



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Social inclusion on display

A cross-cultural study of museological practices in Sweden
and Italy

Laura Carpi

Institutionen för ABM

Uppsatser inom musei- & kulturarvsvetenskap ISSN 1651–6079

Masteruppsats, 30 högskolepoäng, 2020, nr 145

Author

Laura Carpi

English Title

Social inclusion on display. A cross-cultural study of museological practices in Sweden and Italy.

Svensk Titel

Gestaltning av social inkludering. En tvärkulturell studie kring museibruk i Sverige och Italien.

Supervisor

Nadzeya Charapan

Abstract

This study investigates the practices of four museums in two countries in relation to the notion of social inclusion and how their museum professionals reflect about the topic. The aim is to provide an empirical grounding of Sandell's theory about the three levels of impact within which museums can address social exclusion: with individuals, specific communities and wider society. The practices of four museums will be analysed and discussed: Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum in Västerås, Sweden and Musei Civici and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

To answer the research questions, nine qualitative semi-structured interviews were performed. The informants selected are museum professionals responsible for different public practices at their institutions. The interviews were taped and at a later stage transcribed. Additionally, documentation from different sources completes the empirical data. A qualitative analysis has been employed to analyse the data. Text analysis and thematic analysis were selected to scrutinize the data. I employed the deductive method to trace Sandell's theory on the data.

The findings show that the notion of social inclusion is a subjective concept. Nonetheless, all the informants' ideas of social inclusion are consistent with Sandell's definition. The practices enhanced by the museums to address social inclusion are different in nature but mirror the understanding of the concept expressed by the museum professionals and it is in line with Sandell's model. Therefore, his theory about the three levels of impact that museums can achieve implementing inclusive practices is verified by the empirical data. Moreover, my hypothesis about the link between the social inclusion enacted by museums and the socio-cultural context is proved too.

This is a two years master thesis in Archive, Library and Museum Studies.

Abstract på svenska

Denna uppsats undersöker på vilket sätt fyra museer i två länder arbetar med social inkludering samt hur deras medarbetare resonerar kring detta. Syftet var att se huruvida det går att empiriskt belägga Sandells teori, som handlar om att museer kan bekämpa social exkludering på tre nivåer: med fokus på individer, särskilda grupper eller samhället i stort. Den publika verksamheten i fyra museer har analyserats och diskuterats: Västmanlands läns museum samt Västerås Konstmuseum i Västerås, Sverige; Musei Civici samt Fondazione Palazzo Magnani i Reggio Emilia, Italien.

För att besvara uppsatsens frågeställningar gjordes nio semi-strukturerade kvalitativa intervjuer med museiarbetare. Informanterna arbetar i olika publika verksamheter inom dessa museer. Intervjuerna spelades in och transkriberades sedan. Utöver dessa har olika dokument från andra källor använts som komplettering. Analysen gjordes med hjälp av textanalys samt tematisk analys utifrån en deduktiv ansats, för att undersöka Sandells teori.

Resultatet av denna studie visar att begreppet social inkludering har olika subjektiva innebörder. Icke desto mindre överensstämmer alla informanternas idéer med Sandells definition av social inkludering. Museers publika aktiviteter kopplade till social inkludering är olika till sin natur men speglar museiarbetares förståelse av konceptet och är i linje med Sandells modell. Därför stödjer forskningsresultaten hans teori om att museer kan bekämpa social exkludering på tre nivåer. Dessutom styrks även uppsatsens hypotes om sambandet mellan museernas sociala inkludering och det sociokulturella sammanhanget.

Detta är en masteruppsats från ett tvåårigt mastersprogram i studier om Arkiv, Bibliotek och Museer.

Key words

Museum; social inclusion; Richard Sandell; cultural diversity; immigration; museum practice; case study.

Ämnesord

Museum; social inkludering; Richard Sandell; kulturell mångfald; immigration; museibruk; fallstudier.

Table of contents

Introduction.....	5
Aim, research questions and limitation.....	6
Essay disposition	7
Overview of the research field.....	8
Theoretical framework.....	13
Social ex/inclusion.....	13
Museums as agents of social inclusion.....	14
Method and material	19
Method	19
Museum selection	19
Musei Civici (City museums).....	20
Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (Palazzo Magnani Foundation).....	21
Västmanlands läns museum (Västmanland County museum).....	23
Västerås Konstmuseum (Västerås Art Museum).....	24
Data collection	24
Semi-structured Interviews	24
Documents	25
Data analysis	26
Ethical considerations	27
Analysis	29
Disposition	29
Brief overview of migration and inclusion policies in Sweden and Italy.....	29
Sweden.....	29
Italy	30
Museums and social inclusion	31
Musei Civici and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani.....	31
Västmanland läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum.....	37
Inclusive practices.....	42
Musei Civici and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani.....	43
Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum	49
Final discussion	56
Museums and social inclusion	56
Museums and inclusive practices	58

Social inclusion in a broader context.....	63
Suggestion for future research	65
Sources and literature	66
Sources.....	66
In the possession of the essay writer.....	66
Literature.....	66
Appendix 1: list of the participants	72
Appendix 2: interview consent form	73
Appendix 3: list of questions	75
Italian interview guideline	75
English interview guideline	76

Introduction

Migration is not a new issue in museological discourse; across historical and political periods, migration has affected culture and societies. As Robert Winder states "we are all immigrants: it simply depends how far back you go." (Winder 2005, p. x). However, in the last decades, the speed and number of people moving around the world have increased and produced significant changes in a lot of European countries. This phenomenon has certainly affected the communities in which we live leading to the formation of pluralistic societies, characterised by fast-changing needs, multiculturalism and plural identities and citizenship. Globalisation, demographic shifts, internal tensions and financial crisis are only a few of the challenges which many countries are dealing with today. The recent crisis of refugees and migrants from Africa and other Middle Eastern countries, fleeing wars and deprivation, results in a continual flow of people who seek to reach Europe. During the year 2015, more than 1,820,000 people illegally crossed European borders (Frontex 2016, p. 6).

The arrival of new cultural groups represents a critical transformation in the composition of society, one that can destabilise our traditional structures and conceptions (Carra 2014). Questions of migration, integration and diversity have become central in the public debate and have forced societal institutions, i.e. political, medial, educational and cultural, to relate to and address these issues (Sandell 2007; Johansson & Hintermann 2010; Montanari 2013). Despite that many scholars and professionals (Vergo 1989, Boast 2011) within the cultural sector have started to question the role that museums play in society and their responsibility in addressing social issues since the early 1990s, these recent transformations have brought up with more emphasis these aspects of inclusion and exclusion. Cultural institutions, which focused primarily inward on the growth, care and study of their collections, have begun to look outward, to the audience, providing educational, cultural and social benefits in order to respond to the needs of the contemporary plural society (Goodnow 2008). In this regard, debates have been raised about crucial issues such as cultural diversity and multicultural perspectives, as well as the role that museums can play in the construction of inclusive, pluralistic societies¹.

This research was born out of personal and professional reflections on the social role of museums, cultural diversity, and national belonging. As Brook and Hesse-Biber (2006, p. 14) explain, the researcher's situated location – their personal experiences and biography – may influence in many instances the undertaking of a project or the selection of the research topic. In my case, the reason beyond my

¹ See for example the collaborative project between UNESCO and ICOM dealing with migration questions (UNESCO, 2014).

research interest in how museums relate to cultural diversity, immigration and inclusion grew out of my personal and familiar experiences of un-belonging, migration and living "in-between" two countries as an Italian person living in Sweden. Dealing with a different language, culture, and system has represented an exciting journey but also the starting point for reflections about prejudices, misunderstandings and stereotypes which hinder real cross-cultural encounters. My interest in this topic broadened during the course "ALM and society", which I attended in the winter of 2019 at Uppsala University that gave me multiple perspectives on the topic.

These experiences have been crucial in the selection and development of my research interest as well as the selection of the countries in this research. I have personally learnt that factors such as nationality, religion, and appearance, just to give some examples, may facilitate the inclusion of some people while excluding others. Furthermore, I believe that museums, together with other cultural institutions, have the potential to contribute to tackling social injustice, exclusion and enhance tolerance, collaboration, and positive social change.

Aim, research questions and limitation

Richard Sandell wrote in 1998 the essay "Museums as agents of social inclusion", on the grounds of the increasing recognition of the social relevance which museums can achieve through inclusive practices – programs, exhibitions, shared curatorship and the use of collections. He argues that cultural institutions have the responsibility and potentiality to impact social issues, like exclusion, disadvantage and inequality and enact positive outcomes beyond the cultural dimension (Sandell 1998, p. 411–12; 2002, p. 4). This undertaking led him to the identification of three levels of impact: the individual, the community, and the society. Drawing on this assumption, the purpose of this study is to provide an empirical grounding of Sandell's theory about social inclusion in museum practices in the cross-cultural context of Sweden and Italy. In line with the provided theoretical framework and presented purpose, the research questions are:

How does museum staff perceive and approach social inclusion in professional practices?

Based on Sandell's model how are the individual, community and social levels enacted in museum practices?

How do the broader socio-cultural contexts and existing policies of Italy and Sweden affect the approach to social inclusion, in relation to cultural diversity?

Since the term social inclusion refers to many aspects, some guidelines are needed to clarify what exactly is going to be investigated. In this study, I will narrow the focus on museums' practices dealing with social inclusion, specifically focusing on cultural diversity, ethnicity, and migration. Moreover, the research is limited to the analysis of museum outreach programs and projects, while other sectors of the museum's management and operation will not be explored in this study.

To fulfil the aim of the research, I will use a qualitative multiple case study conducted with four museums in two different countries. Since the purpose of this study is to make an inquiry of Sandell's theory about the social agency of museums through the understanding and practices of museums without any explicit goals to work with social inclusion, I have singled out four museums for further analysis. These are the Musei Civici (City Museums) and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (Palazzo Magnani Foundation) in Reggio Emilia, Italy; and the Västmanlands läns museum (Västmanland County Museum) and the Västerås Konstmuseum (Västerås City Museum) in Västerås, Sweden. Hereafter, I will present the structure of the thesis.

Essay disposition

In the introductory chapter the research topic, purpose and questions are presented and contextualized. Thereafter, an overview of the research field will follow which highlights previous research and contributions relevant to this study. Then, the theory and key concepts which have been chosen for the inquiry of the research topic are described. The chapter will end with the discussion about the methodological design strategy employed in this study: the former describes the method selected to conduct the research; then, the selection of the case study, the strategy of data collection and analysis. The third and conclusive paragraph will go over ethical considerations related to the research process. The second chapter will present the analysis of the data collected. An introductory chapter briefly reviews the history of migration and policy management in Sweden and Italy. After this, I present the analysis of the empirical data in two chapters. In the former, I analyse the museum professionals' approach to the notion of social inclusion and cultural diversity; I will then turn the focus to the practices of the four museums undertaken to address social issues in the second and final chapter of this section. Lastly, in the third chapter, the results from the analysis will be brought together to answer the research questions and a few suggestions about possible further research on the topic will be presented. The conclusions of the study will be summarised at the end of the chapter.

Overview of the research field

Alongside increased globalisation and migration in the last several decades, the issues of integration and diversity have become a central topic of the public debate in many European countries. This, in turn, has forced social institutions to address these issues in their agendas and communicative strategies. Since the late 1990s, increased attention has been paid to museums and their contributions to social inclusion (Sandell 1998; 2002; Janes & Sandell 2019; RCMG 2000; Dodd and Sandell 2001), migration and cultural diversity (Goodnow 2008; Johansson 2015; Iervolino & Sandell 2016; Johansson & Bevelander 2017). In order to position the study in the broader museum research field, previous international research focusing on the social role and impact of museums, with particular attention to aspects of cultural diversity and integration, will be presented in this chapter.

The impact of cultural and social change on the museums' role, mission and practice has been analysed by a growing body of museum practitioners and scholars. During the 1960s and the 1970s museums went through a process of transformation that affected their role and function in society. This reassessment is the result of a critical evaluation of core values and purposes which has led to growing attention for the social responsibility of museums and the possible positive outcomes they can achieve (Davis 2008; Dos Santos 2008). As Weil argues (Weil 1998; 2007), since the end of the 1990s museums have begun to change, from authoritative institutions focused on their collections to more social and audience-oriented ones. This shift is often referred to as the "New Museology", and this term is usually linked to a radical reassessment of the roles of museums in society, which means that more attention is now given to and socially marginalized groups (Vergo 1989; Boast 2011).

Richard Sandell started his research on social inclusion in the late 1990s and has produced an essential contribution in the analysis of the development of museums in the UK and their growing interest in diversity and equality. He argues that cultural institutions have the responsibility and the potentiality to impact social issues such as exclusion, disadvantages and inequalities (Sandell 2002, p. 4). In the article "Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion" (1998), he developed a framework to investigate the social role of museums and their potential to deliver positive social outcomes, beyond the cultural dimension. I will return to these aspects later in the theoretical chapter. In the book *Museums, Equality and Social Justice* (2012), Richard Sandell and Eithne Nightingale stated that there is a growing recognition of the central role and challenges brought by the concept of diversity, equality and social justice in the museum field. The engagement with these concepts has led museums to new working practices and a rethinking of their goals and overall agendas. For example, museums have been forced to become more open and accessible for everyone, to engage with different audiences and to represent a diverse society (Nightingale & Sandell 2012, p. 1). According to Nightingale and Sandell (2012, p.1), new strategies are needed to respond to issues of inclusion,

diversity, and integration, which better respond to the contemporary multicultural society.

Eilean Hooper-Greenhill has made valuable contributions to the debate about the changing role of museums and has questioned museum knowledge production from a cultural theoretical perspective. She acknowledges that museums not only have the capacity to change their practices to reach a broader multicultural and complex society, but they can also create opportunities to include a differentiated audience at the physical, intellectual and cognitive level (Hooper-Greenhill 2003; Hooper-Greenhill 2006). Based on her research, Hooper-Greenhill identifies seven areas of impact of social inclusion work in the museum: personal growth and development; community empowerment; the representation of inclusive communities; promoting healthier communities; promoting lifelong learning; tackling unemployment and crime (Hooper-Greenhill et al. 2001, pp. 23–24). Referring to these areas, they stated: "[we] have identified a wealth of evidence to demonstrate the highly significant social impact of museums and galleries and their contributions towards social inclusion" (Hooper-Greenhill et al. 2001, p. 53).

Positive and negative aspects about the social role of the museum and its collaboration with various communities have also been broadly discussed in recent decades in many other publications (see for example, Boast 2011; Lynch 2011; Golding & Modest 2013). Despite the increasing support and acknowledgement of the social role of museums, some scholars share a sceptical attitude towards the ability of a cultural institution to effectively engage with social issues and enhance social inclusion. For example, Tony Bennett in his book *The Birth of the Museums*, argues that museums, instead of delivering social benefits, have excluded many groups from fully participating in the cultural services offered by the institutions and reinforced dominant power relations. He draws the conclusion that museums are means used by social elites to reinforce the differences in society and to promote constructed norms and values (Bennett 1995, p. 28). While Josie Appleton (2001) argues that museums should pursue their institutional mission of preserving, documenting and studying cultural heritage apart from social and political pressures.

The increasing interest in the role that museums can play in addressing social inequality, such as exclusion, racism, and fostering dialogue, tolerance and social inclusion has taken hold both in Sweden and Italy. Despite that the contributions to these ideas are various and steadily growing at the international level, they are relatively recent in the Italian museological sector. In Italy, the idea of a museum as an agent of inclusion/exclusion and that the partnership between cultural and social programs can play a central role in building an equal society has recently begun to be discussed. According to Bodo (2009), this is not surprising given the long-established function to preserve and safeguard cultural heritage which museums have played until the late 1990s. In recent years, the increasing attention focused on the public service duties and consequent interest in social issues in the

museum sector at an international level has pushed Italian cultural institutions to scrutinise identity, knowledge production, and reconsider their approaches to audiences (Bodo 2009, p. 162). She points out that structural and normative tools are crucial for helping museums to open up to new audiences and become more inclusive. For example, Bodo describes the experimental approach, undertaken by the GAMeC in Bergamo, to prepare "cultural mediators" which can offer new interpretations of the collections. While other museums choose to involve the public using storytelling technics and through the collaboration with contemporary artists to create new perspectives about cultural heritage (Bodo 2009, p.164–66). Despite the revolutionary nature of this change, Bodo thinks that this is the only way for museums to showcase cultural heritage today, following the definition that UNESCO updated in the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Bodo 2009, pp. 165–66).

Elisa Carra points out that museums and political institutions need to move forward and undertake new strategies to shift from institutions devoted to the conservation and the transmission of knowledge, to institutions oriented to the needs of the public and "in the service of society"² (Carra 2014, p. 180). In order to respond to these historical changes, she suggests that museums should undertake efforts directed towards envisioning new practices that affect all the traditional functions of the museum – for example, mission, curatorial practices, exhibition layout – and then, open up to new implementations. Carra suggests that, if museums desire to remain relevant in contemporary society while maintaining their traditional audiences, they need to welcome those people who for different reasons have suffered some kind of social exclusion. Here, a partnership between museums and regional and local administrations, such as between the museums and the organisations that provide social services, can represent a productive implementation in museum work. Indeed, the creation of shared programs and working strategies can transform museums into institutions enabling the representation and construction of inclusive and transcultural societies (Carra 2014, p. 180). As Weil argued in his study of American museums, the partnership between museums and social organisations is crucial, especially for local museums which manage smaller collections and are less attractive at the national level (Weil 2007, p. 35). As presented previously, the partnership between museums and local communities and civil organisations is a central aspect of the growing field of study about social inclusion.

In the last decades, the European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture has supported research that has stimulated debates and reflections about a more inclusive and participatory way of conceiving cultural

² ICOM's current definition states: "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."

heritage and social inclusion in general. Between 2007 and 2009, Bodo et al. conducted studies within the European project MAP for ID – Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue scrutinising inclusive practices implemented by some museums in Europe. Among with them, there are some examples from the Italian museum sector seeking to develop the potential role of museums as places of intercultural dialogue which can promote a more active collaboration with different cultural communities of citizens (Bodo, Gibbs & Sani 2009).

More recently, the interdisciplinary project MeLa* European Museums in an age of migrations, founded by the European Commission, has been developed to reflect on the relation between museums and migration "as a paradigm of the contemporary globalised and multicultural world" (Basso Peressut & Pozzi 2012, p. 10). The contributions, brought together in the book, reveal "the importance of considering multivocal, multicultural and transitional perspectives to transform museums into institutions for the representation and construction of inclusive scenarios of pluralistic societies." (Basso Peressut & Pozzi 2012, p. 10).

Reviewing the initiatives undertaken inside the same MeLa* project, Montanari acknowledges the central role of local museums in fostering social inclusion and cohesion (Montanari 2013, p. 554). She puts forward the idea that local museums promoting the local heritage can play an essential role for new members of the communities. Montanari highlights that they can help new citizens to learn the historical development of the territory, becoming more familiar with their new homeland – places, habits, and traditions, thus creating a sense of community, and finally "enhancing a sense of awareness and mutual knowledge" between the newcomers and the traditional audience (Montanari 2013, pp. 553–4). Moreover, she argues that an effective way to foster inclusion is to involve local communities in creating a new relationship between the museum staff and the public (Montanari 2013, p. 563).

