



LUND UNIVERSITY

# Closing a Museum

*A Cultural Analysis on the Dismantling Process of the  
Museum of Movements in Malmö*

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## Abstract

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An attempt was made to create a museum that focuses on the issues of democracy, migration and human rights by the Swedish authorities in 2015. As a result of the feasibility study of such an institution, the Museum of Movements (MoM) began to operate in its temporary location in Malmö. In September 2020, it was decided that the museum would no longer be financed by the Swedish government and the dismantling process started. This thesis aims to understand the role of the MoM in relation to affect and emotion. In doing so, it investigates and analyses the practices and the meaning derived from them among the museum staff and the communities to figure out the social consequences of the museum's dismantlement. Drawing on the studies of cultural heritage and the concepts of the museum, affect and emotion, and employing a cultural analytical approach, the analysis is based on the data collected by using ethnographic methods such as participant observations, individual interviews, autoethnography and official documents. Therefore, it concludes that the closure of the museum changed the meaning of the museum for the people involved and caused a loss of trust in the authorities. The civil society was disappointed and their dream was not fulfilled. This study could help to establish the lessons learned from the MoM so that they can be applied in other similar contexts.

Keywords: museum closure; participatory museums; Museum of Movements; migration; democracy; civil society; emotional heritage; co-creation

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## 1. Introduction

Museums are thought to be an important aspect of our daily lives all around the world. Whilst some might never have been in such places, for others museums are a place to meet, to visit an exhibition, to watch a film, to see artwork, to learn a certain topic, to join a specific workshop, to read a favourite book or even to have a cup of coffee at the cafe or restaurant inside. Although the Covid-19 situation in 2020 and 2021 hit the museum sector harder financially than many other sectors, the sector experienced gains as well. One example is the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, which announced that the digital visitor numbers of the museum soared during the pandemic (Cascone, 2021). The form of experience may have been changed for visitors (physical to digital), yet the experience itself remained as a part of everyday life.

Museum professionals may worry whether digital media will replace the physical museum experience or not. As the consequences of Covid-19 have proven, it may be possible to exist in both worlds – to work with physical and digital experiences. Aiming to exist in both worlds, rather than thinking of it as a kind of competition, will benefit both actors (museums and visitors) in the long term. In addition, working in both worlds may help to address other issues such as representation, collection, collaboration, and inclusion. In a TED conference in 2018, Ariana Curtis, curator at the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., spoke about how museums can be more inclusive. She stresses the inclusion of those whose stories remained hidden or unheard in museums. She suggests incorporating everyday stories of women, not only the ones who are recognised as inspiring or aspirational. Reflecting the realities of daily life, museums can be places where histories of everyday practices are shared. In line with her suggestions, more museums are becoming increasingly aware of issues of representation. Moreover, it is fair to say that the urgency of such a call for change is not solely the choices of the museum institutions. These are demands from the communities outside of them. Museums should reflect the society in which it is located. The everyday life people carry on in the same city or neighbourhood may be surprisingly different to one another. Therefore, museums have a great potential to enhance residents' understanding of differences and grow compassion and empathy towards them.

In the introductory chapter of the book “Museums in a Time of Migration”, migration scholars Christina Johansson and Pieter Bevelander (2017) state that museums are quite important in affecting one's point of view about the world as children visit museums, often as part of the school curriculum (p. 10). Then they briefly mention how the roles of museums

have evolved over time and that these roles are still changing. Once a sign of power and dominance, later a tool to create “good citizens” and to build “national identity”, museums’ roles have recently been challenged by globalisation (p. 15). Beginning with the change in the political situation in the sixties and seventies, museums became more interested in “ordinary people and socially marginalized groups” and “to become more self-reflexive and democratic” (Johansson & Bevelander, 2017, p. 16). While incorporating multiple voices (marginalised groups such as indigenous people, minority groups, immigrants and refugees), they began to investigate intangible heritage which means community practices and expressions to foster a sense of belonging among community members. This has been the case for Scandinavian museums as well since they work with new approaches such as hybridity, transnationalism, and change (Goodnow, 2008). It is important to comprehend these tendencies to navigate the complexity of particular implications that can be drawn in the end by using the case of this thesis.

Another layer of the change in the sector in Europe is to create specific migration museums employing different perspectives as stated by anthropologist and museologist Sharon Macdonald (2016). As will be clear later, the Museum of Movements (MoM) was an attempt to fit this trend from the Swedish state and the City of Malmö. Looking up to the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York, they wanted to have one democracy and migration museum in Sweden. This wish did not come without challenges. Since the issues that they tried to deal with are difficult because of the subjects involved (marginalised groups, vulnerable people such as immigrants, refugees, LGBTQI+ community and artists at risk), the work needed to be undertaken very carefully, which will be elaborated later.

One must not ignore the connection between museums and cultural heritage. As declared by sociologist Peggy Levitt (2015), cultural heritage is currently used as an important tool to present national identities. The image of culture and heritage are present as “bounded entities” at the museums as she puts it and this is not limited to Nordic countries (Gradén & O’Dell, 2018, p. 320). As a part of cultural strategy, specifically in a Nordic context, inclusion started to enter the agenda a while ago, so that the state-funded museums have given some space to the national minorities as well as an effort for accessibility for all (Gradén & O’Dell, 2018, pp. 320-321). That also means a perspective shift in museums from materials to intangible heritage.

Align with archaeologist Laurajane Smith’s argument (2006), folklorist Valdimar Tr. Hafstein (2018) argues that “heritage is about change” (p. 9). It changes practices and discourses while the meaning and usage of it are being changed. Since these changes affect

the aspects of our daily lives, cultural analysis becomes crucial to investigate such practices and meanings. Focusing on everyday life it aims to illuminate various cultural representations and practices to understand the effects and influences both in the past and present. For this reason, cultural analysis is an appropriate approach to use in this study since everything, no matter how big or small, is shaped and happens in everyday life. Hafstein (2018) says that intangible heritage is also about “such cultural forms, their performance, their circulation, and their uses” (p. 4), thus it is not an uncanny choice to use cultural analysis in the study of heritage and museums. The MoM was working towards collecting stories by using oral history methods as can be investigated in relation to such heritage.

### **1.1 Background**

“Malmö is a natural hub for people and cultures from worldwide. The city’s inhabitants come from around 180 countries and speak some 150 different languages” proclaimed the City of Malmö’s official website. With a population of 344,166, it is the third-largest city in Sweden (Malmö stad, n.d.). With its large harbour, Malmö has served as a port/gateway to and from Sweden. Since 2000, the Øresund Bridge, connects Malmö with the greater area of Copenhagen, Denmark. In 2015, over 150,000 immigrants and refugees arrived in Sweden via this bridge. Today, the city of Malmö estimates that about one-third of Malmö’s residents have different countries of origin (Malmö stad, n.d.). In an effort to reflect the diversity of the city in both historic and contemporary times, the City of Malmö had put forward an idea to establish a museum focusing on democracy and migration in Malmö. In 2015, perhaps as an effect of receiving refugees, the proposal was submitted to the Minister of Culture and Democracy, requesting this kind of museum to open. The Swedish government allotted a grant for the City of Malmö to carry out a feasibility study to find out whether or not this type of museum was needed in Sweden. In addition to the feasibility study, The Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare arranged a conference titled *Museums in Times of Migration and Mobility: Process of Representation, Collaboration, Inclusion and Social Change* (Elg, 2019, p. 460). The results of the feasibility study were published in 2017 and an anthology based on papers from the conference followed suit (Johansson & Bevelander, 2017). According to both publications, a museum of migration and democracy in Malmö would help to make varied cultures and their stories visible in Sweden.

In 2019, the temporary place of the MoM where the staff was supposed to test the ideas that emerged from the previous studies conducted was determined to be located at

Bergsgatan 20 in the centre of Malmö. Starting without any inherited collections or archives, the aim was to democratize all the processes including developing methodologies and ethics from the beginning. In the temporary place, MoM continued to engage and collaborate with existing and new stakeholders under the museum's programme, full of varied events and activities.

Growing up, I listened to the stories of migration from my family. They had to migrate from Bulgaria to Turkey in 1989 due to the assimilation policies by the Bulgarian government at the time. Their story of migration ends with hardships and difficulties to cope with such as being partially excluded by locals even though they shared the same ethnicity. The problems of adaption come with economic issues and communication complications because of using a distinct accent and different usage of words and even feeling the impact of growing up in a totally different political regime. The challenges they faced surely had an effect on me, also in unexpected ways. Eventually, I became academically interested in migration and heritage issues. In September 2020, while in the middle of my project that I was doing together with the museum team, we heard the government cut the funding and the museum was going to close down at the end of the year. Creating a museum from scratch and then closing it down? It looked like such a rare situation and I chose to examine this unique process. One would assume that the closure of a museum means only a dismantlement of its physical space. However, it is much more than that.

## 1.2 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to understand the role of the Museum of Movements in relation to affect and emotion by investigating and analysing the practices among museum staff, and the meaning they make for themselves and their stakeholders in order to find out the social consequences of the museum's dismantlement. In order to achieve this aim, the following main research questions with sub-questions for each chapter will guide the thesis:

- **How did the museum team/staff describe their experience at the MoM?** What were their anticipations? What kind of museum was the MoM?
- **How did the community perceive and define the MoM?** What kind of activities were held in the museum? What were the motivations of them to involve in the MoM?
- **How did the staff and the community interpret the closure of the MoM?** Is it a loss? If so, what are the effects/consequences?

In writing this thesis, my ambition is to contribute to museum and cultural heritage studies from the specific perspective of applied cultural analysis. Another ambition is to provide an example (i.e. MoM) to be used in academia and the culture sector by including staff and participants' experiences. The last one is to show the value of ethnographic methods to gain deep insights into specific contexts such as cultural institutions.

Also, my intention and my focus are to show what disappears when a museum closes down. It is important to problematise the closure of the museum as even it seems to be closing the doors of the physical place only, yet there is more in that. I do not try to define what the loss is here, rather I try to describe what it does to the people involved during the process. By describing what happens when the decision comes and the museum loses finances, this thesis is more process-oriented and attempts to show how things can change and as well as discussing what this change means to people as it develops.

### **1.3 Previous Research**

This section explains some of the previous studies conducted related to my research topic. There is an abundance of research on visitors and programmes held at the museums in addition to the research on collections and exhibitions. I will not explore topics such as these. I am more interested in the museums' roles in society as well as collaborations and community engagement. That's why looking into the previous research on such issues as well as exploring the museums related to migration, democracy issues and human rights is important as the MoM has been aspiring to be that kind of museum. Aside from the studies related to these topics, studies on affect and emotions at heritage sites or in museums are explored. Yet most of these studies examine the visitor's point of view and they explore the reasons and motivations of the visitors. I, however, focus mostly on the staff as they provide crucial insights into the whole process of the MoM and participant organisations' (communities) experiences to some extent. It is also important to state that the community gathering around the MoM is constituted not only by individuals but also civil society organisations which can be seen as members of that community by themselves. Throughout this thesis, the term of community is used on different levels. While the term indicating the MoM's community includes museum professionals, cultural practitioners, civil society organisations and activist groups, arguments that are derived from the application of theories on the case of this thesis, and generalisations according to the outcome of the examination of the MoM utilize this term of community in a much broader sense including marginalised groups and minorities.

Keeping the role of museums in nation-building in the past in mind, one of the views on museums, in general, is that “museums can and must reinvent themselves into viable and socially relevant institutions for the twenty-first century” (Levitt, 2017, p. 37). Levitt (2017) focuses on the question of whether museums are creating global citizens and their means of assistance to create diverse communities. Levitt (2017) argues that the main impactful element of the cultural fabric of a community is how diversity is managed within. Management of diversity includes how it is perceived and opens a road for more categories and labels or whether it is seen as a problem while, on the other hand, diversity itself can be considered as an opportunity. What is important to note here that perception of diversity and immigration has a direct effect on how cultural institutions act or perform in this area and Levitt (2017) exemplifies this using the museums from Sweden, Boston and Qatar. Another work of Levitt (2012) shows that diversity management varies depending on the countries’ global role. Though Sweden’s desire to create global citizens with its commitment to justice and equality “one has to look harder to find the diversity within” (Levitt, 2012, p. 39). The MoM has also been affected by these discussions, strategies and methods that they employed were shaped accordingly, which will be mentioned later.

An important issue addressed by museum scholar Richard Sandell and researcher and museum professional Eithne Nightingale (2012) and activist and museum professional Bonita Bennett (2017a) is that the issues of equality, social justice and human rights are moving towards the centre of the thought process of the museums. This approach has an observable impact on amendments in policies and the museums searching for new ways of depictions covering the current diverse demographic structures. With this point of view, museums have an impactful contribution to social change (Bennett, 2017a). Therefore, museums have the ability to promote or effectuate more tolerant and inclusive communities (Gouriévidis, 2014). Moreover, there is an emphasis on the inclusion of the excluded (O’Neill and Silverman, 2013, as cited in Bennett, 2017a, 2017b), otherwise, the risk of continuation of the exclusion is inevitable in the rights-based approaches as visible in the article of museum scholar and professional Bernadette Lynch (2017). Hence, it is important to implement invisible and unheard voices and stories by reflecting themselves when working with communities. There are hopeful example practices such as the case of the Women Making Herstory project by activist, writer and journalist Parvin Ardalan. Telling the stories of immigrant women that are not visible in Swedish history, the project managed to build trust and carry out an inclusive project despite the hierarchies and power relations with many collaborations by using various platforms (Ardalan, 2017).

