From Generalist to Specialist
The Professionalization of the Danish Museum Occupation 1958-2018
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This thesis is an empirical mixed-methods study on how professionalism has been defined in the Danish museum field throughout the past six decades. Based on an extensive empirical material consisting of archives, job advertisements and interviews with museum professionals and university professors, I track museum-professionalism as an ongoing discourse between three selected stakeholders namely regulators, practitioners, and educators, from the end of the 1950s until today.

In 1958, the Danish Parliament passed the first comprehensive Museum Act for local and regional history museums, establishing a subsidiary system, which enabled the employment of a professional workforce in local museums and defined a set of criteria for what constituted professional museum work in Denmark. Since then, Danish museums have developed from single-curator institutions to diverse professional workplaces with a number of cooperating specialists. Likewise, the museum field has become a coordinated system characterized by a more or less systematic division of topics.

In my dissertation, I study what has been defined as professionalism, how this definition has changed, and what has influenced the changes from 1958 until today by examining three specific discursive fields; an organizational, a practical and an educational. Moreover, I explore the development of professional museum mediation in order to understand the specialization of professional museum work, which has marked the period of my study.

Applying a theoretical framework inspired by historical institutionalism, I first identify three phases in the definition of professionalism based on an analysis of the Danish museum legislation and influenced by internal discussions within the field as well as by external events such as shifts in political agendas and economic trends.

Second, I study the practical discourse on professionalism by tracking how the museum institutions have described the tasks to be performed and the skills required in professional museum work, analyzing advertisements museum positions from 1964 to 2018. Third, I study the development and discussion of the content and organization of education for museum professionals throughout the period.
Finally, inspired by the sociology of professions, I characterize museum-professionalism as a hybrid form of professionalism, whose specific features and development over time I map. With this thesis, I collect and interpret an essential part of contemporary, Danish museum history, and I develop a characterization of museum professionalism as a distinctive occupational field, thereby offering an empirical case study on museum work as a specific form of professionalism.
Danish Resume


I 1958 vedtog det danske Folketing den første museumslov for lokale og regionale kulturhistoriske museer, der opstillede et tilskudssystem, som gjorde det muligt at ansætte professionel, betalt arbejdskraft også i lokale museer. Siden da har danske museer udviklet sig fra enkeltmands institutioner til alsidige, professionelle arbejdspladser med adskillige samarbejdende specialister, og museumsfeltet er blevet et koordineret museumsvæsen kendetegnet af en mere eller mindre systematisk deling af ansvarsområder.

I afhandlingen undersøger jeg, hvordan professionalisme er blevet defineret, hvordan denne definition har ændret sig, og hvad eller hvem der har påvirket disse ændringer fra 1958 til i dag ved at undersøge tre specielle diskurser; nemlig en organisatoriske, en praktisk og en uddannelsesrelateret. Derefter, udforsker jeg udviklingen af professionalisme i museumsformidling for på den måde at forstå specialiseringen af professionelt museumsarbejde.

Gennem en teoretisk ramme, der er inspireret af historisk institutionalisme, identificerer jeg for det første tre faser i udviklingen af en definition af professionalisme i den danske museumslovgivning, som er blevet påvirket af interne diskussioner så vel som af eksterne omstændigheder såsom skiftende politiske dagsordener og økonomiske konjunkturer.

På baggrund af en analyse af jobannoncer for museumsarbejde fra 1964-2018, studerer jeg, for det andet, den praktiske diskurs om professionalisme ved at udforske, hvordan museumsinstitutionerne har beskrevet de relaterede opgaver og de krævede færdigheder, knyttet til professionelt museumsarbejde. For det tredje undersøger jeg,
udviklingen af og diskussion omkring indholdet og organiseringen af uddannelsesstilbud til museumsprofessionelle gennem perioden.

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Introduction

‘Since our curator has sought new challenges, a full-time position is available as soon as possible.

The curator will be responsible for the museum's collections – including computer registration, preservation, storage, and passive collection. To the museum belongs a local archive, and the curator will be responsible for this section. The curator will furthermore be part of the implementation of the museum's work plans concerning investigations, research, collecting, exhibition, and various task within mediation – including education for schools. [...] Emphasis is placed on the following qualifications: University degree in history, ethnologist or similar professional education relevant for museums, experience with museums and archives with emphasis on local history, experience and desire to work with volunteers, computer competences, the ability to mediate in writing, and an interest for forest history.’

(job advertisement posted at www.jobindex.dk, June 17, 2005)

In June 2005, I applied for the abovementioned job as curator at Værløse Museum. I had just finished a master in history at the University of Copenhagen, and for the last two years of my studies, I had worked part-time at a local museum. I had taught schoolchildren, registered artifacts, and participated in the development of temporary exhibitions. I had also used archives in my studies. Therefore, I thought that I knew what it was to be a museum professional. I was lucky to get the job – a job which for the following 11 years made me a museum professional collecting artifacts, digitizing registrations, systematizing archives, moving collections, putting together exhibitions, researching history and giving tours and talks to various groups.

However, over the years, I often thought that professional museum work – at least in small institutions like the one I worked in – was a job for an improvising octopus. A typical day often started with a meeting discussing the structure of the next exhibition, followed by an hour of registering artifacts with a group of volunteers. Then I would teach second
graders how to churn butter as part of a tour on life in the local countryside 100 years ago. After lunch, I might have tested the next tour and finally I would finish the day by writing a press release for an upcoming event. For me, much of the work was learning by doing, but I increasingly asked myself, what characterizes professionalism in museum work? Is it academic knowledge? Practical skills? Commitment to the job? Experience? Or just common sense and perseverance?

Therefore, it was with great joy that I got the opportunity to start as a PhD fellow studying the definition and development of professional museum work since the 1950s, in September 2016. I have now spent three years researching the history and characteristics of my former occupation, three years in which I have challenged my own preconceptions about museum work. I have been surprised and humbled by documenting interesting stories about a professional field characterized by commitment, a sense of responsibility, and great personalities. As a result, I have uncovered a piece of Danish history – and, hopefully, I contribute to the understanding of the development of museum professionalism not just in Denmark but also in an international perspective.

My project is based on empirical material, and therefore I would like to start by acknowledging the people who have helped me by sharing their knowledge about the field. Since I have studied contemporary museum history, I have been fortunate to be able to talk to some of the essential participants in the historical development of professionalism. In alphabetical order, I would initially like to thank: Christine Buhl Andersen, Kirsten Rex Andersen, Troels Andersen, Mogens Bencard, Frank Birkebæk, Else-Marie Boyhus, Rune Gade, Esben Hedegaard, Steen Hvass, Bruno Ingemann, Jacob Buhl Jensen, Nils Jensen, Thomas Secher Jensen, Hans Jeppesen, Bent Jørgensen, Leila Krogh, Hans Henrik Landert, Ane Hejlskov Larsen, Carsten U. Larsen, Michael Lauenborg, Bobo Krabbe Magid, Marie Riegels Melchior, Lars Kærulf Møller, Frank Allan Rasmussen, Thomas Bloch Ravn, Jacob Salvig, Ulla Schultz, Jørgen Smidt-Jensen, Ole Strandgaard and Jens Erik Sørensen, who all generously agreed to find time to be interviewed by me. It has brought me from Fur to Gudhjem and offered me a fantastic look into 60 years of Danish museum history, not to mention it has given me the opportunity to meet some of the museum professionals I have heard about and looked up to for decades. Their stories, insights, and interpretations have honed my understanding of the Danish museum world – not least, the corners of museum work unfamiliar to me. I hope I do them justice – if not I sincerely apologize.
Moreover, I would like to thank the director of Jobindex A/S, Kaare Danielsen, who in February 2017 readily provided me with all job ads using the word “museum”, which had been posted at the web portal www.jobindex.dk between 2002 and 2016. Without this data, it would have been very challenging to create a complete overview of the definition of museum jobs during the period. I also thank the librarians at the Institute of Information Studies at the University of Copenhagen and the employees at the Danish Association of Masters and PhDs (Dansk Magisterforening), who have helped me to get hold of all the editions of the magazine ‘Magisterbladet’, such that I could track the development of professional museum jobs back to 1964.

Of course, this research could not have been done without help from my advisors. I would like to thank Professor Hans Dam Christensen, who has always been ready to read and re-read my representation of Danish museum history helping me to restructure and focus sometimes incompatible perspectives – always believing in the project, even when I did not. I also want to thank Associate Professor Line Hjorth Christensen, who, while supporting my choices, forced me to consider and explain my approach. That has been very helpful.

Naturally, I also thank the senior researchers, who came up with the idea for the research program, ‘Vores Museum’, of which my project is a part, and succeeded in making it happen, just as I thank the Nordea Foundation and the Velux Foundation, who have generously invested in our research. I also thank all participants in ‘Vores Museum’ for being good colleagues. Our many interesting discussions since the first meeting in June 2016 have given me new ideas – both related to my own research and to museum work in general. The cooperation and the friendship have meant the world and it has been a privilege to work with all of you.

Throughout the study, I have been lucky to meet several international practitioners and scholars interested in museums. Among those, I would like especially to thank museologist Peter van Mensch and Professor at the Technical University in Berlin, Oliver Rump, for taking the time to discuss the content and development of museological education. Furthermore, I also want to thank Professors Catherine Luschek, Marjorie Schwarzer, Nathan Dennis and the rest of the staff and students at the museum studies program at the University of San Francisco in California, which I visited during the spring of 2018, for allowing me to participate in their work and for explaining the development of museum professionalism in the US. In addition, I am grateful that Professors Edward Luby at San Francisco State University, Nizan Shaked at California State University Long Beach
and Carole Paul at University of California Santa Barbara took the time to meet with me and talk about their museum studies programs.

Special thanks shall also go to Professor Susan Spero at John F. Kennedy University in Berkeley, with whom I had inspiring conversations about professional museum work and the development of museum studies, and who gave me access to the archive of the oldest museum studies program in California, which was founded in 1976. These talks and other encounters with museum scholars and practitioners from around the world have helped me to understand museum work in new ways by providing an international perspective on my topic.

Moreover, the good atmosphere at the Royal Academy of Library and Information Science/the Department of Information Studies – even in times of big changes – has made a big difference, so thank you for three interesting years not least to my PhD-colleagues, who have made it fun and challenging to come to work. I definitely know much more about libraries and various forms information, than I ever thought, I would.

Finally, I must thank my family for listening to the sometimes never-ending details of the history of Danish museums, and I give a big hug to my five-year-old daughter Lea, who has accompanied me on numerous museum visits and put up with having to wait for me to finish a sentence, a page or a chapter countless times, before we could play.

Copenhagen, August 2019
Chapter 1

Research Question, Case Study and Outline

During the last six decades, museum work both in Denmark and around the world has changed as the role, content, practices, and possibilities of museums have been debated and redefined. Shifting political focus on cultural policy and museums, the invention of new media, the creation of concepts like co-creation and digital mediation, the introduction of experience economy and audience development and the debate about museology as an academic field; all these factors have led to continuous changes in the work of museum professionals and required new skills. In this thesis, I study the development of the discourse on professionalism in the Danish museum field from 1958 to 2018 by asking how professionalism in museum work has been defined, negotiated and changed throughout the period.

My study is empirical – i.e., it is based on empirical material identifying different characteristics of museum professionalism in Denmark. In the study, I define professionalism as the set of attributes – i.e., the tasks and the skills, which in the discourse have been connected to professional museum work throughout the period. The project focuses on professionalism from an institutional perspective. I do not study how professional museum work has been defined outside the museum field. Nor do I investigate how and by whom professional museum work has been carried out in practice, but rather how professionalism has been framed within the field and how external structures and agents have affected this framing. Moreover, professionalization is defined as the development of professionalism, not necessarily as a progressing process but rather as various changes in the ongoing definition of what it means to perform professionally in the field.
1.1. Outlining the Thesis

The thesis consists of ten chapters, of which five are papers, either published in or submitted to international, academic journals. Despite potential redundancy and stylistic inconsistencies due to the different stylesheets of the chosen journals, I have put the full text of the submitted papers in the thesis, including abstracts and lists of references. However, in order to obtain coherence in the thesis, I have done minor editorial changes such as changing the number of the figures and tables in order to include the number of the chapter, and changing endnotes to footnotes.

In this chapter, I outline the structure of the thesis, I present the Danish museum field as a case study, I explain the model for my study, and position my project in relation to the national research program ‘Our Museum’, of which this thesis is part. In chapter 2, I relate my research to relevant issues in the existing literature on professional museum work and museum studies. In chapter 3, I present the theoretical framework of my thesis, and in chapter 4, I introduce the source material and the methods applied for collecting and analyzing it.

The analysis is presented in five articles (chapters 5-9): In chapter 5, I analyze the development of the Danish museum legislation from 1958 to 2018 asking how and why the regulatory framework of professionalism in Danish museums has changed over time. The article is published in ‘Nordisk Museologi’ 2019:1. Chapter 6, published in ‘Museum Management and Curatorship’ (2019), tracks the development of professionalism from 1964 to 2018 by analyzing job descriptions and skills listed in job ads for museum jobs. In chapter 7, which has been submitted to the journal ‘History of Education Quarterly’, I track the development of training and education for museum professionals since the 1960s focusing on how professionalism has been defined and negotiated and by whom.

In the two final papers (chapters 8 and 9), I zoom in on the field of museum mediation as a specialized field of museum work. The specific focus on mediation has been chosen because mediation has long been pointed out as an increasingly important and specialized part of professional museum work. Furthermore, as part of the national research program ‘Vores Museum’, which explores on mediation, I want to investigate the discourse on professionalism in relation to mediation in order to add a contemporary historical perspective to the program.

In chapter 8, I study the development of mediation as a specialized field in professional museum work. The paper has been submitted to ‘Museum History Journal’. In
chapter 9, I analyze the professionalization of the museum mediator in Denmark, focusing on the development of professionalism for museum mediators both related to the regulations, to practice and education. Chapter 9 has been submitted to the journal ‘Museum and Society’, and has recently been revised in order to make the argument more relevant for an international journal. Finally, in chapter 10 I conclude and discuss the overall development of museum professionalism in Denmark from 1958 to 2018 considering the contribution of my study and suggesting areas for future research.

1.2. The Danish Museum Field

In an international perspective, Denmark is undoubtedly a specific case study. However, four characteristics make the Danish museum field worth studying also outside of Denmark – namely the Danish museum legislation, the early establishment of culture as an independent ministerial purview in Denmark, the size of the Danish museum field and the organization of professional museum education.

Denmark is one of the few countries in the world with a long tradition for a regulatory framework for museums at a national level. In 1958, the Danish Parliament passed the first Museum Act (Act 166, 1958) setting up a subsidiary system for museums working with local, cultural history based on the principle that local history museums could receive subsidies equal to the funding granted by the local municipality. This funding allowed regional and local museums to hire professional staff. In order to qualify for the subsidies, the Museum Act specified certain conditions among which were accessibility and approved rules. In 1964, a Museum Act covering art museums followed (Act 118, 1964), and since 1976 (Act 304, 1976) the Danish museum legislation has included history museums, art museums as well as natural history museums.

In my study, I consider ten Museum Acts as shown in figure 1.1. from 1958 to 2012. Furthermore, a revision of the current act has been debated since 2017, however, the debate has not yet (August 2019) resulted in a revision. As a result of this long tradition for national museum legislation, the majority of professional museums in Denmark either falls under the purview of the Museum Act or voluntarily follows the standards set.
Internationally, museum legislation has predominantly been related to specific museums (e.g., the British act for subsidizing the Imperial War Museum from 1920) or the establishment of national museums (e.g., the legislation in Zambia in 1966, Ghana 1969, Kenya 1983 or the Philippines 1998). Other legislation has focused on the general preservation and protection of cultural heritage (e.g., Norwegian Act no. 50, June 9, 1978, or Act 107/01 on Cultural Heritage in Portugal from 2001).

Only a small number of countries have passed museum acts that regulate a whole museum field. Among these countries are, e.g., Poland (1996), Iceland (2001), Latvia (2007), Japan (2008), Estonia (2014) and Sweden (2017)\(^1\). However, most of this legislation did not set up a specific subsidiary system – e.g. in the Japanese Museum Act of 2008 (which is a revision of an act from 1951) it is only stated that the central government may grant subsidies to local governments for the establishment of a museum (Japanese Act no. 59, June 11, 2008, Article 24, Japanese Association of Museums 2008). Several of the museum acts have been directly inspired by the Danish legislation (e.g., the Baltic Museum Acts).

\(^1\) Source: [https://en.unesco.org/cultnatlaws/list](https://en.unesco.org/cultnatlaws/list) (accessed August 2019). The list is not complete – e.g., neither the current Danish Museum Act from 2012 nor the Swedish Museum Act from 2017 are mentioned.
As such, the Danish museum field constitutes a unique empirical case for studying the development of a nationally regulated, professional museum field over an extended period of time.

Second, the Danish museum field has belonged to an independent ministry since 1961, when the so-called ‘Ministry for Cultural Affairs’ was founded as an independent ministerial purview. In other countries, such a political focus on culture is more recent. In Norway and Sweden the so-called ‘Kulturdepartementet’ was established in 1982 and 1991, respectively, and in the UK the first secretary for Culture was appointed in 1992. As such, the professional Danish museum field was established as part of the growing welfare state in which culture was a public good that the state and the municipalities should provide for all citizens. This relatively long political perspective makes the Danish museum field an interesting case study.

Third, the Danish museum field is of limited size. Table 1.1 shows a count of museums in Denmark in the period 1956-2015.

Table 1.1 Number of museums in Denmark 1956-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Museums</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956 (1)</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>Only history and specialized museums. 76 were state-subsidized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 (2)</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>Of which 16 were departments under the National Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 (2)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>Of which 18 were departments under the National Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 (3)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 (3)</td>
<td>278</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 (3)</td>
<td>267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 (4)</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>Of which 97 are state-subsidized, and five state-owned institutions and are subjects to the Museum Act.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Source: Report 152 (1956): 12-21
(2) Source: Danmarks Statistik & Kulturministeriet (1987):54
(3) Source: https://www.statistikbanken.dk/statbank5a/default.asp?w=1280 (accessed August 2019)
(4) Source: https://www.statistikbanken.dk/statbank5a/default.asp?w=1280 (accessed August 2019)
Although the numbers are difficult to compare, since they have been compiled using different methodologies, they all reveal a relatively small museum field. In comparison, in 2010 Sweden listed about 2,000 museums in 2010, Norway listed between 800 and 900 museums, the Netherlands listed 773, the United Kingdom listed 1,795, and Germany listed 6,712 museums (in 2016), according to the website of the Network of European Museum Organizations (NEMO, https://www.ne-mo.org/about-us/the-network.html, accessed August 2019). Likewise, The Institute of Museum and Library Services in the United States estimated that there were more than 35,000 active museums in the US, in 2014 (https://www.imls.gov/news/government-doubles-official-estimate-there-are-35000-active-museums-us, accessed August 2019). Simply put, the limited size of the Danish museum field provides the opportunity for a comprehensive yet manageable analysis of a national museum field.

Fourth, unlike several other countries, the development of academic educations specifically directed towards the museum field has been slow in Denmark. Even though Aarhus University started offering courses in museology already in 1977, it was not until the beginning of the 2000s that the Danish universities developed elective programs in the field. Instead, a strong tradition for vocational training organized by the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM), and from 2005 by the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM). As a result, the development of education for museum professionals in Denmark contains an interesting debate about the definition of professionalism and control over the field, which I analyze in chapter 7.

1.3. Modeling the Study of Danish Museum Professionalism

In order to operationalize the concept of professionalism, I study three specific discursive fields (an organizational, a practical and an educational), focusing on three stakeholders (regulators, practitioners, and educators outside the museum field). In other words, I perceive professionalism as formal conditions codified by legislation, practical definitions determined by the practical content and skills related to museum jobs, and competencies reproduced in training and educations.

Studying the organizational discourse, I analyze the Danish museum legislation from 1958 to 2012. The 10 Museum Acts, included in my study, reflect a definition of professionalism, of the changing political values attributed to professional museums as
public institutions, and of a coherent museum system. As such, the legislation provides an ongoing frame for the definition of museum professionalism in Denmark.

The ongoing debates about the museum legislation, which has involved museum professionals to a greater or a lesser extent, and the organization of the regulation of the field throughout the period provides an insight into the discourse on museum professionalism over time – i.e., how the boundaries of professionalism has been imagined and negotiated and by whom. Moreover, it provides the opportunity to consider possible external factors, which have affected the development of professionalism in the field. In chapter 5, I investigate the development of the Danish museum legislation from 1958 to 2018.

Studying the description of professional museum positions and the skills defined as required in order to act professionally constitutes a second perspective on the discourse on professionalism. Throughout the period, the vocabulary used to describe professional museum jobs has changed significantly both because of changes in the museum field, because of the introduction of new practices related to new technologies and because of a changing definition of the role of the museum and professionalism. Job functions have changed, and new requirements have been introduced, while others have disappeared. The development of digital media and the shift in the perception of audience participation are examples of changes, which have revolutionized the way museum professionals work. Analyzing job ads for museum jobs in the period from 1964 to 2018, I track the tasks and skills related to professionalism both for the whole museum field (chapter 6) and for museum mediators (chapter 9) as they have been defined by the employing institutions.

A third perspective on the discourse on museum professionalism is, how it has been reproduced – or how professionalism has been transmitted in the period. Since the 1960s, vocational training has been organized by the Danish museum associations in order to educate museum professionals, while the Danish universities have offered academic courses in museology since the 1970s – each defining the knowledge and skills needed for becoming or being a museum professional. Analyzing the content, the format, and the institutional base of professional museum education in Denmark, in chapter 7, I investigate the definition of professionalism and its development.

The educational field has been a continuous battlefield for debate about the institutional jurisdiction over the field of museology and museum education between the museum practitioners and the universities. Thus, the ongoing debate about the development
of training for museum professionals mirrors the shifting balance of power in the field of professional museum work.

The three discourses mutually affect each other and are affected by external influences such as economic conditions, technological developments, and public trends. Nevertheless, I recognize that they are only three out of several different discourses constituting the discourse on professionalism in the museum field – e.g., discourses on visitors or economic sustainability. Combining the three perspectives, I create a multifaceted account of how professionalism has been defined and developed both in general in the Danish museum field from 1958 to 2018 (chapter 5-7), and similarly for museum mediators (chapter 8-9). Figure 1.2 depicts the three discourses and their relation.

**Figure 1.2 Operationalized Model of the discourse on museum professionalism**

Each of the three discourses is negotiated by several stakeholders, whose internal distribution of power has determined the development and the resulting definition of professionalism. In this project, I study three specific stakeholders, which have been relevant parts of the three discourses - namely regulators (i.e. legislators, politicians and the
bureaucratic supervisory authority), practitioners (i.e., paid, educated staff working in the field and organized in the museum associations), and educators (i.e. institutions of higher education, universities).

At the same time, I recognize that other positions such as museum users, volunteers, international relations and private enterprises working in the museum field also significantly affect the development of the field, however, such groups fall outside the scope of my study. Figure 1.3 shows the stylized model for my study, including the three stakeholders. As it appears, the practitioners and the regulators both influence all three discourses, while the institutions of higher education – i.e., the universities – predominantly affects the educational discourse and the practical discourse by offering specific educations.

Figure 1.3 Model for studying museum professionalism as an ongoing negotiation between different stakeholders.

Over time, the properties and importance of the discourses and the influence of the stakeholders vary and shift. In order to address the changes in the definition of professionalism over time, in chapter 10 I map the ongoing changes by considering the model in three periods, which are empirically established in chapter 5 based on the
analysis of the museum legislation. In addition, I address the strengths and weaknesses of
the model in relation to the empirical material studied.

1.4. ‘Vores Museum’ – Researching Museum Mediation

The project is part of the large-scale national research program ‘Vores Museum’ (‘Our
Museum’), which studies museum mediation both in a historical and in a contemporary
perspective. ‘Vores Museum’ is a collaboration between five universities, seven museums
and a planetarium, and consists of 13 projects, eight of which are contemporary with
questions defined in collaboration with the participating museums. Five of the projects,
including mine, are historical studying museum mediation and the museum field from the
17th century until today. Furthermore, the program includes four associated projects, which
also focuses on different aspects of contemporary museum work. The program, which
constitutes a unique collaboration between museums and universities, is funded by two
Danish philanthropic foundations – namely the Nordea Foundation and the Velux
Foundation as well as by the participating institutions. The program is based on the
following hypothesis:

‘Museums are created and developed historically in a field of tension between
a perception of the museum as a means for the enlightenment of the public
and as a goal for the experiences of the audience. This field of tension is
specifically evident in the museums’ mediation as a number of dilemmas,
which contemporary mediation seeks to handle.’ (Drotner 2018, my
translation).

This perception is explained by the head of the program, professor at the University of
Southern Denmark, Kirsten Drotner, in the following way:

[…] museums’ communication practices, both past, and present, are marked
by balancing enlightenment and experience as constant dimensions to be
handled, rather than as elements for which to strive or to abandon. To this
effect, our key research questions are as follows: Which dilemmas in handling
dimensions of enlightenment and experience do we see in Danish museum
communication in the past and today? Moreover, on that basis: How can
museums’ communication with audiences be designed, developed, and evaluated to widen and advance museums’ means of citizen engagement?’ (Drotner 2017: 150)

The program investigates the dialectic relation between the two roles of providing education and experience in order to understand their historical and present preconditions and to develop contemporary museum mediation further by identifying best practices and new ways of mediating. In order to answer the questions, the project operates with three analytical dimensions; an institutional (e.g., related to the legislative and economic framework for museums), a representational (e.g., related to the media used) and a user-oriented.

Overall, my project contributes to the institutional dimension of ‘Vores Museum’ by tracking the definition and development of professionalism in Danish museum institutions. Based on my personal experience as well as on studies of the empirical source material, I found that it was difficult to identify and delimit professionalism for mediators without also considering the general development of professional museum work since many professional museum jobs were in fact multi-functional – especially during the early part of the period I study. Therefore, I first track the overall development of the professional museum field (chapters 5, 6 and 7), and then I zoom in on the specialization of mediation as a professional function (chapters 8 and 9). In other words, I offer a historical background for recent and current professional practices in professional Danish museums. However, considerations about professional museum work are not a new field of study. In the following chapter, I point out some of the perspectives addressed in the existing research on museums, on professional museum work, and on museum studies.
Chapter 2

Researching the Museum Profession

Since the middle of the 20th century, researchers studying museums have repeatedly addressed professionalism in museum work. In this chapter, I do not attempt to make a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature. Instead, I relate my study of the development of the discourse of professionalism in Danish museums to the existing research by addressing four perspectives, significant to my study. First, I relate to previous research focusing on establishing a theoretical basis for professional museum work. Second, I review the line of studies investigating museum professionalism as specific practices and skills. Third, I concentrate on the existing literature on the education of museum professionals, and finally, I relate my study to research on the Danish museum field.

2.1. Theories on Professional Museum Work

In 1989, the Dutch museologist Peter van Mensch pointed out that discussions of professionalism in museum work in Europe and the United States have originated in two different questions. In the book `Professionalizing the Muses’, he wrote: ‘While the discussion in Europe seems to focus on whether museology should be considered a true academic discipline, museum workers in the United States have concentrated on the professional aspect.’ (van Mensch 1989:9). In other words, he found that European research had focused on developing an academic basis for professional museum work, while American scholars and museum practitioners had discussed the existence and the characteristics of one or more museum professions. While such a geographical division may be too categorical, especially for research done after the turn of the millennium, a closer look at the existing literature on professional museum work and the process of professionalization does point out two different traditions.

The European tradition, which has been dominated by Central European museologists such as Zbyněk Stránský (1926-2016), Ivo Maroević (1937-2007), Tomislav Šola (b. 1948) and French museologists such as Georges Henri Rivère (1897-1985), André Desvallées (b.
1931) and François Mairesse (b. 1951), has focused on defining museology as a scientific discipline, developing theoretical concepts and systems in order to understand the role of museums and their work. Thus, in 1983 the ICOM International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) and the ICOM International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) held a joint colloquium with the title ‘Methodology of Museology’ discussing the definition of museological knowledge (ICOM and ICOFOM 1983). Likewise, in 2010, Desvallées and Mairesse edited a book listing key concepts of museology, including profession, communication, and collection (Desvallées and Mairesse 2010).

In general, this line of thought defined museum professionalism as a common, theoretical terminology more or less independent of museum practices (e.g., Maroević 1997, Šola 2005). Stránský argued that defining museology as an academic field was a necessity for the development of museums (Stránský 1989). However, he also claimed that the theory of museology should be separated from the museum as a practical institution – thus building on the division between the concepts of museology (museum theory) and museography (museum method) developed by Georges Henri Rivière (Soares ed. 2019).

However, in Europe, the relation between method and practice has also been the subject of ongoing debate. In his doctoral thesis, “Towards a Theory on Museology” from 1992, Peter van Mensch studied the development of museology by tracking the professionalization of practical museum work in the United States and by following the development of museology by the International Committee for Museum (ICOM). Thereby, he based the development of theory on empirical studies of the international museum field (van Mensch 1992). Furthermore, in the introduction to the second edition of his book ‘New Trends in Museology II’, van Mensch advocated the need for “practice-based theory and theoretically informed practice” (van Mensch and Meier-van Mensch 2015:8). Thus, the theoretical approach to professionalism in museum work has become increasingly related to museum practices.

2.2. Studying Museum Professions and Professional Practices

A parallel approach to the study of museum professionalism has evolved among Anglo-American scholars and museum professionals focusing on the existence of a museum profession and the practical definition of professional museum work. Already in 1960, the director of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, Albert Parr, questioned the existence of a single museum profession. Instead, he argued that museum work was a
field of cooperating professions (Parr, 1960). Since then, the question of the professional status of museum work and its characteristics have repeatedly been addressed. Some scholars have sought to define professionalism in museums and museum careers (Hudson 1989, Kavanagh 1994, Glaser and Zenetou (eds.) 1996), while others have looked for a specific body of knowledge or a set of skills related to museum work (e.g., Washburn 1985, Boylan (ed.) 2004, Tlilli 2016, Alexander, Alexander and Decker 2017).

Furthermore, several scholars have discussed the identity of museum professionals. To this effect, the Canadian museologist Lynne Teather in 1990 refuted the existence of a professional museum identity referring to the strong identification with the academic disciplines related to museum work (Teather 1990). Finally, several scholars have rejected the whole question of categorizing museum work as one or more professions. Thus, in a speech in 1987, the American museologist Stephen Weil concluded that the whole question of professional status was inferior to the promotion of a broader, public understanding of the role of museums as socially relevant institutions (Weil 1990). In any case, the Anglo-American approach to museum professionalism has centered around the definition and perception of professional museum practices.

Moreover, a number of scholars have tracked the professionalization of museum practices over time in order to determine the shifting priorities in the field (Weil 2002, Mancino 2016) or to track the ongoing organization in regional, national or international museum associations (Boylan 2006). Finally, a limited amount of international literature has addressed the layout of legislation in the museum field (e.g., Vilkuna 2006), since national legislation, organizing museums is a relatively recent development in the international museum field.

2.3. The Specialization of Museum Work

The specialization and diversification of museum work leading to an ongoing development of professional sub-fields have been the subjects of a growing amount of literature, both as grey literature published by subcommittees of ICOM and as studies done by scholars and museum professionals. In his doctoral thesis, Peter van Mensch identified three consecutive battlefields in American professional museum work during the 20th century leading to the specialization of education, administration, and registration (van Mensch 1992). Thereby, he pointed out the development of special functions as independent professional fields in museums. Furthermore, in 2008 the ICOM-subcommittee ICTOP (International Committee
for the Training of Personnel) published an analysis of the museum labor market – identifying 20 different job functions in professional museums (Ruge (ed.) 2008), thus underlining the diversity of contemporary museum work.

A considerable amount of research has focused on the development and characteristics of specific job functions in professional museums. Some have studied the professionalization of conservation (e.g., Bourdieu 1972, Octobre 2001; Lester 2002) or of registration (Vassal and Daynes-Diallo 2016), while others have focused on the development of management and the significance of managerial skills in museums (e.g., Moore 1994, DiMaggio 1994, Bagdadli and Paolino 2006, Janes and Sandell 2007).

Museum educators have received special scholarly attention due to the increasing focus on the public role of museums and museum mediation. Some scholars have categorized the work as museum mediator as a semi-profession (Jagošova and Mrazova 2015, Jagošova 2015), while others have studied the development of skills required for art educators (Ebitz 2005), their self-perception (Bailey 2006) or the skills required of information professionals in museums (Marty 2006). In addition, scholars have mapped the practical methods used by educators (Jorro et al 2017 analyzing the gestures of museum educators) as well as the tasks performed in specific museums (e.g. Tran and King 2007 and Tran 2008 examining the work of educators in science museums) or in specific functions (Schep 2017 studying museum guides). Likewise, in Denmark museum curator Mette Boritz has briefly described the professionalization of museum educators as part of her doctoral thesis on museum education (Boritz 2018).

2.4. New Challenges for Museum Professionals

With the introduction of new museology, a new paradigm was created in the Anglo-American museum field, presenting a new perception of the role and tasks of professional museums. This new focus led to a number of new areas of study focusing on visitors (Hooper-Greenhill 1992, Falk and Dierking 1997), learning (Hein 1998), the social role of museums (Sandell 1998) and the inclusion and participation of audiences (Simon 2010) – just to name a few of the perspectives covered.

