, archaeology, anthropology are likely to raise considerable interest as they now become better known¹³⁶.



Fig. 5.16 – Anatomical Theatre (left) and Astronomical Observatory (right), University of Tartu. The Anatomical Theatre was built between 1803 and 1805 (central rotunda), and lateral expansions until 1860. The Observatory was built between 1808 and 1810 and the tower (originally domed), was rebuilt in 1825 to house the Fraunhofer refractor (photos S. de Clercq).



Fig. 5.17 – Students at the Museum of University History, University of Tartu: section devoted to the 19th century (photo: M. Sakson, reproduced with the kind permission of the University of Tartu).

The University of Tartu (1632), the oldest university of Estonia, has collections, museums and buildings of great interest, including the Art Museum, the Museum of University History (fig. 5.17), the Museum of Geology, the Museum of Zoology, the Botanical Garden and Herbarium, the Anatomical Theatre, the Astronomical Observatory and the corresponding medical and instruments collections. The Astronomical Observatory is part of the Struve

¹³⁶ At the University of Tartu there is a keen interest in making collections better known to scientists around the world. Today, Tartu's zoology, palaeontology and geology collections are being catalogued according to modern standards (M. Isakar, T. Pani, interview 9 October 2003).

Geodetic Arc, today classified by UNESCO as World Heritage (see chapter 7). The majority of collections are well-preserved and the buildings are structurally intact, only suffering from normal decay due to the passage of time. Integrated under a common structure in 2005, the collections are aiming to speak with a coordinated voice within the University and to offer an improved public service, without losing ties with teaching and research, particularly in the case of the first generation collections (see Mägi in press).

Russia seems to have considerable university heritage, although surveys or inventories are either non-existent or unreliable (V. Kuzevanov, *in litt.* 13 May 2004). There is clearly a need for more research into university collections in Eastern Europe as almost two-thirds of European universities are situated there (see appendix A1).

5.2.7 Initiatives at international level

At the international level, the three most important recent initiatives were the creation of the network Universeum in 2000, the European project developed by the Council of Europe (1999-2001) and the creation in 2001 of a specific international committee for university collections (UMAC) within the International Council of Museums.

i) The Universeum Network (2000)

During the late 1990s, 12 of the oldest and most renowned universities in Europe engaged in a collaborative project ('Universeum: Academic Heritage and Universities, Responsibility and Public Access'), financed by the European Commission (*Culture 2000* programme), to share knowledge and experiences and to take initiatives with the aim of enhancing access to collections. The 12 founding universities were the University of Amsterdam, the Humboldt University Berlin, the University of Bologna, the University of Cambridge, the University of Groningen, the Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, the University of Leipzig, the Royal College of Surgeons of England, the University of Oxford, the University of Pavia, the University of Uppsala and the University of Utrecht. In 16 April 2000, the Declaration of Halle was signed by these institutions (see Declaration of Halle transcribed in appendix A10). The network developed three collaborative projects: one to "identify and inventory the collections of a sample of European universities, starting with the medical discipline" (Database project), a second with the aim of establishing a "web-based facility to allow easy access to Europe's university treasures via the Internet" (Virtual Gallery project) and an exhibition "showing the interactions of knowledge between European universities in the past and present" (Joint Exhibition project) (Bremer 2001: 7). Universeum also produced *Treasures of University Collections in Europe* (Bremer & Wegener 2001). Universeum has held regular meetings and since 2000 other European universities have joined in. Although never formally constituted as an association, Universeum is the only group today aiming at raising awareness about university heritage at European level.

ii) UMAC (2001)

ICOM's International Committee for University Museums and Collections (UMAC) was formally created during the 19th General Assembly of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in Barcelona in July 2001, making it the first association of university museums and collections of international scope¹³⁷. The creation of UMAC meant that, for the first time, the distinct identity of university museums was recognised by the most important organisation of museums worldwide. According to Peter Stanbury, chair of UMAC between 2001 and 2004, "UMAC's role is to highlight similarities and differences between university museums and other museums, and to encourage interaction and partnerships between all museum professionals [...]. By asking probing questions, UMAC enables solutions to be found to

¹³⁷ See UMAC's website at <http://icom.museum/umac>. UMAC's objectives are to be found under 'What is UMAC'. See also Stanbury (2002).

protect our common heritage. UMAC's writings, conferences and discussions augment the formal training of those responsible for university collections" (Stanbury 2003b: 3).