Within the Swedish museum sector, research on the changing role of museums in society has been discussed in recent decades (see for example Palmqvist & Bohman 2003; Alzén & Aronsson 2006). However, how museums deal with the concept of cultural diversity and social inclusion has only marginally been investigated (see, for example, Bjärenstam & Parazajder 2004; Axles, 2009; Edström & Hyltén-Cavallius 2011). Issues relating to the integration of cultural diversity within the museum sector are addressed in the anthology *Scandinavian Museum and Cultural Diversity* (Goodnow & Akman 2008). In the book, Katherine Goodnow (2008, p. 230–245) argues that museums face a new challenging period in their history. Giving examples, mostly from the Scandinavian field, she argues that museums need to rethink their approach and strategies in order to mirror a culturally diverse society. In a rapidly evolving society, museums are called to use their potential to act as agents of social change on both the causes and the effects and the impact on society (Goodnow & Akman 2008, p. 243). Contributions in the book showcase different practices and choices that Scandinavian museums employ

when they deal with issues of inclusion and diversity representation (Goodnow 2008, p. 230).

Especially interesting is Cajsa Lagerkvist's study of the recent changes in the Swedish museum field and the factors that determined these changes (Lagerkvist 2008). She points out that government policies, museum practitioners and migrant communities have played a relevant role in exhibiting migration and diversity. By presenting two case studies, Lagerkvist highlights the collaboration with communities as a key practice to promoting a multicultural and transnational form of representation. Even though she recognises collaboration with source and local communities as the key to creating valuable and meaningful activities, she also highlights that these implementations are challenging for the museums' staff and cause inherent conflicts concerning knowledge production and shared authority (Lagerkvist 2008, p. 100). As Witcomb states:

...by 'placing' community at the heart of the museum enterprises [...] it will be possible to overcome them as hegemonic institutions. In giving voice to the powerless, a process of self-discovery and empowerment will take place, in which the curator becomes a facilitator rather than a figure of authority.

(Witcomb 2003, p. 79)

Christina Johansson in her book *Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity*, examines some Swedish museum projects focused on aspects of migration and cultural diversity (Johansson 2015). Her research contributes to the ongoing debate about the inclusive role of museums, while she also discusses the limits and challenges that museums encounter in actively involving source communities in the cultural production process (Johansson 2015, p. 114). In conclusion, she argues that the representation of cultural diversity and immigration in Swedish museums is changing according to policy development in the field of integration and social inclusion. Based on the cases she studied, the author concludes that the representation of newly arrived immigrants is seldom included in the museum display, since these cultural institutions are more focused on officially recognized minorities (Johansson 2015, pp. 65–67). Moreover, she points out that new perspectives and practices have been showcased by Swedish museums attempting to enhance more hybrid and transnational, narratives. Nonetheless, these approaches to social inclusion are far from being rooted in the institutions' fabric. The author suggests that if museum practitioners want to implement more inclusive practices, they need to rethink the role and mission of their institutions. They need to accept that museums are not neutral or safe spaces, deploy new approaches to address cultural diversity, and create new forms of authority. (Johansson 2015, p. 116).

As I have shown in this chapter, in the last decades the issues about social inclusion and migration have deeply impacted Western European countries and have become the core of public debates both within and outside the museum

domain. This growing interest is connected to the idea that museums can be valuable tools in the social inclusion process. Moreover, they might contribute to raising awareness about new-comers and their contributions to the local communities. Also, they might contribute to creating a sense of belonging and foster a new transnational identity. Despite the willingness of the museums to be more inclusive and equal, the outcomes of social inclusions are often ineffective or invisible.

In this vein, further research is needed to investigate the attitudes and practices that museums put into being when they are dealing with social inclusion in the museum field. Although many studies about the concept of social inclusion have been published, they mostly gather an overview of good practices from different museums in order to sustain their research agendas. There is still a lack of empirical studies that critically investigate practices of local museums in relation to social inclusion. The field of research regarding migration and integration of more recent cultural groups is still sparsely explored. The lack of in-depth studies both in Sweden and in Italy makes my research more relevant to understand whether and how museums work with these social topics; how museums' staff understand social inclusion and engage with people of different cultures, i.e. how they showcase cultural diversity. In conclusion, the overview of previous research demonstrates the scarcity of existing knowledge about the museological practices in relation to displaying and communicating social inclusion.

Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will present the theoretical framework and the key concept that have guided the research design. The analysis of the empirical data is based on the theoretical framework, "Museums as agents of social inclusion", developed by Richard Sandell at the end of the 20th century. Before presenting Sandell's perspective, I will define the concept of social exclusion and inclusion.

Social ex/inclusion

To better understand the idea of museums acting as agents of social inclusion, I will employ the concept of exclusion from a historical perspective. Despite the fact that these two terms are relatively new in the museum debate, the former is a political and philosophical reflection upon society introduced in France in the 1970s, describing "an underclass which fell outside the protection of the State's social insurance" (Sandell 1998, p. 404). Since then, the meaning of the concept and its relationship with the idea of poverty and deprivation has changed with the passing of time, and it has grown in importance and use within many sectors – academic and sociological (Sandell 1998, p. 405; Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 8). The understanding of social exclusion depends mostly on the different views about

inequality and disadvantage. Sandell (1998) argues that the term encompasses a broad part of society, especially those who are prevented for different reasons from participating fully in the social system. He states:

For many, the term 'social exclusion' is more useful than 'poverty' since it is more comprehensive, can be used to encompass a wider range of socially disadvantaged individuals and groups and focuses on a dynamic process not merely a static description of a situation. So, whereas definitions of 'poverty' have tended to focus on the material means required to participate in society, 'social exclusion' is a broader term which includes those people who, whether living in poverty or not, are prevented from fully participating in the different systems of society. (p. 404)

Although the concept has been used in different contexts and the meaning has been changed according to the political, academic, and professional usage, de Haan (quoted in Sandell 1998, p. 405) recognises three commonalities. Firstly, social exclusion is the opposite of social inclusion; secondly, it is both a state and a process, and finally, it is multidimensional, involving more implications than just poverty and deprivation. Bhalla and Lapeyre (quoted in Sandell 1998, p. 406), as well as Walker (Walker 1997), identify and describe these three dimensions, the economic, the political and the social. They argue that the roots of social exclusion involve many aspects that are interconnected and go beyond material opportunities. According to Sandell, there is a fourth dimension in which people might be prevented from accessing rights and services in different aspects of life, the cultural dimension (Sandell 1998, p. 410). Exclusion, therefore, has a multidimensional and interrelated nature, which explains the adoption of the concept in many professional sectors; consequently, the responsibility for preventing social exclusion has been widened beyond the traditional welfare agencies, also reaching the cultural field and involving museums (Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 12). I will describe more in-depth the role of museums as agents of social inclusion in the following section.

Museums as agents of social inclusion

Sandell (1998, p. 407) argues that de Haan's view of social exclusion as a mechanism points out that institutions and organisations, like museums, may represent the means of institutionalised exclusion. In this way, museums may promote social exclusion by avoiding the integration of the stories of particular groups into their main national narrative or preventing them from accessing beneficial cultural services. Moreover, museums can reiterate the exclusion of cultural groups by promoting normative perspectives and values that confirm prejudices and discriminatory attitudes. Moving from this concept of social exclusion on, Sandell argues that museums have the responsibility to change this institutionalised practice and the capability to retrieve those excluded (Sandell 1998, p. 408). Despite the idea that culture can benefit society is not new in the museum field (Hein 2000), Sandell argues that in the new millennium it is more challenging for museums to clarify and demonstrate their social purpose. He states

that museums can pursue this, including a goal in many forms and that their response is often multi-faceted (1998, p. 401; 2002, p. 3). As presented in the following table, Sandell suggests three typologies or roles: the inclusive museum, the museum as an agent of social regeneration and finally, the museum as a vehicle of broad social change (as shown in Figure 1).

Figure 1. Museums as agent of social inclusion – a typology.

	The Inclusive Museum	The Museum as Agent of Social Regeneration	The Museum as Vehicle for Broad Social Change
Goal	To achieve cultural inclusion	To improve individuals' quality of life (e.g. increase self-esteem)	To influence society/instigate positive social change (e.g. promote greater tolerance towards minorities)
Achieved through—	Representation of, and participation and access for, those excluded	Initiatives which seek to alleviate disadvantage/encourage personal development (with individuals and small groups)	Providing a forum for public debate, education and persuasion
Exclusion is tackled within—	The cultural dimension	The economic, social, political and cultural dimensions	
Social problems associated with exclusion—	Might be addressed indirectly	—provide the rationale behind initiatives —might be directly expressed within the museum's goals	

Source: Sandell, R. (1998) p.416.

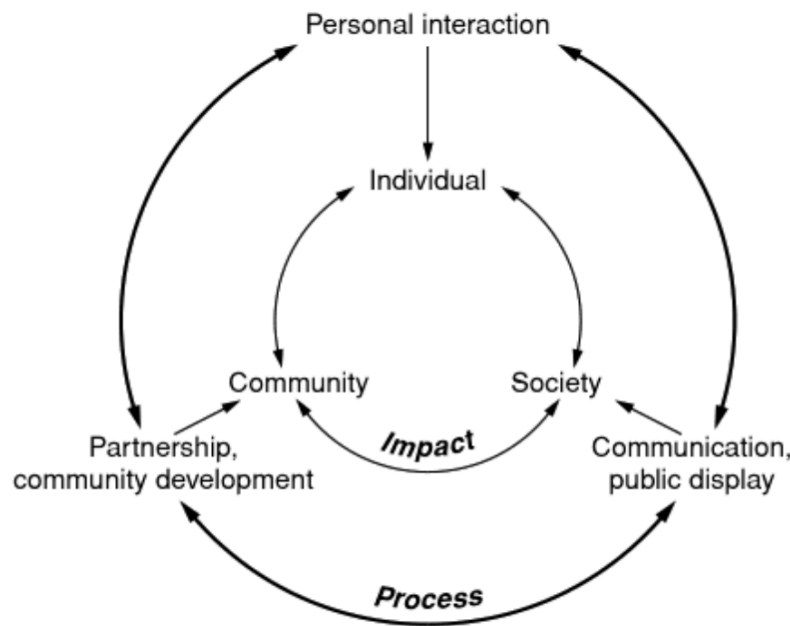
Figure 1 demonstrates that the first typology tackles exclusion within the cultural dimension, while the other typologies seek to respond to social, economic, and political challenges.

As mentioned before, Sandell (1998) includes the cultural dimension among the economic, political, and social dimensions of exclusion. Within this dimension, the inclusive museum seeks to tackle exclusion, through three elements: access, representation, and participation. The former describes the opportunity to engage with cultural services; the second is the representation of the individual and the group's cultural heritage in the main narrative. The last one is the opportunity to engage in the creative process of cultural production (Sandell 1998, p. 410). These three elements are more commonly known under the term of audience development. Drawing from empirical research identifying the contributions that museums make towards inclusion, Dodd and Sandell (2001) argue that museums have mostly understood their inclusive role as synonymous with cultural inclusion. This

perspective supports a growing body of activities and projects that have been implemented with the goal of widening access, representation and participation. For example, museums can become inclusive by identifying and overcoming the barriers of different nature – physical, economic, and cultural/emotional factors – that prevent some groups from participating fully in their services. Furthermore, through the representation and participation of groups traditionally excluded, museums can promote cultural equality and democracy (Sandell 1998, p.410–11; Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 12). As explained before, the four dimensions of exclusion are inextricably interrelated, and therefore the outcomes reached by this typology might, in turn, have impact upon the other dimensions. So, including the culture of underrepresented communities in the mainstream narrative, not only builds a democratic representation of society, but it might also generate recognition and enhance community self-determination.

The second and third typologies include approaches and initiatives that go beyond the cultural dimension seeking to engage with and impact upon the social, economic, and political dimensions of exclusion. Sandell recognises that museums have the capacity to positively affect individuals, to promote social development and to build a more equitable world (Sandell 1998, p. 412; 2002, p. 4). This positive recognition is based on the assumption that museums are meaning-making institutions, and they can influence and shape the visitors' perception of social issues (Sandell 2002, p. 21). Sandell refers to social exclusions, not only as a form of economic disadvantage experienced by some groups and individuals but also as the dynamic social processes and power relations that operate to deny some groups opportunities, rights and access to resources and cultural authority. Museums which purposefully engage with social issues understand the representation of heritage and their collections concerning people and society, as a means to contribute to social equality and to achieve broader social goals. (Sandell 1998, p. 412; Sandell 2005; Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 13). According to Sandell's theory (2002, p. 4), museums can impact positively upon three levels: the individual and community level, as an agent of regeneration, and at the societal level as a vehicle of broad social change.

Figure 2. Museums and the social inclusion: impact and process.



Source: Sandell, R. (2002) p. 5.

Museums acting as agents of social regeneration seek to have an impact upon social issues and deliver positive outcomes to known individuals and identified communities. The outcomes of this interaction range from the personal and emotional sphere, such as self-esteem and a sense of belonging, to a more practical one, such as increased personal confidence and the acquisition of skills that allow the person to find a job. Some projects undertaken by museums are purposefully designed to achieve personal and practical benefits for the people involved; in these cases, the museum and its collection function as a means of social inclusion. In other instances, projects, implemented to engage underrepresented groups and to make them acquainted with the museum, produce unexpected benefits for the individuals that take part in the activity itself (Sandell 1998, p. 413; 2002, p. 5; Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 27). The processes within which museums attain these goals are mostly personal, face-to-face interactions, undertaken by the museums' outreach and education departments. In many instances, museums develop these projects in partnership with other agencies which work with these individuals.

When it comes to the community level, Sandell argues that museums can undertake regenerating and renewing activities in order to enhance communities that have long been deprived of decision-making opportunities and are excluded from the main narratives as well as deliver positive outcomes in specific neighborhoods and areas. (Sandell 1998, p. 413; 2002, p. 7) These types of practices aspire to open up dialogue between communities and build bridges among different cultural groups. In this role, museums function as a means for community

empowerment, helping them to find their place in contemporary society. As at the individual level, the personal interaction between the museum staff and communities as well as with external organisations is still central. Practices borrowed from social and health services often shape the projects undertaken by museums. These two levels focus mostly on the positive social outcomes for the audiences, previously selected as the targets of the activities by the museum staff. These initiatives are often arranged in partnership with other social institutions as social services, community and health agencies, inside of a broader communitarian plan, where the government usually provides the foundation to realise those projects (Sandell 1998, p. 413; 2002, p. 7).

Although the third and final level, museums as a vehicle for broad social change, is often regarded with scepticism by many museum practitioners and academics, Sandell points out that museums, alongside other social institutions, might contribute to changing social behaviour and encouraging cooperation for a better world. They can call attention to social inequality but also build narratives and norms that shape new, more inclusive and pluralist perspectives within society. (Sandell 2002, p. 8). In this role, museums act at a macro level promoting programs and exhibitions that for their often controversial or provocative nature aim to affect the entire society. He affirms that this approach requires an acknowledgement for the civic role of museums and the power to influence people's view about social issues, as well as challenging their preconceptions or misconceptions and enhance comprehension and tolerance (Janes & Sandell 2019, p. 17). Indeed, in this final typology, museums need to implement thoughtful approaches to collections, display, and interpretation mirroring the full diversity of society (Sandell 2005, 189–193).

According to Macdonald, museums have always been seen as authoritative institutions that provide truth and generate knowledge (Macdonald 1998, p. xi). They are an instrument of mass communication and can reach people well beyond the walls of the buildings in which they are housed. In this sense, museums can underpin manifestations of social exclusion and generate inclusive and equitable societies. Many authors, such as Hooper-Greenhill (2000) and Macdonald (1998), have widely explained the political consequences of inclusive exhibitions and collection practices, and this is no place for further analysis. This proactive role of museums is still controversial and not commonly shared in the museum field; seldom it is openly expressed within the mission and the goals of cultural institutions. (Sandell 1998, p. 414; 2002, p.10; Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 32). Nevertheless, Sandell states that museums have the potentiality and the responsibility to shepherd the experience of the audience and to employ their cultural authority to engage with social inequality (Sandell 2002, p. 21).

The social role of the museum, which I aim to discuss in this study, depends on the relation between museums and society, i.e. how the museum staff position the museum within society. Sandell's theory about museums as agents of social

inclusion paves the way for an understanding of the museums' approaches and outcomes.

Method and material

In this chapter, the overall research design, and the methods of data-generation and analysis will be described. Consistently with the theoretical framework and related research questions, the study aims to provide an empirical grounding of Sandell's theory about social inclusion in museum practices in the cross-cultural context of Sweden and Italy. In the next chapters, I will start discussing the method employed in this research and the selection of the museums, as well as the data collection and analysis methods. I will finally conclude with my ethical considerations.

Method

In order to answer the research questions and to explore ideals and practices through the lived experiences of practitioners working in museums, I employ qualitative research, as the more appropriate approach, because it allows the researcher to enter the social reality and grasp complex, social phenomena, focusing on the meaning that participants hold regarding the topic (Creswell 2013, p. 43; Eliasson 2013, p. 21). Moreover, I have selected this method because my study is exploratory, since, as shown in the literature review, very little has been published on how museums position themselves in regard to social inclusion in Italy and Sweden. When a qualitative method is selected, the researcher needs to specify the strategy of inquiry, namely the strategy design used to define the procedure, gather and analyse the data (Creswell 2013, p. 69). I have selected the case study approach to reach the goal of the study. Indeed, in a case study approach, the researcher makes an in-depth investigation of one or more cases within a real-life, contemporary setting or context, seeking to obtain unique insights and to make sense of the relationship and the processes within a particular instance (Creswell 2013, p. 97). This method of inquiry requires the selection of one case or multiple cases to be compared (Creswell 2013, p. 98); in this study, I have decided to employ a multiple case approach to understand how museum professionals engage with social inclusion and, furthermore, investigate Sandell's model on museums located in different countries. Although museums in Western countries have evolved similarly, nonetheless, they present peculiar strategies for the management and recognition of cultural diversity (Stevens 2010, p. 157).

Museum selection

In a case study approach, it is necessary to clarify the criteria used to select the cases, as it explains the basis of the research design (Descombe 2007). Since the aim of this study is to provide an empirical grounding of Sandell's theory about

social inclusion in museum practices in a cross-cultural context, Sweden and Italy have been singled out as they have different strategies for the management and regulation of cultural diversity as a result of different approaches to migration policies. Given the fact that the geographic location of the museums is crucial in my study, two museums from each country have been selected to investigate how museum professionals from local and medium-size museums engage with social inclusion according to Sandell's model. The selection was guided by personal and practical motivations. In autumn 2019, I spent five weeks as an apprentice at Västmanlands läns museum (Museum of Västmanland county) in Västerås, Sweden; therefore, my first thought was to invite the museum to participate in my research. After a positive answer from the director, I asked the other major museum in Västerås to participate, Västerås Konstmuseum (Västerås Arts museum), because my goal was to analyse museums from the same city.

When it comes to the Italian museums, I sent my invitation to participate in my research to the museums located in Parma, my hometown, and Reggio Emilia, with which I also have a familiarity. Two museums in Reggio Emilia, the Musei Civici (City Museums) and the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (Palazzo Magnani Foundation) agreed to participate. These institutions share several commonalities as they focus on the local context and history; they are located in medium-sized cities, and they all are public institutions (the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani is the only one with a smaller private participation).