The new paradigm also brought about a number of studies concerned with the new challenges for museum professionals. Already at the end of the 1980s, the need for a better definition of professionalism in museum work was addressed by Stephen Dobbs and Elliot Eisner studying educators in art museums (Dobbs and Eisner 1987), and in 1993 American
scholar Deidre Stam pointed out the museums’ need to develop a new organizational culture and new methods to understand audiences and their society in order to live up to the new museology (Stam 1993), which was presented in an anthology in 1989 (Vergo 1989).

Although British scholars Vicky McCall and Clive Gray found that new museology has had few practical consequences for the everyday practice in museums due to organizational limitations (McCall and Gray 2014), a number of studies have focused on the consequences of specific developments for the role of the museum professional and museum professionalism e.g. studying the significance of the participatory paradigm (Carpentier 2011; White 2016) or of the growing focus on audiences (e.g. Roos-Brown 2013). To this effect, scholars have studied the development of the role of the museum professional either in the community (Henry 2006) or in the museum organization (Haas 2002). Simultaneously, the International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) has discussed how efficiency in professional museum work can be measured (Tlili 2010, Ruge 2010).

During the last two decades, a significant amount of literature has sought to identify new skills needed to meet the changing requirements for museum professionals. Some scholars have focused on the development of new requirements in general (e.g. Art Insights 2018), while others have specifically focused on the need for new skills brought on by the development of new technologies (e.g., Marty 2007, Kim, Warga and Moen 2013, Mu.Sa 2017, Silvaggi and Pesce 2018) in some cases leading to an argument for convergence and the need for interdisciplinarity between related institutions in the GLAM sector (e.g. Latham 2015; Robinson 2016). Also, within the last decade, a number of blog posts and reports have listed future skills needed for museum professionals (e.g., Visser 2013, Mu.SA 2017, Art Insight 2018).

However, the debate about new challenges for the museum professional also manifested itself as a discussion about whether museum professionals are needed at all. In a presentation at the conference ‘Museums 2000’ in 1992, Tomislav Šola described the museum professionals as an endangered species in need of a theoretical basis in order to survive (Šola 1992). Moreover, in 2006 in a paper in a special edition of the Journal of Museum Education (vol. 31. No. 3) Mary Ellen Munley and Randy Roberts asked whether museum educators are still necessary, arguing that changed conditions for museums have led to mediation being divided between many professional functions (Munley and Roberts 2006). Similarly, Nina Simon argued in a blog post in 2007 that educated curators had become superfluous due to the participatory paradigm (Simon 2007). However, in 2016
British museum professionals Timothy and Joanne Ewin defended the curator by claiming that ‘properly trained and integrated curators are vital to maximizing a museum's impact’ (Ewin and Ewin 2016:322).

2.5. Studying Museum Studies

A third perspective relevant to the present project is professional museum educations, which has also been the subject of a significant amount of scholarly literature. While vocational training related to the museum field has only been the subject of a limited number of studies (e.g., Roodhouse 1998, Leggett (ed.) 2011), museum scholars have investigated the content and development of academic museum studies programs using different perspectives. Thus, in 2012 the relation between supply and demand of museum skills was the subject of two American PhD dissertations comparing the relation between the skills offered by 32 American museum studies programs with the skills identified as needed by 38 leading museum professionals across the United States (Bomar 2012), and studying the relevance of museum studies curricula to museum professionals (Hearn 2012).

Some scholars have focused on the history of museum studies (e.g., Simmons 2007), some have studied the role of practice in the educations (e.g., Macleod 2001, Lorente 2012, Decker 2016, Kingsley 2016), some have investigated the relationship between museum educations and the new requirements for professional museum work (e.g., Dubuc 2011), while others have suggested the need for new interdisciplinary educations directed towards a broader institutional field (e.g., Trant 2009, Howard 2014, Latham 2015). While the latter perspective falls outside my scope of inquiry, my study contributes to the discussion about the development of professional museum education as a negotiation between practice and academia and the development of museum studies or museology as an academic discipline.

Furthermore, a significant number of scholars and museum professionals have mapped the history and structure of museum studies in specific countries such as in the United States (e.g. Welsh 2013, Schwarzer forthcoming), Canada (Carter, Castle and Soren 2011), the Czech republic (Kirsch and Jagosova 2019), Slovakia (Tislar 2017), Germany (Waltz 2015), Finland (Kallio and Välisalo 2006, Thomas, Wessmann and Heikkilä 2018), Norway (Frøyland 2007) and Sweden (Smets 2006, Vilkuna 2010). Others have analyzed the history of museum studies programs in specific universities (e.g., Stransky 1990, Duncan 2002, Duff, Cherry and Sheffield 2010, Riera 2017).
Finally, both ICTOP and the American Association for Museums have both developed general curricula for museum studies programs (See Bomar 2012) and museum studies curricula in competence-based educations has been discussed in by international scholars (Teather 2012). Also, lists of museum studies programs have been compiled both internationally (Edson 1995) and for specific regions (e.g., Sturgeon 2008). In Denmark, a list of museum educations offered by Danish Universities was compiled by the Danish Center for Museum Research in 2013 (Gransgaard, Jensen and Larsen 2014:19). Moreover, a growing number of textbooks and other materials intended for museum studies programs have been published both in Denmark (Dam Christensen et al. (eds.) 2004, Larsen and Thorhauge 2008) and internationally (e.g., Burcaw 1997, Macdonald 2006, Carbonell 2012, Latham 2014, Witcomb 2015). This literature has been studied as a source of the development of museum studies, attesting to the establishment of museum studies as an educational discipline (Rounds 2001, McClelland 2007, Decker 2017). While a closer, comparative study of museum studies programs and the related literature falls outside the scope of my study, reviewing the textbooks and descriptions of programs have provided me with a frame of reference for the ongoing definition of topics addressed in museum studies both in Denmark and abroad.

2.6. Researching Danish Museums

Also, in Denmark, the conditions for and development of professionalism in Danish museums have been the subject of scholarly literature over the years. Danish cultural policy has been the subject of several studies (e.g. Duelund 1995, Jeppesen 2002), while also the museum legislation has been analyzed and commented especially as part of the ongoing debate about the organization of responsibilities and subsidies of museums (e.g., Lundbæk 1985, Banke 1992, Dam Christensen 2007, Marker and Rasmussen 2019). Most recently, Vinnie Nørskov has mapped the development of museology in Denmark since the turn of the millennium – addressing the structural transition in 2001 from a council of peers to a professional, bureaucratic agency overseeing the museum field (Nørskov 2018).

Some of the descriptions have presented museum practices (Neumann 1966, Witt 1977, Strandgaard 2010), others have analyzed the structure of the museum field (i.e., Toft and Pedersen 1972, Harnow 2017). A significant amount of so-called grey literature on Danish museums has been published (i.e., statistical reports, e.g. Kulturstyrelsen 2015, Slots og Kulturstyrelsen 2018, or reports about visions for the future development of the museum
field (Grøngaard Jeppesen 1995, Lauenborg 1994, Bak and Birkebæk 2017, Nielsen and Nissen 2017), and both the formal framework for Danish museums, practical museum work, and museum educations have been debated regularly in the journal ‘Museumsmagasinet’ (1976-1987), which since 1988 has been published under the title ‘Danske Museer’ (1988-). However, the only comprehensive historical review of the development of Danish museums was published in 1979, limited to addressing the development of history museums (Rasmussen 1979).

Also, the development of training and education for museum professionals have been addressed. In 1959, the newly appointed professor of material culture at the University of Copenhagen, Axel Steensberg, presented his subject at the annual meeting in the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM) (Steensberg 1959), and in 1995 the headmaster of the industry-specific training facility, Museumshøjskolen, Ole Strandgaard, published a description of the development of training for museum personnel organized by the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening) (Strandgaard 1995). Furthermore, associate professor in museology at Aarhus University, Ane Hejlskov Larsen, has recently analyzed the development of museum education in Denmark as an ongoing cooperation between the Danish museum associations and the Danish universities in a Nordic anthology (Hejlskov Larsen 2019).

2.7. Contribution

My study contributes to the existing literature in four essential ways. First, I expand the knowledge of Danish museum history by covering the period from 1958 to 2018, and by including all museum categories (i.e., history, art, and natural history) in my study. Second, my research contributes to the existing literature on the professionalization of museum work by providing an empirical analysis of the development of professional museum work and the related skills – mapping the transition from a multi-functional professional occupation to a specialized, diverse professional field.

Third, by applying the theoretical framework of historical institutionalism (see chapter 3), I place the development of museums in a broader historical context of the development of the Danish welfare state. Thereby, I contribute to the current historical understanding of museums as public institutions. Fourth, I map the organization of and discussions about training and educations for museum professionals, thereby adding to the existing research
on professional museum education by tracking the empirical development of and the relation between vocational training and academic museum studies related to museums over time.
In this project, I map the field of professional museum work in Denmark from 1958 to 2018 by empirically tracking the negotiated definition of professionalism over time. In general, I define professional museum work as an institutionalized practice, which is socially constructed as a result of ongoing negotiations between several different stakeholders. As such, the project aligns with the social constructivist research tradition.

In this chapter, I present the theoretical background of my study. First, I explain my theoretical design by relating to the conceptual framework of the French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, whose constructive structuralism and reflexive sociology have inspired the structure of my project. Second, I relate to two specific topics within the academic field of sociology, namely institutional development and the sociology of professions, which both constitute significant theoretical frameworks for my study by defining and discussing central concepts such as the development of institutions over time and professionalism.

3.1. Structural constructivism and the study of museum professionalism

Social constructivism is often defined as a group of different theoretical approaches, which perceive knowledge as historically and culturally specific and emphasize the connection between knowledge and social processes (Pedersen 2012: 201). Some social constructivists, such as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, have focused on how reality is created by social interaction (Berger and Luckmann 1966), while others, such as Pierre Bourdieu, have studied social structures. For Bourdieu, social structures are both objectively existing and socially constructed – a research position which he has termed ‘constructivist structuralism' or ‘structuralist constructivism’ (Bourdieu 1994:52). Based on several empirical studies, e.g. of the academic world in France and of the Kabyles in Algeria (Bourdieu 1988, 2005),
he developed a theoretical framework centered around the concept of field, which he defined as a network of relations between different positions. Each position is defined by these relations, which in turn are determined by the access to or possession of different types of capital (Bourdieu 1996:84-85). In this study, I adopt the concept of field to delimit professional museum work.

Bourdieu outlined four types of capital, i.e., economic, cultural, social, and symbolic, each holding different significances in the particular field. He claimed that the capital and thereby the power is asymmetrically distributed in any given field, and the volume and composition of the capitals of each agent or stakeholder determine the position of power. Fields develop due to continuous battles between agents within the field and between fields based on the distribution of capital. Both the distribution of capital and the significance of each type vary over time classifying fields as dynamic and historically bound entities (Bourdieu, 1987:4).

Each position in the field acts based on the structures of the field (e.g., the legislative and material conditions), as well as on habitus – defined as a set of dispositions, i.e., a combination of conscious and unconscious values, experiences and opinions. Habitus is both individual (i.e., unique for each agent), collective (i.e., acquired through social interaction), and social (i.e., confirmed, produced and reproduced through social institutions) (Wilken 2006: 49). As such, habitus is both affected by the surrounding structures as well as is affecting them (Bourdieu 2005: 197-202). Bourdieu also recognized that each field is defined by a set of specific rules, about which all agents generally agree. These rules, which Bourdieu refers to as doxa, are all preconditions, which are implied and accepted and thereby set the possibilities and the limits of the field. (Wilken 2012: 55-57). However, neither doxa is a set of fixed regularities, it is rather a set of socially negotiated structures bound by historical circumstances.

For several reasons, my study cannot be classified as a ‘Bourdieuian’ field study. First of all, I do not systematically map the external structures of the field. By identifying legislation, practice, and education as specific discourses of interest, I deliberately leave out several factors, which have contributed to the definition of professionalism. Factors such as the economic conditions of the Danish museums, new technologies, the products of the museums and their relation to their visitors are only included in the argumentation when directly relevant – e.g., if the introduction of new technologies has led to changes in the definition of skills, new job functions, educations or legal requirements.
Second, I do not systematically study habitus in the museum field – e.g., I do not consider the underlying values of the universities related to organizing courses in museology or the political ideology, guiding the legislative debate. Third, I do not identify Bourdieu’s types of capital and their value in my field of study. Instead, I empirically track debates and events both as testimonies to, as catalysts for and as functions of the shifting power relations in the field. As such, the introduction of the Agency for Cultural Heritage in 2002 meant a marked decrease in the power of the museum practitioners and a similar increase in the power of the Ministry of Culture.

Based on this theoretical framework, I define professional museum work as an occupational field, whose doxa I identify as the collectively accepted definition of professionalism at any given time. In this perspective, I examine the ongoing definition of doxa related to professionalism in the Danish museum field by studying what is defined as professional museum work, and how this definition has developed.

The model of the study, which I have presented in chapter 1, is inspired by social worlds/arenas mapping, a method introduced by the American sociologist Adele Clarke as a tool for situational analysis, which I will return to in chapter 4. However, in this chapter, I shall shortly comment on the theoretical basis of the method namely social worlds/arenas theory developed by Anselm Strauss, who according to Clarke defined social worlds as “universes of discourse and principal affiliative mechanisms through which people organize social life” (Strauss in Clarke 2007). He argued that social arenas are occupied by several social worlds and sub-worlds, which negotiate various issues. Agents simultaneously participate in several social worlds, and social worlds overlap. As such, society can be seen “as consisting of layered mosaics of social worlds”, whose content and boundaries are negotiated continuously (Clarke 2007). However, originating in the theoretical field of interactionism, social worlds/arenas theory maintain that ‘whatever order emerges of whatever duration, it is likely the consequences of a negotiation among participants’ (Clarke 1991), thereby objecting to the existence of external structures – contrary to, e.g., Bourdieu.

In my study, I align with Bourdieu in claiming that external structures exist and that those structures both construct and is constructed by the social agents in the field. Thus, economic conditions or the changing labor market are structures which both determine and are determined by the discourse on professionalism in the museum field, however at the same time they also transcend the museum field, connecting it to other fields. In chapter 5, I study the influence of such external structures on the development of the museum field, applying the theoretical framework of historical institutionalism.
However, before presenting historical institutionalism, I must shortly address another central thought in Bourdieu’s mindset – i.e., reflexive sociology. Bourdieu advocated that knowledge is situated in a time and a place – of which the researcher is also a part. Therefore, researchers also contribute to the construction of the field (and are constructed by it). As a result, they need to reflect on their relations to their field of study – i.e., their academic tradition, their social position, and previous experiences in order to be able to make possible influences on the analysis transparent. Bourdieu refers to these relations as the field-effect, the educational effect, and the effect of social background (Mathiesen and Højbjerg 2004:237). In other humanistic research traditions, such as history, such considerations translate into discussions about tendency – e.g., how different information is prioritized in a source (Olden Jørgensen 1994: 54-56).

Being trained within the field of history and having worked for more than a decade as a curator in a state-recognized, Danish museum before starting my PhD, my study can be characterized as insider research, defined as research done by members of a field - following the typology of geographers David Butz and Kathryn Besio, (Butz and Besio, 2009:1669-1670). While it can be argued that the insider perspective can be seen as a privilege, researchers have also argued that adopting an insider position as a research strategy “ignores the dynamism of positionalities in time and through space” (Mullings, 1999:340). Even if a researcher belongs to a field, being a researcher in itself means viewing the field from the outside. In other words, just because I was previously a museum professional, I cannot claim to maintain that position unchanged, when entering the field as a researcher. Nevertheless, studying the definition of professional museum work up until 2018 means that I also study my own former practices.

Moreover, I enter into a field, whose language and doxa I have shared and identified with for an extensive period of time. As a result, the codes used in the field has been known to me from the start, which has facilitated the framing of my research questions. On the one hand, this knowledge has made me able to ask different and also more critical questions. On the other hand, preconceived knowledge of the field can also make the researcher blind or prejudiced towards the field of study. Therefore, reflexive considerations have been an important guideline throughout the project in order to take advantage of my insight, while at the same looking out for possible biases. I will return to these considerations when presenting my methodological approach in chapter 4.

In short, my study aligns with the research tradition of structural constructivism – as represented in the mindset of Pierre Bourdieu. I study professional museum work as an
occupational field tracking the ongoing definition of professionalism and who defines it. In practice, I relate to two specific theoretical traditions, which I will address in the following sections – namely the tradition of historical institutionalism and the sociology of professions.

3.2. Historical Institutionalism – tracking institutional development

As previously mentioned, I define professional museum work as an institutionalized practice, which in Denmark is regulated by legislation, setting the framework for the professional field. Consequently, I argue that the development of professionalism in museum work can be analyzed by looking at the museum legislation. In this section, I will briefly position myself in relation to the extensive literature in the field of organizational theory.

Overall, my study aligns with the tradition of new institutionalism, which has been developed in the field of organizational studies since the end of the 1970s. New institutionalism is interested in how and why institutions evolve in a certain way in a given context, however, rejecting rational-actor models as explanation for institutional change and instead focusing on ‘the properties of supra-individual units of analysis, which cannot be reduced to aggregations or direct consequences of individuals’ attributes or motives’ (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:8-9). Correspondingly, I study changes in the definition of professionalism in the museum field as a result of dialectic and not necessarily rational negotiations between different stakeholders and of structures internal as well as external to the field.

More specifically, my study is related to the sub-field called historical institutionalism, which according to political scientist Sven Steinmo, can be characterized as a historically orientated approach to studying politics and social change, focusing on the ways institutions structure and shape their behavior and outcomes (Steinmo, 2008:118). Historical institutionalists argue that "behavior, attitudes and strategic choices take place inside particular social, political, economic and even cultural contexts" (Steinmo, 2008:127). In short: History matters.

When defining the Danish museum legislation and professional museum work as institutions, historical institutionalism provides a way to examine the contexts and the development of the museum legislation and its effect on the professionalism of the museum
field. In addition, in chapter 8, I track the development of professional museum mediation in the Danish museum field as a function of external and internal structures and strategies.

3.2.1. Museum Professionalism and Path Dependence

According to researchers working with historical institutionalism, institutional development is perceived as a chain of interdependent events rather than as isolated occurrences - a chain which can be traced back to a specific point in time. Therefore, historical institutionalists often refer to the concept of path dependence (Kangas and Vestheim, 2010: 273) – a concept which has been developed in the field of economics to explain the continuation of less efficient technologies (see, e.g., the study of Paul David on the QWERTY-keyboard, David 1985). Path dependence was adopted into political science already during the 1960s and was conceptualized around the turn of the millennium by the American political scientist Paul Pierson, who defined it as ‘social processes that exhibit positive feedback and thus generate branching patterns of historical development’ (Pierson, 2004:21). Simply put, development can be said to be path-dependent when a current path creates positive feedback, which makes the continuation of that path preferable to other possible paths.

Pierson has argued that four features are likely to occur in self-reinforcing political settings, namely the occurrence of multiple equilibria, the importance of contingency, the critical role of timing and sequencing of events, and the development of resilience towards change (Pierson 2004:44). Simultaneously, Pierson claims that paths in institutionally dense environments are hard to change because they are self-reinforcing (Pierson, 2004:35). This observation has also been pointed out by political scientist Peter Hall and sociologist Rosemary Taylor, who have argued that ‘institutions are resistant to redesign because they structure the very choices about reform that the individual is likely to make.’ (Hall and
Taylor, 1996:940). To this, Steinmo has added that people invest in learning the rules related to institutions and thereby raise the cost of changing the path, which promotes path dependence (Steinmo, 2008:129). Adopting the perspective of path dependence, in chapter 5 I track the definition of professionalism in the Danish museum legislation from 1958-2018 based on an empirical analysis of the legislative process, and in the concluding discussion (chapter 10), I discuss the discourse on professionalism in the museum field as a potentially self-reinforcing, path-dependent institutional development.

3.2.2. Change as Critical Junctures and Endogenous Development

However, even if the empirical analysis indicates that the development of professionalism in the Danish museum field is path-dependent, empirical studies generally show that change does occur. In historical institutionalism, change is traditionally explained as the result of critical junctures – i.e. moments ‘when new conditions disrupt or overwhelm the specific mechanisms that previously reproduced the existing path’ (Pierson, 2004:52) – or as ‘punctuation points of a “punctuated equilibrium” in which significant changes are triggered primarily by exogenous forces, and new institutional arrangements and new developmental pathways are created.’ (Sorensen 2017:25).

Simply put, institutional development is seen as an ongoing equilibrium, which is occasionally disrupted by external events followed by a new equilibrium. However, political scientist Giovanni Capoccia has pointed out that such critical junctures can also result in so-called ‘near misses’ – i.e., points in time in which the disruptive potential does not result in the actual change (Capoccia, 2015:165). In chapter 5, I analyze the museum legislation in order to identify and characterize possible critical junctures and near misses in the development of the museum field in order to explain changes in the discourse on professionalism over time.

However, during the last decade, several scholars adopting historical institutionalism in their analysis have argued that considering institutional development as a punctuated equilibrium interrupted by critical junctures and affected by exogenous events, does not sufficiently explain the change of institutions. In other words, the course of professionalization of museum work defined as an institutionalized practice cannot be explained only by external events. Instead, it must also be considered as an ongoing process.

In 2010, American political scientists Kathleen Thelen and James Mahoney constructed a conceptual framework for analyzing incremental institutional change describing institutions as inherently dynamic entities developing based on shifts in power.
To explain such endogenous changes, they set up four processes of gradual change related to the possibility in the field for vetoing suggested changes in a ruleset, the permissibility for interpretation and the level of enforcement, which change according to shifts in the power relations within the institution (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010). Table 4.1 shows the four types of institutional change and the corresponding agents identified by Mahoney and Thelen.

Table 3.1 Contextual and institutional sources of institutional change and the corresponding agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low level of discretion for interpretation/changes</th>
<th>High level of discretion for interpretation/changes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong veto-power</td>
<td>Layering (subversives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak veto-power</td>
<td>Displacement (insurrectionaries)</td>
</tr>
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According to the model, layering occurs, when the institution is in a strong position to veto changes, while at the same time not accepting alternative interpretations of the existing ruleset. Therefore, change happens by adding new rules to the existing framework. Proponents of this kind of change are called subversives because they seek to change the institution without changing or reinterpreting the ruleset. If alternative interpretations are tolerated in an institution with strong veto-power, change can occur as drift – i.e., by reinterpreting the existing ruleset without formal changes. In order to obtain change, agents in this scenario have to adapt to the ruleset while exploiting to further their reinterpretation. Such agents are called parasitic symbionts.

Displacement happens in institutions with a low discretion for alternative interpretations of the ruleset and a weak veto power towards change. In that case, the rules are changed by insurrectionaries, who rebel against the existing ruleset and replace it. Finally, conversion appears when the tolerance of alternative interpretations is high, and the veto-power is low. Then the existing ruleset is strategically re-implemented by so-called opportunists to obtain the desired change.
In the concluding discussion in chapter 10, I relate to this conceptual framework as a way to characterize and understand the development of the professional Danish museum field from 1958 to 2018 based on the study of the development of the museum legislation (chapter 5), of the development of the practical definition of professional museum work (chapter 6) and the development of education for museum professionals (chapter 7). Finally, in chapter 8, I track the development of museum mediation as a professional practice, identifying critical junctures and their drivers over time. In the remaining part of this chapter, I shall relate my research to another significant topic within the field of sociology, namely the sociology of professions.

3.3. Profession and Professionalism

Professions, professionalism and the process of professionalization have been the subject of a considerable amount of research within the field of sociology since the end of the 19th century advocating various approaches to the study of professional work. In the present project, I study developments in the discourse of professionalism in the Danish museum field since 1958 - i.e., how professional museum work has been defined and how this definition has been negotiated over time. In this section, I explain my approach to the study of professional work and position my research in relation to the vast amount of literature studying the sociology of professions.

3.3.1. What defines a profession?

In order to study professional work, the meaning of the term ‘professional’ needs to be clarified. In the existing research traditions, this necessary precondition has led to two main questions: What is a profession? And how and why does professional work develop? From the end of the 1930s, several sociologists such as Talcott Parsons, Everett Hughes, and Harold Wilensky discussed the properties and function of professions. In general, they perceived professions to be stabilizing functions in a society characterized by several specific properties among which were high skills and altruism (Parsons 1939, Hughes 1963, Wilensky 1964). Researchers within this so-called taxonomic approach sought to identify defining properties for professions, in some cases arguing that the achievement of those properties constituted the process of professionalization (Wilensky 1964). Although the approach has been heavily criticized for only inadequately defining professions in relation to other occupational fields, for being based on ideal types, and for being static and unable to explain change (see, e.g., Evetts 2011b, Saks 2012), the definition and the characterization
of profession are recurrent topics also in more recent literature (e.g., Brante 2009). In my research, it also provides a theoretical background for operationalizing my field of study.

In general, a number of specific properties are agreed upon as markers for professions – namely: a specialized education, specific ethical rules, autonomy in the organization and management of work, monopoly, specialization, a level of abstraction, and professional judgment (Staugaard 2017:29-31). These markers have been supplemented, e.g., by the American sociologist Elliot Freidson, who added knowledge based on abstract theories, division of labor, the control of the labor market through accreditation and licensing, and the control of education associated with universities (Freidson 1999: 118-119). Others such as the Swedish sociologist Thomas Brante have emphasized scientific knowledge as the basis for professions (Brante 2011).

In my project, the discussion of professional markers has provided a framework for my approach to the empirical source material. Thus, I study the autonomy of museum professionals by analyzing the power relations in the field, I map the development of core knowledge in professional museums by studying the content and skills defined for museum jobs, and I track the reproduction of professionalism by studying the organization and content of professional training and education.

In the existing research on professions, a hierarchical typology has been constructed based on the presence of certain markers in specific occupational areas. Traditionally, doctors and lawyers have been perceived as “classic”, “full” or “pure” professions due to their autonomy, long education, licensing rules and a high level of commitment to their field of work (e.g., Noordegraaf 2007). Following changes in the professional labor market, in 1969, the American sociologist Amitai Etzioni added the concept of semi-profession – defined as occupations with shorter educations or training, which are integrated parts of bureaucratic organizations, communicating knowledge rather than applying it. Furthermore, semi-professions are generally perceived to be less committed to the work than classical professions (Etzioni 1969). To this typology, Thomas Brante added a third concept – namely pre-profession – defined as occupations, which has recently become based on university-level research (Brante 2009:31).

However, classifying professional museum work in Denmark according to this typology makes little sense. On the one hand, museum professionals traditionally hold university educations within specific fields such as history, ethnology, archeology, or art history – i.e., they hold long, academic educations. Moreover, they are generally described
as very committed to their work\(^1\), and a specific code of ethics has been formulated by the International Committee for Museums (ICOM) in 1986.\(^2\) On the other hand, museum professionals do not have a monopoly on their field of work, and they have always worked in more or less bureaucratic organizations. Therefore, museum professionals classify neither as classic nor as semi-, nor as pre-professionals.

Within the last two decades, a number of scholars studying professions have pointed out that the role and definition of professional work have changed (e.g., Broadbent, Dietrich and Roberts 1997, Fournier 1999, Evetts 2003, Evetts 2011a, Noordegraaf 2007, Noordegraaf 2015). For instance, medical doctors employed in hospitals are no longer autonomous professionals, since they are subject to organizational control, and new occupations such as social workers, nurses and managers strive to be full professions by establishing academically credentialed training. As such, professions have transformed as a result of changes in organizational conditions as well as of internal strategies – thereby challenging the existing categorizations of professions. Nevertheless, comparing the properties of professional museum work with the existing categories provides me with an interesting perspective to my study and also makes museum work comparable to other occupational fields, although such direct comparisons fall outside the scope of this dissertation.

3.3.2. What is ‘professionalism’?

According to the British sociologist Julia Evetts, “definitional precision (about what is a profession) is now regarded more as a time-wasting diversion [among sociologists – my clarification] in that it did nothing to assist understanding of the power of particular occupational groups […] or the contemporary appeal of the discourse of professionalism” (Evetts 2013:780). Instead, she advocates studying the concept of professionalism as an occupational value-system and as an institutional discourse, e.g., used in advertising and in organizational strategies to motivate employees (Evetts 2011b:7).

\(^{1}\) This point has been addressed in several of my collected interviews (e.g., by Mogens Bencard and by Esben Hedegaard)

Likewise, using the theoretical framework of Bourdieu, the Dutch scholars Willem Schinkel and Mirko Noordegraaf, defined professionalism as a form of symbolic capital held by the professionals, which can be translated into other forms of capital, e.g., social recognition (Schinkel and Noordegraaf 2011:85). Thereby they identified professionalism as a personal value. In other words, professionalism can be seen both as a set of values and as a discourse on hallmarks for competence and legitimacy, which can be defined at a personal or an institutional level. In my thesis, I study professionalism in Danish museum work at the institutional level focusing on how professionalism has been defined in the set of rules accepted by the field.

Studying different types of professionalism, scholars have addressed a growing contradiction within professional work between the logics of profession, organization, and management (e.g., Freidson 2001, Evetts 2011a, Noordegraaf 2015). As a result, in 2007 the Dutch scholar, Mirko Noordegraaf introduced the concept of hybrid, mixed or managed professionalism as an alternative to ‘pure professionalism’ (characterized by occupational control) and ‘situated professionalism’ (defined by organizational control). Instead, Noordegraaf argued that professionalism combines different logics e.g. occurring in managed situations as 'reflexive control' – i.e., in cases where the professional controls how and when to use professionalism professionally (Noordegraaf 2007). He argued that professionalism can be defined as the protected treatment of complex cases by professionals and that professional work is coordinated through standardized skills, professional commitment, and professional norms. Managerialism is the coordination of work in organizations, and hybridized professionalism is the treatment of professional cases in well-managed organizational contexts (Noordengraaf, 2015:190-192).

Noordengraaf has also pointed out that in order to apply new technologies and adapt to new expectations, present-day professionals are also required to find new ways to organize their treatment – thereby applying what he has called ‘organizing professionalism’ – i.e. "embedding organizing and organizing roles and capacities within professional action" (Noordengraaf 2015:200).

For my study, hybridized and organizing professionalism are interesting concepts, because professional museum work has inherently been characterized by small institutions with few multi-functional professionals, which has been in charge of a number of simultaneous functions both practical, academic and managerial, predominantly required to organize their own professionalism. In order to distinguish between different forms of hybridity, in this project I adapt and expand the concept of hybrid professionalism by
introducing three specific forms of hybridity based on the analysis of the development of educations for museum professionals. These three forms, which will be further explained in chapter 7, are academic hybridity (combining different academic fields), functional hybridity (merging different practical fields) and organizational hybridity (mixing different organizations).

### 3.3.3. Professionalism = Jurisdiction + Competence

I operationalize the definition of professionalism as a combination of the content of jobs in the professional museum field and the skills required, which have been defined and discussed both in the legislative debate, in the practical field and in relation to the organization of professional education and training. Specifically, I use the concept of jurisdiction introduced by the American sociologist Andrew Abbot as “the link between a profession and its work” (Abbott 1988:20) to map the specific field of work, which Danish museum professionals have been expected to occupy.

I use the words ‘competence’ or ‘skill’ as interchangeable concepts to designate the properties, which a museum professional has been possessing and is expected to possess. Competence or competencies have been widely discussed among scholars in fields such as education and psychology. Traditionally, competence is associated with effective performance in a given situation (White, 1959). The Dutch educational scholar Martin Mulder has argued that competence consists of various competencies defined as ‘a coherent cluster of knowledge, skills, and attitudes’. Also, he has defined professional competence as ‘the generic, integrated and internalized capability to deliver sustainable, effective […] performance […] in a certain professional domain, job, role, organizational role, and task situation’. (Mulder 2014:111)

This connection between performance and competence led the American psychologist David McClelland to argue that competence was a better measure than intelligence when testing for efficiency (McClelland 1973), and over the years a number of more or less elaborate models for operationalizing competence has been developed including various dimensions such as personality traits (e.g. creativity and intuition), social skills and meta-competencies (e.g. the ability to learn)(see e.g. Cheetham and Chivers 1996, Delamare Le Deist and Winherton 2005, or Illeris 2011). In this study, I adopt a broad definition of competence by including all qualifications mentioned in the empirical source material as required for performing professionally.
In 1999, Australian scholar Terrence Hoffmann identified three different definitions of competencies in the academic literature – namely competencies defined as observable performances (i.e. as tasks to be performed), competencies defined as the quality of the performance (i.e. on the behavior that needed to be demonstrated), and competencies as underlying personal attributes needed to perform efficiently (Hoffmann, 1999: 276). I adapt the categorization of Hoffmann as a way to categorize the skills described as required for museum professionals. Based on an exploratory study of the empirical sources related to the Danish museum field, I found that the need for specific academic knowledge has repeatedly been articulated. Therefore, I have divided the category of personal skills into academic skills (i.e., required education) and personal skills (i.e., personality traits). In chapter 6, I map the development of the discourse on professionalism over time by tracking changes in the distribution of skills between the categories.

A significant part of the literature on competence has been related to the field of education. Following the definition proposed by the UNESCO in 1997, I distinguish between education ‘which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or a group of subjects’ and vocational training ‘which is mainly designed to lead participants to acquire the practical skills, know-how and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation’ (UNESCO 1997 as paraphrased in Moodie 2002:250). For the case study of the Danish museum field, this distinction translates into a difference between academic educations in museology and vocational training in the form of courses organized within the museum field (see chapter 7).

