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Museum as Activist

(Re)inventing Institutional Paradigm at the Museum of Movements in Malmö

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Abstract

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What exactly happens behind museum displays and repository doors? Who decides what heritage has to be preserved and what part of it should be exhibited? Who operates all this invisible machinery of the museums' backstage functions and executes its daily routines?

Museums as institutions of modernity have a specific role in the process of knowledge production and power redistribution within societies, first of all by empowering certain groups and discourses and making them visible. The demand for structural changes in museums and for enhancement of museums' social agency and responsibility voiced through the recent decades, results quite often in projects aimed at *external* museum functions, such as educational programs and temporary exhibitions, and does not touch museum management or collecting policies.

In this thesis, I suggest a framework for reimagining the *inner* structures of museums as cultural institutions based on an ambitious museum project started from scratch.

The Southern Swedish city of Malmö is one of the 'hot spots' for migration discourse, as it connects Sweden to the continent through the Oresund Bridge, and is known for its strong tradition of civil society-based activism. The Museum of Movements in Malmö (or the National Museum for Democracy and Migration) aims to address a broad range of subjects, including migration, human rights, popular movements and civil society-based activism. A feasibility study conducted by the city's Cultural Department in 2016–2017 asserted the importance of establishing this future institution as a museum: a transparent, safe and credible public space which can engender open discussion around difficult issues.

In order to understand how activism and community-making initiatives can find a place in the museum's core, I employ a cultural analysis on activist movements grounded in the ethnographic fieldwork conducted at the Malmö Cultural Department during autumn 2017. By approaching traditional museum practices via activist cultures, I aim to answer the question: Is it possible for a cultural institution to take the standpoint of an activist in a changing society?

Keywords: migration museums; participation; activism; museum definition; democracy; Museum of Movements; museology; civil society.

Abstrakt svenska

Museer som aktivister: Att återuppfinna institutionsparadigm med Rörelsernas Museum i Malmö

Olga Zabalueva

Vad händer bakom museimontrar och magasindörrar? Vem bestämmer vilket kulturarv som ska bevaras och vilken del av det ska utställas? Vem driver det osynliga maskineriet av museernas backstage-funktioner och genomför dagliga museirutiner?

Museer som modernitetsinstitutioner har en särskild roll i processen för kunskapsproduktion och maktfördelning inom samhällen, först och främst genom att synliggöra vissa grupper och historier. Sedan 1900-talet uppmärkte man efterfrågan på strukturella förändringar i museer och på 2000-talet står det klart att museer behöver agera och framhålla sitt sociala ansvar. Det leder dock ganska ofta till projekt som satsar på museets externa funktioner, till exempel programverksamhet och utställningsproduktion.

I denna masteruppsats föreslår jag en ram för att omformulera museets inre strukturer och analysera ett ambitiöst museiprojekt som utvecklas i Malmö.

Malmö är en av de brännpunkterna för migrationsdiskursen eftersom den förbinder Sverige med kontinenten via Öresundsbron. Staden är också känd för sin starka tradition av folkrörelser och aktivism. Rörelsernas museum i Malmö (eller det nationella demokrati- och migrationsmuseet) är ett projekt inriktat på breda ämnen som migration, mänskliga rättigheter, demokratiska folkrörelser och idéburna organisationer. En förstudie genomförd av Kulturförvaltningen i Malmö Stad under 2016–2017 framhävde vikten av att etablera den framtida institutionen i form av ett museum: ett öppet, tryggt och trovärdigt offentligt utrymme som kan skapa en diskussion kring problematiska samhällsfrågor.

För att förstå hur aktivism och samhällsskapande initiativ kan hitta en plats i museets hjärta använder jag en kulturanalytisk studie av aktivism och folkrörelser som genomfördes vid Kulturförvaltningen i Malmö Stad under hösten 2017.

Genom att koppla ihop traditionell museipraxis med aktivistkulturer strävar jag efter att svara på frågan om det är möjligt för en kulturinstitution att ta sin egen ställning som aktivist i det moderna samhället.

Nyckelord: migration; demokrati; deltagandet; aktivism; Rörelsernas museum; Malmö; museologi; civilsamhället.

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Introduction

*“There are no objects behind the glass. No collections. Neither staff nor the building.
The only thing we have for a moment in our feasibility study are the words:
National Democracy and Migration Museum in Malmö”
Fredrik Elg (Malmö Stad, 2016)*

What does one think of when they hear the word “museum”? Chilly hallways with glimmering treasures displayed in the glass cases? “White cube” type of rooms with paintings hanging on the walls? Stuffed animals and skeletons peeking at the visitor from their dioramas? Wonders of science and tech? Dusty shelves filled with antiquities? A futuristic building floating over the cityscape? The past, the present, the future?

Can any of these imaginary museums *take action* for social, economic or political change?¹ Is there a need for museum to be activist while there are plenty of other cultural institutions rallying for human rights, equality and social justice? One can argue that museums are special sites designed for production and preservation of knowledge, not for protests or propaganda. Or are they?

The world of museums has been dramatically growing over the last century, and this progress has even sped up in recent decades. Simultaneously, the very concept of museal² arrangement has not changed very much since the first modern museums were opened to the public (the most iconic examples would be the British Museum in 1759 and the Louvre in 1793; museum historians agree that “the birth of museum” as we understand it today happened around 1800, cf. Pomian, 1990; Bennett, 1995). Museologist Anna Leshchenko (2016, 2017) derives three models of museum policies aimed towards visitors and public spaces: besides the classical model of “museum as a temple” and “museum as the forum” defined by Canadian museologist Duncan Cameron in 1971, she argues for a “museum-activist” model. According to Leshchenko, more and more museums are emphasizing complex social, economic and political issues through storytelling; they are not only providing a space for public dialogue (as in the *forum* model) but participating actively in such dialogues themselves. This “radical” form of the *forum* model presumes “a fight of sorts

¹ The origins of the word “activist” can be traced back to 1915, in reference to mostly right-wing political forces in Sweden that were advocating abandonment of neutrality in World War I and active support for the Central Powers. (Dictionary.com, n.d.; see also Nordisk familjebok, 1922). The more general definition would be “one who advocates a doctrine of direct action” (Dictionary.com).

² According to French museologists Mairesse and Desvallées, “the museal field covers not only the creation, development and operation of the museum institution but also reflections on its foundations and issues” (2010, p. 48).

for the museum's right to demonstrate the position of a civic agent that freely chooses the most controversial subjects" for its displays (Leshchenko, 2016).

Such a suggestion – that museums themselves have agency to choose their own stance – motivates a closer look both into museums as organizational structures and into activism and civil society movements. This thesis proposes a framework based on a specific Swedish case that, however, can be used to elaborate further on such a connection between museums and activism.

To conduct a cultural analysis on museums can be an intricate challenge due to the common perception of 'culture' as something that belongs in and is being produced by cultural institution themselves (museums in particular). This conception, however, makes the culture of *those who produce culture* to some extent obscure and hidden from the outsider's view. It is also hard to talk about the museums and do not touch the notion of *heritage*.

Heritage and its making can be understood as a "cultural practice about cultural practice" (Aronsson & Gradén, 2013, p. 4) which selects and highlights certain aspects from the past in the present and stake out for the future both collective and individual perception of culture. Such meta-practices make heritage somewhat multi-layered and not always a transparent concept. The process through which culture is transformed to heritage in the museum may also change the ways in which cultural practitioners and artists whose work is selected and displayed, come to understand their own work and their practice (Gradén, 2013; cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

A specific feature of museum as a 'cultural technology' (Bennett, 1995) is its internal structure, which is usually based on collections. Museums, therefore, are able to endure external changes in society, adjust to them, and keep the internal structure intact. For instance, in the rapidly changing world of digital technologies, museums are going online with digitized collections and exhibitions, and reaching their audiences through social media. Nevertheless, the latter are often affected by the traditional authoritative narrative or the expert's voice,³ and the former inherit all the classifications and sometime even biases from the respective collections.

Another issue is the public's preconception of the museum as an institution itself. For example, in a study on participatory techniques in museum narratives, the visitors longed "for

³ As in the recent case with the British Museum, when the official museum's account tweeted about how they are writing the labels for exhibitions: "We aim to be understandable by 16 year olds. Sometimes Asian names can be confusing, so we have to be careful about using too many" (cited in Belam, 2017). This generated a lively discussion in social media, resulting in the museum apologizing for inconvenient wording and clarifying their point (that labels have their own restrictions and additional information is always available through other museum products).

an authoritative, expert voice, and... [did not] perceive their own contributions as necessarily relevant or interesting” (Becker-Proriol & Chanay, 2012, p. 327).

Museums are often still perceived as instruments of public instruction and are supposed to form a context for “governmental programmes aimed at reshaping general norms of social behaviour” (Bennett, 1995, p. 6). However, these norms have changed. Where in the 19th century a Foucauldian disciplinary institution depicted by cultural theorist Tony Bennett has emerged, there is now a place for multifaceted representation, as “norms have become more liberal and more pluralist, with the slow take-over by consumerism” (Schwend, 2012, p. 30).

How do these transformations affect museums that are created recently or museums in process of inception? This thesis focuses on one particular museum project – a Museum of Movements in Malmö, follows its development, and addresses challenges that are arising in the process.

Background

During 2016 and spring 2017, a feasibility study for the new museum in the Southern Swedish city of Malmö was conducted by the city’s Cultural Department. An idea of establishing a national museum for democracy and migration was supported by the Swedish government, and the final report, called the *Museum of Movements* (“Rörelsernas museum” in Swedish, Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a-c) was presented to the Ministry of Culture in May 2017. In the course of the feasibility study, focus of the planned museum shifted from the rather broad notions of “democracy” and “migration” to the even broader term “movement”, which, nevertheless, can serve as an umbrella concept for both of them. Consequently, popular movements, NGOs and activism came under the spotlight both as prospective subjects and participants of the study. The second phase of working towards the museum project is due to start in 2018, and the challenges that lie ahead of the museum project team are tangible and concrete at first sight. What about the building? The staff? Collections and exhibitions? What will the power relations look like both on municipal and state level? It might be too early to answer these questions at the moment, but nevertheless they will affect the cultural heritage work being made at present.

To tackle these challenges, an understanding of how museums are functioning is essential. In this thesis, I intend to argue that despite the promising idea of creating a new museum from a clean slate, the inherent institutional inertia still might haunt it, bequeathed both from the museum world and from the cultural administration practices.

Aim and objectives

In this thesis, I am investigating how the Museum of Movements project is taking form and, if possible, how it can transform traditional organizational structures of (Swedish) museums in an inclusive and collaborative way. The overall purpose of my research is to develop a framework for the museum's social responsibility and to answer the question if it is possible for a cultural institution of modernity to take the standpoint of an activist in the changing society.

To fulfil this aim I am going to focus on the following research questions:

1. **What are “traditional museum practices” inherent for museums as institutions?**
What legacy does the Museum of Movements project wish to avoid and what are the attractive aspects that make this new organization to become a museum? Answering this question will help to define the problem and to delineate the backdrop for the case study.
2. **How the feasibility study for the Museum of Movements was formed and what role did the community/civil society play in this formation?** Here the argument for the chosen case will be unfolded alongside the main investigation focus.
3. **How can activism and community-making initiatives find a place in a museum's core, not only in its temporary exhibitions?** Is there any underlying similarities in museums and activism as cultural practices? This question is designed to fulfill the aim and to bring together all sorts of empirical material used in the course of research.

This thesis is not only relevant for the field of Museum Studies, but also answers growing demand to enhance museums' social agency and responsibility (cf. Sandell, 1998, 2002; Leshchenko, 2016). By following an actual museum project, it suggests approaches and methods that can be used by the future museum and similar projects in reimagining inner structures of cultural institutions.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis is not limited by literature that studies how museums are performing their functions. Whereas said literature will be analyzed as a separate field of research with its own inner trends (such as a concept of a museum as a Foucauldian institution of power, or aforementioned demand for museums' social agency and responsibility), three theoretical currents that frame the concepts being used can be distinguished in the thesis text. These currents are related to notions of power, postcolonial (museum) studies, and cultural institutions.

The museum as a site for knowledge production is traditionally perceived as the place for exercising power (e.g. Bennett, 1995; Hooper-Greenhill, 1992). This perception is grounded in the works of French philosopher Michel Foucault. However, Foucault also addresses museums as *heterotopias*, or the spaces of *otherness* that tend to encapsulate time and space and disengage objects from their contexts (1986). Museum philosopher Beth Lord (2006) argues that the ability of museums as heterotopias to be self-reflective and perform a discursive analysis on objects is underrepresented in the museum studies field. As Lord points out, a “negative view of the museum as an Enlightenment institution that embodies state power and strives to order the world according to universal rules” (p. 1) makes somewhat obscure the analytical power that is embedded into museums as institutions.

