Performance Communities: An Affective Approach to Community Building through Performing Arts

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Abstract

In this research I aimed for grasping an understanding of how community performance projects serve for building communities through bodily assemblies and affect. I conducted an ethnographic research based on two different performance projects in Malmö. I have used participant observation, embodied ethnography and semi-structured interviews as research methods. Doing so, I attempted to comprehend what sort of circumstances bring people together within the community performance projects and the role of affect in bringing people from different backgrounds together for a specific aim under the roof of these projects. I base my theoretical arguments on Clare Hemmings' interpretation of affect and Judith Butler's performative theory of assembly. I conclude that the capacity of our bodies to produce and share affect is augmented with the embodiment of different states of in-betweenness such as vulnerabilities based on migration and precarity. The potential to assembly as communities is higher where such vulnerabilities are either embodied by the performers or acknowledged and communicated. Then affective solidarities are built among the group which renders these public assemblies as actual communities while the means of community performance provides a solid basis for such solidarity. When such acknowledgment and embodiment of vulnerabilities is lacking, there is a different possibility that oppositional groups are formed and the group is not closely tied together. However, one can still observe that smaller forms of solidarities are established among those more vulnerable bodies, even when the acknowledgement by the larger group is missing.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Introduction

> Nevertheless, by turning in circles the displaced preserve
> their identity and improvise a shelter. Built of what? Of habits I think, of
> the raw material of repetition turned into a shelter. The habits
> imply words, jokes, opinions, gestures, actions,
> even the way one wears a hat
> *John Berger, And Our Faces My Heart Brief As Photos*

This thesis is about the affective experiences and relationships and their impact on community building within two community performance projects in Malmö during 2018 and 2019. That I ended up writing a thesis on community performances is not surprising considering my devotion to theatre for over ten years and my strong belief in its transformative power. However, that is not the main reason that I decided to initiate this research. The actual reason is John Berger (1991) who spoke to me through his book *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief As Photos*. In the book he uses a metaphor describing two different lines representing time in life. One is a horizontal line stretching all around, representing the global traffic of the world. It is universal. On the other hand, the vertical line is much more personal, it represents one's roots in the underworld, reaching from underground towards the skies. Berger says that home is the "center of the world" where these two lines cross, where the traffic of the world meets one's roots in the underworld and future in the sky. Those who are displaced leave that vertical line behind or try to carry them on their shoulders like a tent pole to find a shelter under. Then, the present becomes mere temporal fragments detached from home. From the first day that I arrived to Malmö right after leaving my home behind, the community performance was one of the rare places where I could ignore the weight of that pole I have been carrying on my shoulder. Community performance brought me together with so many people like me who have been dragging their own poles around in one way or another. Given the emotional intensities I have experienced during these gatherings I felt closer to the "center of the world" and further away from those temporal fragments that constituted my new life in Malmö. Thus, community performance for me is not merely an object of research. It is "an improvised shelter".

There are many concepts around performing arts based projects that are initiated or performed by community members. Depending on the context, different concepts are used such as community theatre, community dance, community arts, applied theatre and so on. I will refer to the community art activities which I base my research on as "community performance" since

they offer a range of performing arts such as dance, theatre, and music. Kuppers (2007) define community performance as artistic works that "facilitates creative expression of a diverse group of people, for aims of self-expression and political change" (p.3). I adopt her definition of community performance within this research. The concepts of participation, empowerment, and transformation certainly lie at the heart of the concept of community performance. Main characteristics of community performance are being communally created and process oriented rather than product oriented (Kuppers, 2007).

I often refer to the term "community" since the it is the very heart of the research. The definition of the term might change depending on the context. Williams (1973) characterizes community as a "warmly persuasive" term that addresses certain set of relationships within a group of people (p. 76). Kuppers (2007) takes off from this definition and problematizes the "warmly persuasive" nature of the concept which can actually pose a challenge when the term is used within an artistic environment that requires rigorous and effective exchange and exploration (p. 10). Thus, she approaches community not as a term that has a fixed definition, but as a fluid process (Kuppers, 2007, p.10). My approach to the term community is in line with that of Kuppers. When I use the term community within the context of community performance projects, I refer to a group of people who come together for the aim of performance making whose relationships to one another and their togetherness have affirmative and embracing connotations for the participants, yet constantly evolving and open to conflicts and setbacks. Williams (1973) also indicates that the term community is almost always used in an affirmative way (p. 76). However, one should also remember that every time we mention a certain group of "people" we actually leave "another group of people" outside, hence defining a certain community might be exclusive or its definition might be depending on ignoring the existence of certain groups just as well (cf. Butler, 2015). Thus, this study acknowledges the constraining characteristics of building or creating certain types of communities even if it adopts an affirmative definition of it.

Butler (2015) discusses the power of public assemblies when bodies gather together in public spaces, claim "a performative right to appear" and gain a signifying function that allows them to create political, economic, and social demands (p.11). According to this, the "gathering" regardless of speech or declaration creates embodied forms of solidarities. These solidarities are often established through the common suffering of different forms of precarious states. Such commonalities have the potential to become sources of affect and connect different bodies

through shared intensities. In the same way, I approach the community performances as assemblies rather than mere artistic or cultural productions. Community performance provides its participants who have been pacified through distress and discrimination a rather active role in which they are "able to take control of the situation by distributing the emotional burden in regulated amounts" (Boehm & Boehm, 2003, p. 295). I argue that these performances offer a range of different assemblies which brings together people who go through different forms of oppressions and enable them to collectively mobilize.

Community performance research also provides a solid basis for the feminist research agenda in many different ways. Enria (2016) defines three main ways through which community performance contributes to feminist inquiry: "(1) the situated nature of knowledge; (2) the orientation towards emancipatory action and (3) the creation of non-hierarchical research spaces" (p. 327). Community performance enables different forms of knowledge production through handing the tools of performance production to the people of the community. Thus the power of producing knowledge through art is no more constrained with the trained performance artists and the hierarchical structure of the classical theater-making. Community performance challenges such hierarchical structures not only through participatory artistic methods but also through creating a discussion on who gets to be on stage and produce artistic and political knowledge. Such radical change in the subjects and directions of voices coming from the stage has a potential to emancipate the owner of the voices as well as the communities and audiences who gets to be a part of such performances.

Doing a community performance research in Malmö specifically adds another dimension to the study. Malmö has been in the focus of international media in different ways mostly due to its diverse population. Especially after Sweden opened its doors to the refugees during 2015 and placed most of them around Malmö within the Skåne Region, the city started to get even more news coverage. The conservative media often addresses the shootings, gang related activities and violent events occurring in Malmö and makes implicit or explicit claims which blame the refugees and/or the newly settled for those violent events (Daro, 2017). As there are also news that celebrate multiculturalism and diversity (Orange, 2019), the newly settled populations actually suffer from a serious extent of segregation and isolation. Within the city there is a clear separation of "migrant areas" and "Swedish areas" and, there is much hate speech and accusations towards certain groups (Listerborn, 2015). Within this context different forms of initiations to change such discourse and segregation are much needed. Fortunately, Malmö

offers many different institutions and collaborations that undertake different social, cultural, political and artistic projects to counteract against discrimination and induce principles of social justice and equality. Even though these initiations are not enough on themselves to fix the whole situation, I find the impact they have within their own circles quite important. The community performance projects that I analyze are within those attempts to provide more inclusionary and egalitarian living spaces through offering platforms for assemblies that enable free artistic expression as well as communication and socialization.

What makes the case of these performances even more interesting is how subtly they create such assemblies. If one takes a look at the examples of such assemblies that Butler (2015) mentions, one can mostly observe protests, funerals, strikes, occupations which are more or less all gathered around an explicit political agenda or a certain aim. Within the case of the performances I conducted my research on, the assembly happens without a clearly uttered political agenda shared by everyone in the group. Such subtle forms of assemblies are also in line with what Butler (2015) indicates when she says that the assemblies are consisted of "plural form of performativities" and there is not a single form of assembly that one can define (p.8). Hence these performance projects create different forms of assemblies around plural political agendas which are shared and circulated among plural subjectivities through plural means. With this research, I aim for uncovering how communities are built through these subtle assemblies and the even subtler impact of affect in bringing people together.

Purpose and Research Questions

This research aims for grasping an understanding of how community performances in Malmö bring together people from different backgrounds to form communities. Within this context, what I would like to bring to the forefront are the ways we form different types of collaborations and solidarities not only through deliberation and explicit argumentations but with assemblies of bodies and affect. Given this approach, throughout this research I will aim for answering the following research questions:

- How do the community performance projects in Malmö serve for building communities through bodily assemblies and affect?
  - What sort of circumstances bring people together within the community performance projects?
  - What is the role of affect in bringing people from different backgrounds together for a specific aim under the roof of the community performance projects?

Overview of the Literature

Community performance projects are not only art based creative initiatives or spaces for socialization but also structured works with political agendas. Thus they are actual interventions in different spheres of social, cultural, and political issues. The existing literature often points at this characteristics from different vantage points such as social justice, artistic impetus, empowerment, and issues of agency. There are no obvious clustering of themes or separate research fields since the mentioned concepts are so interwoven together. In the following, I will try to give a brief state of art regarding the written works on community performance from different perspectives.

Community performance projects are often addressed as structures that have a high potential to foster social justice. It has been argued that art can "build bridges and express difference positively, not just for the individual but for whole communities. They can break boundaries" (Houston, 2012, pp. 416). The expectations from the community performance projects is not only for them to create new interpersonal perspectives or changes of small scale, but also the assumption that they will benefit the whole society:

> The recognition that to offer and share something beyond the art form itself facilitates growth and change within the individual on a personal and social level (as opposed to merely physical) gives justification to a social imperative for dance that can claim to effect change in a wider social context. (Akroyd, 1996, pp.17)

With a similar perspective Thomson (1989) also claims that "Dance is the birthright and potential of all human beings" (as cited in Shapiro, 1998, p. 156). Even though such statement sounds as it comes from a very privileged context where all other sorts of birthrights are met so that people can talk about dance as a birthright, one can also take it as moving our bodies has something beyond the kinesthetics and every person should have the chance to try it out for themselves at least once in their life. Most of the literature address that the community performance projects give people a space to dance, to act, to move, to express themselves and interact with others in new ways than they are used to, and discover new bodily possibilities. These aims are summarized aim of the community dance projects are defined by Amans as follows:

-To de-mystify dance as an art form

-To provide opportunities for as large a part of the population as possible to engage in dance activity of some sort or another, irrespective of their age, class, or cultural background

-To reinstate dance as an integral part of the life style of our society (2017, p.5)

Even though the artistic motivations and the elements of social justice ideally goes hand in hand during such projects, in the literature one can observe a tension between these two impulses. It is often argued that community performance should establish itself "on partnership rules between the director (and sometimes the social worker) and the participants/actors" so that "the actors, who are community members, take an active part in all stages of the production" (Boehm & Boehm, 2003, p. 284). It is even further argued that practitioners, teachers, directors and choreographers should also be as involved in the needs of community (Wenger, 2011; Fraleigh, 2002; Barr, 2013). Fraleigh (2002) discusses that "It is significant that in art, aesthetic values have a cultural context; they exist within a framework of reciprocity - of community" (p.57). On the other hand, there is an indication that the social justice and community aspects of those projects concern the tax payers and policymakers, while the artistic impetus is mainly the agenda of the artistic creators such as directors and choreographers (Maldoom 2000 and Finnan 2003 as cited in Houston, 2012, pp. 423). Even though this study is not based on such tension, the issue comes to the surface during the analysis of the impact of these two dimensions on the community building. Even though the ideal case is the engagement of each and every contributor in the communal and political agenda and involvement of the community members in the artistic processes, such perfect harmony is often lacking in the practice.