In an evaluation of the vast amount of publications studying competency-based education, Martin Mulder has identified three different approaches to the relation between professionalism and competence-based education – namely ‘behavioristic functionalism’ defining the role of education as to develop specific behaviors needed for specific job functions; ‘integrated occupationalism’ relating education to the demands defined by the labor market; and ‘situated professionalism’, which underlines the contextuality of professionalism by stressing the importance of experience in on-the-job settings (Mulder 2014:128-131). While Mulder to some degree describes development in the field of educational research, I adopt the concepts as a way to characterize different strategies on, how museum professionals should be trained (chapter 7) – thereby using them as values.
3.3.4. Developing Professionalism

Studying the development of professionalism over time, I am inspired by the so-called neo-Weberian approach to the study of professions, which define professions as dynamic groups of agents battling for legitimacy (e.g., Larson 1977, Abbott 1988, Saks 2010). The British sociologist Mike Saks has defined the area of interest for neo-Weberians as “the factors that influence the success or failure of professional projects aimed at obtaining or enhancing legally-based forms of exclusionary closure” (Saks 2010:895), one of which is the definition of the jurisdiction of a professional field.

According to Andrew Abbott, jurisdictions are constantly negotiated both between professions and with society at large, and no jurisdiction is changed without a battle (Abbott 1988). This conflict-related perception of development corresponds to the idea of dynamic fields advocated by Bourdieu. However, while Bourdieu focused on uncovering hidden social and cultural relations of dominance, Abbott mainly perceived changes in jurisdictions as conscious strategies of occupational groups (Carlhed 2011:298). Here, I combine the two points of view by arguing that changes in the definition of professionalism (i.e., of jurisdiction and skills) can be results of conscious strategies of different stakeholders in the field as well as derived results of hidden relations and structural changes.

In this study, I am interested in investigating the development of the power relation between different stakeholders in the field in order to determine the driving forces of the process. In doing this, I am inspired by the dichotomy between professionalization from above – i.e. imposed professionalization – and professionalization from within – i.e. professionalization as a process organized by the members of the field, which has been introduced by historian Charles McClelland in a study of German professionalization in the Weimar period (McClelland 1990:99). In my study, this distinction translates into professionalization defined by the museum field versus professionalization characterized as a process imposed by external agents. However, contrary to many researchers within the field of sociology of professions, I do not define professionalization as a necessarily progressive process but just as a change in the definition of professionalism.

The influence of external structures on professionalization is repeatedly addressed in the existing literature. In 1999, Eliot Freidson stated that professions are dependent on the context of time and place, e.g., in the form of policy, organization, and professional knowledge (Freidson 1999). Thereby he implied that professional fields should be studied
in relation to the surrounding structures seen both as active agents and as passive conditions for the professionalization.

Similarly, Mirko Noordegraaf pointed out that professionalization in present-day knowledge societies has become a contradictory and controversial process, because knowledge societies, on the one hand, call for professionals, but at the same time put up barriers to resist the establishment of autonomous, professional communities (Noordegraaf 2007:763). Thereby, he identified a regulatory level to the process of professionalization, which is important when studying the field of professional museum work in Denmark.

First of all, the majority of the funding for museums in Denmark is public – i.e., it comes from the state or municipalities. Second, in Denmark, the state has taken an active role in the definition and regulation of professional museum work throughout the period of this study, and the vast majority of the professional museums in Denmark are regulated by or follow the Museum Act. Therefore, for me, the changes in the distribution of power between regulators outside the museum field and practitioners within the field constitutes an important perspective. Likewise, the distribution of power between the museum field and institutions of higher education (i.e., universities) is essential for the negotiation of professionalism as an educational discourse. This perspective is addressed in chapter 7.

A number of researchers have also studied the development of professionalism as a result of changes in the conditional structures such as the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) – a set of liberal management strategies aimed at making the public sector more efficient, which to some degree has been implemented also in Denmark since the 1980s. The British sociologist Julia Evetts has postulated that the introduction of NPM both in the UK and elsewhere has led to a new form of professionalism (Evetts 2011a). Analyzing recent developments in the labor market, she has pointed out a number of specific changes in contemporary society, which has affected professional work, some of which are the introduction of the logic of market and consumerism, the increased emphasis on bureaucracy and management, and the transition from standardized credentials to a focus on control of results and performativity (Evetts 2011b). Furthermore, Evetts has pointed out that the implementation of NPM ‘has had ‘unintended’ consequences on the prioritization and ordering of work activities, and have brought with them a focus on target achievement to the detriment or neglect of other less measurable tasks and responsibilities” (Evetts 2011a: 415).

In the Danish museum field, such considerations currently appear as ongoing discussions about the prioritization of mediation over collection work as a result of political
strategies. Moreover, Evetts has argued that ‘the commodification of service work entails changes in professional work relations. […] The relationship between professionals and clients is […] being converted into customer relations through the establishment of quasi-markets, customer satisfaction surveys and evaluations as well as quality measures and payment by result’ (Evetts 2011a:416). In this respect, contemporary museums, in general, make interesting case studies, since the introduction of participatory practices and the focus on co-creation and social inclusion to some degree can be seen as an alternative to the commodification mentioned by Evetts – albeit often sought evaluated through surveys and specific quality measures. However, while such a line of inquiry would make an interesting perspective for further research, it falls outside the scope of this thesis.

Finally, Noordegraaf has recently argued that professional work nowadays has become re-organized so that the cases involved have become more complex, it has become re-stratified – so that professional fields increasingly work transnationally and new divisions determined by tasks have been introduced, and it has become re-located both geographically and technologically (see Noordegraaf 2016:799). As a result, Noordegraaf argues that it has become difficult to speak of a "prototypical" professional, since professional fields have become more varied and heterogeneous, e.g., as organizations have gained influence over professional education and socialization (Noordegraaf 2016:803). In the concluding discussion in chapter 10, I relate these observations to the development of the professional Danish museum field.

3.4. Theorizing about the Development of Professionalism

As shown in this chapter, the theoretical framework for my study is influenced by the structural constructivism of Pierre Bourdieu. As such, I define professionalism in museum work as a dynamic, process, which has evolved throughout the study as a result of changes in the surrounding structures, of internal strategies and ongoing negotiations of power between different stakeholders.

Overall, I define my field of study as the discourse of professionalism – understood as the ongoing definition of the jurisdiction of professional work as well as the skills defined as required for competent (professional) performance both for the general museum field (chapter 6) and for museum mediation as a developing specialty within museum work (chapter 9). I study this development by focusing on the three specific, related discourses, which I have outlined in chapter 1.
Applying the concepts of historical institutionalism, I examine the discourse on professionalism both as a potentially path-dependent process and as an endogenous development through six decades from 1958 to 2018. I track critical junctures and the shifting distribution of power in the field between the three different stakeholders mentioned in chapter 1, in order to characterize, how professionalism has developed in the Danish museum field since the 1950s. Furthermore, inspired by the sociology of professions, I identify the characteristics of museum professionalism, and track how these traits have changed over time.

Finally, I analyze the logics related to the development of professional training and education for the museum field. However, in the following chapter, I introduce the empirical sources analyzed in the study and address the methodological framework applied for the collection and analysis of the material.
Chapter 4
Methodological and Empirical Approaches

The present project is based on empirical data, and in this chapter, I first present the overall methodological strategy applied, then, I introduce the three main types of sources and the various methods used for collecting and analyzing the empirical data related to the development of museum professionalism in Denmark in the period from 1958 to 2018.

4.1. Museum Professionalism as a Mixed Methods Study

Overall, the study is based on the two research paradigms mixed methods, and grounded theory. Mixed methods have been defined as the process of integrating the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in order to address a specific research question, creating a multi-faceted approach (Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016). Mixed methods studies operate with various research designs, e.g., a convergent, an explanatory, and an exploratory design. In a convergent design, the qualitative and quantitative methods are used independently of each other and integrated in the final interpretation, an explanatory design uses qualitative methods to expand quantitative findings, while an exploratory approach uses qualitative studies to formulate theories or hypotheses, which are then tested with qualitative methods thereby generalizing the findings (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011).

While the present study is not constructed to fit a specific typology, my approach aligns with the convergent research design, because the different elements of the study are developed simultaneously, although findings have been integrated throughout the research process and not just at the end. The study is based on three types of empirical source material – namely written text in the form of archival material and printed debate posts, job advertisements, and qualitative interviews. As I will show, the collection of documents and interviews has been based on sampling and has – to some degree – been dependent on arbitrary conditions and subjective decisions related to preservation, accessibility, sampling,
and interpretation. However, in the collection and analysis of the job ads, I have applied quantitative methods as a way to expand the qualitative findings to the whole Danish museum field in the period of the study.

I use a combination of non-intrusive methods and interviews in order to combine the reliability and validity of written, contemporary sources with the self-representation obtained by interviewing members of the field. According to political scientist Morten Frederiksen, non-intrusive methods are methods in which the researcher analyzes preexisting sources – such as the analysis of preexisting texts – while interviews are co-constructions made by the researcher and the informants in order to answer specific research questions (Frederiksen, 2015:208-209). By using a mixed-methods approach, I have been able to track significant events in the development of the Danish museum world as well as to study the underlying discourse on professionalism from 1958 to 2018.

4.2. Grounded Theory as Methodological Inspiration

The second significant paradigm, which has inspired my research design, is grounded theory, which was initially introduced by American sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967 as an inductive, iterative analytical method used for qualitative data, in which collection and analysis are conducted simultaneously. Glaser and Strauss advocated studying processes and actions - basing the development of theory on the analysis of empirical data (Chamaz 2015). In short, grounded theory-studies develop categories based on the coding of qualitative, empirical data, which in turn informs further collecting and further refinement of the categories ending up as the basis for theories about the phenomenon studied.

In my study, I do not apply grounded theory as a strict methodological protocol. My initial operationalization of the study has been informed both by existing sociological theories on professions as well as on empirical studies of the Danish museum field. Moreover, I have not systematically conducted multiple rounds of coding on all collected materials, and I do not claim to develop a universal theory for the professionalization of museum work in general. As such, my study aligns with the majority of studies claiming to combine mixed methods and grounded theory according to Timothy Guetterman et al., who recently studied the characteristics of mixed methods-grounded theory studies, emphasizing a lack of further description of the specific methods applied and a lack of the development of theory as commonalities for mixed methods-grounded theory studies (Guetterman et al.
Instead of developing theory, I hold my empirical findings up against existing theories on professions using the development of specific professional markers to operationalize the process of professionalization in order to establish a broader perspective on the development of professional museum work.

My study relates to grounded theory in as much as it is heavily based on empirical data, which I use to develop and qualify categories and to establish the structure and content in my field of study. More precisely, my overall research design is inspired by two contemporary positions within grounded theory – namely constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis, both of which stress contextuality. Developed by the American sociologist Kathy Charmaz, constructivist grounded theory rejects the idea that the researcher can be a neutral observer without preconceptions and subjective interpretations affecting the outcome of the research. Charmaz, therefore, advocated reflexivity throughout the research process in order to understand, how categories and theories are constructed by the researcher’s understanding of the empirical material (Charmaz 2014), a position which aligns with reflexive sociology (see chapter 3).

Likewise, I have been inspired by situational analysis, which emphasizes that any knowledge produced by the researcher or by the object of research is situated in specific contexts and that these contexts (or situations) should be mapped as part of the research (Clarke 2005). In historical studies, this approach corresponds to the classical historical method of relating sources to its origin, determining potential tendencies in the material (see, e.g., Olden Jørgensen 2001).

As part of the methodology of situational analysis, the American sociologist, Adele Clarke, suggested studying discourses as a way to identify properties and positions in different so-called social worlds and arenas using social worlds/arena theory (see chapter 3). Mapping the properties of the relevant discourses and identifying their mutual relations, provide an overview of the field of study. Clarke also argued that this approach was useful in a variety of disciplines including in historical studies, where multiple maps of the same social arena at different points in time can be used to capture situational contexts and developments (Clarke 2005:268).

Adhering to the need for multiple maps in historical studies, in chapter 5, I establish three periods (i.e., 1958-1976, 1977-2001 and 2002-2018) based on an analysis of the development of Danish museum legislation from 1958 to 2018 – thereby grounding the categories in the empirical material. Finally, in chapter 10 I construct three maps tracking the development of professionalism defined by the properties of the three perspectives
(legislation, practice, and education) and the dynamic relation between the stakeholders (regulators, practitioners, and educators) over time.

In the remaining part of this chapter, I present the three main types of empirical material used – i.e., documents, job ads\(^1\) and interviews, and the methods applied for and analyzing the sources.

### 4.3 Documents

The first type of source material is documents consisting of three types of text – namely unpublished archives, grey literature, and published articles. The unpublished material has mainly been found at the Danish National Archives, although documents have also been located at the library of the Danish Parliament, at the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM) and in private archives. The so-called grey literature consists of printed material such as Parliamentary debates and reports about the field, while the published articles are debate posts and articles from the professional journals “Stof fra Danske Museer”, “Kunst og Museum”, “Dansk Tidsskrift for Museumsformidling”, “MID Magasin” and “Museumsmagasinet”, which since 1988 has been published as ‘Danske Museer’. In the following, I will first make some general comments on archival studies and textual analysis as a method. Then, I will present the material included, review the sampling made, and address the methodology applied for analysis.

As already mentioned, textual analysis of pre-existing text constitutes a non-intrusive method, since the material is not constructed with the purpose of answering the specific research question and is therefore not directly affected by the researcher (Frederiksen 2015:206). However, it is often argued that contemporary sources relate more directly to historical discourses since they are not affected by later rationalizations. Nevertheless, the origin, selection, and validation of the source material determine the result of the analysis, and representativity and choices about inclusion and exclusion of specific archives are therefore essential points to consider.

\(^1\) Even though job ads are texts, in this study they represent a specific kind of data collected and analyzed using quantitative methods. Therefore, they are treated separately in this chapter.
All historical texts are constructed with a contemporary purpose and therefore carry potential, contextual tendencies (Olden Jørgensen 2001: 57). An illustrative example of this fact is Parliamentary debates about the museum legislation, which on the one hand reflect contemporary debates about museum professionalism, but on the other hand, each statement also represents a political opinion adapted to a contemporary ideological program. Another example is the correspondence between individual museum institutions and the Ministry of Culture, which both mirrors a general discourse on the conditions of professional museums, but it also reflects individual interests. In other words, when using any source material, potential biases must be taken into account. Nevertheless, unpublished sources give access to nuances in the discourse, which is not necessarily represented in later presentations of the events.

In this project, the source material is used both as cognitive, normative, and performative statements depending on their content and type. Cognitive sources describe how things are – i.e., they establish a course of events. Normative sources refer to how things should be. Thus, reports describing visions for the future of the museum field are used as normative sources (e.g., Ministeriet for Kulturelle Anliggender 1969 or Birkebæk and Bak 2017). Finally, performative sources attest to actions which demonstrate the distribution of power in the field – e.g., documents related to the museum legislation can be perceived as performative because it is the (physical) result of lengthy negotiations (Olden-Jørgensen 1994:76).

The selected archives, which predominantly consist of printed text in some cases with handwritten notes, have been reviewed, and relevant documents have been coded applying a combination of manual coding and summarizing memos. Experiments with digital coding have been done, when found suitable, using the data management software, Nvivo. However, due to the extensive amount of analog material, extensive digital coding has deliberately been abandoned. Throughout the analysis, I have primarily used open coding to establish a course of events and to discover the leading positions in the discourse on professionalism over time. Subsequently, relevant codes have been qualified by the re-reading of a limited number of central documents clarifying specific themes. Moreover, a limited number of closed codes have also been applied in order to track the development of specific discourses related to the research question. Among these codes are legislation, profession, education (uddannelse), mediation (formidling), education (oplysning) and experience (oplevelse).
In the study, I have included documents related to three specific stakeholders in the museum field, namely regulators, practitioners and educators, and I will now present the specific material collected for each of the three groups.

4.3.1 Regulators: The Ministry of Culture

As already mentioned, in Denmark, culture was first introduced as an independent ministerial purview in 1961. Until then, museums had belonged to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, and the first Museum Act for history museums was proposed by the Minister of Education in 1958. For this study, ten Museum Acts, passed between 1958 and 2012 have been analyzed as well as the related parliamentary debates in order to map the development of a legal framework for professional museum work in Denmark.

In 1962, 1972 and 1982, specific committees were founded to develop or review the museum legislation. Documents from these committees found in the archive of the Ministry of Culture as well as records from the parliamentary cultural committee in 1983-84 have been included in my study. Likewise, official statements from the cultural committee from 2000-2001 and 2012 have been reviewed. The material consists of minutes from meetings, correspondence sent to the Ministry of Culture, consultations from different stakeholders commenting on legislative proposals and unpublished reports analyzing specific initiatives, or the museum field in general.

Several reports (so-called grey literature) analyzing the status of the museum field, giving recommendations for future developments have been published over the years, forming a basis for the legislative debate. From this material, reports written by the Ministry of Culture or by commissioned committees or individuals have been included from 1956, 1969, 1975, 1989, 1991, 2011 and 2017 (Rapport no. 152 (1956), 517 (1969), 727 (1975), 584 (1989), 332 (1991), Kulturministeriet (2011), Bak and Birkebæk (2017), Nielsen and Nissen (2017)).

Finally, specific archives pertaining to the supervisory bodies related to the museum field – namely Statens Lokalmuseumstilsyn (the National Inspectorate for Local History Museums, 1958-1976), Kunstmuseumsnævnet (the National Board of Art Museums, 1964-2017) – have been included.

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1976), Statens Museumsnævn (the National Board of Museums, 1976-2001) and Kulturarvsstyrelsen (the Heritage Agency of Denmark 2001-) have been explored. However, the extent, structure, and accessibility of the material made a comprehensive review impossible within the practical framework of this project. Furthermore, the exploration indicated that a considerable amount of material depicting the administration of professionalism in museums already could be found in the archives included in the study, such as correspondence or circulated documents and decisions. Therefore, I deliberately excluded a systematic review of the bureaucratic archives in the study, although this could be an interesting topic for future research.

4.3.2 Practitioners: The Museum Associations and the Practical Museum Field

The materials representing museum practitioners consist of archives from the museum associations: Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening (DKM, the Danish Association of History Museums), Foreningen af Danske Kunstmuseer (FDK, the Association of Danish Art Museums), Dansk Naturhistorisk Museumsforening (DNM, the Danish Association of Natural History Museums) and Organisationen Danske Museer (ODM, the Association of Danish Museums).

Until 2005, DKM, which was founded in 1929, was dominating the debates about the structure of the museum field and the definition of professionalism in museum work. The number of history museums has been far more massive than the number of other categories of museums throughout the period of the study. A report on cultural mediation published by the Ministry for Cultural Affairs in 1969 counted 134 history museums in 1967/68 receiving state subsidies and about 20 subsidized art museums (Ministeriet for Kulturelle Anliggender 1969:160-165). In comparison, 61 of the 97 museums receiving state subsidies in 2019 were history museums, 27 were art museums, 2 were natural history museums, and 7 had mixed subject areas. Furthermore, from the 1960s DKM was active in organizing debate-meetings and courses related to professional museum work. The art museums, which until 1978 were organized in two associations – one for Copenhagen and one for the rest of the country – were less active in the debate about professionalism, and the natural history museums did not form an association until 1976. In 2005, the three associations were merged into Organisationen Danske Museer (ODM, the Association of Danish Museums).

For my study, I have systematically reviewed the archive of DKM in the period 1958-2005 focusing on minutes from board meetings and meetings in relevant committees (e.g., the educational committee), correspondence, reports compiled by the association, plans for
courses and meetings as well as statistics gathered among the members. This material was supplemented by documents found at the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM). Also, archives related to the merger of the museum associations and the subsequent work of ODM have been systematically studied, while material from FDK and DNM have only been included in the material when it was deemed fruitful for the study.

First of all, the material preserved from FDK and DNM is relatively scarce. According to the registry of the Danish National Archives, the archive of DKM consists of 44 boxes, FDK includes 18 boxes and DNM only two. Second, exploratory studies of the archives of FDK and DNM as well as a study of archives from FDK found in the possession of the former director of Silkeborg Kunstmuseum (now Museum Jorn) (1973-2004) and former chairman of FDK, Troels Andersen, showed a certain redundancy in the material between documents found in the archive of DKM and in those of FDK and DNM in the form of minutes from joint meeting, communications from the ministry or from supervisory bodies such as the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN). Third, differences in the discourse on professionalism in the three museum categories were not initially part of the research question. Therefore, my empirical emphasis has been on the archive of DKM from which relevant material has been coded, and memos have been developed tracking events, establishing timelines. However, in-depth coding of the full material proved to be insurmountable due to the amount of documents.

Also, I have systematically reviewed six professional journals covering the Danish museum field during the period of the study: ‘Stof fra danske museer’, published from 1971-1988, was primarily a newsletter produced by DKM containing speeches and minutes from meetings and debates as well as descriptions of workshops and courses. ‘Museumsmagasinet’, which was founded in 1976 and published by the independent institution ‘Museumstjenesten’, contains articles and debate posts about professional museum work, organization, and education. In 1988, the journal changed the name to ‘Danske Museer’. All three journals have been systematically explored; however, due to the extent of the material, a systematic coding has not been possible. Instead, relevant developments and debates have been mapped by constructing memos, and selected papers have been coded manually both as contemporary descriptions of the development and as discursive statements articulating positions in the discourse on professionalism.

Three additional journals have been reviewed: ‘Kunst og Museum’, published by FDK from 1966-1989, predominantly contained presentations of specific museums or topics
related to art. A recurring item in the journal was a systematic presentation of newly acquired artworks in the museums' collections. For my project, a systematic review of the journal provided information about ongoing discourses in art museums – thereby adding to the mapping of the overall discourse in the museum field. Finally, ‘Dansk Tidsskrift for Museumsformidling’, published from 1976-2011 and ‘MID magasin’, published since 2000, have been examined in order to track the development of professionalism in the specific field of museum mediation. These two journals has been systematically reviewed and relevant text has been coded.

4.3.3 Educators: Vocational Training and University Educations

Professional training and educations for museums have been studied based on archival material from DKM, on the archive of the industry-specific training institute Museumshøjskolen (the Danish Training Institute for Museums) and on study plans from the Universities in Aarhus, Copenhagen, and Roskilde, which have developed courses related to museology.

From 1967 to 1988, DKM organized annual summer courses with several different workshops. In order to track the content of museum training, I have collected course descriptions, lists of participants, and evaluations from the summer courses preserved in the archive of DKM. The data has been organized in a database with information on the number and topic of the workshops as well as the number of participants year by year. Subsequently, each workshop has been categorized using five general categories, which have been developed based on the content of the workshops. The five categories are academic courses, museographic or administrative courses, courses related to mediation, courses on policy and museology and courses centered on preservation and collections. In chapter 7, I analyze the distribution of courses between the categories in order to track changes in the definition of the core knowledge needed for museum professionals over time.

Moreover, the archive of Museumshøjskolen, which was founded in 1987 by the museum associations as an independent organization, has been systematically reviewed and relevant material such as minutes from the board, correspondence, and catalogs describing

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3 The English translation has been found in a memo written by the headmaster of the Institute in 1997 (Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens Arkiv 1997-1998)
courses offered have been included in my study. Manual coding has been applied, when it was found relevant, while comprehensive coding has not been deemed necessary.

Finally, syllabi from Aarhus University, Copenhagen University, and Roskilde University Center related to courses in museum studies since 1998 have been studied as well as the annual catalogs of courses in the humanities at Aarhus University from 1973 to 1989 in order to map the development and content of academic educations for museum professionals.

In order to put the Danish development into an international perspective, I have explored selected descriptions of museum studies programs both in Europe and in the US. The European programs explored are Museumskunde at the University of Applied Sciences in Berlin (Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin), the master in museology at the Reinwardt Academy (Amsterdam University of the Arts), museum studies at Leicester University as well museum studies at the universities in Helsinki and in Umeå. In the USA have focused on museum studies programs in California at San Francisco State University, California State University Long Beach, University of California Santa Barbara, University of San Francisco (USF) and John F. Kennedy University (JFKU) in Berkeley. Furthermore, I have examined the development of the programs at USF and JFKU since 1976 based on course descriptions and interviews with relevant staff in order to form an international perspective to my Danish case study.

4.4. Job Advertisements

A specific type of written text is employment advertisements published by Danish museums between 1964 and 2018. In scholarly literature, job advertisements have been used to track the development of skills needed for more or less specific occupational fields (e.g., Todd et al. 1995, Den Hartog et al. 2007, Sodhi and Son 2010, Kim et al. 2013). In 2012, librarian Ray Harper reviewed 70 studies in the field of Library and Information Science from 1972 to 2010, finding that the study of job ads has been a popular method used in LIS research especially in the US. He found that the studies generally used extensive datasets collected with purposive sampling, which were analyzed using few complimentary sources and often without using inferential statistics or automatic text analysis (Harper 2012). As I will show, I have constructed an extensive, un-sampled dataset, which I analyze using interviews and text-analysis as complementary material.
4.4.1 Constructing the dataset

Due to the relatively small size of the labor market in Danish museums, it has been possible to create a dataset consisting of job ads for academic jobs posted by Danish museums from all years in the period from 1964 to 2018. The job ads have been collected from two different sources – namely the magazine for members of the Danish Association of Masters and PhDs (Magisterbladet published by Dansk Magisterforening) and the Danish job portal www.jobindex.dk.

In 1964, Magisterbladet changed the format from a newsletter to a bi-weekly magazine with job ads as a regular feature – making it possible to collect a comprehensive dataset. However, collecting data from a magazine connected to a specific union also entails certain limitations. Most importantly, the job ads collected all relate to people with academic educations – i.e., members of the association. For this reason, the dataset has deliberately been constructed to include only academic jobs and not all jobs posted by museums.

Towards the turn of the millennium, the number of museum jobs posted in Magisterbladet decreased from 51 ads in 1999 to 29 ads in 2002, indicating that employment in the field was either declining or that other channels for posting jobs were used. Exploring the non-industry specific, Danish web-portal www.jobindex.dk, whose archives date back to 2002, I found that an increasing number of museum jobs were posted online. Table 4.1 shows the annual number of museum jobs posted in ‘Magisterbladet’ and on www.jobindex.dk in the period 1999-2004, indicating a shift in the outlet for job ads from analog to digital during the beginning of the 2000s.

Table 4.1 Number of job ads posted in Magisterbladet and registered by www.jobindex.dk 1999-2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of ads in “Magisterbladet.”</th>
<th>Number of jobs registered by jobindex.dk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In February 2017, I obtained an extensive extract from the database of jobindex.dk containing 3,945 job ads using the word ‘museum’ posted online on several different websites compiled by www.jobindex.dk covering the period 2002-2016. In order to match the dataset from ‘Magisterbladet’, the extract was sorted so that jobs not posted by museums as well as non-academic jobs were excluded.

In sorting the dataset, I used three specific criteria:

1. Omitting jobs not related to museums. A number of the jobs included in the extract from jobindex.dk were not museum jobs, but jobs using the word museum as part of the job description – e.g., school teachers making field trips to museums.

2. Omitting practical job functions in museums – i.e., jobs such as craftsmen, cleaning staff and kitchen staff were not included in the dataset, because these types of the job were part of the study and they were not advertised in Magisterbladet and therefore did not match the initial dataset.

3. Omitting specific job functions, which were not comparable with the earlier dataset, including administrators at non-managerial levels – i.e., accountants and secretaries, students, front staff, custodians and volunteers. Such positions were not posted in ‘Magisterbladet’ – and many of them were most likely not posted at all.

Two relevant, academic job functions were exempted from the dataset, even though they were found in both datasets and qualify as academic positions – namely conservation and researchers in specific projects. The field of conservation has been a specific field of museum work with specific institutions, training, and requirements since the 1970s and has undergone an independent professionalization. Moreover, about 200 ads for PhD, postdoc or professorship positions relating to specific research projects were discarded, since they did not describe general museum work but rather specific academic projects. All ads were
sorted manually in order to enforce the criteria mentioned as best as possible and to avoid redundancy due to ads being posted on multiple websites or posted several times.

Finally, in February 2019, I accessed the online archive of www.jobindex.dk in order to supplement the dataset with job ads from 2017 and 2018 – using the abovementioned selection criteria. Therefore, the total dataset compiled consists of 2,730 job ads – i.e., 930 ads from ‘Magisterbladet’ covering the period 1964-2001, 1,569 ads from the extract of www.jobindex.dk from 2002 to 2016, and 231 ads from 2017-2018 collected on www.jobindex.dk (accessed February 21-22 2019).

4.4.2 Coding and Categorization
Researchers Antoinette Fage-Butler and Nina Walters, who have studied Danish job ads for communication jobs between 1961 and 2011 – have characterized the format of job ads as consisting of five sections namely organizational identity, job description, personal specifications, practical information and contact information (Walters and Fage-Butler, 2014; 48). Inspired by these categories and based on an initial pilot study of job ads from 1964 to 1973, I developed a set of basic codes, which guided the collection of the data. The dataset was constructed as a spreadsheet applying the following closed codes: year of the job, employer, job title, education, qualifications, job description, permanency of the job and information on the number of work hours – i.e., full-time or part-time. During the further analysis of the data, education was merged with qualifications, since the subdivision proved to be difficult to maintain throughout the dataset and irrelevant for the analysis.

In practice, until 2001, the data was manually collected from printed magazines – recording information on the selected codes, i.e., not including full sentences. Thus, education was just recorded as an academic title and/or discipline and not as the whole sentence used in the ad. The extract from jobindex.dk was a spreadsheet with 11 columns – of which information was collected from four – namely date and year, job title, employer, and job description. The job descriptions contained the full text of the ads, including coding language (such as HTML). From this, information on qualifications, job descriptions, permanency, and the hours of work was extracted manually by copy-pasting.

In order to be able to characterize the development of Danish museums as a professional field of work, each job ad was categorized according to the field of work based on the title of the job. For this, I constructed six categories adapted from categories introduced by the ICOM International Committee for Training of Personnel (ICTOP) in 2008 (Ruge, 2008). ICTOP identified 20 distinct professions in 4 categories – namely
director, visitors (including education services, visitor care, security, library functions and webmaster), collections and research (including curator, registrar, exhibition and display curator and exhibition designer) and administration, management and facilities (including administrator, facilities manager, IT manager, marketing manager, fundraiser and media officer). (Ruge 2008: 14). In order to fit the collected dataset, I adapted the ICTOP-categories to fit my study in three significant ways:

First, in order to fit my definition of mediation as all job functions related to public, outward communication, all positions in mediation were placed in a category, which I entitled ‘mediation’, including exhibition designers and display curators, which in the ICTOP model was placed in the category of collection and research, and marketing employees, which was placed in the category of administration by ICTOP (Ruge 2008: 14).

Second, I added two categories to the ones set up by ICTOP – namely ‘curator’ and ‘project’. The category ‘curator’ covers all job ads using the title ‘museumsinspektør’ (curator), which is generally used as a generic job title covering several functions typically related both to research, collection, and mediation. The category ‘project’, which includes all ads describing specific temporary projects as the framework for the position, was added in order to be able to test the commonly voiced assumption that museum jobs have become increasingly temporary. (see, e.g., Marker and Rasmussen 2019:88-89).

Third, practical jobs such as security managers or visitor care assistants, which are included in the ICTOP-categories, are exempted from my dataset due to the properties of the source material as mentioned above. In my study, the proportion of ads in each category and the shifts in the distribution of ads between the categories over time are seen as indications of the development of the definition of professional museum work in the period studied.

4.4.3 Drawbacks of Job Ads as Sources

In his article, Ray Harper has compiled a list of drawbacks in using job ads as a source for academic research collected from various previous studies. These drawbacks include the accessibility of the material, the sampling of the job ads as a potential challenge for the depth of the analysis, the relationship between job ads and reality, and job ads as a tendentious source (Harper, 2012: 30-31). In the present study, I have sought to counter these challenges as best as possible.

First, in composing the dataset, I found a significant challenge; namely that not all museum jobs were necessarily posted neither in ‘Magisterbladet’, at jobindex.dk nor
elsewhere – i.e. not all job postings were accessible. A comparison between the job ads
posted in ‘Magisterbladet’ and the section announcing new employments revealed
significant discrepancies. For instance, in 1990, the aggregated list of jobs announced
recently occupied included 51 museum jobs, of which 36 were not found advertised in
earlier editions of the magazine. Several informants in the collected interviews have also
addressed the posting of jobs. The director of Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum (1963-1989),
Else-Marie Boyhus explained, that many positions were filled by direct recruitment among
interns at the National Museum (Interview Else-Marie Boyhus) and the same was confirmed
for the art museums, which according to the former director of Silkeborg Kunstmuseum
(1973-2004), Troels Andersen, recruited staff from the National Gallery (Interview Troels
Andersen).

Following the current rules for positions in the public sector, which are observed by
most of the state-subsidized museums in Denmark – new, permanent jobs must be
advertised. However, according to the director of Svendborg Museum, Esben Hedegaard,
also now direct recruitment is used in the sense that opening positions are created to fit
interns and trainees already associated with the museum (Interview Esben Hedegaard).
While it is important to be aware of the potential bias caused by direct recruiting and
preexisting candidates, it is impossible to assess the extent or the development of this
practice over time. However, the collected dataset naturally only includes the jobs, which
has been posted in one of the two outlets used.