In order to break down the institutional character of museum, postcolonial studies have to be addressed, as the problem of what (and how) is being showcased is deeply connected with the colonial nature of museum as a cultural practice (see, for example, Anderson, 2006). The authors of the Museum of Movements project are referring to such postcolonial thinkers as Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi Bhabha (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a, p. 22) in order to rethink the hierarchical means of knowledge production in cultural institutions.

Peggy Levitt (2015) describes a postcolonial turn in museum-making as the transition from the Foucauldian institution of power to the instrument of cross-cultural dialogue. This trend includes “respect and recognition to previously marginalised groups” (Levitt, 2015, p. 152) as well as an informed knowledge production in the field of shaping national past and heritage (by implementing previously invisible voices and stories). Ethnologist Jennifer Manning (2016) suggests a term ‘postcolonial feminist ethnography’ to frame the research that is aimed to the understanding of marginalized Other: “there is a need to give a voice to the marginalised so they can establish their existence in [scientific] discourse” (p. 91). This standpoint, however, is already problematized⁴ as it is constructing the Other itself, differentiating them from the ethnographer or museum professional (the latter in the Western world due to specific socio-economic conditions most likely would be framed at least by ethnicity and class, if not gender) who do not have to “establish their existence” and depriving this very Other of the opportunity to choose. In this sense, ethnography as a discipline and museum as a medium are encountering similar problems while trying to

⁴ On MuseumNext Europe conference in 2017, Shaz Hussain, Collections Assistant at The Royal Airforce Museum in London, suggested changing the language used in museums. Among these changes were turning “giving a voice to” into “having a conversation with” (Hussain, 2017).

overcome their colonial past, which makes it possible for both to perform transdisciplinary loans of means and methods.

As Thomas Sieber (2016) shows, it is possible to create Other by the means of museum narrative in any context, be it migration, as in his case, or, for example, different 'local' ethnic groups. The discussion on postcolonial museum, even though it does not lie in the focus of this thesis, inevitably will be touched upon since, in the case of the Museum of Movements, the strategy will be needed to turn away from creating 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 2006) and work towards the participatory model (Simon, 2010; for the example of community collaboration *in situ* see also Malmö-based project "Women making herstory", Ardalan, 2017).

Last but not least, museums, according to the actual definition and by nature, are *institutions*. To conduct a cultural analysis on the Museum of Movements project, I used Dorothy E. Smith's concept of *institutional ethnography* which helps to locate "linkage among local settings of everyday life, organizations, and translocal processes of administration and governance" (2006, p. 15). The concept of institutional ethnography also helps identify what cultural theorist Fiona Cameron points out as being "rigid, fixed and obsolete institutional structures and forms of analysis" which become "increasingly problematic" in a postmodern world full of "complexity, uncertainty and competing worldviews" (2015, p. 345, 348). Cameron suggests to revise the entire ontology of the museum as an institution of modernity, which is based, among other things, on the hierarchical structures and dichotomies (such as nature/culture) as well as on "modern precepts of certainty, objectivity, truth and expertise" (*ibid.*, p. 345). Her appeal for the new ontology is based, among other things, on the acknowledgement of non-human actors (*cf.* Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005) and on the introduction of various compositional techniques, such as Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of *assemblages*. The latter combines bodies and thoughts, humans and non-humans "as affected and affected things" (cited in Cameron, 2015, p. 351).

Therefore, by problematizing an institutional character of museum, and questioning the power relations within it with the means of post-colonial perspective, it is possible to analyze discourses and practices emerging in the process of establishing a new museum. The museal reflections of these three main notions are presented in the first chapter of this thesis and used to understand both the specific field in which the Museum of Movements is situated and challenges that are facing the project team who aims to create something new.

Methods and material

The research methods of this thesis can be described in two ways. First, it's the methods I used while collecting material during my 10-weeks fieldwork at the Cultural Department of the City of Malmö (autumn 2017). This assignment became a multifaceted experience where I was working with two very different organizations (even if they both belong to one Cultural Department).

Annemarie Mol (1999) in her discussion on ontological politics suggests the notion of multiple realities or ontologies that are being *enacted* or *performed* rather than observed (p. 77). Unlike the *perspectivalist* approach, where the world is seen differently from different standpoints, or the *constructivist*, which is about construction of alternative stories that have been possible in the past – the *multiple realities* according to Mol are existing simultaneously as the product of different practices. The Museum of Movements from the very beginning existed in several contexts, both as a political endeavor on the pages of newspapers and municipal reports and as a real movement of all the potential stakeholders and collaborators who have been concentrating around the project. In the case of my fieldwork, I was cooperating with two activities within the Cultural Department, closely connected to the future museum project. Each of these activities was also *performing* the Museum of Movements in different ways.

The long-term collaboration between the City of Malmö's *Cultural Department* and the independent cultural actors⁵ is conducted mostly by the *Unit for International Relations and Projects*, which was also responsible for the *museum* feasibility study (fig. 1). The Unit's task for autumn 2017 was an arrangement of the *Safe Havens conference* in December. Besides its direct function as a meeting place for human rights defenders within arts and academia,⁶ the conference was also a supporting platform for the museum project, as many participants in one way or another can be seen as potential stakeholders in the questions related to migration, democracy and popular movements.

⁵ Including participation in the *International Cities of Refuge* (ICORN) program which offers shelter for writers and artists at risk.

⁶ Safe Havens – The Malmö Meetings 2015–2017 is a series of annual network conferences in Malmö, Sweden. It is arranged in collaboration between cultural operators and organizations and serves as a gathering place for human rights defenders within arts and academia, and as a platform for enhancing the visibility of cultural operators. The conference focuses on the connection between art, culture and human rights, and highlights the significant position of artists, culture and academia in human rights advocacy. It also promotes sharing and exchange of knowledge between artists and cultural operators, activists, scholars, and major human rights/cultural organizations. (<https://www.themalmomeetings.org/>)



Figure 1. Cultural Department of the City of Malmö: Structures connected to the Museum of Movements project (for autumn 2017)

The vision of the future museum as a research center, alongside the Cultural Department's involvement with Safe Havens and ICORN networks, brought up the idea of establishing an *archive* that will provide a 'safe haven' for documentation and heritage of the popular movements and NGOs in Sweden and around the world, as well as for artists at risk. The archive project is curated by the *Malmö City Archives* (an institution that is linked not only with the Cultural Department, but also with several other administrative departments of the Malmö City municipality) as an independent, but closely connected to the future museum, and is called the *Rescue Archive* (Malmö Räddningsarkiv).

During my fieldwork at the Cultural Department, I was both participating in the organization of the Safe Havens conference and conducting a cultural analytical study for the Rescue Archive project. In the first case, I was an actor who was actively involved in some stages of planning and in the performance of the conference itself. In the second, my role was one of a researcher or consultant who investigates certain cases and delivers the results. Main research methods for my first aspect were therefore observation and participatory observation. This part of ethnographic methods, or *fieldwork* (Schmidt-Lauber, 2012, p. 562), implies an immersion into a field, a "direct, participatory access to cultural events and people in their respective spaces" (ibid.). The understanding of the field is achieved by participating in common practices and becoming a "professional familiar" (Löfgren, 2018, p. 50), instead of a "professional stranger" (Agar, 1996). By being involved into the Unit's inner activities and routines, I was able to gather insights on how the free cultural sector and human rights defenders, conference attendees and contributors, are conceiving of the very impulses that lay

in the background of the Museum of Movements' project: democracy, freedom of expression, artistic community and networks of mobile actors.

Though not being specifically indicated as the part of feasibility study, I argue that Safe Havens' series of events had a great impact on the future museum's concept as an explicit example of fluid and adaptive networks of collaborations that are unable to keep pre-designed structure. It highlights also a connection between art and activism, which will be addressed in Chapter three.

Even if my collaboration with the Rescue Archives project was more formal in the sense that I had the assignment to complete and a 'field' to visit, the boundary between the 'field' and 'desk research' has also become blurred and transient during the fieldwork (cf. Richard Wilk's chapter on "Demystifying Fieldwork" in Ehn, Löfgren & Wilk, 2016, pp. 115–129). A study I did for the Rescue Archives project was a cultural analysis on memory cultures among activists, artists and human rights defenders; empirical material included ethnographic observations and participatory observations, as well as interviews with local and international actors (personal or via Skype; informants will be presented in the Chapter three of this thesis). Among the informants there were those who practice different forms of art alongside their activism as well as those defending human rights by different means. Following Charlotte Aull Davies' approach to reflexivity (2002), I aimed to engage informants in conversations rather than interviewing them after a structured list of questions. This design intended also to minimize the impact of my own assumptions on what the informant might answer. As Michael H. Agar (1996) argues, an informal interview is "one-down position" (p. 140) for an ethnographer, as we are learning our informants' experiences through conversation and giving them consequently the lead.

One of the challenges in this particular study was *translation*, both in a sense of foreign languages (five interviews were conducted in English, two in Swedish and one in Russian) and as a translation of my findings to the client, the Malmö City Archives, making them applicable for the Rescue Archives project. By reassessing this material and integrating it into a broader frame of the thesis, I am again translating and interpreting it in a slightly different way. If for that particular study the fieldwork was the major empirical material, in this thesis I am using it as the framework to look into museum's inner structures. Taking into account the scientific tradition of a *sociology of translation* (Callon, 1986), my cultural analysis as a whole takes form of a mobile and fluid system of notions, actors, theoretical frameworks, networks and stakeholders; of ethnographical fieldwork and discourse analysis,

of museum practices and social worlds – as I wish to delineate the cultural field where the research was taking place.

The material for this thesis, however, is not limited by the Rescue Archives or Safe Havens projects. I have had a unique opportunity to follow the development of the Museum of Movements along the way and continue to follow it further while writing this text. The 2017 report and empirical material published with it (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a, 2017c) provides a ground to draw on further both in the sense of analyzing participants' answers and reactions during the study and of overviewing the examples of cultural institutions that were chosen for comparison and inspiration. This material opens up further into a broader field of similar museum projects that are covered in literature or are unfolding simultaneously (cf. the Migration Museum Project, UK) and provides the ground both for comparison and content analysis.

My approach to work with the Museum of Movements project can be also described as a 'go-along' in a broader sense: the first year I was literally going along with the museum-making process. In the ethnographic research a *go-along*, a "hybrid between participant observation and interviewing" implies that "ethnographers are able to observe their informant's spatial practices *in situ* while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time" (Kusenbach, 2003, p. 463). Since the first time I learned about the project on the conference *Museums in Time of Migration and Mobility* (May 25-26, 2016, Malmö University) I was coming and going, listening to the presentations (for example at *Mänskliga Rättighetsdagarna*, the Swedish Forum for Human Rights, October 17, 2016), gathering eventual information into a separate folder on my laptop and keeping contact with the project team. Somehow my own 'spatial practices' during my studies and part-time work were overlapping with those of Malmö inhabitants interested in creation of this new museum. This almost unintentional and occasional 'fieldwork' has taught me that there are many people and ideas in Malmö who are moving around in somewhat overlapping social worlds; the Museum of Movements project was emerging in these intersections. This brings to the scope of the thesis another theoretical and methodological framework, and the traces of Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2005) with its constantly shifting networks of relationship of human and non-human actors, which can be found in the following text, even if I was not deliberately focusing on it.

My position as a researcher during the work on the thesis was informed by Beverly Skeggs' (1997) and Charlotte Aull Davies' (2012) works, which implies both reflexivity and responsibility for the knowledge production process. The overall method for the whole thesis

would be *cultural analysis* as the “empirical-based method for examining cultural phenomena”, specific mainly for Nordic ethnologic tradition (Fornäs, 2012, p. 61).

Challenges and ethical considerations

The important part of gathering ethnographic material for the Rescue Archive study (see Chapter 3 for a more detailed overview) was defining the range of informants who could provide valuable insights and at the same time will help me develop my study further. Among my initial ideas of approaching different groups of people was the one of intersectionality (which implied for example finding one informant from a women’s rights movement, one who would be active in the field of anti-racism, one who fights for LGBTQ-rights and so on). The other idea was to employ my active languages and gather material both locally and internationally. Even though these desires were accomplished only partially (see also the subsection *Time as a resource* in Chapter 3 of this thesis), the broad representation of women’s rights defenders among my informants (who were besides not always aware of each other’s existence) says something about transparency and openness among this group (as well as about my own network, interests and biases).