Another issue that has been discussed in the literature regarding community performance further elaborates on the social justice dimension through discussing the issues of empowerment and agency. There is much research that emphasize that community performance projects empower their participants in different ways such as the cultivation of personal development (Boehm & Boehm, 2003), through encouraging self-value and a more egalitarian and diverse future (Kuppers, 2007) or to overcome discrimination and oppression (Amans, 2017). One point which is critical to notice here is that even when we are talking about "empowerment", the concept of power brings about the questions of the agency of the

"empowered". The claim of empowering a certain group might bring around an unintentional construction of a know-how based hierarchy and a power relation in between participants and initiators. As community performance is popularized and emerges as a specific branch of expertise, the institutionalization of the field becomes unavoidable. Green discusses such institutionalization through its potential to bring about specialization and a knowledge gap between the specialist and non-specialist (Green, 2000). Thus while the group of experts and fund makers set the agenda on how to include, empower, and transform certain groups, they might willingly or unwillingly claim the upper hand in the relevant discussions, which can end up in tuning down the voices of the actual people who suffer from the injustices at hand and ignoring their own agency:

> We are bound to help at least a few participants discover meaningful voids in their lives, or perhaps provide some sustenance in one way or another. However, assumptions such as this may also take us back a step. By presuming these students are 'lacking' we may not be helping them. We may be imposing our own perspective of the world, as we impose a dance technique based on our own worlds. If we refuse to look at how we envision ourselves in the project we are bound to replicate offensive and patronising ways of presenting ourselves to the community (Green, 2000, pp. 63).

If I need to locate this study among the existing literature, one might argue that method wise it is very similar to other studies as many of them also rely on qualitative methods and ethnographic research. However, the fact that I actually participate in one of the projects and compliment participant observation with embodied methods would bring about an innovative methodological approach. What makes this research distinct from the others is the emphasis on the affect and approaching community performances as performative assemblies. Hence, my approach to social justice and empowerment in this study would be an important contribution to the community performance literature through aiming for having a grasp of it through community building by means of affect and assemblies. It is also evident that there has not been so many studies within Sweden even though community performance projects have been recently popularized. Thus, this research would give a case specific insight of the Northern European context of community performance.

Theory

Affect Theory

The theoretical foundation of this research is constituted by affect theory. Most of the literature on community performance that aims to have a grasp of the community building aspects of performance projects are based on the theories of social movement, cultural interaction and deconstruction (Lowe, 2000, Kaptani & Yuval-Davis, 2008). However, approaching community building and performance through affect theory provides a unique perspective regarding how we embody our hopes and vulnerabilities towards community building as well as providing an account for how we connect with other people, things and spaces. Thus the affect theory will be useful to understand the complex and deep relations we build with others and ourselves (Tomkins, 1963).

Affect theory is a relatively new approach that offers a novel way to comprehend personal, cultural, and social phenomena. Affect is a concept that is hard to define as it is connected to body rather than mind or rationality and to the lived rather than the uttered. Affect is a form of bodily and psychological subjective intensity that can be triggered by human beings, things or spaces. Affect has the capacity to travel in between bodies and to be collectively shared. It is often mistaken for feelings or emotions[1]. Even though affect can find expression as emotions, affect itself is a "state of being" (Hemmings, 2005, p.551). Emotions are cultural and social expressions, whereas affect is biological and psychological in nature (Probyn, 2005, p.11). Thus, affect is an embodied unique experience. Massumi (1995) argues that the impact of emotions can be measured through heartbeat, while affect is associated with our very skins. During experimentations regarding the bodily reactions to affect and emotions, it was observed that the change in emotional states were physically observed in the change of heartbeat whereas the affect could only be measured through the electrodes connected to the skin (Massumi, 1995).

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[1] One should still note that some prefer to use the terms affect and emotion interchangeably in certain contexts (Ngai, 2005).

Affect can be autonomous or dependent. While Ahmed (2013) discusses the affective potential and political implications of emotions, she does not perceive affect as only autonomous bodily intensities but also argues that they are capable of determining how different bodies perceive one another. She further explains how national identities, the concept of the "other", ideologies and communities are created through affective intensities as a result of the embodiment of love, pain, hate, disgust, fear, and shame. As a result how we define ourselves, including our collective identity as much as our very bodies, are very much "affected" by how we perceive the "other" in relation to "self" through different emotional states. As opposed to Ahmed (2013) who interprets affect in a more dependent way as the way our bodies express how they evaluate their surroundings and give value to others within certain power structures, Sedgwick (2003) and Massumi (1995) sees it as more autonomous and independent. Hence, affect is not a generalizable theory and it has been praised for such aspect (Hemmings, 2005; Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). Especially for it draws on the "the unexpected, the singular or the quirky" aspects of affect over "the generally applicable" objective scientific theories. Such approach is often mentioned as liberalizing for the researcher (Hemmings, 2015, p. 550).

Affect is defined in different ways within different disciplines such as psychology, literary studies, cultural studies, gender studies and so on. Being a non-generalizable and interdisciplinary term brings about different interpretations of affect. Within the sphere of this research I will base my theoretical foundations on Clare Hemmings approach to affect considering her affiliation with feminist approaches and gender studies as much as her interpretation of affect within a social sphere. Even though I will refer to other affect theorists within this course, I adopt the social approach to affect offered by Hemmings as I am more interested to employ affect theory to have an understanding of the connection between the body and the social.

Hemmings (2005) elaborates on the contemporary approaches to affect that enable us to have a grasp of the social structures and our positionalities in it in a critical way. She shares the ideas of theorists such as Brian Massumi and Eve Sedgwick in the way affect liberates the researcher form generally applicable theories, dichotomies of repressive/subversive and social determinism (2005, p. 550). However, Hemmings also suggests that these former approaches to affect mostly address connecting and relatable affections rather than the conflictive and oppositional ones. Affect have the potential to build and connect as much as separate and

constrain. Thus rather than focusing on the isolated autonomous forms of affect, Hemmings searches for its engagements with the social:

> Such affective cycles might be described not as a series of repeated moments body - affect - emotion - a self-contained phrase repeated in time, but as an ongoing, incrementally altering chain   body - affect - emotion - affect - body   doubling back upon the body and influencing the individual's capacity to act in the world. My critical response to Massumi and Sedgwick's work on affect, then, is not one that rejects the importance of affect for cultural theory. It is one that rejects the contemporary fascination with affect as outside social meaning, as providing a break in both the social and in critics' engagements with the nature of the social. The problems in Massumi and Sedgwick discussed in this article do not require a wholesale rejection of affect's relevance to cultural theory. Instead, affect might in fact be valuable precisely to the extent that it is not autonomous. (2005, p. 564)

My aim in using affect theory within this research is to have an understanding of affect as social and transferable rather than autonomous and individual. I would like to investigate how affect can produce different forms of belongings as well as detachments. What are the potentialities of embodied practices to create or constrain communities through affect? I specifically draw upon four aspects of affect theory which are often mentioned in the existing literature:

1. The first aspect I will refer to for my analysis is the emphasis on the capacity of the body. Such emphasis goes back to Spinoza when he indicated that "No one has yet determined what the body can do" (1959, p. 87). Thus, the potentials of affect is marked by the body's unknown capacity to affect and to be affected (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 2). As we are surrounded by different political, cultural, and social forces, the different ways that the body produce and experience affect and interact with those forces is an important part of this research.

2. The second aspect that will come to the forefront during the analysis is the in-betweenness of the affect. Affect is accumulated in situations of in-betweenness (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 2). Massumi defines in-betweenness as "the gap between the content and effect" (Massumi, 1995, p. 84). Affect flourishes from those liminal spaces. Thus one can address situations of in-betweenness such as vulnerability in between offense and pain, temporality in between present and

future, and hopefulness in between expectation and result through affect. Within this context, I will approach the vulnerability, hope and precarity of community performers and temporal situations of their positionalities within those projects as sources of affect.

3. The third characteristic that is much important for this study is the ability of affect to travel in between bodies and to be shared. Gibbs (2001) argues that "bodies can catch feelings as easily as catch fire: affect leaps from one body to another, evoking tenderness, inciting shame, igniting rage, exciting fear – in short, communicable affect can inflame nerves and muscles in a conflagration of every conceivable kind of passion". Within the case of this research such potential of travel and sharing is not as wide-scale as those defined by Sara Ahmed (2013) that can create cultural politics of emotions nation-wise, rather I am interested in those affective intensities that are shared in smaller scales of these projects that has an impact on community building.

4. The last aspect of affect theory that I will use as a theoretical tool is its relational and oppositional characteristics. Contrary to Massumi (1995) and Sedgwick (2003), Hemmings (2005) argues that affect does not only have connected and relational modes but also oppositional ones (p.550). Affect can bound people and things together as much as it has a capacity to create boundaries and opposition. Approaching these two ends in a dialectical way and without creating two oppositional poles, I will try to see how these aspects work in building or failing to build communities.

Performative Theory of Assembly

Another theory that I base my arguments on is developed by Judith Butler (2015) in her book *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. In the book, Butler analyzes the significance and function of public assemblies in relation to the social, economic and political circumstances within which they occur. Some examples of such assemblies are demonstrations, protests, occupations and even funerals. According to Butler (2015) what renders all these assemblies powerful tools of political action is their offering of plural forms of performative action. In her earlier writings Butler (1999) describes performativity as a process of continuous repetition of hegemonically structured bodily acts and gestures and their resignification for binary gendered and sexual identities and compulsory heterosexuality. During this process the body provides an

outer layer on which the discursive practices find a surface to flourish. Within this continuous process of resignification she also opens up space for "subversive" acts, the acts that reveal the socially constructed fictional interrelations of sex, gender, and gender performance. The "performative theory of assembly" approaches to the public assemblies as platforms that gather together bodies who have been suffering under the conditions of precarity with a similar logic of Butler's earlier discussions on performativity. Those bodies embody a performative form of resistance through these gatherings and produce plural forms of solidarities that do not rely on "speech" but to the assembly of the bodies. She further argues that being vulnerable and depending on one another during these assemblies poses a significant challenge to the individualism imposed by different means of capitalism. Within this research, I approach the community performances in the same way Butler approach public assemblies. I take these performances as public assemblies where people entrust their vulnerable bodies to each other and form solidarities that does not rely on speech but rather rely on gathering of different bodies and affective intensities between them.