Community engagement has a significant gravity for the museums and is a desired achievement to reach yet not always accomplished fully. One thing that is striking in the research of Bennett (2017a, 2017b) is the example of District Six Museum, which is a place where legal, social, and cultural rights can be unravelled regarding migration and human rights issues. It is aware of “the power dynamics inherent in knowledge production” so they “consciously set out to engage with former residents as co-creators, co- authors and co-owners within the various fields of the museum’s work-with all the complexity that this entails” (Bennett, 2017a, p. 6). Hence, the museum, which is a customary place to tell the past, is able to transform itself to contend with the current issues while visitors as observers become active participants for desired change (Bennett, 2017a, p. 9). This museum was one of the examples of dialogical and democratic museum practices from around the world that the MoM has been following.

There are several studies on affect and emotions in heritage and museums research and most of them investigate the interaction between visitors and the objects in museums, how people react to certain kinds of content (Bagnall, 2003; Dahl et al., 2013; Mason et al., 2018; Schorch et al., 2017; Smith, 2006; Witcomb, 2013). Scholars Jasmijn Rana, Marlous Willemsen and Hester Dibbits (2017) state that differences among people do not refuse practices and items linked to heritage. Considering the differences between some parts of the community might have a negative perspective towards those practices and items. However, having a different state of emotions does not waive the shared practices regarding heritage. Based on these arguments, Rana et. al (2017) develop the concept of emotion networking as a methodology building on the work of Smith and Campbell (2016).

All these studies refer to museums that work with migration in relation to diversity and human rights-based approach. They advocate for the importance of working with such issues. Moreover, they address the changing role of museums in the current global environment and how museums can engage with their communities while being relevant internationally. This part cannot be completed without cultural analysis. In an MA thesis titled *Museum as Activist* (2018), by using the MoM as a case study, Olga Zabalueva looks for an answer to the question of whether it is possible for a museum to act as an activist and talks about the feasibility study process. In another article, Zabalueva (2019) discusses how this project becomes related to the politics in Sweden, although it was claimed “the least political museum” and thus the importance of reflexive standpoint that it must have (p. 51). My study builds on this previous research, while also adding a new chapter to the story. As it follows the process after the feasibility study was completed and focuses on the

dismantlement, I add the perspective of the museum team and participants. In this sense, my study offers a case in point while also having the potential to fill in the gap in the literature by investigating the meaning of dismantling a museum in a Swedish context. Additionally, it contributes to the academic discussion by demonstrating the value of cultural analysis in the area of the chosen topic for it would not be quite possible to understand such meanings and practices emerging in the process without being close to the subjects and working with the participatory methods.

#### **1.4 Disposition**

The disposition of this thesis is based on the three main research questions. Each chapter aims to find an answer to those questions while analysing the empirical material. Starting with an introduction, including the background of the study to contextualise it, the aim and research questions as well as specific previous research on the issue, I discuss the methodology and ethical issues, then I conclude with the part of theoretical framework and concepts I use in this study.

The first chapter explains the results of the feasibility study conducted for the MoM and the settlement of the temporary place given in Malmö. The reasons behind this idea as well as the reasons of the museum form chosen are attempted to be answered. Then, I discuss the visions and dreams of the museum team and what kind of personal gains they had as a result of the museum project process, specifically focusing on networking and knowledge production.

The second chapter focuses on the community engagement processes with concrete examples from the museum's operations. It starts with the ethics that were uttered often by the museum team and the activities that taken place. The question of what "co-creation" means to the museum team and what it meant in the literature are shown as well as the trust between civil society and the museum. At last, the motivations of the participants and organisations are explained, and where they lead, how the MoM was perceived.

The third chapter deepens the argument about "the loss" as a result of the dismantlement of the MoM and the consequences besides what it means to the staff and civil society. Lastly, the conclusion summarises the main points made in all the chapters showing the answers to the guiding research questions. The part about the future research as well as the applicability of the findings and analysis is also included.

## 2. Methods and Materials

This section of the thesis describes the methods used as well as the reasons behind the choices to help come to an understanding of the issues related to the aim of the study. Also, the materials produced by certain methods will be explained while positioning the researcher in relation to the field. In the end, ethical reflections will be presented before moving on to the section on theories and concepts.

### 2.1 Entering the Field

The first encounter I had with the MoM was at the end of April in 2020. After the meeting with one of the managers of the museum, the thinking process about the project I could propose to them started for me. After a few meetings, the need for help in communications for the Safe Havens conference came out and, in this way, I got involved in the conference team in late August 2020. Safe Havens is an annual conference and international gathering of artists where arts organisations, artists residencies, activists, human rights and free speech organisations, legal specialists, funders and policymakers who protect and defend artistic freedom share and use their experiences. It has been a part of the MoM's programme since the beginning of the museum activities. The aim of the project I was working on was "to investigate the Safe Havens conference to identify the audience in order to figure out how a strategic communications plan could be developed for long-term engagement". By using ethnographic methods such as individual interviews, participant observations and netnography as well as follow-up interviews to get feedback on the strategies designed, I conducted fieldwork that lasted 2 months. One of my ambitions was to show the value of ethnography to the people I was working with, as suggested in Ladner's study (2016). Therefore, 2 months later, I managed to deliver the report prepared to the organisers of the conference. It was a strategic communications plan including the analysis and suggestions. Right after that, I started working as a part-time communications officer for the Safe Havens team at the MoM. With the dismantlement of the museum, my job also ended at the end of December in 2020. Overall, I spent 4 months with the museum staff and other participants both physical and digital and this enabled me to do my fieldwork for the study. It was conducted both at the temporary location of the MoM in Malmö and digital space (mostly on the platform of Zoom). During this time (August - December 2020), apart from the project done for the conference, most of the materials I use here were collected solely for the purpose of this study. My methodological approach is ethnographic which is about qualitative techniques. The empirical data consists of fieldwork notes (field diary),

photos and videos taken by me, meeting notes, presentations, public reports and documents as well as online news. As I combine very different kinds of materials and methods, it can be also named as a bricolage approach (Ehn et al., 2016; O'Dell & Willim, 2014) which is used by many ethnographers and cultural analysts. In addition to this, drawing inspiration from Latour, ethnographers Tom O'Dell and Robert Willim (2011, 2014) see ethnography as composition as it is not a linear practice. Compositional practices like cultural analysis allow us to move back and forth and use our intuition and creativity (Janesick, 2001) and previous experiences. With this in mind, I have been trying to link numerous phenomena and experiences to various strategies and approaches tried in the field. Now, the main methods and sources of this thesis will be explained in detail.

## **2.2 Participant Observation**

Since I was a part of the team at the museum, I had a chance to explore everyday practices at the MoM. Sociologist Robert K. Merton (1972) points out that there are two aspects of the access to field participants: “insider doctrine” and “outsider doctrine” (as cited in Labaree, 2002, p. 100). Insider and outsider positions were very pickable in my case as I was working for the museum and mostly behaving like someone from the staff. Spending quite a time at the physical venue of the museum enabled me to gain insights provided by “intimate knowledge” (Labaree, 2002, p. 100) [or “insider knowledge” (Davies, 1998, p. 104)] for an outsider. Being an outsider can be considered as a disadvantageous position as it is not quite possible to obtain the knowledge inside and because of the difficulty to find certain informants. That's why being an insider was a beneficial position for me as it has its own advantages. Gatekeepers to access informants were not needed and it was not difficult to collect the materials.

I spent every weekday between late August and early November 2020 at the MoM and got to know people and their work habits and the museum routines first-hand. In November and December, the process continued mostly digitally. Participating and observing at the same time not only immersed me in the field but also yielded me to use all of my senses to capture details such as moods, feelings, sounds, rhythms and smells as expressed by Löfgren (2016). Field notes were taken based on the observations. Sometimes I was writing about things happening (or not happening) at the same time I was experiencing them but there were days I took notes afterwards, perhaps later in the same day. There is no one way of writing observations and researchers have their own ways of taking notes. Also, what is important and necessary to note during an instance is not apparent (Tjora, 2006; Wolfinger,

2002) and it may become valuable later in the process (Wolfinger, 2002). Hence, in my field diary, some notes are short and obscure, some others are long and very descriptive as well as full of emotions or thoughts I had. The field diary is 45 pages in total. And the time period that it was written was between the last week of August and the third week of October. Also, there are one-page observation notes from the first meeting in April 2020 I had and the last gathering with the museum staff in December 2020 at the museum.

Although there may be hidden ethical and methodological challenges related to insiderness (Labaree, 2002, pp. 109-118), the position I had and participant observations are a complement to individual interviews (Aspers, 2009) which will be elaborated after this part. They are particularly useful for the emotional aspect of the study. However, I am aware of the possibility that part of my observations can be based on my own perceptions of the informants rather than “objective” reflections.

### **2.3 Interviews and Transcription**

The challenges of the method of interviewing cannot be denied (Davies, 1998; Nairn et al., 2005) as people just tell stories, their interpretations to the interviewer. Sociologist Margarethe Kusenbach (2003) refers to the limitations of this method by saying that “the particular interactional dynamics and the physical constraints of most ethnographic interview encounters separate informants from their routine experiences and practices in ‘natural’ environments” (p. 462). One of the strategies I had to overcome this limitation was conducting interviews in the “natural environments” of the informants. With some exceptions, most of the interviews took place at the MoM or participants joined from their homes. The other idea I had was to be careful not to interrupt the informants and let the conversation flow arguably freely even though my questions were quite structured. The answers found their way and sometimes got mixed with other questions. Interviews generated beneficial data for this study as they led me to understand what the MoM means in a broader sense.

Interviews constitute an essential part of my empirical data. As indicated above, there were no serious problems in recruiting informants. Personal connections made since the beginning of fieldwork were used in the recruitment process. Still, it was not a fully successful process as surprisingly, one person did not reply at all to the interview request made by email. One person promised to answer my questions via email yet, did not despite the fact that there were two reminders. The same situation occurred with another person as well, the only difference in this one that there was only one reminder. Consequently, out of

12 potential informants, a total of 10 individual interviews were conducted with nine informants both in real life and in digital space. One informant was interviewed twice: before and after the closure decision.

Anthropologist Katarina Graffman and Kristina Börjesson (2012) mention that flexibility is of the essence in cultural analysis (p. 102). For instance, at first, my intention was to meet with all of my informants physically but due to the Covid-19 situation and geographical locations of some informants, this could not happen. While six of the interviews were conducted at the MoM, the other four were held on Zoom. It would not be correct if I say I observed any significant differences between the two types of interviews. Except for one of the online interviews, all informants' cameras were on to be able to see each other and to make the conversation as interactive as possible. Perhaps, my focus points were not required to obtain details including full body language. The length of the interviews were 30 to 75 minutes. All of them were audio-recorded with consent and deleted after transcription was done. This was communicated to the informants at the beginning of all sessions. Unfortunately, there was no language preference as I could speak only English and Turkish at the time when interviews were held. Nevertheless, I do not see it as a disadvantage since all of my informants speak fluent English.

Informants were varied in terms of age, ethnicity, socio-economic position, etc. but demographics are not relevant in this study, as different themes that will categorise the informants. As an insider, I hoped that my position helped to erase such power positions (one I hold as a researcher, the other they hold as informants). The questions asked were thematically prepared and structured. There were sub-questions to guide them but not like the questionnaires with fixed questions. Informants were able to modify their answers during the conversation yet I carefully followed the flow to avoid getting off track. They were not interrupted when there were no time concerns.

Informants were informed both orally and written. All of the interviews were voluntary based and the informants were able to decide whether to take part in this study or not. The purpose of the interview was mentioned including the aim of the study with possible research questions. These were written in the email template that was formed individually according to the informants, yet all of the emails included the same initial information. At the beginning of all sessions, I, again, explained these details. They were told in advance that they would be anonymous even though some of them were comfortable taking part with their real names. Yet, I chose to give all of my informants' pseudonyms. This also provided me relief in terms of the risk of exposing their identity as it is my duty to ensure that the

information they gave me can do no harm to them. The informants in this thesis are Anna, Charlotte, Diane, Emily, Gustav, Isabella, Javier, Peter, Stella. These names do not represent any national or ethnic background of the informants, they were given randomly.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim after each was conducted. Recordings were about eight hours and the transcriptions were 117 pages long in total. Whole dialogues were written including my own words and expressions. Transcriptions include some notes I took (during the interviews or after), especially about facial expressions and feelings observed. This is important to note as the study incorporates the emotional aspect of the topic. Also, it is clear that I had a role in creating these texts as linguist Mary Bucholtz (2000) confirms, my own interpretations shaped them and have an impact on the final versions used in the analysis stage. As I reviewed the transcriptions, there were things that I missed during the original interviews, and much more themes and issues became visible to me through the transcriptions as said: “people seldom address the issues or themes of an interview in the order we “expect” them to. Thus, a single answer or story told by the interviewee may actually address several different themes or questions” (Aspers, 2009, p. 10). Hence, this proved itself in this study.