Another point that should be discussed is a kind of activism which was left aside. Should the scope of popular movements include, in addition to human rights activists, for example, far-right movements or protesters against abortion? How does my choice of informants correspond with the mission and the scope of the future museum? I decided to limit the scope by gathering empirical material from the same (political) spectrum of activism (“democratic popular movements”) at which the Museum of Movements project is aimed, for example, human rights defenders and activist artists, as well as representatives of Malmö city’s civil society.

It is important to separate the fieldwork for the Rescue Archive from the fieldwork done in connection to the Museum of Movements project. For the Rescue Archive study, I have deliberately chosen activism *per se* as my starting point and looked for potential stakeholders instead of just those already interested in the museum groups (who are presented in Chapter 2). This approach allowed me to highlight connections and intersections within existing practices as well as enact another ontology for the museum project (Mol, 1999). I have also deliberately chosen not to follow traditional for Museum Studies approach of interviewing curators and other museum professionals as there are a wide range of both academic literature and media publications on the topic (e.g. Levitt, 2015).

In her book *Reflexive Ethnography*, Charlotte Aull Davies (2012) designates the “intrinsic multi-layered reflexivity” of the ethnographic research, which at the same time should not lead to a “complete self-absorption that undermines our capacity to explore other societies and cultures” (p. 24). Therefore, I want to dwell on my own position in the field.

Liza McCoy (2006) claims that research on institutional practices should start outside the institutional discourse. I agree that even if the aim of my research was not the institutional ethnography as such, a certain distance is essential to conducting a reflective and informed research.

At the same time, I am inevitably immersed into the field as a museum practitioner. I was working with collections in cultural institutions in two countries, Russia and Sweden, which means that I have an idea of how the “hidden from outsider’s view” part of museum work looks like. Being constantly perceived as an outsider due to the foreign background and language issues while I was working in and with museal field in Sweden, I myself have always felt as a reluctant insurgent, because every structural feature, every line in acquisition books and every shelf system in repository was telling me that I am in my natural environment, that I am being ‘native’ here. This inner contradiction enabled me to collect material more effectively, as I was looking from the outside into the system of Swedish cultural institutions but at the same time was aware of the inner tacit knowledge and rules of conduct within them. Kirk-Lawlor and Allred in their research on cross-disciplinary and intercultural teams (2017) have demonstrated that the barriers in-between disciplines are more solid than those between different cultures in the sense of nationality; therefore my ‘lineage’ from Russian cultural institutions gave me the toolbox to employ on this case. On the other hand, I still have had a somewhat fresh gaze and estrangement that is necessary for the successful cultural analysis. This is one of the reasons why the case for the thesis was chosen from the Swedish context.

Disposition

The disposition of the chapters is based on the three main research questions and, simultaneously, the use of material in each of empirical chapters differs due to different objectives behind them.

The first empirical chapter of this thesis deals with the retrospective of museology as a field of knowledge in order to delineate ‘museum world’ and ‘museum culture’. It also describes the emergence of new museology in the 1970s and 1980s as a movement towards transforming museums into socially relevant institutions.

The purpose of this chapter is to place the thesis material in the disciplinary context and, simultaneously, frame the previous research; it depicts the field that the Museum of Movements is entering and serves as a follow-up for the theoretical frame introduced above.

The second chapter focuses on the process of project development behind the Museum of Movements. How did it turn from the initial idea to the published report in three parts and then to the actual experimental project? What are existing networks and side projects which surround the museum? What happens next? In this chapter I intend to argue that the museum project, even though still in a visionary stage of development, has already constructed a community of stakeholders who are interested in its further progress.

The last chapter analyses the relation between institutions and activism and frames the main objective of this thesis: how it is possible for the future museum to adjust existing institutional structures and practices in reflective and collaborative manner and how Museum of Movements can become a socially relevant project. In this chapter I am using the key notions which were derived from fieldwork study on activist movements “Memories that make an impact” (autumn 2017) to conduct analysis on material from previous chapters.

Limitations and future research

The critical voices in museum studies field argue that “museums are beyond salvation” (Hage, 2000, as cited in Levitt, 2017, p. 36). Some are claiming that rigid and authoritative structures of Enlightened (white middle class) Man’s discourse is unable to adapt to contemporary challenges (for the account on contemporary art and biennale culture see, for example, Mingolo, 2013). Others have predicted that digitalization of collections and the wide spread of information technologies will sideline museums in the field of knowledge production and consumption or even “create and extend shared ignorance” (Merritt, 2009). However, in the reality of digital revolution, museums still have their visitors – and the numbers are growing or dropping from country to country, from case to case, individually. Karsten Schubert (2000) suggests that IT increases public interest in museums due to the “fetishist fixation on the museal object” (p. 152) which contrasts the escalating virtuality of our everyday life. Museums are not going to become extinct in the coming decades and this is one of the reasons why the continuous work in museum theory, practice and the space in-between is still required.

There is a lot written on “transforming museums in the 21st century” (e.g. Black, 2012; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2006; Svanberg, 2010; see also anthology “Defining museum in the 21st century”, Mairesse, 2017). In this thesis, however, I have written about very practical

moments that were unfolding continuously while I was writing. In the following, I will deal neither with objects in the glass cases organized as an exhibition nor with an institution of modernity designed to exercise power. I will neither talk about visitors or digitalization, nor suggest themes and topics for the future museum.

My intention is more forensic – I am going to look for the hidden strands in the traditional museum design that imply inclusion, participatory or agile design, and bridge them together with inner mechanics of activist movements. By this, I aim to draft an organizational structure for a socially relevant and responsible institution, which will be able to develop further alongside with its audience. This structure, as I argue in this thesis, can be based on the activist practices implanted in existing museal code of conduct, as these two elements have a lot more in common than it seems. Moreover, the development towards an “activist museum” has already become a worldwide trend (cf. Trendswatch, AAM, 2017; see also Worts, 2018 for a more critical approach) which encompasses different functions and structures. The best thing about museums, after all, is that “they are forever changing” (Schubert, 2000, p. 153) – which means that this thesis’ material can provide an applicable method for the future projects.

Chapter 1. To museum or not to museum: Inherited structures in heritage institutions

It is late May and all the windows in the classroom are open, letting inside the noise from the street, hot air, and the smell of overheated asphalt. The bright sun does not allow us to see anything from the Power Point projected on the screen, but the professor's words are convincing enough without any visual aid. "The main problem of the museums today is hierarchies," - he says. "If you are building an exhibition then you have to go to the deputy director who administrates collections, and then to a collection curator, and the curator will be unwilling to show you the objects you want, because curators prefer to sit on a clutch of objects as broody hens and do not really wish their precious collections to be exhibited". He accompanies his words with a pantomime, so everyone in the class can grasp how the imaginary collections curator is eager to defend their treasures against the lay world of amateur exhibitions designers.

Several years later it is another classroom, and other students, but it is still a late May, and everything is blooming, and everyone just wants to get out, sit on the grass, enjoy the sun and eat an ice-cream. But first we have to report results from our museum internships. Two girls were doing their work at the same museum but in different departments; in the collections repository, and with the exhibition and programming unit, respectively. Both are reporting communication difficulties between departments. "We wanted to make a really great exhibition," - says the one who was working with the exhibition department. "But the repository is located far away from the museum, and people there were really reluctant to show us objects". "The exhibition people were coming out of nowhere and asking for items that weren't so easy to take out," - the girl who has worked in the collections department says, seeming to recognize the situation her classmate is describing. "If they could only imagine how many cool objects are there in the storage rooms! But they've chosen only the ones they could see in the database..." (Field diary: Reflections)

Two different countries, two different languages, two different academic traditions – but still these episodes represent the teaching of museology, the discipline that in this thesis is both an integral part of the theoretical framework and, simultaneously, a field for conducting cultural analysis on. What does it consist of?

According to the ICOM (International Council of Museums) museum definition, "[a] museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment" (ICOM, 2007). The modern concept of 'museum' went through a number of structural and vocational transformations, evolving from private art collections and cabinets of curiosities to today's complex institution that focuses both on visitor experience and educational purposes (Bennett, 1995; Schubert, 2000).

The field of studies that embraces museal issues as a whole is museology or Museum Studies. If we look up for the word ‘museology’ in *Key concepts of museology* dictionary, published by International Council of Museums (Mairesse & Desvallées, 2010), we can see different phases and layers that are composing this field even within the specialised ICOM’s committee (ICOFOM – International Committee for Museology). Thus, for example, there is a clear distinction between Francophone and Anglo-American ‘schools’ of museology,⁷ especially of the movement that is called *New Museology* (or, sometimes, critical museology) and, according to the *Key concepts*, has had both French and Anglo-Saxon origins in the late 1980s.

New Museology

In France, the concept of *la nouvelle muséologie* that emphasises the social role of the museums and its interdisciplinary character, was introduced by André Desvallées (Mairesse & Desvallées, 2010, p. 55). It originates from the prominent theoretical tradition within ICOM institutions, from Georges Henri Rivière and *ecomuseums*,⁸ focused on local identities and communities. In Rivière’s vision “the ecomuseum [...] on a given territory, expresses the relationship between man and nature through time and space on this territory” (1978, cited in Mairesse & Desvallées, 2010, p. 59). This approach integrates local natural and cultural environment in the cultural landscape that consists of diverse forms of heritage.

In the Anglo-Saxon world it was an anthology edited by Peter Vergo (1989) that introduced the *New Museology* to publics. According to Vergo, the ‘old’ museology was “too much about museum *methods*, and too little about the purposes of museums” (p. 3). He argues that museology can be perceived as a narrow field of knowledge, the discipline which studies museums and is interesting only for the museum professionals. On the other hand, museums at the time were addressing almost every possible subject, which allowed them to reach much broader audiences. Vergo appeals for a “radical re-examination” of the museums’ role within society.

Deirdre Stam (1993) argues that the new museology addressed first and foremost the information base of museums as it is focused on “processing of knowledge” (p. 58). She

⁷ Another branch named in the dictionary (Mairesse & Desvallées, 2010) is Central- and East European tradition of perceiving museology as a scientific field. However, Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries and their museological discourses are barely mentioned, even though a lot of ICOFOM’s research is being conducted in Latin America (for example MINOM, or International Movement for a new Museology, and the whole notion of “sociomuseology”). For amore detailed account of different branches and directions of the discipline (as well as their mutual unawareness of one another) see Peter van Mensch’s *Towards a methodology of museology* (1992).

⁸ The term was introduced by the French museologist Hugues de Varine in 1971 and developed further by Georges Henri Rivière, a first acting director of ICOM and founding father of the French museology.

suggests that all the levels of the museum information, from the paper catalogue cards to the personnel record, form in one way or another a museum's mission. Furthermore, by reconsidering this information base, it is possible to achieve the new museology's endeavor to transform museums into socially relevant institutions, or at least answer the "fundamental question of New Museology: what is the purpose of the museum?" (p. 59). Stam describes "the information to be derived by public from the museum" as the primary museum product (p. 60) rather than the ways of preservation and display of the artefacts. In a sense, the new museology has followed the 'linguistic turn' and then consequently a post-structuralist movement in broader field of cultural studies.

In the context of this thesis, the new museology can be conceived of as a twofold field. On one hand, it represents the state of art or previous research as a shift in museal knowledge from the authoritative homogenous narrative to participative representation, from collections to communities, and from objects to stories. On the other hand, it is still an intensely theoretical area. Deirdre Stam points out that the new museology "has not so far explained exactly how [its] theoretical framework should be translated into practice" (1993, p. 55); 20 years later in a study on British cultural institutions Clive Gray and Vikki McCall state that "the 'new museology' is less useful for praxis – museums have been left to find their own routes to link ideas around the 'new museology' to what they are actually doing" (2014, p. 21).

The more specific developments in the field of museology and museum studies that I plan to employ in my investigation are based on two directions of inquiry.

Disciplinary museum

First is a perception of museum as a Foucauldian institution of power. This perception also lies in the foundation of a new museology discourse as it describes the authoritative set of practices in museums as institutions. Tony Bennett has introduced the notion 'exhibitionary complex' (1988) which, as he argues, produced certain ontologies in representation, based usually on a perspective of Man (white, bourgeois, male and Western) as a starting position for the universality of presented knowledge (cf. Bennett, 2015, p. 6). Eilean Hooper-Greenhill also uses the term 'disciplinary museum' (1992) to describe the practices of cultural governance which emerged in the nineteenth century Europe. Both Bennett and Hooper-Greenhill construed a conception of museum as institution of modernity, a concept that was further elaborated in the works of Laurajane Smith who suggested the term *Authorized Heritage Discourse* (AHD) which among other things implies "a certain mentality

in the management of heritage and museums... [which] is overly concerned with expert judgements on the significance of the past, and is based on technical and aesthetic forms of expert knowledge” (Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 448). Smith describes the emergence of the Western heritage discourse through the notions of nation, history, patrimony and monuments (Smith, 2006, p. 19). A specific subsection of this field is a vision of museums as political institutions, as in the works of Clive Gray (2015).