Second, according to Harper, a dataset of more than 2,700 job ads poses a potential
challenge since a large dataset could make a thorough analysis problematic (Harper
2012:30). Nevertheless, in this study, all relevant job ads from all years in the period have
been deliberately included for several reasons: Until 1977, the number of annually posted
jobs were limited. A maximum of 20 jobs was posted annually (and in some years as few as
five jobs – namely in 1966 and 1969). The early ads generally provided little information
about the job and the skills required. Therefore, a sample-based on criteria such as time
would create a potentially unacceptable bias, if the few ads with more elaborate information
were left out, or if they were to represent the whole material. As a result, the dataset has
been comprised to include as many ads as were accessible, and which fitted the
aforementioned criteria for selection. Likewise, the data include ads from all types of
organizations (i.e., state-owned, state-subsidized or private) and all museum categories (i.e.,
history, art or natural history). Even though there are significant differences between
different types of museums, there are also significant convergence across the field.
Moreover, for several museums, the organization and category have changed during the period making it difficult to limit the dataset using such criteria. For instance, museum mergers since the turn of the millennium have created several museums working with more than one category (e.g., Museum Sonderjylland). Likewise, a small number of ads from museums, which are not state-subsidized have been included in the dataset, since a number of the private, non-subsidized museums have followed and follow the general definitions of museum work set up in the museum legislation, making it difficult to distinguish their definition of professionalism from that of the state-recognized museums.

Third, Harper claims that "job adverts in isolation present a segmented and partial view of reality. Job ads do not provide any data which indicates the skills which successful candidates possess nor do they demonstrate the actual skills deployed in a job" (Harper, 2012: 31). More specifically, job ads provide information on how the institutions define the ideal job and the associated skills not on who applied for them or on how they were carried out. By using job ads without, e.g., interviewing working museum professionals or reviewing applications, I specifically study how professional museum jobs have been articulated by the museum institutions –limiting my study to the institutional discourse on professionalism in the museum field.

Fourth, in general, the genre of job ads have become more detailed over time, among other things, including more or less elaborate descriptions of the jobs (see Walter and Fage-Butler 2014). This development is also found in the collection of job ads from museums. During the 1960s and 70s, museum job ads often only contained information on the job title, the name of the museum, and the academic education needed. 82 out of 119 ads (i.e. 69%) from the period 1964-1976 did not include any further description of skills or the job, while only 206 out of 1800 ads (i.e., 11%) from 2002-2018 did not specify the job or skills, many of which instead referred to further information on the museum website.

The increasing detail indicates a growing specialization and a changing labor market for museums in which jobs increasingly needed to be explained and promoted. This development was already addressed by the chairman of the educational committee under the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN), curator at Vendsyssel Historical Museum, Per Noe, in a speech in 1987, where he said that changes in the workforce in the following 10-15 years would lead to a situation, where the jobs would not be created for specific people, but where the museum field would rather be so established that the jobs would be available for skilled applicants. (Speech given at the bi-annual meeting of SMN October 2, 1987, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager 1982-
2006). In other words, the dataset reflects general changes in the genre over time. Therefore, the material has been divided into three empirically constructed, consecutive periods based on the distribution of job ads over time (see chapter 6, figure 1) and an analysis of shifting themes in the museum legislation (chapter 5). The periods, which are 1964-1976 (119 job ads), 1977-2001 (811 job ads) and 2002-2018 (1800 job ads), allow for a comparative analysis of the content in each period.

4.4.4 Analyzing Job Ads

The dataset of job ads has been constructed with the purpose of answering three questions:

1. How has the labor market developed in Danish museums from 1964 to 2018?
2. How has the description of museum jobs changed from 1964 to 2018?
3. How has the definition of skills required in museum jobs shifted from 1964 to 2018?

Applying different statistical methods, I have sought to answer these questions through the analysis of the dataset. First off all, a simple count of different job titles has provided an insight into the development of the labor market. The further analysis has been inspired by a study by Sodhi and Son, who tracked recurrent phrases with up to eight words used in job ads for operational research jobs, including phrases used in more than 2% of the job ads in their dataset (Sodhi and Son, 2010; 1318-1319). My study constitutes a simplification of their method since I have mapped the frequency of single words used to describe the job and the skills required in each of the periods mentioned above using the data management software Nvivo, in order to take the uneven distribution of job ads between the three periods into account. The word frequency analysis has been executed in Danish, and the keywords have then been translated into English.

Following the method of Sodhi and Son, specific vocabularies were established for job descriptions and skills for each of the three periods. All words with less than five letters were excluded in order to avoid including non-descriptive words such as to (til), with (med), as (som) and will (vil). Although this approach potentially overlooks significant words with less than five letters, an exploratory evaluation of the excluded words with less than five letters indicated that the bias was minimal. In order to avoid skewing the composition of the vocabularies with words that might be used frequently in a small number of ads, the
frequency of each of the words identified by the automatic word frequency analysis was re-computed by counting the number of job ads using each particular word. The frequency of each word was calculated using the root of the word – e.g., the word ‘mediate’ also covers mediation and ‘administrate’ also covers ‘administration’. In order to make the further analysis manageable, I chose only to include words used in more than 5% of the ads in the vocabularies.

For the same reason, I manually excluded a small number of general words such as museum, work (arbejde), relevant, and tasks (opgaver). While different strategies for systematizing the exclusion of words were tried, it was not possible to set up fixed criteria besides a subjective evaluation of the descriptive properties or the context of the words. For instance, neither the word ‘museum’ nor the word ‘relevant’ add to a definition of museum professionalism, because it is self-evident that ads for museum jobs often contain the word ‘museum’, and that the applicants are expected to hold ‘relevant’ educations or ‘relevant’ skills for any job.

As a result, three vocabularies were developed with words describing museum jobs, including 21, 24, and 55 words in the periods 1964-1976, 1977-2001, and 2002-2016. Likewise, three vocabularies were compiled with 20, 27, and 52 words describing the skills needed in the periods. Finally, two aggregated vocabularies were created, including a total of 61 unique words for job description and 64 unique words for skills.

As a way to track changes in the discourse on museum work and skills over time, the words in each of the two vocabularies were categorized and distributed into eight inductively constructed categories; four related to job descriptions and four related to skills. The four categories identified for job descriptions, which has been inspired by the functional categories introduced by ICTOP (Ruge, 2008;14), are collection and research, communication, administration and development, and cooperation. In table 4.2, the keywords are divided into the four categories.
Likewise, the keywords related to skills has been divided into four categories inspired by the three definitions of competence identified by Terrence Hoffmann; i.e., a performative, a behavioral and a personal category (see chapter 4) to which I have added an academic category including the educational skills defined as needed. The four categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection and Research</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Development and cooperation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archeology</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Contribute (bidrage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeology</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>Coordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Take part in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(faglig)</td>
<td>Webpage</td>
<td>Operation (drift)</td>
<td>(medvirke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Communication Contact</td>
<td>Be in charge of (førestå)</td>
<td>Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Carry out</td>
<td>Build (opbygge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>(gennemføre)</td>
<td>Order (ordne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting (indsamling)</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art (kunst)</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (kunstindustri)</td>
<td>exhibition</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Educate</td>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Cooperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection (samling)</td>
<td>(undervise)</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secure (sikre)</td>
<td>(samarbejdspartner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (viden)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Take care of (varetage)</td>
<td>Create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>Organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(vedligeholde)</td>
<td>(tilrettelegge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Prepare (udarbejde)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(virksomhed)</td>
<td>Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Danish words are indicated in brackets when the English translation is ambiguous or not comprehensive.
related to skills are performative skills (i.e., skills relating to tasks to be performed),
behavioral skills (i.e., skills describing behaviors to be mastered), personal skills (i.e.,
character traits) and academic skills (i.e., required education). Table 4.3 shows the
distribution of the 64 aggregated words between the four categories.

Table 4.3 Categorized vocabulary of keywords for skills 1964-2018 (n=64)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Performative</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Danish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeology</td>
<td>(engageret)</td>
<td>Document</td>
<td>Digital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Mediate</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(embedseksamen)</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnology</td>
<td>Entering</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>(indsigt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional (faglig)</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Manage/management</td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (folkekultur)</td>
<td>experience</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Knowledge of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/historian</td>
<td>Museum experience</td>
<td>Museum work</td>
<td>(kendskab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Driver’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art history</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Magisterkonferens’*</td>
<td>(overblik)</td>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval archeology</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Nordic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum subject</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(museumsfag)</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>(undervisning)</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum relevant</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
<td>(viden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(museumsrelevant)</td>
<td>Structured</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ exam</td>
<td>Extrovert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skoleembedseksamen)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Danish words are indicated in italics and put in brackets when the English translation is ambiguous or not comprehensive.

* Magisterkonferes was an academic title between MA and PhD, which existed in the humanities at Danish universities until 2007.
Each of the words in the two vocabularies has been categorized according to its most frequent context in the material. Thus, ‘European’ is placed as an academic skill, because it most often occurs as part of the academic disciplines European ethnology or in contexts with archeology. In cases where the categorization has been disputable, alternatives have been explored. However, I found that the few cases where such considerations were relevant did not significantly alter the distribution. Based on this categorization, the development of the discourse on professionalism is tracked by comparing the distribution of words between the different categories for job descriptions and skills between the three periods.

4.5. Interviews

Besides documents and job ads, I have interviewed 30 retired and working museum professionals in managerial positions as well as museum scholars, which have taken part in the development of training and education for museum professionals. Exploratory interviews were also done with a number of representatives of international museum studies programs in Berlin, in Amsterdam and in five Californian universities, in order to obtain a broader understanding of the organization and discourse of museum educations providing a perspective for the Danish development of training and education. While all Danish interviews have been recorded and transcribed, the international conversations have been exploratory talks and therefore have not been recorded. In the following, I will only address the collection and analysis of the Danish material.

Inspired by the dichotomy between story and discourse, e.g. addressed by Madan Sarup (Sarup 1996:17), the interviews were aimed at collecting career accounts of key actors in the Danish museum field throughout the period as well as at tracking the discourse on professionalism among museum professionals, providing an internal interpretation of the

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4 The informants were Professor Dr. Oliver Rump at Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft in Berlin, museologist Peter van Mensch, who has played a significant role in developing curricula for and teaching museology at the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam, the director of museum studies at San Francisco State University, Professor Edward Luby, director of museum studies at University of California Santa Barbara, Carole Paul, professor of contemporary art history, museum and curatorial studies at California State University Long Beach, Nizan Shaked, professor of museum studies at John F. Kennedy University, Susan Spero, and adjunct professor of museum studies at University of San Francisco, Marjorie Schwarzer.
development. The interviews took place as conversations inspired by creative interviewing (Douglas 1985), focusing on four basic topics – namely:

- The development of the Danish museums as an institutional field throughout the period.
- The definition of professional museum work and the core knowledge of museum professionals.
- The skills needed of museum professionals.
- The training and educations offered to museum professionals in order to provide the required skills.

Using life stories to study the development of specific occupations has been used in a number of studies, e.g. of teachers (Smulyan 2004) and journalists (Meyers and Davidson 2017). In my study, asking informants to tell their occupational life story and to comment on the development of the field has provided me with a supplement to the other sources – offering explanations to gaps, drawing attention to significant points and providing nuances to former or current debates. Thus, the discrepancy mentioned above between the number of job ads and the occupied jobs in the field was explained by personal experiences from several of the informants, who related how they were recruited or had recruited employees themselves (e.g., interview Else-Marie Boyhus and Esben Hedegaard).

The informants were sampled using a combination of relevance sampling and snowball sampling (Krippendorff 2004:117-120). As a starting point, the informants were selected based on the objective to cover the whole period of the study as well as the three museum categories history, art, and natural history. Key informants were identified based on the archival research among the people recurring in central documents. For instance, the former head of Ribe museum (1961-1980), Mogens Bencard, and the former director of Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum (1963-1989), Else-Marie Boyhus, were selected as informants, because they played significant roles as participants in legislative committees and in the Danish Association of History Museums during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.

Some of the informants were chosen in order to cover specific topics – e.g. the secretary of the museum associations for history and art (DKM and FDK) from 1969 to 2007, Kirsten Rex Andersen, who was interviewed about the work of the associations, or the director of Svendborg Museum and the Danish Welfare Museum, Esben Hedegaard,
who was added to the sample in December 2018 based on a wish to explore the definition of competences in a museum working with a distinctly social issue. Table 4.4 provides a list of interviews and the professional affiliation of the informants.

**Table 4.4 Informants and their affiliations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relevant affiliations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christine Buhl Andersen</td>
<td>Director of Glyptoteket (2017-2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten Rex Andersen</td>
<td>Secretary of DKM (1969-2005), Secretary of FDK (1978-2005) and Secretary of ODM (2005-2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troels Andersen</td>
<td>Director of Silkeborg Art Museum now Museum Jorn (1973-2004), former head of the Association of Danish Art Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Birkebæk</td>
<td>Director of ROMU (Roskilde Museum) (1977-2017), Member and chairman of the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Else-Marie Boyhus</td>
<td>Director of Lolland-Falster Stiftsmuseum (1963-1989), chairman of the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn) during the 1970s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rune Gade</td>
<td>Associate professor teaching museology, Copenhagen University, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esben Hedegaard</td>
<td>Director of Svendborg Museum and the Danish Welfare Museum (1998-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruno Ingemann</td>
<td>Professor Emeritus, Department of Communication and Humanities, Roskilde University Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Buhl Jensen</td>
<td>Head of the education section at ODM (2014-2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position and Relevant Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nils Jensen</td>
<td>Director of the Association of Danish Museums (2008-) and Lecturer at the Danish Training Institute for Museums (1999-2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Secher Jensen</td>
<td>Director of the Natural History Museum in Aarhus (1999-2012), former head of the Association of Danish Natural History Museums (DNM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans Jeppesen</td>
<td>Director of the Maritime Museum (1981-2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bent Jørgensen</td>
<td>Director of exhibitions at the Zoological Museum (1965-1979), Director of Copenhagen Zoological Garden (1979-1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leila Krogh</td>
<td>Director of J.F. Willumsens Museum (1973-2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans-Henrik Landert</td>
<td>Consultant in the Agency of Culture and Palaces (Kulturstyrelsen) (2007-), Previously director of the local museum Færgegården in Frederikssund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ane Hejlskov Larsen</td>
<td>Associate professor of art history and museology at Aarhus University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carsten U. Larsen</td>
<td>Director of the national museum (2002-2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobo Krabbe Magid</td>
<td>Head of collections at the Danish National Museum (2015-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Riegels Melchior</td>
<td>Associate professor at the Saxo Institute, Copenhagen University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lars Kærulff Møller</td>
<td>Director of Bornholms Art Museum (1988-), former head of FDK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Allan Rasmussen</td>
<td>Director of the industrial museum Frederiks Værk (2005-), chairman of ODM at the time of the interview in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Bloch Ravn</td>
<td>Director of Den Gamle By – National Open Air Museum of Urban History and Culture (1996-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Salvig</td>
<td>Director of Naturama (1996-2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulla Schaltz</td>
<td>Director of Museum Lolland-Falster (2005-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position and Years Worked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jens Erik Sørensen</td>
<td>Director of Aarhus Kunstmuseum and later AROS (1979-2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample includes museum professionals working in the field since 1961. Ten informants were retired at the time of the interview, nine were working at museums, six worked in museum-related organizations, four were related to Danish Universities, and one, who had previous worked in a museum, was employed outside the museum field. Three of the informants were selected to represent the field of Natural history, five represented art museums, eleven represented history museums, four represented university-based programs related to museum studies, three represented the administrative oversight, three represented the vocational training organized by the museum associations, and one represented the museum associations.

However, during the interviews, it became clear that each informant had several approaches to the field. For instance, the former director of ROMU (1977-2017), Frank Birkebæk, both spoke as museum director for a regional museum and as a member and chairman of the National Council of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn) during the 1980s. Likewise, the former director of the Agency of Cultural Heritage (2002-2011) Steen Hvass also related to his past as director of the local museum in Vejle (1979-1994) and as director of the Danish National Museum (1996-2001). Furthermore, all informants interpreted the museum field and its development as a whole both as professionals and as users of museums, providing additional insight into the topic.

The interviews took place in the period between December 2016 and December 2018 either in the homes or the offices of the informants, except the interview of Bruno Ingemann, which took place at a café. All interviews were conducted in one round lasting between 30 minutes and 3 hours. In most cases, the interviews took place with a single respondent. However, the former secretary for the museum associations DKM and FDK, Kirsten Rex Andersen, was interviewed together with her husband, the former director of the Maritime Museum, Hans Jeppesen.
In two cases (i.e., the interview with the former director of exhibitions at the Zoological Museum (1965-79), Bent Jørgensen, and the interview with the former head of Odsherred Museum and headmaster of Museumshøjskolen (1988-2005), Ole Strandgaard) their wives sporadically participated in the interview adding recollections and interpretations. Finally, in two cases, colleagues were included in part of the interview. Museum consultant in the Agency for Culture and Palaces (Slots og Kulturstyrelsen), Hans Henrik Landert, included his colleague, Sidsel Staun, in the interview, and the director of Svendborg og Omegns Museum, Esben Hedegaard, brought in curator Jeppe Wichmann Rasmussen. As already mentioned, all interviews except the one with the former director of Silkeborg Kunstmuseum (1973-2004), Troels Andersen, were recorded and transcribed.

A loose frame of questions was developed, matching the identity of the specific informant in order to allow for adaptations, open narratives, and evaluations. The interview protocol was changed over time in order to correct lines of questions which were not working, to clarify previous inconsistencies or to include newly developed points of interest indicated by previous interviews, thereby following the dialectic relationship between data collecting and analysis, which is part of grounded theory. For instance, the general question about a definition of museum professionalism was supplemented by a long line of inquiry into different areas of work in museums, the composition of professional museum staff, the significance of managerial skills and the difference in the discourse in different museum categories.

The loose protocol was chosen for several reasons. First, of the 30 informants, 22 had worked or currently work as museum managers, qualifying as elite informants, who are used to reflecting on, evaluating and mediating the subject of study (Kvale and Brinkmann 2008; 167). By adopting a loose protocol, the informants were allowed to affect the line of inquiry, facilitating self-representation. Second, choosing the format of loose conversation my practical experience in the field could be exploited to elaborate the narratives and evaluations and to bridge possible differences between an academic study of museum work and the practical narratives, which is one of the challenges pointed out by Meyers and Davidson as a characteristic of studies of practical fields of work (Meyers and Davidson 2017: 282).

4.5.1 Possible Biases

Nevertheless, two of the potential challenges in using contemporary interviews as sources for historical events are the relation between the narrated story and the actual event, and the
influence of the interviewer on the narrative. First of all, the distance between the time of the interview and the events related poses a potential challenge to the validity of interviews as sources. In their study of Israeli journalists, Meyers and Davidson have pointed out that life stories are always both referential and evaluative, meaning that the story is always related to the specific point in time, when it is told – i.e., the narrative about the past is constructed according to the present (Meyers and Davidson 2017:281-282). Simply put, memory, later events, and the current perception of the topic naturally influence any interview about the past.

In my case, the informants were asked to narrate their occupational life story as well as to comment on the development of professional museum work throughout the period of the study, combining their narrative with their interpretation of the overall development. However, in a number of cases, the informants voiced reservations towards this line of questions; some pointed out that they had not been active for years, and therefore, had not formed an opinion about the current state of the museum field (e.g. Mogens Bencard and Ole Strandgaard), while others referred to their experience as limited to a particular museum category (e.g., Leila Krogh), or pointed out the distance in time making it difficult to add details to the narrative (e.g. Bent Jørgensen). Therefore, it is important to stress, that the interviews are based on memories, rationalizations, and personal evaluations in many cases spanning decades. Nevertheless, being key figures in the field, the informants add details, interpretations, explanations, and insights, which supplement the written material.

Second, the qualitative interview can be characterized as a craft, which is dependent upon the abilities, sensitivities, and knowledge of the researcher as the primary research tool (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:102). Therefore, it is necessary to critically reflect on the role of the interviewer. As addressed in chapter 3, my study can be characterized as insider research, since I have a long experience working in the field. As an interviewer, this insider perspective has provided increased access to the field by facilitating access to informants (i.e., I have known who to contact). Furthermore, it has provided an analytical insight e.g. in the form of knowledge of idioms used in the field such as ‘the five pillars of museum work’, of workflows e.g. knowing the tools used in the registration of artefacts or of the format of the traditional, annual meetings organized by the museum association (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM). On the one hand, such insights have honed my questions and facilitated the conversation. On the other hand, the role as insider has no doubt also at times resulted in complicity in the conversations. Therefore, I have repeatedly
reflected upon possible preconceptions and complicity when planning the interviews and analyzing the results.

### 4.5.2 Analyzing Interviews

All recorded interviews have been transcribed using the data management software Nvivo, translating the interviews into text. Likewise, the notes taken during the interview with Troels Andersen has been transformed into a memo. All transcripts, as well as the memo, have been coded manually using open coding in order to identify central stories and discourses. The coding was used to point out new perspectives or discrepancies, which then instructed the subsequent interviews and analyses of material. When relevant, additional coding has been performed using a combination of manual and automated text searching techniques. Systematic coding based on existing categories was not considered necessary since the interviews predominantly function as perspectives to and interpretations of the discourses and events found in the other source material.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which entered into force in May 2018, questions of anonymity and the handling of personal data have been the subject of ongoing considerations. Since the Danish museum field is small and the informants have occupied significant positions and participated in the public debate, it is impossible to anonymize the informants, even though initials are used instead of names in the transcripts. All informants (except Troels Andersen) verbally agreed that the interviews could be recorded and the interviews used in the present project, however, with the general reservation that direct quotes should be approved. Therefore, all quotes from interviews, used throughout the dissertation, have been sent out for approval, in order to avoid misunderstandings and to allow for comments and clarifications to be added. Since the interviews are unique sources of Danish museum history, the material will be sought preserved at the National Archive as part of the archive of the Association of Danish Museums after the termination of the research project provided the permission of the informants.

### 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explained the methodological strategy of the study. First, I addressed the structure and methodological basis for my project relating to the general paradigms of mixed methods and grounded theory. Second, I presented the three main types of sources used (documents, job ads and interviews), and the methods applied for collecting and
analyzing the material. Furthermore, I discussed the value and possible challenges for each type of material. In the following chapters, I track the development of professionalism as a discourse first in the museum legislation (chapter 5), then in the definition of practical museum work (chapter 6) and third in the organization of training and educations related to the museum field (chapter 7). Finally, I zoom in on the definition and development of professionalism in the specialized field of museum mediation (chapters 8 and 9).
Chapter 5

The Creation of a Museum System.

Professionalizing

Danish Museums 1958-2018

Abstract:
Since 1958, legislation has regulated the Danish museum field, describing the role of museums, structuring the field and defining museum work. In this article, I analyse the Danish museum legislation and the related discussions since 1958 in order to track the development of the Danish museum field. Drawing on the tradition of historical institutionalism, I identify three phases of professionalization delimited by critical junctures in 1958, 1976 and 2001. Each phase is characterized by specific aims conveying a specific understanding of professionalism. Finally, I relate the current debate about the museum field to the historical context, asking whether a new critical juncture is imminent.

Keywords: Professionalization, legislation, institutional development, history.

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In June 2017, the Danish Minister of Culture formed two working groups to suggest new models for the structure and subsidiary system of the state-supported museums in Denmark to replace a system that was argued to be unjust, lacking transparency and based on historical conditions.¹ In this paper, I analyse the Danish museum legislation since 1958, asking how historical conditions and different agents have affected the development of the professional museum field.

Until the Danish Parliament in 1958 passed the first Museum Act for history museums (the term covers all cultural heritage museums as defined in the act), a limited number of museums had been subsidized by appropriations under the Finance Act and specific legislation had been limited to institutions such as the National Museum. The Museum Act of 1958 introduced a model for structuring a professional museum field through addressing the role and responsibilities of museums as parts of the Danish welfare state, and by defining a set of criteria triggering subsidies that enabled museums to hire professional staff.

Throughout the period, there has been a strong tradition for museum professionals to participate in the legislative process, discussing the structure of the museum field, the definition of museum work and the role of museums in society. Thus, the legislation and the debates reflect the ongoing processes of organizing the professional Danish museum field, and constitute a significant source for identifying the so-called historical conditions of the current Danish museum structure.

Denmark is one of the only countries in the world with a long tradition of regulating public subsidies for museums by law. In other countries, legislation has often been related to named museums (e.g. the British act for subsidizing the Imperial War Museum from 1920) or it has focused on the general preservation and protection of cultural heritage (e.g. Law 107/01 on Cultural Heritage in Portugal from 2001). Only a small number of countries have passed specific museum acts that regulate coherent museum fields. Among these countries are e.g. Poland (1996), Iceland (2001), Latvia (2007), Japan (2008), Estonia

Several of these pieces of legislation (e.g. the Baltic Museum Acts) have been directly inspired by Denmark, and therefore the Danish legislation provides a unique empirical case for studying the development of a legal structure for a professional museum field over an extended period of time.

The study is based on textual analysis of 10 Danish Museum Acts from 1958, 1964, 1969, 1976, 1984, 1989, 2001 and 2012, as well as on relevant archival material related to the legislation and the accompanying debates. The materials used include ministerial reports on the cultural field and on museums from 1956, 1969, 1975, 1995, 2011 and 2017, relevant archives from the Ministry of Culture, parliamentary committees and museum associations, containing correspondence, responses to public hearings, minutes from meetings and posts in the professional journals Stof fra Danske Museer, Museumsmagasinet and Danske Museer. Furthermore, I have interviewed a number of museum professionals who have been active in the debate throughout the period.

In the following, I start by setting up a theoretical framework for analysing institutional development. Then, I analyse the Danish museum legislation and the ongoing debates from 1958 to 2017, seeking to identify if, how, when and by whom the structure of the museum field has been negotiated, and finally I discuss how the present debate can be seen in relation to the historical development.

### 5.1. Historical institutionalism, path dependence and critical junctures

Analysing the current structure of the museum field as a product of historical conditions, I am inspired by the research tradition known as historical institutionalism that is prominent within the fields of political science and sociology. Historical institutionalists perceive development as a chain of interdependent variables connected over time rather than as

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2 Source: https://en.unesco.org/cultnatlaws/list (accessed February 2019). However, the Japanese Museum Act dates back to 1951 and the Swedish Museum Act is not mentioned in the UNESCO list.

3 In 1958, the Museum Act only included history museums, and in 1964 and 1969 separate legislation was passed for art museums and history museums.

4 The study is part of my doctoral research on the development of the museum profession in Denmark since 1958, which is included in the large, national, Danish research program Our Museum.
isolated events (Steinmo 2008), and they traditionally argue that institutional change follows path-dependent, evolutionary ways (Kangas & Vestheim 2010:273). Path dependence was introduced into political science in order to explain the resilience of institutions and the different, not necessarily efficient, development of institutions under similar circumstances (e.g. Pierson 2004). In this research tradition, development is characterized as a punctuated equilibriumin which so-called critical junctures represent points in time “in which major changes are triggered primarily by exogenous forces, and new institutional arrangements and new developmental pathways are created.” (Sorensen 2017:25, see also Capoccia 2016). In the analysis of the museum legislation, I seek to identify and characterize such critical junctures in the development of the Danish museum field.

During the last decades, several researchers working with historical institutionalism have stressed the importance of endogenous processes in institutional change as a supplement to path dependence, critical junctures and exogenous or external drivers of change. Thus, in 2010, the American political scientists Kathleen Thelen and James Mahoney introduced a conceptual framework for analysing institutional change focusing on institutions as inherently dynamic entities that develop as power shifts between agents within the institutions (Mahoney and Thelen 2010). Pursuing this line of thought, I look at the development of the Danish museum field both as an incremental process affected by endogenous drivers and as a punctuated equilibrium influenced by exogenous events.

Overall, the history of the Danish museum field can be described as an ongoing professionalization. As a concept, professionalization is often only vaguely defined and related to the development of controlled occupational groups within a specific field of work (e.g. Abbott 1991, Evetts 2011). In this article, I regard professionalization as a multidimensional process in which different phases in the development promote different aspects of making an occupation professional. To the best of my knowledge, using such optics for studying museums has not previously been done. Over the years, the development of professional museum work has been studied by a number of scholars in the field of museology and museum studies (e.g. van Mensch 1992, Weil 2002, Davis et al. 2010).

For this perspective, I thank one of the anonymous referees of this paper.
Furthermore, the historical development of the Danish museum legislation has been analysed several times (e.g. Lundbæk 1985, Banke 1992, Dam Christensen 2007, Harnow 2017, Nørskov 2018). However, in 2010 cultural scientists Anita Kangas and Geir Vestheim advocated the use of path dependence as a lens through which to analyse the resilience of Nordic cultural policy, calling for further empirical studies in the field (Kangas & Vestheim 2010). This paper constitutes such an empirical study with a focus on the museum field and thereby contributes to the existing body of research, providing an overview of the recent Danish museum history as well as a new perspective on museums as a public, institutional field.

5.2. 1958–1976: Political professionalization

In 1956, the Danish Ministry of Education published a report identifying 116 history museums and 24 special museums outside the city of Copenhagen. Of these, only 38 received state subsidies specified in the Finance Act at a tariff unchanged since 1941. Local subsidies were described as varying, and the condition of the collections as critical. In March 1958, the Minister of Education therefore presented the first museum bill concerning subsidies to local, history museums, arguing that:

‘[…] the old generation of museum founders is dying out, the collections have multiplied and the requirements for their preservation have grown, so that most museums today find themselves in a very difficult situation both concerning their financial basis and concerning their management.’

(Folketingets Forhandlinger (hereafter FF) 1957–58, column 2903; all quotes have been translated from Danish by the author)

As such, the first Danish Museum Act was the result of a critical juncture brought on by an incremental decline in human capital in the museum field, a decline in the condition of the collections and a lack of sufficient funding. The resulting act aimed to establish a subsidiary

6 The museums in the Copenhagen area were not part of the initial analysis.
system in order to distribute public funding for museums between local and national budgets by allotting state subsidies in an amount equal to the local.

5.3. Defining museum fields

Different perceptions of the purpose and affordances of history and art museums led to two specific Museum Acts passed in 1958 and 1964. Both acts defined specific financial and professional standards as well as accessibility as criteria for obtaining state subsidies (Act 166 (1958), § 3, sec. 1.d, 1.e, and Act 118 (1964), § 3, sec. 1.d and 1.f). While history museums were organised hierarchically, with up to 17 regional museums (landsdelsmuseer) required to have professional staff overseeing and consulting other subsidized museums in the region (Act 166 (1958), § 2), the 20 art museums were all supervised by the National Board of Art Museums (Kunstmuseumsnævnet). In 1963, a report by the National Inspectorate for Local Museums (Statens Lokalmuseumstilsyn, SLT) explained the hierarchical structure by way of stating that the same requirements did not apply to small and big museums: while the purpose of small museums was to register, maintain and present the collections with an educational aim, more information and scientific effort was expected of big museums (FF 1963–64, appendix A, columns 485–494). In other words, the hierarchical position of the individual museum determined the definition of the work required to fulfil the criteria in the legislation. This structure has been debated several times over the years and most recently resurfaced in the debate in 2017.

The museum professionals in both history and art museums were given considerable influence over the supervision and development of the field. In both supervisory bodies, the SLT and the National Board of Art Museums, museum professionals had considerable representation. Thus, five out of the seven members in the SLT represented the National Museum and the Association of Danish History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM Act 166 (1958), § 7), and two of the 3–4 members of the National Board of Art Museums represented the National Gallery and the Association of Danish Art Museums (Foreningen Danske Kunstmuseer, FDK, Act 118 (1964), § 3, sec 1.e, §4 and §7). Especially the members of DKM were very active in drafting the legislation. Mogens Bencard, the former director of Ribe Museum from 1961 to 1980 and secretary of DKM during the 1960s and 70s, commented: “We made the laws […] we came in and submitted
a bill to the minister – a finished bill with all the sections” (Interview Mogens Bencard). These bills often provided a significant part of the final museum acts.

5.4. Professional standards and the relevant museum

Initially, the museum legislation defined only vaguely the professional standards required in museums. During the political debates, the non-professionals’ past efforts were praised and politicians expressed the concern that too strict educational requirements could damage citizen initiatives. To that effect, the representative from the conservative-liberal party, Venstre, said in 1958: “I don’t think that we shall be too strict […], since the job hitherto has been done, even if the contributing agents have not been absolute professionals” (FF, 1957–58, column 3033).

In practice, the skills of the museum professionals who were hired were also relatively broad. Thus, some of the most active participants in the development of the professional museum field were the author, literary historian and director of Viborg Museum (1960–1993) Peter Seeberg and the architect and director of Vendsyssel Historical Museum (1960–1997) Palle Friis, and although the art museums were more monodisciplinary, two of the most prominent figures in the field were the attorney and head of the private art association in Esbjerg (1956–1986) Torben Permin, and the businessman and founder of the contemporary art museum Louisiana Knud W. Jensen. In other words, the necessity of academic credentials was disputed and the definition of the required skills was vague during the 1950s and 60s.

Instead, the debate about the museum field focused on defining the role of museums as public institutions. In 1958, the Minister of Education stated:

‘Museums are not just a matter of entertainment. It is at the history museums that ordinary people have the best opportunity to gain an understanding of the background to the situation we live in today, and the awareness that we are not isolated neither in space nor in time.’ (FF 1957–58, columns 2904–2905)

Similarly, in 1964 during the parliamentary debate about art museums, a Member of Parliament from the Social Democrats said that ‘society must strive to give the eternal values of culture first priority in order to prevent the banishment of human values under the mounting pressure of technology’ (FF 1963–64, column 2113). Thus, the stakes were high,
and even though the definition of museums as educational institutions was not new, the articulated stress on their relevance and public benefit was a new political agenda assigned to the museums – representing a political professionalization of the field.