Musei Civici (City museums)

The Musei Civici (or City museums) is a public institution, part of a network of cultural institutions which, in turn, is a division of the welfare department of the city of Reggio Emilia. This means that the city council sets the goals, and administers the human and economic resources, while the cultural aspects are supervised by the director and the museum professionals (Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2009, p. 16). The mission has always been to preserve the historical heritage and history of the city and the county while helping to develop the cultural identity of the local community. The museum has also

promoted scientific research, knowledge and public use of the museum network, also through educational and training activities. They have been dynamic promoters of cultural and training activities related to their heritage in co-operation with several public and private institutions in the area: superintendency, University, public authorities, research institutes and cultural institutions.

(Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2009, p. 11).

The museum and its first natural collection date back to 1779 and over the years, has grown in scope from the local to the international through the acquisition of objects from all over the world in different fields, from archaeology and ethnography, to arts, natural and industrial history. The mission of the museum is

”...to foster a sense of belonging and to create a shared memory, beside the traditional goals of education and knowledge within the many activities and initiatives undertaken”. Moreover, it states that the museums seek to enhance the opportunity for the public to develop a personal interaction with the institutions and the collections, in order to enjoy the visit in relation to their personal needs, desires and expectations (Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2009, p. 13). A brief presentation of the public activities of the museum may help to present the role that the institution plays in the local context.

Through the use of the collections, the museum seeks to bring people closer to local history and identity and develop a conscious use of cultural heritage. The targets of the educational programs are students, from local pre-school to high school, families, special public³, young people and adults. The museum offers many activities for students, such as *Living lab*, *One day at the museum* and *I love cultural heritage*⁴. Creativity and the personal encounters with objects are the means used by museum educators to stimulate personal development and interpretation⁵ (Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2009, p. 14). The museum is also engaged in implementing programs for families, with a special focus on making its collections stimulating for children: some examples are *The passport for culture* and *The museum for children*⁶.

The concept of lifelong learning is the core of these activities; through lessons, courses and meetings in relation to the museum collections and in partnership with other educational organisations active in the territory the museum seeks to promote knowledge⁷ (Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2009, p. 15).

With the term special public, the museum aims to target people with disabilities. Through particular programs, tailored according to their needs, the museum seeks to reach these groups and involve them by offering unique experiences. These projects are part of a broader social goal, promoted by the city council of Reggio Emilia, under the name *A city without barriers*⁸. The start-up project for groups with disabilities was *The light in the eyes*⁹ in 2016. At present, the website does not mention any special programs¹⁰.

Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (Palazzo Magnani Foundation)

Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (or Palazzo Magnani Foundation) is an institution founded by the district of Reggio Emilia in 2010 with the support of private

³ Pubblici speciali in the Italian version is the term used to refer to people with disabilities which I translate in *special public*.

⁴ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > The museum-for-the-school [20-09-15].

⁵ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > schools [20-09-15].

⁶ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > family [20-09-15].

⁷ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > younger and adults [20-09-15].

⁸ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > projects for special publics [20-09-15].

⁹ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > projects for special publics > education > special publics > the light in the eyes [20-09-15].

¹⁰ Musei Civici Reggio Emilia website > Education > projects for special publics > education > special publics [20-09-17].

investors. In 2016, the city of Reggio Emilia became one of the founders. The institution is defined as a public organisation since the majority of the participation is from public institutions, i.e., the county and city of Reggio Emilia. The foundation is a non-profit, cultural organisation; its aim is to conserve the historical building Palazzo Magnani, purchased by the county of Reggio Emilian in 1987, and to create an exhibition space for the promotion of visual arts, cultural events and the development of the territory (Palazzo Magnani Foundation statute). On their website, the organisation moves beyond the institutional purposes, centred on the enhancement of the arts at an international, national and local level as well as local heritage toward more social and inclusive goals. The institution states:

Fondazione Palazzo Magnani promotes the visual arts through exhibitions and cultural activities. It privileges interdisciplinary dialogue, intercultural encounters, and interchange between different forms of knowledge. In this way, an exhibition becomes a cultural project, an occasion designed not only to offer visitors the opportunity to observe valuable works but also and above all to provide an opportunity for comparison, reflection, growth, criticism and sharing one's personal knowledge and convictions.¹¹

Moreover, it describes the method implemented:

A constant source of research is workshop-based experiential and narrative approaches to teaching and learning, in recognition that the practice of art is the major route through which individual development and social cohesion can be reconciled. [...] We are convinced that art should play a fundamental role in the process of providing support and improvement in matters of health, adversity and vulnerability.¹²

The active role which the cultural institution affirms in the mission unfolds in their public activities targeting school children and youngers, adults, and people with disabilities. For the former audience, the institution offers guided tours, as well as experimental and narrative workshops connected to the upcoming exhibitions in order to enhance the educational value of arts¹³. For every exhibition and workshop, both the theoretical and practical, are enacted for adults as well as specialists, for example, the course, *The use of photography at schools, Between workshop and project*, for teachers¹⁴. The projects and initiatives for the latter group fall under the name *Accessibility projects* and aim to create the opportunity for particular groups of people to enjoy the visit, express themselves and benefit from art. Several different initiatives are ongoing, such as *Art belongs to me*, a guided tour based on the visitor's needs; *Alzheimer's itinerary*, a project for people with this disease and *Donated ticket*, free entrance for people experiencing economic difficulties. Furthermore, itineraries for blind and people with impaired vision as well as AAC

¹¹ Palazzo Magnani Fondazione website > foundation > mission and history [20-09-17] .

¹² Ib.

¹³ Fondazione Palazzo Magnani website > edu > schools [20-09-17].

¹⁴ Fondazione Palazzo Magnani > foundation > workshop-course [20-09-17].

(Augmentative and Alternative Communication) solutions are implemented in the exhibitions¹⁵.

Västmanlands läns museum (Västmanland County museum)

Västmanlands läns museum (or Västmanlands county museum) was founded in 1861 by Västmanlands Fornminnesförening (Institution for the memory of the past in Västmanland) and housed in Västerås Castle until 2010, when the museum's public department moved to the buildings of the former factory Mimer. The museum shares and co-manages the building and some services with Västerås Konstmuseum and together they built Karlsgatan 2, a city cultural space. Since 2006, Västmanlands läns museum has been administrated by the Västmanland county¹⁶. The museum aspires to preserve the memory and the heritage of the territory and the collection consists of objects from prehistoric to contemporary times. The purpose of the museum is to promote engagement in cultural life throughout the whole county and to cooperate on the development of the local territory and with its inhabitants. More specifically, the museum's mission is to deepen the knowledge about the diversity of local heritage, and to enhance debate about the past and the future (Region Västmanland 2018, p. 28–29). Västmanlands läns museum seeks to represent an open arena for all the inhabitants of the region by fostering dialogue and reflection as well as equality. Cultural diversity, access, and participation are central concepts of the museum's public activities; moreover, among its short-term goals, presented in the regional culture plan, the museum has included exploration and implementation strategies to achieve a democratic dialogue within the county (Region Västmanland 2018, p. 30–31).

The activities provided for visitors focus on children and youth, especially from schools, which are the target groups included in the regional cultural plan (Region Västmanland 2018, p. 27). Guided tours allow the museum pedagogues to lead students through the history and to discover the many stories the objects tell about society. The museum also offers material (*Tell more*) and study boxes – the boxes contain objects related to different historical topics – to teachers to enhance the educational value of history and heritage¹⁷. With the triennial project *Ohtsedidh – Samiska Kulturyttringar i Mellansverige*, the museum collaborates with other cultural institutions to preserve and highlight the presence of the Finnish minority group in the region¹⁸. Finally, guided tours are also undertaken to introduce immigrant adults to the history and culture of the region; these activities are implemented in collaboration with specific schools, such as SFI (School for immigrants) and Vuxenutbildning (School for adults)¹⁹.

¹⁵ Fondazione Palazzo Magnani > foundation > accessibility-projects [20-09-17].

¹⁶ Västmanlands läns museum website > history [20-09-18].

¹⁷ Västmanlands läns museum website > learn and discover > school [20-09-18].

¹⁸ Västmanlands läns museum website > learn and discover > project [20-09-18].

¹⁹ Västmanlands läns museum website > learn and discover > schools > book a viewing [20-09-18].

Västerås Konstmuseum (Västerås Art Museum)

Västerås Konstmuseum (Västerås Art Museum) has collections that date back to 1919 when the Västerås Art Association (Västerås Konstförening) was founded. Since then, it has grown in size and today includes more than 8,000 artworks, mainly from Swedish artists. In 1972, the city of Västerås took over management of the collection, which was exhibited at the town hall until 2010, when it moved to its current location, in Karlsgatan 2, together with Västmanlands läns museum²⁰. The museum presents itself as "a meeting point for Västerås dwellers and tourists. Through the arts, we want to inspire, challenge and activate curiosity. [...] everyday people of different ages and cultures meet at Västerås Art museum."²¹.

Västerås Konstmuseum is administrated by the city council and therefore, follows the goals and the vision of the city policy. Lifelong learning, accessibility, equality, and diversity are the key concepts upon which the city and all the cultural institutions base their mission (Västerås stad 2019, 7–14). The museum focuses on families and youth, which are free to express their creativity and improve their artistic skills at the *Art laboratory*. Different laboratories arranged by age are organised during the week and the holidays²². Västerås Konstmuseum also engages with schools and students from different age groups and with differing needs. Guided tours of the ongoing exhibitions and thematic workshops introduce the participants to art and stimulate their creativity and critical thinking related to different topics, for example, *My museum*, reflects on museums as institutions and on the act of collecting. Another example is *Design and recycling*, which focuses on ecology and the use of resources²³.

Data collection

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with museum professionals from the selected institutions. Moreover, I referenced the museums' web pages, and materials about previous exhibitions and programs as well as policy documents. The employment of multiple data sources and collection allows me to achieve more accurate research results (Creswell 2013, p. 100).

Semi-structured Interviews

As case studies inquire about contemporary phenomena in a real-life context within which people are directly or indirectly engaged, the interview is the more appropriate approach to collect the views and the personal experiences of the participants. In the interviews, I was looking for the opinions and the personal thoughts of the participants as well as the strategies related to social inclusion. In the semi-structured interview approach a set of prepared questions guide the

²⁰ Västerås Konstmuseum website > about Västerås art museum [20-09-19].

²¹ Västerås Konstmuseum website > about Västerås art museum [20-09-19].

²² Västerås Konstmuseum website > children and youngers > open creativity for children [20-09-19].

²³ Västerås Konstmuseum website > children and youngers > free tours for kindergarden schools and highschoools [20-09-19].

interviewer to discuss specific themes, but at the same time, leave the interviewees free to address aspects they regard as especially important and free to describe in-depth some arguments (Eliasson 2013, p. 26). Through semi-structured interviews, the interviewer and the interviewees can construct a productive dialogical interaction within which the interviewer is free to change the sequence of the questions and ask other questions which arise during the interview itself (Bryman & Nilsson 2018, p. 302). Furthermore, in-depth interviews allow the researcher to discuss the same topics with all the participants and to collect the same data from all the informants. During the interviews, a variety of themes were discussed – like the museums' role, social inclusion and diversity.

Research in the field can often face issues in the process of conducting an interview and the researcher needs to be prepared to face these issues (Creswell 2013, s. 173). An aspect that I underestimated in preparing the interviews and that caused few relatively sensitive problems, was the language employed for the interviews. Since the research involves two countries, I decided to write my study in English and therefore, to use this language for the interviews with the Swedish staff in order to avoid translating as many interviews as possible, since I had already decided to use Italian with the other participants. All the Swedish participants were informed about the language. Notwithstanding, the use of English during the interviews made some participants uncomfortable, and it became a barrier to express their opinions freely. Therefore, I adopted a flexible approach and let two of the five interviewees use Swedish. It is important to note that the collection of data is the product of the interview situation, and so the language spoken in the interview could have affected the results. Nevertheless, I do not think that language has substantially affected the results of the interviews.

The interviews lasted between sixty and ninety minutes, depending on the interviewee. Two of the nine interviews were face-to-face and took place at the museums, respectively Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum. I recorded the interview with the mobile application "Vocal Memo" for Apple. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the remaining interviews were conducted via Skype and recorded in the Skype application. In Appendix 3, a template including the full list of questions, employed in the study is provided, in both English and Italian.

Documents

The data collected through the interviews was complemented by museum documentation and policies. I primarily collected documents describing the museums' projects and initiatives in connection to social inclusion which were mentioned during interviews with the informants, since this is the focus of the thesis. These documents help to reveal more about the ideals and practices of these projects. Among them, I employed three videos and the publication *Museums as places for intercultural dialogue: selected practices from Europe* (Bodo, Gibbs & Sani 2009, p. 54–55) which describes projects founded by MAP for ID: the videos

and the book present the project titled *Mothers* carried out by Musei Civici. Other documents of interest include the brochure *Guerrilla Girls tidning* for the exhibition shown by Västerås Konstmuseum, the project plan of *Ballongen – Lekt på riktigt* undertaken in partnership by Västmanlands Läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum. Additional documents referenced include the project paper titled *La cultura per la cultura dell'integrazione* (The culture as a venue for the culture of integration), carried out by Fondazione Palazzo Magnani; *Nya basutställningar på Västmanland läns museum. Grundkoncept* (The new long-term exhibitions at Västmanland County Museum. Keyconcepts) were also a complement of the investigation. These documents integrate the data from the interviews to create a more complete picture of the ideas and assumptions regarding the topic of this research. In addition, an examination of the web pages of the four institutions was employed to learn more about their public activities.

Museum policies and strategic plans were considered in the analysis as well. These documents are the *Statuto Fondazione Palazzo Magnani* (Statute of the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani), the *Carta dei Servizi dei Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia* (Paper of the services and the regulations of the Musei Civici of Reggio Emilia), the *Handlingsplan for Kultur* (Cultural handling plan) of city of Västerås, which drives the Konstmuseum, and the *Regional Kulturplan for Västmanland 2019–2022* (Regional Plan for culture for Västmanland 2019–2022), which includes Västmanlands läns museum among the other regional cultural institutions. Since the study seeks to answer the research questions investigating the assumptions that guided the activities addressed to the audience, the broader ideological position of the institutions and discourses on cultural diversity, I approached the documents as products generated by certain individuals for specific purposes and with a specific audience in mind (Yin 2007).

Data analysis

The purpose of the analysis is to examine, categorise, and test the findings collected to address the research questions and the aim of the study (Creswell 2013, p. 220). In this research, I employ both text analysis and thematic analysis. The former, to find out more about the practices and the context surrounding the notion of social inclusion within which the interviewees work. The materials for my text analysis were presented in the previous chapter. The thematic analysis approach has been selected to extract and explore meaningful information from the transcriptions of the interviews and their relationship to overall social structures. In this case, to explore patterns across the data to understand those aspects of the phenomenon that the participants talked about frequently or in depth.

The process of analysis began with the creation of a full transcription of the interviews from the recordings after all the interviews had been conducted to avoid being affected by the content and the personal opinion of the informants. It can be worth notice, that when the interviewees' words have been quoted in the thesis,

repetition and humming were deleted, and some language corrections have been made to offer a more clear and comprehensible text to the reader without distorting the content. In fact, there is a difference between how people use words and express themselves in spoken and written language. Moreover, I employed square brackets to point out words or parts of the interview, which have been omitted. The sections of the interviews used in the analysis that were conducted in Swedish and Italian were translated into English. Even though the interpretation is subjective in some way, it is essential to note that as a researcher the study is conducted in line with the general rules for good scientific practice which request transparency, accuracy and reliability (Eliasson 2013, pp. 14–17).

The transcriptions of the interviews were closely examined many times during the process of analysis, to identify the meanings of the topics, ideas and patterns present. In undertaking this analysis, I have applied a deductive method so that the material from the interviews and the documents have been explored through the theoretical framework which I have already described (Creswell 2013, p. 75). By employing this method, I could identify topics and key concepts in the data and after that, group them according to the theoretical framework. Given the fact that it is a cross-cultural study, I grouped the museums not based on their typology but on the cultural context in which they belong. Finally, since the analysis is mainly based on nine qualitative interviews, many quotations are present in this part of the research to allow everyone to speak and have the same space. Moreover, the informants' understandings of the notion of social inclusion are crucial to answer the research questions and fulfil the purpose of the study.

Ethical considerations

In undertaking this research, I have applied a qualitative interview approach as the primary strategy to collect data. When people are involved in interviews, ethical guidelines need to be followed, which according to the Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council) are comprised of an agreed upon understanding regarding informed consent, the use of information and an outlined approach for confidentiality (Vetenskapsrådet 2002).

The face to face interview is a structured process between the researcher and the informant; therefore, an unbalanced power relation is common. On the one hand, the researcher leads the process, asks the questions, and uses the material afterwards. On the other hand, the interviewee might want to describe his/her ideas and the museum practices advantageously. I tried to overcome this possibility by being transparent and open about the purpose of the thesis and the rights of the participants as the informed consent requires. All the participants were asked to sign a consent form which I provided before the interview about their rights as part involved in the research. I clearly explained the purpose of the research, the interview method, and the possibility to be quoted in the text. All the informants agreed to be quoted and recorded during the interviews and overall, all of the

interviewees were open to talking about the topics covered in the interviews. A template of the consent form employed is attached in Appendix 2.

Another crucial ethical aspect in the use of interview information is anonymity. In this research, all the participants are representative of specific museums, but the role and the name of the informants are not crucial for the results of my study. Therefore, I decided to refer to the participants with the pseudonymous "Interviewee" followed by an assigned number between 1 and 9. Since the geographical location of the museums plays a relevant role in this study, complete anonymity is impossible. As I discussed previously, the results will be presented in the analysis according to the geographical location of the museums; therefore, it is impossible to guarantee a complete anonymity of the informants. In Appendix 1, a list with all the informants, their museums of affiliation and other information about the interviews is attached.

Finally, the usage agreement describes how the researcher uses and stores the material from the interview. All the participants were informed that the results of the interviews would only be used for the purposes of this study. Moreover, I assured all the informants through the consent form that no one would gain access to the interviews.

This chapter has attempted to present the aim of the research and position the project within the contemporary debate about the social role of the museum and the relative question about cultural diversity and immigration. I also tried to provide an explanation of the focus on museums practice including the aim and research questions of the study. Then, the methodology and research design have been discussed, and the reason for a qualitative approach explained. Finally, ethical reflections about the research method and process conclude the chapter.

Analysis

Disposition

In the following chapter drawing on Sandell's theoretical framework, the data collected during the research will be analysed.

The first paragraph aims to scrutinize how museums' staff understand and frame social inclusion and cultural diversity. The institutions are grouped based on their origins and then analysed in two groups: starting with the Italian institutions followed by those in Sweden. In the second paragraph, a thorough analysis of the practices and projects of these museums relating to issues of cultural diversity and migrations will be conducted.

Before introducing the analysis of the four case studies, I will begin with a short exploration of the national immigration and integration policies of the two countries. This is of utmost importance in understanding the context within which the four museums work.