Methods

The overall design of the research takes an interpretive approach in the form of an ethnographic method that consists of embodied practice, participant observations, and interviews. Ethnography was the best research method for this study as it allows the researcher to comprehend "how social structures, relationships, and processes produce cultural forms that in turn shape individual consciousness and practices" (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p.14). Taking the connection and reciprocity between theory and method into account, ethnographic work served very well to have an understanding of the relationship between the bodily experiences, affect and community building on site. Additionally, ethnographic work allowed me not only to connect theories of affect to the methods I employed, but also earned me a deeper understanding of the projects I was involved in.

Methodological concerns

Doing research that includes the embodiment of the researcher is not an easy task method wise. Ness (2004) addresses ways to release some of the methodological worries connected to doing research through embodiment. She differentiates embodied ethnography from disembodied ethnography. Embodied ethnography brings about full bodily participation in the practice and aims for a firm grasp of the corporeal experience. The disembodied ethnography is more likely to rely on observation rather than the first-hand experience of the relevant case or practice. If we need to locate these different approaches on an observation-participation spectrum, disembodied research would stand closer to the observation end requiring less bodily involvement in doing and describing ethnographic work, as embodied research is at the participation end relying more on the engagement of the body of both the researcher and the researched in the work. This logic provides a guideline, enabling the researcher to locate herself at different points of the spectrum. My take on this approach was to adopt a flexible positionality. This observation-participation spectrum enabled me to facilitate between different degrees of observation and participation by providing a guidelines through which I can locate myself as a researcher. Rather than basing the ethnography on a deep-seated distinction between participation and observation, I acted as a researcher, facilitator, observer, and participant in different contexts trying to maintain grounded relationships based on trust with the actors in the field and keeping them informed.

I base my field research on two different projects. The first project [Dance Project] started with introductory dance and movement workshops for community performers undertaken by a dancer employed at the institution who was also responsible for the organization and needs of the community group. The project continued with a rehearsal process bringing together the community dancers, professional dancers and, the choreographer. The last phase was a public performance of the finished work at Malmö Opera. In this project I started as a participant of the introductory workshops informing everyone involved in the project about my research. I would also help with the practical errands of the projects such as fixing the *fika*,[2] helping out the community dancers when needed, preparing the venue etc. As the rehearsal process started I stepped back as I was not dancing at the actual performance and continued to act as a facilitator for the community group and an observer. I attended the rehearsals and other correspondences that was either organized by the participants or by the theatre such as *fika*s, lunches, dinners, or parties.

As for the second project [Theater Project], I was an active participant in their performance production. I had established relationships with the group of organizers as well as with the community performers as a theater practitioner when I first arrived in Malmö. That is why, for this performance I was specifically invited to be a part of the project. The participants and organizers were informed that the project was also a part of my ethnographic field research. I participated in the rehearsals, performances, and other social gatherings such as the premier party, lunches, and dinners, as well as other participant initiated gatherings. I was paid 500 SEK for each performance I worked for just like the other community performers.

Being a participant during the ethnographic research and taking on an embodied approach is sometimes criticized for "being a disadvantage for the capacity to produce impartial research" (Della Porta & Keating, 2008, p.308). However, using first-hand experience of both bodily and emotional practice is a crucial part of this research as it focuses on affect as a unique and embodied concept. Thus, being a participant in the whole process in this context does not render the research as biased, rather it adds another layer of reflexive comprehension of affective experiences.

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[2] 2 Fika is a very common Swedish phrase that means taking some time to have coffee and share some food with others usually with friends or collogues

The concepts of impartiality and especially "objectivity" have been criticized by feminist inquiry (Haraway, 1988). Haraway (1988) challenges the unquestioned truth of objective science with "our 'embodied' accounts of truth" (p. 578). Our positionalities in a given societal and political structure and the ways we embody them affect how we perceive and experience reality, thus our knowledge production. These differences in positionalities do not render such knowledge as wrong or biased, rather they provide "situated knowledges" which create "a more adequate, richer, better account of a world, in order to live in it well and in critical, reflexive relation to our own as well as others' practices of domination and the unequal parts of privilege and oppression that make up all positions" (Haraway, 1988, p.579). My positionality within this research as Middle Eastern middle-class woman who is also a theatre practitioner, community artist, community instructor would also affect how I produce knowledge and the way I grasp data . Although I do not base this research only on an auto-ethnography, my own history and experience will sure have an impact on this research. Thus, the embodied part of the research will be affected by my standpoint. Thus I was continuously reflecting on the impact of my own culture and identity on the way I produce knowledge throughout the ethnographic work (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Hastrup, 1992). In the same way, I was aiming for grasping an understanding of how participants' "situated knowledges" alter their interpretation of the projects they are involved in and the aspects of community building.

Another important highlight of this research regarding its methods is that I use my own emotional involvement in the project environments as a source of data. Data is the main source of knowledge we use to produce further knowledge during research process. Questioning what we consider as "data", St. Pierre (1997) problematizes the common-sense understanding of knowledge production. She describes three sorts of data which are under constant erasure: emotional data, dream data, and sensual data (St. Pierre, 1997, p.177). Throughout her essay she discusses how different methods produce these sort of data. She calls these data "troubling data" which is hard to categorize, code, or transcribe yet impactful and moving. In my experience in this case study, the most relevant "troubling data" was the emotional data which is central to this research. I constantly attempted to reflect on my own emotional labor and emotional involvement in the projects which I have been observing and taking part in. Methods-wise, embodied ethnography was the main source of emotional data as it got me bodily, intellectually, and emotionally involved in the projects. Throughout the analysis I will take emotional data as a main source of knowledge production and its role in building communities.

Thus, not only my emotional involvement but also how participants reflect on their own emotional states will be of significant importance.

Ethical concerns

While I employ ethnographic methods, there were times where I had to make certain decisions in which some ethical issues should be considered. For example during one of the projects, a conflict occurred between two participants where one claimed the other uttered a racist phrase. No one was there to hear the conversation between them yet I found myself in the middle of the conflict where I was acting as a mediator between the participants and also reporting what happened to the project initiators. I had to keep track of my positionality, protect the participants and provide secure communication between the institution and participants at the same time. These decisions and interventions I made were not necessarily the most impactful decisions, rather they were improvisational daily practices around knowledge production regarding the "the mundane details of the researcher's daily existence in the field" (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p.6). Thus, the ethnographic research I conducted very much revolved around this day to day seemingly "insignificant" things embedded into the flow of the everyday life. Throughout my research, rather than isolating myself from what is actually happening in the field or mystifying the whole ethnographic process, I tried to maintain a balance between "me as a researcher" and "me as a part of the community". I did this through establishing genuine friendships with the participants, using embodying methods ie. being a real participant rather than establishing a distance between myself and the project participants, yet keeping everyone informed about the topic of my research, the research process and my studies. The character of the research and my background as a theatre practitioner also made this much easier. My already established relationships with most of the participants and organizers, and the fact that these projects were community based – hence essentially inclusive and open – helped me a lot, offering a context that I was welcome and greeted with joy in almost every encounter.

Employed methods

I have conducted semi-structured interviews with five community performers. Using a semi-structured style for the interviews allowed me to obtain deeper data about the specific areas of the research, as it also allowed the interviewees to freely reflect on the issues that they particularly found important. The interviews were recorded and transcribed with the consent of

the interviewees. All the interviewees signed a consent form. Interviewees' identities were anonymized in the analysis following the rules of confidentiality and research ethics (European Commission, 2010). The transcripts of the interviews were subjected to a thematic analysis. The interviews were coded under four different themes: the capacity of the body, in-between bodies and communities, sharing bodies and communities, bodies together and bodies apart.

A purposive sampling method was followed. The interviewees were picked among the participants of the observed/participated projects with regard to representation of different gender, ethnicity, nationality, and age groups. Acknowledging that the perfect representation is not possible, especially in a research based on bodily and affective practices, I have made an effort to create a group of interviewees as diverse as possible in accordance to the research population. Along with that, another criteria was active and regular participation in the projects. Thus, the interviewees were also picked based on their orderly attendance in the project activities. This allowed me to gather deeper information from the participants who have maximized their involvement in the field.

One important point is that during one of the interviews an interpreter was involved who translated the interview from the interviewee's mother tongue to English. An interpreter is essential during cross-language research when interviewee and researcher do not speak the same language (Williamson et al., 2011, p.382). Even though my prior correspondences with the interviewee was in English and Swedish, he supported the idea of using an interpreter for the interview as he felt he could express himself better and in more detail in his own language. Interviewee and the interpreter shared the same mother tongue and had no prior contact. The acquaintance of the interpreter and interviewee is a common topic discussed in the literature, often addressing that familiarity create comfort and trust, yet it can also lead to limiting the depth of some important arguments that might be taken for granted in between the interpreter and interviewee (Williamson et al., 2011; Murray and Wynne, 2001). So, instead of working with someone who has close contact with the interviewee, I chose to work with someone new and introduced them over a *fika* before the interview.

The validity of the data provided by the interpreter is addressed as a concern within cross-language research (Williamson et al, 2011). However, the interpreter I worked with had a background in Social Science and was familiar with the terminology regarding the methods and theories I employ. Even though one should also consider the power relations in between

interpreter and participant as there is a risk for a highly knowledgeable, powerful or a well-known interpreter figure might intimidate the participant (Murray and Wynne, 2001). In this case the interpreter was knowledgeable about the qualitative research and aware of the research ethics and confidentiality, yet socioeconomically, culturally and age-wise compatible with the participant. The interpreter was asked to translate in the first person and avoid talking to the interviewee directly as I was the one keeping eye contact and directing the questions to him. I had a lingering anxiety during the interview, especially when the translation of the interview question took more time than I expected or when I was worried if the interviewee understood the question correctly. In order to cope with this, I tried to verbalize my worry immediately and kindly approached the translator or restated my question to the interviewee. These small interventions solved the problems right away and rendered our communication much clear. Consequently this interview took much longer time than the others which I communicated in the same language with the interviewees. Other than those moments of worry and being time consuming, the help of an interpreter worked well. The fact that it was the choice of the particular interviewee to have the interview in his mother tongue with an interpreter and the interpreter's open and helpful approach also made the process much smoother. I was happy to see the interpreter and interviewee chatted for a while after the interview in their mother tongues and said goodbye to each other in a very friendly manner.

Institutions and Projects

In order to protect the privacy of the companies as well as individuals I will refer to two different institutions that I have conducted my ethnographic research in as "Dance Company" and "Theater Company".

Dance Company is a relatively large institution owned by the Region Skåne. It majorly initiates dance theater performances which are staged in their own venue or in Malmö Opera. They have their own company of dancers and resident choreographers who are employed by the Dance Company. The company has a specific outreach department that creates and manages projects where the communities of Malmö is involved. The project that I was specifically involved in, that I will refer as "Dance Project" from now on, is a part of those community based initiations. It is built as a dance theatre performance to be shown at the Malmö Opera. The cast is consisted of 20 community dancers living in Malmö accompanied by 7 dancers of the company. The community members are chosen from the people who already have been actively involved in

company's community projects and they come from different age groups and different groups of ethnicity, gender, and bodily abilities. The community dancers are involved in the project on a voluntary based and were not paid or employed by the Dance Company. There has not been any auditions. The community members were picked by the project team and approached individually. The community performers were brought together before the rehearsal process in weekly workshops for a month. Then the actual rehearsal process took off with the inclusion of company dancers. The creation process was mostly initiated by the choreographer. There was a project responsible appointed to take care of the warm ups and specific needs of the community dancers. The company dancers and community dancers usually prepared and warmed up separately and gathered together during the rehearsals. The performance piece, as described in the performance program, aimed to tackle the issues of being a community and existing together.