UMAC has proven to be an active body. Since its creation, the proceedings of the annual conferences in Barcelona (2001), Sydney and Canberra (2002) and Oklahoma USA (2003) have been published and a selection of papers from the annual conference in Seoul (2004) will be published soon. UMAC was also responsible for the compilation and editing of an issue of ICOM Study Series (No. 11, 2003) and it released the advisory document *University Museums and Collections: Importance, Responsibility, Maintenance, Disposal and Closure* (UMAC 2004, see also appendix A10). One of UMAC's most ambitious projects has been to compile information about university museums and collections worldwide and make it available on the internet. UMAC's Worldwide Database of University Museums and Collections has drawn from two initial databases in Germany and Australia and is searchable per country, per museum and collection type and per subject (Weber & Lourenço 2005)¹³⁸. The Database is being developed further to become an even richer source of information for university museum professionals, as well as a more useful online instrument for researchers and the general public alike.

iii) University Heritage and the Council of Europe (1999-2001)

Between 1999 and 2001, the Council of Europe developed a collaborative project at the European level with the aim of promoting academic heritage. The project was a joint initiative of the Steering Committees for Higher Education and Research (CDESER) and Cultural Heritage (CDPAT) of the Council of Europe and partly funded by the European Commission. It involved universities from Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain and Turkey. Originally aimed at establishing an Ancient Universities Route, "the participants quite rapidly moved away from this [...] in favour of an emphasis on the heritage of European universities for at least two reasons. Firstly, while the origin of European universities may well be termed ancient, not all the institutions that identify with and continue to live this tradition are marked by old age. Secondly, while the European university tradition provides a link in space and time between a variety of institutions in Europe and beyond, the concept of a route is too simplistic a way of conceiving this relation" (Sanz & Bergan 2002b: 15; see Boylan 2003 for a description of the project). After the project was completed, *Heritage of European Universities* was published in English and French (Sanz & Bergan 2002a). It includes articles on university history (Ridder-Symoens 2002a,b, Rüegg 2002, Zonta 2002), universities and the European identity (Blasi 2002, Brizzi 2002a, Peset 2002, Renaut 2002), museums and collections in relation to university heritage (Boylan 2002), the concept of university heritage (Sanz & Bergan 2002b,c,d), case-studies (Bakhouché 2002, Brizzi 2002b, Díaz 2002, Silva 2002), and a compilation of relevant European declarations and conventions. The project also produced the draft Recommendation on the Governance and Management of the University Heritage (Council of Europe 2004). The draft Recommendation is directed at the governments of the 46 Council of Europe member states and was considered by the Steering Committees for Higher Education and Research (CDESER) and Cultural Heritage (CDPAT) in late 2004/early 2005. The text has a detailed introduction and includes recommendations on legislation, governance and management, finance, access, professionalisation, training, research, awareness raising, relations with the local community, and international cooperation. The Draft Recommendation urges governments to "implement in their policy, law and practice" the principles contained in the text and to "promote the implementation of [the] measures by relevant public authorities at all levels as well as higher education institutions".

It should be noted that the Council of Europe had already adopted a Recommendation indirectly related to university collections in 1998, i.e. the Recommendation 'Incidental

¹³⁸ See UMAC Worldwide Database at <http://publicus.culture.hu-berlin.de/collections/>

Collections' (Recommendation No. 1375/1998). Another relevant Recommendation of the Council of Europe in relation to university heritage was issued in 2000 (Recommendation No. R (2000)8 of the Committee of Ministers) on the research mission of universities, which reads that: "[we should] regard the contributions of universities, through their wide variety of disciplines, to the preservation, development and enrichment of European cultural heritage".

5.3 Discussion

This chapter aimed at reviewing our current state of knowledge about university collections, both in terms of the literature and of recent initiatives in Europe.

The museum level was predominant in the literature review and the collection-level was hardly mentioned. This is not so much because collections did not exist – they certainly did – but because there is a bias in the sources employed: papers were mainly selected from professional museum journals, in which texts on museums are more likely to be published. References to university collections mostly appear in specialised journals (archaeology, anthropology, zoology, etc.) and are relatively rare in the museum literature.