Brief overview of migration and inclusion policies in Sweden and Italy

Museums do not exist in isolation from society; they are not separate from the contexts in which they operate. Migration represents one of the critical issues that many European nations are dealing with. A brief history of migration in both Sweden and Italy can be relevant to understanding the context within which they work and how museums relate to those social changes. In terms of migration histories and policies, there are lots of differences between the two countries; the different national histories, and the development of two different economic structures that have produced distinct approaches and policies to addressing migration and integration since the last century. A concise presentation of Swedish and Italian inclusion-related policy development as well as migration history will follow.

Sweden

Sweden, as well as other countries, has had a long history of immigration, from the formation of a unified kingdom until today. After the Second World War, a wave of immigrants arrived in Sweden seeking freedom and work. The neutral position of Sweden contributed to economic growth, that in turn led to the need to acquire labour forces from other countries to fulfil the needs of the new and growing factories (Johansson 2015, p. 42). This free labour movement between Sweden and other countries lasted into the early 1970s when the decreasing need for unskilled

labour workers and a new political orientation led the government to introduce a migration law (1972) to regulate the flow of immigrants and refugees. The need to guarantee the citizens' welfare forced the government to be more selective, leaving free access to the other Nordic countries (Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland) and after joining the European Economic Union, to EEU and EU citizens (Goodnow 2008, pp. xx–xxi). At the same time, Sweden put in place a pluralistic approach to address the integration of minorities into society, granting them rights and access to the Swedish welfare system (Johansson 2015, pp. 42–43).

The main goal of the Swedish immigration policy is to recognise ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity and to support the right of individuals to maintain their cultures and traditions, instead of creating a homogeneous society. Although some minority groups obtained official recognition as National minorities in 2000, many remain unprotected by the integration policy because it privileges those groups which are organised in structured communities and have a long-lasting residence in the Swedish territory (Government Offices of Sweden, Fact sheet p. 1; Kulturdepartementet 1998/99). During the last decade, Sweden has started a more restrictive policy towards immigrants, and especially refugees, in contrast with the ideal image of openness and generosity it had once promoted.

Together these examples provide evidence of Sweden's long history of migration that is characterized by openness and pluralism. This might create more favourable conditions for understanding and implementing social inclusion practices in the museum domain. The Swedish government has promulgated laws to regulate the flow of immigrants and to grant them the same rights and living conditions as Swedes. Even though Sweden has undertaken an integration policy with a multicultural approach since the late 1970s, it has yet to reach satisfying outcomes, in particular toward the relatively new migrant groups.

Italy

Immigration and emigration are two aspects that have characterised Italy since the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, immigrants and the social issues related to this phenomenon have been largely ignored at the national level since the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s (Colucci 2018, p. 14). At that time, public authorities and researchers started to show interest in the immigration phenomenon. Colucci explains that the heterogeneous type of immigration and the incorporation of immigrants in less structured sectors, like agriculture and housekeeping, played an essential role in the lack of interest shown by the institutions in attempts within public discourse to integrate and represent immigrants (Colucci 2018, pp. 14–15). Since 2000, Italy has become part of a broader international political landscape and together with other EU nations has embraced a common strategy to reinforce the closure of the borders and a more rigid attitude towards immigrants (Colucci 2018, p. 26). The mass migration movements during the last decade, due to the wars in North-Africa and the Middle

East, have highlighted the obsolescence and the incapacity of national and international policies to handle the phenomenon and the unwillingness to accept refugees (Colucci 2018, p. 33; Paparusso 2017). Nevertheless, the government promulgated the *Carta dei Valori della cittadinanza e dell'integrazione* (Paper of the citizenship values and the integration values) in 2011, which presents the knowledge of Italian language, history, culture, and values as fundamental aspects for an active integration in the economic, social and cultural life of the country (Paparusso 2017, pp. 300–01). However, the most recent governing body passed an immigration law which prevents and limits immigration and makes inclusion in society more difficult (Paparusso 2017, p. 304).

In conclusion, the implementation of integration policies in Italy has never been a central issue in the immigration policy. The management of integration and inclusion was often delegated to local institutions and private associations. The reasons for this national attitude by the Italian government is that immigrants have always been seen as a temporal rather than a structural phenomenon (Paparusso 2017, p. 296).

Museums and social inclusion

Drawing from published material and mainly from the data generated during the interviews, the following section seeks to discuss the museum professionals' broader ideological positions and discourses on social inclusion and particularly on cultural diversity. The introductory paragraph will attempt to answer the first research question:

How do museum staff perceive and approach social inclusion in their professional practice?

The Italian case studies of the Musei Civici and the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani will provide an introduction to the analysis followed by the Swedish museums of Västmanlands läns museum and the Västerås Konstmuseum.

Musei Civici and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani

What does social inclusion mean? As I presented in the theoretical section, this concept has different meanings which are based on the context within which the term is employed. Based on his research, Sandell (RCMG 2000; Dodd & Sandell 2001) argues that in the museum sector the concept of social inclusion is based on different assumptions and he labels many different projects and initiatives. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate how the museum staff define and understand social exclusion/inclusion and how cultural institutions engage with the topic.

When I asked about social inclusion Interviewee 2 said:

I would say that museums should be agents of social inclusion, but, then, they are not automatically like this. I mean, it depends by what museums display, if the contents are specific or difficult to understand, it becomes an obstacle to social inclusion. Moreover, it depends by how the activities, the offer, the contents, are presented to the public. Nevertheless, definitely museums must be inclusive, but then it's up to those who work at the museum to enhance social inclusion.

(Interviewee 2)

Moreover, the same person states:

It is as for museums which have collections which require special cultural competence to be understood. The contents need to be mediated by the museum. Therefore, every visitor who visits the museum should feel at ease and find an opportunity to engage with the collection and find its personal way to enjoy the museum. [...] So, museums should be inclusive from this point of view.

(Interviewee 2)

Interviewee 1 links social inclusion to the idea of access and the rights of all people to enjoy cultural heritage and museums, rather than being exclusively for researchers and the well-educated. The informant says:

I think that social inclusion means to include people who for some reason are considered different and grant them the same rights, for example, to do something or to choose to go anywhere, instead of being excluded because the place has not the right access, the lift, and there are different barriers. Therefore, the place will be perceived as hostile.

(Interviewee 1)

The idea of social inclusion which emerges from the interviews with the staff of the Musei Civici focuses on creating the conditions for more equitable access to museum resources for diverse audiences, in particular people with disabilities, and opening up opportunities to participate in and enjoy museum experiences. As Sandell (1998; Dodd & Sandell 2001) argues, many museums may interpret the responsibility of social inclusion as limited to an area of activity or restricted to specific social issues, for example, gender or disability and therefore, they might restrict their activity to these target groups.

Based on the interviews with the professional of the Musei Civici, the concept of social inclusion is mainly related to the cultural dimension, what Sandell calls *the inclusive museum*. He explains that it is about increasing attention to issues of access, participation and representation by removing the barriers that hinder access to museums to some groups of people; these barriers range from physical, economic, to psychological and intellectual (Sandell 1998; 2002). However, Interviewee 1 brings up the idea that museums can deliver positive outcomes in the lives of the visitors because the museological experience can benefit people by engendering a sense of place and making them feel recognised and part of a community. This assumption is in line with the idea that museums have a social

role and a positive impact on the lives of people in different ways (see the Overview of the research field chapter).

Interviewee 1 argues that museums should welcome all people and that, as visitors, everyone has the same rights to understand, read, see and enjoy the museum. Moreover, she explains that the museum's collection, heritage, and culture belong to all the citizens, and museums have to be active in implementing strategies to facilitate their access and participation. This understanding of the social role of the museum reflects the increasing importance that visitors play in defining strategies to attract a diverse audience and above all not to exclude any groups (Hopper-Greenhill 2006; Sandell 2002; Nightingale & Sandell 2012). Although this attitude appears to be a museums' responsibility, Interviewee 2 highlights that museums are not institutionally inclusive, on the contrary, it is dependent upon the people who work at the museum and the decisions they make. As Hopper-Greenhill (2005, p. 226) argues, museum staff need to rethink and renegotiate the meanings of their practices to implement strategies which include all of society in its diversity.

None of the interviewees at the Musei Civici directly linked the notion of social inclusion to social justice and change, even though, when I asked about these aspects, they acknowledged that museums should be active in promote cohesion and contribute to better society. Both of them agreed that the museum collection is so broad and rich that it highly affects the aim of the museum. Interviewee 1 says:

I think that culture, because of the tools, the language used, has the potentiality to foster better society, more inclusive and more cohesive. So, everybody must do his job. About the Musei Civici of Reggio Emilia [...] it is ..., this is my point of view, so strong the richness of the collection that it is difficult to see beyond sometime.

(interviewee 1)

Both the interviewees bring up the initiatives about these topics have been undertaken but they were never explicit in challenging behavior and stereotype, especially in connection with cultural diversity and immigration. Interviewee 2 says: "About the topics of immigration, we work with them, but not recently with special activities or projects. So, it is surely possible to do more." (Interviewee 2). The museum acting for change and social justice is becoming more central to the museum's mission. According to Sandell, museums should move beyond the purpose about education, entertainment and consumption to the recognition of a civic engagement, because many people look to museums for inspiration and guidance (Janes & Sandell 2019).

Social inclusion, as an institutional responsibility of museums, has only recently been included among the goals of Italian cultural institutions (Carra 2014; Bodo 2009), while many other European countries have already addressed social inclusion and explicated their commitment (see for example the GLLAM rapport). The findings from the interviews spotlight that only in recent times have the staff

of Musei Civici begun to narrow their focus on the concept of inclusion and social issues such as diversity and integration. One of the interviewees explains:

Some years ago, we started to rethink our role and make some changes. Only a few years ago, we had hardly any planned inclusive activities. There was not a working group planning special activities for other special audiences, as we refer to them. Therefore, we still are at the beginning of this shift. The turning point was to appoint a responsible in charge of find the topic, the groups and coordinate the working team. [---] Nevertheless, we try to think about inclusion in every activity.

(Interviewee 2)

It is evident from this excerpt that the museum is moving beyond a purely conservative and educational role towards one of social inclusion. However, the commitment is not yet integrated with the museum's core values, as Interviewee 2 admits:

It is not our priority to implement inclusive strategies in our museum work, as we decide one day out of the blue to undertake activities for the African communities of Reggio Emilia. Nonetheless, we try to think about all the visitor groups when we start a project, I think it would be the normal practice. This is the challenge.

(Interviewee 2)

This approach is confirmed by the other informant who states: "When we start to plan a project, like an exhibition, we have a budget and the these [the practical aspects of inclusion] are still not so much taken into account." (Interviewee 1).

The commitment to tackle social exclusion and achieve positive social outcomes and consequently, the awareness to engage more strategically with issues of social exclusion became embedded in the practice of the Musei Civici when the museum appointed a diversity coordinator to manage a specific working group, to implement activities and projects for "fragile" audiences²⁴. Interviewee 1 points out that this approach has not originated from an internal reflection about the need to develop a new working practice to address social exclusion, but rather to fulfil the goals of the city's cultural policy. The informant says:

More than five years ago, the city started a project to remove all the barriers. Amazing results have been achieved, from the removal of physical barriers to the way people understand disability. So, we, the museum, became part of this movement which ended up in a more inclusive approach towards people, especially those with disabilities. There was none at the museum with the right competence to work on these social issues. One is an archaeologist, one a natural scientist and an art historian, they can have a personal sensibility, but not the methodology. [...] Therefore, it was not so evident at the beginning how to be incisive with these audiences.

(Interviewee 1)

²⁴ The interviewees use the word "fragile" to address the groups of people who need special care to enjoy the collection and the museum. The term is used in the integration project *Reggio Emilia a city without barriers*. The interviewees identify with the term "fragile audience" people with disability and immigrant.

The above quotation reveals that social inclusion was approached as a working practice targeting groups with physical and mental disabilities because this was the goal of the social policy of the city and all of the public founding institutions responded accordingly. Interviewee 1 says:

We engaged with [providing support and specialized programming for] disabled people because this was the opportunity which paved the way to do these things [inclusive activities], to have good results, [...]. This was the starting point that allowed me to do many other things, over time, with patience.

(Interviewee 1)

Based on the interviews, it is apparent that there is a general awareness that social inclusion is a relevant aspect of the museum practice, but, if diversity and social inclusion are going to be the core of the organisation, these values should be carried out by the organisation at all levels and in every part of the museum operations:

So, from that point of view [social inclusion], I have to tell that the attitude of the people still needs to be built. I am confident that we will reach this goal, but it concerns a professional change. We, my colleague and I have the same understanding, but we attended courses organised by the Regio; [...]. In short, if we, [as institution] work with diligence to enable this [inclusive] approach, as a structured way of working, I think that within five years we will be more [inclusive].

(Interviewee 1)

In conclusion, the staff at the Musei Civici understand social inclusion in terms of broadening access in order to include different audiences and to remove the barriers which prevent people from fully participating and enjoying the museum. The social agency of the museum is moving beyond the traditional role of communicating knowledge, but this change has not reached the core of the museum practice yet. According to the interviewees, inclusive practices are slowly becoming part of the everyday work of the museum.

As mentioned, Carra (2014) and Bodo (2009) argue that the social agency of museums is recognized as a recent responsibility in the Italian context. The findings from the interviews with the staff of Fondazione Palazzo Magnani indicate that the commitment of the cultural institution to address social exclusion and cultural diversity is a new approach which started when the new president took office. Interviewee 4 explains the shift in the museum's management and mission:

Three, four years ago, we went through a change. When the Trust's board changed, a new president [which now is the foundation's director], with a new vision, took over. We became a cultural institution [which is] open to different audiences; and so, we started to ponder over possible strategies because it was not yet clear the meaning of social inclusion.

(Interviewee 4)

The concept of social inclusion has become very recurrent in recent decades and embedded in many different sectors. Nevertheless, it remains a wide-ranging and fluid concept which can elicit diverse characteristics of what constitutes social inclusion (Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 4). As the above excerpt shows, the museum staff was not prepared to address exclusion and benefit society. Moreover, each museum needs to find its particular approach to the definition of social inclusion according to the nature of its collection or its mission. The Fondazione Palazzo Magnani is an exhibition space which, as explained in the mission statement,²⁵ seeks to benefit people through the value of art, as the following excerpt also explains:

In this historical moment, the museum must come closer to the audience, both the traditional and the potential one. It has no longer just an educational and enlightening role, but it should be, and this is what we try to do, a means for mutual enrichment. [...] The Fondazione Palazzo Magnani states that arts benefit people and that all the people should engage with that.

(Interviewee 3)

In the last years, the cultural institution has undertaken a fundamental shift toward public engagement and social inclusion. Moreover, it comes back in the words of the one of the interviewees that these new ideas have challenged traditional practices and attitudes of the staff. The following quotation points out that the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani seeks to enhance its contemporary social relevance by implementing a professional working team, in charge defining social inclusion, as the Musei Civici did.

So, the intuition of the new president [now gallery's director] has been to send me to conferences at Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. [...] Well, the first time I went there, a new world about accessibility, education has been disclosed in front of me. [...] One thing I found particularly fascinating, that those who welcome [other ethnical groups] can also receive from these people and not only give. From that moment, when I came back from Florence, I shared the experience with the whole staff. We decided to undertake, clearly with people open to these aspects, some new approaches.

(Interviewee 4)

The same commitment to social inclusion is shared by the other interviewee and it is clearly articulated in the mission of the museum:

Fondazione Palazzo Magnani promotes the visual arts through exhibitions and cultural activities. It privileges interdisciplinary dialogue, intercultural encounters, and interchange between different forms of knowledge. [...] the practice of art is the major route through which individual development and social cohesion can be reconciled. [...] We are convinced that art should play a fundamental role in the process of providing support and improvement in matters of health, adversity and vulnerability.²⁶

²⁵ Fondazione Palazzo Magnani website > home> the foundation > mission and history [20-09-17].

²⁶ Fondazione Palazzo Magnani website > home > the foundation > mission and history [20-09-17].

Based on the analysis of the data, it is clear that the two interviewees share the same understanding about social inclusion, namely that the art is a means to benefit people and to in turn build a better society.

As for the Musei Civici, the informants at the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani use the word "fragile" to identify the groups that social inclusion tends to focus on, like people with physical and mental disabilities, at risk youth, and refugees. They engaged with ethnic communities more inconsistently, even though it is part of their mission. One of the professionals from the institution says:

Well, specific programs [addressing cultural diversity] have not yet been implemented, and we are aware of it. It is an idea on the table since a while, but we have had yet the time to structure a plan. We received propositions to start projects with communal organisations working with immigrants, but we have had yet the possibility [to work with them]. [---] One goal between many is to dedicate more space, to focus more on the [ethnic groups].

(Interviewee 4)

To conclude, the data from the interviews confirms that the professionals of both the cultural institutions commonly expressed the same attitudes towards social inclusion as a responsibility which contemporary museums should embrace in their practice. Social inclusion is concerned with excluded people and the need to benefit their lives. Both the museums' professionals explain that museums need to engage with the audience and include more groups among those who already visit the museum. They understand social inclusion primarily through the cultural dimension and narrow their focus on access and participation. Nevertheless, the idea of delivering positive outcomes in the lives of the people who engage with the museums is becoming more relevant, especially at the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. Based on the interviews, social inclusion is concerned with all the citizens which can benefit from the museum services. Nevertheless, it appears clear that the two museums have especially promoted projects which tackle the exclusion of people with disabilities, while other social instances, based on ethnicity and other marginalized groups are still extemporarily addressed. At the same time, this social agency represents a new role for the staff and their institution and therefore the idea and the options on what constitutes social inclusion are still an ongoing work. Both the cultural institutions are at an early stage in renegotiating their relationship to, and role within, society while focusing on cultural diversity and immigration. As Sandell et al. (RCMG 2000, p. 45) argue, a pragmatic shift in the philosophy and core of the museum at all levels is required if the museum wishes to become an effective agent of social inclusion. In the following paragraph, the Swedish museums will be presented and analysed.

Västmanland läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum

Since the beginning of the new millennium, the Swedish government has shown a growing interest in cultural diversity, including, for example, aspects of gender,

age, physical disability, and ethnicity. In 2003, the *Agenda Kulturarv* (Cultural Heritage Agenda) was issued to guide and inspire cultural institutions in dealing with social inclusion and cultural diversity (Klein 2008, p. 155). Since then, several initiatives (see, for example, *Tid för kultur* 2009 and *Känn dig som hemma* 2015) have been promoted by the government, like the year dedicated to multiculturalism in 2006, to increase attention and broaden the concept of cultural diversity (Edström & Hyltén-Cavallius 2011).

The data from the interviews shows that the Västmanland läns museum has an in-depth commitment to issues of exclusion, discrimination and social inequality, especially with regard to those groups traditionally underrepresented in society. One member of the staff explains:

From my experience, we are trying to work with multiple perspectives. We work with diversity in many ways: ethnical, cultural, geographical. Moreover, we address social issues related to gender discrimination and age. Moreover, we also look at how we can create an opportunity for people with disabilities to enjoy the museum. [...] We have these temporary exhibitions; we have many exhibitions about query questions, and we have minority groups here in Sweden, like Roma people, Swedish-Finnish people and the Sami people.

(Interviewee 5)

A colleague describes in this way her approach to social inclusion that she identifies in the mission of the museum:

A democratic participation in the museum activities is one of our main goals: it concerns especially children and youth which are our priority targets. It is part of our democratic work to let them be here and work with us.