## **2.4 Autoethnography**

It should not be forgotten that we are always a part of the field that we investigate. Keeping this in mind, I decided to include my own experiences as well as material by using the autoethnography method. Using myself as a starting point had an impact on the way this study was designed. Also having a hard time avoiding negative and frustrating feelings throughout the investigation, it was necessary to use myself (my body and mind) to have a deeper understanding of the issues in this study (my experiences at the MoM and my definitions, interpretations, and perceptions, etc.). Other people (informants) might have been able to conceal some difficult emotions but this was not the case for me. It is not quite possible to ignore one’s own feelings and thoughts when constantly reflecting. Personally, I do not believe emotions explored here can be fully uncovered without the researcher’s own. Yes, it is subjective but ethnographer Billy Ehn (2011) claims that “subjectivity should therefore not necessarily be seen as a threat to ethnographic detachment” (p. 61) and adds “instead you should transform it into an analytic resource, by treating it in the same way as other people’s subjective experiences” (p. 61) meaning that researcher themselves can be an informant as well in their own studies with great attention. The time I spent at the field felt longer than it was because of the intensity of the experiences. This method certainly helped me to analyse the data I have and bring the issues to notice and unpack. Using my own

reflections on my experiences improved the ability to understand the situations deeply beyond what was said.

## 2.5 Official Documents

Anthropologist Charlotte Aull Davies (1998) acknowledges the usefulness of varied documents in ethnographic research and claims that they can “provide significant insights into social and cultural processes” (p. 200). This investigation includes official reports. All the publicly available documents produced by the MoM were obtained but only two of them were used in this thesis. One of them is named “Rörelsernas Museum – Förslag Till Permanent Verksamhet” (Rörelsernas museum, 2020) and this is the last report written and edited by the museum staff after the closure of the museum. As it is in Swedish, a translation programme was used to read it. Not everything is investigated, only some parts in the report are studied. Especially the part including the comments from the organisations involved throughout the operation period of the MoM. These were requested by the museum itself yet, still valuable sources of data to understand how the museum was experienced and perceived outside. The other document published in April 2017 is the English summary of the feasibility study (56 pages long) conducted by the project group coordinated by the City of Malmö, Department of Culture. It was provided to me by the staff. These documents were important, full of rich statements which rationalise the actions made by the museum and enabled me to think more deeply on perceptions and interpretations further.

## 2.6 Organising the Data

Analytical tools in cultural analysis involve “looking for break points”, “using contrast”, “focusing on culture as learning process” and “the importance of emotions” (Ehn et al., 2016, pp. 21-23). These were points of inspiration for organising the data and thus the analysis process. After choosing the topic and collecting the data needed, I began to organise my materials. As a result of the orders of the interview questions and written materials, the data was divided into two main groups: the one before the closure of the MoM and the other during the period of dismantlement. I was searching for similarities and contractions to group them (Sunderland & Denny, 2007); thus I found some patterns and themes that occurred frequently. The synonyms of the words to describe the meaning of the museum were grouped under the same headings. The strength of this method is that it eases the process of extracting the information needed. It was not an exact solution to rereading in my case but it saved some time as it prevented revisiting the irrelevant data. It cannot be said that I used the grounded

theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), yet the techniques I employed were a bit similar to it as explained. At last, the categories based on common themes formed the structure of this thesis.

## **2.7 Ethical Reflections**

The position I have, the relationship and interaction between me as a researcher and my research subjects, and some ethical issues are already discussed in previous sections. As stated earlier, my position of insiderness was apparent. According to scholar Angelika Sjöstedt Landén (2011), some positions of researchers become stickier in the ethnographic research process than others (p. 547). She argues that the identity of the researcher and how it is reflected are significant as they have effects on the research process and the results. Since I realised that my employee identity was dominant during the fieldwork process, I tried to be more careful about maintaining non-exploitative relations with people at the museum.

I must admit that setting up interviews about this closure issue made me a bit uncomfortable. I did not want to cause any burden; I believe it was a sensitive topic at that time. The process as a whole has been very intense, emotional and exhausting for me as it might be the case for many other ethnographic studies (Lillis, 2008), but this was because of the decision on the closure, not the research itself in my case. It has not been easy to detach and remove myself and look at the field from a distance. Moreover, the tension within the museum team became evident slowly while I was spending more time with people at the museum. It has to do with organisational structure and decision-making. Although it was not a common experience of the informants, this emerged in my data, so it must be noted as it is important not to ignore or exclude any voices that exist in the field. Having said that, I will not go deeper with this matter to ensure the safety of my informants, and also, it is beyond the scope of this study.

When it comes to my background, it was partly revealed as “Turkish” in the field. It has been interesting to notice how my Turkishness became sticky and often I found myself reflecting on myself as a Turkish person while writing my field notes or afterwards. This was my own label that I put myself in since I did not observe the same for other people or informants as I could manage to fit in the field. To a certain extent, the subjects in the field were diverse, thus my national identity may have had an impact on some people how they communicate or relate themselves to me. There were times I found the Swedish way of doing things strange, although the rationale behind looked reasonable. Also, my student identity was more visible at times depending on whom I encountered. It must be stated here that I am

a Turkish woman coming from a working-class family which belongs to the Bulgarian Turks minority group. Surrounded by the stories of challenges of forced migration, it surely affected the way of my thinking. That said, my interpretations on the issues have been changing throughout the fieldwork based on the experiences and the way that they were processed (Skeggs, 2002). In the end, we as researchers are the ones who decide what to study from which perspective and what is worth highlighting as sociologist Beverley Skeggs (2002) discusses. This is a challenge of being a researcher working with ethnographic methods where the limits of subjectivity become blurred. My identity and background affected the topic and the field of my choice, but I do believe that they have been beneficial rather than an obstacle in this study.

Another point must be stated that Swedish Research Council (2017) informs that the best way of getting participants' consents is written consent (p. 26); however, this was not my preference as it might have caused unnecessary formality between me and my informants. Additionally, this thesis as the outcome of my research will be sent to the informants when it is finalised. Therefore, the informants will be able to see the result of the study they have been part of and contributed to.

Anthropologist Jan Ovesen (2009) considers that "no formal code of ethics can prevent unfortunate or unintended consequences of social science research, or ensure beneficial ones, for that matter" based on his unpleasant previous experience (p. 277). It is fair to say that I cannot claim that I was aware of my own actions all the time. Still, trying to be an ethical researcher "based on my personal ethics, which included doing no harm, being kind and considerate, and honoring norms of reciprocity" as noted (Ellis, 2007, p. 7), I had no intention to hurt any people while we were interacting or in the writing phase. On the other hand, it was not possible to be fully aware of the participants' intentions in the study. Ultimately, it must be stressed that this study has its own limitations. I do not claim that the findings are valid everywhere as this research has been undertaken in a specific field and in a Swedish context.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

The interdisciplinary nature of cultural analysis allows researchers to use different concepts and tools to understand a wide range of cultural practices, forms and meanings. In this section, the main theories and concepts used will be explained. This thesis will not be limited to these, the additional theories or concepts will be added in the analysis chapters according to the issues discussed. Here, the concepts that are heritage, museums, and affect and emotion will be clarified.

#### 3.1 (Emotional) Heritage

It is important to understand and define the social and political phenomenon of heritage first, before diving into the world of museums. There is an abundance of studies on cultural heritage and its definitions but I want to focus on heritage in relation to affect and emotion from the perspective of critical heritage studies. Starting with an encounter with a 97-year-old woman in front of the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration, which also the Museum of Movement's idea came from, Smith (2020) explores the affect and power aspect of visiting such places in the heritage field in her book titled *Emotional Heritage*. Based on short but profound interviews with the visitors, Smith (2020) acknowledges both the political and emotional power of heritage. Positioning her study in the critical realism field (p. 21), Smith (2020) informs that the field does not ignore the materiality, it focuses and appreciates that the "human agency has consequences" (p. 22). Nevertheless, this does not mean to ignore the value and agency of objects and places, but it emphasises the significance of the specific contexts.

The concept of heritage is able to be retheorised and revisited constantly because of its nature and it is open to "critical and reflexive framing" as Smith (2020) claims (p. 25). According to Smith (2006), "heritage is a process, an act of using the past to help make sense of the present and resource aspirations for the future" and "heritage is something that is done rather than possessed; it is an action and an intent rather than a 'thing' or a 'site' (2020, p. 4). Folklorist and museum scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) argues that curatorial practices by museum professionals for museum displays are both for and in itself a cultural product provided by knowledge behind them. Collections and exhibitions of museums serve the purpose of heritage-making as their objects in the display have a role of representation of heritage stories. In terms of heritage-making, how exhibitions are structured is to be considered as a representation of that particular heritage due to certain approaches to be taken by museum professionals and their impact on the display. In addition, the level of emphasis

on heritage stories of the objects in the display is in strong association with exhibitors' understanding of that heritage and their ability to create a narration. Align with the arguments of Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) and drawing on the idea that was previously developed by themselves, Smith (2020) notes that visitors and museums are involved in "heritage-making" processes. Thus, heritage is a performance and process (not a thing) and it is inherently intangible with many actors involved. Additionally, heritage is emotional as well as political.

There is a link between heritage and affect and emotions. Both are context-dependent and mediated. Affect and emotion aspect of heritage processes enables these processes to fit for different uses based on the idea of "affective practice" by scholar Margaret Wetherell which will be elaborated later (2012). With the help of this concept, emotion, discourse and practice can be incorporated and create a deeper understanding of the heritage as a performance and process. It not only apprehends "the performative nature of heritage" that is about "re/creating and negotiating the meaning of the past for the needs of the present" but also "acknowledges that emotional investments may be made in the expression and justification of various social values and beliefs and the historical narratives they underpin" (Smith, 2020, p. 57). Smith looks into the visitors in developing the concepts and this study has been very useful for me to combine heritage with museums and affect and emotion. The difference is that I focus more on the museum's team rather than the audience, so this thesis projects the producers' (staff) point of view.

### **3.2 (Participatory) Museums**

When we think about the concept of the museum, it generally describes a place where certain objects are displayed and preserved. Due to the shifts in museum practices and cultural policies, the role and impact of museums have evolved. As cited in tons of research, I will take the same action here and use the latest ICOM's museum definition:

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (ICOM, 2007)

Museums are institutions connected to the individuals after all, and Levitt (2012, 2015, 2017) discusses the role of museums in nation-building first. Museums now play a crucial part in understanding different identities in terms of global citizens for they took a role in the process

of forging national citizens before. The difference between past and now is that museums and some institutions were practicing power through displaying the artefacts from other parts of the world while immigrants or other ethnicities were precluded from the sense of belonging as they were not allowed to take place in the borders of the museums. Yet, by looking at the ICOM's definition, museums have to reflect the actual society if the aim is to serve and develop the society. Reforming museums to redesign the links and understandings that relinquish exclusion of others and provide a gap closer and create a common field between cultures within diverse communities is the challenge (Bennett, 2017a). In order to overcome this challenge, museums should act as an enabler and create a safe space for cross-cultural dialogue. As their enabler role, providing space to the marginalised or labelled as others to represent themselves, and returning the objects to their countries are now considered as common practice (Levitt, 2015). As institutions, museums have such power.

Museum professional and researcher Nina Simon (2010), in the book titled *Participatory Museum*, defines a participatory cultural institution as “a place where visitors can create, share, and connect with each other around content”. Such institutions do not produce or present the same content to everyone, instead, they gather and show “diverse, personalized, and changing content co-produced with visitors”. Taking this model as a starting point, the MoM has been working towards becoming this kind of institution that functions with participatory approaches and methods.

### **3.3 Affect and Emotion**

Studying affect and emotions in anthropology and ethnography has been gaining popularity in recent years. The approaches have changed and the number of people studying it has increased. Scholars calling it an “affective turn” find this way “more encompassing, exciting, multidimensional, warm, open-ended, attuned to singularities, liberating, humble and democratic” (Jansen, 2016). As a matter of fact, affect and emotion are used correspondingly and it may cause some confusion (Frykman & Povrzanović Frykman, 2016). They can look like separate realities, yet there is no such serious distinction. By affect, Wetherell (2012) means “embodied meaning-making...this will be something that could be understood as human emotion” (p. 4), and I also employ this understanding in this thesis. According to scholar Sara Ahmed (2004) and Wetherell (2012), the relation between affect and emotion is not simple as philosopher Brian Massumi and social scientist Nigel Thrift understand. Massumi and Thrift believe in the autonomy of affect and see affect and emotions as separate entities. For them, emotions are more subjective while affect is a bodily

sensation that is precognitive. Yet it is much more complex than that: “An affective practice is a figuration where body possibilities and routines become recruited and or entangled together with meaning-making and with other social and material figurations” (Wetherell, 2012, p. 19). Sensations categorised as affect can be located in different parts of meaning-making where affect might trigger the meaning-making process as its initiator or as the meaning-making process further affect might rise to the occasion. In a different case, affect comes into being in the form that meaning-making process cannot exist by itself. Therefore, affect is not separable from emotion while emotion itself is also intertwined within every aspect of the meaning-making process.