During the 1960s, the political ideals related to museums were increasingly linked to the field of mediation. Both the 1958 and 1964 acts stressed accessibility by requiring subsidized museums to have fixed opening hours and free access for schoolchildren (Act 166 (1958), § 3.1.e and Act 118 (1964), §3.f).

In 1969, the Ministry of Culture published a report identifying ‘the relationship with the part of the population that does not have any special interest in museum collections’ as the main issue for museums. The museums were asked to learn from the new media – i.e. radio and TV – and to become “dangerous museums” and “arsenals, from which arguments could be collected to criticise the existing order of society” (Report 517, 1969:155). Thus, political ideals about the museums as relevant through mediation were articulated – constituting a political professionalization of the field.

This ideal was subsequently operationalized in the 1969 Museum Act, which specified that both history museums and art museums could apply for additional funding if they arranged presentations of cultural movies, music or literary readings etc. (Act 272 (1969) and 273 (1969), § 1.2, § 5.1.3 and FF, app. A, 1968–69, column 4207). In addition, the acts introduced the title of Museum Educator (museumspædagog) as professional staff dedicated to working with mediation. In practice, also the new museum professionals took a special interest in mediation. Leila Krogh, the former director of J.F. Willumsens Museum (1973–2006) explained: “[mediation] was my own personal approach to museum work – that was what I wanted with my subject” (Interview Leila Krogh).

As shown, the introduction of a legal framework for museums in Denmark can be seen as a result of a critical juncture created by the endogenous development of the Danish museum field existing prior to 1958. The legislation constituted a juridical professionalization by providing museums with a comprehensive ruleset, setting up two parallel museum fields with different structures for cultural historical museums in 1958 and art museums in 1964.

The museum acts focused on defining the role of the museums as public institutions, and during the 1960s, the related debates centred on political ideas about the relevance of museums for a wider public, rather than on defining professional educational standards for the employees.
5.5. 1976–2001: Institutional professionalization

The subsidiary system led to the hiring of a growing number of paid professionals in museums that had previously been run by volunteers. In 1967, DKM counted a total of 213 paid employees in state-subsidized history museums (Archive of DKM: Museumsstatistik 1967–70), and in 1980, this workforce had grown to 1007 permanent full-time positions (Gregersen et al. 1980:31). Furthermore, in 1972 the sum allotted to state-recognized museums was more than six times higher than in 1958 in constant prices (Report 727, 1975:204) due to the equal allocation of subsidies between the local and national level, the growing financial engagement from local authorities and the increase of subsidized museums. The success of engaging local finances made it difficult for the state to control its mounting expenses in the field. Moreover, recession replaced the economic optimism of the 1960s. This contributed to creating another critical juncture in the development of the Danish museum field – originating from the intrinsic development of the field and the exogenous change – i.e. the international economic downturn.

In 1976, a new Museum Act, including history, nature and art museums, was passed and it significantly restructured the museum field and its subsidiary system. The hierarchical structure of the history museums was replaced by regional museum councils with the purpose of co-ordinating the work between the museums in the regions (Act 304 (1976), ch. 3). According to the Minister of Cultural Affairs, the new structure aimed at promoting ‘a desired decentralization of the museum administration while at the same time upholding a central coordination’ (FF, 1975–76, column 3642–3645). Thus, organization, coordination and consolidation of the field became central topics in the museum debate during the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

5.6. ‘The museums want duties’

Interestingly, the need for coordination was formulated by the museum field during the beginning of the 1970s, underlining the dynamic development of the museum field as well as the influence of the museum professionals. In 1972, Peter Seeberg, who was chair of

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7 The number of subsidized history museums grew from 38 in 1958–59 receiving 354,000 dkr (i.e. about 736,000 dkr. in 1972) to 75 museums receiving 4,874,600 dkr. in 1972–73.
DKM at the time, claimed that the museum field was facing a new phase of professionalization, advocating a new, necessary focus on coordination between the museums as the best way to live up to the role expected of the museums (Bro-Jørgensen et al. 2001:63–71). A decade later in 1982, the director of Odsherred museum, (1976–1988) and then chair of DK Ole Strandgaard, explained to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs:

‘The museums want duties. They want both the right and the duty to do research, collect, preserve and mediate. When this is desired to be expressed in the law, it is because it can be difficult for small local museums to be allowed to do the less popular tasks. With the law in hand, this could be easier.’ (Archives of the Ministry of Culture j.nr. 215000-1-83: letter to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 20 August 1982).

In other words, the museum professionals wanted a statutory role in order to secure their bargaining position facing different local and national political agendas. This desire tied into a debate during the 1970s and 80s between the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry for Cultural Affairs about the jurisdiction over the preservation of heritage sites and archaeological investigations. As a result, nine of the 44 paragraphs in the Museum Act of 1984 regarded the organization of archaeological work, including penal provisions for the violation of the duty to report possible archaeological findings during construction work (Act 291 (1984), ch. 8). Furthermore, in 1989 local authorities were instructed to inform ethnological museums about physical planning in the geographical area (Report 584, 1989, §36a). Thus, during the 1970s and 80s, the administrative role of the museum institutions concerning heritage was defined in increasing detail.

5.7. Defining the field

As part of the ongoing coordination, the legislation and the debate from the 1970s focused on defining professional museum work, the skills required and the internal division of labour in the field. In 1975, a brief written by SLT to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs stated that museum work consisted of three phases – collecting, preservation and mediation (FF, 1975–76, appendix B, column 1301–1302), a definition, which in the 1984 act was expanded into the five so-called ‘pillars’ of museum work – collecting, registration, preservation, research and mediation (Act 291 (1984), §2). Also, the definition of educational skills for museum
directors was included in the legislation in 1984. The Act specified that the director of the museum should be a professionally educated, full-time employee (Act 291 (1984), §11.1.7). Professional education was specified as ‘a university degree in a subject relevant for the museum such as archaeology, ethnology, ethnography, history, art history or natural history’ according to the topic of the museum (FF, 1983–84, Appendix A, column 891).

Finally, the division of labour between the individual museum institutions was organized. In 1984, each museum was required to claim responsibility for a specific part of the Danish cultural heritage or for a specified topic (Act 291 (1984), §11.1.3). Furthermore, the National Museum and the National Gallery were included in the Museum Act as the main museums for cultural history and art with the task of further developing and keeping central, national records of archaeological work and art collections in state-recognized museums (Act 291 (1984), ch. 2, Act 291 (1984), §11.1.11).

Thus, a centralized, hierarchical structure of the museum field was introduced and the previous responsibilities of the regional museums were placed with the main museums and newly formed supervisory body – the National Board of Museums (abbreviated SMN for Statens Museumsnævn). Such ongoing definitions of the museum field attest to its dynamic nature.

5.8. Influential professionals

Formally, the museum professionals continued to hold considerable influence over the development of the field during the 1970s. In 1976, the new supervisory body, SMN, was introduced, consisting of 16 members of which eight were elected by the regional museum councils – i.e. museum professionals. The influence of museum professionals was evident, for instance, in discussions about restructuring the subsidiary system and introducing block grants – a political strategy which museum professionals managed to block several times during the 1970s and 1980s. However, the influence of the professionals declined towards the end of the 1980s. Whereas SMN initially approved or rejected applications for state subsidies, oversaw budgets and work plans, and approved the employment of professional staff (Act 304 (1976), ch. 2), in 1989 the council was reduced to 12 members without political representation, and the task of reviewing budgets was transferred to the local contributors (Act 380 (1989), § 1.6 and 1.13), thereby reducing the political influence and economic control of SMN considerably. In addition, in 1989 the state subsidies became subject to an annually set maximum, fixed on the state budget (Act 380 (1989), § 1.12). This
meant that the annual state subsidies to the individual museums could vary according to the annual number of subsidized museums and local funding, making it impossible for the museums to budget with fixed state subsidies.

Accurately, Ole Strandgaard describes the development of the museum field as a transition from a museum world to a museum system (Interview Ole Strandgaard). The economic recession of the 1970s constituted an exogenous driver leading to significant changes in the subsidiary system of the museum field. However, as shown, the need for consolidation and coordination of the field was brought on by its massive growth and voiced by museum professionals. In other words, the shifting focus of the legislation and the creation of a museum system was the result of endogenous developments as much as of the exogenous economic downturn.

The ongoing attempt to define the museum field, museum work and the skills required became key elements in the developments of the 1980s. In other words, the museum field underwent an institutional professionalization with a focus on defining the key properties of the field. Simultaneously, the museum professionals gradually lost influence over the supervision of the field, leading up to a critical juncture that developed during the 1990s and caused a structural break at the beginning of the new millennium.

5.9. 2001–2017: Administrative professionalization

During the 1990s, the debate about the structure of the museum field in Denmark resurfaced (e.g. Banke 1991, Selmer 1991). The Minister of Culture asked a number of museum professionals to describe their visions for the future of the field. In one of the resulting essays, the director of Odense Bys Museer, Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, envisioned a museum field consisting of state-financed central museums, 14 state-subsidized regional museums and a number of locally financed museums (Grøngaard Jeppesen 1995:28), thus reintroducing a hierarchically structured field. Even though this idea was heavily criticized by the museums (Harnow 2017), and the revision of the legislation was postponed due to the lack of agreement and ongoing regional experiments with co-operation and decentralization in the cultural field (Act 1085 (1995)), it reveals an emerging will to rethink the structure of the museum field.

In 2001, a new museum act was passed, continuing the focus on organizing the museum field – e.g., defining a parallel structure for cultural history, art and natural history museums, introducing the zoological, geological and botanical museums as the main
museums for the natural field (Act 473 (2001), chs. 2, 3 and 4). Furthermore, the act reintroduced the focus on mediation by defining mediation for children and accessibility for the disabled as prerequisites for receiving state subsidies (Act 473 (2001), §4.1.12-13).

5.10. Power struggle

Following an increase in the number of museums working with both archaeology, ethnology and history, the Museum Act of 2001 required not only an educated director but also educated staff covering the topics of the museum (Act 473 (2001), §14.1.7). This was facilitated by a program, introduced during the 1990s by SMN, subsidizing the employment of new permanent curatorial positions for a three-year period. This program, which existed until the middle of the 2000s, enabled a number of small museums to hire additional academic personnel.

In the remarks for the proposed bill, it was argued that the requirements for the director varied according to the size and the character of the institution, and therefore they were difficult to define (Bill 152 (2000-2001), remarks §14.1.7). As opposed to the previous legislation, the bill did not specify the academic qualifications of the director, but in the adopted Act this requirement was not changed, and the director was still required to have a ‘relevant’ education (Act 473 (2001) §14.1.7). This discrepancy between the bill and the act can be seen as a result of the resilience of the field and of the ongoing influence of the museum professionals, but it also attests to the power struggle between the regulators – i.e. the ministry – and the practitioners.

The most significant change introduced by the Museum Act of 2001 was the replacement of the elected council SMN with a professional agency, the Heritage Agency of Denmark (abbreviated KUAS: Kulturarvsstyrelsen, Act 473 (2001), § 38). The first director of the agency was the former director of the National Museum from 1996 to 2002, Steen Hvass, who he describes the establishment of KUAS as an administrative manoeuvre in order to merge the field of cultural heritage from offices in several different ministries into one agency (Interview Steen Hvass).

However, in a speech given at the DKM annual meeting in 2000 the Minister of Culture stated: “The […] council for the museums is characterized by being a collegial body, seeking consensus on all evaluations and opinions. This is not always appropriate when counselling a ministry” (Gerner Nielsen 2000). In other words, the structural change
represented both a bureaucratic professionalization of the public administration but also a political showdown with the influence of the museum professionals.

5.11. Changing structures

In 2007, a comprehensive reform of the Danish administrative structure resulted in the dissolution of the regional counties and mergers of a number of municipalities. Although the regional funding for museums transitionally was continued by the State, in practice the reform upended the organizational structure and the subsidiary system, which had been tied to the counties since 1976. Thus, the structural reform of 2007 constituted an exogenous event, which significantly affected the development of the Danish museum field.

The Heritage Agency advocated and facilitated mergers between museums in order to create sustainable institutions (see e.g. Vinther 2010), and in 2010, the Ministry of Culture set up a working group to analyze the museum field and to make recommendations about its future structure, collaboration and co-ordination, core tasks, local anchorage and the implementation of new technologies (Kulturministeriet 2011:42–44). The group consisted of a representative from the Ministry and the directors of the Heritage Agency, the National Museum and the National Gallery, representing a centralized, top-down process that was directly opposed to the previous legislative debates in which the museum associations had been directly represented. After massive pressure from different stakeholders, a reference group was formed, including the Association of Danish Museums, which was created by a merger of the previous museum associations in 2005, and a number of other relevant stakeholders. The concluding report, which formed the basis for the subsequent revision of the Museum Act, recommended that the structure should be continued but with a focus on enhancing quality, coordination and professionalism (Kulturministeriet 2011). Thus, the envisaged showdown with the previous museum structure did not happen – probably due to the continuous influence from the practitioners and other stakeholders in the field.

5.12. Sustainability, relevance and simplification

The current Museum Act, which was passed in December 2012, maintains the definition of museums as public institutions with five interdependent tasks – namely collection, registration, preservation, research and mediation. However, it also reintroduces the value-based mission of the museum field by focusing on ‘professional and economic sustainability’, the cooperation between museums and the outside world (Act 1391 (2012),
§ 1.1), as well as actualization of knowledge and relevance for citizens and society (Act 1391 (2012), § 2).

The Museum Act simplified the regulations by abolishing the definition of specific qualifications for museum directors, arguing that both academic and managerial skills are required (Bill L 24 (2012) § 1.11). The Association of Danish Museums endorsed this argument during the legislative process in August 2012. Nevertheless, in practice a museum-related, academic education is still valued for museum directors. A survey of the staff listed on the websites of state-recognized museums in 2019 shows that only three of the 97 state-recognized museums have directors with education not directly related to the topic of the museum – in one case, the museum director is educated as a librarian, in the second the director is educated within the field of sociology of religion and in the third the director has a degree in political sciences. The former director of Roskilde Museum 1977–2017, Frank Birkebæk, furthermore explained the significance of academic professionalism within the traditional museum-related disciplines by saying:

‘The most important thing is that you are an educated professional – with a professional museum-related education – when you are a museum director. […] If you do not have the professionalism, you do not understand the institution and then you are not capable of developing it.’ (Interview Frank Birkebæk)

Thus, Frank Birkebæk is maintaining an academic museum education as a prerequisite for working in museums at least at managerial level. In other words, the deletion of the definition of skills in the Museum Act of 2012 attests to the increasing power of the regulative part of the museum field. Nevertheless, the importance of academic training within museum-related disciplines has been maintained – indicating a certain resilience in the field related to connecting the definition of museum professionalism to certain disciplines within the humanities.

Another way in which the Museum Act of 2012 changed the museum field was by changing the subsidiary system for awarding research grants – in practice requiring applicants to hold a doctoral degree (Bill 24 (2012), point 3.4.4.4). For museums that had predominantly employed candidates with the Magister Artium degree, an academic degree between the Master and the PhD existing in the humanities in Denmark until 2007, this constituted a challenge. The PhD degree had been introduced in the humanities in 1993 and
the candidates had initially been rejected by the museums as too theoretical for practical museum work (Danske Museer 1996, SMN’s annual report:12). The new rules excluded most curators from research grants. The enforcement of the rules represented a professionalization and thereby a specialization of the field of research in museums. Even though the Heritage Agency initiated programs to accredit existing museum researchers and to subsidize the education of new PhDs at the museums, the change has significantly influenced the organization of work within the museum institutions, leading to increasing division of labor and specialization.

To sum up, since the 1990s the museum field has been characterized by an endogenous power struggle between the Ministry of Culture and museum professionals – characterized by the declining influence of the practitioners. The introduction of a professional, supervising agency in 2001 marked a critical juncture in the development of the Danish museum field. Due to the strong resilience of the field, the Museum Act of 2001 continued the previous focus on both coordination and organization of the field, maintaining the definition of academic professionalism. However, facilitated by the administrative changes in Denmark in 2007 as an exogenous event, the Museum Act of 2012, reformulated the role of museums, changing the legal framework for the Danish museum field from predominantly defining a professional institutional field to defining the ideological value of museums – thereby subjecting the museums field to a new political professionalization.

5.13. Three phases of professionalization

In my analysis of the Danish museum legislation since 1958, I have identified three critical junctures, which can be seen as historical conditions for the current museum field – namely the introduction of specific museum legislation in 1958, the restructuring of the museum field represented by the Museum Act of 1976 and the introduction of a professional supervision in 2001.

On the one hand, each of the junctures was formed by intrinsic developments in the museum field, creating perceived instabilities in the form of a lack of resources during the 1950s and 60s, rapid growth and the need for the consolidation of political bargaining power during the 1970s and 1980s and the power struggle between the Ministry of Culture and the museum professionals during the 1990s and 2000s.

In addition, the analysis has shown how changing aims in the legislation have contributed to different dimensions of professionalization.
– namely legal/political professionalization, institutional professionalization and administrative professionalization.

On the other hand, the junctures were promoted by exogenous events namely as the formation of the welfare state during the 1950s, the economic downturn during the 1970s and the administrative reform in 2007. Thus, in some ways, the development of the Danish museum field confirms the theory of punctuated equilibrium; however, it also accentuates a dynamic process in which intrinsic developments form critical junctures. In other words, the current museum field is conditioned by specific events as well as by intrinsic developments determined by the power relation between regulators and practitioners.


In 2017, the debate about the museum fields was reopened, motivated by the need for further sustainability in the institutions and the perceived inscrutability of the existing subsidiary system. Two working groups, each consisting of a former museum director and three consultants from outside the museum field, were asked by the minister to consider the need for equality in the requirements for museums, the future distribution of responsibility between the local and national level, future incentives to the museums and future possibilities for re-evaluating and revoking state recognitions (Mission statement, 30 June 2017). The mission of the groups thus suggested a significant showdown with central parts of the existing structure, e.g. the distribution of tasks and the equality throughout the museum field.

In December 2017, the two groups handed in their reports, both suggesting a significant restructuring of the field and a redefinition of central concepts – both to some degree returning to previous ideas and debates. The first report (Birkebæk & Bak 2017) underlined the relevance of museums as public institutions, suggesting a subsidiary system based on performance and reducing the definition of museum work to preservation and mediation – thus doing away with the time-honored five pillars of museum work. The second report (Nielsen & Nissen 2017) proposed a hierarchical system in which only the state-owned museums and 5–10 regional knowledge centers should be state-subsidized by performance contracts, while financing the rest of the museums locally based on block grants.

Adhering to the tradition of public debate among stakeholders, no proposal for a new Museum Act has been introduced as of the beginning of 2019. However, the general political
willingness to renegotiate the basic structures organizing the museum field, the relative radicalism of the proposed solutions and the relatively weak position of the museum practitioners suggest that we are at a new critical juncture, and a fundamental renegotiation of the structure of the Danish museum field is possible in the near future.

5.15. Literature


Davis, Ann, François Mairesse & Andrée Desvallées (eds.) 2010. What is a Museum? München: Verlag Dr. C. Müller-Straten and ICOFOM.


netværkskaber Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, 40 år ved Odense Bys Museer. Odense: Odense Bys Museer,


**Legislation**


**Archives**

Archives of the Association of Danish Art Museums.

Archives of the Ministry of Culture: Ministeriet for kulturelle anliggender 1. Kontor j.nr 176/1963 and 413/62, j.nr. 13000-1-67 and 1800-2-68,

Ministeriet for kulturelle anliggender j.nr. 1700-5-74, j.nr. 215000-1-83, Kulturministeriet j.nr. 215000-1-89.

Archives of the Association of Danish History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumforening)


**Other sources**

Mission statement for vision groups concerning the distribution of tasks and subsidies in the museum field, 30th of June 2017.


Interviews

Chapter 6

What a Curator Needs to Know – the Development of Professional Museum Work and the Skills required in Danish Museums 1964-2018

Abstract:
In this paper, I ask how the professional jurisdiction and the discourse on professional skills for Danish museum professionals have changed from 1964 to 2018. Based on empirical content analysis of job ads and on qualitative interviews with museum professionals, I track the professionalization of museum jobs mapping a development from the definition of a generic profession during the 1960s and 1970s, over the establishment of an academic managerial level during the 1980s and 1990s to a diversification and specialization since 2000. Analyzing the discourse on professionalism, I find an increasing focus on performativity and the definition of personal skills required of professionals, while standardized credentials have become less important.

Keywords: Professionalization; competence; professionalism; specialization; museum history

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In a blog post on The Museum of the Future in 2013, the international consultant and blogger Jasper Visser listed his idea of the ideal future museum professional including being ‘a practical communicator’, ‘a team player’, ‘a creative pro-active problem solver’, ‘passionate and loyal’, ‘aware of the wider societal, cultural, economic and political environment’, ‘responsible’ and ‘curious’. (Visser 2013). However, such a definition of the ideal museum professional is not new. Since the end of the 1950s, the Danish museum field has undergone a process of professionalization characterized by the ongoing definition of museum work as well as the formation of a professional work force. Moreover, the definition and purpose of museums as public institutions have continuously been under negotiation – negotiations that have translated into an ongoing transformation of the definition of museum jobs and the skills required. However, to my knowledge, little scholarly attention has been paid to empirical studies of the definition and evolution of professionalism in the museum work force in that period – either in Denmark or internationally.

In this article, I analyze the terminology with which museum jobs and the associated skills have been defined in job ads posted by Danish museums in the period from 1964 to 2018 – thus providing an empirical analysis of the discourse on museum professionalism in Denmark over more than five decades. The Danish museum field constitutes an interesting case study. First, the field has been regulated by comprehensive legislation since 1958, creating statutory benchmarks for the definition of museum work. Few other countries in the world have similar legislation, most of which is more recent.1 Second, the number of museums in Denmark is limited. In 2019, 97 museums are state recognized and six are state-owned (Kulturministeriet 2018: 2) – making a comprehensive analysis of the museum field possible.

For the empirical analysis, I use a dataset of 2730 job ads for academic museum jobs posted between 1964 and 2018. Furthermore, I conducted 25 semi-structured, qualitative interviews with retired and working museum managers drawing on their experience and expertise in defining jobs and skills both when advertising and in everyday practice. Finally, 

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I rely on studies of archives from the Danish museum associations\(^2\) and legislative committees as well as on debates in professional journals in the Danish museum field.\(^3\)

In the following, I start by defining the central concepts of professionalism and competence related to the field of sociology of professions. I then place this study in the context of existing research on museums as a professional field of work, address job ads as a source and introduce the sources and methods used for the analysis. Next, I analyze the quantitative development of the labor market in Danish museums, and finally, I track the development of job descriptions and the skills required expressed in job ads and in interviews with professionals from 1964 to 2018 in order to analyze the discourse on professionalism in the Danish museum field over time.

### 6.1. Professionalism and competence

As concepts, profession and professionalism have been widely debated mainly in the field of sociology. Some have focused on defining the characteristics and roles of professions (e.g., Parsons 1939, Weber 1968; Abbott 1988), e.g., stating that ‘professions are carriers of certain types of scientifically anchored practices’ (Brante 2011). Some have analyzed the process of professionalization either as a linear development (e.g., Wilensky 1964) or as a socio-political process (Saks 2012), while others have accentuated the discourse of professionalism as a field of research (e.g., Evetts 2011). In this paper, I define professionalism as the combination of all qualities associated with trained and skilled people in a particular field, tracking how these qualities have been defined over time in the Danish museum field. This study thereby relates to the tradition focusing on the discourse of professionalism represented by the British sociologist Julia Evetts, who has pointed out a number of general findings in the literature on the discourse of professionalism. These include the introduction of a logic of market and consumerism, a change from professional competence

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2 The Association of Danish History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM), The Association of Art Museums in Denmark (Foreningen af danske Kunstmuseer, FDK) and from 2005. The Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM).

as standardized credentials to a focus on results and performativity, and a development from professional discretion to bureaucracy and management resulting in the professionals’ growing connection to the organization and decreasing affiliation with their professional occupations and associations (Evetts 2011, 18–22). At the end of the paper, I will relate to the development of the Danish museum field to these general trends.

In practice, I investigate two specific discourses of professionalism in the museum field. On the one hand, I analyze the discourse on job description, using the concept of jurisdiction borrowed from the American sociologist Andrew Abbott to refer to the portfolio of tasks attributed to a specific area of work within a professional field (Abbott 1988, 20). On the other hand, I analyze the discourse on skills, using the concept of competences as a designation for the attributes, an applicant ideally needs to possess in order to be qualified as professional in a field.

Another central concept is competence, which has been widely debated among scholars in many different fields (e.g., Delamare Le Deist and Winterton 2005 or Illeris 2011). In 1999, Australian scholar, Terrance Hoffmann, established three different definitions of competence in academic literature – a behavioral definition focusing on the skills needed to be demonstrated; a performative definition focusing on the tasks to be done, and a personal definition defined as ‘the underlying attributes of a person’ (Hoffmann 1999, 275–276). In this paper, I use the three definitions to categorize the skills mentioned in the job ads – dividing the personal competences into academic and personal skills, tracking the proportionate evolution of the categories over time in order to find out how the definition of a competent applicant has changed.

6.2. Defining museum professionalism in the field of museum studies

In the scholarly field of museum studies, professionalism has repeatedly been addressed. Some researchers have focused on characterizing professional museum work and the core knowledge of museum professionals (e.g., van Mensch and Mensch 2015; Tlili 2016) or the qualifications required for more or less specific functions in the museum field such as managers (DiMaggio and Kavanagh 1994), registrars (Vassal and Daynes-Diallo 2016), guides (Schlep, van Boxtel, and Noordegraaf 2017), or educators (Jagošová 2015). Other scholars have discussed the definition and development of museum work as one or more professions (e.g., Weil 1990; van Mensch 1992; Boylan 2006 or Alexander, Alexander, and
Decker 2017) and the professional identity of museum workers (Teather 1990). Finally, a number of researchers have analyzed the role of the curator (Mancino 2016; Nielsen 2017) and the development of the perceived role of the museum and museum work e.g., related to technological (Marty 2007) or paradigmatic changes (Sandell 1998; Simon 2010). In this paper, I relate to these three perspectives by empirically identifying the development of job descriptions and the skills defined, by tracking the development of the museum profession and by asking how external changes in the perception of the role of the museum and it’s technologies have affected the discourse on professionalism in the Danish museum field since the 1960s. In short, I ask how museum work and museum skills have been defined in Denmark over time.

6.3. Job ads and interviews as sources for mapping professionalization

The analysis is based on a dataset of 2730 job ads posted between 1964 and 2018 in the printed edition of the magazine for members of the Danish Association of Masters and PhDs (Magisterbladet), and on one of the biggest Danish web portals for jobs, www.jobindex.dk. The delimitation of the period has been determined both by the change of the format of ‘Magisterbladet’ in 1964 into a bi-weekly magazine with job ads as a regular feature, by the increasing use of the internet as outlet for job ads around the turn of the millennium and by jobindex.dk’s ability to provide data dating back to 2002. Thus, the dataset is composed of 930 jobs posted in ‘Magisterbladet’ from 1964 to 2001 and on 1800 jobs posted on jobindex.dk from 2002 to 2018.

The dataset includes academic jobs in professional museums following an adapted version of the definition of museum professions made by the International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) under the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 2008. In this museum, museum professionals are divided into four functional categories – i.e., directors, people working with collections and research, with visitors and with administration, management and facilities (Ruge 2008). However, in order to create a comparable dataset, administrators have only been included at a managerial level – leaving out accountants and secretaries. In addition, employees working with facilities and security management as well as jobs in visitor care and security have been dropped from the dataset.

Furthermore, conservators are not a part of the dataset, since jobs in preservation have gone a parallel professionalization with a specific jurisdictional field and specific skills.
Finally, PhD, post doc or professorship positions relating to specific research projects have also been dropped from the dataset, since the job descriptions was found to refer more to the specific topic of research than to museum work.

As sources, job ads have been used to analyze the development of specific fields of work – e.g., in the field of Library and Information Studies (Harper 2012) or in the field of Operational Research jobs (Sodhi and Son 2010). However, job ads constitute a specific genre of text with the purpose of engaging secondary audiences be it applicants or stakeholders in the professional field (see e.g., Walters and Fage-Butler 2014). They describe jobs and skills as the employers define them and not necessarily, how the jobs have been done or the skills required of the applicants. Nevertheless, allowing for general trends in the development of the genre of job ads, they provide a unique insight into the self-perception of the employing field and allow the construction of a comparable dataset over time using closed categories. For this study, I have collected information on year of the ad, museum, job title, educational background, required skills, job description and the duration of the job. Following structural changes in the Danish museum field, I have divided the period of my study into three consecutive phases – namely 1964–1976, 1977–2001 and 2002–2018 with the purpose of tracking the development between the phases (Jensen 2019).

Inspired by Sodhi and Son (2010) – I use content analysis to construct two vocabularies for job descriptions and required skills, respectively – including words in Danish with five or more letters occurring in more than 5% of the job ads in each of the three periods. Both vocabularies have subsequently been translated into English by the author. In addition, non-descriptive words such as ‘museum’, ‘work’ and ‘other’ have been manually deselected from the vocabularies.

Each keyword has been categorized into one of four inductively created, analytical categories. The vocabulary for job description consists of 63 keywords divided into the following categories; collection and research (i.e., words referring to work particular for museums such as registration, artifact and archeology), mediation (i.e., words describing

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4 In 1976, the revision of the Museum Act established a new focus on institutional coordination, and in 2001, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage (Kulturarvstyrelsen) was introduced as a new bureaucratic oversight of the field.
outward relations such as activity, exhibit, school and media), administration (i.e., words related to the operation of the museum such as management, operation, digital and maintain), and development and cooperation (i.e., words such as participate, collaborate and investigate). Table 6.1 shows the words in each category. Meanwhile, the 61 keywords in the vocabulary for skills are categorized as either academic skills, personal skills, behavioral skills or performative skills. Table 6.2 shows the distribution of keywords for skills.

**Table 6.1 Categorized vocabulary of keywords for job description 1964–2018 (n = 61).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection and Research</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Development and cooperation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject</td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>administration</td>
<td>contribute (bidrage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ansvarsområde)</td>
<td>event</td>
<td>danish</td>
<td>participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archeology</td>
<td>external</td>
<td>digital</td>
<td>coordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preservation</td>
<td>mediation</td>
<td>director</td>
<td>take part in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>webpage</td>
<td>operation (drift)</td>
<td>(medvirke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research</td>
<td>communication</td>
<td>be in charge of</td>
<td>network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>artefact</td>
<td>contact</td>
<td>(forestå)</td>
<td>build (ophygge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history</td>
<td>marketing</td>
<td>carry out</td>
<td>order (ordne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collecting</td>
<td>media</td>
<td>(gennemføre)</td>
<td>plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(indsamling)</td>
<td>pedagogical</td>
<td>municipality</td>
<td>produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>art (kunst)</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>management</td>
<td>project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arts (kunstindustri)</td>
<td>temporary</td>
<td>employee</td>
<td>cooperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>registration</td>
<td>exhibition</td>
<td>personnel</td>
<td>partner (samarbejdspartner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collection</td>
<td>educate</td>
<td>practical</td>
<td>create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(samling)</td>
<td>(undervise)</td>
<td>secure (sikre)</td>
<td>organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investigate</td>
<td></td>
<td>take care of</td>
<td>(tilrettelegge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>(varetage)</td>
<td>prepare (udarbejde)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(viden)</td>
<td></td>
<td>maintain</td>
<td>develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(vedligeholde)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(virksomhed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tracking the distribution of the words between the categories in each of the three periods provides an insight into how museum professionalism has been defined from 1964 until today.

Table 6.2 Categorized vocabulary of keywords for skills 1964–2018 (n = 64).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Performative</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Danish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeology</td>
<td>(engageret)</td>
<td>Document</td>
<td>Digital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Mediate</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(embedseksamen)</td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnology</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>(indsigt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Manage/management</td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(folkekultur)</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Knowledge of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/historian</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Museum work</td>
<td>(kendskab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>experience</td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Driver’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art history</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magisterkonferens*</td>
<td>(overblik)</td>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Nordic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeology</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum subject</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>(undervisning)</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(museumsfag)</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
<td>(viden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum relevant</td>
<td>Structured</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(museumsrelevant)</td>
<td>Extrovert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ exam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skoleembedseksamen)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Magisterkonferens was an academic title between MA and PhD, which existed in humanities at Danish universities until 2007.

To put the discourse of the job ads into perspective, I have conducted 25 semi-structured qualitative interviews with retired and working museum professionals in managerial positions in order to learn more about the practical discourse on professional museum work. The interviews include professionals working in the field since 1961, selected using a combination of relevance sampling and snowball sampling. The informants were asked about their personal
career and their perception of the Danish museum field and the museum profession. All interviews have been transcribed and coded using open coding, and all quotes have been translated from Danish to English by the author. However, before looking into the discourse of professionalism in Danish museums, I will analyze the development of the labor market as it is depicted in the job ads.

6.4. The museum field as a changing labor market

Since the introduction of the first Museum Acts for history museums in 1958 and for art museums in 1964, the size of the museum labor market in Denmark has experienced a remarkable growth. Before, the vast majority of museums did not employ academic staff, and in 1967, The Association of Danish History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM) listed that only 78 of their members employed academic staff equal to 33.5 full-time positions (Museumsstatistik 1967–1968, Archive of DKM). However, already in 1980, the National Council of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN), the national supervisory body for museums in the period 1976–2001, counted the equivalent of 1457 permanent full-time positions, of which 307 were listed as managers, curators or educators (Statens Museumsnævn 1980, 28–31).