This theoretical framework is often based on the public side of museum practices: exhibitions and representation. In his later work, Bennett indicates this predisposition of the ‘exhibitionary complex’ concept as it: “suggests that the forms of power exercised by museums are limited to their exhibition functions... [t]his neglects the role that museum collections play as resources for research practices” (2015, p. 11). Indeed, the mechanics of collections management and the significance of objects within museum repositories as well as their shifting nature and the ability to produce meanings is the subject for future studies (cf. Svanberg, 2017).

Informed museum

The second direction represents the new museology’s aspiration to transform museums into socially relevant institutions of the 21st century. Museums here are supposed to reclaim their own agency and renounce ‘neutrality’ of objective knowledge. The central narrative of this ‘turn’ is the relation between museums and visitors, or between museums and society. Additional weight is added here by focusing on local communities in the late 1960s and early 1970s (the inception of community museums in US⁹ and ecomuseums in France). In this paradigm, museum is being conceived of as ‘forum and actor’ (Svanberg, 2010), or as a ‘contact zone’ (Message, 2015) and a meeting place between cultures. Anna Leshchenko (2016, 2017) suggests that the ‘museum as an activist’ concept is going to enhance existing notions of ‘museum as a temple’ and ‘a forum’ (Cameron, 1971). The ‘activist’ model, however, focuses often only on the relation between the institutions and their visitors, excluding some other meaningful components (such as staff, objects and organization of collections, or even the museum building) from the picture.

Richard Sandell (2002) argues, that instead of focusing on complex outcomes that are difficult to measure, such as creating national identity (cf. Aronsson & Elgenius, 2015), museums are able to “impact positively on the lives of disadvantaged or marginalised individuals, act as a catalyst for social regeneration and as a vehicle for empowerment with

⁹ A significant example is Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, Washington DC, opened in 1967.

specific communities, and also contribute towards the creation of more equitable societies” (Sandell, 2002, p. 4).

This impulse towards “transforming museums in the twenty-first century” (cf. Black, 2012), however, is also directed mainly towards the ‘front-stage’ of museum’s universe, the space where visitors are making contact with the objects, collections and stories that museum presents. One can also argue that the transformation in question is basically a turnover of the very same concept of museums as disciplinary tools that impose new norms and values (transparency, diversity, inclusion) on the populace.¹⁰ Museums, therefore, are standing at the very point where they are often compelled to define their position in ongoing political, social and economic debates.

Deirdre Stam (1993) derives following museum functions that could be impacted by the *new museology* discourse: staffing, organizational structures, educational practices, exhibition theory, display techniques, classification structures, labelling, media use, management/business practices (p.62). In this thesis, I will focus on the organizational structures, as it’s the fundamental part of museum taxonomies, which organize and steer all other functions. Stam also mentions the American Association of Museums and Metropolitan Museum of Art report from 1942 that has already recognized the necessity of adjustments in departmental structure of museums (Stam, 1993, p. 62). However, this necessity was further manifested in the works of the new museologists of the 1990s (ibid.) as well as in more recent studies (e.g. Gray & McCall, 2014; Cameron, 2015). The issue has been also problematized in the Swedish context, for example in the recent book by Charlotte Hyltén-Cavallius and Fredrik Svanberg *Beloved Museum: Swedish museum of cultural history as culture producers and community builders* (2016). In their investigation the authors dwell on problems of diversity and inclusion, as well as a lack of representation in museum collections and exhibitions.

Swedish refractions

In Sweden, the development of museum practices to a large extent has followed a Western paradigm. Dan Karlholm (2015) in his genealogy of Swedish art museums places the shift from “object-oriented museum” to “activity-oriented center” in the “long 1960s” and connects it to the institutional critique (p. 25). Kerstin Arcadius in her book *Museum in Swedish: County Museums and Cultural History* (1997) provides among things other an

¹⁰ See the recent Swedish “museidebatt” (SvD, 2017) where the contemporary museum practices are claimed by some participants as substitution of ‘authentic history’ by norm-criticism which became, according to the author of the first debate argument, Ola Wong, “a new norm”.

account of the development of the museum profession in the country from the mid-nineteenth century to 1939, whereas Mattias Bäckström (2016) dwells on Nordic exhibition production and design practices. The most recent developments on inclusion and representation are highlighted in the aforementioned publication by Svanberg and Hyltén-Cavallius (2016) as well as in Swedish museum projects (for example, the National Museums of World Culture in Gothenburg, the travelling exhibition “100% Fight – the History of Sweden” or the Museum of Movements itself). The work towards museum as a socially relevant institution is emphasized politically: thus, the Cultural Policy Amendment from the Swedish Ministry of Culture (2016) states that Swedish cultural institutions should reflect the past in a more inclusive way than it was done previously (cited in Gradén, 2017, p. 30).

The Museum of Movements project, therefore, can be positioned within a broader discourse of museological development both on a national and an international level. This paradigm, which Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) calls a ‘performing museology’, questions the traditional museum structures, not only within the collection or exhibition halls, but within “the very infrastructure of the institution” (p. 376).

Despite the multiple positive developments towards *museum as a reflective and inclusive social actor*, on which I will continue to dwell in the Chapter 3, these ‘very infrastructures’ are sometimes exhibiting hidden controversies of the museum ‘backstage’. Before I continue my investigation of the Museum of Movements development, I want to dwell on one example which illustrates the complexity of the current state of art in the field of “re-examination” of the museum’s role within society (Vergo, 1989).

“Diversify or die”

During Spring 2018, the touring exhibition “100% Fight – The History of Sweden” was displayed at the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm. It is also referred to as one of the inspirational examples in the Museum of Movements feasibility study report (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a, p. 43). The exhibition, which tells the history of Sweden’s many rights-fighters, touches upon a broad range of questions, from the early 20th century suffrage to the right for one’s own body and integrity, from the right for asylum to the LGBTQ movement. With the means of museum narrative, it discusses the right to live, dwell, work and love on equal terms, regardless of functional capabilities, sexual orientation, beliefs, gender, class or origin. The exhibition project is aimed for the broad audience and evokes a controversial range of reactions: “Haters gonna love to hate this”, says a review in the Svenska Dagbladet newspaper (Bäckstedt, 2018).

What struck me during my visit to the museum in April 2018 was the audioscape of the exhibition. If in the adjacent Viking History hall public moved solemnly and slow and only hushed voices were heard, in the “100% Fight” area both individual visitors and guided tour participants were talking out loud, discussing issues that they found interesting, amazing or uncomfortable, and every guided tour (I met two in less than half an hour) ended with a conversation about democracy, human rights and the contemporary heterogeneity of Swedish society.

One figure was moving through this world of display cases, posters and lively discussions without a word; a woman with dark skin in a cleaning company’s uniform. Before herself she was pushing a trolley full of brooms, mops and garbage sacks. Not a visitor, not a guide, she was moving smoothly among the stories of race, class and gender discrimination, as if she was invisible, a ghost or something. I was fascinated with her movements and recollected myself only when she was leaving the exhibition hall; just in time to take a picture (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. The interior of the exhibition “100% Fight – The History of Sweden” at the Swedish History Museum, Stockholm. April 2018. Photo by author.

This example illustrates the structural failure within our rethinking of inclusion/exclusion issues in the modern museum’s organizational structures. Is it possible to overcome this failure, or rather to walk around it in a productive way? Where exactly does the museum agency and responsibility starts? Sara Ahmed (2012) calls different kinds of race equality policies in the institutions for *performance culture* (p. 84) implying that a good institutional performance supposes “the right kind of appearance” (p. 85). In the case where current Swedish cultural policies are intersected with the labor market policies, encounters such as depicted above can occur and produce visible tensions, where *exhibiting diversity* does not necessary mean *doing diversity* (even in Ahmed’s institutionalized sense).¹¹

¹¹ For a more detailed account on Swedish cultural heritage and diversity politics see the chapter “The Bog and the Beast” in Peggy Levitt’s book *Artifacts and Allegiances: How Museums Put the Nation and the World on Display* (2015, pp. 14-49).

The nascent Museum of Movements could provide a further experimental field for working towards diversity and inclusion, as it is an institution that started from scratch and therefore (supposedly) does not inherit structural failures of the traditional museums. In the narrative of the project (Elg, 2017), the “open and transparent nature” of the future institution is emphasized many times in consequent papers and speeches. How was it solved in practice? Let us look closely at the chosen case.

Chapter 2. Moving from foreigners to participants: The National Museum for Democracy and Migration in Malmö

The story

The idea of establishing a state-funded museum of immigration in Malmö was brought up already in 2006, but “the proposal did not spark any public debate and an immigration museum never materialized” (Johansson, 2014, p. 124). The interesting thing about that case, however, was the wording chosen for this proposal.

The idea was suggested by Swedish Minister for Higher Education and Research Lars Leijonborg in an article entitled “Let’s create a Museum of Immigrants in Malmö” (*Skapa Invandrarnas museum i Malmö*, 2006). The phrasing survived this first suggestion and, in the beginning of 2015, reappeared in the same Southern Swedish newspaper *Sydsvenskan* along with a declaration that the first “museum of immigration” can be built in Malmö in 2017-2018 (Häggström, 2015). It was stated that the initiative behind the suggestion stemmed from the real estate company *Diligentia* that owned the land in the Västra Hamnen area of Malmö; and that the same idea simultaneously (and independently) was voiced by Malmö politicians. *Diligentia*, according to the article, was intending to build Malmö’s own Ellis Island Museum¹² which would serve as a kind of cultural hub for the newly constructed neighborhood.¹³

It is worth mentioning that the idea of promoting certain places through culture relates to the traditional role of museums as ‘civilizing devices’ set up to fulfil “the task of the cultural governance of the populace” (Bennett, 1995, p. 21). Stefan Berger (2015) points out that the nation states established in the 19th century were bound to inaugurate national museums in order to foster and strengthen an emerging national identity, unlike the older nations whose identity was solidly rooted in a common past. The idea of a museum as a physical space that will add a specific value to the future district has, therefore, a lot to do

¹² The National Museum of Immigration is located in the Main Building of the former immigration station complex on Ellis Island in New York which served as a gateway to the 12 million immigrants who entered America between 1892-1954. The island was made part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1965 and has hosted a museum of immigration since 1990.

¹³ The idea, however, can be traced as far as to June 2014, when one of the leading Swedish business newspapers published an editorial entitled “Build an Ellis Island in Malmö” (Bygg ett Ellis Island i Malmö, Nilsson, 2014). The author, PM Nilsson, characterized in the political circles as “rather right-wing, but... not the xenophobic right-wing, [the] liberal right-wing” (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04), envisioned Sweden as a multicultural state, “where people from other countries can come and stay for longer or shorter time, or even for the whole life; a sort of New York but in the fir forest” (Nilsson, 2014). The positive image of Sweden therefore was one of the main points in the focus. As the Malmö politicians got the “Ellis Island” narrative from this 2014 article (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04) it is possible to suggest that the real estate company did the same.

with creating a specific identity of this neighborhood, which is already listed as one of the city's top 10 tourist attractions.¹⁴ The image of Malmö as a multicultural city and a home of 174 nationalities makes the “museum of immigration” a natural choice that can contribute to existing policy.

The focus on “immigration”, however, was problematized by ethnographer and museum professional Dragan Nikolić in the same *Sydsvenskan* newspaper where he has written an article “Do not raise political points in my name” (*Samla inte politiska poäng i mitt namn*, 2015). Nikolić pointed out a controversy between the City Council's policy aimed at celebrating diversity and multiculturalism on one side, and, on the other, extreme homogeneity among Malmö officials, most of whom do not have “other” background than Swedish. In response to this article (Thomé & Johansson, 2015; Karlsson, 2015), the notion of ‘immigration’ has transformed into ‘migration’ and ‘democracy’, which has also appeared as an important part of the future museum's focus. According to Malmö politician Nils Karlsson, two components of the future museum were the result of collaboration between two political parties: the Swedish Green party (Miljöpartiet) and Karlsson himself were promoting the “Ellis Island” narrative, whereas Social Democrats party argued for the labor movement and the prominent history of the fight for the worker's rights in Malmö during the 20th century (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04).