The literature published in the 20th century seems to indicate that the role of university museums is somehow erratic and lacks consistent formulation – particularly in terms of audiences. Although the general public was of concern to university museums, the targeted audience comprised mostly students and researchers. In the late 1950s, texts gradually began to make distinctions at the exhibition level to accommodate internal and external users and a turning point seems to have occurred in the 1960s: more texts began to mention both the general public and professional standards. This transformation is likely to have resulted from a combination of related factors. Firstly, the number of universities grew rapidly, coupled with signs of shifts in research interests at least since the 1950s, resulting in a decline in the use of first generation collections for teaching and research. Secondly, the museum sector initiated a dramatic transformation. Thirdly, in the 1960s the university museum of historical nature (second generation) initiated a gradual period of growth. Exclusively presenting historically and artistically relevant objects, second generation university museums possibly attracted broader segments of the general public to universities and eventually to first generation museums as well. More research on this aspect would certainly be welcome, but the diversification of audiences is likely to have gradually induced first university museums to contemplate on the nature of their own public role, including opening hours, collection accessibility, interpretation and professional standards, especially given that at the same time they were confronted with a decline in their traditional audiences.

The growth of second generation university museums could also have been related to the growth in the number of universities – more universities, therefore more museums in absolute terms (no relevant statistics are available as far as I know). However, the boom in second generation university museums was not accompanied by a growth in first generation university museums¹³⁹. In my view, historical and artistic museums expanded in universities mostly as a result of changes in museums in general, particularly the increasingly prominent role of the public, coupled with a growing awareness among universities of the importance of their historical heritage (also, perhaps mostly, as a public relations and student recruitment tool). This in turn brought new audiences to universities and induced first generation university museums to re-think their audiences and professional standards.

¹³⁹ To the best of my knowledge, no major university museum of natural history in Europe was created after the 1960s. 'New' museums did appear, but they resulted from the reorganisation of former museums or collections – e.g. the Museum of Mineralogy at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris (1970), with collections dating from the 1800s and the Natural History Museum, University of Wrocław (1976), resulting from the reorganisation of the zoological and botanical museums, both dating from the 19th century (Jakubowski 2001).

The main contemporary dilemma of university museums and collections can be formulated as follows. In order to stay relevant for the university, collections need to contribute significantly to teaching and research; in order to be relevant to society at large, they need to increasingly provide access to collections, raise their professional standards and deliver public service more broadly. How can this be achieved when university museum professionals have themselves considerable difficulty in clearly defining the contemporary role of university collections and its connections with present, past and future teaching and research? How can this occur when the university itself has a rather restricted vision of their contemporary social and cultural role? Finally, how can this be achieved when resources are diminishing and do not suffice for stability, reflection, research and collaboration?

Finding the key to this dilemma requires collaborative efforts between universities, governments and the museum sector. It requires transcending disciplinary borders, university borders and national borders. University collections need to be seen in an integrated way as part of a nationally and internationally distributed collection. Collaboration is a challenge as it requires major cultural leaps. Collaboration may also prove difficult at a practical level when countries are large (like France) or de-centralised (like Germany), but collaboration and an integrated vision are essential for a more effective promotion of university heritage.

The literature also shows that comprehensive surveys of university museums and collections are not numerous. Such surveys require considerable financial and human resources, scientific expertise, time, and political will. Nevertheless, they are an essential tool towards an objective understanding of the nature of university museums and collections, as well as an indispensable first step towards informed decision-making. At present, data from different surveys in Europe are difficult to compare because European higher education systems remain diverse despite the tendency for homogeneity. Furthermore, existing surveys were carried out within different conceptual and methodological frameworks (e.g. varying definitions of 'museum' and 'collection') and different scopes (some including only object collections, others including archives and libraries, some focusing on public universities, others on public and private universities). More efforts should be made to improve consistency in standards and definitions. Despite the differences in methods and scope, all surveys have two things in common: at their roots were situations of general and critical instability, if not 'crisis', and the findings and recommendations are strikingly similar, i.e. university museums and collections are insufficiently recognised by contemporary universities and society alike, their role is being questioned, and they are generally operating well below their potential in research, teaching and public service.