In 1993, a survey made by the SMN and the training facility, Museumshøjskolen, showed 2510 people working in state-owned or state-subsidized museums – equaling 1611.1 full-time jobs (FTEs, full-time equivalents). Of these, 35–40% – i.e., 600 FTEs – were categorized as academic positions. (Statens Museumsnævn 1993, 2 and 9). Towards the end of the 1990s, the SMN introduced a national program subsidizing new, tenured curatorial positions for 3 years, and even though the so-called ‘start up program’ was discontinued around 2005, in 2012, the work force had almost doubled to 2913 FTEs, of which 954 were academic (Kulturstyrelsen 2015, 8–9). Despite obvious difficulties in comparing the numbers directly, it is thus safe to say that the academic labor force in Danish museums grew substantially from the 1960 to 2012.

The growth is replicated in the distribution of the job advertisements in the dataset shown in Figure 6.1.
As shown, only a limited number of museum jobs were posted each year until the end of the 1970s. Moreover, a significant proportion of the advertised positions were posted by the National museum – e.g., accounting for 10 out of 20 positions in 1971. However, also local museums started posting curatorial positions during the 1960s – e.g., the City Museums of Odense (Odense Bys Museer) in 1964 and the Museum of Køge in 1965.

A number of museum positions were occupied by direct recruitment – i.e., they were never posted. Thus, the former director of the regional museum on Lolland and Falster (Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum) from 1963 to 1989, Else Marie Boyhus, described how she was recruited before finishing her master’s degree at the University of Copenhagen, starting her job only days after defending her thesis (Interview Else Marie Boyhus). Also later in the period, direct recruitment was a significant method for hiring academic staff. Of the 51 museum jobs announced as ‘newly occupied’ in ‘Magisterbladet’ in 1990, only 36 had been previously advertised in the magazine suggesting that a significant number of positions were still occupied by direct recruitment.
In addition, the work field has become more specialized over time. Between 1964 and 1976, almost 70% of the museum jobs posted in ‘Magisterbladet’ used the job title ‘museumsinspektør’ (curator). Meanwhile, the 119 ads only included 15 different job titles. In the following period, 1977–2001, about 57% of the jobs were designated ‘museumsinspektør’ and more than 80 different job titles were used. Finally, from 2002 to 2018 only 22% of the jobs had the title ‘museumsinspektør’ and the number of job titles exploded to more than 320. Thus, the perception of museum work as one profession was replaced by a growing diversification of job functions characterized by the introduction of a range of new titles such as ‘registratør’ (first found in 1987), ‘art mediator’ (kunstformidler, used since 1998) and ‘fundraiser’ (introduced in 2012).

Distributed between the functional job categories defined by ICTOP (Ruge 2008) adapted to the Danish museum field by adding a curator-category and a project category, Table 6.3 shows the development of the distribution of ads between categories.

Table 6.3 Proportional distribution of job ads between functional categories 1964–2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and research</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curator</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The distribution indicates three different phases of professionalization. In 1964–1976, curators were hired as the only academic staff, while in 1977–2001 the academic staff was divided into managers and curators boosting the proportion of jobs in the category of director. Finally, in 2002–2018, museum staff has become much more specialized into different...
functions and especially staff working with mediation – defined as any kind of public relations – has grown. This focus on mediation can be interpreted as being the result of an introduction of a logic of market into museum work, corresponding to the general trend mentioned by Julia Evetts (2011).

Finally, the collected job ads indicate a change in labor mobility and the perception of career in the museum field since the 1960s. Table 6.4 show the number and proportion of temporary jobs advertised in the three periods, demonstrating how almost one-fourth of the jobs posted between 2002 and 2018 were temporary. This partly explains the exponential growth in the number of job ads.

Table 6.4 Temporary jobs advertised 1964-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number of temporary jobs advertised</th>
<th>Total number of jobs advertised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964–1976</td>
<td>8 (6.7%)</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977–2001</td>
<td>101 (12.5%)</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2018</td>
<td>442 (24.5%)</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964–2018</td>
<td>551 (20.2%)</td>
<td>2730</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As a result, the museum labor market has experienced an increasing turnover. To this effect, the coordinator of the national network of museum directors, director of Museum Lolland-Falster since 2005, Ulla Schaltz, recounted that 8–10 of the Danish museum directors (i.e., about 10%) have been replaced annually over the past five years some because of firing or illness, others as a voluntary career choice (Interview Ulla Schaltz). Furthermore, the former director of the Danish Maritime Museum (1981–2007), Hans Jeppesen, addressed the changed attitude towards career by saying: ‘When I was new in the museum field, you did not discuss whether it was for life, and you did not talk about careers as people do today’ (Interview Hans Jeppesen). Thus, the workforce has become increasingly mobile as museum jobs have come to be seen as stepping stones in a career more than a lifelong affiliation to one institution.
In conclusion, the quantitative analysis of the academic workforce in Danish Museums suggests three significant developments; first, that the labor force has grown exponentially, second that it has diversified and become more specialized and finally that it has become more mobile and temporary. However, how has professional museum jobs been defined? And which skills have been associated with them? This is what I will analyze in rest of the paper.

6.5. What is museum work?

Mapping recurrent words used to describe museum jobs in job ads provides an indication of, how professional museum work has been defined and how this definition has developed. First, job descriptions have become increasingly elaborate over time. While 69% of the job ads posted between 1964 and 1976 did not contain any description of the job besides a title, only 11% of jobs posted between 2002 and 2018 did not include details about the job, although they often refer to other sources of information – e.g., the website of the specific museums. This increasing complexity of job ads is a general tendency also found by researchers Walters and Fage-Butler, who have analyzed Danish ads for communication jobs from 1961 to 2011 – concluding that the size of job ads have increased exponentially over time (Walters and Fage-Butler 2014, 44).

Correspondingly, the number of significant keywords found by word frequency analysis in the collected job ads grew from 21 and 23 words in 1964–76 and 1977–2001 to 55 words in 2002–2018 – indicating the development of a common language in museum jobs ads after the turn of the millennium. In total, 63 keywords were found in the three periods. Of these, 12 occur in all three periods – namely ‘administration’, ‘research’, ‘collecting’, ‘collection’, ‘exhibition’, ‘activity’, ‘mediate’, ‘educate’, ‘management’, ‘investigate’ and ‘participate’ – thus offering a core definition of the jurisdiction of professional Danish museum work – throughout the periods.

One of the most frequently used words is ‘mediation’– appearing in 14%, 26% and 40% of the job ads in the 3 periods respectively. In some cases, mediation was the core jurisdiction – often in jobs with the title ‘mediator’ or ‘educator’ – in other cases, mediation was part of a combined jurisdiction. This was the case when Museum West Zealand (Museum Vestsjælland) in 2002 advertised for an archeologist listing the contents of the job as archeological work, digital documentation and registration of the archeological collections as well as mediation of the museum’s archeological work.
After the turn of the millennium, also an emerging specialization of the field of collections management appears in the collected job ads. Of the jobs posted before 2002, only five were specialized positions in collections management (i.e., 0.5% of the jobs), while 65 jobs in registration and documentation were posted from 2002 to 2018 – constituting 4% of the jobs in that period. This supports the idea of an ongoing specialization in the museum field.

Over time, specifically, the ongoing technological development created new jurisdictional areas – both within registration and mediation. Thus in 1986, Skive museum posted a job as assistant specifying registration of photos and artifacts, creation of an overview of where computers could be used and providing software advice as tasks. Furthermore, since 2000 a growing number of positions mention digital mediation as part of the jurisdiction. For instance, in 2015, the Jewish Museum posted a job for a museum mediator listing PR, communication and marketing as well as ‘handling of the museum’s webpage [...] and social media’ as part of the job. Moreover, from 2002 to 2018, 32 jobs with titles related to IT were posted – e.g., as ‘IT-supporter,’ ‘IT-coordinator’ or ‘IT-developer’. In other words, the implementation of digital technologies has significantly influenced the jurisdiction of museum work after the turn of the millennium, introducing new jurisdictions.

In Figure 6.2, I compare the distribution of the keywords between the four categories; collection and research, mediation, administration, and cooperation and development.
As indicated in the figure, the proportion of keywords relating to museum-specific work – i.e., the categories collection and research and mediation – dropped from 62% of the words used in 1964–1976 to 50% of the words from 1977 to 2001 and 46% in 2002–2018. Meanwhile, the proportion of keywords in the generic categories administration and cooperation and development grew from 38% in the first period to 52% and 54% in the following periods. Thereby, the data suggest that the discourse on the jurisdiction of professional museum work in Denmark has decreasingly focused on museum-specific work and more on generic work such as development and administration.

Overall, the distribution of keywords follows trends in the Danish museum policy throughout the period (see also Jensen 2019). The relatively large proportion of keywords in the category mediation in 1964–1976 (29%) corresponds to the political focus on cultural mediation and the relevance of museums as public institutions conveyed in a report published by the Ministry for Cultural Affairs in 1969 (Ministeriet for Kulturelle Anlig-
gender 1969). Likewise, the proportion of words related to cooperation and development in 1977–2001 (29%) corresponds to the focus on coordination and consolidation of the museum field following the revision of the Museum Act in 1976. Finally, the relatively large proportion of keywords in the category administration (27%) in 2002–2018 can be interpreted as a reflection of the growing focus on museums as sustainable businesses – accentuated in the Museum Act of 2012 (Act 1391) – exemplified by the introduction of new specifically administrative jobs such as ‘head of administration’ or ‘administrators’.

Simply put, content analysis of the job ads reflects both a growing complexity in the genre, a diversification of the discourse on professional museum jobs and a development from a focus on museum-specific jurisdictions to generic jurisdictions accommodating for a number of businesses. Furthermore, technological developments and the growing focus on economic sustainability have introduced new jurisdictions into the definition of professional museum work.

### 6.6. What a curator needs to know

A similar content analysis of the words used to describe the skills required in professional museum work from 1964 to 2018 indicates that also the discourse on skills has changed. As the number of words, recurrently used to define the jurisdictions in professional museum work, grew, so did also the number of words used to describe skills. While 20 and 27 significant keywords were identified in the periods 1964–1976 and 1977–2001, 52 words were recurring in 2002–2018 – confirming the aforementioned development of a common language. Eleven keywords appear in all three periods namely ‘archeology’, ‘ethnology’, ‘history’, ‘art history’, ‘education’ (uddannelse), ‘experience’, ‘mediate’, ‘interest’, ‘knowledge’ (kendskab), ‘museum work’ and ‘practical’ – thus defining academic knowledge and practical expertise especially in mediation as central skills throughout the period of this paper. Nevertheless, a closer comparison of the proportionate distribution of keywords between the four categories ‘academic skills’, ‘personal skills’, ‘behavioral skills’ and ‘performative skills’ (Figure 6.3) indicates three significant changes in the discourse on professional skills in the Danish museum field since the 1960s – i.e., the declining focus on academic skills, the increasing importance of performativity and the growing definition of personal skills.
As shown in Figure 6.3, the proportion of keywords describing academic skills decreased from 60% of the keywords used in ads from 1964–1976 to 41% in 1977–2001 and 15% in 2002–2018 – suggesting that professional museum skills were predominantly defined as academic educations until the turn of the millennium. However, the declining proportion of words in the academic category is partly explained by the aforementioned growth in the total number of keywords in the last period. Only the word ‘academic’ is new to the academic category in 2002–2018 – the rest of the new recurrent words belong to other categories – thus contributing to the decreasing proportion of academic skills.

In practice, the discourse on academic skills changed significantly over time. In the first Museum Act for history museums from 1958, regional museums were required to employ ‘trained personnel’ (Law 166 1958, § 2). However, during the political debate politicians argued that academic professionalism was not necessarily needed since amateurs had previously run museums successfully (FF 1957-58, column 3033). Nevertheless, the National Inspectorate for Local Museums (Statens Lokalmuseumstilsyn, SLT) was appointed the task...
of approving professional employments assessing the academic level of the candidates (Law 166 1958, §3, f). Thus in 1975, SLT only reluctantly approved the employment of the head of Morsland Museum, who did not have a finished M.A. – stating ‘that applicants without a finished education should not [in principle] be hirable.’ (Meeting, April 11, 1975 – Statens Lokalmuseumstilsyn: Møderferater med dagsordner (1958–1976)). Thus, an academic degree was defined as a central skill for becoming a museum professional.

During the 1980s, the educational skills were further defined in the legislation. In 1984, the Museum Act required state-subsidized museums to have academically skilled managers (Law 291, 1984, § 11, sec. 1.7), and six specific disciplines were defined as ‘museum-related’ – namely archeology, ethnology, ethnography, history, art history and natural history (FF, 1983-84, appendix A, column 891) – suggesting the development of a common definition of the required education for museum professionals.

Due to an increasing number of museums with multiple topics, in 2001, the Museum Act required that each museum should have academic staff covering all its topics, however not necessarily at managerial level (Law 473, 2001, §14, sec 1.7). At the same time, a debate about the need for academically trained museum directors started – a debate which in the current Museum Act of 2012 resulted in the abolishment of the requirement for specific educations for museum directors with reference to the need for both academic and managerial skills in museum managers (Comments for Bill L24 2012, § 1.11). Concurrently, the previously defined academic skills became increasingly related to specific jurisdictions in the museum field – namely the field of collection and research.

The specialization of research was further underlined by the enforcement of the general rules for applying for research funding, which had not previously been implemented in the museum field. In the remarks for the current Museum Act, it was stressed, that applicants from museums, applying for public research programmes should hold an education at doctorate level – thereby forwarding an independent academic professionalization of museum research (General remarks to L24, 2012 point 3.4.4.4). In other words, the discourse on professionalism in museums changed after the turn of the millennium – leading to a continuous specialization and professionalization of a number of jurisdictions.

This specialization represented a practical challenge for the museum field, which traditionally had employed candidates with the degree of Magister Artium (mag.art.), an academic degree between the level of Master and PhD, existing in the humanities in Denmark.
until 2007. The museum practitioners were skeptical of the value of the doctoral level. Originally, the museum field rejected the PhD as too theoretical for practical museum work (Statens Museumsnævns 1996: 12, SMN’s annual report; 12), and a similar skepticism was also encountered in the conducted interviews. Thus, Jørgen Smidt-Jensen from Museum Østjylland explained: ‘I think there has been a break, where the academic professionalism has become more and more theorized and less and less practical.’ (Interview Jørgen Smidt-Jensen), thereby describing a perceived disproportion between academic education and practical museum work. Nevertheless, 78 of the 808 jobs posted between the implementation of the PhD-requirement in 2013 and 2018 formally list a PhD as required skill and a number of research evaluations and industrial PhD programs have been initiated in museums since 2013 in order to fulfill the research requirement defined by the Ministry of Culture.

Furthermore, organizational changes due to the focus on creating sustainable institutions have also promoted specialization in the museum field. In 1999, the head of the local museum in Kerteminde, Erland Porsmose, wrote in ‘Danske Museer’:

The comprehensive tasks at the museums mean that good collectors, mediators, managers as well as good researchers are needed. The problem is […] that the relatively few positions available at each institution preferably should be filled with people, who are good at everything at the same time.
(Porsmose 1999, 17)

Thereby, he pointed out that the limited size of the museum institutions dictated a need for a combination of skills.

However, since the turn of the millennium, the museum field has experienced a number of mergers, so that each state recognized museums in Denmark in 2012 had an average of 23 full-time-equivalent positions (Kulturstyrelsen 2015, 8), thereby facilitating specialization of the employees. The director of Museum Østjylland, Jørgen Smidt-Jensen, explained:
‘Because we are merged […] and got a bigger budget, there is the possibility of […] hiring people with competences, which might not have been possible to have, had we been a small local museum […] That makes it possible for us to employ a journalist, an exhibition designer and a photographer.’ (Interview Jørgen Smidt-Jensen)

In other words, the focus on large institutional units during the last two decades has transformed the museum field into an increasingly complex labor market in which cooperation have become an important skill. Thus, the word ‘cooperation’ appears as a skill in 47% of the job ads posted in 2002–2018, while it is used in only 9% of the ads in 1977–2001 and is found only once in the ads between 1964 and 1976. Simply put, the ongoing specialization of the museum field – occurring throughout the period of this paper, has resulted in a decreasing focus on traditional, academic skills.

6.7. A practical and decent person

Another significant development in the definition of required skills is the growing proportion of words related to behavioral and performative skills. While 25% of the keywords in 1964–1976 related to either behavioral or performative skills, this proportion was 34% in 1977–2001 and 56% in 2002–2018. This growing focus on performance and behavior corresponds to the general trends referenced by Julia Evetts as a replacement of professional competences as standardized credentials with a culture of performativity (Evetts 2011, 21). In the museum field, the ongoing diversification and specialization have substantiated this trend making it difficult to define common, standardized credentials. Furthermore, practicality is a skill repeatedly associated with museum work. Thus, the word ‘practical’ occurs in 8% of the job ads in 1964–1976, in 11% of the ads in 1977–2001 and in 11% in 2002–2018. Nevertheless, there is a growing tendency to define the skills needed in terms of tasks to be performed and behaviors to be mastered.

Lastly, the proportion of keywords related to personal skills grew from 15% of the keywords used in 1964–1976 to 26% in 1977–2001 and 29% in 2002–2018 – indicating a growing focus on defining the disposition of the applicant as part of the discourse of professionalism. This finding corresponds to the trend discovered by Walters and Fage-Butler, who in their analysis of Danish job ads for communication jobs in 1961, 1991 and 2011 find
information on disposition in three out of three ads in 2011, in one ad out of three in 1991 and in no ads in 1961 (Walters and Fage-Butler 2014, 45).

However, a closer analysis of the definition of personal skills in the museum field indicates three different levels defined over time. In 1968, the director of Viborg museum (1960–1993) and chairman of DKM (1968–1974), Peter Seeberg, wrote in a memo to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs: ‘In their employment, the museums must take into account that well-educated people with aesthetic competences and rich aesthetic experience are needed’ (Undated memo, Archive of DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1958–1968). Thus, he pointed to a sense of esthetics as a required personal skill for museum professionals – defining personal skills as directly related to the output of the museum.

Another personal skill, recurrently mentioned in the museum field, is commitment, which is specifically mentioned in 4% of the job ads posted in 1977–2001 and in 11% of the ads from 2002 to 2018. Also in the interviews, commitment is specified as a central skill. The former director of Ribe Museum 1961–1980, Mogens Bencard, recounted how he was involved with the local community as aesthetic consultant for the city of Ribe and as member of the tourist association as a way to be committed to the local area (Interview Mogens Bencard) – thereby describing commitment as a sense of duty to the locality or the topic of the museum. Also, the current director of Svendborg museum and the Danish Welfare Museum, Esben Hedegaard, addressed commitment, saying:

We draw on all people’s talents – their ability to sing and bake cakes and everything else […] and the most important thing is that we ask, whether they want to do it […] because that is what gives us the commitment which will convince the foundations, the audience and other partners that it is exciting and we should do it.(December 7, 2018)

Thus, he described how commitment is a prerequisite for the authority of the museum as a convincing institution. In other words, commitment belongs to a second level of personal skills related to the relation between the professional and the institution or the area of work.

Recently, interpersonal skills have been articulated as required skills. Thus in 2006, the local museum in Amager, Amagermuseet, advertised for a mediator with ‘good social
competences’. Also in the collected interviews, social skills are recurrently addressed. When asked about skills needed in professional museum work, the former director of Naturama (1996–2015), Jacob Salvig, explained: ‘To be able to drink coffee is probably the most important skill. However, I will say that it is also about not being afraid of coming into contact with new types of people’ (Interview Jacob Salvig).

Likewise, the former director of the history museum, Færgegården, and since 2007 consultant in the Agency of Culture, Hans-Henrik Landert, stated: ‘It is my impression that there is a strong need for […] highly developed social skills in order to combine all the stakeholders the museum is surrounded by all the time’ (Interview Hans-Henrik Landert). Finally, Esben Hedegaard from Svendborg Museum and the Danish Welfare Museum characterized the required skill of a museum professional as the need to be ‘a decent person’ (Interview Esben Hedegaard) – a concept which was operationalized by curator at the Danish Welfare Museum, Jeppe Wichmann Rasmussen, who listed ethics, the ability to create a safe environment, reliability, clarity and the courage to ask the tough questions but also to know when to stop as important skills for museum professionals working with difficult social topics (Interview Jeppe Wichman Rasmussen). Thereby, social skills constitute a third level of personal skills relating to the disposition of the museum professional, which has been defined and articulated in contemporary museum work.

Simply put, the discourse on professional skills in museum work has increasingly included personal skills related to the disposition of the applicant, although different levels of personal skills have been part of the discourse throughout the period.

6.8. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tracked the development of the academic labor market in Danish museums and the related discourse on professionalism from 1964 to 2018 – based on an analysis of job ads, archives and interviews with museum professionals. Overall, I found that the development is characterized by an exponential growth in the work force and a significant specialization – especially after the turn of the millennium. Thus, professional museum work in Denmark has changed from a generic, curatorial profession into a growing field of specialties – determined by technological evolution, shifting political agendas and a changing attitude to the retention of employees and to career since the 1960s.
Over time, the development can be described in three phases – namely an establishment of a generic professional field during the 1960s and 1970s, the creation of an academic, managerial level educated within specific disciplines during the 1980s and 1990s and a specialization into a number of different job functions – each with an ongoing professionalization – since the 2000s.

Analyzing the discourse of professional museum work and the skills related, I found that the development of professionalism in the Danish museum field matches the general trends in the development of professions discussed by Julia Evetts. First of all, a growing focus on the field of mediation and on economic sustainability after the turn of the millennium suggests that the logic of market and the focus on the consumers have been introduced in the Danish museum field.

Second, the definition of professional skills in the museum field has shifted from a focus on standardized academic skills to a focus on performativity – also corresponding to the general trends. Simultaneously, academic skills have increasingly been connected with specific specialties within the museum – namely research. Nevertheless, the practicality of museum work is recurrently addressed throughout the period studied – suggesting that performativity, defined as the performance of practical skills, has always been part of the discourse on professional museum skills. Third, the growing focus on administration and sustainability suggests a decreasing autonomy of the professional field supported by the development of a bureaucratic oversight in the form of the Agency of Cultural Heritage (Kulturarvsstyrelsen), which was introduced in 2001.

Finally, I have found that personal skills have increasingly been defined in the discourse throughout the period. Whereas personal skills during the 1960s were mainly related to ensuring a satisfactory output for the museum, commitment and interpersonal skills have become part of the discourse – increasingly linking professionalism to the institution as a professional field of cooperating specialists.

Returning to the cooperative, practical, communicating, passionate, curious, responsible problem-solver, which Jasper Visser identified as the ideal museum professional for the future, this paper confirms this ideal based on the development of the Danish museum field. However, the paper also shows how the discourse on professionalism has shifted over time. There can be little doubt that the development since the 1960s has had implications both for the identity of museum professionals and for the understanding of museums as academic
knowledge institutions. Further research into the discourse on professionalism within each developing specialty would provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the museum field, and a comparison with museum fields in countries with different models for regulating cultural institutions would contribute to an understanding of the relation between legislation and professionalization over time. Unfortunately, these topics fall outside the scope of this paper.

6.9. References


**Sources**

Archive of the Association of Danish History Museums, Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforenings arkiv.


Interviews


Rasmussen, Jeppe Wichman, curator at the Danish Welfare Museum, December 7, 2018
Chapter 7

Training or Education.
The Development of Education for Museum Professionals in Denmark since the 1960s

Abstract
For decades, the organization, content, and institutional foundation of educations for museum professionals have been debated as a specific field. In this paper, I analyze the discourse on professionalism articulated in the development of professional training and education for Danish museum professionals since the 1960s. The study establishes three phases in the development and unveils a historically contingent dichotomy between practice-orientated vocational training and academic university education with different definitions of museum work as hybrid professionalism. Simultaneously, growing demands for qualifying educations from the museum field and an increasing focus on the labor market outside the academic sphere have created a mounting interdependence between the two stakeholders, leading to increasing organizational hybridity in the educational field.

Keywords: Professionalism, Vocational Training, Academic Education, Museum history, Hybridity
In 2008, the Canadian professor in museology Lynne Teather stated, that the articulation of any profession is dependent on ‘their body of knowledge, and how that is produced, examined, and furthered through professional education work’ (Teather 2012:64). In this paper, I map the development of vocational training and academic education for Danish museum professionals since the 1960s, asking how professionalism has been defined in training and education throughout the period, and how the definition has been negotiated between two stakeholders; namely the Danish museums and the Danish universities. In other words, I offer an empirically based case study of the development of an inadequately researched field of professional education in a recent historical perspective.

Education for museum professionals is an interesting case study, because museum professionals traditionally hold university degrees, while a significant part of their work is practical. Furthermore, the development of professional museum education in Denmark has evolved as (sometimes strained) negotiation between a strong practical museum field and the universities. To the best of my knowledge, such a duality in the development of an educational field is unique for Denmark.

Internationally, comprehensive museological educations have been offered by universities since the beginning of the 20th century. In the period of this study, significant programs were developed in Brno in Czechoslovakia in 1968, at Leicester University in the UK in 1966 and the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam in 1976. Also in Scandinavia, academic museological educations have been offered at Umeå University in Sweden since 1980 (Smeds 2006) and at Jyväskylä University in Finland since 1983 (Thomas et al. 2018), followed by other smaller programs related to museums.

In the United States, one of the earliest museum studies programs was established at Harvard University in 1921, and after the second world war programs were founded at universities across the country – e.g. at the Smithsonian Center for Museum Studies in Washington in 1965 and at Lone Mountain College in San Francisco in 1974 (Schwarzer, forthcoming). Today, the website of AAM lists 186 museum studies programs in the US.¹

The limited size of the Danish museum field, as well as the small number of Danish universities offering museum-related courses, enables a comprehensive, yet manageable,

historical analysis of the whole field. Official Danish statistics in 1969 listed 211 museums in Denmark including 15 departments of the National Museum (Danmarks Statistik and Kulturministeriet (1979), table 11.2, p. 101), and in 2010 only 97 museums were state-recognized, while there were five Danish universities, which offered a museum-related course in 2013 (Gransgaard et al. 2013:19).

The academic literature on the content, history, and development of museum studies as an educational field is extensive. While the organization and development of vocational programs for museum professionals are only sporadically addressed (e.g. Strandggard 1995, Roodhouse 1998), the development of academic museum studies programs have been a recurring topic of research related to the development of museum studies in an international context (e.g., Teather 1991, van Mensch 1992, Boylan 2006, Lorente 2012, Teather 2012) or in specific countries (e.g., Stránský 1990, Genoways 1996, Duncan 2002, Welsh 2013, Thomas, Wessman and Heikkilä 2018, Kirsch and Jagosova 2019, Schwarzer (forthcoming)), or related to the relation between educations and the labor market (Dubuc 2011, Bomar 2012, Hearn 2012, Kingsley 2016).

In the literature, various points have been emphasized. First, professionalization has been described as a development from practical museum training towards academic museum education (e.g., Lorente 2012). Second, especially American scholars have argued that there is a difference between a European focus on museology as an academic discipline, taught at the universities, and practical training, offered by the museum associations, and American museum studies incorporating practice into the university programs (e.g., Simmons 2007, Schwarzer (forthcoming)). Third, a resistance towards an academization of museum work and a potential conflict between museum practice and university education have been identified, particularly in the North American museum fields (Teather 1991). By tracking the development of museum educations in Denmark, this paper contributes to the literature by investigating these trends in a historical perspective based on empirical material.

Professional knowledge has also been defined in basic syllabi for museum studies, which have been developed by ICTOP (the International Committee for Training of

Personnel (ICTOP) in 1971 and 2001, and also discussed by the American Association of Museums (AAM), which formed a committee for the discussion of the education of museum professionals in 1973 (Schwarzer, forthcoming). Moreover, a growing number of textbooks and materials for teaching museum studies at universities have defined the content of professional museum work in both Denmark and internationally (e.g., Dam Christensen et al. 2004, MacDonald 2006, Carbonell 2012). A closer analysis of this literature would make an interesting topic for further research, although it falls outside the scope of this paper.

The development of Danish museum educations has mainly been addressed as presentations of and debates about specific courses and educations in the professional Danish museum journals (e.g., Strandgaard 1996, Floris et al. 2002, Jeppesen 2003). In 1995 the headmaster of the industry-specific training institute Museumshøjskolen, (1988-2005), Ole Strandgaard, published a description of the training of Danish museum personnel since the 1960s (Strandgaard 1995), and in 2013 the Danish Center for Museum Research compiled a report containing a snapshot of museum-related educations offered at Danish universities (Gransgaard et al. 2013). Finally, in a recently published Nordic anthology, the development of qualifying educations for the museums and the heritage sector in Denmark has been described as a result of ongoing cooperation and critical reflection between museums and universities (Larsen 2019). My study adds to the existing research by mapping the content and organization of the education of museum professionals in Denmark since the 1960s as an ongoing discourse on professionalism.

The paper is based on empirical studies of the archive of the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM), which has been dominant in the debate about the development of the professional museum field in Denmark. Furthermore, I have studied the archive of Museumshøjskolen, which was founded in 1987, and the archive of the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM), which was formed in 2005 as the result of a merger between DKM and the museum associations for art museums (Foreningen Danske Kunstmuseer, FDK) and natural history museums (Dansk Naturhistorisk Museumsforening, DNM), both of which were significantly smaller and less active in the debate than DKM. I have also reviewed study plans from the universities in Aarhus, Copenhagen, and Roskilde concerning educations in museology, and the professional, Danish journals ‘Stof fra Danske Museer’ (1971-1988) and ‘Museumsmagasinet’ (1976-today, however since 1988 published as ‘Danske Museer’), have been explored in order to track discussions about educational initiatives in the period.
Finally, I have conducted semi-structured, qualitative interviews with 30 working and retired museum professionals and university professors developing and teaching museological courses in order to qualify and explain the discourse on professionalism found in the archives.

In the following sections, I first account for the theoretical framework of the paper relating to the field of sociology of professions and the field of educational research. Then, I map the organization and content of vocational training and academic education for museum professionals in Denmark since the 1960s, by tracking three consecutive phases – namely from the 1960s to the end of the 1980s, from the 1980s to 2000 and from 2000 until today.

7.1. Theorizing about the Development of Professionalism

Traditionally, scholars studying professions and professionalism have defined the existence of specialized knowledge and education as one of the characteristics of professional work (e.g., Parsons 1939, Brante 2009, Saks 2012), and several scholars have accentuated scientific knowledge or the relation to academic institutions as defining values for professions (e.g., Hughes 1963, Brante 2011). Some have also argued, that the establishment of training is a qualifying step in the process of professionalization (Wilensky 1964). Following UNESCO’s classification of education from 1997, I define vocational training as education mainly designed to lead to practical skills, know-how, and understanding necessary for employment in a particular trade. Meanwhile, I characterize academic education as education conceived to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject (as defined in Moodie 2002). As I will show, the development of education for Danish museum professionals can be understood as cooperation and negotiation between vocational training and academic education.

Within the last decades, several scholars studying professionalism have argued that a contradiction between the logic of the profession, of the organization and management, has developed (e.g., Freidson 2001, Evetts 2011, Noordegraaf 2007). As a result, professional knowledge no longer corresponds to a specific academic discipline, the classic example being medical doctors, whose professionalism today also entails working in an organization, performing managerial tasks and organizing the work in new professional ways. Therefore, the Dutch scholar Mirko Noordegraaf has introduced the concept of hybrid professionalism (Noordegraaf 2007), which takes the growing complexity of professionalism into account.
by including managerial and organizational logic into the core knowledge of professional work. However, professional museum work is an inherent combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, thus combining theoretical and practical logic.

In this paper, I adopt and expand the concept of hybrid professionalism by arguing that the courses and educations for Danish museum professionals promote different kinds of professional hybridity. To illustrate this, in table 1, I define three forms of hybridity, which I have found in the educational discourse related to museums.

Table 7.1 Forms of hybridity identified in the training and educations for museum professionals in the Danish case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic hybridity</th>
<th>combination of various academic disciplines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional hybridity</td>
<td>combination of various practical and managerial job functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational hybridity</td>
<td>combination of various educating organizations</td>
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The relationship between theory and practice in professional education has been studied by the American sociologist Eliot Freidson, who contrasted vocational training characterized by schooling within the labor market with professional training taking place in classrooms, outside the labor market. He stated:

‘Practitioners are likely to consider academic or scientific standards to be hopelessly and unfairly impractical and resent those who formulate and promulgate them. Thus, professional schooling creates a very sharp and problematic division between academic authorities and practitioners.’ (Freidson 1999:122)

Freidson thereby described a potential conflict between practice and academia, a conflict which has been explained by educational scholar Gavin Moodie as vocational educations’ lack of a secure identity leading to defensiveness in relation to higher education (Moodie 2002: 259).
A similar dichotomy was introduced by the American sociologist Charles E. McClelland, who distinguished between professionalization from above driven by agents outside the field in question and professionalization from within organized by the professionals themselves (McClelland 1990). In this paper, I address this potential conflict in the organization of the Danish museum training and educations by adopting the so-called neo-Weberian approach to professions, which defines professions as dynamic groups, continually battling to define their specific properties in relation to other groups (e.g., Abbott 1988, Saks 2010). As such, I determine the development of professionalism in museum educations as an ongoing negotiation between the museum field and the universities.