Theater Company is a small scale free theater initiation. The company organizes open workshops, seminars and performances which are mostly focused on different social issues. Such activities are often funded by grants and external funding. The company's performances are usually based on documentary material which they gather through interviews and workshops. Their main aims are stated as building communities and encourage dialogue within different groups of society. Their activities are open to anyone regardless of their background. The participation in events and performances is often on a voluntary basis, and sometimes paid when there is enough funding for the certain project. The project that I was specifically involved in, that I will refer as "Theater Project" from now on, was in the form of a site specific performance. All the performers are community members whereas the creative team ie. director, musicians, choreographer and so on are trained professionals. Yet, the creation process was a participatory process where the community members were actively contributing. All of the contributors who took part in the project were paid. The Theater Project offered a hiking performance [*vandringsföreställning*] where the audience was taken to different scenes within Malmö by the performers. The scenes were specific sites that have significance for migrants who arrived to Malmö within different points of history. Thus the performance tacked the relationships between the migration practices and the city of Malmö.

Participants

Total of five participants were interviewed. Their names were anonymized under the code names of Abdel, Anya, Lena, Leo, and Mahmood. Abdel, Anya and Lena participated in the Dance Project, whereas Leo and Mahmood attended to the Theater Project. Three participants are non-Swedish (each of them coming from a different country), one of them is Swedish, and one of them is non-Swedish yet also identifies herself with Sweden as she came here with her family at a very early age. The youngest is 24 years old and the oldest is 68. Three of them are males and two of them are females. The last but not the least, all of them opened their thoughts and emotions to me in a very sincere way which was so clearly felt during the interviews.

Analysis

In the following there are four different themes that I came up with as a result of my thematic analysis of the interviews, my field notes, as well as my own embodied practice during the ethnographic work. These four themes are also in line with four different ways that I make use of affect theory that I have indicated in the theory chapter. I would like to underline that the themes are not isolated from each other. To the contrary, each theme is very much connected, even in some cases rely on each other. Especially the first three chapters build on how affect is produced and shared while the fourth chapter discusses the impact of how all these different modes and states function during forming communities.

1.The capacity of the body

> Showing up, standing, breathing, moving, standing still, speech, and silence are all aspects of a sudden assembly, an unforeseen form of political performativity that puts livable life at the forefront of politics.
>
> *Judith Butler, Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*

The capacity of our bodies being limited to our physicality is in a way challenged by affect theory. Affect is often associated with the body's constant engagements with people, things and different spheres of life which capacitate it to produce and share affect. Gregg & Seigworth (2010) further elaborates on this idea through offering Bruno Latour's definition of what a body is and what the opposite of a body is when during a conference he asked people to come up with an antonym of the word ''body''. Among many suggestions he highlights the words "death" and "unaffected" concluding that "If the opposite of being a body is dead [and] there is no life apart from the body [then] to have a body is to learn to be affected, meaning 'effectuated,' moved, put into motion by other entities, humans or nonhumans. If you are not engaged in this learning, you become insensitive, dumb, you drop dead'' (as cited in Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 11). Thus, the body is actually defined through its ability to be affected by its surroundings rather than "its nature as bounded substance or eternal essence" (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 11).

According to such view we make sense of our bodies through affect. Our bodies have the capacity to affect as well as to be affected. Spinoza argues that our bodies change through affect

and they keep an account of those affective experiences (as cited in Watkins, 2010). Thus our bodies have the capacity to retain, to accumulate, to form affect (Watkins, 2010, p. 269). Butler (2015) and Hemmings (2015) also mention affect in a way to point out how affective embodiments are also very much depended on the social and institutional relations and their impacts. Hence, assembly of bodies, what they embody, and their significations find and produce meaning under certain political environments and conditions.

These theoretical remarks are very much associated with how the participants mention or perceive the capacity of our bodies to produce affect and form assemblies based on those affective intensities. Such capacity is often framed in a context where the existence and assembly of bodies signify something beyond the language and its meaning. It is especially evident when Mahmood talks about the power of assembly of the bodies through theater:

> Nowadays art become more digital. We watch TV, series. I worked in the series. I know that this person repeats that role 10 times before. If you repeat something 10 times the authenticity becomes less and less and less. So you are watching someone fake… not fake.. But it is away from reality. But when you go [participate in] to theatre and you interact with real people. There is no TV here, there is no "action" and "repeat", there is no digital platform, there is no recording machine, no camera, there is nothing. Just you and this person. And for me it is really authentic. Art to interact with people without tools or camera. direct connection. It is a very very very strong connection, very strong. Especially this kind of art… [...] this experience it could change your life. Yesterday I was watching a theatre in a festival. Someone was talking about he went to Poland 30 years ago and he attended a theatre show and they were talking in Polish. And he didn't understand anything but when the show finished he knew that this experience changed his life completely. [...] Imagine that someone do a theatre performance and you don't understand him but he can affect you. How much powerful is this tool?

According to Mahmood the performance brings out the body's capacity to affect and to be affected. He frames it as being "authentic" thus different than the digital performances we see everyday, rather fed by the actual coexistence and interaction of our bodies. This capacity is brought to the surface in many different ways by the interviewees. The most common way that is highlighted by them is the assembling of bodies for a certain purpose. According to Lena and

Abdel doing something together brings people closer and capacitate our bodies as more than physical beings. Abdel articulates the difficulty of finding people to call friends or creating a community in Sweden as a foreigner. However, his solution to this is to put his body in use for the same purpose to gather together with others. He says that "It is typical in Sweden that people don't just meet but they do something together. So most of the people [that I define as my community], I met through doing stuff together, like dancing." Lena also makes a similar remark by saying that she met most of her friends through doing something together. Even though she has lived in the same part of Sweden for all her life she finds it easier to connect with others "through activities mostly riding, badminton, dancing, walking, hiking". Thus, it seems like putting our bodies to some sort of use or earning them a function for the same cause brings people together in different ways. Not only our bodies stand side by side but we also employ different meanings to such gatherings by attaching common aims and shared things to it. In this case one can argue that these performance spaces offers a platform for assemblies that enable different sorts of connections and attachments among bodies particularly through physical gatherings and providing a basis for working towards an end together. The form of such connection is put in words in different ways by participants such as "friends", "community" or "group".

Anya also mentions the same affect yet further argues that the performance projects stand out from the other encounters she has been to, saying that:

> Somehow the friends that I have met through dance as compared to other friends…
> I think you become close in a completely different way. And because I think when
> you are doing performance you are much more emotionally expressive than you are
> on street or whatever. And that's what makes… *(thinks)* I think most of the friends
> that I met through dance we have a very close emotional connection. You talk a lot
> about your feelings. You know…

It is interesting to note that Lena also uses a similar comparison between different group of people as she describes the bodily assemblies. What makes her insight slightly different than Anya's is he further argumentation regarding the bodily interaction:

> I think dancing together and being so close physically. That's another situation.
> You cannot find this situation in Willys or Ica or somewhere else. I think that's a
> big difference. Because you're used to hug and be near each other. So if I meet
> [Name], he is 40 years younger than mei if we meet at Mobilia we still hug each

other and we say "we had a wonderful time together". But if I would do that with other people also with Swedes you have to be careful. Bodily interaction brings people together in a special way. And you are more precautious, you take more care of each other.

Lena does not only makes a distinction between her other social encounters and performance practices, but also mentions how these practices makes a remark on her. This observation also builds on how affective experiences are preserved, remembered and registered in our very bodies and leave traces on us (Hemmings, 2005, 552). Thus, Lena thinks that bodily interactions has a significant impact on forming groups and communities in a way that leave a mark on her. Anya finds that the specific form of assemblies, mainly dance, bound people together through making them emotionally expressive to each other thanks to its artistic and physical components. Mahmood makes a similar remark while he differentiates the experiences in our daily lives from those in the performance practices saying that "People in social life they put masks all the time. But I discover in this experience that they remove their masks in theatre. That's why you meet people from an authentic perspective."

How community performance brings bodies together and mobilize the affective capacity of bodies in different ways has physical and emotional dimensions that significantly differentiates it from our daily assemblies with other bodies in public spaces that does not have a common aim (Butler, 2015). Especially how Mahmood mentions "masks" is quite important here. The "masks" people put on in social spheres tend to put up boundaries in between them. How people behave, what they wear, where they live, what occupation they all layer on those masks, which all end up individualizing each and every one through creating different forms of rules, differences and inequalities. Those boundaries prevent us from getting in physical contact, being emotionally open and expressive or being our true selves. However, community performance have an enabling effect on interdependency and solidarity. It is in line with how Butler (2015) defines the way we embody our vulnerabilities and build solidarities in which people are not afraid of depending one another.

The way that community performance create affective commonalities through "doing something together with our bodies" does not only revolve around the idea of bringing bodies together for an artistic aim. As I have already mentioned in the introduction chapter, one important aspect of the community performance is to have a political goal or agenda.

Employing the assembly of bodies for such goal is also often acknowledged by the participants. Given this acknowledgment, it is also significant to what extent those political issues are actually embodied by the community performers through or within the performances (cf. Butler, 2015). During my participation in the Theater Project I felt that there was a unity in this sense. The political agenda of the performance which concerned the issues of migration in Malmö was shared among the whole group. Not only almost every community member was a migrant themselves, but also both the community performers and creative team, regardless of their immigration status, either were openly affected by those issues at some point of their lives or politically took side about this issue and openly communicated it.