(Interviewee 6)

In the interviews, the respondents commonly discuss the social role and responsibility of the museum as an acknowledged aspect. Indeed, the analysis suggests that the museum staff has been working within the framework of social inclusion for many years in line with the established national and local cultural policy. One interviewee explains: "We use the Regional culture plane for Västmanland, and we have another document, I think it's not updated, but we work from it, that it is called 'Accessibility and diversity. " (Interviewee 5). The crucial role that the cultural policy plays in the practice and approach of the museum to social inclusion is mirrored in the following statement:

We have a [Regional] Plan for Culture, which we follow. It describes the goals for all the cultural institutions. And [in this document] we, as Västmanland läns museum, found the goals that we should achieve. The Region has goals, which are for all the cultural institutions in the county, and they are always present in what we do about diversity.

(Interviewee 6)

These quotations exemplify the impact on the museum sector that the Swedish government policy about immigration and integration has had and still has, raising the debate about social issues, as I discuss in the chapter about the Swedish immigration and integration policies. Democracy, equal representation, and access are the key concepts that the interviewees bring up when they describe the social agency of the museum. The mission statement on the museum's webpage explains that, besides the many functions of the institution,

...the museum should be an independent arena for democracy in which opportunities should be dialogue, reflection and debate. Operations will be knowledge-based, accessible, and embrace cultural diversity and invite participation, co-creation, creativity and cultural renewal.²⁷

The focus on cultural diversity and equal representation are discussed by many scholars in the Swedish museological field. Christina Johansson (2015) argues that Swedish museums are working to address the social issues that arise in contemporary society and that there is a close link between cultural institutions and the policy fields of culture, immigration and integration.

Furthermore, one of the informants argues that the inclusive agency of the museums and the approach to diversity in all its forms come as a shared professional attitude, through common disciplinary expertise which drives the museum as a whole. She says:

Because it is not just one person who creates an exhibition, but since the beginning of the production, several people are involved. So, there is the participation both from exhibition curators and programs, but also from us, as educators. In this way, the educator is involved in the exhibition since the beginning, if we take the exhibition as an example. [...] This is good because we have the opportunity to discuss many times. In this way, it is much better because different professional expertise are involved.

(Interviewee 6)

When I asked about social inclusion and the social agency of the museum at Västerås Konstmuseum Interviewee 8 stressed the need to renegotiate art museums' roles in society since they are traditionally seen as exclusive places presenting difficult subjects. She explains:

But I would say that I think this [social inclusion] is important, and, since I am working for the public, in a public institution, I think we must welcome everyone to the museum. Moreover, by doing this, we also have to recognise our history and the history of art and the tradition of art being related to upper class and an upper-class agenda somehow. [...] So, we have to recognise this and constantly tried to see or examine or try to find ways to be more inclusive. We have to be very aware that arts are still today very much for some people and that there is this kind of barrier for many people to visit artist institutions or get involved within the arts. So, in that sense, we need to be constantly aware and working actively to try to reach everyone in society, I think.

²⁷ Västmanlands läns museum website > home > about us [20-09-18].

(Interviewee 8)

Moreover, she reflects about the strategies to become more inclusive:

So, since from the beginning [planning stage], we have a big job to do by starting to be more diverse in our way of thinking when we look at art from the art institutions view. [...] There is a big task for us as the collection that we have today include primarily white, Scandinavian artists. So, even there we can start changing.

(Interviewee 8)

The commitment to rethinking the role of the museum as becoming a powerful means to include different groups and engage with different topics has been expressed by the interviewees on many occasions during the interviews. In the Swedish context, social inclusion is generally related to a broader level of inclusion which directly and openly addresses problems of social exclusion along with instances of injustice and discrimination (Sandell 1998; Dodd & Sandell 2001). Based on the interviews with the staff of the Västerås Konstmuseum the museum should continue its activities that engage with shaping an equal society and aspire to be relevant to people's lives. The interviewee explains:

Definitely, [Konstmuseum] is a democratic institution. Moreover, the agenda, on the whole, is to be an open space and an open democratic space for people to visit and to meet the arts. [...] I think we have an important task to do in that sense because I see the arts as the perfect arena actually to start discussions on many different topics that involved people. So, the arts are a perfect arena where people meet. [...] We try to be a platform where you can, through the art, which is quite free, open-minded, often open-minded, discuss different things or just show the world from different angles. Furthermore, I think that through the exhibitions that we do, we try in many ways to reach different groups in society.

(Interviewee 9)

Similarly, Interviewee 9 talks about social inclusion in terms of equal access to museums and their cultural services: "Well, I think we really see ourselves as a place where the individual freedom is very important, and we, as an art institution, we play an important role in society as a means to support democracy and the free speech." (Interviewee 9). The word democracy comes back in the interview with Interviewee 7 too:

I think the most important is the democracy: you have to see the citizens in the city or the country as equal, all are equal, and all people's history and the languages and traditions are equally important. [...] I think it's important to have in mind that you don't have the answer, you haven't the authority, as a professional and as a person. [...] If I want to create a space for many voices and many perspectives, I need to listen and be open.

(Interviewee 7)

The social agenda that the interviewees speak of is mirrored in the cultural policy of the city of Västerås which states that the institution, among other cultural

institutions, must work for all the inhabitants of Västerås (Västerås stad 2019). While the staff of the Västmanland läns museum talked about a structured county cultural plan which aids in pursuing inclusive ends, the cultural policy of the municipality is more vague and has no particular ambition, apart from including children, youth, and more generally all the citizens, as this excerpt shows:

We have a policy that we are following, the Handlings plan from the city, which is negotiated after every election. So, we have to follow this sort of direction; but the overall sense of the document is that we need, we should be here for all Västerås inhabitants. So, we don't have the specific goal that we need to attract specific groups, apart from young people, I will say.

(Interviewee 8)

The absence of a detailed strategical plan is also highlighted by the other two museum professionals. One of them points out: "We don't have social inclusion as an explicit goal. We have, from the politics, all the goals that we have to achieve are workshops and moments for children." (Interviewee 9). The third interviewee more explicitly argues:

There isn't any document, here at Konstmuseum, that seeks for including cultural diversity. No. I think that something that is central is to equally exhibit artists of both genders, and we work in this direction, but it's very difficult.

(Interviewee 7)

Despite the common acknowledgement from the staff that social inclusion is a means to promote an equal society and that they are responding accordingly, the findings reveal that cultural diversity and immigration issues are part of a broader attitude toward inclusion, but they are still at the margin of their mission. The following excerpt states:

We need to be aware that inequality is active in society. So, it might be that the specific projects focus on these groups that you mentioned [ethnic groups and immigrant] and some other projects focus on other things. So, it's a... it's always a matter of balance and what you can... what're the main focuses. [...] But then we always have the questions of how many women we include in exhibitions, overall. I would say that we need to work more on these issues. I look forward to work more with inclusion, how we include other ethnic groups besides the national minority in the exhibition or program. If I take a look into the history of the exhibition and program, I can say that little had been done.

(Interviewee 8)

Another interviewee notes that cultural diversity is not a central issue in the social inclusion agenda of Västerås Konstmuseum:

There are no competencies for that [integration of cultural diversity] and so, it happens that this aspect is downgraded, I think. [...] There is a sort of, a sort of automatism when we do an exhibition, we ask for whom we work, but different cultural group, with a different language and a different culture are seldom included. It's not the first priority, not at all. At least at Konstmuseum.

(Interviewee 7)

The inclusion of ethnic groups among those who suffer some form of exclusion and the collaboration between them and the museum staff is described as challenging and difficult to implement by many authors (see for example, Goodnow & Akman 2008; Johansson 2015). Cajsa Lagerkvist (2008) describes the challenges and limits that museums experience in collaborative projects with immigrant communities and the need for museums to rethink their approach in order to really become inclusive. According to the staff, the museum subscribes to a broad definition of diversity that includes aspects other than ethnicity. Interviewee 6 stresses:

The concept of social inclusion includes many kinds of diversity; I mean, one year maybe it's about disabilities, [...], the following we focus more on women, especially in the exhibitions; and sometimes it can be more about ethnic. [...] We try to include one group every year so, maybe we engage with another group the next year.

(Interviewee 6)

On the whole, the staff's attitude towards social inclusion is in line with Sandell's theory and previous research (RCMG 2000; Dodd & Sandell 2001; Goodnow & Akman 2008) indicates that museums deal with social issues on a broad level and their commitment varies between awareness and active engagement. When it comes to ethnic diversity, it is evident that groups already recognised as national domestic minorities, like Sámi and Roma, receive more space than the stories of those who recently immigrated to Sweden. Furthermore, there is a general recognition among the interviewees for the social agency of the museum and the need to serve the whole city in an effort to better respond to their needs and aspirations. In conclusion, it can be argued that both the museums are moved by the desire to contribute to social equality, democratisation and justice. This analysis illuminates how museums address social issues beyond the cultural dimension and see themselves as democratic spaces.

In the following chapter, I will examine and posit the practices of the four cultural institutions within Sandell's framework to explore how they implement the concept of social inclusion in relation to cultural diversity and immigration in their work.

Inclusive practices

In this chapter, selected examples from the interviews will be discussed using Sandell's theoretical framework. Drawing on the data from the interviews and documents, I discuss how museums implement social inclusion in their working practices. As I have already described, Sandell argues that inclusive practices have an impact on three different levels: the individual, the community and the social.

This chapter is structured in two sections which aim to investigate the practices of the cultural institutions in Italy followed by those in Sweden. The research question which this section attempts to answer is:

Based on Sandell' model how are the individual, community and social levels enacted in the museum practices?

Musei Civici and Fondazione Palazzo Magnani

Beyond the outreach and educational work with specific groups and communities, museums have the capability to deliver personal benefit to the people involved in the museum's projects. As Sandell argues, museums can overgo the cultural dimension, within which they usually work, and reach wide-ranging outcomes in the life of individuals.

To illustrate such cases, an example can be found in the pilot project Mothers within which the Musei Civici participated in the European project MAP for ID (Museum as Places for Intercultural Dialogue), between 2008 and 2010. The project was promoted by the Musei Civici and the Culture and University City Agency and was produced in partnership with the Social Security and Cohesion City Agency, the Community Care City Agency and the Local Healthcare Authority²⁸. Based on the interview with Interviewee 1, the museum invited a group of women from an immigrant community of different nationalities from the neighbourhood of Santa Croce which has a higher density of immigrant people among the city, to develop new inclusive communication strategies and a long-term relationship with immigrant groups. To achieve these goals the staff made contact with organisations dealing with immigration, such as the Social Security and Cohesion Agency, and mediators from different migrant communities, to present the aim of the project and identify the participants (Bodo, Gibbs & Sani 2009, p. 55). The topic chosen for the activities was the theme of maternity, i.e. the generative role of women, which is a universal value, and it is well represented in the museum's collection. Objects from prehistoric to modern times were chosen to represent a woman's body, which over time has been identified with the idea of life and has been worshipped since then²⁹. The feminine form embodies the mystery of life and has been used to represent the concept of fecundity in many cultures and throughout time. Examples from the museum's collection selected for the project were the Venus of Chiozza and the Whirlwind woman of the Lakota tribe. The statue of Isis breastfeeding her son Horus represents the idea of the mother as providing nourishment which is also personified by an African wooden fetish. Other artefacts are linked to a crucial moment in the life of a woman, like puberty and her future role as wife and mother, from the Roman society to African tribes. The journey through the idea of motherhood ends with the deep relationship which grows between the mother and

²⁸ Patrimonio e intercultura website > projects > Emilia Romagna [20-09-22].

²⁹ Musei Civici website > explore > mothers [20-09-22].

her child. Among the museum's collection were chosen paintings representing Madonna with her baby from Middle Ages and mothers with children to culminate in the representation of the pain experienced when a child prematurely dies, or the empty space left by the death of the mother³⁰.

In the early phase of the project, the participants were guided through the museum to observe the selected artefacts, which were at the same time explained. The point was to present these objects as the products of human beings rather than representations of the local history³¹. From this first contact, the museum's staff used different tools to stimulate discussions and personal reflections about the idea of motherhood from the participants. During a laboratory activity, they could create their unique representation of the feminine body as a generator of life using clay and seeds. The informant describes:

We observe the Venus of Chiozza and other representations of Venus, created in a period of famine, [...] and then we went in the laboratory, and we worked with clay, seeds and other things. Everyone made her own version of the Venus, based on one's feelings. [...] In the Venus, in her belly, you place some seeds; then you put the statue in a pot and water it, and it should grow a plant. The point was the idea of the life that grows.

(Interviewee 1)

In the second part of the project, personal stories about the idea of motherhood were collected from some of the participants together with contributions from photographers, and professionals – a midwife and a psychologist – who had been working with the idea of motherhood. These women were not all mothers; some of them told their experience of becoming a mother, with particular regard to their condition of being an immigrant, living in a country culturally different from their own. One of the artists explored what it means to become a mother at a young age, while the other photographer presented pictures where she processed the pain and sense of loss she experienced in the premature death of her mother. All the stories, interviews, artefacts selected for the project, videos and pictures were assembled in a film to create a dialogue about the idea of motherhood and life between the museum's artefacts and the contemporary voices of the participants³².

Within this project, the women could actively participate in the reinterpretation of the museum's objects from broad multiple perspectives which sought to promote the participation of new citizens by creating a shared cultural heritage and by bridging the dichotomy between the cultures of the locals the perceived other (Bodo, Gibbs & Sani 2009, p. 55). The project team decided to use the video because it was considered a more suitable tool of communication, which allowed all the participants to freely explain their ideas and intimate reflections about the concept of motherhood. All the participants could choose to talk in the language

³⁰ Musei Civici website > Home > explore > mothers [20-09-22].

³¹ *Ib.*

³² Musei Civici (2013-10-13). *Mothers*. Video 1. (YouTube). [2010-09-22]; *ib. Mothers*. Video 2. (YouTube). [20-09-22]; *ib. Mothers*. Video 3. (YouTube). [20-09-22].

they felt most comfortable. In the end, the video was a blending of different languages which highlighted the multiple perspectives within which the topic was explored. The project finally resulted in a temporary exhibition at the museum in 2010, which presented the project and the video. Interviewee 1 describes the outcomes of the project:

The point was that these women became acquainted with the museum and the collection. Through the different workshops, we sought to enable a sort of empowerment, to create an opportunity [...] I took pictures of these women, so different from each other's, from different countries, [...] working together on their statues and enjoying this time. It was a beautiful experience.

(Interviewee 1)

The women who participated in the project were not intended to be solely representative of their communities of origin, but they also constitute a group of people from a disadvantaged neighbourhood of the city. In fact, the project sought to create a safe space within which the participants could express themselves. In line with Sandell (2002, p. 6), the project enhanced the participants' self-esteem and personal growth as individuals, by making them more confident to handle public places which are not usually a part of their lives. In this occasion, the use of storytelling, the personal interaction with objects from the collection, and the creative production of artistic objects displayed at the museum, were the strategies implemented to enable these positive outcomes in the lives of the participants.

The process by which these positive outcomes were achieved focused on the interpersonal, rather than the educational relationship (Bodo, Gibbs & Sani 2009, p. 55). Based on the data from the interview with the Interviewee 1, the face-to-face interaction between the museum's staff and the participants was the approach used during the project to build trust and collaboration. These aspects are in line with Sandell's research, which spotlights that projects in the category of individual impact are characterised by this type of interaction and represent an opportunity for personal more than professional growth for all the actors involved (Sandell 2002, p. 5–7). Interviewee 1 ascertained that, as a result of this inclusive project, a strong relationship between the museum and these women was established. At the end of the project, the museum's staff decided to maintain a partnership with this group of women who then took part in a new project in collaboration with the city libraries to get acquainted with the history of the city and create a sense of place and shared heritage.

An unexpected positive outcome for one of the participants of the project Mothers was the opportunity to participate more actively in the work of the museum. During the interview Interviewee 1 explained:

There is a beautiful project that I want to undertake. Among the participants of the project Mothers, there is an Egyptian woman, which has been living in Italy for two years. She speaks Italian very well, and before to move here, she was a tour guide in Il Cairo. At the museum, we have a few objects from Egypt on display. I planned to ask her to describe these objects during

guided tours on the night of the 18th of May, which is the night of museums celebrated in all the European countries.

(Interviewee 1)

In this specific case, what is crucial is the idea that participants of the projects were invited to contribute as expert of the specific context of the museum objects and share their knowledge with museum professionals and visitors. The museum activity undertaken by the museum became the means to enhance skills and confidence in this woman which might benefit the quality of her life. One of the interviewees at the Musei Civici describes these as inclusive practices:

Right now, these are the projects within which we try to be inclusive; I think these are valuable experiences because they enrich the individuals, enhance a sense of belonging to the community, and they help these people to become more confident, as, for example, to visit a museum.

(Interviewee 1)

The following project exemplifies the role that a local museum can play in developing skills which might enhance employment opportunities for the participants (Sandell 1998, p. 413). Between 2017 and 2019, the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani decided to join in the effort for the advancement of intercultural dialogue, promoted by the city of Reggio Emilia, with the project, *La Cultura per la cultura dell'integrazione* (The culture for the culture of integration). Through this network between different local organisations, the municipality of Reggio Emilia sought to integrate young adults, refugees, and those seeking asylum, in the social fabric of the city. Interviewee 3 explains the reason for the participation:

The purpose of the project was to promote integration through the arts. We, as a cultural institution, think that the arts can stimulate intercultural dialogue and bridge cultural diversity by overcoming linguistic barriers.

(Interviewee 3)

The Fondazione made contact with the social organisation *Dimora di Abramo* (The house of Abramo), which works with refugees and asylum-seekers. Six participants were selected for this training project. After an introductory period, these six people worked as volunteers. They worked as guardians in the rooms and assisted in welcoming visitors. She further explains:

This experience developed positive outcomes. During the project, one of them [the participants] showed great professional and personal engagement and therefore, we, together with the Dimora di Abramo, decided to keep this young man as an apprentice. He became the coordinator of other six participants in the project, and he developed professionally, and he was offered a working place at the Fondazione among the service and reception staff.

(Interviewee 3)

In the above excerpt, the museum utilizes art as a vehicle of integration and regeneration for the participants. Particularly, the Fondazione sought to develop the participant's working skills in order to improve their employment prospects after the lifetime of the project. Through personal and professional engagement of the members of the project, the participants could develop self-esteem, autonomy and responsibility. Interviewee 3 summarizes the project: "I saw these young adults grow and become aware of their role among us. It was a mutual integration where we also from the staff got to know and appreciate these people. We learned highly from each other." Personal interaction is recognised by Sandell as a recurring tool implemented to deliver positive outcomes for individuals (2002, p. 6), as the other informant from the Foundation recognises:

What is worth to point out is that this project was a mutual enrichment both for the participants and for the staff. It paved the way for a rethinking of the role of the arts as a means to address exclusion and bring positive social benefit.