In September 2015, the Swedish government declared support for the project and allocated a budget for a feasibility study for such a museum. It was still entitled as “Museum of Immigrants” in media (*Regeringen backar upp invandrarmuseum*; Pedersen, 2015); however, this discourse changed in February 2016, when the feasibility study officially started (Gillberg, 2016). The publicity of the project was continued as a ‘migration museum’, echoing another ‘migration issue’ that was taking place in Sweden at that time – a ‘refugee crisis’ that hit Europe in the late 2015.

According to the Swedish Migration Board, a record number of asylum cases were processed in 2016, as the country received more applications in 2015 than ever before (Migrationsverket, 2017).¹⁵ ‘Refugee crisis’ engendered strong reactions in media and society, ranging from the restrictive legislative measures (such as border control on the Öresund bridge between Denmark and Sweden, introduced in November 2015; Swedish

¹⁴ Being promoted as a “sustainable” and “globally unique area” with “a magnificent urban silhouette” (Malmotown.se, 2018), the Västra Hamnen area harbors the Turning Torso, a building that serves as a landmark for the city.

¹⁵ Ca 163 000 refugees were seeking asylum in Sweden in 2015, and 111 979 cases were resolved in 2016; whereas a number of asylum requests in 2016 was 28 939 – lowest since 2009.

Government, 2015) to passionate engagement of volunteers and NGOs helping newly arrived refugees (Nikolić, 2017). The peak of the so-called crisis came in September-October 2015, the time when the idea of feasibility study was conceived.

The method

Being in the middle of open public discussion, the Museum of Movements project has chosen public dialogue as a method. More than 15 meetings were held in 2016 and early 2017, with different actors and organizations, including NGOs, representatives from cultural institutions, national minorities, researchers and Malmö citizens. Most of the meetings were conducted in the form of qualitative studies, for example, workshops where participants were divided in several groups where each was supposed to discuss and present answers for the study's questions (a variation of *world café* participative method, where the topic is discussed at several tables, and then individuals start switching tables while getting introduced to the previous discussion at their new table by a "table host" or moderator). Being a method similar to those used in ethnography (cf. for example focus groups), it provided the project team with a wide range of insights which they have generously published as an appendix to the final report (*Vad vi hörde, vad vi såg*, Kulturförvaltningen, 2017c). I participated in two dialogue meetings organized after this principle, in October 2016 and in March 2018. Even if participants both times were different, the whole atmosphere of the meeting seemed to have been developing alongside the course of the feasibility study and, later, the museum project. For example, in 2016 there were still moderators/table hosts who helped to organize conversation at each table. In 2018, even though there were two moderators ready to help, all the groups of participants were more than able to organize themselves from my observations, and sometimes were even resisting any attempts to direct them (for example, one table with only three participants at this last meeting refused to merge with another table which was also undermanned because they were "enjoying their own discussion", Fieldnotes 2018-03-13). One of the first observations from the dialogue meeting in March 2018 was how many people seemed to know each other, they've greeted one another with hugs and words like "It's so good to see you again!" (Fieldnotes 2018-03-13).

The continuous work on the feasibility study, both on the national level and in Malmö, led to the creation of a sense of *community* around the museum project, which has its impact on different groups and actors in Malmö city. After publishing the report in May 2017, the work on the project was paused until the beginning of 2018 for different reasons, and all this time people who were involved in feasibility study kept asking about the project's

progress. The first dialogue meeting in March 2018, after the start of the new phase in the museum-building, brought together around 90 participants from among more than 100 persons who registered for the meeting.

I will call this group of people “**interlocutors**”, as their ambition, voiced by many participants, was “to be heard” and “to make sure that their voices will be heard” (Fieldnotes 2018-03-13; 2016-10-27); many of them were affected by the possibility of contributing to the future museum.

Another group that is partly overlapping with the previous one is “**referees**”. Consultants from the museal world and academia, some of whom were assigned to the project by the Swedish government (for example, representatives from Swedish History Museum, National Museums of World Culture and Swedish Exhibition Agency), and others who were joining as a result of extensive networking of the project team. The *Researchers essays* published as the part of final report (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017b) was a contribution from referees. Another specific division of the referees group are political journalists or opinion makers who evaluated the process in their public expressions.

A group which I would describe as “**patrons**” also took part in the feasibility study. This group is very diverse and at some points correlates with the others. For example, Malmö politicians can be perceived both as interlocutors aiming to bring to the project their views and agendas, and patrons who will benefit from the future museum. Another example is Malmö teenagers who were interviewing their family members during the summer internships at the Cultural Department in 2016, and who can be seen as the future museum visitors.

The project “**team**” was also somewhat heterogeneous entity of people who were working (or are still working) with the issue, and who sometimes emerge from or dissolve within other groups. For example, a lot of study trips that provided the project with comparative material were made by the team member from the Swedish Exhibition Agency, the entity which was later closed down according to the new Swedish cultural policy (SOU, 2015:89).

It is important to remember that these groups are very flexible and that their members can move from one group to another or belong to multiple groups at the same time. For example, there is no such group as “**academics**” because researchers from different institutions and fields of study could be found in any of the four groups I am describing, and some “**referees**”, for example, were moved to the “**team**” and the other way round, during the project. My objective in deriving these different categories is to describe the network and

community which was formed around the museum and divide different interests within this community. There are of course other possible categorizations. For example, as I mentioned before, Malmö City politician Nils Karlsson named two kinds of political agenda behind the initial idea that was formed in the City Council of Malmö: one came from the representatives of the Social Democrats party (labour movements and democracy) and another one from the Green party (migration and multiculturalism). These agendas have foreordained two focuses of the feasibility study (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04).

All these groups represent only one segment of project stakeholders and are described here together as their representatives were more or less involved in the community formed during the process of (museum-)making. The City of Malmö, other Swedish museums and the national Swedish ICOM committee, international NGOs, and local civil society movements who weren't involved at the stage of feasibility study can nevertheless also be conceived of as stakeholders for the project. I have distinguished these separate groups as they were *actively participating* in the course of the feasibility study and will probably contribute to further work on the museum project. The sense of community-building was further emphasized by the project manager: "The first step towards inclusion must be for people to have a sense of belonging and to feel ownership" (Elg, 2017).

The great advantage of the dialogic method for the feasibility study was its transparency – the team travelled from North to South to meet with various groups and individuals (around 120 organizations and more than 600 people were involved in total, for the full account see the feasibility study report, Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a-c), and the materials of almost every meeting were disseminated among its participants.

As museum historian Steven Conn puts it, "museums have become among the last places where the public can come and behave as a public" (2010, p. 231), a kind of "place of safety where varieties of people can gather to exchange ideas and to interact with each other" (Elaine Heumann Gurian, cited in Conn, 2010, p. 231). In that sense, the work conducted by Malmö City's Cultural Department was a full-scale *cultural analytical project* which aimed to investigate the possibilities and conditions for creating this new institution that might become a public space for discussions around democracy and migration.

What's next?

Apparently, the Museum of Movements project did not have the inherited structures of traditional museum organizations. However, institutions tend to resemble similar ones in their own field (Jönsson, Persson & Sahlin, 2011), as well as to confer identity or sameness

(Douglas, 1987). Archives, libraries and museums are often conflating some of their basic functions, especially if a successful strategy was developed already in an akin institution; the same is true for the management and public administration. What happened with the feasibility study after the report had been presented to the public in May 2017?

The Swedish State budget for 2018 was approved on September 20th, 2017,¹⁶ and the Malmö City received a decision to continue to develop plans for the museum. As the Cultural Department of the City of Malmö, which was responsible for the pilot study, is a municipal organization, it is dependent both on internal and external political and power relations in the municipality. Thus, the decision-making process is being detached from the actual work and all the suggestions have to travel back and forth through the complex hierarchical chains. This somewhat rigid structure eventually collided with the flexible networks of collaborations between Cultural Department and independent cultural actors.¹⁷ As a participant in one of such collaborations has put it: “I’m an anti-institutional form and now I’m working with an institution” (Informant II, personal communication, October 17, 2017). During the organizational phase of the *Safe Havens* conference which took place in Malmö in December 2017, I have observed the structural failure manifested in detachment, both physical (some participants of the team had their work placements elsewhere and could not attend all the meetings) and administrative (a result of reorganization within Malmö City¹⁸). Though this structural failure did not directly inhibit the conference and further work of the unit, it created some tension in the process (Fieldnotes Safe Havens, September-December 2017). Therefore, it is not only *museal* traditional structures that can endanger the ambition of the Museum of Movements to become a fluid and *active* organization; the future museum will also have to find a way to integrate into administrative and financial schemes of Swedish public management institutions.

However, despite all the bureaucratic delays, by spring 2018 the Museum of Movements project was started again. Following the suggestion from the feasibility study, the decision was made to introduce an experimental “startup” museum which will be located in the same building as the Malmö City Archives (Gillberg, 2018). This venue is scheduled to

¹⁶ The Malmö City’s budget was approved only on December 20th and does not mention the museum as a specific direction of work for the following year (Malmö Stad, 2017).

¹⁷ Such as *Women making herstory* (documentation and history of the immigrant women in Malmö, a collaboration project of Feminist Dialogue network, Malmö Museums and ABF association), *Migration Memory Encounters* series of events (including art exhibitions, meetings with authors and theatre performances) and *Safe Havens/ICORN* (International cities of refuge) network.

¹⁸ The head of the Unit for International Relations and Projects’ supervision entity, Cultural Strategy section, has changed in October 2017, and the Cultural Director for the Cultural Department had resigned in January 2018, which meant a high level of uncertainty on all the decision-making levels.

open to the public in the latter half of 2018 and it will consist of smaller exhibition projects. The important part of this future work will be trying out different methods for collaboration and inclusion; as well as clarifying organizational relations between the government and the municipality and other possible agents (Elg, 2017).

The idea behind this “startup” is to establish a collaborative practice as a main way for the future museum’s functioning, “to secure a critical and open discussion to be ongoing also in the daily practice of the future museum” (Elg, 2017). Therefore, taking Nina Simon’s *Participatory Museum* (2010) as a point of departure, the Museum of Movements project strives to rethink it in the framework of turning “interlocutors”, “referees”, “patrons” and the “team” into the vibrant and active community of stakeholders which will perform participatory practices and, at the same time, continuously evaluate the museum’s relevance.

This strategy is reminiscent of the way activist movements sustain themselves. For the next chapter, I will address different practices of the activist cultures and link them together with the museum setting.

Chapter 3. Currents and intersections: Activism and antiquarian culture

This chapter builds on fieldnotes, observations and interviews from a 10-weeks of fieldwork at the Rescue Archive project. I use it as a tool to deconstruct the institutional structures and analyze the position of activism within the nascent museum.

The archival project itself was ambiguous at that stage of development. It was voiced in several presentations and documents that the Rescue Archive would collect materials from NGO and non-profit organizations, nationally and internationally;¹⁹ however in the Malmö City's political representation it took the form of the archive for testimonies and documentation of refugees.²⁰ It differed therefore from the museum project with its rather apparent political agenda and initial impulse.

Between October and November 2017, I conducted several interviews (7 personal and one via Skype) with local and international activists, approximately half of which were combining their activism with some form of creativity and artistic expression. My informants were:

- Informant I - interviewed October 11, at Malmö University. Young woman with a non-Swedish background who is involved in activities of helping other newcomers to find a job in Sweden.
- Informant II - interviewed October 17, at their office. Journalist and human rights activist, who was forced to leave their home country and currently resides in Sweden.
- Informant III - interviewed October 27, at Malmö University. Comic strip artist and anti-racist activist with a non-Swedish background.
- Informant IV - interviewed November 1, at their office. Project manager in an NGO that helps people with non-Swedish background and education find a job in Sweden.
- Informant V - interviewed November 1, at Lund University. Women rights activist and one of the organizers of several protests rallies and events.
- Informant VI - interviewed November 3, via Skype. Performance artist persecuted by the State due to the implications for political activism in their art.
- Informant VII - interviewed November 6, Lund University. University student and women rights activist, collaborates with informant V.
- Informant VIII - interviewed November 8, at their office. Writer who was forced to leave their home country due to implications for political activism, currently resides in Sweden.

¹⁹ "Civila organisationer – NGO:s – är ofta hårt utsatta av repressiva regimer och det kan finnas behov av ett räddningsarkiv eller ett 'fristadsarkiv' för att bevara internationella civila organisationers historia och påverka på internationella sammanhang" (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a, p. 60).