In the Dance Project, the main political agenda both in the project description and in the performance program was indicated as catching different sights of the possibilities of being a community. However, the political agenda was neither shared by everyone in the project group, nor was it openly communicated between community performers and creative team. Actually the choreographer himself decided not to take part in the discussions on community due to his heavy artistic workload and declared this choice openly to the community group. Thus, there was a dissonance within the group regarding engagement in the discussion of the being a community. This issue came to the forefront especially when there was a conflict between two participants. The conflict was between a non-Swedish young man and a Swedish older woman. The man declared that he faced a racist behavior from the woman as the woman refused it and blamed the man for reacting rudely to her. As the conflict was not resolved immediately, during the next rehearsal the young man who felt accused said that he wants an apology and he left the stage. When he left, another participant who identified himself with the same accusation went after him immediately. There was a big tension in the group, yet the choreographer chose to continue with the rehearsal letting no further discussions and asked for the intern dancer to fill in for those who left. The older woman refused to apologize for a couple of days and consequently she also left the group. After so many discussions within the management of the Dance Company, it was decided that it is was the appropriate thing the older woman to leave and the two accused dancers were convinced to come back to the performance. The Dance Company apologized for the assumed racist behavior. Then, the dance intern filled in for the older woman. During the interview Abdel declared how this instant replacements of one body for the another affected him negatively:

> […] the decision of the guy was that he would not continue in the performance.
> There was someone jumped in. It was a person doing internship. They jumped in to

replace the guy. The group continued and didn't really… Everyone was doing their own personal part and continuing. No one reacted to what happened. Unfortunately that [reaction] didn't happen. Everything was continuing. […] So the group didn't seem… the whole group in general really didn't stop when someone left. While that's how should be in a production or a factory or something but when we are doing a performance about community called [The Dance Project] I imagined people would take a step and really stand out for someone in the group who is suffering […] If the woman runs [leaves] the group continues, if the guy runs [leaves] the group continues. So I was missing so much *mmm* reaction of the people who are there. Like no one was saying anything they were just standing there or staying or moving. They didn't say "this woman shouldn't be here with us because that is not acceptable" [or] "No, the guy is very welcome". They didn't do that. When the woman left they could be like "No, she is a part of community. She has to stay. We like her so much". No. They also didn't do that. They in both cases were applauding for the person who jumped in to replace for whoever leaving. And that made me very sad. Just to conclude that, that wasn't a community.

Apparently such conflict lead some participants to willingly or unwillingly leave. It is important to notice that not only not sharing the same political goal but also the absence of particular bodies and the fact that they were replaced by others had a significant impact on Abdel. This shows that not only existing and being together but also a lacking or a non-existing body have an impact on the sense of community. One can imagine funerals at this point. The lost one is not there, however in a way s/he is, as s/he is the one who brought everyone together. Thus mourning for the lost one or the common goal of commemoration forms an assembly and its aim is openly acknowledged. This is very much in line with when Butler (2006) argues that how mourning can become a powerful tool of solidarity. Moreover, she discusses that not all bodies are considered worthy of mourning, for example terrorists, which enables discriminative politics to flourish and prevents the marginalized from building solidarities through collective grieve and mourning. Similar to this argumentation, the fact that the acknowledgment of some"body" is actually missing during the conflict was not shared among every participant led to the blockage of an assembly (like a funeral) where the participants are building solidarities for a common aim (like mourning and grieving). At this point, it is important to refer how Lena felt in this situation. During the interview Lena says that she associates herself with the political implications of bringing together people from different backgrounds to form communities and

finds it very important. However, at the same time says that she was not affected by the conflict personally and does not mention any sort of uneasiness regarding the absence of certain bodies. Rather, she says that she does not want to deal with the clashes and problems that occurred during this process if she herself is not personally involved in them:

> We had one conflict in the group but the organization said "Don't bother about it we take care of it and you go on focusing on what you are going to do, the performance". That was super. They said we have a short of time you can't be thinking about what happened. It was a conflict between two people and no one else was there. So [they said] "don't take part for one or the other person just leave it to us". Because I think if they stand out for this and you have 20 people it grows and grows and it's not worth it.

Gathering together for a certain aim and employing the means of artistic performance, bodily interaction, and emotional expression flourishes the capacity of our bodies to connect through affect. However, referring to Lena, it shows that a common agenda and artistic means are not enough to actually form assemblies and communities. There might be some conditions that block the capacity of the bodies to affect and to be affected. Ahmed (2010) explains how certain objects and bodies can be affective source of happiness as well as blockages that lead to trouble and discomfort:

> Some bodies are presumed to be the origin of bad feeling insofar as they disturb the promise of happiness, which I would re-describe as the social pressure to maintain the signs of ''getting along.'' Some bodies become blockage points, points where smooth communication stops. […] To refuse to be placed would mean to be seen as trouble, as causing discomfort for others. There is a political struggle about how we attribute good and bad feelings, which hesitates around the apparently simple question of who introduces what feelings to whom. Feelings can get stuck to certain bodies in the very way we describe spaces, situations, dramas. And bodies can get stuck depending on what feelings they get associated with. (p. 39)

In the case of the conflict during the Dance Project it seems like the conflict itself was perceived as a threat to the community's image of happiness by the majority of the group as well as by the management. So many people did not react against it to keep on working and keeping the rest of the group together, whereas this act of ignoring affected some, like Abdel, in a bad way. As a result, for some the conflict was perceived as an obstacle on the way of being a happy

community, for others it blocked the capacity of our bodies to affective experiences by keeping silent regarding the lack of certain bodies. I will elaborate more on how these sort of conflicts creates oppositional affects that stands on the way of building communities under the fourth theme.

2. In-between bodies and communities

> Performances epitomize the state of in-betweenness.
> *Erika Fischer-Richte, 2009*

Fischer-Richte (2009) argues that the ephemeral nature of the performance which is very much constrained with space and time actually emphasizes different states of temporality and in-betweenness (p.391). To elaborate more on this, she applies this idea to Victor Turner's theorization of liminality:

> The emphasis on in-betweenness reveals that performances become particularly suitable sites for processes to take place between people within but also outside of the same milieu, religion, social status, gender, ethnic group, nation, or culture. Therefore, it seems particularly promising to examine processes of cultural exchange in performance. (p. 393)

Affect is very much fed by these states of in-betweenness. When our expectations do not meet the reality, when our situations are temporary, when we hope or when we fear, then our power to affect increases and we are more easily affected by others. How I understand and formulate such characteristic of the flourishing of affect in states of in-betweenness is especially based on Hemmings (2012) approach to affect. She elaborates on this through referring to the inconsistencies between our actual lives and the existing systems of knowledge, or in other words to the dissonance between ontology and epistemology:

> My own view of affect [...] is that it does indeed offer a way into thinking about the relationship between the ontological and the epistemological, but as a resource for understanding their mutual imbrication or as a kind of knowledge about the interface between ontological or epistemic considerations (p. 149)

In the same way Seigworth and Gregg (2010) approaches the states of in-betweenness that is produced by such interface through their capacities to create actions and to things to act upon within which affect arises. During both projects there were so many different dynamics that

emphasize such states of in-betweenness in different ways. The first of these particular states is the fact that the participants are not considered "professional artists". None of the interviewed participants have received a professional performing arts education yet they have enough experience to undertake public performances. Different terms are used to address community performers during the projects I participated/observed such as "amateurs", "community actors", "non-professionals" or "collaborators [*Swedish=medarbetare*]". What actually creates this in-betweennes is the dissonance between the community performers' knowledge or experience in different forms of performing arts and the lack of a formal education in arts that makes it almost impossible to locate them in the structure of the formal artistic institutions. Hence the participants are not paid (or are not paid as much as) professionals yet they have certain engagements and experiences in different artistic methodologies. While even the field of community performance itself is actually an in-between field within performing arts and social work, the in-between state of community performers comes as no surprise.

In the Dance Project such distinction is much obvious since "professional" dancers are also involved within the project who are employed at the Dance Company. The rest of the community performers work on a basis of voluntary work. This situation obviously has different impacts on different participants. For instance Lena often mentions the "making of the performance with their hearts". As she talks about her involvement in the performance she often puts her hand on her chest pointing to her heart. She perceives her experience as "a dream coming true" hence for her doing the performance this way earns her a more genuine perspective of community. On the other hand Abdel perceives such distinction and their situation as "non-professionals" as a binary:

> We were warming up in different places with the professionals. I understand they have different exercises but sometimes during the day we would only see them on the stage. Even the performance program they speak about "professional and non-professional". When you differentiate everything from start one can feel it…

He further argues that such differentiation builds "boundaries between people" that one cannot see with their eyes but rather feel their existence. The fact that he needs to work in another job to earn his living exhaust him at the end of the day thus accentuates his

precarity[3]. In these cases where Lena's in-between situation is a source of inspiration for her, Abdel's in-betweennes as a precarious worker and a non-paid performer creates boundaries in between performers according to him. Such contrast is actually reminded us by Butler (2015) when she talks about how precarity is differentially distributed even if when it is a shared condition. While both performers share a precarious situation as non-paid non-professionals, how they experience it significantly changes with the impact of other precarious states.

In the Theatre Project such distinction is not as obvious as the Dance Project. The only felt difference is the distinction indicated in the performance program between the "creative team" (which is consisted of trained directors, musicians and choreographers) and *medarbetare* [collaborators] which is the rest of the community performers. However such distinction was not as emphasized during the actual creation and rehearsal process. On the contrary the experience of community performers as migrants was approached as an important part of the performance. Thus the knowledge production were collectively shared. According to Enria (2016) participatory community performance helps its participants to "tell their own stories collectively and to produce knowledge rooted in their experiences" and this "production of non-hierarchical knowledge can begin to break down barriers to equity" (p. 227). My experience as a participant during this project was actually the same. I felt like each and every one of us were not only contributing to the performance with our own ways of knowing but I also learned so much from each other. Mahmood also mentions that it is the first time he goes through such experience:

> […] in my country I was raised up in a dictator system. So this dictator system criminate your thoughts *(points to his neck as where the sound comes from)* even before you think about it. I didn't think about that I was raised with these blockages. You can't express yourself, you can't say the truth, you can't tell anything that you want to tell. You always just chuk chuk chuk *(makes hush gesture).* So when I came to this theatre I started to understand what's going on. Because theatre encourages you to become more authentic, to express yourself. So I started to observe these blockages and how I started to release these blockages. […] We sit together before and after the performance and we evaluate how we are doing. We think about what

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[3] It is interesting to address the contrast between Lena's and Abdel's situation through comparing how they define the tiredness after performance. Abdel says that he was tired as he had to work in other jobs at the same time, Lena who is retired defines it as "pure joy".

is the next step to make this performance better. And this mentality I didn't experience it before. But here I do. When I was part of this experience for the first time I feel like "this show talks about me".

Thus one can argue that the in-betweenness as being a "non-professional" community performer creates different potentialities for different people and groups. As for Mahmood, the affective experiences he has within the Theatre Group as a result of his embodied experience of freely expressing himself creates a potential for challenging the social subjection. Hemmings (2005) also argues that affect as a qualitative way we experience the world have a capacity to transform us as well as exceed social subjection (p.349). One the other hand, as it was the case with Abdel, it could accentuate the already existing precarious situation of the performer just as well. Such accentuation actually might block the capacity of affect. Yet, it could also allow one to attach non-financial meanings that makes the whole experience about its core values as it did with Lena who did not have a precarious situation and experienced things differently.

The last but not the least relying on non-professional or non-institutionalized forms of knowledge could help elaborating different forms of knowledge production and opening up space of expression in a non-hierarchical way and enable people to actually bond together as a group (Enria, 2016). For example, different forms of accumulation of knowledge, which are not are considered as "professional" in the real world, were acknowledged, shared among the group, and used as performance material within the Theater Project. Such step away from professionalism or institutionalism even seems to form the community performers as closely tied groups in one case (Theatre Project) and a more separated one in the other (Dance Project).