Finally, professional education has often been related to competence defined as a set of abilities, knowledge, and attitudes leading to effective performance in a given situation (e.g., White 1959). Adopting this general definition, I see museum professionalism as the sum of competences and knowledge relayed in the various courses and educational programs related to museum work. According to the Dutch educational scholar Martin Mulder competence has been associated with professionalism in three different ways in the field of educational studies, namely:

**Table 7.2 Research Traditions for Defining Competence**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ResearchTradition</th>
<th>Competence Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioristic Functionalism</td>
<td>Competence = Training of specific behaviors related to specific functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated Occupationalism</td>
<td>Competence = Matching the demand of a specific labor market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Situated Professionalism</td>
<td>Competence = Related to specific professional (Institutional) contexts.</td>
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Source: Mulder 2014:128-131

Adopting this terminology, in this paper, I characterize shifts in the definition of competence in the Danish museum educations from the 1960s until today.

In the following sections, I track the Danish development of vocational training and academic education in three phases marked by summer courses organized by the museum.
association for history museums, by institutionalized vocational training developed by the industry-specific training institute Museumshøjskolen and by the academic educations offered by the universities.

7.2. Informal Vocational Training – Summer Courses 1967-1988

In Denmark, plans for setting up local or regional museum courses on ‘the most common museum work’ were already mentioned in the Annual Report from the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM) in 1961. In August 1966, a group of Danish museums in the Northern part of Jutland, led by writer and museum director Peter Seeberg, proposed to establish a training facility for personnel working in cultural institutions – a so-called ‘Museum Folk High School’ (museumshøjskole). In the proposal, it was stated:

‘Offering a four-year education of practical and theoretical nature, the Folk High school will give the students an extensive background of knowledge and solid experience in skills, which must be seen as necessary for the versatile job of the museum employee.’ (Archive of the Danish Association of History Museums, hereafter DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1966, all Danish quotes are translated into English by the author)

In practice, the education should consist of lectures in history and history of art, architecture, music, nature, and technology as well as practical training in administration, research, preservation, and audience service. In the four years should also be included two periods of practical work at a cultural institution, and the education should give access to employment or advancement to managerial, non-academic positions at museums and cultural centers (Archive of DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1966). This proposal marked the start of a debate about the content, organization, and institutional foundation of the education of museum professionals in Denmark.

The overall idea was to provide training for non-scientific personnel as well as for new academic employees. However, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was reluctant to fund such a facility referring to the universities as possible providers of education for museum professionals. According to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the organization of such a

To that effect, in 1967, DKM started organizing annual summer courses, establishing a tradition, which lasted until 1988. According to the preserved archives, the courses had between 70 (in 1967) and 123 (in 1972) participants, and a total of more than 950 individuals took part, some of which even participated for up to nine years (Archive of DKM, Materialer vedrørende kurser etc. 1967-1999).

The initial participants were both employed professionals and amateurs including board members, students and volunteers (Jyllands-posten May 13, 1967, and Aarhus Stiftstidende June 22, 1967), although the proportion of participating amateurs decreased over the years as the professional workforce grew. The courses consisted of a number of workshops and joint lectures as well as discussions after hours. Overall, the courses were meant to be interdisciplinary. When interviewed in 2017, the secretary of the Danish Association of Museums (1969-2007), Kirsten Rex Andersen, explained: ‘In principle […] everybody in the museum [were supposed to] know all the disciplines involved in the work.’ (Interview Kirsten Rex Andersen). Thus, museum professionalism was defined as characterized by functional hybridity combining knowledge about different functions in the museum. The former director of Ribe Museum (1961-1980) and secretary of DKM during the 1960s, Mogens Bencard, added:

‘We [the organizers – authors note] found it natural that you should be informed about what the others were interested in and did and know a little bit about their methods. For instance, sending an art historian to an archeology workshop was natural for us.’ (Interview Mogens Bencard).

In other words, the courses also promoted academic hybridity, encouraging the museum professionals to know the different academic disciplines related to museum work – an idea, which made sense because of the predominantly small museum organizations with limited opportunity for a division of labor.

Above all, the courses were aimed at exchanging experiences and promoting networks between museum professionals. In a memo written by the educational committee under the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN) in 1986, the courses were described in the following way:
‘[the] purpose […] is to provide museum people with the opportunity to get acquainted with other fields of museum work than their own, to supplement and update the knowledge and skills within their own field of work and finally to create the framework for the essential collegial exchange of experiences and opinions.’ (Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager og – referater 1982-2006).

Correspondingly, the former director of the Maritime Museum (1981-2007), Hans Jeppesen, who participated in the summer courses in 1971, 1975 and 1985, explained: ‘The courses were about promoting a qualified discussion rather than about providing answers’ (Interview Hans Jeppesen).

The courses were held at rented folk high schools (Folkehøjskoler) preferably in a secluded area of Denmark. Kirsten Rex Andersen explained: ‘You [i.e., the participants] should not be tempted to go outside the area. During those eight days, you were there – 24 hours per day.’ (Interview Kirsten Rex Andersen). Late-night discussions and a festive atmosphere were parts of the experience – so much so that the following remark was included in the minutes of the planning meeting for organizers and teachers in January 1983: ‘Finally, a warning was made not to party so much the penultimate evening […] so that it would not be possible to participate in the actual closing party’ (Minutes from planning session, January 27-28, 1983, Archive of DKM, bestyrelsessager 1982-1988). This collegial and informal atmosphere has been emphasized by the participants. In 1995, the headmaster of Museumshøjskolen (1988-2005), Ole Strandgaard, wrote:

‘One of the essential features of these early courses was that they brought together high and low, learned and learner, professionals, and amateurs under rather primitive circumstances. […] Undoubtedly, these courses were decisive for that "esprit-de-corps," which developed throughout these years and characterized the cultural history museums.' (Strandgaard 1995:192).

In other words, the summer courses aimed to create cohesion in the museum field rather than to define and relay a specific body of professional knowledge, even though the participants were predominantly from history and natural history museums.
According to Ole Strandgaard, the courses were not offered as a result of a planned strategy but reflected the topics found to be most relevant at the time (Strandgaard 1995:194), i.e., the topics covered in the workshops mirrored contemporary interest in the museum field. A categorized overview of workshops, as shown in figure 1, demonstrates the combination of topics over time distributed between five aggregated categories has been constructed – namely:

1. Workshops related to academic knowledge such as archeology or ethnology (e.g., a workshop on churches and ethnological methods in 1976).

2. Workshops on mediation (e.g., a recurrent workshop on video and tv in museum work in 1984 and 1985).

3. Workshops on museography and administration (e.g., a workshop on accounting and budgets in 1970 or on audience service and security in 1984).

4. Workshops related to collections and preservation (e.g., a workshop on the principles for collecting in 1970).

5. Workshops related to museology or museum policy (e.g., a workshop called ‘The museums in a time of crisis’ in 1983).
On the one hand, the workshops related to academic knowledge constituted a large part of the summer courses. Together with workshops on mediation, the academic workshops constituted half of the courses in all years except 1976, 1977, 1978, 1983 and 1988. On the other hand, only a few workshops were dedicated to museology, i.e., discussing the role and function of museums or museum policy. Only in 1978 did the summer course offer multiple workshops in that category – one on the ecological mini-museum and one on ‘the holistic function of the museum’.

Simply put, the first phase of professional museum training from 1967 to 1988 consisted of peer-to-peer training organized as summer courses by the museum field. The courses, which aimed at discussing contemporary topics, exchanging practical experiences and forming networks, promoted academic as well as functional hybridity for a broad museum field – thereby defining professional competence as a combination of behavioristic functionalism and integrated occupationalism.
7.3. Institutionalized Museum Training

Parallel to the summer courses, institutionalized, possibly mandatory, museum education was repeatedly debated. In a memo from 1969, the director of Aalborg Museum, Torben Witt, concluded, that interdisciplinarity was an essential part of museum studies and that practical training ‘could be organized […] as post-graduate courses compulsory for emerging museum professionals’. (Report from Torben Witt to DKM 1969, Archive of DKM Bestyrelsessager 1969-72). Likewise, in a seminar on mediation organized by DKM in 1972, mandatory post-graduate education for curators, educators and conservators was proposed including courses in museum history, administrative organization, buildings, research, mediation and preservation (Stof fra Danske Museer 3:1972:28-34). Moreover, in 1975 the committee for the revision of the Museum Act recommended the development of a non-compulsory short introduction to museology for academically trained personnel, and short courses in the methods and techniques used in museums for technical and administrative employees (Report 727, 1975:159-162).

In 1977, the head of Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum (1963-1989), Else-Marie Boyhus, advocated a differentiated approach to museum training recognizing both the need for introductory education for new professionals, the need for on-the-job training and the need for the facilitation of networks and inspirational study tours. She also suggested that the museums’ need for training and the educational institutions’ need for practical experience could be coordinated (Boyhus 1977), thereby introducing the idea of organizational hybridity.

Later in 1982, an educational committee established by the Danish Association of History Museums (DKM) presented an elaborate plan consisting of 12 modules covering a wide range of topics from security, registration, preservation, and administration to exhibition work, museology, management and the use of audiovisual media. In different combinations, these modules should form educational programs for 23 different job functions, including members of the board and political representatives at different levels. For instance, the education of curators should consist of courses on the preservation and long-term effects of storage on artifacts, registration, and administration, while a specific course on museology should be voluntary (Archive of DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1982-1988). The academic hybridity, which was a fundamental principle in the summer courses, was replaced by a specialized discourse related to specific job functions, which promoted functional hybridity combining several practical functions related to a specialized field of
work. Even though the system was never implemented, it formed the basis for later discussions about the institutionalized museum training.

**7.4. Museumshøjskolen - the Danish Training Institute for Museums**

In 1987, two educational committees, set up by DKM and the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN), recommended to establish a training institute offering museum-related training on both ‘technical’ (museographic) and ‘ideological’ (museological) issues (Archive of the Danish Training Institute for Museums, Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager 1982-2006), and in December 1987 the independent institution, Museumshøjskolen, was founded as a collaboration between the museum associations for history, art, and natural history. The vocational training for museum professionals was institutionalized, and the training entered into a new phase. In 2005, Museumshøjskolen was merged with the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM), which is a union of the three museum-associations for history museums, art museums, and natural history museum (DKM, FDK and DNM). Since then, the training has been organized by the educational division of ODM.

A comprehensive categorization of the courses organized by Museumshøjskolen and ODM is complicated based on the available source material. However, it appears that the content of the courses resembled that of the summer courses with a focus on practical and current issues. For instance, in 1991 Museumshøjskolen offered an introduction to museums and courses on practical registration, security, agricultural tools and the materials tin and lead, besides a number of one-day courses covering topics such as cleaning and service were offered regionally on demand (Catalogue of courses 1991, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Diverse kursuskataloger og statistik 1987-2006). Other examples of practical and current courses are ‘internet for museum personnel’ (2000), ‘user-driven innovation’ (2008), ‘experience design and visual communication’ (2010) and ‘best practice related to audiences’ (2015).

Until 1995, Museumshøjskolen also continued to offer weeklong courses like the summer courses. However, the courses were organized in so-called lines indicating an ongoing specialization of the museum field. For instance, in October 1990 a six-day course offered an administrative line with courses on administration and the use of databases, an academic line studying architectural history and sound as documentation, a mediation line working with the use of audiovisual media and a so-called experimental line discussing the

In general, the demand for training changed significantly during the 1990s, indicating that a new phase in the development of professional museum education was emerging. In April 1999, the board of Museumshøjskolen concluded: “Everyone now wants course certificates, and the Board finds that Museumshøjskolen must accept this development.” (Board meeting April 6, 1999, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Formandens arkiv 1999-2006). When interviewed in 2017, the headmaster of Museumshøjskolen (1988-2005), Ole Strandgaard, added: ‘It [Museumshøjskolen] became more and more like a school.’ (Interview Ole Strandgaard). In practice, this growing demand for certificates led to discussions about the format of the institutionalized training – i.e., about the organization of qualifying courses and the development of educational programs.

7.5. Vocational Training as Qualifying Courses and Educations

Already in 1989, Ole Strandgaard, stated, that the institute should provide a combination of museum-related and basic courses, which could qualify museum employees for advancement (Strandgaard 1989:3). However, as a private organization, Museumshøjskolen could not obtain the certification to offer independent, qualifying courses. At the end of the 2000s a qualifying education in management for curators, a diploma program in museum management for managers and one in cultural mediation were developed in cooperation with CELF, Center for Vocational Training in Nykøbing Falster. Likewise, qualifying programs in management are currently offered in cooperation with Niels Brock Copenhagen Business College and Zealand, Academy of Technologies and Business, thereby underlining the need for organizational hybridity in the training of museum professionals.

Such collaborations are expensive, and the limited number of museums in Denmark makes the target group small. Therefore, the head of the educational section of ODM (2014-2017) Jacob Buhl Jensen assessed, that ODM would not focus on the development of qualifying, management educations in the future, because the target group would instead blend with other sectors in order to obtain different experiences (Interview Jacob Buhl Jensen). Moreover, the educational field has become increasingly international. For instance, a number of Danish museum managers have recently participated in management courses at the Getty Leadership Institute for Museum Management in Los Angeles, subsidized by the Agency for Culture and Palaces (Slots og Kultursturelsen).
Another recurring discussion has been related to the development of museum educations instead of, or as a supplement to, short courses. In 1994, the board of Museumshøjskolen stated that standardized educations for museum assistants and museum managers were needed. However, this was contested by the Association of Danish Art Museums, which formed a dissident opinion stating that the art museums did not want qualifying educations or formalized training (Board meeting March 8, 1994, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager og referater 1987-2006).

Nevertheless, several comprehensive educations were developed with external financial support around the turn of the millennium. A Nordic education for museum-managers (Nordisk Museumslederuddannelse) was started in 2001 with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers. Simultaneously, an education for mediators subsidized by the National Council for Children’s’ Culture (Børnekulturrådet) (museumsformidler-uddannelsen) was organized, an education for museum assistants was planned in 2002, and an education for curators (museumsinspektøruddannelse) was started in 2004. Moreover, an education for museum educators (Museumsunderviseruddannelsen) was added in 2009 (Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager og referater 1987-2006 and Årsberetninger for ODM 2006-2018).

Each education consisted of a number of fixed modules and required a certain level of specific experience since they were based on the practical knowledge of the participants. While the educations were expressions of specialization in the museum field, the functional hybridity of professional museum work was still underlined, e.g., by including two sessions on management in the education of curators (Catalogue of courses at MHS 2006-2007, Private archive of ODM). Furthermore, the combination of traditional academic educations and practical skills in museum managers was upheld until 2012, because museum managers according to the Danish museum Act were required to hold a university degree in specific museum-related disciplines (see Jensen 2019). As such, the educations represented a specialization of museum professionalism, and professionalization of sub-fields, although the combination of different functions was still maintained.

Meanwhile, the practical focus in the short courses offered by ODM was sharpened to fit the demand of the museum field. When asked about how the course portfolio has changed, the head of the educational division of ODM (2014-2018) Jacob Buhl Jensen, explained:
‘We do not have so many development-oriented courses anymore. Our primary course portfolio lies on the business-related things […] I think that […] the development-oriented things are typically something which will be addressed at big conferences and seminars. Practice-oriented things are more related to courses, and when it becomes more specific, we are consultants’ (Interview Jacob Buhl Jensen).

Likewise, he explained that a number of courses are now held at the museums since the institutions have reached a size, which makes it profitable to organize local courses. Furthermore, both the museum institutions and the employees increasingly focus on how easy the training can be translated into organizational value. Therefore, activities aimed at creating networks are no longer in demand since people increasingly find a network outside the museum field (Interview Jacob Buhl Jensen).

Since the end of the 1980s, vocational training for museum professionals has been institutionalized, and the format of the training has changed in order to accommodate growing demands from the museum field for qualifying courses and comprehensive educations. These demands have led to a specialization in the training. At the same time, the vocational training has continuously offered short courses of contemporary relevance with a growing focus on practical issues. Thus, the institutionalized vocational training has maintained the functional hybridity and has continuously advocated integrated occupationalism as the basis for educations for museum professionalism, although adapting the training by implementing organizational hybridity as a way to obtain certified qualifications.

7.6. The Battle about Museology

Until 1970, museum training mainly took place in the form of individual internships, while the universities’ museum-related training was mainly practical auxiliary courses for existing academic disciplines. Courses in excavation techniques were integrated into the study of archeology and interviewing were part of the study of ethnology, which was established as an independent academic discipline at Copenhagen University in 1960 as ‘material history’ (materiel folkekultur).

In 1969, the International Committee for Training of Personnel (ICTOP) passed a resolution stating that museology should be considered an independent science, and in
Denmark, museology was taken up at Aarhus University in 1977, when three art history students developed an interdisciplinary course inspired by Eastern European museology. One of the founders of the course, the later director of Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Jens-Erik Sørensen, recalled: ‘We did not care about the accounting and the politics – our [course] was general. It was museology […] i.e., what is it we want with museums?’ (Interview Jens Erik Sørensen).

The course collaborated with the local art museum, Aarhus Kunstmuseum, which ended up housing an exhibition produced by the students with the title ‘Why Museology’. Thereby, precedence for practice-related museum education was established at Aarhus University, advocating situated professionalism as the basis for the education of museum professionals.

Simultaneously, in the fall of 1976, the department of history at Odense University (now University of Southern Denmark) proposed to make a two-semester museological course in cooperation with Odense Bys Museer covering museum history, the function and structure of museums, museum legislation, museum administration, the role of museums in the media as well as practical exercises. (Archive of DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1976).

However, a number of leading museum professionals strongly objected to such an education, because it was not planned in cooperation with the field, and as such broke with the idea of integrated occupationalism, which had governed the organization of the previous training. Ulla Thyrring, who was then chairman of DKM, argued that such an education should provide helpful knowledge for all the disciplines represented in the museums (Thyrring 1978), and Hans Jeppesen, then director at Limfjordsmuseet (1973-1981) stated, that he preferred professional post-graduate training as a way to qualify candidates for museum work (Jeppesen 1977). To these objections, the head of the department of history at Odense University, Søren Mørch, responded:

‘I thought, naively I now realize that those who should meet the educational needs of the museums would be happy when someone volunteered to get started without any expense for the museums. However, we have been strongly educated otherwise – and I simply do not recall a similar suspicion […] I have met after we presented our innocent and well-intentioned suggestion to make what might be the beginning of a museum education.’ (Mørch 1977).
In other words, the development of a university-based museum education in Odense became a struggle about the perceived jurisdiction over the definition of museology between the museums and the university, and the program was never fully developed.

Interestingly, the course offered at Aarhus University did not cause a similar debate. It was founded in the department of art history, and according to the former director of J.F.Willumsens Museum (1973-2006), Leila Krogh the professionals at art museums felt very close to their academic discipline (Interview Leila Krogh), and the association for art museums (FDK) was not as active in the debate about professional museum education as the association of history museums (DKM). The program in Odense, on the other hand, was based in the department of history – thereby presumably challenging the position of DKM. As a result, until the end of the 1990s museological courses were only offered at Aarhus University.

Nevertheless, the museums’ role in the organization of museological research and education was repeatedly discussed in the museum field. In a meeting in 1996, the board of Museumshøjskolen stated that, in the long run, the universities could focus on theoretical museology, while Museumshøjskolen could develop a more pragmatic version like the ones offered at Leicester University and the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam (Board meeting December 10, 1996, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Bestyrelsessager og referater 1987-2006). Likewise, in 1997, Ole Strandgaard described an elective program in museology, which should be taught as a collaboration between Museumshøjskolen and an unspecified university department. The course should be a combination of lectures, museological exercises and an internship, during which the student should get acquainted with museum work related to administration, collection management and mediation (Memo written by Ole Strandgaard, March 1997, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens Arkiv 1997-1998). However, in 1997 it was also proposed to change Museumshøjskolen into a ‘department of museology’, where it would be possible to offer post-graduate studies and do museological research (Meeting January 6, 1997, Archive of MHS, Forstanderens arkiv 1997-1998).

From 1993 to 2003, Museumshøjskolen and the National Museum organized an annual museological one-day seminar, inviting Danish and international museologists and museum thinkers to discuss current trends in the Danish or the international museum field. Thus in 1993, the director at Viborg Stiftsmuseum, Peter Seeberg, spoke about ‘The
museums in their time’, and in 2002 the Dutch museologist Peter van Mench lectured about museology and the transition of the museum from ethics-driven to performance-driven businesses (Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Course Catalogues).

However, according to a letter written by Ole Strandgaard to the consultation of Danish museum organizations (Samrådet af Danske Museumsorganisationer) in June 2002, the Agency for Cultural Heritage (Kulturarvsstyrelsen, KUAS) showed no interest in subsidizing museological courses (Letter, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens arkiv 1999-2006), and, simultaneously, the demand for such courses from the field changed. As a result, Museumshøjskolen and later ODM was increasingly focused on practical courses, while museological studies were increasingly taken over and defined by the universities.

7.7. The Universities and Museology in the 21st century

Around the turn of the millennium, the interest in museums as a field of research and education at the university level snowballed. In 2013 an overview compiled by the Danish Center for Museum Research shows 16 different educations and courses offered by five Danish universities, some of which were specialized, covering specific functions such as mediation, communication or the use of history, while others include museum mediation in collaboration with Museumshøjskolen. Thereby the proposal was underlining the specialization of the field by focusing on mediation. However, describing the collaboration between Museumshøjskolen and the university at the time as limited and dependent on personal contacts, he explained: ‘He [Ole Strandgaard] would like to have Museumshøjskolen anchored in a university […], but it was a clear premise, that we had to come up with something so that we did not compete with Museumshøjskolen.’ (Interview Bruno Ingemann).

Already at the end of the 1980s, associate professor at the department of communication at Roskilde University (RUC), Bruno Ingemann, started using museums and their exhibitions as case studies for courses in communication, and in 1998 he developed a proposal for an education in museum mediation in collaboration with Museumshøjskolen. Thereby the proposal was underlining the specialization of the field by focusing on mediation.
practitioners and international researchers (Memo written by Bruno Ingemann 24 July 1998, private archive). The program recognized the practicality of professional museum work, however moving the exercises into the university. Due to bureaucratic circumstances at RUC, the education was never implemented, and Museumshøjskolen rejected an alternative solution placing museology in relation to the department of history, inhibiting further cooperation (letter from Ole Strandgaard to the board of Museumshøjskolen December 1, 1998, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens arkiv 1999-2005).

Instead, a so-called ‘toning’ in museum mediation was offered at RUC from 2002 as a combination of history and communication from 2002. The program facilitated a focus on the history and function of museums and the analysis of museum exhibition and other forms of museum mediation, and it included the possibility to accredit an internship at a cultural institution (Beskrivelse og Studieordning, 2002). However, according to Bruno Ingemann, the initiative was characterized by a lack of commitment from the university. The students could use museums as a prism to study history and communication. However, specific courses in museology or museum mediation were not offered (Interview Bruno Ingemann). As such, the ‘toning’ did not define museum professionalism since it did not define a body of professional knowledge and skills.

At the same time, educations in museology were developed at the universities in Aarhus and Copenhagen. In 2001, the Department of Art History at Aarhus University developed a one-year supplementary education in museology at bachelor level with courses in museology, museological method, communication and an internship at a museum or a similar organization (Hejlskov et al. 2005). Associate professor in museology, Ane Hejlskov Larsen, explained that the program, which currently accepts about 40 students per year, is based on providing an understanding of museums as organizations and aims at combining meta-reflections about the institution, legislation, collections and audiences with practical skills such as registration, writing press releases, designing a school program and planning an exhibition (Interview Ane Hejlskov Larsen). As such, the program recognizes the hybridity of professional museum work by combining theoretical understanding, critical reflection, and a number of practical skills.

At the University of Copenhagen, a similar one-year bachelor elective in museology was established in 2002 as a cooperation between Art History and Ethnology. According to one of its founders, associate professor Rune Gade, one of the purposes of the program was to prepare art historians for a labor market outside the university. He explained: ‘The
universities have been forced to get used to the fact that we do not only educate candidates to become researchers like ourselves, we actually educate them to be able to go out and commit to a reality outside the university’ (Interview Rune Gade). Simultaneously, also other programs related to museum work were developed focusing on the employability of the candidates outside the university. For instance, the department of history at the University of Copenhagen offered a one-year master related to museums and archives from 2000 to 2008, which included an internship at a cultural institution (private correspondence with associate professor Benedicte Fonnesbech-Wulff, University of Copenhagen, May 27, 2019).

The museology program in Copenhagen consists of courses in the history and theory of museums and collections, exhibitions, and an internship at a cultural institution with a focus on mediation or collection work. Comparing the two programs, associate professor Marie Riegels Melchior from the University of Copenhagen explained: ‘They [Aarhus University] are much more concrete, much more hands-on – we are not.’ She continued: ‘We have a role as pre-education because we are only an addition to a main academic profession’ (Interview Marie Riegels Melchior). Later she added: ‘[The purpose] is to strengthen the future museum professionals' reflection on their own and their colleagues' practices, and thus to challenge museum work.’ (e-mail 16/08-2019). Nevertheless, the program in Copenhagen emphasizes museum professionals as academics in different disciplines to which museology adds a critical perspective, whereas the program in Aarhus also defines museum work as a practical profession.

The cooperation with the practical museum field in the form of internships and on-site visits and dialogue is emphasized in both programs. Ane Hejlskov Larsen explained: ‘We have a number of requirements for the institutions. They [the interns] must participate in the daily work.’ (Interview Ane Hejlskov Larsen). Thereby, the jurisdiction over the definition of professional museum work has been taken over by the universities. In both cases, the museums constitute a field of study and provide practical experience, which underlines the

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3 Collection work was added as a potential focus for the internships in 2018, according to associate professor Marie Riegels Melchior from the University of Copenhagen. (e-mail 16/08-2019)
perception of museum work as situated professionalism and the use of organizational hybridity as a central element in academic museum educations.

Finally, Aarhus University (AU) has also attempted to develop academic on-the-job training for museum professionals after the turn of the millennium. In 2003, the Center for Museology at AU started developing plans for a master in museology for museum practitioners with a minimum of two years of experience in the field. The education consisted of courses on international museum-theory and -method, on management for museums and on communication (Larsen et al. 2005), thereby maintaining the functional hybridity of museum work. Formal cooperation with Museumshøjskolen was not established. On the one hand, the university got the impression that Museumshøjskolen was disinterested in a cooperation (e-mail from Ane Hejlskov 16/08-2019), while Ole Strandgaard commented the proposed program in a letter to the university, writing:

‘It is in the interest of everyone that educations which offer more theoretical and management-related competencies besides the traditional museum disciplines are offered. […] Precisely because it is an education, a partnership can be developed between the museum's common institution and its training and the university.’ (Orginal italics, Letter to the Department of Esthetic Disciplines, Museological studies from Ole Strandgaard, 03/06-2003, Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens arkiv 1999-2006).

Even if he agreed to a cooperation, he also underlined that training belonged to the jurisdiction of Museumshøjskolen, while education could belong to the university. As a result, the master was announced in Danske Museer without mentioning Museumshøjskolen as a partner to the regret of Ole Strandgaard. Instead, the university looked for a direct cooperation with the museum practitioners by asking them for ideas about how to develop the program (Jeppesen 2003). The master, which was offered from 2005, was problematic both for the university and for the museum field. Ane Hejlskov Larsen commented: ‘It worked – I think it ran 2 or 3 times, and we got a lot out of it, but it was not profitable for the university’s economy.’ (Interview Ane Hejlskov Larsen), and the director of ODM (2008-), Nils Jensen, explained: ‘[the participants] should have been recruited directly from the museum field – they never were, because it was impossible to find the time [as practitioner]’ (Interview Nils Jensen).
However, the cooperation between the museum field and the universities has evolved since during the last decade. In 2010, ODM and the Center for Museology (CfM) officially agreed to cooperate on offering post-graduate training for the museum field with the purpose of avoiding competition in the field and instead to secure mutual support in order to ‘contribute to professionalizing the museum world’ (Agreement of cooperation between ODM and Center for Museology, Aarhus University, 2010, private archive of Ane Hejlskov Larsen).

Practical differences such as the prices of educations and the timeframes needed for organizing have repeatedly made a closer cooperation difficult. The price of the master was found to be too high by the museums, and the university’s timeframe for offering a master program did not match the museums’ priorities. Thus, in the minute from a meeting in 2013 between ODM and CfM, it was remarked that ‘there is no long-term planning at the museums, you sign up relatively close [to the start of the course]’. Furthermore, it was found that ‘there is a […] restraint in the field towards giving training to the employees.’ (Minute from meeting between ODM and CfM, 24/01-2013, private archive of Ane Hejlskov Larsen). Nevertheless, a new master in curation at Aarhus University has been offered from 2018.

Meanwhile, the cooperation between the museum field and the universities has become closer during the last decades. Several museums and universities have entered into partnerships regarding postgraduate fellowships as a way to academically upgrade the museum workforce or to study museum practices. An example of this is the current research program ‘Our Museum’, in which eight museums have entered into a partnership with five Danish Universities studying museum mediation (see www.ourmuseum.dk).

7.8. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tracked the development of the organization and content of training and educations for museum professionals in Denmark since the 1960s as an ongoing discourse on professionalism. The study shows that the educational field was developed in three consecutive phases. From the 1960s until the end of the 1980s, the education of museum professionals was defined by the museum field and organized as peer-to-peer training focusing on the exchange of experience and the formation of networks.

From the end of the 1980s until around the turn of the millennium, the vocational training was institutionalized. While it remained predominantly controlled by the museum
practitioners, demands for qualifying educations emerged within the field, leading to changes in the format of the training. Finally, since the end of the 1990s, the Danish universities have taken a growing interest in museums both as a research field and as a labor market. Simultaneously, the introduction of a ministerial, bureaucratic agency to supervise the museum field in 2001 meant that the conditions for the institutionalized vocational training changed. As a result, the already existing division between academic pre-entry education offered by the universities and practical post-graduate training organized by the museum association was emphasized.

Throughout all three phases, professional museum education has combined a number of different logics and has therefore inherently been characterized by hybridity, however, with a shifting definition of the concept. While the discourse on educating museum professionals throughout the period has advocated functional hybridity combining a number of different practices related to the occupational field of museums, the early vocational training also emphasized the need for academic hybridity – i.e., knowledge of the methods (and theories) of different academic museum-disciplines.

Over time, the academic hybridity was replaced by an ongoing specialization and by organizational hybridity, where the education was combining various organizational fields (i.e., museums and educational institutions). Finally, the university programs, which have been developed during the last two decades, have added a focus on critical reflection on the field, and have in some cases returned to the comprehensive understanding of museum work by focusing on museology as a whole.

Finally, my study has also indicated a significant difference in the definition of competence between the training organized by the museum field and the university educations. On the one hand, the vocational training organized by the museum association as short courses has advocated a combination of behavioristic functionalism and integrated occupationalism focusing on practical training of specific behaviors and the discussion of topics defined by the museum field. On the other hand, the universities have based their definition of museum professionalism on a combination of critical reflection and situated professionalism, including on-site-visits and internships in their programs as important parts the educations, however at the same time reserving the universities’ right to specify the content of professionalism relayed by the education.

As such, the education of museum professionals is unique compared with other forms of education due to the inherent combination of academic knowledge and practical expertise
required of museum professionals. Also, the Danish development is unusual in comparison
with international museum studies programs, which predominantly have been developed by
universities or similar institutions. Nevertheless, the growing interdependence between the
museum field and the universities since the 1990s has changed both the format of vocational
training and the design of university educations possibly leading to further convergence
between the two in the future.

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Mogens Bencard, director of Ribe Museum (1961-1980), secretary of The Danish Association of History Museums during the 1960s, January 10, 2017
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Chapter 8

Between Education and Experience.
The Professionalization of Museum Mediation in Denmark
1958-2018

Abstract

Accessibility, learning, education, entertainment – these are all words that have been used to characterize museum mediation in Denmark throughout the past 60 years. In this article, I ask how museum mediation has been defined, debated and operationalized in Denmark since the end of the 1950s, in order to map the development of a central part of professional museum work and the drivers that have influenced the development. I find that museum mediation can be described as an ongoing negotiation between education and experience throughout the period. However, mediation has been given increasing importance, thereby accentuating the definition of mediation. I also find that shifts in the political agenda and an ongoing specialization in the museum field has caused a potential polarization of education and experience in the discourse of museum mediation – leading to the misconception that museum mediation is either education or experience.

Keywords: Mediation; museum history; professionalization; education; experience
In February 2018, the art historian Peter Michael Hornung wrote in a comment in the national, Danish newspaper, Politiken:

‘Education, experience, and turnover look like the three new pillars, on which the activities [of museums] are based. […] Should the visit [at the museum] end up making us smarter, the information we take home should preferably resemble an extra benefit of an indisputable experience.’ (Hornung, 2018, all quotes have been translated from Danish by the author).

Thereby, he voices a commonly heard perception about contemporary museums both in Denmark and in other countries – namely the perception that experience has come to take precedence over education in order to secure economic sustainability. However, looking at the development of museum mediation both internationally and in Denmark, this claim is hardly accurate, so what has led to this representation of modern museum mediation?

Moreover, how has museum mediation been professionalized during the last six decades? I address these questions in this paper using Denmark as an empirical case study. Simply put, I ask how museum mediation has been defined, debated, and operationalized politically and in practice, and which drivers have contributed decisively to this development.