(Interviewee 4)

Sandell argues that the different levels of interactions and the outcomes enhanced by the museums' activities are often overlapping. In some instances, programs motivated at the outset by specific goals can later result in different outcomes (Sandell 1998, p. 415). Based on the data from the interview with Interviewee 3, the above project resulted in unexpected social outcomes. She mentioned that the involvement of immigrants and socially excluded groups in the professional museum environment encouraged visitors of the exhibitions to reflect on stereotypes and normative assumptions, causing even uncomfortable reactions. The interviewee described that some of the visitors were positively and negatively surprised by their associations with immigrants, especially people of colour, and arts.

According to Sandell's model about social inclusion, museums can also use their resources to address social exclusion at a community level. Cultural institutions have the potential to deliver positive social outcomes to specific geographically or culturally defined groups. The outcomes of these initiatives range from community empowerment and cohesion to the development and renewal of deprived and marginalized neighbourhoods. The following example from the Musei Civici illustrates the museum's role in delivering benefits to a specific community of women from post-Soviet countries, who work as caregivers in Italy. Interviewee 2 described the motivation of the project during the interview:

We invited the caregiver to show and share their culture because we thought that it was important for us to explore and highlight a community which is present in town, but not so visible and maybe of some interest for the citizens of Reggio Emilia. Moreover, we sought to bridge the gap between this non-Italian group and the museum and its services and present the museum as a place where they can enjoy anytime.

(Interviewee 2)

The other informant from the museum describes the purpose of the project: "We tried to involve these women to engender a sense of belonging to their new country and to increase their self-esteem.". The community participating in the project/exhibition was identified through contacts with the local association Madreperla, which coordinated the activities of the community at the time. The museum's staff invited the participants to contribute to preparing an exhibition by bringing artefacts, for example, clothes and crafts from their counties, which would be exhibited among museum's objects in the ethnographic rooms. Based on the data from the interviews, the exhibition aimed to target the community in relation to its diverse culture and traditions. The initiative had the scope to highlight the individual group members as part of the social life of Reggio Emilia and reversing the process of exclusion that these women usually experience.

The strategy to represent the cultural diversity of a community can produce both positive and negative outcomes. Interviewee 2 explained during the interview that these projects, on the one hand, enable community identity and self-determination as a group, on the other hand, they can reiterate the division between "us" and perceived "others". This is in line with Goodnow (2009, p. 240), who states that constructing an exhibition about the distinctive aspects and traditions of a specific cultural group can be dangerous and produce a negative impact on the audience, by reinforcing stereotypes and divisions. Based on the analysis of experimental approach from the European museological context, Bodo (2012) demonstrates that the attempt to encapsulate the life experiences of individuals, groups and the culture of communities can result in constructing and communicating otherness. She argues that

what often distinguishes these initiatives is not so much a will to encourage attendance and participation on the part of migrant communities, as to promote a 'knowledge-oriented multiculturalism' directed principally at an autochthonous public. Here the 'other' is conceived as an object of knowledge – rather than an individual with whom we engage in a relationship – and is constructed from the point of view of a dominant culture.

(Bodo 2012, p. 182–83)

A further consideration is that the concept of community participation beyond the cultural dimension may be recognised by museum practitioner but, in reality, is seldom placed at the heart of museum's work (Sandell 2000; 2001; Bodo 2012).

The projects discussed in this section represent examples of practices of social inclusion in Italy, a country whose integration policy and approach to cultural diversity have long been marginalised in the national context. The projects with the participation of immigrant people share the common feature of using art and cultural heritage as a means to deliver positive social outcomes. The practices implemented by the two cultural institutions seek to address social exclusion by positively impacting the lives of the participants, enhancing self-esteem, confidence, and practical skills. Both institutions reach these outcomes through

personal engagement in the project and face-to-face interactions between the museum staff and the participants. Based on the interviews, it can be argued that the museums became more than a creative and inspiring place, in these instances, it provided a safe space, and an opportunity, for personal, psychological and emotional development of the individuals. With the project Mothers, the Musei Civici sought to make these women feel at home in their new country while building trust and bringing different perspectives to the museum's collection. The Fondazione Palazzo Magnani became a resource for a disadvantaged group; the project enabled the participants to learn about their new country and develop working skills to find a job beyond the lifetime of the project.

Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum

The concept of social inclusion is vague and can be associated with many dimensions which can have impact on different levels, as I have described before. Even the museum sector contains differing opinions on what constitutes social inclusion: for some, social inclusion means to combat the multiple disadvantages experienced by the majority of deprived neighbourhoods or individuals, such as poor health or high crime. For others, it might describe the idea that underpins new approaches to practice based on the process of museum democratisation. While still other cultural institutions might consider social inclusion in terms of widening access through the removal of physical barriers or offering reduced admission charges (Dodd & Sandell 2001).

The analysis of the data collected during the research shows that the staff of the Västmanlands läns museum address cultural diversity and social inclusion in their planning for displays by constructing narratives that reflect and represent the plurality of life experiences, histories and identities. One of the informants from the museum explained during the interview:

When we worked to renew our long-term exhibition, one of the crucial points was how we should work with diversity. I mean, how we look at and show that Sweden and its history are not simple, with one people and these usual ideas, you know. With white people who have always been here. So, we wanted to display the history of the territory from many points of view: from different places, and ages, and different gender, and ethnicity. Moreover, we wanted to point out that diversity has always shaped society in Sweden, and this part of Sweden, Västmanland.

(Interviewee 5)

The above citation supports previous research by Iervolino and Sandell (2016). They state that, by selecting and displaying objects which represent different social and cultural groups, the museum seeks to revise the process of exclusion and othering and in this case to deliver a broader image of Sweden and the local history. Moreover, Interviewee 6 mentioned that, while working at the new long-term exhibitions, they sought to foreground an equal and democratic society. The two museum professionals I interviewed, both said that they aimed to combat prejudices

and challenge stereotypes and their associated meanings. They explained that the stories displayed in the long-term exhibition were selected to represent the value of community diversity and the contribution that these groups have brought to what is considered typical Swedish society today. In the book's chapter titled "Museums and the combating of social inequality: roles, responsibilities resistance" (2002), Sandell argues that display practices can influence the public and on a broad level society as a whole. He focuses on the idea of how the interpretations of the museums' display modes and objects can expand opportunities or present limitations for culturally diverse groups. Therefore, they can potentially contribute to constructing inclusive and equitable societies and tackling discrimination and exclusion (2002, p. 9–12).

Consistent with the findings from the interviews, the museum 'staff chose a multiple voice approach within which many voices and interpretations are displayed alongside the museum's general narration. The local history is represented through different points of view which intend to mirror a pluralistic society and to broaden the audience. One of the interviewees stresses this aspect:

In one part of the exhibition, there is a harbour, the Middle Age exhibition, where you can listen to voices which speak in different languages. We tried to show that there were many people from different countries, who moved and came to Västerås at that time. We tried, not to point out, but just to show that this was the life, it was mixed.

(Interviewee 5)

She further explains:

We have a film in this exhibition which is from an elevator with short scenes. You can pull the elevator button, and you can see one scene, and then you can pull the elevator button again, and you see a new scene. Just to show what different kind of people could live in this, in one house. You have a guy who is hippie, and you have young girls who are giggling and looking in some teenage paper and this old couple who is kissing in the elevator, and also this Italian man who is arguing in the elevator and more.

(Interviewee 5)

The above excerpts stress that the museum has worked substantially with the issue of diversity and the need to integrate these many voices into the mainstream narrative. According to the interviewees, there is not one story, but, based on documents and objects, many experiences, stories, and identifications that can be displayed. Their statements indicate that the museum tried to introduce a more global narrative and create more inclusive stories which, in some way, challenge the historical and normative beliefs about Sweden. According to Sandell's theory, they address social inclusion by developing a more democratic representation of the history of the territory. The data from the interview confirms that Västmanlands läns museum staff implemented a social-historical approach through the representation of common people which many museums have adopted in recent

time to create more inclusive representation (Dodd & Sandell 2001, p. 5; Iervolino & Sandell 2016, p. 227).

Moreover, Interviewee 5 emphasises that the concepts of equality and diversity are at the core of the museum's permanent exhibition. As such, it is implicit that their effort entails a museum's representation accepting and valuing differences between people, regardless of background, gender, age, or beliefs. This approach is in line with the museum's definition established by INTERCOM: "INTERCOM believes that it is a fundamental responsibility of museums, wherever possible, to be active in promoting diversity and human rights, respect and equality for people of all origins, beliefs and backgrounds"³³. The exhibition is displayed in chronological order; prehistoric age, middle age, XVI to XVIII centuries, and XIX to XXI centuries. To narrate the history of the territory, the staff use a thematic approach to present a different topic which focuses on the life of the people who lived at that time (Nya basutställningar på Västmanlands läns museum. Grundkoncept.). The thematic strategy has been chosen to make people feel at home across borders and to allow each visitor to find her/himself in the narration. One of the interviewees states:

The most important thing is that we use universal ideas: for example, what it is to be human. We feel love, and we feel anger, we like to play, both children and grown-up too. We tell the history of Västmanland in different ways, like that. So, everyone can identify oneself with the people, with stories in the exhibition in some way.

(Interviewee 5)

The same idea was also expressed by the other interviewee: "So, it is quite the same, from the past until today: people have not changed so much, we think, feel, and love, in the same way; it is very much the same, these values have not changed." (Interviewee 6). The new long-term exhibitions are based on the ideals of self-identification, enjoyable experience, accessibility in terms of a broad definition of diversity, democracy, and participation (Nya basutställningar på Västmanlands läns museum. Grundkoncept.). The analysis of the data from the interviews and the documents indicate that Västmanlands läns museum has integrated a broad concept of social inclusion in their working practice. According to Sandell's study (1998; 2002), the museum addresses exclusion at the social level, seeking to shape as well as challenge social behaviour and norms. Museums which will pursue this goal need to take moral stands on human rights, discrimination, and prejudice. The display of diversity undertaken by the museum can be related to the recognition of cultural diversity in the political agenda of governmental and intergovernmental agencies (Sandell 2005, p. 190). The Swedish cultural policy, even at the local level, addresses specific social issues and has identified projects focusing on social exclusion in order to enhance a democratic and equitable society.

³³ Intercom website > home [20-10-10].

Since the previous example deals with Sandell's third category of impact through display practice, in the following section I discuss how both Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum act as vehicles of broad social inclusion by presenting temporary exhibitions which deal with concepts such as discrimination and human rights.

During the summer of 2017, Västmanland läns museum presented an exhibition titled *100% Fight – fights for human rights in Sweden* about the fight for human rights in Sweden and the fundamental role that these people played and still play in building a democratic society³⁴. The exhibition was produced by the regional museum of Kristianstad, and the museum's staff decided to lease it because it represented an opportunity to bring up social issues, like injustice and discrimination, in Sweden, which is generally recognised as a democratic country³⁵. The exhibition showed the stories of people fighting for different kinds of rights, like the right to vote, the rights of minority groups and the right to live and love without restrictions. One of the interviewees from Västmanlands läns museum explained:

It showed stories of people in the past but also at the present time. For example, the fight for women's right to vote, the right to choose gender, the fight of different Swedish minority groups to be recognised and the rights of people with disabilities. We worked in a broader perspective with this project.

(Interviewee 5)

Västerås Konstmuseum engaged with issues of social inclusion through the exhibition *Guerrilla Girls – feminism, fakta och fuskpäls* (Guerrillas girls – feminism, facts and faux fur), which is a travelling exhibition, produced by Mjellby art museum, that was hosted at the museum during the summer of 2019³⁶. Interviewee 8 explained that the exhibition sought to tackle discrimination, racism and sexism by presenting the work of an activist art group, i.e. The guerrilla girls. The group is composed of anonymous masked women, whose purpose is to highlight inequality and discrimination within the American arts' sector, where women artists, mostly from minority groups, are underrepresented (*Guerrilla Girls tidning*)³⁷. During the interview, one of the museum staff pointed to the need to implement practices which seek to challenge people's values and perceptions: "We had this exhibition, The Guerrilla girls, which raised the question about inclusion. These artists, their whole art project, work with these questions. This is an example of how we use exhibitions to talk about social problems." (Interviewee 8). Moreover, she states:

³⁴ Västmanlands läns museum website > find > results [20-10-12].

³⁵ Ib.

³⁶ Västerås Konstmuseum website > exhibitions > archive [20-10-15].

³⁷ Ib.

I think that the exhibition was a sort of eye-opener for many people about the role that each of us can play in changing things. And I was impressed to see how young people got deeply involved in this topic. [...] These kinds of exhibitions are welcomed by the museum as a means to promote change by showing what other people do.

(Interviewee 8)

In the above quotations, it is evident that the target of these projects is not just those identified by the project as suffering disadvantages or exclusions, rather the wider public, society as a whole. As Interviewee 8 highlighted, besides the specific outcome to benefit women artists, the museum sought to address exclusion on a broad level, by making the whole of society reflect about the discrimination of women among society. During the exhibition, open workshops were organised for the visitors to design posters about topics related to the exhibition or those relevant to the participants. Indeed, the exhibition sought to stimulate the visitors about the manifestations, causes and consequences of prejudice in everyday life. This was articulated by one of the interviewees from the museum: "We tried to involve the visitors with workshops where they could create their posters about social questions, they thought were relevant in their life and could be included in the exhibition. We sought to stimulate their participation." (Interviewee 8).

Indeed, these temporary exhibitions are a means for museums to focus on specific topics and give voice to social instances such as discrimination and exclusion. The analysis of the data demonstrates that both museums seek to bring about change and promote social justice in order to play a relevant role in the local society (Sandell 2002, p. 10). Beyond the engagement at this societal level of inclusion, Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum participated in a project that, according to Sandell's theory, impact on the community level.

Between 2015 and 2017, the museums took part in the project *Ballongen* (Balloon) in collaboration with Knytpunkten, a local cultural association whose purpose is to use art to engage and stimulate children and youth living in the area, along with Konstfrämjandet Västmanland, a cultural organisation promoting the spreading of art at national and regional level (Västerås stad, p. 5). The project was structured in two phases: in the former, between 2015 and 2016, three artists, who use to work with participatory art, led three projects about children and games involving the whole community. In the latter, in 2017, Västerås Konstmuseum and Konstfrämjandet worked closely with the artists on the results from the first phase by organising workshops and art production (Västerås stad, p. 5). The project aspired to regenerate a city neighbourhood and benefit its community socially. The area chosen for this project was Råby, "a neighbourhood in the West part of the city that has a high density of inhabitants with an immigrant background and one of the more disadvantaged in the city." (Västerås stad, p. 6). The purpose of this two-year project was to reduce the distance between the centrum and the suburbs and to overcome different barriers which exclude people, especially children, so that they can enjoy art and the services that museums offer. Moreover, the document states:

The project also has an unexpressed social purpose. By building a centrum for children and youngers a Råby, the long-term goal is to engender a sense of belonging in these children and youth to get them interested and involve in the developing and care of the neighbourhood. In doing so, we try to foster conscious and creative dwellers in Råby.

(Västerås stad, p. 3).

After this first project, Råby was selected, together with 14 other areas throughout Sweden, for the national project *Konst Händer* (Art takes place). The project, *Råby Planet*, was a collaboration between Västerås Konstmuseum, Konstfrämjande Västmanland and Statens Kulturråd³⁸. Between 2017 and 2018, the artist Michael Beutler was invited to stay on several occasions in Råby and collaborate with the locals to create a temporary work of art in the neighbourhood. One of the interviewees from Västerås Konstmuseum explains:

A significative project was the Ballongen project. During the project, an artist lived in the neighbourhood and worked at a piece of art together with the dwellers. It was a very demanding project, both the economic and the organisation. It was not so simple, because you cannot just invite people to participate in a project. You have to gain their trust to make them participate. Nevertheless, the project worked well, and the museum became visible in society and especially among some groups.

(Interviewee 7)

The project turned into a game, where a gigantic ball was being rolled in through the forest nearby which became the game field; and into a festival, where all the inhabitants were involved in the event's organisation and fulfilment. Today, the ball is kept in The Shrine, a structure built by the artist as a reminder of the initiative³⁹.

By means of this project, the museums aimed to engage with groups living in disadvantaged areas, which usually do not visit museums and involve them in the process of making art to foster a relationship between this community and the museums (Västerås stad, p. 2). The project was complex and demanding, as the informant admitted, and structured in different phases. During the proceeding, Västerås Konstmuseum together with the cultural organisation Kulturfrämjandet were able to organise a course for art students living in the neighbourhood to develop their skills and reflect on the social value of art (Ballongen – special internship and place meaning). Finally, the project was presented in an exhibition *Den Fria Leken* (Playing freely) at Västerås Konstmuseum, where artworks about the central theme of the project, i.e. the different ways children can play freely, were displayed⁴⁰.

The analysis of the data shows that with these projects, both the museums contributed to the empowerment and the positive development of the community in this neighbourhood which for various reasons are at the margins of society.

³⁸ Konstfrämjande Västmanland website > project [20-10-15].

³⁹ Statens Kulturråd website > find [20-10-15].

⁴⁰ Västerås Konstmuseum website > exhibition > archive [20-10-15].

According to Sandell (2002, p. 7), within this project, the museums "provided and enabled [a] creative, perhaps less threatening, forum through which community members could acquire skills and the confidence required to take control and play an active, self-determining role in their community's future." Through the value of art, museums can act as catalysts for community involvement and capacity building and deliver socially positive outcomes (Sandell 2002, p.7). These types of projects that were implemented in locations outside of the museum can inspire groups, which the museum has not yet reached, to get involved in museum work and collaboration. Moreover, through the partnership with other cultural institutions, they can also bring social subjects like migration, cultural diversity, integration and social cohesion to the public's attention in new less traditional ways. As Sandell (1998, p. 415) argues, the approaches to social inclusion are rarely as defined as in the model he theorised; on the contrary, the outcomes delivered by museums often overlap.

On the whole, the analysis shows that both Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum had implemented strategies to address social issues and incorporate migration and cultural diversity in their communicative practices. A common feature is that they tackle social exclusion at a community and social level. Employing new approaches to representation and interpretations, both museums seek to foster social inclusion for groups which suffer from different types of exclusion. While at the same time, by making marginal culture visible and challenging norms and stereotypes, they contribute to a more equitable and inclusive society. Through the display of the long-term exhibitions and the inclusion of immigrant's narratives along with other minority groups, Västmanlands läns museum sought consciously to communicate narratives so they will be adopted broadly. In this way, the museum displayed evidence of our common humanity and cultural diversity, while challenging and questioning social behaviour and stereotypes for more equal societies. Indeed, the social level of commitment is also well embedded in the communicative practices of Västerås Konstmuseum. Using temporary exhibitions, the museum seeks to play an active role in societal debate and address difficult questions of difference and justice. In this perspective, the museum can be regarded as a vehicle of broad inclusion, tackling discrimination, hostility towards groups with a different background while fostering tolerance and mutual knowledge. The project *Ballongen* and the following *Råby Planet* can be seen in the light of community empowerment and therefore the museums as agents of social regeneration at the community level. The museum engagement focused on treating the community of Råby not only as a beneficiary but also as an active partner. The challenge of the activity was to define the right ways of working with others while supporting their growth and self-development.

Final discussion

The purpose of this study was to provide an empirical grounding of Sandell's theory about social inclusion in museum practices in the cross-cultural context of Sweden and Italy. In line with the provided theoretical framework and presented purpose, the research questions were:

How does museum staff perceive and approach social inclusion in their professional practices?

Based on Sandell's model how are the individual, community and social levels enacted in the museum practices?