²⁰ "Ett arkiv för att bevara vittnesmål och material som berättar om människors flykt från krig" (Malmö Stad, 2017, p. 17); or as one of the Malmö politicians said: "in the Rescue Archives we have all the lists of people who are... who come here for the last two hundred years" (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04).

This material, alongside with fieldnotes from participatory observations of different events (including Safe Havens conference in December 2017, which focuses on a connection between arts, culture and human rights), provided me with a framework when approaching the “museum as activist” concept from the other side. Is there any structure behind the unstructured activist movements? Which mechanics work in that case? Hank Jonston, for example, in his study of protest cultures claims that “we live in a social movements society where this culture is being institutionalized” (2009, p. 10). Another question will be if activism always takes the political form.

First of all, however, I have to address another connection, between activism and art, which correlates to the poetics of museum as medium. “[A]ll museums are art museums in the sense that museums, by their very nature, aestheticize what they show, even when the objects they display are not intended to be viewed as art” in the words of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006, p. 375). Being a rather problematic argument *per se* (do Holocaust museums aestheticize what they show?), it provides insight into the mechanics behind what museums are actually doing with their displays.

Artists, activists and politics

Art and media theorist Philipp Kleinmichel (2015), by using Baudrillard’s notion of *simulacrum* argues that political activism as art is actually the artistic simulation of political activism. In his model, it is the access to the symbolic economy of art that defines artists-activists in the world where “political activism seems to have lost its power” (p. 20). The important function that Kleinmichel outlines as the result of the simulation is a “musealization” of political activism. The musealization of any given object allows us to approach it from a distance, to reflect on its appearance and meaning, without being immediately affected. Hence, the musealization of political activism allows us to understand its methods, strategies, and historical contexts (Kleinmichel, 2015, p. 16) – but at the same time disengages activism from its natural environment.

In this paradigm, the artistic form of political activism brings up the notion of museum as a cultural practice which allows for the preservation of phenomena and reflection over them (cf. Lord, 2006). Indeed, the idea that the very form of museum as an institution suits to “illuminating and discussing issues of democracy, migration and human rights” (Kulturförvaltningen, 2017a, p. 75) was reappearing quite often in the course of feasibility study alongside with such sentiments as “people do need a place to safeguard and legitimize their history” (Fieldnotes Rescue Archive, September-November 2017).

Researchers in arts and activism point out the difference between *political art* and *activist art* (e.g. Desai, 2017). Political art is a form of self-expression, where politics becomes a subject matter for the artist. Activist art, on the other hand, tends to be “socially involved”, and aims to make a difference; it can amplify voices of local communities and direct them to politicians and decision makers. It is, like “regular” activism, a politics of doing.

There is a difference in how people whose contribution in activist movements is more or less artistic, or related to creative word, are perceiving their agency. One of my informants said: “Above all, I am fighting for myself, because I am the first one who suffers from the racism” (Informant III).²¹ Others were declaring their artistic occupation as a foundation for identities: “My activism is kind of accidental: I perceive myself as a writer” (Informant VIII). The connection, however, is apparent: “All of the writing, journalism, and everything is too a sort of activism” said another informant, and added: “I wanted to do something, to say something, to change something, it means that everything was not connected to ‘I would like to write a beautiful text’, I would like to make an attack on their mind, and that’s an important thing!” (Informant II).

Other informants emphasized the importance of the “politics of doing” as well: “‘Activist’ means that you want to achieve a result and I am skeptical about any results in our country” (Informant VI).²²

A big part in one’s self-identification with activism from the artists’ side is the pressure, for example from the State authorities. As soon as the State begins to ban or punish for artistic expression, artist’s identity can switch from the “political artist” to the “activist artist”. For example, one of the artists mentioned that before he was arrested for his performances, he never considered his work to be of the “activist” kind; after that the performances became more politically articulated as a form of exercising the freedom of speech, “a sort of civic gymnastics” (Informant VI).²³

Museums, as it was discussed in Chapter 1, are political institutions, and statements made by the means of exhibitions, public programs or collecting policies of the museums are political as well. In a certain sense, museums have always been activists, striving to make an impact and “do something”. But this direction of the museum work is neither articulated in

²¹ “*Framför allt kämpar jag för mig själv, egentligen, för att den rasismen drabbar först mig*”.

²² “‘Активист’ значит, что ты хочешь чего-то добиться, какого-то результата. Я довольно скептически оцениваю возможность добиться результата в России”.

²³ “Это такая... гражданская гимнастика”.

the actual museum definition nor often declared as one of the most important effects in museum practices (cf. Gray, 2015).

Activist artists whose identity as activists emerges from their art, or even most often from the society's reaction to their art, are therefore contributing not only to 'muzealization' of political activism, according to Kleinmichel (2015), but can also serve as an illustration of somewhat reluctant or tacit activism.

Influences and impacts

Another link that can get us closer to bridging a museum (or other cultural institutions) and activism practices is an endeavour to make an impact.

Almost all the informants of my study agreed that a main achievement in their activist pursuits is the ability to influence one's life and beliefs, be this "one" a practicing Catholic who supports anti-abortion law, homophobic relatives, or indifferent citizens who do not care about political protests:

- "It was the first time in that kind of conversation I was educated enough. Because of my activism. To actually persuade someone, to give that topic a second thought" (Informant V).
- "If you can go through life and say that you've changed the mind of one person for the better of the society, I think you've done your job as an activist" (Informant IV).
- "A victory (for me) is changing someone's opinion" (Informant VIII).
- "Important that others use it as a role model" (Informant VIII).

In this context, one of the most efficient tools to change someone's mind (to 'attack their mind', as interviewee II has stated) is the artistic expression which almost always leaves a tangible trace in a form that is accessible to public: "Artists always leave something behind. Things are passed on to somebody else" (Informant VIII).

This combination – tangible artistic objects that are able to influence the worldview of the audience – is something very familiar to the museal framework. Indeed, museums are placed on the rim between contemporary and heritage (Schubert, 2000), and are shaping their visitors' mindset, intentionally or not. The epitome of this paradigm might be the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York, which in 1930s "was not satisfied with simply documenting but took a proactive stance, instigating and participating in, if not actually directing, critical debate in all the areas it covered" (ibid., p. 45). These similarities do not overcome the differences between (most often) vast and complicated cultural institutions and individuals or groups of individuals involved in political protests, but underline the shared intention of both cultural practices: to make an impact. It is important to notice that artistic activism, though striving for a change as any other form of activism, focuses a lot on

individual artistic expression. An indicative feature of this form is the ability to transform this expression into reflexive and socially meaningful practice, almost always connected to human rights and social justice. The offence against freedom of expression or other human rights often serves as a catalyst to perform such a practice as some of the informants were indicating:

- “I do believe in rights for everyone and in respect to other's integrity” (Informant IV).
- “It’s putting your knowledge to good use to help others” (Informant I).
- “Being aware of your privilege pushes you to act” (Informant VIII).
- “Why should other women not have the same opportunities as myself?” (Informant VII).²⁴

What is interesting and important here is a reflexive stance taken by informants VII and VIII – first of all, they are relating to their own position and through that finding a motivation to act.

If we look closer at the recent changes in the museum world, we can see a perpetual reassessment of the museum’s position in contemporary society and of the ‘norms’ that engendered traditional museum narratives. Art historian Anabel Roque Rodriguez (2017) gathered in her blog some examples from museums and cultural organizations that discuss museums neutrality issues. The #MuseumsAreNotNeutral campaign in social media, started by Mike Murawski from the Portland Art Museum together with artist LaTanya Autry, in August 2017 (Murawski, 2017), has already gathered 490 mentions on twitter and Instagram which means a social media reach of 228 000 views and 26 000 interactions.²⁵ The attempts to reflect on the origins and historical development of museums as, among other, colonial institutions, are bringing up the notions of social justice and equality in rights, which are also vital for activist movements.

I argue therefore, that a **mindful, reflexive approach** to their own collections and institutional history “pushes museums to act”, as it happens, for example, with some museums and collections of ethnography.²⁶

Coming together

Another aspect in being artist and activist at the same time is the ability to mobilize others: “you need to find a kind of creative word bringing people and involving people together” (Informant II). Ammar Abdulhamid, Syrian-born human rights activist, notes that “[h]aving

²⁴ “Varför ska andra kvinnor inte ha samma möjligheter som jag har här?”

²⁵ Information gathered via open source SM statistics resource brand24.com on the 15th of April 2018.

²⁶ For example, Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam or the National Museums of World Culture, Sweden in their encounter with “multicultural challenges”; for a detailed account on this see Iervolino (2013).

access to information does not automatically translate into a willingness to act... Much work still needs to be done to get people from being passive observers of events to willing participants in shaping them” (cited in Searcher, 2012). This premise can be compared with Deidre Stam’s ‘information base’ of the museum work (1993) and the recent efforts to bring the ideals of the new or critical museology into museum practice through employing narratives and storytelling (Leshchenko, 2017).

The informants often described a kind of informal network: “most of us were like... they knew someone who knew someone... and told them: hey, come here, this is something you’re gonna like” (Informant VII).²⁷ It was also mentioned that it could be difficult to interact with people from different social backgrounds and bring them together: “sometimes we are the victims of diversity too. Because we can have different kinds of ideas” (Informant II). Therefore, some movements are based on previously formed networks and relations (cf. Diani & McAdam, 2003, p. 7), and a strong impact is needed to bring new people to the group. On the other hand, some concerns were voiced out of being too closed/trying to focus on only one group: “you pick one space for it, sometimes it just the target group that becomes involved in that space” (Informant IV).

Hence, activist movements, even not being institutionalized, are looking for the form of **community** they can employ as the basic network, where the core is almost always personal relations within a smaller group. During my fieldwork, I have attended two events that were supposed to start a new activist network in a certain area. However, “my” group was dissolved after the second meeting, due to being unable to find a coordination between complete strangers.²⁸ As another group of this movement which had three or four good acquaintances as its core has survived this first stage of *forming*,²⁹ I assume that the informal connections within the group before the activity started were vital in this case.

Bringing together the community is one of the museums’ considerations as well, especially in the context of the new museology. However, the difference here lies in the angle of efforts. Museums are often striving after the community of visitors or contributors, directing their efforts outside the institution. There are not very many examples of

²⁷ “de flesta var ju... de kände nån som kände nån... hade berättat för de: nämen, kom hit, det här är någonting du kommer att tycka om”.

²⁸ For example: people weren’t friends with each other on Facebook; the list of emails after the first meeting was written by hand and some of the contacts were lost due to the poor handwriting; it was extremely difficult to coordinate schedules without mutual consideration; etc.

²⁹ First of Tuckman’s stages of group development (the forming–storming–norming–performing model, Tuckman, 1965).

community-building directed inside, towards museum staff, especially in Sweden.³⁰ In the best of existing practices, the accent on multicultural representation within museums is driven in the form of projects, not implemented in long-lasting policies (Ardalan, 2015); or even as the kind of “outsourced diversity work” as it has happened with the Multicultural Center in Stockholm’s suburbs that took upon itself some of the functions in the field (Levitt, 2012, p. 41).

Clive Gray (2015) argues that the management function of museums is underrepresented in the field of Museum Studies (at least in the UK) and this might lead to some friction between managerial and collection-based museum professionals. As the most recent example with the protests outside the Brooklyn Museum³¹ shows, friction between museums and (the outside) communities can also be a consequence of the current museum policy.

To find a clue for how to bridge these gaps, I will address again the activism study framework. In forming the relationship, especially within a group that just came together, a big part is played by the concepts of support and solidarity:

- “The meetings that we did were actually very helpful because it was also very... it was helping with backing up the members of the team, the support, which not only was practical but also very much sentimental” (Informant I).
- “Meet-ups are open for everyone, and we discussed that it was more like a support group, I think, because everyone who came was a bit upset and angry and just wanted to discuss the situation with women's rights” (Informant V).

One of the things that was often characterized as fruitful and precious was the **process** of taking part in (planning) activities: “the whole idea was... It was, like, formed in action” (Informant IV) or “it will also give you very much in the entire process” (Informant I). In fact, one of the important memories that informants named from their activist experiences has recurred as the process of getting together and getting to know each other:

- “I think it's more of the connections and the network that we've build, I think this is everything. I mean it's more intangible because it's knowledge and it's the actual network and the trust of the women in the group that we have now. I mean, those are important things, because all the tangible things they come and go, and we can build that up” (Informant V).

The emotional part of taking action together is also being remembered as something precious:

- “sentimental support is a big part of this ... process” (Informant I).