The second often articulated state of in-betweenness is being a migrant. Three out of five participants I have interviewed were migrants which is a representative percentage compared to the whole population of the research. The questioning of the notion of belonging, being a foreigner, not being able to speak the language, not feeling home, difficulty of integrating into Swedish society are some of the challenges of being a migrant mentioned by the interviewees. Not being able to identify themselves with the Swedish society yet being significantly disengaged from their home countries is also highlighted. However, what makes these challenges interesting is that they enable affect flow around within the community offering a common platform of accepting and understanding one another. Leo emphasizes on this fact as he describes how hard it was to survive in a city without a good knowledge of its language:

When I came to Sweden the biggest challenge for me was the language. Whatever I wanted to explain I couldn't because of the language. And whatever they wanted to tell me I couldn't understand. I also had a translator from time to time but it was not a good help. The translator couldn't help me. I wanted to express myself on my own. Now, I am very satisfied with the theatre group. It is a cooperative environment. It is a community for me. I don't need a translator here. This community is established on multiculturalism. We feel each other. It is a helpful community full of feelings and understanding.

The tools of performance and the feeling of being a part of a community helps him out when he cannot verbally express himself in Swedish or while the others cannot understand his mother tongue. Mahmood also mentions a similar form of hesitancy he experiences in social life:

I couldn't understand even the difference between *[my country]* and here. I didn't understand that. Because in *[my country]* if you are taking a taxi, driver can ask you any question *(laughs)*. There is no privacy. And you become friends with the driver after 20 minutes. But here, you can't ask people. You have to think twice. Because maybe it is not my limit. Where is my limit? So I have to discover my new limit. Especially when I came here, I started to think it is maybe because I am *invandrare* [Swedish: migrant]… I am new here, so maybe because of that…

Leo also elaborates on the issue of being a migrant in Malmö regarding his embodied nervousness regarding verbal communication saying that "When I came to Sweden the biggest challenge for me was the language. Whatever I wanted to explain I couldn't because of the language. And whatever they wanted to tell me I couldn't understand". He also adds that he relieved this tension within the Theater Company. The nervousness of not knowing what to do, how to speak or how to behave in a social context and the fear of being judged by the others based on one's own cultural identity is a source of alienation in these cases that I also often feel as a migrant in Malmö. However it was an indescribable experience to see how same alienation transforms into a source of love, care, and understanding in these projects. I felt it the most while I was performing in the Theatre Project. I am not sure if I can put it in words in a precise way, however I can surely say that during the rehearsals and performances, for the first time in 2 years of my life in Sweden, I felt like home. The people around me not only changed the way I perceived "me as a migrant" but their energy changed the way I perceived the whole city, every single point that we walked on and performed in. I realized that I was not

alone in this. This city might be marked as a place that actually rejected me in many ways through its invisible and informal means, but now "we" were putting our marks on the city. We were transforming the space we are living in. Such experience also relevant to transformative impact of affect as also discussed by Hemmings through referring to Bruns (2000) arguing that "affect, and in particular laughter, foregrounds the unexpected that throws us off balance, that unsettles us into becoming someone other than who we currently are" (Hemmings, 2005, p. 549) . In my experience the affect of the Theater Project did not transformed me in someone who I was not. However, it helped me the other way around: it shook me so well that I realized that I was lost and once again remember who I actually was through assembling with people who share the same in-betweenness.

Apparently such coming together in solidarity does not only have personal or interpersonal impacts but also indicates a further political assembly. Butler (2015) articulates on the importance of "less visible networks of solidarity" especially of those who may not directly appear in the public space. Even though the migrants in Malmö are not explicitly excluded from the public spaces, one can easily recognize how segregated and isolated neighborhoods are formed for them to live in (Listerborn, 2015). Thus coming together of migrants from different countries and performing in solidarity in public spaces such as in and around the city center as it was the case in Theatre Project and in Malmö Opera as it was in Dance Project is a significant demonstration. The act of taking over such places through migrant bodies and demonstration of an open solidarity has also a symbolic power.

The third in-between situation that can be highlighted is different forms of vulnerabilities of the performers. Being vulnerable is another state of in-betweennes. On the one hand we are afraid of being hurt as we are in a fragile state, on the other we hope that everything is going to be fine. I believe that being vulnerable is embedded in the crack between fear and hope and affect has a possibility to flourish from such cracks. Butler (2015) defines vulnerability as "a function of openness, that is, of being open to a world that is not fully known or predictable" (p. 149). She further argues that our vulnerabilities are relational in their essence depending on the relations our bodies constitute with its surroundings. Acting and dancing together also means to open and entrust our bodies to the others. Such physical entrustment of our vulnerable bodies is implied by Anya. She mentions that there is a difference between the bodily practices (dancing) and more rational practices (her current job). She uses the terms "physical" and

"theoretical" to differentiate between the two. When she is asked to elaborate more on this difference between dancing and doing her actual job she struggles:

> It [dance education] was a one year thing only. I think I wanted to do something different for a while but I knew that it would not probably be permanent. I always enjoyed arts but I guess I have always been a more theoretical person I really enjoy writing and reading and solving mathematics *(laughs)*. And I would say becoming more *mmm* how do you say *(thinks)* more comfortable where I am today. I wouldn't say I am a grown up yet *(giggles)* but I am starting to know where I am headed at least. I mean of course they [physical and theoretical] are connected in many ways as well. *Mmm* what does it mean… *(thinks)* I think the more with the physical [or] bodily I would say it is more free much more creative open ended at least the work flow is more open ended whereas theoretical is more *(thinks)* logical and *(thinks)* for me somehow it is easier to follow. The bodily ones is even insecure somehow because it is more free. It is hard to… Yeah…

She also adds that she cannot be as emotionally open with her friends at school as she is with her friends she dances with. It is very much in line with when other interviewees who also mention the difference of how they feel in these performance spaces and how they feel in other spheres of public life. Thus our bodies are capacitated to share affect in these performance spaces and being open and vulnerable even more accentuates this capacity. Mahmood adds another layer to this argument as he talks about not only one is vulnerable but theatre itself requires vulnerability in a sense.

> Theater it is when you lose your defense mechanism so you became more vulnerable and in this situation you can feel others also. You become more sensitive to other energies.

If we take what he says, it means that most of the performers are actually twice as vulnerable: first through their own different in-between situations, second through the nature of the performance that demands them to be open and "unmasked". Butler (2015) mentions the potential of vulnerabilities "as a source to mobilize as a form of activism, or as that which is in some sense mobilized in forms of resistance" (p.123). However, she also highlights that such mobilization does not happen on its own but the mobilization should happen in concert (p.140). Considering the relational characteristic of vulnerability, mobilization is very much depended on what actually surrounds our vulnerable state. In contrast to Mahmood's remark, in Abdel's

experience it seems that his vulnerability brings around pain and frustration while the other people he entrusted himself does not take care of him or the others in the ways that he hoped for. Thus his case and the way he experienced the conflict in the group offers another case regarding vulnerability, where it is not in concert and blocks the affective resonance. He restates a couple of times that his expectations from the group during the conflict they have been through frustrated him. He uses the word "unfortunately" repeatedly throughout the interview. He mentions his expectations as follows:

> I didn't want anyone of the people to leave. Not the guy, not the women… But I was hoping for a solution. People getting together or something... Because it is like… Then there is nothing to learn. I was maybe very optimistic [saying that] "let's learn something from that, let's bring the people together".

Butler (2015) also argues that "the dependency of human and other creatures on infrastructural support exposes a specific vulnerability that we have when we are unsupported" (p. 65). Letting go of our armors and embodying our vulnerable selves in order to find new sorts of supports and solidarities produces affective relations among us. Such risk is taken through hoping that we will receive support which very much coincides when Butler argues that "the conditions of support for the most vulnerable moments of life are themselves vulnerable" (p.131). Thus, affective intensities are shared and bind us together when we achieve to receive that vulnerable support. However, when the opposite happens, as it did with Abdel, the hope leaves its place to frustration and blocks our ability to affect and to be affected.

3. Sharing bodies and communities

> Affect is what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects.
>
> *Sara Ahmed, Happy Objects*

One specific aspect of affect is its ability to travel and to be shared among bodies. The "body" does not only imply a "human body". Nonhumans, part-bodies, and objects are capable to affect (Gregg & Seighworth, 2010; Ahmed, 2010). Thus, how affect travels and is shared is "found in those […] resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves." (Gregg & Seighworth, 2010, p.1). With those shared, circulating, and sticking aspects, affect

actually poses a confrontation through creating assemblies, against "an increasingly individualized sense of anxiety and failure" (Butler, 2015, p. 15).

I can very much relate to how the community performance creates ways to cope with the lonely struggle we undertake in life in so many different ways. I had some though times during the performance process of the Theatre Project. After a very hard week receiving negative responses from job applications and having so many personal problems, most of them related to immigration, I had to go back to perform with the group. My feet hurt, I had a headache, my eyes were swollen, and I felt ever depressed and grumpy. I let people know that I would be late and spent some extra time in bed hopelessly watching the ceiling. I hardly gathered myself together, left home, took the bus, and approached to our performance venue. We use the back door and it is usually locked. I knocked and waited. A colleague opened the door with a huge smile on the face giving me a big hug. The moment I entered in the performance space I saw people fixing things and making preparations for the performance, getting ready for a warm up. Everyone who saw me and my huge desperation dragging along with me just approached me one by one and gave me hugs. It felt like with every hug I became lighter and lighter in weight as I kicked away the desperation that tagged along. It felt like with every smiling face I saw my eyes were less swollen, my feet hurt less, my headache was gone. Then we started to warm up, got ready for the performance, and walked to our starting point where we gather the audience and begin our hiking performance. It is hard to put a finger on what was it that lifted me up that day. It might be feeling the others checking on me as we perform and realizing their caring gaze. It felt like my desperation was felt and circulated within the group and shortly after it left its place to a feeling of comfort and safety through an overwhelming care and support that was not verbally communicated. Whatever it was, it felt like an unseen web connected all of us together. That web became more and more felt as we gathered together, move together, met the audience, looked at each other in the eyes. I feel like I am surrounded with people who get me, who know and understand what I am being through.