How do the broader socio-cultural context and existing policies of Italy and Sweden affect the approach to social inclusion?

In this chapter, I will discuss the results I have laid out in the analysis in relation to these specific questions. The first two questions discuss if Sandell's model is grounded in the empirical data, while the third question inquires if there is a connection between the way museums underpin social inclusion and the context within which they serve. I will also propose suggestions for further research on the topic.

Museums and social inclusion

What becomes clear from my analysis is that notions of social exclusion and inclusion are related to different levels of understanding among museum professionals. At both the Italian museums, the social agency of the museums concerns excluded people and marginalised groups whom all the interviewees refer to with the term "fragile". This category includes all the people that have been excluded from the enjoyment of the cultural system and are in need of special programs to be reintegrated. The link between social inclusion and these target groups has to be seen in the broader context of the social policy of Reggio Emilia. In fact, the project – Reggio a city without barriers – undertaken by the city has represented the starting point for the two museums to reflect on diversity and address social issues. Therefore, it is not surprising that social inclusion is connected to personal growth and the fostering of a sense of place for the people targeted by the museums.

My informants at the museums explain that social inclusion is a responsibility of the cultural institutions, but they have started to address these issues only in

recent times. Besides this, they suggest that this approach has steered the institutions into unfamiliar territory where they are asked to achieve goals which the museum was not equipped for, and therefore, their practices faced new challenges. These considerations about the pursuit of social inclusion are confirmed by both Carra (2014) and Bodo (2009). They argue that the social acting of museums is relatively recent in the Italian museological field because of the predominant functions of preserving and communicating cultural heritage which they have mainly performed. The authors highlight the lack of structural and normative tools needed to help museums to understand the concepts of social inclusion and how to become inclusive which hinder the social development of these institutions.

The study reveals that the interviewees approach social inclusion primarily through the cultural dimension and narrow their focus on access and participation. Nevertheless, the idea that museums can deliver positive outcomes in the lives of the people who engage with them is becoming more relevant, especially at the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. Sandell (1998; Dodd & Sandell 2001) argues that many museums relate social inclusion to the cultural dimension of exclusion, and therefore, have underpinned action to broaden the audience and remove the barriers that hinder people from enjoying the museum. Nonetheless, he also argues that the same institutions have the ability to move beyond this dimension and tackle exclusion in the social, economic, and political dimension. By focusing on the benefit that art and cultural heritage can deliver to people, the staff of the museums provide appropriate examples of institutions moving towards what Sandell defines *the museum as agent of social regeneration*.

Social inclusion is a radically subjective concept and can be understood and approached in different ways. According to Sandell's definition of social inclusion, museums can deliver positive outcomes to individual people or communities, or, as in the case of the Swedish museums, can become agents of broader social change and influence the public opinion (Sandell 1998). My study shows that both the Swedish museums share a common trend: they have moved beyond the cultural dimension of inclusion and seek to contribute to social cohesion by addressing discrimination and questioning stereotypes and norms for more democratic perspectives. Interviewee 5 suggests that by picturing and representing the history of the county from a more equal and inclusive perspective, the museum can contribute to fostering tolerance, respect and a more cohesive society.

Based on his research, Sandell argues that the social agency of museums, and the social level of commitment, in particular, can be reached only if the staff is willing to challenge and rethink their assumptions and habits of mind (Dodd & Sandell 2001). This statement is confirmed by the interviewees at Västerås Konstmuseum who point out that museums, and especially art museums, need to rethink their role and present themselves as a democratic space where people are free to express themselves, and social issues can be discussed rather than acting as

”elitist” institutions. The pursuit of social equality and democracy suggested by my informants must be seen in a broader context. Museums are not isolated, but rather they are part of every country’s cultural and political infrastructure. Within this context, their roles and responsibilities acquire a particular dimension. As for the Swedish museums, the societal dimension of their approach to social inclusion is nurtured by the national and local cultural policy which refers to museums as allies in promoting democracy and integration (Sandell 2005, p, 190). Nevertheless, as some of the interviewees argued, not all the excluded groups have the same opportunity to benefit from the museums. Interviewee 7 explains that ethnic groups, especially those who are newly arrived in Sweden, are seldom the target of museum activities. This statement can be related to what Johansson mentions, that migrants organised in associations are more visible and therefore receive more space to make their voices heard (2015, p. 109).

In conclusion, my study shows that the staff of the Italian museums relate social inclusion to the personal level, where positive outcomes are delivered by museums in the lives of the individuals. On the contrary, the staff of the Swedish museums approach social inclusion on a broader level seeking to promote equality and challenge stereotypes.

Museums and inclusive practices

Regarding the different levels of impact described by Sandell, the research shows that all the levels within which museums can be relevant in society emerged from the analysis. Nevertheless, as Sandell highlights, the museums have the responsibility to underpin the social agenda while not all the levels need to be impacted or implemented within the museum practice. As the results from the analysis show, Swedish and the Italian museums implement different levels of inclusion.

In the Italian museums, the implementation of social inclusion in museum practices occurs mostly in what Sandell defines as the individual level whose outcomes are wide-ranging from personal, psychological and emotional to pragmatical. For example, projects like Mothers, the one with the Egyptian women at the Musei Civici, and the one with the refugees at the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani, are meant to improve the lives of the individuals who participate in the activities. My study identifies three aspects that make these projects appropriate to illustrate what Sandell argues about the first level of impact. First and foremost, the engagement with the museum impacted positively on the lives of the participants. At the Musei Civici, the positive outcomes were to increase their self-esteem and foster a sense of place and familiarity with a public institution like the museum, where many of the participants had never been before. The developing of skills and confidence that would have helped the participants to improve the quality of their

lives and enhance employment opportunities were the main goals at the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. The social utility of museums theorised by Sandell is confirmed by the assumptions brought up by some of the Italian informants that art and cultural heritage were not the goals but rather the venue to enhance the quality of life for the participants and that the cultural institutions became the settings for social inclusion.

Secondly, Sandell argues that the process through which museums deliver positive outcomes is the face-to-face interaction between the participants and the staff. According to Sandell, the positive outcomes at this level can be reached mostly through personal engagement of the staff in their efforts to build a trustful relationship with the members of the project. At both the museums, some of the interviewees often pointed out during the interview that personal interactions were the fulcrum around which the participants could achieve benefits. They mentioned too that the personal engagement of the staff in building dialogue and achieving goals benefited not only the target groups but also all who were involved in the project. This approach is in line with how museum professionals in Italy understand social inclusion, as I discussed in the previous chapter.

Finally, the third aspect which substantiates Sandell's model is the partnership between the museum and non-cultural organisations which are linked and have the competence to work with the group with which the museum engages. Based on field research, Sandell considers partnerships to be crucial to the socially inclusive museum at both the individual and community levels. At the Musei Civici, Interviewee 1 emphasises that partnerships were essential to enhancing inclusive projects and that museums need to be integrated into a well-connected network to achieve their goals and find new opportunities. At the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani, Interviewee 4 points out that, besides this collaboration, partnership with cultural organisations was crucial to developing collaborative strategies and achieving results. All these aspects indicate that for Sandell's first level of impact to be implemented there needs to be a museological context where personal engagement and attitudes can take on new challenges.

The second level, which would deliver benefit to a specific, geographically defined community according to Sandell's model, is less apparent in the analyses of museum practices in the Italian context. As previously discussed in the theoretical chapter, this level aims to enhance community self-determination and increase participation in the decision-making process, whether in the project or the community. My study shows that these outcomes are not explicitly included among the goals of the Italian cases. At the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani, both the informants agreed that community empowerment is not yet structurally included in their agenda, especially in terms of cultural diversity and immigration. As I described in the overview of the research field chapter, addressing community issues and engaging with the concept of "community" challenges the museum sector to revisit and question its identity and authoritative role (Goodnow & Akman

2008; Johansson 2015). According to the way the Italian staff understand social inclusion, the foundation is not ready to approach community needs in the way Sandell suggests in his model.

In the case of the Musei Civici, the analysis of the project undertaken with women from post-Soviet countries reveals that, although the staff engaged with the community, the results delivered had more of an impact on the lives of the independent members rather than empowering the whole community. As previously discussed, the approach used to represent the community focused on traditional aspects of the community, and that runs the risk of exotifying the immigrant community and portraying a somehow static identity (see for example, Goodnow 2008). It is also important to know that the members of the community were not invited to take part in the formulation and management of the project and therefore, they had limited influence over the project concerning them. The example from the Musei Civici does not fulfill the defined characteristics of Sandell's second level of impact. Though involving the community in the project, the members were not active in the cultural production and the management of the activity. Furthermore, when the informants described the project, they talked about positive outcomes for the individuals, but they did not include community building, self-determination, and dialogue among the project's goals. My study shows that in some respects the established authority of the curatorial and research expertise of museum staff, the standard of quality and the state's lack of interest for immigrant communities seems to constitute an obstacle to the museums' engagement with communities.

Another significant and interesting find that should be highlighted in relation to what I discuss above is the absence of the third level of impact defined by Sandell, i.e. the societal level among the Italian museums. The empirical data shows that at both the museums this level of impact which aims to tackle social exclusion by challenging and questioning norms and behaviours, and influencing the wider mainstream public is not structurally present among the museum practice. This third category of impact demands an acknowledgement for the role and power of museums to shape and affect people's attitudes and mindset. My study reveals that the staff acknowledge these fundamental values as well as the role that museums can play at this level of impact, but at the same time they recognise that their institutions are not yet ready to go down this path thoroughly. To enact this level of commitment, museums should frame these socially driven goals – like the pursuit of social justice and equality – in the inherent part of their working practices, according to Sandell (2019). As Carra (2014) argues, Italian cultural policy has traditionally privileged the safeguard and enjoyment of Italian cultural heritage rather than considering the potential benefits they can provide to individuals and society. Therefore, within this context, it is not surprising that the museums in Reggio Emilia do not engage consistently with social inclusion.

In short, the projects of both the Italian museums examined in this study empirically ground the first level of impact in Sandell's theory. Both the outcomes and the processes selected by the staff to achieve their goals are in line with Sandell's model. Even though the community level is in some way included in the agenda of the Musei Civici, as can be seen in some of the projects that have been undertaken, it does not move beyond the dualistic curatorial practice versus the new collaborative paradigm. Such social work by museums must involve radical turns, more than mere consultation and inclusion of diverse perspectives which lead to shared curatorial authority with the community. As for the community level, the society level is marginal in the practice of the Italian museums because, as I discussed before, the country's cultural and social infrastructure does not promote the civic role of cultural institutions.

As I discussed before, the museums engage in different ways with the concept of social inclusion. The analysis of the Swedish cases shows that both the museums approach social exclusion at the second and third level in Sandell's model, i.e. the community and the society.

The two-year project *Ballongen* undertaken by both Västmanlands läns museum and Västerås Konstmuseum is a good example of a community being empowered to participate in the decision-making process of the activity actively and to develop community self-determination. The goals of the project were to regenerate a disadvantaged neighbourhood, develop a dialogue between the community and the museums, and inside the community itself to foster cohesion and strengthen commitments to the place. Through the partnership with other civil and cultural organisations, the museums opened up a dialogue with the community and engaged their enthusiasm and commitment to the renewal of the area. As I discussed in the analysis section, the members of the community were involved in the planning and decision-making process, in partnerships with the artists for the designing and realisation of each stage of the activity. The project and that which followed, *Råby Planet*, are creative initiatives with artist-curators working from within the museums, and they sought to embed collaboration into practice. In these instances, the museum relates to Sandell's community level because the projects contain two strands: the partnership with other organisations and the purpose to contribute to the alleviation of social problems. The interviewees at Västerås Konstmuseum said that the initiatives positioned the museum and the art, not as a goal in itself, but rather as a means of promoting community self-development, collaboration, and wider public engagement. It is worth noting that Sandell did not develop in-depth the relationship between the museum and the level and nature of community involvement in his model. In light of this, the two community projects represent good examples of a museum working with the community.

The museum practitioners at the Västerås Konstmuseum brought up that participation in the arts represents a way for museums to fulfil social agency because, beyond encouraging participation and building community competences,

it opens up to a broader democratic process of inclusion. The assumption that museums can contribute to equality and a more inclusive society was mentioned by the staff of the Swedish museums several times during the interviews. The exhibitions I discussed in the analysis chapter reveal that the museums sought to tackle social exclusion on a broader level, something that Sandell describes in the third level of his model. The exhibitions *100% Fight – fights for human rights in Sweden* and *Guerrilla Girls* suggest that museums can play a critical role in addressing manifestations of discrimination and envisioning an inclusive society. The informants at both the museums said that they see the museum as a public space where it is possible to represent the multicultural structure of the society and challenge stereotypes and injustice in order to foreground tolerance, equality and cohesion.

The connection between the museum and its broader social agency is clearly apparent in the content presented in the long-term exhibitions at Västmanlands läns museum. The two museum professionals I interviewed explained that beyond the design of the new display there had been an attempt to picture and present the local history through the inclusion of different voices which "validate different ways of interpreting objects and refer to different points of view and different truths about the material presented" (Hein 2000, p. 35). They sought to redress misconceptions and stereotypes and highlight community diversity, by giving voice to different groups. The manner of displaying objects and setting up exhibitions plays a crucial role in affecting visitors' perceptions and values, according to Sandell and other scholars (see for example, Hopper-Greenhill and Macdonald). In the case of Västmanlands läns museum, the social-historical approach was implemented to create a more inclusive representation by including the stories of culturally different people. The new display overtly replaced the previous representation to give equal attention to other groups avoiding the "us" and "them" narration and constructing more inclusive representation.

Sandell's idea that museums can advance democracy, citizenship, and universal human rights emerges clearly from the interviews and the strategic plans of the two Swedish museums. My study points out that there is a mutual understanding between the museums' staff and the national and local cultural policies, which set the goals, about the social role of museums. In fact, all the interviewees said that democracy, integration, and inclusion are the fulcra around which they underpin different kinds of initiatives. The idea of democracy and equality is embedded in the museum practice, and it is proved by the empirical data. Almost all of the interviewees at both the museums brought up that they try to include all groups and give them the same space among their activities, even if this is a challenging goal. My study reveals that the contributions to social inclusion displayed by the Swedish museums are grounded in the national cultural policy which, in turns, affects the local cultural policy which drives the two museums. This aspect seems to confirm why museums choose to impact on the second and third level of Sandell's model

while the first one is not included among their goals. None of my informants at the Swedish museums brought up the individual or personal level where the museum engages with a single member of the target group to deliver positive outcomes in his/her life.

It can be summarised that the projects of both the Swedish museums examined in this study empirically ground the second and third level of impact in Sandell's model and confirm his assumption that museums can tackle social exclusion and address contemporary social problems on a broad level. Alongside other traditional institutions, museums can contribute to the recognition and empowerment of disadvantaged communities as well as make an impact on society through practices based on contemporary values and social equality. As for the Italian cases, one level is missing among the practices of the Swedish museums. This absence can be related to the country's cultural and social framework which does not place the individual in the centre of its action but rather the society.

In conclusion, Sandell's three levels of impact are grounded in the empirical data of my study. The first level, which addresses social exclusion on a personal level, is implemented in the practice of the Italian museums. The second and the third levels, which tackle social issues on the community and society level, are embedded in the working practice of the Swedish museums.

Social inclusion in a broader context

Drawing on the previous discussion about how museum professionals understand social inclusion and the different approaches they underpin, it is clear that Sandell's model is implemented in the practice of the four museums in different ways. My study shows that museums have developed distinctive approaches to social exclusion and have employed diverse strategies to achieve their goals. My hypothesis is that social inclusion is understood and underpinned in the practice of the museums in different ways because they work in a different socio-cultural context. The relation between the museum and the local context plays a crucial role in affecting and defining the public activities of the museums studied in this research.

As previously discussed in the analysis chapter, Italy and Sweden have developed at times different policies and approaches towards immigration and cultural diversity. On the one hand, the Swedish government has promulgated laws to regulate the flow of immigrants and to grant them the same rights and living conditions as Swedes. This attitude created more favourable conditions for museums to reflect and implement inclusive practices in their public activities to address cultural diversity and social issues in the last decades. On the other hand, the implementation of integration policies in Italy has never been a central issue in the immigration policy. Moreover, the management of integration and inclusion has

been often delegated to local institutions and private associations without building an overall national structure. Hence, the two different approaches to cultural diversity have elicited two different frameworks within which museums work.

The concepts of diversity, integration and equality are embedded in the museological practice of the Swedish museums. Their approach to social inclusion is rooted in the socio-cultural context elicited by Swedish policy, and therefore, they are more active in the second and third levels of Sandell's model. Indeed, none of my informants at the Swedish museums brought up the individual or personal level where the museum engages with a single member of the target group to deliver positive outcomes in his/her life. As I explained before, this relates to the Swedish cultural policy that does not focus on the needs of the individuals but instead considers people as part of a social structure and tackles social exclusion on the societal level.

On the contrary, the reasons why both of the Italian museums are keener to approach social exclusion at a personal level are rooted in the socio-cultural context within which they serve. In fact, the social policy of the city of Reggio Emilia seeks to benefit and integrate in society those people who suffer different forms of disadvantage, especially persons with disabilities, but other groups too, like immigrant and refugees. The social agency of the museums relates to the personal engagement of the single institution which has sought to respond to the shifting terrain of political sensitiveness and diversity in Reggio Emilia. All the Italian interviewees highlight that the new city policy launched by the mayor affected the practice of the museums towards a more inclusive and socially relevant function. As the main focus of this policy is centred on the person, so too the museums have started to address social exclusion on the personal level.

Related to this, it can be argued that the Swedish museums contribute to social exclusion from a top-down perspective because of the relation between culture and governance. Therefore, they approach social issues through the concept of democracy and equality. Thus, among the Italian cases, the approach is vice versa, namely from a bottom-up perspective, because it reflects the absence of the state's commitment to the principle of integration and equality and leaves the responsibility upon the local organisations.

According to Sandell and other authors (see for example Nightingale & Sandell 2012) cultural institutions which clearly expresses the inclination to address social inclusion, especially in relation to society, have to undergo a fundamental transformation and acknowledge the shift, described by Whitcombe (2007), from the collection to the public. As I discussed in the research field overview, the Italian cultural policy has been more interested in the conservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage, rather than its social value (Carra 2014). Therefore, despite the growing interest in the social agency of the museum, as the informants at both the museums explained, social inclusion is still not solidly rooted in the museum practice, and it ended up in short-term projects. On the contrary, the assumption

that cultural heritage can engender equality and affirm the identity of immigrant groups is more embedded in the official Swedish approach (see for example, *Tid for kultur* 2009; *Känn dig som hemma* 2015) and consequently in the mission of the museums. The Råby project is an example of the long-term commitment of the museums, embedded in a more complex framework.

To conclude, the empirical data confirms my hypothesis that the museum cases of this study engage with social inclusion differently because they serve within two different socio-cultural contexts. This framework affects the way museum professionals understand the notion of social inclusion and the practice they underpin to tackle social exclusion.

Suggestion for future research

As I have already discussed, there is a lack of empirical research which investigates the social agency of museums in Italy and Sweden. Therefore, I believe further investigation is crucial in order to reach an in-depth understanding of the link between the social agency of museums and the socio-cultural context. The response should be of interests not only from an academic point of view but also from a practical perspective to increase social inclusion in the museum practice.