Ahmed (2010) argues that emotions circulate and can stick to the objects and signs. They do not have a location and always move, thus they turn into a disembodied force. Although Ahmed’s work and arguments are helpful in many ways, subjects with objects and individuals with situations are entangled and Wetherell criticizes it saying that “she goes on to isolate emotion, reifying it from the total practical context of social action and engagement” (Wetherell, 2015, p. 58). From Wetherell’s (2012) point of view, if the circulation of signs is in the centre, it is “to risk over-idealising affect” and therefore “bodies completely disappear from the study of affect” (p. 160). Likewise, cultural anthropologist Monique Scheer (2012) talks about “emotional practices” and suggests that seeing “emotions as practices means understanding them as emerging from bodily dispositions conditioned by a social context, which always has cultural and historical specificity” (p. 193). As claimed by Smith (2020), the term heritage is an emotional expression and can be classified among speech and performative expressions in line with Wetherell’s arguments (2012). Furthermore, the shared and collective aspect of emotions constitutes social and collective meaning for a person and for those who share the same. With this kind of link, a person can construct or be a part of the narrative (Berlant, 2004, 2011 as cited in Smith, 2020, p. 56). Hence, heritage itself turns into an emotional and performative exercise that is encapsulated by a feeling of belonging and believing (Smith, 2020) and in this thesis, heritage is presented as a form of social and cultural practice, thus as an affective practice and emotional practice. This notion is especially significant to acknowledging the social and political consequences of heritage-making as well as understanding what specific affects and emotions do.

These theories and concepts are related to each other as I investigate the institution that deals with the process of heritage-making while working towards a full-scale museum. This process ceased because of the decision of the dismantlement and thus the period which is full of emotions including the meanings behind started.

#### **4. Towards the Museum of Movements**

Wetherell (2012) underpins the idea that affect and emotion have an impact, both individually and collectively, on the contexts we live in. There are consequences due to the influence of the affect and emotions on the experiences and perceptions of people. In this sense, heritage-making and practices are no exception. These processes involve embodied performances including personal and social relationships as a result of different emotions and understandings. As noted, “emotions are not themselves actions, but they provide an inner energy that propel us toward an act, they provide the energy for cognition and evaluation” (Illouz, 2007, p. 2, as cited in Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 453). Wetherell’s study (2012, 2013) also shows that emotions can be considered as discursively mediated events, thus having an effect on meaning-making.

Museums now take an active role in current social and political issues with their operations and exhibitions. These relatively late changes are also an indication of increased interest in the ever-changing socio-political environment that surrounds them. Operations of museums, that are shifted towards these matters as causation, provide participants an opportunity to engage with actions, decisions or policies taken by the institutions. All of these decision-making and implementation processes include museum staff’s perspectives and interpretations that are determined by their emotions as well. The MoM wanted to extend one’s idea of a museum that works with more traditional structures and conventional ways of collecting, preserving objects and exhibition activities. For this, they decided that radical thinking was required regarding space and organisational structure. The steps taken were determined by this sort of rationale which is clarified throughout this study.

In this chapter of the thesis, the results of the feasibility study conducted for the MoM will be explained first. Then, the temporary location where they tested the ideas will be described and in the second half, the anticipations and personal gains of the museum team will be included.

##### **4.1 Feasibility Study and the Results (The Museum As A Form)**

In 2015, politicians from Swedish Green Party and Social Democrats in Malmö brought up the idea of building a museum. While one party promoted the “Ellis Island narrative” focused on migration, the other one wanted to focus on democracy, “the labor movement and the prominent history of the fight for the worker’s rights in Malmö during the 20<sup>th</sup> century” according to politician Nils Karlsson (Zabalueva, 2018, p. 24). The municipality proposed to establish a national museum for democracy and migration in Malmö to the

Minister of Culture and Democracy, Alice Bah Kuhnke. One of the arguments in the letter stated the necessity of a research centre working with the issues of democracy, socio-political movements and migration by saying that everyone has a right to access their own story. The government intended to support the feasibility study and provided a grant to the Department of Culture, City of Malmö via the Swedish Arts Council.

The study which aimed to unite two subjects (democracy and migration) was conducted by a diverse group from the Department of Culture including the national and international networks and there were political and academic reference groups that followed the process as well as three museum agencies, but it was also open to anyone who would want to contribute. Starting with an academic conference organised by Malmö University, the way that they did the feasibility study was a way to start a movement or a process that actually could listen to several voices at the same time. Various international study visits were carried out in some Swedish and European museums and cultural institutions as well as in the USA and Canada. Certain museums in South America were interviewed online. In addition to these, dialogue meetings with civil society, civil society organisations, museum sector professionals and academics were conducted and the methods used were inspired by the Women Making Herstory project (Ardalan, 2017). According to the report, there is a distinction between civil society and civil society organisations. “Civil society in this context refers to people who are not expected to have a particular understanding of the subject nor speak for a group or a movement” (Feasibility study, 2017, Process section, para. 2). The World Café method, which is an informal and relaxed discussion about a specific topic in a café setting, was used in the meetings to have more open conversations. Additionally, a number of in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals from civil society. In total, 135 organisations and actors joined and about 630 people were involved in the meetings. After the analysis, the team got back and asked whether the participants had any comments. These dialogues appeared as a huge chapter titled “What we heard, what we saw” in the material that was handed over to the ministry.

When it comes to the museum as a form for highlighting migration and democracy, this idea was profoundly discussed in the workshops. Above all, the perception of a museum drives the idea of a safe and reliable environment for handling complex questions and controversial assumptions. This aspect of the museums is constructed around the centre of education, research and participation triangle. On top of being able to provide these concepts, having an arsenal of archives and collections to support their operation provides the starting point to touch such loaded questions. Also, many studies demonstrate that people trust

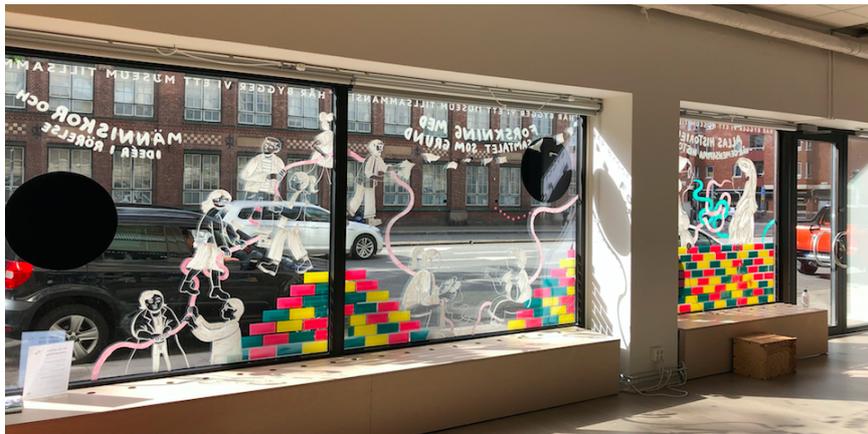
museums more than many other institutions in societies as denoted in the feasibility study. They are credible and they bring people to face the objects helping them to understand different lives across time and space but as humans themselves sharing the same hopes and dreams. Moreover, one of the proposals that were supported by many participants in a workshop with the museum sector was that “the new museum could be seen as a chance to redefine what a museum could be - to be able to push boundaries and turn theory into practice”, “for example by breaking norms about national identity (-ies) and developing leading competence on representation but also by setting a good example” (Feasibility study, 2017, Workshop with the Museum Sector section, para. 2). It is possible that without getting out of the guidance of history and through the multiplex definition of Sweden, the identity, new Swedishness, can become perceptible with all its complexity in the new museum, the professionals argued.

The result of the feasibility study showed that there was a need and an interest to create a museum to highlight and communicate democracy and migration issues with a right-based approach as museums are perceived as safe and credible places that provide research and education. There was the need to process the hidden and oppressed stories about democracy and migration, and the need to expand the understanding of cultural heritage. Anchored locally to be close to civil society actors, there is an opportunity to achieve a high level of collaboration and inclusion while expanding networks nationally and internationally. The museum should have been established in Malmö, for it is such a diverse city with 184 nationalities and a transit called “gateway to Europe”. It has a history of democratic activities including political and social movements. Also, being surrounded by prominent universities makes it a preferable and legitimate location.

#### **4.2 A Place in Möllan**

After receiving a grant for a start-up period from the government in 2018, as was suggested in the feasibility study, the temporary place was given to the team where they can continue to engage with different stakeholders. With smaller projects, the team wanted to test the ideas and methods for collaboration in a proper setting to be able to be more prepared for the full-scale museum (Elg, 2019, p. 468). The temporary venue was located in Möllevängen (Figure 1.) and opened to the public in 2019 with the name “Rörelsernas museum (Museum of Movements)”. The physical value of a museum should not be underestimated. Museums have been thought to be places where people can meet other people no matter the differences between them. Anna, for example, thinks that one of the things that makes the MoM special:

“It was very much I think, the physical place, a space in the centre of Malmö where everything can happen”. In the feasibility study, one of the proposals for possible locations for the actual museum was Folkets Park in Möllan since it is one of the lively and diverse areas with many cultural institutions and activities. In the park, there are buildings with historical importance in relation to democracy and migration. The Möllan area is easily accessible physically allowing the team to be closer to civil society. It is also known for its links to social and political movements and activism. It is understandable because of these reasons, why the MoM is located there.



**Figure 1.** The view of the MoM's temporary place from inside

It is not a surprising fact that museums can be created without collections, with links to theoretical concepts or historical events such as The Museum of Work in Norrköping and Ellis Island in the USA or the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis and Holocaust museums around the world. The MoM team knew that they should take the civil society's case on democracy and migration because the stories from the top are always heard. They decided to hear it from the bottom. That's why the museum would centre around oral history, as Oral History is a tradition used by historically marginalised communities among others, to write themselves back into history. Thus, the team wanted to do everything right from the beginning, they did not have any collections at first. Yet, ethics were being developed regarding the methods for collecting the stories from people. Referring to academics such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha, they wanted to challenge the conventional role of a museum. Rather than being a museum that operates with the old and more traditional structures, the aim was to be characterised by the dialogue and participation that has been central to the work with the feasibility study. The MoM has addressed the issues of

democracy, migration, human rights, aiming not only to prioritize historically marginalised voices but also inviting them to act in the process of its establishment and functioning.

According to museum scholar and professional Patrick J. Boylan's study (2011), museums in numerous countries started hiring various staff considering their backgrounds and specialisations in addition to the increased recruitment numbers. This can be regarded as the modern vision of museums that being dynamic, frequently and exceptionally complex organisations for the benefit of society and its growth. Instead of traditional roles, museums have project managers as a result of redistribution of power (Viau-Courville, 2017). This issue was also on the agenda of the workshops for the feasibility study. The participants talked about the diversity in the society in Sweden today and the necessity of seeing the reflection of this within the institutions. There is a fact that the lack of representations of certain groups inside the organisations maintains problematic approaches in terms of the needs and wishes of marginalised groups. Thereby, employment becomes an issue that needs to be reconsidered by the museums (Nikolić, 2017, p. 215). Being aware of this, the museum team of the MoM was designed as a diverse group regarding not only gender and ethnicity but also professional backgrounds. Emily mentioned this when asked about what makes the MoM unique or different from other museums in Sweden: "Everybody has such a different background. And I'm not talking just ethnically, I'm talking like professionally, and which places from the society we come from. And we all have our luggage and knowledge, and we complete each other". Gustav also believes that this is one of the aspects that makes the MoM special. He reflects the discrepancy in the institutions and uses the MoM as an example that this issue can be defeated to a certain extent. With his words:

How the group is composed. They work in many languages. And I mean Swedes are a minority in the group, which is not the case in the rest of the city. The staff of this municipality, administration in this municipality does not look like the inhabitants of the municipality. And there is a clear difference, you know, in terms of a migration background. The city has a problem. I guess all citizens in Sweden have a problem with representation but this museum did not have that problem, in some aspects, at least.

Furthermore, they hired project managers who were responsible for certain projects that led them to engage better with communities. Peter says: "If you start bringing in people with different backgrounds, you will have a completely broader knowledge base, and it will

probably be as high, but they will be broader”. When the same people work in an institution, the knowledge may be very huge but it is the same. Ultimately, when people with differences come together, there is a potential that they will bring their own knowledge and understandings of the subject matter as well as their networks. As a consequence, varied networks and interdisciplinary knowledge are included in the museum.

It is worth mentioning that the staff as I refer to them was not a very homogenous group. What I mean by this, the roles within the museum were not very fixed and strict, so there is fluidity as also discussed by Cameron (2015). An example of this can be that an academic who collaborated with the museum once was hired and began to work as a team member or someone who worked with the team some time ago continued to collaborate in other matters. The hierarchies inside of the museum were almost invisible and the practices varied depending on the circumstances in this contemporary world. The structures within went beyond the ordinary authoritative powers partaking in museums. This was the case in their relationships with the communities as well which will be elaborated on in the next chapter.

Staff are the ones who make anything possible in a museum or any kind of cultural institution. They deliver the events to the public and represent their institutions. Thus, it is important to understand their personal experiences and positive outcomes more on an individual level related to the museum as will be explored below.

### **4.3 Dreams and Visions**

Constituents of the space that people live in are spaces by themselves that can heterogeneously and inherently exist with intrinsic qualities in the space (Foucault, 1986). Foucault is interested in two types of external spaces which are called utopias and heterotopias and sees museums as heterotopias based on 19<sup>th</sup>-century modernism in Western culture. By accumulating everything, museums have attempted to encompass “the totality of time...in a finite space” (Lord, 2006, p. 3). They are thus seen as disciplinary institutions that exercise power over individuals from this perspective. However, this aim of museums has changed in time and for most of the museums, the purposes are different now.