At this point I would like to restate Mahmood's remarks as he was talking about the shared but not verbally communicated feelings and moods. When talking about the affective intensities that connect us, how we share the present moment and travelling feelings in between bodies he often uses the word "energy" :

> Theater it is when you lose your defense mechanism so you became more vulnerable and in this situation you can feel others also. You become more sensitive

to other energies. If someone is sad you feel it directly. And there is a unity in this performance. If someone is sad you are sad also, if they are happy you are happy. But what I think also is when there is one sad person in the middle of ten happy person the rest will uplift this energy and help him to raise his vibration and unite. So maybe it happens unconsciously. Maybe he says "I went to the theatre, I was sad, but when I came back home I was happy" It is energy. But if we have nine people feeling sad one person happy (*laughs)* I don't know…

The similarity of what I have experienced and how Mahmood describes such "energy" is a significant example of how affective intensities are circulated and shared. Both my remarks and his description of "energy" corresponds to how Hemmings refers to Tomkins (1963) regarding the way such "energy" moves in between bodies:

> Tomkins asked us to think of the contagious nature of a yawn, smile or blush. It is transferred to others and doubles back, increasing its original intensity. Affect can thus be said to place the individual in a circuit of feeling and response, rather than opposition to others. (Hemmings, 2005, p.552)

This explanation also corresponds with how affect functions in certain moments of community performances in a way to allow us to share our struggles in life without using words but only through existence, assembly, and interaction. However, affect is not an entity which is ensured by mere bodily existences or assemblies and it is actually sometimes oppositional (cf. Hemmings). It is not simply "produced" in certain ways. How it flourishes from vulnerabilities and in-between moments almost render how we share and circulate affect as vulnerable and in-between as well. Thus it might be the case that its circulation can be blocked in different ways. While Butler (2015) talks about our failures and anxieties, she discusses how these feelings can actually be products of what she calls "responsibilization". "Responsibilization" makes one believe that a person is actually "responsible" for the societal injustices and has the means to fight against those and take cautions individually as a "responsible" citizen (p. 16). It goes without saying that not every individual actually feels failed or anxious by those responsibilities. However, when some are actually bothered by such "responsbilization" and realize its challenges, and they assembly against it, they form an alternative to isolated and individualized forms of responsibilities through embodiment of a shared social condition and a plural form of coexistence (Butler, 2015, p.16). A similar form of assembly is created by these performance

projects which confronts the individualized failures and anxieties, through the shared and traveling affective intensities that offers a base for a common ground for care and understanding.

If I may go back to the point where I mention that the circulation of affect is blocked in different ways, I might mention the Dance Project during which I observed both how some performers were experiencing and uttering "responsibilization" and how some others were embodying an oppositional frustration as a reaction to such individualization of others. During the interview with Lena, we talked about the political implications of bringing together people of Malmö who come from many different backgrounds. She said that the political aspects of this gathering were important to her. However, she was more interested in how dance-making can develop each person individually in certain ways, rather than what such assembly signifies politically. The way she describes her own perspective on the issues that the migrants have both in the performance group and in Sweden in general is as follows:

> […] if you come [migrate] to a [new] country you have to do a lot as a newcomer. And the people receiving they [also] have to do a lot to bring this integration and to see that we learn from one another. And we need to be open. That's it. And if there is conflict you need experienced people. Because we had one conflict in the group but the organization [Dance Company management] said "Don't bother about it we take care of and you go on focusing on what you are going to do, the performance". That was super. They said we have a short of time you can't be thinking about what happened. It was a conflict between two people and no one else was there. So don't take part for one or the other person just leave it to us. Because I think if they stand out for this and you have 20 people it grows and grows and it is not worth it. It's better to solve problems with people who really are involved and with good people [experts] trying to solve this situation.

So Lena lets the institution take their "responsibility" which is dealing with the conflict as experts and she herself takes her own responsibility which she defines as to be "open" towards the others. During the project I could observe this attitude of "openness" through participants' body language as they were hugging, cuddling, and being close to one another, as well as through their attitudes which was mostly loving and caring. Lena also emphasizes the importance of bodily interaction and its impact on loving and caring for each other. However such bodily and behavioral closeness was not felt the same way by each participant. An "openness" that actually ignores certain issues and problems in the group created an opposite

reaction in some participants. Abdel specifically talks about his experience when he rather felt a strong "closedness" from the other participants during the project:

> Sometimes when you say "I feel tense when you are sitting with someone" and the other also feels the same. I can think about the group… Like what I said [before] about people the guys [in the group] and I said they were not connected with me. Actually I think they were not connected to each other either. So they don't contact each other. They would go out smoking but there were no connection. And I don't know why… It is really hard to say… And I try myself to offer going for a beer or something but yeah…. *thinks*… Maybe they were a bit closed. It also affected me to be closed. With other friends that could be very open but it depends how open they are. But there were a feeling of "closedness", not closeness.

It seems like Abdel felt an estrangement from the group especially during the occurred conflict when no one took any action but rather kept their private thoughts to themselves not to "disturb" the production process. In a similar way, Anya also complains about how people kept ideas to themselves in an isolating way referring to the same conflict:

> It is also important to talk about these things [the conflict]. I would be open to people who come and say about the prejudice they have against different people or different cultures. But this wasn't the case.

Thus one can observe that the capacity of affect to build closely tied groups and communities can be blocked in different cases such as responsibilization, individualization, time pressure and institutional interventions all of which can be understood through how Hemmings (2012) addresses the capacity of affect to create oppositional relationships that I will more elaborate during the next thematic chapter. It is also very interesting to see how different participants in the same project reflect very differently on the same situation, some embodying responsibilization and some taking side against it. One can also address the differences through impact of age, class, nationality and so on. Even though it is a significant dimension, my focus is on the assemblies and affective intensities on building communities. Thus, the impact of different sorts of intersectionalities might be a good point for a further research.

4. Bodies Together and Bodies Apart

> Even when they are not speaking or do not present a set of negotiable demands, the call for justice is being enacted: the bodies assembled "say" "we are not disposable," whether or not they are using words at the moment; what they say, as it were, is "we are still here, persisting, demanding greater justice, a release from precarity, a possibility of a livable life.
> *Judith Butler*, *Notes toward a performative theory of assembly*

Hemmings (2005) approaches affect "as critical object and perspective through which to understand the social world and our place within it" (p. 548). She further highlights the capacity of affect regarding its ability to create relational alliances as much as to construct oppositions within different contexts. According to her, affect's ability to build alliances is based on different occasions such as "a productive basis from which to seek solidarity with others [or] feeling the desire for transformation [which are] not based in a shared identity or on a presumption about how the other feels (Hemmings, 2012, p. 158). However in other different occasions the affective attributions to certain bodies and objects can actually end up in what she calls "negative affect". Negative affect can stick to or affect certain bodies in a way to build oppositionalities. For example she refers to the feelings of fear and shame and their affective capacities of bringing certain bodies together as Sedgwick (2003) argues, however she also discusses that they also put some bodies apart (Hemmings, 2005). I will go through these different relational and oppositional affective intensities through exemplifying how the subversion of "responsibilization" works, how affective solidarities are built, and how oppositions are created through blockage of affective intensities.

During the interview Leo highlights a couple of times the importance of helping each other and supporting each other within the performance communities. He claims that help and support brings people together in these performances. He describes his own troubles that he had upon his arrival to Malmö mostly regarding integration and language which he was able to address through community performance. The issue of "help" is important to him within a community and he emphasizes it a lot. However, he does not necessarily essentialize "help" when he talks about the issues and problems that the others have. According to Leo's remarks, individualization and isolated responsibilization is confronted by a notion of "help" which is based on communal problem solving and reciprocal support:

> One of the objectives of this community is to come together, so that we help each
> other and create a very strong single unit. It is one of prime objectives of [this]

community. But it takes time it is not very easy. It happens in time. People from different cultures come around, sit together. We always try to create an understanding between each other to reach this goal. The most important thing is to feel safe mentally, socially, bodily.

Butler (2015) argues that "the more one complies with the demand of 'responsibility' to become self-reliant, the more socially isolated one becomes and the more precarious one feels; and the more supporting social structures fall away for 'economic' reasons, the more isolated one feels in one's sense of heightened anxiety and 'moral failure.'" (p. 15). As a result, the sense of being a community, or in Butler's sense initiating an assembly, one transforms the individualized responsibilities into a collective embodiment of the issues to be dealt with. This transformation provides different mechanisms of support and interdependency. The kind of "help" that Leo emphasizes is a clear example of such transformation. It brings about an affective resonance that creates safe environments. During the interview he stresses that it makes him happy to be able to receive and provide collective help. As a result, interdependency, in contrast to responsibilization, becomes a source of happiness for Leo that enables him to build attachments and solidarities with the whole group (cf. Ahmed, 2010).

However it is also the case that the emphasis on responsibilization can create oppositional groups within the community, as it did during the Dance Project. Anya brings up this issue during the interview when she talks about the conflict I have mentioned earlier and how other's responses and the way that they define their responsibilities created barriers between her and certain people in the group. She complains about how particularly Swedish people interpreted the accused young man's walking out of the group as a betrayal to the community and to the schedule of the performance. She also talks about when she felt like leaving the performance as a result of the conflict. When she communicates this feeling to a fellow performer, she responds to Anya saying that "We cannot do this to [the choreographer]". Anya is frustrated by this response. She does not only feel responsible towards the choreographer (in fact she criticizes the choreographer's ignoring attitude), but she feels responsible for every single community members' wellbeing. Her insight is very much in line with how Leo describes "help". However the lack of unity regarding such care within the group and the individual responsibilization makes it difficult to achieve.

Another important aspect of building rather relational affections can be understood through the term "affective solidarity" (Hemmings, 2012). Hemmings (2012) builds this concept of

solidarity on affective intensities of desire for connection rather than aiming to build relationalities through common identities. Moreover, she argues that affective solidarity is actually built on affective dissonances. Such dissonance derives from the ontological and epistemological discrepancies between "who we are" and "who are we expected to be". According to Hemmings (2012) this contradiction should be the source of affective solidarities in which different modes of engagements are produced through the dissonances we suffer from. Mahmood also mentions such dissonance he experiences as a migrant in Sweden. He says that he hesitates regarding how he behaves in Sweden since he fears that how he is used to behave in his country might not be the way he supposed to behave in Sweden. However he also indicates that he does not have this hesitancy among his fellow community performers knowing that they share this common hesitancy and understand him. He continues as follows describing the uniting impact of these common feelings which are not verbally communicated but somehow acknowledged:

> We are starting individually. I come with my worries and problems in my mind. And I come to this place. Everyone come with their problems. And after practicing doing sound exercises moving our bodies and everything…. You feel like this group becomes more like one person. If one move his head everyone move his head it is like waves. When we see birds flying so you see about ten birds, if one of them go right, everyone go right or left. The group becomes more united. […] Energy I think. It is energy. Energy wants to melt in with other energies. But our fake identity prevents that 'no you come from here, I come from here', 'you are bla bla, I am bla bla…' But if we remove all these thoughts the energy wants to interact with each other, wants to become. What I experience in theatre you cannot experience in school . You don't feel like you are 'one'. I hope we could work with this energy everywhere. Like we are one person and we are focusing to do this goal. I didn't experience this before.

What Mahmood defines here is also in line with Butler's theorization of plural performativities (2015). She argues that these plural enactments are the results of "the understanding that a situation is shared, contesting the individualizing morality that makes a moral norm of economic self-sufficiency precisely under conditions when self-sufficiency is becoming increasingly unrealizable" (Butler, 2015, p.18). He also acknowledges the "negative affects" which he defines through embodiment of different identities. According to him, in the Theater

Company these negative affects do not exist and leave their place to a common "energy" that ties everyone together. However, remembering Hemmings' argumentations regarding how affect does not happen in an autonomous vacuum but it is very much embedded within a social and discursive context, one should address that such affective gatherings can also develop into oppositions, divisions, barriers, and separations. An opposition or division is not necessarily filled with negative indications. For example, during the Theater Project, I intensely felt that the existence of an audience made it much easier for me to realize that we actually formed a community together as a performance group through the way we positioned ourselves with regard to the audience even if it does not offer an opposition. In fact we tried to build connections with the audience as the performance group. Yet, the existence of an audience somehow enabled me to define ourselves as a certain community who has been together, worked together, built ties, shared things and I felt ever empowered in front of a group of audience.