³⁰ For the account on African American and American Indian activism and museum practices in US see Kylie Message’s *Museums and Social Activism: Engaged Protest* (2014).

³¹ In April 2018, several anti-gentrification activist groups in Brooklyn demanded establishing a “Decolonization Commission” after the museum’s decision to appoint a white scholar as a curator for the African art collection. The public debate around the events included allegations such as “the Brooklyn Museum is out of touch with the communities at its own doorstep” (Vartanian, 2018).

- “It was the first time in my life that we had an open demonstration (...) And I think we did it, and then it was very exciting for me, it was one of the best time of my life because we... we just hugged each other then. After that period, of course after that we've separated, and some of us living different life and does different work now... maybe some of us wouldn't even talk with each other. But that period of time - it was... beautiful” (Informant II).

French sociologist Émile Durkheim (2008 [1912]) has derived two phases of the social cycle in aboriginal society which he applied later for modern social systems: the one of *integrity* and the one of *diffusion*. The latter can be characterized by lower emotional activity of the group and higher involvement into the everyday routines, whereas the former is the period of religious exaltation, emotional expression and ritual practices. According to Durkheim, the sentimental-based rituals strengthen coherence in social groups. One of the ways to achieve an emotional engagement within the group is to raise the level of empathy; as one of the study's informants said, her inspirational motto was: “Get out of your shell and look around, there are other people with the same problems, and... get support by being a group with other people” (Informant I).

In these terms, the importance of shared emotions is crucial for activist groups to achieve a momentum which won't let the group dissolve at the forming phase. It can also bring new members to the established group due to empathy and compassion; one of the informants stated: “We don't wanna recruit. We just wanna spread the word about what is happening” (Informant V). In this case, the information that invokes emotional response is the thing that consolidates actors in a group: “Many of my friends on Facebook have never been activists. You can say that they were supporting it [protest movement] in form of pictures, a small thing one can think, but, I don't know, it was something great that them who were never interested in politics and so on, they did care and participated with these small inputs, so... it grew so big in the end” (Informant VII).³²

Empathy and affect

As was discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the new approaches to the information base of museum was one of the focuses for the new museology (Stam, 1993). One of the recent works of Laurajane Smith deals with the relationship between emotions/affect and the Authorized Heritage Discourse (or AHD; Smith & Campbell, 2016). As there is supposed to exist “a certain mentality in the management of heritage and museums... [which] is overly concerned with expert judgements on the significance of the past, and is based on technical

³² “Många av mina vänner på FB som hade aldrig varit aktivister. Man kunde se att det fanns stöd från de i form av bilder, man kan tänka... det är en liten sak, men, jag vet inte, det var något störst att de som inte väldigt intresserad av politik och sånt de brydde sig också med sin lilla insatts så.. att det hela blev så stort.”

and aesthetic forms of expert knowledge” (p. 448), Smith and Campbell argue that the agents of the AHD - heritage officials - often perceive emotional engagement as something negative or even tainting professional objectivity. On the other hand, the “stress of not being emotional, on maintaining professional objectivity, may be [...] itself an emotional state” (ibid.).

The Center for the Future of Museums, in the annual “Trendswatch” report (AAM, 2017), proclaimed “empathy” as one of the trends of 2017. The trend, however, has emerged over several years. For example, in a form of the Museum of Broken Relationships in Zagreb, Croatia (Vištica, 2010) or as Orhan Pamuk’s “Museum of Innocence” (opened in 2012 in Istanbul). Both projects deal with emotion and memory, and a certain nostalgic sentiment.

As Israeli philosopher Avishai Margalit (2011) puts it, the vulnerability of nostalgic positioning lies in the moral sentiment and idealisation of the object of nostalgia. The nostalgic collective memory can turn into the ‘vicarious memory’ that engenders conflicts as it contradicts the memory of other groups. US historian Steven Conn cites David Lowenthal in his critique towards “heritage industry” and claims that “heritage recasts the past as something always warm and fuzzy, something to be celebrated, and most of all something never to be questioned or challenged by anyone outside the group whose heritage we are celebrating” (Conn, 2010, p. 39).

Whereas an emotional position towards the past often seems (and is criticized) as reactionary, populist and conservative (Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 446), recent ethnographic research displays that nostalgia can also be “a negotiation between past and present, and a form of activism” that employs memories of the past in the present to conceive a better future (ibid.). The complicated relations between memory, remembering, emotion, and imagination lie at the core of people’s understanding of their heritage (Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 454) and can help facilitate the mission of a cultural institution. Therefore, by overcoming a negative stance towards emotions and nostalgia, heritage management actors can influence and regulate affective engagement of the public.³³

This tension in the position between memory and heritage, and the construction of the *sense of belonging* by the means of heritage institutions inspired me to ask informants of their precious memories that they would like to preserve. As cited above, one part of such

³³ Of course, as any power distribution mechanisms, these means can be versatile. As I argue elsewhere, for example, in the flux of post-Soviet nostalgia in the Russian Federation, the heritage is being extensively used as a mobilizing social force to promote the idea of the great Russian national culture and history, and perpetual insurgence of the foreign agents that aim to threaten it (Zabalueva, 2017).

memories was the emotionally-charged actions taken together, a sort of Durkheimian *integrity* phase. Another part included the importance of sharing experiences: “getting to tell my story I think, was... being heard in Swedish context. That was very nice” (Informant I). One group made a short booklet and exhibition based on the true stories, as the person behind the initiative stated: “An idea of... that these stories shouldn't be lost. I'm a big believer in storytelling, stories have to be shared, because it's also a way of waking people up, and in every story there's a lot of wisdom and learning, so if you don't share your story, other people are also being deprived of this learning” (Informant IV).

Time as a resource

Among all aspects, it was, however, a demand for collaboration and action that prevailed among the study's informants; the sense of community was more important to them than any documentation or heritage. Nevertheless, another reason that can lead to the lack of interest for documenting their own activities is the lack of time. It should be mentioned that some of the potential informants I approached declined requests for an interview. The lack of time and resources was usually named as a main reason, as well as unwillingness to discuss their work:³⁴

- “We are getting so many requests from researchers and students for interviews and surveys etc, but unfortunately, we don't have time to answer or participate in everything. We don't have enough resources and have a lot to do just now. That's why we are thankful for interest but unfortunately do not have time now”.³⁵
- “Thank you for your proposal, and I will decline it. The project team (it's five of us at the moment) are very busy and low-profiled people”.³⁶

The study participants were also mentioning time and its importance:

- “I know a lot of people who think... this, and this, and that are wrong, but they do not believe that going out to the street and protesting can change anything. And sure, nothing changes in a twinkle, it does not happen fast, it takes time and there should be a lot of us, we should fight because... But it's so difficult to make people to believe in change” (Informant VII).³⁷

³⁴ The ‘politics of doing’ here correlates with the implicit critique of the formalistic academic research that cannot be employed in practice. This point of view can be elaborated further into the realm of theory/practice gap that haunts museology; however, this is the theme for a separate study.

³⁵ “Vi får så mycket frågor från forskare och studenter om intervjuer och enkät undersökningar osv men vi hinner tyvärr inte svara eller delta i alla. Vi saknar resurser och ha en hel del att göra just nu. Därför vill vi tackar för visat intresse men vi hinner tyvärr inte just nu”; private communication, October 27, 2017.

³⁶ “Спасибо за предложение, и я его отклоню. Вся команда проекта <...> (пять человек на сегодня) - люди, у которых мало свободного времени, плюс к тому очень малопубличные”; private communication, October 17, 2017.

³⁷ “Jag känner många som tycker att... det här, och det här, och det här är fel, men de tror inte att om de går ut och protesterar så komma det ändra någonting. Och visst det sker inte nån förändring på en gång, det händer inte snabbt, det tar tid och vi behöver vara många, vi behöver kämpa för att... Men det är så svårt att göra att människor tror på förändring”.

As this informant points out, “it takes time” to achieve a desired result and this also defines activist activities as a time-consuming process. Indeed, there are a lot of considerations about this. Thus, one of the movements that was very active during spring 2017 was almost dissolved at the time of the interview: “right now we are not doing anything because we've all got involved back with our own lives” (Informant V). The particular difficulties are experienced when activism struggles to obtain the more structured way of work: “this is what takes such a long time and effort, it's actually the organising part, because we all have, I believe every activist in a grassroots movement, we are all full of energy and knowledge and perseverance; it's these small things that take a lot of time” (Informant V).

The activities might also be compared to living beings: “I don't know if this will lead to something new, but there's a willingness, and there are ideas on the table about doing something with this, not just leaving it... die” (as informant I says about their finished project) – which have their own life cycles but can be continued in another form if necessary.

These cycles are built upon an impact or momentum: “something really bad has to happen for people to get a move on” states informant V. She describes herself in the moment of such an impact:

- “The more info we received about it from the media and our friends and colleagues, the angrier we get. So we decided to do something about it. And actually we created separate events, we didn't know each other. And then another girl kind of connected us and she wrote to us ‘girls, I think you are creating the same event, so maybe you should recreate it together’. And she send it to us like at 12 at night, and we replied to each other straight away, and we've met the next day and we started to plan this whole big event. And after that we could never stop” (Informant V).

Time and network collide in this episode in the specific narrative: there is a need for a kind of facilitation and (emotional) support, for a common network or platform to raise awareness and tackle time and organizational issues.³⁸ It worth to mention though, that this need was never voiced by an informant clearly, however, if asked “if there was a platform or a space to collaborate” the answers were “I would definitely use it” (Informant IV) / “we would definitely use it” (Informant V).

Perspectives and risks

The close collaboration between museum and civil society can also provide means for documenting certain moments – or *momenta* – in the life cycles of activist movements that

³⁸ It might also of course produce rivalry and competition, which are also often inherent to the activist movements. For example, during the refugee reception 2015 at Malmö Central station volunteers from different groups were “exhibiting competitive behavior” (see Christina Ghita’s Master thesis in Applied Cultural Analysis “Competitive Activism: An investigation of the activists and volunteers in the 2015 refugee crisis”, 2016).

they cannot keep themselves; an important and delicate task of writing history with people, not about people. The future museum, however, seems to have this kind of competence. In the same City Archives' building as the Rescue Archive project is the office of "Women making history", another project run by the Cultural Department (Ardalan, 2017). This project is a unique collaboration with the women immigrant community which resulted in an exhibition at the city museum and in several workshops and publications. Operating as a grassroots project driven by civil society with the support from municipality and academia, "Women making history" has gathered an immense collection of materials which could be one of the first documents of the Rescue Archive (unless it was not included in the first drafts of the Rescue Archive's mission).

The risk of losing this competence, of overlooking local grassroots movements, can be hidden in two interconnected areas. Firstly, there is a 'preservation drive' consonant with politics of empathy, which have a whole scope of ethical considerations:

"Empathy has been identified as a key emotion for facilitating and swaying public debate on social justice issues [...]. However, the idea of empathetic imagination, and the way it is often uncritically embedded in liberal discourse as a 'feel good' concession, has been strongly criticized as a way of reasserting existing power relations when socially privileged subjects choose to confer or withhold empathy."

(Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 454).

Carolyn Pedwell (2014) explores the transnational effects of empathy both in literary works and in current politics, and describes several ways to understand this complicated emotion, from feeling the compassion for Other's suffering to the ability to learn how this Other thinks and feels. She also cites US researcher Lauren Berlant's remark that "empathy and compassion are inevitably bound up with the ongoing ethics of privilege" (in Pedwell, 2014, p. 15). The empathy in the transnational context, according to Pedwell, is always situated in the intersection of neoliberalism and postcoloniality, as the feelings of empathy and compassion are being commodified and can become the source of profit for those conferring it.

A second issue lies in the nature of museum paradigm. Before the division of scientific disciplines, at the dawn of the museums, an amateur interest for antiquities and curiosities flourished (Pomian, 1990; Myrone & Peltz, 1999). The emotional and subjective relation to the past, indicative of the antiquarian culture, invested both in the creation of museums and in historical science in general.

Antiquarianism of the late 18th century, as Susan Crane (1999) argues, was not concerned with construction of the grand historical narrative; instead, it was preoccupied with

fragments and objects of personal interest. The transition from cabinets to museums meant the disappearance of the passionate collector's figure, as antiquarians became the objects of caricatures and mockery. Scattered and somewhat random actors that have emerged during the Rescue Archive forming stage (local and international NGO's, writers and journalists at risk, minorities, human rights defenders, existing archives and programs...) resembled this antiquarian passion of collecting. Crane elaborates the image of the 'curiosities' within a collection as a selection of stories they represent:

“The collector was able to maintain whatever sense of order he desired so long as the collection remained in his cabinet, but once the collector tried to market it, the collection had to offer something besides the fascination it held for its creator; the multitude of stories associated with individual objects needed to be contained within a transmittable master narrative.”