One of the critical points raised by museum philosopher Beth Lord (2006) is that considering the heterotopia as a space of difference. Focusing on the claim of Foucault that “heterotopias represent, contest, and reverse the cultural order to which they are linked”, Lord (2006) argues that interpretation determines the choices of the museums in terms of varieties of the objects displayed as well as the ways of showing they select and adds that the

heterotopia is a space of representation (p. 5). The museums as space provide an opportunity to experience concepts and the objects in the display. The experience provided reveals itself as participants distinguish between the sole meaning of the object and what the relation between the object and the concept connotes together.

When investigating what the MoM meant to the museum team, several common answers appeared. First and above all, working at this museum was seen as an opportunity or even “the dream working place” in Diane’s words. It was exactly what society needs and so inspiring. The excitement and hope were there often in the informants’ voices. This project was more than a regular job experience for several reasons. One of the reasons that it has been seen as a good chance, it was something that had not been done before in Sweden: a museum that was being built from the ground up, a museum that was focused on prioritising historically excluded voices and a museum that also worked on the development of oral history collections in a way that has not been tried in Swedish cultural institutions. As Gustav says: “They were trying to achieve something that you don’t otherwise see within the museum sector in Sweden and not in some many other places, either”. The approach makes it special and different since they ensured the involvement of the civil society and the communities from the beginning. Further, Foucault says that “in general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place” (1986, p. 26). Similar to Foucault’s indirect concern about museums, Emily stresses the aspect of the MoM being financially supported by the state and questions the autonomy of it as it is known that marginal groups do not necessarily trust the authorities. Ultimately, she is astonished because of how the museum operates and their work ethics and she adds: “It’s been this safety for me as a citizen of Malmö and Sweden. It’s been a place where we can discuss tough matters and a lot of people’s realities”. It is fair to say that it feels like a safe and tolerant place where difficult issues can be talked about and the other matters are reflected as the staff desired. Therefore, it has had the potential to be a place that is accessible as a meeting point where differences are articulated, and true engagement takes place.

Another reason that makes the MoM exceptional for the staff was that it has been a safe place for excluded groups. Giving voice to the marginalised people has been a central objective and this perception was shared among the team. Museums have enormous significance to enable a platform for these people or to visualise invisible voices that are in the society but do not have any place to go and represent themselves. Letting people define themselves rather than be defined can help to liberate all of us from the old hierarchy and power relations. Lord’s museum interpretation (2006) in relation to Foucault’s heterotopia

means that museums are places where the differences exist. For instance, the MoM arranged and hosted events in different languages other than Swedish as the Swedish history, or the society, cannot be imagined without the contributions of those people who speak other languages. This is an atypical way of interpreting the differences and giving away the power hold historically. This approach encourages those people to have a voice in creating and practising their identities more freely while continuing to be a part of the “other” national entity. There is a need to tell the history from different perspectives and the MoM team was prepared to manage the challenges that would come.

With the potential to criticize and autonomous stand on the issues around them, museums can utilize their higher ground provided by these potentials to question the power relations publicly as noted by Lord (2006). As empirical data shows, the MoM has been ready and already making an effort to tackle these issues. Yet, it remained as a project that was not transformed into a full-scale museum. Nevertheless, there have been positive outcomes from the MoM not only received from the communities but also gained by the staff that is to be mentioned.

#### **4.4 Knowledge Building and Networking**

It was repeated in several parts in the feasibility study that the new museum should be strongly linked to research and education: a knowledge hub for democracy, migration, national and international popular and social movements. A museum as a form has its advantages since people find these issues more appealing as they trust these institutions. While museums have an educational role (seen as a core function in museology), the impact of communities in creating knowledge cannot be denied. They contribute to the exchange to a great extent and both the museum and communities learn from each other (Manacorda, 2015). Creating such a place would enable knowledge building which is an important part of the museum’s activities for both parties (museum staff and communities) where contemporary issues are grappled in a participatory way. As the MoM was supposed to collect people’s stories and to start building its own collection based on oral history, they decided that strong ethical guidelines were necessary to start this process so that they would not harm the people whom stories and experiences documented. For example, in November 2019, the MoM had a workshop on ethical guidelines as they had seen museums, universities, or archives, they all have different methods. Because of this reason, they sought to create their own collaboration ethics and methodology. Stella and Javier share the best memory they had at the MoM and it was this workshop on ethics as can be seen below:

Javier: It has to be the workshop on ethics, where we had, you know, 35 people, from all over the world, coming in engaging in these amazing discussions and really like working and dreaming and imagining what the museum of the future could look like. That to me was, I think, by far, one of the best experiences I've had in any museum that I've ever been involved with.

Stella: I think it was in November 2019, when they had a workshop on the ethical guidelines for the museums and for this museum. It would also be very useful for Swedish museums in general. Because before they did a short study about the existing practices in Sweden and everyone looked like they're just gathering the stories as they think is the right way. But there were no such documents or guidelines for everyone. And for me, as a researcher, it was really important to have this network of international researchers to talk about these issues, but also, to have it in this place and space, which was basically another formal forum, not for civil society in this case, but for researchers in the museum field. And also, it was a kind of event where I could contribute with something with my research would not be just, you know, observation and writing down the notes and going to the field to study but it felt like a more an action research or action based research that I can engage, I can contribute, I can bring my knowledge to the table, and it will be used by the museum.

While Javier says that thinking and imagining the future museum in engaging discussions with professionals who came from around the world was an amazing experience, Stella tells how the event allowed her to contribute to the museum considering the experience and knowledge that comes with her. In this way, it could feel that it was a real and meaningful contribution for her. In addition to this big workshop, the museum team continued to train themselves by joining the workshop series focused on oral history and participatory approaches during the second half of 2020. In collaboration with Malmö Life Stories, they could develop their skills to carry out their work with people marginalised.

When they are asked whether they can utilize the experiences gained from the museum project in their next project or work, all of the informants responded positively. A few of them told me that they learned a lot about the meaning of culture in a democratic society. They also learned how cultural institutions are important for society and can create a common place; however that said, they can also be excluding. Although these institutions are

built for everybody, they are not used by everybody for some reasons. The staff mentioned that they were aware of the fact that it is not possible to include everyone but they learned how to make the MoM used by as many people as possible. The approach of protecting historically excluded communities, and the participation and development of every process in the museum has been the aim. Diane specifically said that she learned about social museology and practices including how museologists tackled such issues differently in their respective societies, countries, or communities. These aspects of the outcomes are specifically important for personal and professional background and experiences of each team member of a museum who is responsible for certain operations can have an influence on the implementation process of the policies and activities (McCall & Gray, 2014, p. 28).

Moreover, the MoM not only widened the staff's perspective on the subject matter but also expanded their networks nationally and internationally. These people were very inspirational and knowledgeable civil rights defenders, museum professionals and academics from both Sweden and abroad. The informants told me initially that there has certainly been a benefit of this, such as creating connections with different groups from around the globe and thus learning about other cultural institutions and practices. Another advantage indicated by the staff was that these encounters made them able to acknowledge the perspectives as well as unmet needs with the past stories and future dreams of the civil society in Malmö. What is more than that is the personal experience of the team. Wetherell (2012) points out that affective practices belong to the persons besides they are collective. Emily puts emphasis on how the MoM has been a place for her where she can personally grow, learn, and try things out and even fail as, by nature, museological practices are experiments and have the potential to succeed or fail (Silverman, 2015, p. 2). Emily says:

So, the museum has been an eye opener for me, and also an arena where I can try things that I think are needed in the cultural sector or in society in general. I would never imagine to work at a place where you are so free to form your job description and to test stuff and things and have an open dialogue. And it means a place where you can fail and do better.

Lastly, there is an assumption that "museum knowledge should be first and foremost experienced rather than passively absorbed" (Campolmi, 2017, p. 69). Align with this idea, it is articulated that learning is "not just about facts – it also includes experiences and emotions. Learning is something we *do*, and we all do it in different ways" (Ambrose & Pain, 2018, p.

67, as cited in Smith, 2020, p. 78). Bodily experience is important since it can enhance the understanding of the real needs of communities and make it easier to pay close attention to people with the help of all senses. Physically being at the museum enables the staff to shift power dynamics and the process of knowledge production, which is perceived as a one-sided learning process most of the time.

Here, the results and findings of the feasibility study of the MoM are presented. The need for such a museum was obvious and a lot of people were excited and hopeful about the idea as it can serve as an example with its participatory approaches and reciprocal relationships with the communities not only in Sweden but also in Europe. The start-up period is also mentioned and then the visions and dreams of the museum team are explained. The stress was on the knowledge building and social networking among the staff when investigating the personal gains, so they are elaborated. All of these practices are strongly connected to affect and emotions, it is especially because the museum team believed in it first, then they did put their heart and soul into this project. Heritage-making is emotional and emotions do influence people's actions and lead people to do certain things (Wetherell et al., 2018). Working extended hours when it is needed is only one sign of how they engaged with the museum. The closure has surely affected them and has some consequences which will be discussed later in the thesis but first how they have collaborated and engaged with the communities is worth investigating, for it is important to understand the process until the dismantlement.

## 5. Community Engagement and Operations

Today, museums aim to strengthen their links with societies more than ever. The shift from the traditional approaches to more contemporary ones to close the gap between museums and societies has caused a change in organisational structures notably. “Community engagement” and “citizen participation” has been the main goal for the institutions (Viau-Courville, 2017, p. 11). Since not only the museums that focus on diversity or culture but all kinds of museums share the responsibility towards communities in which they partake in a role of initiator function on these matters (Karp, 1992b). Therefore, with the popularity of these new objectives, museums have begun to transform their inner structures and agendas. The focus is more on the needs and wishes of the communities that they engage in rather than what the museum team and professionals think is important.

“Museums were once defined by their relationship to objects: curators were ‘keepers’ and their greatest asset was their collections. Today, they are defined more than ever by their relationship to visitors” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 138). Simon (2010) supports the idea that museums should be taking an active role in social change and instead of having the only role of interpretation of the world around, focusing on the change, the people by clarifying their role in the community and building a bridge of understanding towards the others through being a safe place of expression and communication. It can be seen that there are important efforts to change the way museums work and to find new collaborations with civil society. These were the desires of the MoM as well to achieve a high level of engagement with the communities often left outside. The important thing is to keep in mind that efforts have been made towards the MoM. It was not a final version of such an institution (full-scale museum) established.

In this chapter of the thesis, the effort of the museum team for creating ethical guidelines and the activities that were held at the MoM as well as the meaning of co-creation and related experiences will be explained. Then, the motivations of the participants and organisations to be involved and the museums as a safe place where resources and authority are shared will be explored.

### 5.1 Ethics and Activities

Laurence Gouriévidis (2014) discusses the role of museums in nation-building in an article focusing on the museums and migration. One of the focuses of Gouriévidis (2014) is the perception of the public regarding diversity on how museums approach the subject matter of migration, besides the role that museums play in the social change. The concept of

diversity created an environment where ethnographic collections are frequently reviewed, reinterpreted within the light of the post-colonial approach in Europe (Gouriévidis, 2014, p. 6). Gouriévidis (2014) implies that museums project diversity and its controversial sides directly onto the community to provoke debate in order to transform the perception of the community. Through the participation of the excluded, museums can create space for self-representation in public that empowers those groups and change the discourse of xenophobia and the image of the excluded. This movement in museology is to address the needs of communities and forces the focus point to move towards social issues and participatory understanding instead of sole object display (Gouriévidis, 2014). The MoM has been seeking to include suppressed or distorted experiences of certain groups in the public space and take a step closer each time to validation for these groups within the community.

On the other hand, there is a risk, which the MoM team has been aware of as well, of excluding some groups no matter how hard museums try to include everyone (Gaventa, 2006). Using the experiences from working with museums, Lynch (2014) confirms that even though institutions have good intentions, existing coercive power and actions direct people to support museums' intended goals and to suppress or extinguish potential opposing thoughts. These types of occurrences shatter the link between communities and museums. Lynch (2014) suggests that the approach should be acceptance of conflict in order to see museums as a public space for a confrontation of different views. Through these confrontations new identities can be moulded and dominant political thought may be challenged in order to create a synthesis of both views (Mouffe, 2005, p. 5 as cited in Lynch, 2014, p. 78). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the MoM team has been working intensely on ethics and it has also been significant for building trust between the museum and the participants.

Recently, the ethics or ethical guidelines have been gaining importance for museums as ways of engagement with their visitors and communities around. Political theorist and activist Chantal Mouffe (2013) suggests that interaction between institutions and their interlocutors that have formed interrelation based on mutual trust of both parties indicates on the institution that acting compliance with ethical rules is its part of the responsibility. What was clear from my interviews, the museum team believed that they need to be humble and build relationships and trust, since museums are powerful, trustworthy, but at the same time, they are colonial institutions in a way as well. Museums have done a lot of harm to some marginalised communities and indigenous groups by exploiting their stories with inaccurate representation. That's why they needed to think of ethics when dealing with personal stories because stories belong to people and people need to be treated with respect and care. Some

informants spoke with me about the challenges in doing this and stressed the need of working on ethics together with the communities. That means co-creation, co-collecting, co-researching, and co-exhibiting, which will be elaborated more in the coming sections. For instance, in the ethics (focusing on the research, the collecting, the archiving, and the dissemination of stories of oral histories) workshop in November 2019, they brought experts from the communities, from academia, from the museum sector as they believed that they needed to let people lead them in how they were going to be presenting content.