There are other cases where such grouping has a more blocking impact on the way that the affective solidarities are built. One interesting point regarding this issue is the fact that how all three interviewees from the Dance Project answered the questions regarding being or feeling like a community or the established relationships between the members through referring to the occurred conflict during the project. Anya in a way summarizes the whole conflict from her own perspective that includes remarks from other people in the group. She argues that following the conflict, there were two groups formed within the group: Swedes and non-Swedes. Everyone could feel it but no one talked about it as if there was an invisible wall between the two group. I will try to go through her interpretation of the conflict referring to her remarks part by part:

> It [the conflict] affected everybody negatively I think. And… *(Thinks)* At that point I could see a clear division in the group. I think because… I am a Swedish speaker so in many ways I can interact with the Swedes like a Swede. And then I am also a foreigner and I can a bit easier interact with the foreigners. I could feel a divide based on opinionation. People were building their own opinions. And… (*Thinks)* I was very frustrated. I thought that the whole performance was so much about community building and opening yourself up to diversity. […] I feel like… clearly one of these people was in a position of less power. And I would say that's the person who is not from this country, who has left his home and who doesn't yet

understood the cultural or like how you supposed to behave in Sweden. And of course that person is much vulnerable in this situation […] I was quite frustrated with how Swedish or native people didn't seem to see this. I don't know I was surprised that like I felt like a lot of the people were *mmm* more upset with the fact that he left. He said that "I don't want to be a part of this, if this is accepted". People were more upset that he sort of left the community than the fact that someone might have said something racist to him. At least that is how I felt. […] Yeah I kind of felt the same [wanted to leave]. […] I was talking [about this] to [Name1]. And she told me "We can't do this to [the choreographer]". I was like… He was completely oblivious to this. His only goal was to get this performance on stage. After a while Dance Company tried to take over and resolved this somehow. But there I felt kind of passive. […] I guess in community building, it is also important to talk about these things. I would be open to people who come and say about the prejudice they have against different people or different cultures. But this wasn't the case.

We observe that Anya's positionality as a foreigner who have a good insight of the Swedish society allows her to have a deeper and more complicated perspective within the context of this conflict (cf. Haraway, 1988). What is really particular about the way she describes the conflict is her emphasis on all different sort of blockages that I mentioned throughout the analysis. In this long quote, we see how different people perceive the lack of different bodies in a group, responsibilization of some members towards the group as well as to the choreographer, and different states of in-betweenness when she mentions different sorts of vulnerabilities and challenges of migration. She is particularly describing how the challenging situations of more vulnerable people were not acknowledged by the group which made her feel frustrated. Responsibilization towards the choreographer who is a figure that does not take part in the discussions regarding community also affects her negatively. She also brings up the "openness" vs. "closedness" discussion that was the case during the second thematic chapter. She is not particularly against the people who have certain prejudices but the fact that people keep those thoughts to themselves and be secretive about it makes her feel uneasy. Such isolation creates boundaries and tension within the group. She further elaborates on how the way she perceives oppositional groups:

I also think that is such a cultural thing. Swedish people are definitely more bureaucratic than other cultures. […] Like for them it is a big crime to leave a project. "We have deadline, we have schedule, how can you do that?" […]Swedish

people are not used to somebody standing up taking so much space kind of aggressively saying "I think that is wrong and you owe me an apology" in front of everybody. That's not the Swedish way. That kind of dissonance made them feel like "this is wrong". This dissonance made more of this difference [separation]. […] I experience it a lot in my life. Many times foreigners are trying to convey a message but Swedish people see only the way they are conveying it. "Oh you now he started screaming in a meeting". That's the only thing they see you know. […] Maybe that's the reason of the conflict.

Anya feels as if there were two certain oppositional groups during the conflict. One group is constituted by Swedes which she considers in a position of relatively more power and the other one is constituted by non-Swedes who are in a position of less power. According to her the culture of the Swedish people in the group, which is the dominant culture of the country in which the performance is taking place, have a tendency to create individual responsibilizaton and to ignore the certain vulnerabilities of others. This is very much in line with how Hemmings (2005) emphasizes the importance of social context within which affect occurs. Different ways that the vulnerable expresses or embodies their frustration in the ways that the Swedes are not familiar with create a negative affect and form oppositional blocks. It is so interesting that she uses the actual word dissonance which is referred in different manners by Hemmings (2012) in her argumentation regarding affective solidarities. In this case such dissonance become a sort of negative affect separating the group in two and block the capacity of affect to be shared and multiplied. However, Hemmings (2012) sees those dissonances created by the epistemological and ontological discrepancies as a source of affective intensities and solidarities. This is not the case within the whole group but one can observe that this dissonance becomes a source of affective solidarity within non-Swedes in the group. Anya talks about this saying that:

And on the other hand [Name2] and [Name3], they were very upset because they were like "how can somebody get away with something like this, why she is still here?". It was very weird for us and [Name2] was "I feel like maybe I should leave. By staying I feel like I am taking a stance for this". Yeah, I kind of felt the same. Even though they [Dance Company management] said "let's not talk [within the group] about it [the conflict]" I still felt it [the conflict]. Me and [Name3] was feeling it. [Name2] was almost crying for this reason. Because the feeling is still there.

We can still observe some resonating connections among the group. The open communication and entrusting of one another sticks this group of friends together. We see anger, frustration, sorrow which is shared and circulated among this small group. With all these feelings, they position themselves in an opposition to others who do not embody the same vulnerability and who do not take part in the discussion on the occurred conflict. It seems like the "emotional burden" in the group is not distributed in regulated amounts thus the control of the situation is lost which actually goes against the main aims of community performance (Boehm & Boehm, 2003, p. 295). It is almost like affective intensities are produced and shared by Anya and other performers that she mentions, yet those intensities are destined to be trapped within this small group as they shoulder the whole emotional burden that came out of the conflict. Their vulnerabilities make them more open to affect and to be positively as well as negatively affected. Even if they remain as an oppositional group, we can observe how a form of affective solidarity is built among them. Although such solidarity does not reflect on the whole performance community, it becomes a way to cope with the feelings of passivity, frustration, and anger, a smaller platform where they embrace each other's vulnerabilities, another in-between space where the affect flourishes from.

Conclusion

Hemmings (2005) reacts against the contemporary fascination with affect as an attitude that usually ignores its social meaning and mystifies the term in different ways. Throughout this study so many friends and colleagues who were curious about my research but did not know what affect theory is about asked me what it was. When I briefly described them what affect is, I could observe a very similar fascination that Hemmings mentions, if not confusion or an empty look accompanied by a nodding head. The most common comment I receive was how enchanting the theory sounds. As much as I believe that it has an enchanting side that proves the different capacities of our bodies, I always reminded people that affect is no magic. It is not a magic wand that makes people connect to each other with one move and make them hate each other with the next. On the contrary, it is very much embedded in a social structure where so many dynamics surround affect such as power structures, institutions, culture, politics and so on (Hemmings, 2005).

In the theory section I have very briefly introduced the major highlights of my theoretical tools including affect theory and performative theory of assembly. I have intentionally kept this part concise and further elaborated on theory within the analysis chapter. Using affect theory together with the performative theory of assembly to make an understanding of how the community performance create or fail to create actual communities in different contexts worked very well. As I already mentioned, affect theory has a tendency to be misunderstood as floating and amorphous (and sometimes it actually is but that does not render it insignificant). Thus, using assembly theory to further elaborate on how affect functions within these gatherings allowed me to build a ground on which I can address affect and how it is produced, shared, and circulated through addressing actual assemblies of bodies.

The methods I have employed was suitable for the subject matter of the study. Ethnographic research provided me with a deeper insight of the projects I was involved in. I did not only gather data on how community building happens, but also I had a perspective on larger institutional structures around these projects which can be a good material for further research. Embodied research also served very well considering that I was actually working on embodied practices. It enabled me to produce data through my emotional and bodily experience which is central to such study (St. Pierre, 1997). Interviewing a smaller group of people allowed me to

have in depth information about each person's experience. Since the aim of this study is not gathering data from masses, rather to go deep into how individual bodily experiences have an impact on community making, having less people from different backgrounds served well for this purpose. One challenge I had during the interviews was to make people speak about their actual emotional and bodily experiences. Some were really open about it and comfortably described it while with some others I had to walk around the issues for a while and address questions in different ways to get them to talk about those experiences. In the beginning I felt hesitant to use the theoretical tools to create thematic subtitles for the analysis. I was afraid to come up with clusters way too focused on theory might prevent me from paying attention to other significant data which does directly speak to the theory but just as important. However as I started coding and creating alternative schemes of themes, I realized that such theoretical schematization just served well. It enabled me to easily connect the data to the theory and to further elaborate on the theory.

The kind of research I conducted relies on individual bodily and affective experiences and their impact on community building within the structures of community performance. There is not one sort of community performance, one single form of body that we can experiment on, or one sort of community. Thus it is hard for me to write a conclusion that offers different forms of correlations or a grand closure that explains the whole ethnographic process. However, one certain thing that I came up with during this research is that bodily assemblies and affect certainly have an impact on building communities. There is not one single way that they operate, but basing my arguments on the projects I followed, I might conclude that different forms of vulnerabilities and different states of in-betweenness and their embodiment by the community performers are the most common things which constitutes a common ground for these assemblies. If these embodied states are shared among the group or at least acknowledged and embraced, then the affective intensities find space to flourish and form closely tied communities. However, when there is not a base for acknowledgment or a common ground that these embodied vulnerabilities can be communicated, the affective intensities have a tendency to be blocked. Such blockages can end up in individual frustration, forming groups within a group, or creating oppositionalities. Yet, there is still a possibility that we can create smaller spaces of affective solidarities even among the oppositionalities. How we connect through our vulnerable sides, how we gather together, and how we entrust our fragile bodies to one another are the main sources that enable solidarities and building actual communities within these community performances.

For me, the most fascinating and important part of the research and analysis process was to see how different forms of knowledge productions were flourished through community performance (cf. Enria, 2016). These performances stick out from the traditional performing art forms and their institutionalized ways of creating performances [4]. In this way they provide a platform for bodily and artistic expression for those who would not have an access to it within those traditional structures. Even though in this research, I focused on how affect and assemblies have an impact on community building within these projects, my ethnographic work provided me so much data and became a big source of inspiration for further research. I hope to continue work within the same field and focus on different dimensions of community performance in my future research. I am happy to be able to bring together feminist theories and theories from cultural studies within an artistic field. Hence I wish that this study serves as a good source of inspiration for those who work within similar interdisciplinary fields. Lastly, I hope that this research stands as an interesting case study for community building or community performance practitioners as it offers important individual insights on embodiment, affect, and solidarity.

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[4] I should underline that this was not the case during the Dance Project. I believe such discrepancy between the idea of having the community on stage but not employing the actual means of community performance stood in the way of bringing people together.

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