Since this study approach uses Sandell's model from a context based perspective, it would be valuable to investigate if the typology of the museums and the nature of their collection affects the way they implement inclusive practices. A study looking into the responses of the audience to inclusive social practices in the short and long-term would be a convenient complement to this study, to analyse the outcomes and the possible limits. Moreover, it would also be of interest to extend the cross-cultural study to other countries which present a very different socio-cultural context to investigate if Sandell's model still works.

Sources and literature

Sources

In the possession of the essay writer

Skype interview with informant 1, 2020-04-02. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with informant 2, 2020-04-23. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with informant 3, 2020-04-03. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with informant 4, 2020-04-07. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with informant 5, 2020-04-01. Recording and transcription.
Interview with informant 6 at Västmanlands läns museum, 2020-03-12. Recording and transcription.
Interview with informant 7 at Västerås Konstmuseum, 2020-03-25. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with the Informant 8, 2020-03-19. Recording and transcription.
Skype interview with the informant 9, 2020-03-24. Recording and transcription.
Email from informant 3 to the author, 2020-02-19.
Email from informant 9 to the author, 2019-02-25.
Email from informant 8 to author, 2020-03-04.
La cultura per la cultura dell'integrazione, 2017, Fondazione Palazzo Magnani.
Nya basutställningar på Västmanlands läns museum. Grundkoncept, 2017, Västmanlands läns museum.
Guerrilla Girls tidning, 2019, Västerås Konstmuseum.

Literature

Alzén, Annika & Aronsson, Peter (2006), *Demokratisk Kulturarv? Nationella Institutioner, Universella Värden, Lokala Praktiker*. Norrköping: Tema Kultur och Samhälle, Campus Norrköping, Linköping University.
Appleton, Josie & Anderson Robert (2001), *Museums for 'The People'?*. London: Institute of Ideas.
Basso Peressut, Luca & Pozzi, Clelia (2012), *Museums in an Age of Migrations. Questions, Challenges, Perspectives*. (vol.1). Milano: Politecnico di Torino.
Bennett, Tony (1995), *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory and Politics*. London: Routledge.
Bjärenstam, Hanna & Parazajder, Carmen (2004), *Integrationsprojekt på svenska museer: med projektet "Museer med nya krafter" på Arbetets museum*.

- Norrköping: inst. för tematisk utbildning och forskning, Linköping University.
- Boast, Robin (2011), "Neocolonial Collaboration: Museum as Contact Zone Revisited", in *Museum Anthropology* 34 (1), p. 56–70.
- Bodo, Simona (2009), "Per una educazione al patrimonio in chiave interculturale", *Insula Fulcheria* XXXIX, p. 161–168.
- Bodo Simona (2012), "Museums as intercultural spaces.", in *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*, eds: Eithne Nightingale & Richard Sandell. London and New York: Routledge, p. 181–191.
- Bodo, Simona, Gibbs, Kirsten & Sani, Margherita (2009), *Museums as places for intercultural dialogue: selected practices from Europe*. MAP for ID Group.
- Bryman, Alan & Nilsson, Björn (2018), *Samhällsvetenskapliga metoder*, (3rd ed.). Stockholm: Liber.
- Carra, Elisa (2014), "Verso un museo inclusivo: presupposti e prospettive in risposta al cambiamento sociale.", *Il Capitale Culturale* IX, p. 169–188.
- Città senza barriere. <https://www.cittasenzabarriere.re.it> [20-10-28].
- Colucci, Michele (2018), "Per una storia del governo dell'immigrazione straniera in Italia: dagli anni sessanta alla crisi delle politiche.", *Meridiana* 91, p. 9–36.
- Creswell, John W (2013), *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Davis, Peter (2008), "New Museologies and the Ecomuseum", in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed: Peter Howard & Brian Graham. Aldershot: Ashgate, p. 397–414.
- Descombe, Martyn (2007), *The Good Research Guide for small-scale research projects* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Dodd, Jocelyn & Sandell, Richard (2001), *Including Museums. Perspectives on museums, galleries and social inclusion*. Leicester: Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, Dept. of Museum Studies, Univ. of Leicester.
- Dos Santos, Paula Assunção (2008), "The Relations between Museology and Community Development: Society Changes, Museology Changes". *Cadernos de Sociomuseologia* 29, p. 47–116.
- ECCOM. <http://www.eccom.it> [20-10-10].
- ECCOM 2003, *Il patrimonio culturale come strumento di integrazione sociale*. <http://www.eccom.it/it/attivita/progetti/75-compagnia-di-san-paolo> [20-10-19].
- Edström, Nina & Hyltén-Cavallius, Charlotte (2011), *Osmos: Inkluderande processer i Kulturlivet*. Tumba: Mångkulturellt Centrum.
- Eliasson, Annika (2013), *Kvantitativ metod från början*. (3rd ed.), Lund: Studentlitteratur AB.
- Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. <https://www.palazzomagnani.it/> [2020-09-29].

- Fondazione Palazzo Magnani (2016), *Statuto della Fondazione Palazzo Magnani*.
https://www.palazzomagnani.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Statuto-Fondazione-PM_sett16.pdf [20-09-20].
- Frontex (2016), *Risk analysis* for 2016,
https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annula_Risk_Analysis_2016.pdf [2020-09-15].
- Golding, Vivien & Modest, Wayne (2013), *Museums and Communities. Curators, Collections and Collaborations*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Goodnow, Katherine (2008a), "The construction of identities.", in *Scandinavian Museum and Cultural Diversity*, eds: Kathrine Goodnow & Haci Akman. New York: Berghahn Books, p. ix–xxviii.
- Goodnow, Katherine (2008b). "Exhibition forms and influential circumstances.", in *Scandinavian Museum and Cultural Diversity*, eds: Kathrine Goodnow & Haci Akman. New York: Berghahn Books, p. 230–245.
- Goodnow, Katherine & Akman, Haci (2008), *Scandinavian Museums and Cultural Diversity*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Government Offices of Sweden, Fact sheet. *National Minorities and Minority Languages. A Summary of the Government's Minority Policy*.
<https://www.government.se/49b72e/contentassets/bb53f1cff8504c5db61fb96168e728be/national-minorities-and-minority-languages> [20-04-29].
- Klein, Barbro (2008), "Cultural diversity and museums in Sweden: some critical reflections", in *Scandinavian Museums and Cultural Diversity*, eds: Kathrine Goodnow & Haci Akman. New York: Berghahn Books, p.151–160.
- Hein, Hilde S. (2000), *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective*. New York: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2000), *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2003), "L'evoluzione dei modelli comunicativi nei musei d'arte.", in *Il museo relazionale, riflessioni ed esperienze europee*, ed: Simona Bodo. Torino: Edizioni della Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, p. 1–40.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2006), "Studying Visitors.", in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. p. 362–376.
- Iervolino, Serena & Sandell, Richard (2016), "The World in One City: the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam., in *Curatorial dreams. Critics, Imagine, Exhibitions*, ed.: Shelley Ruth Butler & Erica Lehrer. London: McGill-Queen's University Press, p. 211–230.
- Intercom. <http://intercom.mini.icom.museum/about/key-values/> [20-10-10].
- Janes, Robert R. & Sandell, Richard (2019), "Posterity has arrived. The necessary emergence of museum activism.", in *Museum Activism*, eds: Robert R. Janes & Richard Sandell. Oxford: Routledge, p. 1–18.

- Johansson, Christina (2015), *Museums, Migration and cultural Diversity. Swedish museums in tune with the times?*. Innsbruk: Studienverlag.
- Johansson, Christina & Bevelander, Pieter (2017), *Museums in time of migration*. Lund: Nordic Academic Press. Kulturdepartement 1998/99
- Konstfrämjandet. <http://vastmanland.konstframjandet.se/> [2020-10-25].
- Kulturrådet. <https://www.kulturradet.se/> [2020-10-25].
- Lagerkvist, Cajsa (2006), "Empowerment and anger: learning how to share ownership of the museum.", in *Museum and Society* 4 (2), p. 52–68.
- Lagerkvist, Cajsa (2008), "The Museum of World Culture: a *glocal* museum of new kind", in *Scandinavian museums and cultural diversity*, eds: Kathrine Goodnow & Haci Akman. New York: Berghahn Books, p. 89–100.
- Lynch, Bernadette (2011), *Whose Cake Is It Anyway? A Collaborative Investigation into Engagement and Participation in 12 Museums and Galleries in the UK*. London: Paul Hamlyn Foundation.
- Macdonald, Sharon (1998), *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Montanari, Elena (2013), "Local Museums as Strategic Cultural Forces for 21st century society.", in *Local Museums in the 21st Century: Setting the Framework (vol. 3)*, eds: Luca Basso Peressut, Francesca Lanz & Gennaro Postiglione. Milano: Politecnico di Milano, p. 535–573.
- Mothers* (Part 1) 2013, [video]. Musei Civici Reggio Emilia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKchWZmx4jQ> [2020-09-22].
- Mothers* (Part 2) 2013, [video]. Musei Civici Reggio Emilia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QphIIUZjBkw> [2020-09-22].
- Mothers* (Part 3) 2013, [video]. Musei Civici Reggio Emilia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvJbh7Gy2mE> [2020-09-22].
- Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia (2009), *Carta dei servizi*. Reggio Emilia: Nero Colore.
- Musei Civici Reggio Emilia. <https://www.musei.re.it/> [2020-09-30].
- Nightingale Eithne & Sandell Richard (2012), *Museums, Equality and Social justice*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Palmqvist, Lennart & Bohman, Stefan (2003), *Museer och Kulturarv: en museivetenskaplig antologi*, (2nd ed.). Stockholm: Carlsson.
- Paparusso, Angela (2017), "L'immigrazione e l'integrazione in Italia: il cammino delle politiche.", in *Migrazioni e Integrazioni nell'Italia di Oggi*, ed: Corrado Bonifazi. Roma: IRPPS Monografie, p. 295–306.
- Patrimonio e intercultura. <http://patrimoniointercultura.ismu.org/> [2020-10-10].
- RCMG (2000), *Museum and Social Inclusion: the GALLM Report*. Leicester: Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, Dept. of Museum Studies, Univ. of Leicester.
- Region Västmanland (2018), *Regional Kulturplan for Västmanland 2019–2022*. <https://regionvastmanland.se/globalassets/utveckla->

- [vastmanland/utvecklingsomraden/kultur/regional-kulturplan-for-vastmanland-2019-2022.pdf](#) [20-09-28].
- Riksantikvarieämbetet (2004), *Agenda kulturarv*. <http://www.diva-portal.se/smash/get/diva2:1298721/FULLTEXT01.pdf>. [20-09-19].
- Riksförbundet Sveriges museer (2016), *Känn dig som hemma med framtidens museum: fyra områden att förstärka och utveckla: ett framtidsdokument*. <http://www.sverigemuseer.se/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Kanndig-som-hemma.pdf> [20-09-19].
- Sandell, Richard (1998), "Museum as Agent of Social Inclusion.", *Museum, Management and Curatorship* 17 (4), p. 401–418.
- Sandell, Richard, (2002), "Museum and the combating of social inequality: roles, responsibilities, resistance.", in *Museum, Society, Inequality*, ed: Richard Sandell. New York: Routledge, p.3–23.
- Sandell, Richard (2005), "Constructing and communicating equality", in *Reshaping museum space*, ed: Suzanne Macleod. London: Routledge, p. 185–200.
- Stevens, Mary (2010), "It depends how far back you go: Comparing the representation of migration in the heritage sector in France and UK.", in *Migration and Memory: Representations of Migration in Europe since 1960*, eds: Christiane Hintermann & Christina Johansson. Innsbruck: Studienverlag p. 145–161.
- Vergo, Peter (1989), *The New Museology*. London: Reaktion.
- Vetenskapsrådet (2002), *Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning*. Stockholm. <http://www.codex.vr.se/texts/HSFR.pdf> [20-10-28].
- Västerås stad, *Ballongen. Lek på riktigt*. <https://www.vasteras.se/download/18.1dc82af414bc5e5cb71c86/1554824439432/%C3%84rende%20nr%209%20Ballongen%20-%20Lek%20p%C3%A5%20riktigt.pdf> [10-09-30].
- Västmanlands läns museum. <https://www.vastmanlandslansmuseum.se/> [2020-09-28].
- Västerås stad (2019), *Handlingsplan*. <https://www.vasteras.se/download/18.70f625cd16d25bc202810668/1568643239793/Handlingsplan%20kultur%20190822.pdf> [20-09-10].
- Västerås konstmuseum. <http://vasteraskonstmuseum.se/> [2020-09-27].
- Walker, Ed A. (1997), *Britain Divided: The Growth of Social Exclusion in the 1980s and 1990s*. London: Child Poverty Action Group.
- Weil, Stephen E. (2007), "From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The ongoing transformation of the American museum.", in *Museum Management and Marketing*, eds: Robert R. James & Richard Sandell. Abingdon: Routledge, p. 30–48.

- Winder, Robert (2005), *Bloody Foreigners. The Story of Immigration to Britain*.
London: Abacus.
- Witcomb, Andrea (2003), *Re-Imaging the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum*.
London: Routledge.
- Yin, Robert K. (2007), *Fallstudier: design och genomförande*. 1. uppl. Malmö:
Liber.

Appendix 1: list of the participants

Below I provide a list of the museum professionals who participated in the research, with their institutional affiliations, locations, dates, and the place or type of the interviews.

	Identifying name	Institution	Location	Date	Place/Type of interview	Time of the recording
1.	Interviewee 1	Musei Civici	Reggio Emilia, Italy	20-04-02	Skype	15.30
2.	Interviewee 2	Musei Civici	Reggio Emilia, Italy	20-04-23	Skype	14.45
3.	Interviewee 3	Fondazione Palazzo Magnani	Reggio Emilia, Italy	20-04-03	Skype	13.30
4.	Interviewee 4	Fondazione Palazzo Magnani	Reggio Emilia, Italy	20-04-07	Skype	15.00
5.	Interviewee 5	Västmanlands Läns museum	Västerås, Sweden	20-04-01	Skype	10.00
6.	Interviewee 6	Västmanlands Läns museum	Västerås, Sweden	20-03-12	Västerås	14.00
7.	Interviewee 7	Västerås Konstmuseum	Västerås, Sweden	20-03-25	Västerås	13.00
8.	Interviewee 8	Västerås Konstmuseum	Västerås, Sweden	20-03-19	Skype	9.00
9.	Interviewee 9	Västerås Konstmuseum	Västerås, Sweden	20-03-24	Skype	13.00

Appendix 2: interview consent form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Research project: ALM Master program final thesis

Research investigator: Laura Carpi

Research participant name:

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research project about museum as agent of social inclusion. The purpose of my research is to explore museum's practices in relation to cultural diversity, immigration and integration. How museums respond to social inequality and exclusion and involve the "new citizen" in the museum's public services.

Ethical procedures for academic research require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used.

This consent form is necessary for me to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you, therefore, read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- + the interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be produced;
- + the transcript of the interview will be analysed by Laura Carpi as the research investigator;
- + no one will have access to the interview recording and transcript, except Laura Carpi;
- + the actual material will be kept under my possession;
- + any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval.

I also understand that my words may be quoted directly. With regards to being quoted, please initial next to any of the statements that you agree with:

I agree to be quoted directly and my name can be published.

I agree to be quoted directly if my name is not published and a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.

I agree that the researchers may publish documents that contain quotations

By signing this form, I agree that:

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
3. I have read the Information sheet;

4. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
6. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future
7. although there are any risks associated with my participation, I know that I have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

Printed Name

Participants Signature

Date

Researchers Signature

Date

Contact information

Laura Carpi

Hjortvägen 11 72231 Västerås

0046 0702731456

Lauracarpi.se@gmail.com

Appendix 3: list of questions

Italian interview guideline

Domande sulla relazione tra musei a inclusione sociale

- Per cominciare, potresti presentarti? Il tuo nome, l'istituto culturale per il quale lavori e il tuo ruolo.
- Come definisci il museo come istituzione culturale? Qual è il suo ruolo nel ventunesimo secolo?
- Cosa significa inclusione sociale?
- In che modo il museo può contribuire al processo dinamico di inclusione sociale?
- Aspetti di inclusione sociale sono contenuti nei documenti normativi del museo? Viene rivolta particolare attenzione al tema della diversità etnica e culturale? In che modo sono espresse queste attenzioni?
- Nel caso in cui non siano menzioni direttamente, come vengono affrontati questi temi nella tua attività lavorativa?
- Sulla base della tua esperienza, le politiche culturali nazionali e comunali quanto influenzano le attività del museo per quanto riguarda il vostro lavoro in relazione ai temi dell'inclusione sociale di comunità etniche e immigrati?
- Pensi che le autorità locali e/o l'opinione pubblica influenzino il vostro operato?
- Portate avanti spesso progetti in collaborazione con organizzazioni esterne? Perché?
- Descriveresti l'istituzione culturale nella quale lavori come uno spazio democratico che promuove collaborazione e dialogo tra persone e culture diverse? In che modo?
- Secondo la tua opinione, quali sono gli aspetti importanti che determinano il successo di pratiche museali inclusive?
- Quali sono invece le difficoltà più frequenti che incontri nel realizzare pratiche museali inclusive?
- Vuoi aggiungere qualche altra riflessione sul tema?

Domande specifiche su uno o più progetti:

- Puoi presentare e raccontare un'iniziativa, o più, intrapresa dal museo negli ultimi anni che ritieni interessante per i suoi risvolti di integrazione, riconoscimento delle diversità culturali e immigrazione?
- Quali erano le ambizioni e lo scopo del progetto? Li avete raggiunti?
- Durante la preparazione, avete collaborato con organizzazioni esterne? Come siete entrati in contatto? In quale misura la loro partecipazione ha influenzato la progettazione dell'attività?

English interview guideline

Questions about the relation between museums and social inclusion.

- Could you please introduce yourself, your name, museum, and position?
- How do you define the museum, and which is its role in the 21st century?
- How do you define social inclusion?
- How can museums contribute to dynamic process of social inclusion?
- Is social inclusion incorporated in the museum's policy? Is cultural/ethnic diversity part of it? What are the most relevant aspects?
- If not, how do you implement social inclusion in your work
- Based on your experience, how national and local cultural policies affect the museum's practices in relation to social inclusion of ethnic minorities and migrants?
- Do you experience pressure from the public opinion and/or the local authority?
- Which narratives does the museum tell? Do you include different perspectives?
- Do you often carry on collaborative projects or activities with external organisations? Why? Should you describe your museum as a democratic space for collaboration and dialogue between different people and culture? In what way?
- Based on your experience, which are good practices for social inclusion work?
- Which are the main difficulties in the implementation of inclusive projects in your museum?
- Do you want to add other reflections?

Questions about inclusive projects:

- Can you present one initiative, or more than one, that the museum organizes or organized in the last years that you think is related to integration and recognition of cultural diversity and migration?
- Which were your aim and ambitions when you started planning the project? Did you achieve the results?
- Did you collaborate with external organizations during the planning? How did you come in contact with them? To what extent their participation influenced the project?
- Does the staff get a special education/assistance to develop programs with social inclusion?
- Is there something more that you think it is relevant and you want to add?