While developing the ethical guidelines, the MoM organised and arranged numerous events as part of the museum's offerings to the public and worked in cooperation with many stakeholders. Under the Safe Havens conference programme, for example, they had the monthly Freedom Talks, and Global Stream which consisted of a number of workshops in November 2020 and a big live-streamed panel in December 2020. This is an international event and the aim is to bring artists, arts organisations, artists residencies, activists, human rights and free speech NGOs, legal specialists, funders and policymakers all committed to protecting and defending free artists expression and at-risk artists together and discuss and respond to the issues of artistic freedom. Another conference that the MoM hosted was titled "Violence against women: Femicide, Feminicide, and Transcide in Sweden from the past until Covid-19". The museum wanted to direct the spotlight onto violence against women, femicide, feminicide, and transcide through transnational perspectives based on a grassroots movement approach. The effort of this conference was to highlight the voices of various movements in Sweden that work effortlessly against violence towards women and to convene international efforts in solidarity. Due to the pandemic restrictions, this event also happened on the digital platforms by live streaming. They had a panel series titled Rapid Response where they open space for people to reflect on current issues that affect society. Women Making Herstory (Ardalan, 2017) and Migration Memory Encounters which is a platform for cultural practitioners in Sweden with a background in migration and relocation have also been part of the MoM. In addition to these programmes and their long-term collaboration including a number of workshops with Malmö Life Stories, the museum hosted many more events that they called "co-creation" activities such as art performances, talks and panels, film screenings, exhibitions and workshops with children as usual museum activities. They also hosted events like a music video release, a book presentation and a youth pride. It is curious to note that some of the events were held in different languages such as Farsi and Spanish to make the participants more comfortable in their own native language. These gave shape to the museum's wishes to build new and stronger ties with communities.

## 5.2 Co-creation and Building Trust

There are different ways of imagining community. Anthropologist Ivan Karp (1992a), in a comprehensive book about museums and communities that includes different practices and case studies, states that civil society:

...includes such diverse forms of organization as families, voluntary associations, ethnic groups and associations, educational organizations, and professional societies. These are the social apparatuses responsible for providing the arenas and context in which people define, debate, and contest their identities and produce and reproduce their living circumstances, their beliefs and values, and ultimately their social order. (p. 5)

The MoM was trying to create a community from the beginning and this process already started with the feasibility study. Dialogue meetings, where the museum's operations and forms of collaboration besides individual unmet needs of communities are discussed, have been a platform where everyone participating has had a chance to speak and has been treated with respect. Before these meetings, the museum sent out open invitations to the museum professionals as well as other cultural practitioners, civil society organisations and activist groups, etc. It can be said that although the MoM was not created by the community, it acted as a community museum. This process of creating a community of its own also results in the MoM being a harbour of several communities while constructing one for itself. The difference was that it was a state-funded museum unlike the other community museums around the globe.

According to Richard Sennett (2013), one of the scholars who acknowledge the significance of cooperation and dialogic process, cooperation can be defined "as an exchange in which the participants benefit from the encounter" (p. 5) and the aim of dialogic conversations is "to come eventually to a common understanding" (p. 18). The prior condition to these processes is to have the skill of listening as claimed by Sennett again. The MoM has been seeking to work in this way and claimed in the vision statement that the museum will strive "to create a space where everyone can be heard, seen and included on equal terms, and will actively seek out hidden and forgotten stories in order to broaden public narratives of democracy and migration, and our shared histories" (Rörelsernas museum, n.d.). Almost all those team members I interviewed stated that the cooperation has to be focused on what can communities gain from the cooperation with the cultural institution at a local

national and international level. Charlotte acknowledges the nature of the dialogic process and uses the word co-creation consciously as here: “We didn't have all the answers, it was in the process with the other ones, that we can have the answers with them...so it was a co-learning, a co-development and co-creation, we were not sitting with the old answer”. Peter describes what they mean by co-creation and reveals the processes behind the activities as below:

Co-creation is what we've been doing since we opened the space and it simply means that someone comes to us and they say we want to do this event and do it together. It's never about just letting someone use the space. We're equal partners, we add funding and we're active in the event and it is like a full range of collaborations. And it is always based on people coming to us and suggesting something. That sort of keeps happening the whole time. Also, it is a chance to get to know each other and we can learn more about who they are and they learn about us and how we could work in the future.

The museum staff valued giving real power to the communities, which means sharing the authority in a sense and they did not claim to speak on behalf of the communities. All these processes in the end may have led them to gain trust from the communities.

As mentioned before and as Mouffe (2013) proposes, the position of the museums in communities and the perception of the public should be strengthened through revising and altering their purpose and activities in order to create mutual trust between two parties: the institutions and their interlocutors. According to my informants, since communities often feel used by cultural institutions, they are only invited when the power structure and the power over the content are already set. There is a need to highlight the diversity of stories about democracy and migration from community perspectives, and for that, a diverse cultural heritage should be displaced in the same room. The empirical data shows that the museum team also thinks that the process of building such a museum must be thorough and respectful in the interaction towards its many stakeholders. Co-creation must take place and it takes time to learn to be a good listener and build real relationships based on mutual respect and trust (Robinson, 2018, p. 153). They said that the MoM should have been built slowly with respect to integrity in a participating way and building up an institution in that kind of way takes time. Trust is not something that is given, it is shaped in reciprocal processes and when it is implemented together by sharing the authority, then it becomes more effective than if the

power and control is owned only by the museum or cultural institutions (Lynch & Alberti, 2010). Javier says:

We had those civil society organizations like the Afro Swedish community, the Sami community, saying it out loud in public, and there were also other national museums there...and this civil society groups and organisations saying, we don't want to work, we don't trust these other institutions, but we feel that we can work with this museum because they're doing things differently.

Javier talks about one of the meetings in the process of the feasibility study. He is confident about the ways they work in this museum project and stresses that civil society trusts them. This is a result of engaging and listening to the needs and wishes of individuals and groups from civil society. Peter thinks that what has created the trust is their honesty. Whatever they have done, they have been earnest and honest and they meant every word they said, he says.

A word heard quite often also was “humbleness”. The informants (both the staff and the collaborators) expressed to me that the MoM was not working with civil society and minority groups in a tokenistic way. They were humble, open and transparent. They were not imposing any narratives or exercising power, in the sense that they are experts, and everyone else who wants to collaborate, should stand in line. Museum professional and scholar Victoria Hollows (2013) points out that participants of museums should not be categorised into the observer or passive receiver side of the exchange as the centre-periphery model dictates. The term “participant” encapsulates more groups than that its basic meaning refers to. While the traditional understanding of “participant” losing its power and meaning of that term broadening, more solid steps can be taken towards creating a meaningful environment for dialogue needed by the community.

### **5.3 Motivations of Participants and Organisations**

In the dialogue meetings, three main groups were brought together: academics, museum professionals, and people from civil society. The team ensured that representatives of several organisations for the five national minorities (Jews, Roma, Sami, Swedish Finns and Tornedalers) in Sweden participated in these meetings. Children were not forgotten, a seminar on their perspectives and suggestions was conducted as well. After the team settled the workroom in the temporary place, the profile of participants and organisations involved in the MoM has been very mixed and different from the usual museums. For instance, Gustav

defines the participants as a very diverse group: “This venue is very diverse, at least in terms of race and ethnicity and migration status and so on, much more than any other room in Malmö that I usually see”. There were also people who do not regularly consume culture or visit other museums as they do not necessarily feel welcomed in other places, or they do not think they are relevant to them as noted by Diane when I wanted to hear about the diversity of the visitor groups. She thinks that the rhetoric around the MoM which is being a museum for migration and democracy from the civil society perspective was the reason that people visit. Diversity has been one of the motivations for the organisations that collaborated with the MoM as well. Rosengårds Folkets Hus also comments on this and gives examples from the discussions in the final report published by the museum by saying how mixed the people were. Participation of various groups enables others to learn and nourish themselves with new knowledge and perspectives about the subject matter, democracy, migration and human rights, and exchange experiences as expressed by Helamalmö and Teater Interakt. Emily’s observation on the groups engaged with the museum supports this: “Our audience is those who are interested in the question of civil rights and LGBTQIA+ questions, antiracism, feminism, and oral history, migration, democracy in addition to poetry or theatre groups who don't collaborate with museums necessarily”. In this way, the MoM has served as a platform and meeting point for these organisations.

Furthermore, the MoM has felt unique not only for the staff but also for the organisations involved. This point has been especially uttered by some organisations. For example, Teater Interakt commented: “Such a meeting point has not existed before but is very important for all of us, our members and our business.” and the Pan-Afrikan Movement for Justice said: “...it's quite unique to us” while Rosengårds Folkets Hus writes: “There are no such museums in Malmö”. The reason for it can be found by answering the questions of what these organisations feel or think about these collaborations as shown below:

Helamalmö: We think that the collaboration has worked very well. There is a great sensitivity and openness among the museum's staff, an understanding of the importance of mutual collaboration.

Rosengårds Folkets Hus: When we have collaborated, it has felt good. You have understood that it takes time with dialogue and collaborations and you have had the opportunity to show ourselves and be involved and influence the museum.

Svenskt Queer Initiativ: Welcoming and inclusive. When we worked together, there was understanding. It is important to include our group's voices and needs.

Teater Interakt: Open and mobile. Communicative, dialogical. The museum/employees are sincerely interested in experiences, knowledge and perspectives from us and other organisations.

Pan-Afrikan Movement for Justice: Inclusive and that there is mutual cooperation. Functional collaboration, got to be part of the process from the start.

From the very beginning, the aim of the museum team has been working with these groups in a participatory way and creating a dialogical conversation. There were a lot of references to Simon's idea of a participatory museum (2010) with the strategies under the title of co-creation and accessibility in the feasibility study such as: "Instead of being *about* something or *for* someone, co-production institutions are created through and operated *with* their visitors" (Feasibility study, 2017, Cultural Heritage in Transformation - Together section, para. 1). These also connect directly to issues of inclusion. The social role of the museum has been evident in the vision and mission statements as well as the operations of the MoM. The MoM directly has addressed the need for a platform for marginalised groups in order to create a deeper understanding of democracy and migration and to influence society in a broader sense. It has been trying to achieve this by ensuring the representation, and participation of those excluded while securing accessibility. Thus, it has become an "agent of social inclusion" (Sandell, 1998) which also included the process of the negotiation of power.

#### **5.4 A Safe Place and Shared Resources**

A key element to a dialogic conversation is to feel safe. Creating and nurturing this dynamic is not easy and requires some parameters. The MoM refers to this in the feasibility study by stating that the new museum should be a safe place for communities and anyone coming to the museum. In order for the museum to be a safe place, they write that the public space and the institution's environment are important as well as the visitor's sense of belonging and joint ownership. In the following, for instance, civil society institutions tell their experiences:

Rosengårds Folkets Hus: When we have been with you, it has been very nice with deep discussions that are usually not raised in other forums.

Pan-Afrikan Movement for Justice: Where those who work are respectful and genuine in their treatment. We can bring up things that do not work as well. A sense of security from both sides that has enabled us to raise constructive, critical thoughts...Love the idea of the Workroom, that we can use it ourselves and that we and many together can influence the museum. Our members and we perceive it as an inclusive and safe place.

Svenskt Queer Initiativ: For example, many of our members showed up during the event with RFSL. You managed to get a good and relevant program. We LGBTQIA + migrants, were part of the program and got to share our thoughts and perspectives. We got our message out. I felt very welcome, I think our members felt that way too.

As organisations explicitly expressed, they had positive emotions, thus experiences and they found the MoM inclusive and safe place where they can discuss the issues that they would not be able to discuss in other places necessarily due to the attitudes of the museum staff. This is one of the credited characteristics of museums: safe places to discuss difficult topics (Gurian, 1995).

Some of the organisations say, as can be seen above in the quotes, they had a chance to influence the museum and operations which means that they have an agency, power, or authority to do that. In other words, being a part of the decision-making process and speaking freely in a museum setting allowed them to be “active citizens” (Lynch, 2011, p. 454). Ultimately, they experienced a kind of democratic engagement as the museum affirmed to achieve where participants can trust the institution and feel free.

As Helamalmö reflects: “Often, when the civil and public sectors enter into cooperation, there is a built-in hierarchy of power”. Besides the traditional hierarchy structure and power relations, this argument is charged with other political meanings. Smith (2020) considers that heritage and museums can be used to justify different political ideas and visions as it has the power to do so, thus it is in relation to the recognition struggles. Philosopher and critical theorist Nancy Fraser (2000) also argues that recognition claims are linked to the distribution of social and economic resources and Smith (2020) agrees with this statement by referring to Kinsley (2016): “a critical understanding of the role of museums

within the context of recognition *and* redistribution is required to achieve successful social inclusion outcomes” (p. 48). Being aware of this critical issue, the MoM has been a place where they share resources with civil society and organisations. Since they had a stage, technology, staff and money from the government to function, they used and let communities use these resources together when they cooperated. That was one of the ways of being democratic according to the informants. Gustav, with a smile on his face, exemplifies this and tells how the museum team worked at the venue for the opening day at the temporary place:

I think that my best experience of the museum was when this place opened in August 2018. This room was very special. When I was in here, they were preparing and opening. And they were putting up posters, the posters, which are on the wall now. And you could really feel this, the non-hierarchical culture, which I think is part of the museum. Because everybody was mixing between writing speeches and cleaning the table. And, you know, it was beautiful to see that.