(Crane, 1999, p. 193)

The appeal to social justice and transnational politics of empathy, as well as educational ambitions of the future museum, supposes emergence of that kind of narrative - presumably connected to the popular movements as the museum's concept is built upon it.³⁹

Is there a way to avoid these hazards? Jane Nielsen (2015) argues that in a museum context “relevance can be understood as the creation of meaningful practices” (p. 366). The relevance of any cultural strategy or political agenda in the field of heritage, therefore, depends on a common understanding of this meaningfulness among all the actors engaged. I do not declare that museum staff for the Museum of Movements has to be activists in the first place; the antiquarian's passion for the stories behind the objects is, too, a kind of activism. Some of the informants of my study were keen on ‘breaking the silence’ around certain categories of people activists are working with.⁴⁰ Museums, incidentally, own a powerful tool to break out from this fated cycle of objectification: they are dealing with objects that *are* actually silent and yet can tell stories.

Keeping in mind Smith's and Campbell's (2016) suggestion that museum professionals sometimes experience a sort of aversion to emotional matters, it is possible to assume that the strong focus on emotions (especially in Durkheimian *integrity* phase) can

³⁹ Not to mention the grand museums of modernity, which “presented their political masters as custodians of world culture, rescuers of what had been ignorantly neglected or even threatened with destruction in the countries of origin” (Schubert, 2000, p. 23).

⁴⁰ These categories are indeed intersectional, a taxonomical attribute can be gender: “Because women tend to keep their stories silent. There's a lot of silence around the women's stories.” (Informant IV) or race: “There are two groups here, the visible and invisible one. Those who are invisible, they are not welcome to exist in our nice white country” (“Det finns två grupper här, de som syns, och de som inte syns. Och de som inte syns, man vill inte att de ska existera i vårt fina vita land”, Informant III) or any other social group denominative. One of the informants has similar concerns about their movement's activities as well: “this part was more important for me, that... not to be silenced about something that we were working at” (Informant II).

contribute to establishing a collaborative and sustainable institution. There are also museum professionals who suggest that it may be brought into their field.⁴¹ In a similar vein and based upon my research, I argue also that the Museum of Movements should develop further its bond with Malmö's civil society organisations and sustain a community which is forming around it; a community consisting of different actors with their own, sometimes contradicting, agendas. Furthermore, my point is that without a close connection to and collaboration with the local communities, the museum project might end up in the situation where having the power to create a new institution – *in potentia* – means to be *powerless* as there are no links or networks that can translate this power further (cf. Latour, 1984). In my scope of analysis, this is what was happening at the early stage of the *Rescue Archive* project before it was able to delineate its mission and objectives.

By developing a traditional museum that would work with collections and material evidences, the future museum can include non-human actors to existing networks; the objects that “endure” (Conn, 2010, p. 57). Things, that can outlast any current political agenda and market conditions and that “are passed on to somebody else” (Informant VIII) – to future generations that will hopefully still be coming to learn something in our museums.

⁴¹ For a (rather affective) account on bringing emotions into the museum fieldwork see Dragan Nikolić's contribution to the *Museums in a time of migration* anthology (2017) where he discusses documentation of 'refugee crisis' in Sweden alongside with ethical issues and emotional challenges arising during the process.

Concluding remarks. Moving towards the future

“What I try to do is to make this the least political museum there is, but of course there is a political component, by having a museum for movements or museum for migration you are kind of saying that the movement of people is a good thing.”
(Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04)

The Swedish *Museidebatt* (SvD, 2017) unsheathed in media space a sore spot from the museums’ inner worlds: the underestimated role of experts (from the experts’ point of view) and expertise in front of the dynamic and everchanging issues of current politics, management and exhibition trends. Steven Conn (2010) characterizes new museums with “themes rather than collections” as conveying “values rather than knowledge” and language and images instead of objects (p. 46). He also points out that by focusing on difficult or problematic issues, museums have acquired a somewhat therapeutic role, becoming “places designed to make us better people by moving from the political to the personal” (Conn, 2010, p. 45). Here lies the first contradiction: ‘personal’, in the therapeutic sense, can be interpreted as addressing emotions (as many museums and exhibitions working with ‘difficult issues’ actually do) and, therefore, something opposite to the ‘apolitical pure knowledge’ (cf. Smith & Campbell, 2016) appreciated by the advocates of museums as the places for expertise.

Another contradiction is that Conn describes museums as first and foremost public places, and transfers a lot of socially relevant issues from the domain of ‘real politics’ to the cultural sphere (2010, p. 227) which relates to Philipp Kleinmichel’s (2015) argument on ‘muzealization’ of political activism by the means of artistic expression.

To tackle these controversies, I suggest to stop thinking about the “political component” and apply instead Latour’s concept of *the power of association* (1984), where power is conceived as a kind of *momentum* or composition created by many people taking action. What is interesting in this concept is that different actors do not have to reach consensus to produce that sort of power. Latour criticizes classic Durkheim’s *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* for the concept of overarching society that explains every single practice; he notices however, that even Durkheim acknowledges the agency of (specific) material objects: “if the movements by which these sentiments are expressed are connected with something that endures, the sentiments themselves become more durable” (Durkheim, 1915, cited in Latour, 1984, p. 274).

The *museum* form, therefore, is a natural provider of material resources that could hold all the actors together – an idea that echoes in the latest Swedish cultural heritage policy: *For Sweden that sticks together* (“För ett Sverige som håller ihop”, The Swedish

Government, 2016). Moreover, “the words: National Democracy and Migration Museum in Malmö” (Malmö Stad, 2016) fit perfectly into the current *momentum*, be it local Swedish policies aimed at sharpening migration laws (e.g. introducing temporary residence permit for asylum seekers, Migrationsverket, 2018) or the international museum field where the projects focusing on migration, democracy and diversity are taking place all over the globe (e.g. Migration Museum Project in London, see also *Museums in a time of migration* anthology published after the international conference “Museums in times of migration and mobility: Processes of representation, collaboration, inclusion and social change”, Johansson & Bevelander, 2017). Such concepts as “cultural democracy” or “action-based sociomuseology” (Sancho Querol *et al*, 2017) suggest different strategies for rethinking museum management structures and inclusion issues.

Being a “cultural practice about cultural practice”, the new museum supposed to become a place for making heritage in the present for the future. Decisions and actions that taken today for the Museum of Movements will, by all means, impact the future and continue to raise new questions, as well as propel new activists pushing the realm what a museum can be. During the dialogue meeting on March 13th, 2018, more than 25 themes and activities for the future museum were suggested by the participants in less than an hour.⁴² This multivocality can lead to the longing for one, even if authoritative voice, that will explain and simplify difficult matters. One of such examples might be the “100% Fight – The History of Sweden” exhibition mentioned in the Chapter 1.⁴³ There is a certain risk of such development in the Museum of Movements project, which is conceived politically as the place “where people can visit and learn about their history or other people's history in a modern way” (Nils Karlsson, personal communication, 2018-04-04) – suggesting that there is a certain *modern way* to learn. A key to tackling this challenge can be found in the words of one of the dialogue meeting’s participants: “Screw consensus! Dare to discuss without losing respect”⁴⁴ (Fieldnotes, 2018-03-13). What plays a most important role here is not only the diversity of opinions, but the *process* of discussion and a reflection on one’s standpoint.

Fiona Cameron (2015) suggests the term “liquid museum” as a new institutional form which is able to tackle the contemporary challenges. Cameron argues that there is “the need for museums to embrace complexity and horizontality, rather than simplification and

⁴² Among the suggested themes were, for example, the 100th anniversary of suffrage; freedom of speech; *civillkurage* and responsible citizenship; reasons for seeking asylum; vulnerability/fragility of democracy; food, migration and history; Holocaust and refugees in the Second World War; Europride; cultural diversity; Swedish colony at the Saint-Barthélemy and slave trade in Sweden; etc. (Fieldnotes 2018-03-13).

⁴³ At least with the display’s implied narrative, as guided tours provide place for discussions.

⁴⁴ “Skit i konsensus – våga diskutera utan att förlora respekten”.

hierarchy, as strategies” (p. 349). She also claims that the museum staff should change their mind-set of the authoritative hierarchical entity, as the “liquid museum” embraces a “fluid world of processes” instead of the “modernist museum mind-set of facts and categorizations” (Cameron, 2015, p. 353) – just like the activist participants of the cultural analytical study presented in this thesis do.

The future museum, conceptualized as a process and an assemblage⁴⁵ of interrelated networks, of material and non-material things, beings and actors has, therefore, a potential power “to formulate and compose culturally intelligent responses to complex problems” (Cameron, 2015, p. 358).

Nina Simon in her recent book calls museums places “of passion and public service” (2016). Activism, after all, is also a sort of passion, and constructs complex emotional connections between different groups and individuals. In this sense, the Museum of Movements is already there as an actor, connecting museum professionals and community representatives, researchers and cultural administration, national minorities and Malmö citizens, refugees and activists, or far-right advocates and anti-immigration sentiments – there are endless combinations of these that sometimes can even meet in one person.

Karsten Schubert (2000) argues that due to the “intermittent transparency” of museum-making processes, the current progress of museology became possible (p. 94). By employing the current museological research, I have followed in this thesis an indeed transparent and open process of creating a brand-new museum that will address the problematic contemporary issues of migration and democracy, both internationally and in Sweden.

This process of museum-building happened to have a lot of junctures with the very discipline of cultural analysis, not only in the sense that both museums and ethnography share the burden of the modern way of organizing reality. Feminist ethnographer Beverly Skeggs (1997) introduces *experience* as a subjective construction which allows to take standpoints and is “processed through practice, discourse and interpretation” (p. 28). In the museal field, interpretation is also a vital notion which represents a “relation between things and conceptual structures” (Lord, 2006, p. 5); the reflexive approach to its own history can allow for museum to consciously take a standpoint (which is occasionally happening, as it was mentioned above, in the intersection of these two fields, with ethnographic museums and collections). Museum as a cultural technology can grant the activist movements a space of

⁴⁵ For museums as *assemblages* see also Bennett, 2015.

representation and discussion; activism, on the other hand, can inform museums on taking a stance and situating the act of knowledge production.

“Museum as activist” is not a simple buzz-word or an internet hashtag. By combining these two notions in one sentence, we entrust the institution itself with agency and responsibility. Museum becomes an actor alongside with the collections, building and staff; the participatory engagement which is coming *from within* such an institution can prevent museum narrative from turning into authoritative (or even preachy) one. The existence of other actors and stakeholders, on the other hand, tackles the risk of reflexivity growing into self-absorption. Considering this fragile balance, the Museum of Movements can become “a civic agent that freely chooses the most controversial subjects”, an ‘activist-museum’ (Leshchenko, 2016) created by, inhabited by and by and propelled by fluid networks and collaborations.

Time will tell whether the Museum of Movements will be able to develop this concept further. The challenge is huge, and the vision of this future museum is “fascinating, exciting and daunting all at the same time” (citing a museum professional from Field diary: Reflections). The existing framework, however, provides abundant material for further studies. All that is happening with the museum project at the time of writing and even this writing itself will affect its future shape in one or another way, as I am also consider myself as a part of the forming community around the Museum of Movements. The important thing, however, is to never stop moving. As Karsten Schubert (2000, p. 145) suggests: “*The museum is a machine for producing meaning ... Like a machine, its function depends on motion: ultimately, a motionless machine is meaningless*”.

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Empirical material (in author's possession)

- Fieldnotes from Rescue Archive assignment, September-November 2017, Malmö City Archives.
- Fieldnotes on Safe Havens conference, September-December 2017, Cultural Department.
- Interview I - October 11, 2017, Malmö Höskola.
- Interview II - October 17, 2017, Malmö.
- Interview III - October 27, 2017, Malmö Höskola.
- Interview IV - November 1, 2017, Malmö.
- Interview V - November 1, 2017, Lund University.
- Interview VI - November 3, 2017, via Skype.
- Interview VII - November 6, 2017, Lund University.
- Interview VIII - November 8, 2017, Malmö.
- Fieldnotes from Dialogue meeting March 15, 2018, Malmö City Archives.
- Interview with Nils Karlsson, April 4, 2018, Malmö City Hall.
- Field diary "Museum of Movements" (occasional notes), 2016-2018.
- Field diary. Reflections on museological research, 2012-2018.