**Museum Space as a Controversial Territory:  
Between Inclusion and Social Work**

Museums as spaces of cultural production, according to contemporary authors are dynamically developing agents of social work and inclusion (Bennett, 1995; Sandell, 1998). The problem in this topic is that modern museums still inherit a dual normative orientation: defending, from one side, the frontiers of democracy, and from the other, elitist exclusive values (Dawson, 2014; Prior, 2005). The question arises, how is it even possible to produce social work and inclusion programs in a museum (Silverman, 2009)?

To answer the question three mini-research were conducted in the museums actively developing social work and inclusion in Moscow (Russia).

Firstly, we studied the organizational structure of the seven largest museums and galleries, relying on formal information about the structure of institutions and on 16 semi-structured interviews with heads of museums and inclusive departments. Moreover, in this study, we tried to analyze the legal aspect of creating social work and inclusion programs in the museum, since this element turned out to be often mentioned by informants.

In the second mini-research, based on the conflict points identified during the first study, by 10 interviews and quasi-experimentations we studied the normative orientations of art-curators of exhibition activities on the one hand, and the positions of social and inclusion workers on the other hand.

In the third study, by comparative case-study, we investigate successful and not that successful cases of integration of social work and inclusion in the museum space.

According to the results of the first study, it turned out that inclusive departments and groups of social work in museums are partially excluded from exhibition production, what corresponds to existing findings (Dawson, 2014, 2019; Kann-Rasmussen & Rasmussen, 2020; Prior, 2011). In addition, a legal aspect was found that limits the activities of inclusion and social work, and lets curators and artists defend their position more productive (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Sandell, 2016).

The results of the second study were extremely valuable, as they showed not just the different normative orientation of curators/artists with their *l’art pour l’art* and social workers/agents of inclusion with their *Sozialstaat* values; but different normative orientation between social workers (Silver, 1994). Employees of the inclusive departments in a relativistic way defended the interests of the institution, while those who were more related to social work were guided by the “idealistic” values of the universal good.

The results of the third study partly suggest that the “successful” integration of inclusive activities was carried out only in the case of having common dispositions with curators by social workers, what correlates to having relativistic orientations. At the same time, social workers who did not agree with norms of *l’art pour l’art* were not that successful. This result, in the context of the structural-functionalist and post-structuralist logic (Bourdieu, 1983; Lamont et al., 2015; Parsons, 1993), is embedded in a series of studies of normativity, ethics and morality, testing the relationship between agents' dispositions and their normative judgments (Sayer, 2010).

This study reveals the problems that cultural institutions face in the development of social work and inclusion programs. Besides the research value of the discovered boundary-making processes, the study also has a practical implication in the form of empirically identified "weak" aspects of the inclusive activities of museums.

**References:**

Belfiore, E., & Bennett, O. (2008). The social impact of the arts: An intellectual history. *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History*, 1–240. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230227774

Bennett, T. (1995). *THE BIRTH OF THE MUSEUM Downloaded*. http://publications.lib.chalmers.se/records/fulltext/245180/245180.pdf%0Ahttps://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12380/245180%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsames.2011.03.003%0Ahttps://doi.org/10.1016/j.gr.2017.08.001%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.precamres.2014.12

Dawson, E. (2014). “Not Designed for Us”: How Science Museums and Science Centers Socially Exclude Low-Income, Minority Ethnic Groups. *Science Education*, *98*(6), 981–1008. https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.21133

Dawson, E. (2019). Equity, Exclusion and Everyday Science Learning. *Equity, Exclusion and Everyday Science Learning*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315266763

Gert, B. (2004). Common morality: Deciding what to do. Oxford University Press.

Kann-Rasmussen, N., & Hvenegaard Rasmussen, C. (2020). Paradoxical autonomy in cultural organisations: an analysis of changing relations between cultural organisations and their institutional environment, with examples from libraries, archives and museums. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, *00*(00), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2020.1823976

Lamont, M., Pendergrass, S., & Pachucki, M. (2015). Symbolic Boundaries. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences: Second Edition*, *23*, 850–855. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.10416-7

Prior, N. (2005). A question of perception: Bourdieu, art and the postmodern. *British Journal of Sociology*, *56*(1), 123–139. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2005.00050.x

Prior, N. (2011). Speed, rhythm, and time-space: Museums and cities. *Space and Culture*, *14*(2), 197–213. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331210392701

Sandell, R. (1998). Museums as agents of social inclusion. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *17*(4), 401–418. https://doi.org/10.1080/09647779800401704

Sandell, R. (2016). Museums, moralities and human rights. In *Museums, Moralities and Human Rights*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315312095

Sayer, A. (2010). Class and morality. In Handbook of the Sociology of Morality (pp. 163-178). Springer, New York, NY.

Silver, H. (1994). Silver\_H, Exclusion-paradigms.pdf. In *International Labour Review* (Vol. 133, Issues 5–6, pp. 531–578).

Парсонс, Т. (1993). *ПОНЯТИЕ ОБЩЕСТВА: КОМПОНЕНТЫ И ИХ ВЗАИМООТНОШЕНИЯ*. 94–122.