He observes that everyone worked together and broke the hierarchical culture, which is usually seen in cultural institutions, by mixing and switching the roles and tasks while they were preparing. I remember that the day they hosted the Youth Pride 2020 (Figure 2.). Including myself, the responsible person from the museum staff (and the others from time to time) were helping with the preparations for the pride team according to the division of the tasks for that day. The titles or roles of people did not matter and there were no status frictions. Through these examples, it becomes clear that the resources were shared with organisations at the MoM.



**Figure 2.** The view of the preparations from the Youth Pride

In this chapter, the museum team's approach to ethics for the operations of the museum and the activities that happened were demonstrated. Then, I tried to define what co-creation and dialogical conversation mean, and the need for trust between the museums and communities to achieve that kind of dialogue, and how the MoM has been working on it. The chapter continued to explore how the MoM has been a site of engagement, a safe place of questioning complex issues especially from the organisations' point of view. Shared resources and authority have also given the MoM a distinctive character since heritage and museums are social and political resources through their power to legitimate recognition claims related to the distribution of resources (Smith & Campbell, 2016, p. 450). Increasing community participation in heritage-making processes instead of applying traditional power or curatorial structures in museums, allowed civil society, specifically marginalised and misrecognised groups, to use their agency and tell their stories to a wider public. Now, it is time to understand the closure process and how this "loss" was experienced by the museum team as well as what the consequences are for the staff and civil society.

## **6. On the Process of Dismantling**

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2017) provides us the idea that “heritage is one of the ways that museums...reinvent themselves and redefine their relationship to their stakeholders” (p. 190). Museums are capable of gathering both physical and non-physical materials together in order to create a space not only for education but most importantly engage people with significant and meaningful dialogue closely linked to power balance and interactions within society (N’Diaye, 2017, p. 141). As shown in the previous chapter of this thesis, the MoM has been trying to become a site of dialogue where communities are able to voice the unheard stories of themselves and be part of the national narrative in Sweden. The need for this kind of platform was obvious and came directly from civil society as a result of the dialogue meetings conducted by the working group before the beginning of the MoM operations.

Functioning similar to a community museum, the MoM lets civil society speak on behalf of themselves and listened to their needs and desires. Since it is known that museums need communities more than communities need museums to continue to exist, communities must be able to take action regarding their cultural heritage. Museums are gateways for cultural conversation between communities and by carrying out this role, they become the nexus that closes the gap between distant perspectives. Therefore, with these links created by museums, they have the ability to impact the policy-making process (Camarena & Morales, 2006).

In this chapter of the thesis, the dismantlement of the MoM will be dealt with. How this process was interpreted by the museum team as well as communities and the possible losses considering the vision and the expected outcomes of the museum will be outlined. Thus, the effects and social consequences of the closure will be clarified.

### **6.1 The Closure and Emotions**

After the opening of the temporary place, the MoM has already been operating when the museum team handed in a special assignment requested by the Ministry of Culture which was a proposal for a full-scale museum to the government in May 2020. The full-scale museum was expected to be open in 2025 according to this proposal. Then, the City of Malmö changed the structure within the municipality and added another division that consisted only of this museum unit and appointed a new person to communicate between the cultural director and the museum team. Both the Minister of Culture and Democracy and the cultural director of the City of Malmö were different persons than the ones who were in charge when the idea of this museum was approved. At the same time, the museum sector

began suffering because of Covid-19 and there was huge pressure towards the ministry and the minister. Although the signals were positive from the minister at first, the dialogue between them was interrupted and then, the waiting period started leaving the staff in uncertainty while they continued managing the events and activities. On the last day of this insecurity, I wrote the note below, showing the emotions of the museum team including myself:

There is some uneasiness among the staff, I see...tomorrow's meeting about the museum's future, funding...the fear of uncertainty; because they do not know whether they will receive funding or not, they cannot plan for future or promise for any kind of event to someone from other possible collaborators which is very sad, annoying or... whatever. (Field notes, 14 September 2020)

15 September 2020 was the date that the decision of dismantlement was told to the staff during the meeting with the Department of Culture, City of Malmö. Even the managers of the museum learned that they were not getting any funding half an hour before this meeting. A couple of hours later, this was announced in the newspapers as well. Then the budget bill for 2021 was presented by the government on 21 September 2020 and the MoM was not on the list. The museum team was not informed beforehand about any sort of reasons and the only "official" reason given by the government for this decision was the one published in the media and that was because the proposed activities were overlapping with the other cultural institutions, museums that already exist in Sweden (Gillberg, 2020a). However, this is in fact not the case and the MoM has been a unique institution with its methodology from the very beginning when the feasibility study and the perspectives of civil society were investigated.

When I interviewed the informants, most of them said that the decision left them in shock and this situation continued for a while. To them, it was totally unexpected as the museum was functioning well and receiving only positive feedback from the communities and other institutions. Yet, some of them articulated that this was not that shocking as the museum was not totally autonomous because of the state funding and the state's power to end the project, and it was not a full-scale museum and things were still being tested. According to these informants, also there were some signals that this could happen since the MoM was not funded one year during its operation. Nevertheless, these did not prevent them from the feelings that emerged. After the situation was comprehended and digested, emotions other than shock evoked. For example, anger (for different reasons) was expressed to me clearly.

As Peter says: "...on a more emotional level, we promised people this and they took it away from us and I'm upset in different ways". The quote from Isabella denotes her anger and the reasons connected:

I became angry, obviously. Sad and angry, because on one hand, I was thinking that I'm a part of the museum and that I have to know, I should know why, and what's happening, not just to be informed like everyone else. So, the way of informing us I think it was, honestly, it was not a good form.

Burkitt underlines that, unlike other emotional states, fear and anger or similar types to such states are in cause and effect relation with external factors, that can be linked to other people and a situation, instead of being a stand-alone state regardless of the level of correlation with surroundings according to basic emotions research (as cited in Wetherell, 2012, p. 24). The emotions among the staff were not independent of the decision made. The dismantling process was an ongoing process at that time and the staff were about to face the consequences.

When it comes to the daily routines of the staff, it was evident in the empirical data that the workload was increased. The programmes and events were being held as they were planned and at the same time, the dismantlement was being handled and there was a huge amount of administrative work to be done. It could be argued that the team lost some of the motivation to carry on the projects as the process has been experienced as hectic and exhausting by them, as observed as well as articulated by the staff themselves. Affect with the aspect of correlated intervention in thought process results in having a significant amount of influence on the decision-making process of people and their constructed narration related to self and the environment that they are interacting with. This particular feature facilitates the everyday social interaction for people, as Archer (2007) enunciates (as cited in Wetherell et al., 2018, p. 10). From my observations, it can be said that the staff's talks and body movements such as crossed arms, shaky voices and sullen faces demonstrated their affective positions when talking about the closure of the MoM. These had an impact on their interaction with each other and produced feeling of uneasiness at the workplace. Their experience of being and working at the MoM changed throughout this process.

Aside from the emotion of anger, sorrow became visible and sensible. Emily and Charlotte state their emotions as:

Emily: I think, both for me personally, and for the stakeholders, we've put so much time and energy into this. And it's just being closed means a lot of sadness and disappointment.

Charlotte: Of course, I'm very sad. I think also the organization has been like, there has been so much work. It's so much work and that we actually saw that now we can focus more on developing the program. Since the routines and all of that are done then we actually could start to go deeper in several projects that were researching projects, for example, that were very interesting.

All informants declared their sadness during the interviews and talked about the closure as a heart-breaking experience. They express a sense of great loss for both the city and for all the organisations that were involved as well as also because of resources and time that has been invested.

The sense of the blues comes down like a thick fog again...Charlotte comes and asks how I am, with a tight smile on her face but sorrow in her eyes. A few minutes talk about the event today and she says, 'I got a bit emotional' I ask, 'Why?' 'Because it was a good talk and there will be no 2021' (Field notes, 30 September 2020).

This excerpt from my field diary shows how the closure situation affected the staff's moods in their daily lives at work while the activities were still going on. I was also interested to hear how the staff was affected by the decision on a more personal level. It was revealed that the process of dismantlement also changed the meaning of the MoM among them. As an example, Diane says: "Working here was a very important dream for me, but then that dream kind of got crushed" and she continues it was not only for her but also for the communities to have a place where they can dream and plan the way they want. Supporting this viewpoint, Isabella also states: "I think that the dream that we had didn't work". They both define the museum as a whole, something like a dream where they are allowed to build and shape the space. Gustav interprets the dismantlement of the museum as a rejection of his professional values and says: "The way I want to practice my professionalism, they were put to tests at this museum, and then declined". It is apparent here that the loss is "both object and process" (Elliott, 2018, p. 305). The MoM as a disappearing place also represents the process and effort including many actors behind. Researchers confirm that the loss of place damages

one's sense of identity both individually and collectively and emotional connections that were developed within social groups (Elliott, 2018). The quotes that are given present that there is a feeling of disappointment due to "crushed dreams" since the staff put their mind and heart into this project.

If investigated deeper the meaning of this loss on a broader level, it is vital to understand the feelings and experiences of communities as well. Several informants interviewed informed me that stakeholders and communities became frustrated as this decision sparked the fear of question about what democracy means for the government. The communities lost the platform, and they lost a place where they can come with ideas that people listen to and act on. In truth, the opportunity to encounter complex and difficult issues in a safe place was taken away from them. What is more, in Peter's own words: "The ones that felt they were outsiders, they had been proven to be outsiders again". Independent scholar Roshi Naidoo (2016) talks about the inside and outside paradigm and claims that there is a fear in the institutions that if they ensure equality and share the authority they have, this will lead them to be ashamed themselves because of the existing power relations, specifically normalised "the exclusionary whiteness" within these museums (p. 511). The inclusion of the historically marginalised and minority groups' perspectives is very much related to the power they are given rather than the top-down activities as parts of museums' programmes arranged to their benefit under the titles of diversity or inclusion.

## 6.2 The Loss of Home

Nice kitchen area, open to everyone to gather around and talk. A long table with chairs. Everything looks so transparent. A huge space for gatherings (for film screenings, talks, conferences, etc.) A big screen, other tech. stuff and a lot of chairs. Flexible. Arrangeable. Event space. (Field notes, 21 April 2020)

This was written after my first encounter with the MoM. I observed the venue for a short time and wrote down my reflections. Then, I learned that there was a reason to decorate the kitchen as it was (Figure 3.) and this was a result of the feasibility study. The reason for this is because the people at the dialogue meetings suggested that the space should be transparent, open and inviting. They stated that the kitchen should be designated to allow people to congregate around the table and socialise with each other comfortably. Additionally, the workroom, where the engagement with the stakeholders and communities happened and new ideas and contents were born, was designed by the architects to be adjustable. Align with

Simon (2010), museums should enable accessibility and flexibility at all levels to co-create with the stakeholders who participate.



**Figure 3.** The kitchen area



**Figure 4.** “Home” feeling

With the help of a homelike kitchen, the MoM transformed into a meeting place for the individuals and organisations that wished to collaborate or come together to discuss the subject matters. It was accessible for different groups resembling the whole city in a good location in the city. Most of the informants chose to describe the MoM as the home when they are asked to describe what the museum meant to the communities involved to understand the effects of the loss of it. My own experience became an example of this incident: feeling at home (Figure 4.). It can be seen in my field diary that I felt comfortable and relaxed since everyone else also looked like me, moving freely in the venue without holding or demonstrating authority. The comment of one organisation on their perspective is below:

Pan-Afrikan Movement for Justice: The entire Malmö and Rörelsernas museum has given us a roof. Which meant a lot to us. For our members. That we have places that we can be where it is not problematic. The museum has given us confidence. A home, it is important because we are a small organization without project funds.

The organisation explicitly expressed that the MoM means home to them. The museum gives them a sense of reliability by providing a secure place and resources. It means a safe place where they can be with their members and feel accepted no matter the differences. The feeling of home is linked to the sense of belonging and heritage itself is strongly intertwined not only with feeling and notion of belonging, and geographical location but also narratives of the people created throughout history that shape the very identities of the members of

communities (Smith, 2020). The comment further adds a layer to this argument by acknowledging the role of organisations in building and shaping the MoM:

Teater Interakt: Gets a warm feeling in the body as soon as we enter the room on Bergsgatan. So many positive memories already, even though the museum has been around for a short time. So many good, inspiring and rewarding meetings we have had here. Both when we played and scratched in the room, in meetings with the museum staff and at conferences and other events that the museum has arranged. It is an incredibly valuable feeling to be involved in the construction of a national museum, not least for those of us who ourselves have experience of migration.

First, Teater Interakt describes being at the MoM as an embodied experience by using the bodily effects and finds the experiences pleasing. They mention positive experiences and then they connect these to the feeling of being a part of the museum, therefore the cultural heritage of Sweden. Heritage can also be seen as a resourceful statement that can be put forward against others in order to establish recognition for the group, and also support the group with the idea of existing as a stand-alone group and creating self-esteem in the recognition process (Smith, 2020, p. 261). As can be realised in the comments, both Pan-Afrikan Movement for Justice and Teater Interakt feel supported, secure and confident since they are given a role in the heritage-making process at the MoM.

Historian Eelco Runia (2006) defines presence as “being in touch - either literally or figuratively - with people, things, events, and feelings that made you into the person you are” (p. 5). With the understanding of the term of presence in that sense, producing meaning from heritage practices is directly entangled with this concept through a practice similar to the very process to define presence. Such practice unfolds itself as establishing the identity or exclusive narratives of both individuals and the group by interpretation of events, facts, physical and non-physical materials as parts of heritage. In this way, the absence or loss of the physical place of the MoM is interwoven with the emotional involvement of the communities in relation to their embodied experiences and thus provokes emotions such as sadness and anger which is discussed previously. When arguing that the MoM is a place like home, the emotional aspect of this should be acknowledged. The closure of the temporary place and the dismantlement of the MoM is not only the loss of the physical space to meet for individuals and organisations but also the other communities’ presence as in Runia’s definition of presence that it can cease to exist in an instant (2006, p. 5).

### 6.3 The Loss of Trust

As sociologist Kevin Hetherington (2004) notes: “The absent can have just as much of an effect upon relations as recognisable forms of presence can have. Social relations are performed not only around what is there but sometimes also around the *presence* of what is not” (p. 159). Anthropologists Mikkel Bille, Frida Hastrup and Tim Flohr Sørensen (2010) talk about the concept of absence through presence. The definition and extent of the term of absence is not solely dependent on the term of presence as its opposite. Absence has its own emotional and material facts and consequences in itself following Bille et al. (2010, p. 13). The decision to dismantle the MoM made the staff and communities disappointed as the museum did fulfil a purpose, and a gap that stakeholders and communities need in Malmö and Sweden. Besides the loss of home, it caused the loss of trust in the authorities as reiterated by the informants during the interviews.

We don't even know the name of the expert they discussed with when they decided to close. None of these people have been asked, none of them. People on the field, people in civil society organisations, researchers, none of them. And it's just empty.

This quote from Peter reveals how the experts were disregarded by the government. The MoM turned into the meeting point where civil society organisations would communicate with the state and politicians in a way. Since the museum was planned to be a national museum, it would have ensured direct access to the people in power in the state entities, otherwise would have not been easy or possible to reach. Nonetheless, the decision was made without discussing or consulting the museum team beforehand and as a result of this, disappointment emerged and the trust in the government was lost. Emily's struggle to make sense of the decision can be seen in her words:

The state in the end did not understand which made me very disappointed. It also means that you know, we have all these cultural policies, cultural policymakers, cultural ministers, that talk about the culture being for everybody. Talking about the culture is excluding and we have to learn better, we have to do better. We have to work with certain topics, we have to work in certain ways, you have to be democratic, we have to be more inclusive. And I've learned that's words, because we've been practicing it. Literally, we've been practicing everything that they write about in the museum reports.

Explaining the museum's practices in line with the cultural policies and political agendas as presented by the state entities, Emily believes that the MoM operations were working towards ensuring everyone's right to access and contribute to the common cultural heritage. This tells a lot about the discrepancy between the theory and the practice. Moreover, the City of Malmö's attitude and response surprised the museum team and the communities. Gustav, for example, reacts to this as:

I was to be a bit amazed by how fast the municipality accepted the government's decision. Because they had at least two weeks. And they had a lot of chances to discuss with the group about how their achievements from this museum could have been. Okay, so we could, of course, accept that it wasn't going to be a national museum, but could it be like a local museum? Or a local cultural house or whatever, in some way? And how it could transition into that? The municipality could have had those discussions with us.

This issue was brought forward by several informants and the lack of clear communication caused some uneasiness. The municipality contributed to human resources and enabled new positions in order to avoid the unemployment of the museum team. Therefore, this is not about losing jobs, but other things matter as considered. There were debates and meetings with the City of Malmö over this issue, yet nothing changed and the museum was rejected from both sides: the government and the municipality. It was claimed that the municipality did not have any budget and resources to pursue the project further. Interestingly enough, around two weeks later, there was news about how the municipality wants to invest a considerable amount of money in anti-racist culture focusing on Afrophobia and Islamophobia with the aim of making Malmö a more open and anti-racist city (Gillberg, 2020b). However, it was said that the municipality did not have the money to transform the MoM into a cultural centre. Since the municipality is much closer to the organisations and individuals, thus to civil society, it created a negative impact.

This section summarises how the meaning of the MoM among the staff and the organisations has changed during the process of closure. Throughout the process, how the emotions such as anger and sadness appeared and are experienced is explained. The fact that the MoM disappears does not mean that the needs or demands will disappear. It is argued that it is a loss and both the state and the municipality failed to meet the needs of communities. This resulted in losing trust in the authorities as well as facing the loss of home for the civil

society. Wetherell et al. (2018) maintain that heritage strengthens its own practice, that forms itself in interpretations of the constituents and narratives for a search of meaning, through affect and emotion. With the support of affect and emotion, heritage can authorise and justify the narratives and meanings created in itself. Emotion and affect is also the essence for heritage to be able to have justifiable inclusion or exclusion statements based on identity and citizenship (Wetherell et al., 2018). The sense of belonging in relation to the feeling at home was apparent within the communities yet the decision caused a loss of trust and connection that the staff was building during the years to establish the relationships that are based on mutual respect with organisations and to invite the communities which they have relationships with, to achieve co-creation as aimed.

## 7. Conclusion

As a form of institution, museums transformed themselves through their core practices such as presenting history including identity and value related matters and putting forward a statement as a final product as asserted by Kratz and Karp (2006). This natural course of evolution, regarding a transformation through core practices, brought in new features to museums. After their reformation, museums are to be seen not only as simple places but also as institutions fulfilling their potential to become a dispenser of social technology with cumulative museological knowledge piled up through statements and claims debated and represented within (Kratz & Karp, 2006). As outlined by Johansson (2017) policy developments related to the areas of integration and culture had an impact on museums' approaches and operations concerning the representation of certain groups of people including migrants and minorities in Sweden. The museum sector began to be interested in subjects such as diversity and migration starting from the 1970s (Johansson, 2017). One of the recent attempts of the Swedish authorities to create a museum working with the issues of democracy, migration and human rights was the MoM. The aim of this thesis was to understand the role of the MoM. By doing so, I examined the practices and the meaning derived from them among the museum staff and the communities. I focused specifically on the social consequences of the museum's closure and analysed these in relation to affect and emotion. I tried to answer the questions posed in the thesis to achieve this aim.

As presented in the fourth chapter, it was understood after the feasibility study that there was a need to process the hidden and oppressed stories about democracy and migration, and to expand the understanding of cultural heritage. With the establishment of the temporary place in Möllan, the MoM started to engage with the stakeholders by organising and creating various activities and events together with the communities. Statements issuing loaded questions related to history and recognition claims cannot come without new talents acquired by museums following the steps of adaptation and transformation through having an opportunity to be the place where identities and diversity pushing for recognition are provided representation in such a safe zone. The team's way to form the museum from scratch and the diversity, not only within the communities they worked with but also inside the museum team, were unique in a Swedish context. Wetherell (2012) argues that affect and emotion are strongly connected to meaning-making and this was apparent in the case here. The MoM was the "dream working place" for the museum staff and the excitement and joy of working with civil society, which led them to feel connected and to have good social contacts

was visible in their faces. Responding to real needs and making a positive impact on the communities have been a central motivation for the team. Besides these, the MoM has enabled staff to gain in depth knowledge in terms of good museological practices both nationally and internationally and to expand their networks. Giving a space to the marginalised voices that can be heard and listened to and seeing the result of their works made the team members' souls flourish.

The fifth chapter explored how ethics were given significant attention by the staff while developing their methodology to deal with personal stories of people excluded. Being aware of possible challenges, the team started the process of building trust between them and civil society organisations as well as individuals within the community. The activities aiming to call attention to the issues that the MoM dealt with were carried out both in physical and digital spaces in a dialogical conversation with the organisations involved throughout the operation period of the museum. Co-creation was the centre of the work done and the whole process was based on mutual trust and respect. The MoM was defined by the civil society organisations and participants as a safe place where difficult and complex issues could be discussed. Through shared authority and resources, the dialogue was enhanced.

According to Wetherell et al. (2018), as affect and emotion is drawn to the centre of the focus, it reveals how the development of attachment around abstract concepts and objects operates and enables a profound understanding of the process itself. On the other hand, concentrating on affect and emotion provides realisation of flawed links which were considered as logical before; therefore, by this realisation, people are pushed towards review and reassessment of their attachments (Wetherell et al., 2018). The sixth chapter revealed the decision and the process of dismantling, and emotions such as anger and sadness that emerged among the museum staff during this process. The closure of the museum can be understood as the dismantlement of the physical place but it means much more than that to people who were engaged with the museum. Despite insufficient resources, the MoM became a meeting place where civil society worked with the team in a dialogical process and with feelings of hope, strength and caring rather than pain or sorrow. However, this meaning has changed. Once it was a place of dreams, now it is not a dream fulfilled, it is a dream lost; thus there are consequences. Not only the physical place but also the trust was lost. When the meaning of the closure was investigated, the empirical data showed that the civil society was disappointed since they lost their "home" which also harms their sense of belonging. It meant that their needs and dreams were ignored. Hence, this rejection from both the government and

the municipality caused a loss of trust in the authorities. Still, the movement that was started by this project cannot be stopped and as Emily reminds us of:

The closure will affect civil society in a way that they will demand more, I think, because now they've seen what is possible to do. So, I hope they will demand more from our politicians and the culture department and everything. We had visions, we had the goals, we wanted to do incredible things together. That has not been done in Sweden before.

Following Emily, there are potential subjects to be investigated for future research. For instance, the study can be carried out mainly with the civil society actors since the empirical data in this thesis involves mostly the interviews conducted with the museum team. It can be researched by using the same or different additional methods to figure out where communities go when they lose such a platform as the MoM or whether there are any gap fillers, medium, or platforms that they can utilize, and if so, would they have been in the same level of the MoM. I have not focused on the next steps or so-called gap fillers due to the scope of the thesis, yet it could give a deeper understanding of the civil society perspective. Another topic to be analysed could be the politics behind the decision of closure or power relations/structures between the staff, the municipality, and the government and the discussions that followed the decision with the theories of power and discourse. What does it mean to close down an institution that works with the issues of migration, democracy and human rights in a country like Sweden? This question is definitely worth investigating further. It could also be interesting to compare the MoM with the proposal of a Swedish museum of the Holocaust which will be established in Stockholm (Ahlqvist & Gillberg, 2021).

The findings and conclusions from this thesis are specific to my research on the process of dismantling the MoM, in Malmö, Sweden in a time of pandemic from a cultural analytical perspective. Therefore, I cannot argue that it represents a broader context or statements valid anywhere. At the same time, the concepts adopted and interpreted here can be applied to other institutions, especially the staff's perspectives on certain issues can be examined in terms of affective practices and emotions which is still not so common in humanities but an approach gaining popularity.

## 7.1 Applicability

The role of the MoM discussed is one of the key points of this thesis. The MoM captured the importance of the questions of democracy and migration and the very possibility of this kind of museum that is created by both political top-down initiative and civil society. The dialogue created between these two groups based on mutual respect and trust shows how co-creation can take place in a cultural institution. Institutions that aim to work in a participatory way should prioritise surrounding voices of communities and need to develop their own methodology in terms of ethics. This study could help to convey the learnings of the museum project and to carry out the experiences to be applied in other contexts. Observing the impacts of the settlement and dismantlement process on communities can help authorities to grasp the meanings of such institutions or platforms for communities when making decisions related to those institutions.

In a case where a need of the community is already pinpointed by the authorities and a solution or an answer to the need is being undertaken with a well-structured project, the abandonment of the very project mobilised points out the problematic approach of the authorities. As a by-product of their action of revoking the very decision, that responds to the needs of the community, the beneficiary groups have to face and endure the detrimental effect of this action and bear the consequences while the authorities are getting no real backlash. Authorities, before taking an action or initiative towards sensitive issues, should predict the outcomes and make themselves accountable for their actions. The consequence of such actions on the authorities is insignificant when compared to the effects which taken place on the communities, especially if they are marginalised because each action related to the communities will have its full effect on the communities. If such revocations are unavoidable, authorities should provide more detailed and transparent reasoning behind such abandonment and before the decision of dismantlement, authorities might establish an advisory committee that heavily favours community representatives and beneficiary groups for that kind of project. Considering no backlash and challenge towards the authorities and the real suffering party being the community, authorities should count themselves accountable and take responsibility. A case where the consequence of an action of authorities has no impact on the actor, the authorities should find, as the ethical approach demands, ways to ease the suffering they caused. In terms of the dismantlement of a museum in demand, before dismantlement, conversion such museums to one or several cultural centres or community hubs should be discussed at least in order to answer the need at some level. These

generalised problems and suggestions are discussed deductively and directly applicable to our case here considering how actions of the Ministry of Culture have taken course.

Lastly, this study can especially help the City of Malmö to question and re-evaluate its approach to culture, and to understand civil society better with an open mind since Malmö is aiming to be the European Capital of Culture in 2029 (Malmö stad, 2021). While aiming that high, it is crucial for such investments to improve understanding of democracy and society profoundly through giving a voice to the unheard in order to support their search for recognition.

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## 8.1 Empirical Material

English summary of the feasibility study.

Field diary (April 2020). Museum of Movements.

Field diary (August - December 2020). Museum of Movements.

Interview with Anna (22 December 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Charlotte (17 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Diane (19 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Emily (17 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Gustav (16 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Isabella (16 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Javier (2 December 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Peter (20 August 2020, 20 November 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Interview with Stella (4 December 2020). Interviewer Meltem Yoztyurk.

Rörelsernas Museum (2020). Rörelsernas Museum - Förslag Till Permanent Verksamhet.

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