Denmark constitutes an interesting case study. First, the Danish museum field has been regulated by law since 1958, where the first Museum Act for history museums was passed (Act 166, 1958). Since then, the legislation has defined the role of the museum and defined museum work. Second, the majority of the professional museums in Denmark is either subject to or is voluntarily following the national museum legislation. Therefore, it is possible to track the publicly articulated definition and role of mediation for the majority of the museum field over an extensive period.

Third, the majority of the professional museums are to some degree funded by public subsidies, making the role of museums and the definition of museum work subject to political definition rather than to the forces of the market.

Throughout the study, I establish that professional museum mediation in Denmark from the 1950s until today can be described as a dialectic negotiation between experience and education, which has undergone two significant shifts tied to changes in the definition of the role of the museum and professional museum work. The study is part of my doctoral
thesis on the professionalization of the Danish museum field and is part of the national research program ‘Our Museum’, which is analyzing the past, present, and future of museum mediation.¹

Limiting the study to the period in which the Danish museum field has been regulated by comprehensive legislation, excludes earlier debates about the purpose and organization of museum mediation as education or experience – although it is important to point out that the debate about mediation was not new in the 1950s. Likewise, it is paramount to remember that the discussions about the role of mediation were in no way restricted to the Danish museum field. Therefore, a comparative analysis of the subject in an international perspective would constitute an interesting focus for future research, although I here focus on Denmark as an empirical case study.

In the following, I first define the key concepts of ‘mediation', 'experience,' and ‘education' and outline the theoretical approach used in this paper. Next, I introduce the source material and briefly place the empirical case study in a historical context, before I analyze the development of museum mediation in Denmark focusing on shifting formal as well as practical definitions throughout the period.

8.1. Mediation, Education and Experience

The Danish words “formidling”, “oplysning” and “oplevelse” are terms which are hard to translate and therefore initially in need of clear definitions. In Danish, the word “formidling” is used to cover a wide variety of communicative functions in museum work from education, exhibition, lectures and tours to marketing and other activities directed towards the public. In other words, “formidling” is much more inclusive than the associated English terms. Therefore, in this paper, I use the English word “mediation” to describe all work related to the public. Furthermore, I use the words “education” and “experience” as different, non-exclusive affordances ascribed to mediation. “Education” refers to the aim of transferring knowledge, while “experience” is directed at producing sensory impressions and emotional reactions in the audience.

¹ For further detail on the program, see the website: [http://ourmuseum.dk/](http://ourmuseum.dk/)
In museum studies, mediation has been the subject of a great deal of research. The museologists André Desvallées and François Mairesse have pointed out that communication has gradually become ‘the driving force of museum operations towards the end of the twentieth century.’ (Desvallées and Mairesse, 2010:30), while other scholars have focused on learning in museums and visitor experience (e.g., Hooper-Greenhill 1992, Falk and Dierking 1997 and Hein 1998), participation (e.g. Black 2005, Simon 2010), the development of museums’ use of media (Kidd 2014, Kjeldsen 2015) or on organizational storytelling (Nielsen, 2017) – just to mention a few of the topics addressed by scholars working with museum studies.

The relationship between education and experience in museum mediation has also been a recurrent topic for research – often seen as a development from the former to the latter. To this effect, Jane Nielsen writes in her PhD thesis that there has been a paradigmatic shift in the second half of the twentieth century from the educating, enlightening modern museum to the postmodern, experienced museum (Nielsen 2014:92-101).

In 1999, the American writers James Gillmore and Joseph Pine introduced the term ‘the experience economy’ as an economic stage (Gillmore and Pine 1999), in which memory-creating experiences become commodities. Following this paradigm, museums have been said to have shifted from being informative to being performative (e.g., Skot-Hansen 2008, Lyck 2010). However, to the best my knowledge, no empirical case studies have tracked, how mediation as been defined as part of professional museum work over time. Thus, this paper puts the current understanding of professional museum mediation into a historical perspective.

Inspired by the research field of historical institutionalism, I argue that the development of museum mediation can be perceived as an ongoing path dependent equilibrium between education and experience determined by political agendas and power struggles both outside and within the museum field (see Pierson 2004, Thelen and Mahoney 2010). In this development, I seek to identify and characterize potential critical junctures – i.e. moments in time, where the established equilibrium is changed (e.g. Cappoccia and Kelemen 2015) and the perception of professional museum mediation, therefore, has shifted. Furthermore, I am interested in identifying the drivers of these changes.
This study is based on text analysis of archives from the Danish museum associations\(^2\) as well as from the legislative work in committees and supervisory boards since the 1950s. Furthermore, I have collected 2,730 job ads for academic jobs in museums, which have been posted between 1964 and 2018 in the printed edition of the monthly magazine for members of the Danish Association of Masters and PhDs (Magisterbladet, 1964-2001) and from on the Danish web portal, jobindex.dk (2002-2018).

Finally, I have conducted 25 semi-structured interviews with retired and working museum professionals asking about their careers and their perception of the development of the professional Danish museum field and mediation. The informants have been selected based on their participation in the public debate as well as by snowball sampling. They represent both art, history and natural history museums and they cover the period from 1961 until today. All interviews have been transcribed and coded using open-ended coding.

Based on this material, I track the role of mediation in the definition of professional museum work and how museum mediation has been defined. Furthermore, I show how mediation has become increasingly specialized, and I discuss what this growing specialization has entailed.

### 8.2. Mediation as Accessibility and Participation

Until 1958, only a small number of museums received public subsidies, and most local museums were run by volunteers in private, local associations. Therefore, no comprehensive definition of museum work and the role of museums as public institutions existed. However, with the establishment of a subsidiary system for history museums in 1958, the role of museums and the definition of museum work became part of the legislation. The first Museum Act for history museums in 1958 did not define the tasks included in museum work. Mediation was defined as accessibility – i.e., museums eligible for subsidies were

\(^2\) The Association of Danish History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM), the Association of Danish Art Museums (Foreningen Danske Kunstmuseer, FDK) and the Association of Danish Natural History Museums (Dansk Naturhistorisk Museumsforening, DNM) which merged in 2005 and became the Association of Danish Museums (Organisationen Danske Museer, ODM)
required to be accessible to the public by having fixed opening hours several days per week and receive visits from schools free of charge (Law 166, 1958, § 3.1.e).

Nevertheless, during the 1960s, a political agenda concerning cultural institutions emerged, emphasizing the institutions’ duty to promote democratic enlightenment and social coherence through cultural mediation. In 1969, the Ministry for Cultural Affairs published a visionary report, which placed museums in the field of cultural mediators alongside theatres, libraries, television, and radio and stressed the need for public participation. The report stated: ‘There is a growing urge for cultural expression in the population for active participation and empathy in cultural activities.’ (Report 517; 128). Moreover, it continued: ‘One must accept that besides an educational function, like libraries, theatres, radio, and television museums have the crucial task to entertain’ (Report 517; 153). Simply put, the new policy on mediation, introduced by the report, accentuated entertainment as a legitimate goal and equated museums with other actors in the field of cultural mediation.

In practice, the focus on accessibility and engagement of the public translated into a range of new ideas within the museum field. In a memo from 1968 to the Ministry for Cultural Affairs, museum director in Viborg and chair of the Association of Danish History Museums (DKM) from 1968-1974, Peter Seeberg, points out the potential of museums as information services, which together with libraries and archives can make their ‘bottomless material available to the public – even at all hours.’ (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening: Bestyrelsessager 1958–1968). Thus, the museum practitioners accentuated accessibility and information as core affordances of museums.

However, also mediation with the purpose to engage an audience was used in all types of museums. With the opening of the modern art museum, Louisiana, in 1958, a new form of museums emerged, organizing jazz concerts with dancing in the exhibitions and integrating a café and beautiful architecture in the museum experience. The engaging paradigm was manifest in the opening speech of the founder, Knud W. Jensen, who said: ‘Louisiana shall be [...] an artistic environment and the frame of a piece of life, where something is happening.’ (Stensgaard 2008: 19). Thus, engaging experiences was at the core of the new museum. However, while Louisiana, no doubt constituted a unique case, also other museums experimented with engaging the public in new ways. In 1964, a center for experimental archeology was opened in Lejre next to Roskilde, and in Copenhagen, the Zoological Museum gained international fame opening a new permanent exhibition in 1970.
including several engaging mediating elements. The former director of exhibition, Bent Jørgensen, recounted: ‘We put a bison as a petting animal [in the entrance]. That had never been done before – so it was a sensation. It became completely worn down.’ (Bent Jørgensen, October 26, 2017). The exhibition also included live ants, an installation with bird song and a cooling plate demonstrating the isolating properties of fur.

At the regional museum in Lolland-Falster, Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum, the former director Else-Marie Boyhus, introduced citizen research during the 1960s and 70s using debate as a way to engage the public. She explained:

‘[…] I found out that mediation takes place in the interaction between people – rather than in big, fancy exhibitions. […]You had to dig where you stood, and you had to involve people, because just as much mediation occurs when you are talking with a person, as when you have a fancy showcase.’ (Else-Marie Boyhus, January 30, 2017).

In other words, several different experience-related tools were introduced into practical museum mediation during the 1950s and 60s with the purpose of engaging the public in order to be relevant institutions transmitting knowledge and educating a broad public. The experience was seen as a method for transferring knowledge.

8.3. Mediation as an Integrated Part of Museum Work

The rapid growth of the Danish museum field during the 1960s and the onset of the economic recession during the 1970s shifted the political discourse on museums from a focus on the role and relevance of the museum to coordination and definition of professional museum work (Jensen 2019a). The same trend was true for museum mediation. To this effect, the committee in charge of revising the Museum Act wrote in 1975:

‘As research institutions, the museums have the distinctive characteristic that mediation to a broad audience is worked into their very operation. In the close connection between the collection, research, and mediation lies the museums’ distinctiveness and strength.’ (Report 727, 1975;15).
Mediation was defined as a distinctive characteristic of museum work, which in a memo written by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to the cultural committee in Parliament in 1975 was defined as one of three phases of museum work – i.e., collection, preservation, and mediation. The Ministry stated: ‘while the cooperation [between the museum categories] related to collection and conservation is thought to be possible only within the different museum categories, transverse museum cooperation about registration and mediation can be established.’ (Folketingets forhandlinger, 1975-76, appendix B, column 1302). Thus, mediation was defined as a core function in professional museum work.

Finally, in the Museum Act of 1984, mediation became one of five interdependent parts in the common definition of museum work – i.e. collection, preservation, research, registration and mediation– with the purpose to illuminate history, disseminate the results of research and to make collections available to the public (Law 291, 1984, §2). Simply put, the accentuation of coordination and definition from the 1970s constituted a critical juncture in the development of professional museum mediation – a juncture which turned the focus away from engagement and experience towards a focus on the role of mediation in professional museum work.

### 8.4. The Professionalization of Museum Mediation

Simultaneously, the practical organization of mediation was professionalized as a specific field of work during the 1970s. The political focus on mediation and public relevance resulted in the introduction of a legal requirement for regional history museums to employ museum educators already in 1969 (Law 273, 1969, § 2.2.2). In practice, the education of these educators as either academics or teachers became part of the debate about the definition of mediation and the museums’ relation to the school system. Some museums hired schoolteachers, while others employed academics. Thus in 1980, 13 of the 35 museum educators registered at Danish museums had academic educations, while 15 were teachers and seven held other educations (Statens Museumsnævn, 1980; 41).

In 1970, the Biological Collection in Copenhagen and the Zoological Museum formed the educational service called ‘Skoletjenesten’ with the purpose to function as ‘a pedagogical service with the task to formulate, develop and carry out educational programs, in order to pedagogically utilize collections, museums, institutions and special environments […]’ (Krogh Clausen, 1980:35). Hiring educators for museums with funds from the collaborating municipalities, the museums and the Ministry of Education allowed the
participating cultural institutions to expand their mediation. However, it also raised criticism from some museum professionals, who argued that ‘Skoletjenesten’ distorted the definition of museum mediation focusing on the schools as a specific audience, while in reality, the museums' audiences were much more diverse (Strandgaard, 1980:42). In addition, it was argued, that the sometimes shared museum educators in ‘Skoletjenesten’, who were covering several, different museums, were an insult to the museums as knowledge institutions (Archive of DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1982). Thus, education for schools increasingly became a specialized field within museum mediation.

Overall, the museum practitioners argued to be competent custodians of knowledge with a special right to mediate also to the broad public. During the 1980s, a number of stakeholders saw the potential in providing experiences and knowledge about natural and cultural heritage. In 1982, the organization, Dansk Folkeferie, established a service – subsidized by Aarhus Municipality and the European Union – where young, unemployed people could become tourist guides – so-called ‘rangers’. However, the Association of Danish History Museums (DKM) sharply criticized the program for not involving the museums. In his annual report, the chairman of DKM stated:

‘DKM will not hinder a sensible holiday occupation, but there is reason to point out that mediation of cultural history (as well as of natural history) requires insight and contemplation […] The museums exist around the country as institutions with experience in mediation. Therefore, do not build up yet another organization. If it is deemed desirable, build up the Ranger-program together with the museums.’ (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, Bestyrelsessager 1982-88).

In this perspective, the debate about mediation during the 1970s and 1980s was more concerned with claiming the right to mediate the knowledge of the museums – i.e., the organization of the work, than with whether this knowledge should be education or experience.

Also, during the beginning of the 1970s, the discourse on museum mediation became institutionalized within the museum field. In 1973, DKM organized a series of meetings to ensure that mediation became ‘an integrated part of museum work and not just a survival strategy in a time where the museums were losing ground in cultural policy and in
comparison with other media.’ (Board meeting, May 12-13, 1973, Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, Bestyrelsessager 1973-1976). As a result, DKM held the first annual conference on mediation with 160 participants in 1976. According to the former secretary of DKM, Kirsten Rex Andersen, the participants were often archeologists, ethnologists or historians, who were part of other professional groups in the ordinary annual meeting. The specific conference allowed them also to participate in debates about mediation and to create professional networks of museum mediators (Kirsten Rex Andersen, August 25, 2017).

Likewise, mediation became a recurrent theme in the annual summer course organized by DKM from 1967 to 1988 either in the form of technical courses on exhibition-techniques or graphic design, verbal communication or pedagogical mediation or as theoretical discussions (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, Materiale vedr. kurser). Furthermore, in 1976 the participants in the workshop on mediation created the Danish Journal of Museum Communication, which in the first volume expressly emphasized the need for theorization about museum mediation, user groups, evaluation practices and other central concepts (Gregersen 1976). In other words, during the 1970s and 80s mediation became a specialty within the field of professional museum work with a focus on practical techniques or discussions of general theories of communication rather than a debate about mediation as education or experience.

In practice, experience was continuously emphasized as a tool for communicating knowledge. The former director of Esbjerg Museum, Michael Lauenborg, remembered making an exhibition during the early 1980s leaving out any text, arguing: ‘The museums collect artifacts, so you get an experience, and then you can take the text home to read.’ (Michael Lauenborg, April 20, 2017). In this way, experience was linked to the tactile nature of museums and was identified as a way to communicate the history of Esbjerg.

Similarly, the former director of J.F.Willumsens museum from 1973 to 2006, Leila Krogh, explained her view on the role of the museum: ‘It is the role of the art museums to give the audience a knowledge, an insight, a perception, an experience, which they cannot get elsewhere.’ (Leila Krogh, September 12, 2017). In this way, experience and education are both defined as part of the role of museums.

During the 1970s and 1980s museum, mediation increasingly was defined as a specific function in the professional museum with particular methods and theories that were subject to increasing specialization. While the debate focused on establishing the museums as experts in mediating particular knowledge, experience was used as a method to
communicate with the museums’ audiences. Education and experience were complementary parts of professional museum work.

8.5. Mediation as the Most Important Task

At the turn of the millennium, the debate about professional museum work shifted in Denmark due to the introduction of the governmental agency, the Agency for Cultural Heritage (Kulturarvstyrelsen, KUAS), which took over the supervision of the museum field from the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn, SMN). While SMN had had significant representation from the practical museum field, KUAS was a bureaucratic body independent of the field itself. Therefore, the discourse on professional museum work in Denmark, defined by KUAS, renewed the political focus on museums as relevant, public institutions and on mediation as a visible way to ensure this relevance.

As a result, mediation for children and increased accessibility for the disabled were emphasized as specific areas of interest in the Museum Act of 2001 (Law 473, 2001, §14.1.12-13). A committee was set up to ensure ‘that the mediation of cultural heritage happens in an inspiring and relevant way so that a growing part of the population becomes interested in what the museums offer.’(Kulturministeriet, 2001:15). Simply put, museum mediation should capture the interest of the public.

The resulting report, published in 2006, contained a plan for the development of museum mediation focusing on the user perspective and on qualifying and supporting the development of mediation. The plan was backed by more than 41 million Danish kroner in an annual pool of money to fund projects developing or researching mediation, educational projects, and visitor studies (Kulturministeriet, 2006). In this way, after 2001, the professionalization of mediation became part of a political agenda – an agenda which was controlled from outside the practical museum field.

In the current Museum Act, passed in 2012, the relevance of museums is underlined in the mission statement of the Act. It is stated that the purpose of museum work is to ‘actualize knowledge and make it available and relevant […] for citizens and society’. Furthermore, museums are required through professional and economic sustainability to ‘secure the cultural and natural heritage of Denmark and develop its’ meaning together with the surrounding world.’ (Law 1391, 2012, §§1-2). Thereby, the Act introduces the idea of museums as businesses. As before museums are defined as possessors of knowledge – however, the knowledge must be developed and made relevant for an audience.
For the past couple of years, a new museum act has been debated, mentioning mediation as a key element for redefining the distribution of subsidies in the Danish museum field. In 2017, the Ministry commissioned two reports for Culture in which mediation is mentioned as the defining task for museum work and as a trigger for future subsidies (Birkebæk and Bak 2017, Nissen and Nielsen 2017). Thus, in the current discourse on professional museum mediation, mediation is seen as an increasingly important condition for the museums' economy and therefore, for their existence.

Among current practitioners, the importance of mediation as a way to obtain economic sustainability and relevance is repeatedly addressed. To this effect, the director of Museum Østjylland, Jørgen Smidt-Jensen, explained: ‘Mediation is the most important task […] [The public] wants museums. [The public] also wants museums that do research […], but if there are no guests in the museum, they do not want it’ (Jørgen Smidt-Jensen, August 15, 2017).

Likewise, the director of the Industrial museum Frederiks Værk, Frank Allan Rasmussen, articulated the importance of mediation by pointing out, that mediation is the place where the museum is seen, and he added:

‘We do not have the impact of [an amusement park] […], but of course we have to be good at learning the best from [them] and take it into our own everyday work because we also have a product to sell’ (Frank Allan Rasmussen, April 3, 2017).

Thereby, he repeats the argument voiced in the report on cultural mediation from 1969 – that museums should learn from other media (Report 517, 1969). However, where museums in 1969 were encouraged by politicians to secure their relevance through entertainment inspired by television and radio, today museum professionals accentuate the entertainment industry as a necessary inspiration for securing economic sustainability. Thus, in the 21st century, museum mediation has become commodified as the prerequisite for creating a turnover and therefore, for the existence of the museums.

8.6. Education or Experience as Specialties

Simultaneous to the commodification of museum work, the field has undergone a considerable specialization with an independent professionalization of each subspecialty. Between 1964 and 1976, 77 % of the jobs advertised listed the job title as
‘museumsinspektør’ (i.e., curator) without further specification of the area of work. In comparison, in 2002-2018 only 26% of the jobs advertised by museums were not defined by a specific function (see also Jensen, 2019b). Furthermore, dividing the jobs advertised from 1964 to 2018 into job functions, mediation constitutes an increasing proportion - especially since the turn of the millennium. While 10% of the 930 job ads collected between 1964 and 2001 had titles referring to mediation, more than 28% of the 1,800 jobs posted between 2002 and 2018 were related to mediation. Thereby, mediation constituted the most extensive job function in professional museum work during that period – measured as the proportion of jobs advertised in specific job categories.

Although the increasing proportion of jobs in mediation after the turn of the millennium can be attributed both to a general specialization in museum jobs, also within the category of mediation jobs, have become ever more specialized – e.g., resulting in the introduction of several new fields of expertise. While the content of mediation jobs up until 2002 is often described using words such as ‘exhibition’, ‘education’ and ‘tour’, words like ‘digital’, ‘webpage’ and ‘platform’ are frequently used after the turn of the millennium reflecting the impact of new technologies such as the Internet. Also, words like ‘design’ and ‘graphics’ signal a professionalization of exhibitions and a focus on visual media.

Finally, the increasing frequency of words like ‘marketing’, ‘booking’, ‘event’ and ‘media’ and demonstrates the focus on museum mediation as a business function. Simply put, museum mediation as a professional field of work has been increasingly operationalized into a number of different areas of work in which both education and experience have become professionalized. However, while education has underlined the traditional perception of museums as knowledge institutions, experience-making has been accentuated as a specialty in museum work in Denmark since the turn of the millennium, promoted by the introduction of new technology and business models inspired by the entertainment industry as well as the reintroduction of the political call for the relevance of museums.

8.7. Conclusion

Overall, the above analysis shows that mediation in the Danish museum field since the 1950s has been defined as a core task in museum work with both education and experience as central methods. However, shifts in political agendas and technical developments have determined how the two concepts have been operationalized and perceived. While mediation initially during the late 1950s and early 1960s was defined as giving access to the
knowledge and as educating school children, the introduction of a discourse on public relevance, resulted in a focus on experience inspired by the new media as a legitimate – and necessary – way to engage a broad public. Simultaneously, the institutional professionalization of a number of regional and local museums added new inspiration to the field by engaging a new generation of museum professionals – eager to test new ways to mediate, combining and professionalizing education with experience.

From the middle of the 1970s, the political discourse on museums in Denmark centred on defining a museum structure and identifying museum work as a professional, institutional field. Mediation was still to a large degree part of the comprehensive museum work, in which the production of education and experience merged.

However, since the turn of the millennium the political discourse on the relevance of museums as public institutions has been reintroduced and combined with the need for economic sustainability leading to a commodification of mediation as the product, the museums sell. Thereby, mediation has gained importance, since it has been tied to the livelihood of the institution.

At the same time, museum work has undergone a significant specialization, so that mediation has become a field performed by a number of different professional experts working specifically with graphic design, new media, event making or school education – to name a few. Thereby, the former symbiosis of education and experience is threatened, because it is no longer obvious when different parts of the mediation process are increasingly performed by different employees – possibly working in different departments. As a result, the balance between education and experience can then become a matter of prioritization within the institution – leading to perception of experience and education as a hierarchy in which one or the other takes precedence.

It is this challenge of the balance between education and experience, which has led to the initial quote – however internationally also institutions with the name of museum, is challenging the equilibrium. Thus, a number of popular, American ‘Instagram museums’ like the Museum of Ice Cream, which opened the first temporary exhibition in New York in 2016, primarily aim to provide photo ops for social media. In Denmark, however, museums generally still focus on both education and experience. To this effect, the director of Den Gamle By, Thomas Bloch Ravn explained: ‘If people get an amusing experience, it opens up for the afterthought, the knowledge – and whatever is in the museum – the inspiration,
the otherness.’ (Thomas Bloch Ravn, November 14, 2016). In this perspective, museums are still knowledge institutions, which use experience to promote education.

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Else Marie Boyhus, director for Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum 1963-1989, January 30, 2017

Bent Jørgensen, director of exhibitions at the Zoological Museum 1965-1979, October 26, 2017

Leila Krogh, director of J.F. Willumsens museum 1973-2006, September 12, 2017

Michael Lauenborg, director of Esbjerg Museum, April 20, 2017

Frank Allan Rasmussen, director of Industrimuseet Frederiks værk 2006-, April 3, 2017


Jørgen Smidt-Jensen, director of Randers Museum and Museum Østjylland 1998-, August 15, 2017
Chapter 9

‘We are (almost) all museum mediators…’
– the professionalization of Danish museum mediators 1960s–2018

Abstract
For decades, mediation has received increasing attention as a professional occupational field in museum work. In this paper, I track the definition of professionalism for mediators since the end of the 1960s using the Danish museum field as an empirical case study. Inspired by theories from the sociology of professions and based on archival studies and analysis of employment advertisements for positions in museum mediation, I map the ongoing negotiation of the tasks and the skills related to museum mediators, as well as the professionalization of the field characterized by the establishment of autonomy. The paper thereby defines professionalism for museum mediators in a historical context, offering an empirically based perspective on the study of museum mediation as an occupational field.

Keywords: Museum mediator, professionalism, museum history
In February 1976, the chairman of the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM) invited all Danish museums to the first annual conference on mediation writing: ‘The initiative […] builds on the idea that we are – almost – all museum mediators in one form or another’ (Østergaard 1994: 21, all quotes have been translated from Danish by the author). He thereby framed mediation both as a specialty meriting its own conference and as part of professional museum work in general. Since then, this duality has been challenged by the ongoing specialization of museum work in both Denmark and internationally – a process that can be followed by mapping museum mediation as an evolving specialty in professional museum work.

In this paper, I analyse the definition and development of professionalism for museum mediators in Denmark over the last 50 years. In practice, I focus on four related perspectives: First, I map the development of museum mediation as an occupational field in Denmark since 1969; second, I track the ongoing negotiations about what constitutes the work of museum mediators; third, I study the ongoing definition of skills needed in museum mediation; and fourth I investigate the professionalization of museum mediators throughout the period.

For decades, scholars in the field of museum studies have sought to define the characteristics of museum work as one or more professional fields. Some have mapped the general professionalization of museum work and the development of professional identity over time (e.g. Teather 1990; Weil 1994; Boylan 2006; Mancino 2016). Others have sought to identify professional functions in museums. In 2008, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) committee for the training of personnel (ICTOP) published an overview of job functions in museums listing a total of 20 jobs in professional museums. According to this model, mediation jobs were divided between education officers, who concentrated on visitors, and exhibition designers, who focused on exhibitions, collections and research (Ruge 2008, 14). Moreover, a number of researchers have focused on the definition and development of specific sub-fields, such as managers (DiMaggio 1994; Bagdadli and Paolino 2006), conservators (Lester 2002), registrars (Vassál and Daynes-Diallo) or museum guides (Schep et al. 2018), to name just a few.

A significant body of research has focused on museum mediation predominantly relating to contemporary practices and characteristics. Significant research has been done on learning in museums, on museum audiences (e.g. Falk and Dierking 1997) and on best
practices in museum mediation (Tran and King 2007; Tran 2008; Jorro et al. 2017). Researchers have also studied the organizational role of museum mediators (e.g. Dobbs and Eisner 1987; Munley and Roberts 2006) and their identity (Baily 2006). New challenges in the work of museum mediators have also been addressed. In 2006, American museum educator Barbara Henry concluded that museum educators have taken on a new role as community liaisons and experimenters (Henry 2006).

The development of museum mediation as a professional occupational field has received less attention. In 2015, the Czech scholar Lucie Jagošová characterized museum mediators as semi-professionals due to the lack of external support (Jagošová 2015:54). In Denmark, museum scholar Mette Boritz has included a short historical overview of the professionalization of the field in her recently published PhD thesis (Boritz 2018). With this paper, I contribute to the existing research by offering an empirically based case study of museum mediation in a recent historical perspective.

Denmark provides a unique case study because it has a relatively small and well-documented museum field. According to the Ministry for Cultural Affairs, the Danish Museum field in 1967/68 included 134 history museums and about 20 subsidized art museums (Ministeriet for Kulturelle Anliggender 1969:160-165), and as of 2019, 97 museums in Denmark are state subsidized, which makes a comprehensive analysis of the field possible.

Denmark is one of the only countries in the world with a long tradition of comprehensive museum legislation setting up a subsidiary system and defining professional museum work. The first Museum Act for history museums was passed in Denmark in 1958, while a corresponding act for art museums was added in 1964. Moreover, in the revised Museum Act in 1984, professional museum work was defined as five interrelated ‘pillars’ – namely collecting, registration, preservation, research and mediation (Act 291 1984, §2; for a thorough review of Danish museum legislation, see Jensen 2019a).

In this paper I use the word ‘mediation’ as a translation of the Danish word ‘formidling’ following the definition provided by the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) – that is, the communication between the public and what the museum has to show (Desvallées and Maiersse 2010: 46). I thus distinguish between mediation and other related terms such as pedagogy/education (pædagogik/undervisning)
related to specific pedagogical mediation directed towards schools, and communication (kommunikation/marketing) connected with marketing and PR.

9.1. Studying Museum Mediation

This paper is based on content analysis of empirical material. First, I have studied the legislative framework for museum mediation in Denmark by analysing five consecutive Museum Acts passed in 1969, 1976, 1984, 2001 and 2012 and the related reports, memos and correspondence. I have also studied the archive of the Danish Association of History Museums (Dansk Kulturhistorisk Museumsforening, DKM), which was dominant in defining professional museum work for all museum categories until 2005, when it was merged with the association of art museums (Foreningen Danske Kunst Museer, FDK) and natural history museums (Dansk Naturhistorisk Museumsforening, DNM).

Second, I have investigated the occupational field of museum work and the development of tasks and skills related to museum mediation by analysing employment advertisements for academic positions in museums. However, employment advertisements do not indicate the actual skills of the applicants or how the jobs are carried out in practice (Harper 2012), so I study how museum institutions have defined the jobs and skills of mediators throughout the period.

In practice, I have compiled a dataset of 2,730 employment advertisements for academic positions in museums posted in the journal of the Danish Union for Masters and PhDs (Dansk Magisterforening) during the period 1964 to 2001 and on the Danish web-portal, www.jobindex.dk, in the period 2002 to 2018. The dataset consists of information on the year of the advertisement, the museum advertising, the job title, the skills needed, the job description and the permanency of the position. In addition, I have categorized the advertisements by job function, identifying positions related to management, collection and research, mediation, administration, curatorial or project position. Based on word frequency analysis, I analyse how the definition of professional museum work has changed throughout the period (for further description of the method, see Jensen 2019b).

For added perspective, I have explored posts published in the professional Danish museum journals ‘Stof fra Danske Museer’ (1971-1988) and ‘Museumsmagasinet’ (1977-1988), which, since 1988, have been published as ‘Danske Museer’. Finally, I have
conducted 25 semi-structured, qualitative interviews with retired and currently employed Danish museum professionals, predominantly in managerial positions. All informants, who were selected by a combination of relevance and snowball sampling, have been asked to describe their career and their perception of the development of the Danish museum field to track relevant events and discussions related to professional mediation in the period of the study. This study is part of my doctoral research on the development of professionalism in the Danish museum field.

In the following, I first relate this paper to the existing research on professionalism done in the field of sociology. Subsequently, I describe the development of museum mediation as a specialized field of work and finally I analyse the evolving definition of professionalism as an ongoing discourse about the tasks related to museum mediation, the skills required and the professional organization of the mediators.

9.2. Profession and Professionalism as Theoretical Concepts

For the past century, sociologists have debated the definition of profession, professionalism and professional identity, seeking criteria for what constitutes a profession, how professional fields develop, how they are delimited and how they relate to each other (e.g. Parsons 1939; Hughes 1963; Abbott 1988). Thus in 1964, American sociologist Harold Wilensky addressed the process of professionalization as a linear development including the introduction of professional education, professional associations and a code of ethics (Wilensky 1964). In 1994, the American sociologist Paul DiMaggio listed five specific characteristics of professional work, namely training and the existence of a standard set of credentials, the possibility for lifetime careers, participation in professional activities outside the home institution (including the formation of professional associations), peer control of licensing and ethical standards and claims to authority based on expertise (DiMaggio 1994: 155).

In this paper, I have adapted these characteristics to the debates found in the empirical material, so that I study the development of specialized knowledge and tasks related to mediation using the concept of jurisdiction introduced by the American sociologist Andrew Abbott to denote the areas of work belonging to a certain profession (Abbott 1988: 20). Furthermore, I track discussions concerning the organizational
autonomy of the mediator and finally, I map the ongoing definition of skills needed and the training offered for museum mediators in Denmark during the period studied.

Increasingly recognizing the dynamic nature of professional fields, the development of professionalism both in organizations and in individuals has become a significant topic of research in the field of the sociology of professions. The British sociologist Julia Evetts has advocated studying professionalism as a developing discourse rather than seeking to define fixed characteristics for the concept of profession or for the process of professionalization (Evetts 2011).

However, changes in the labour market have rendered traditional definitions of professionalism inadequate. In 2007, the Dutch scholar Mirko Noordegraaf introduced the concept of hybrid professionalism to account for occupations working with both professional and managerial logics (Noordegraaf 2007). In 2015, he added the concept of organizing professionalism, arguing that professionals are increasingly required to organize their work as part of their professionalism (Noordegraaf 2015). In the following analysis, I consider how the two types of professionalism introduced by Noordegraaf can help characterize and clarify the development of professionalism for museum mediators in Denmark over the past 50 years.

9.3. Mediation as an Emerging Specialty

Up until 1969, museum mediation in Denmark had been established as a specific field of work in the form of various local initiatives inviting teachers to teach at local museums as temporary, part-time museum-lecturers in towns such as Roskilde, Rønne and Næstved. The Danish National Museum’s Open-Air Museum established the first position with education and mediation as a specific jurisdiction in 1963. In her analysis of Danish museum educators, Mette Boritz concludes: ‘The need for professionalizing the education was still more pronounced’ (Boritz 2018: 63).

In 1969, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs published a report on cultural mediation stating:

A revised [Museum] Act ought to require that a museum educator [museumsøpedagog] should be associated with each regional museum [from 1958 to 1976, the history museums were organized hierarchically with up to
17 regional museums, which received special subsidies to oversee and develop other museums in the region – authors comment […] i.e. an educator with a background in cultural history, who cooperates with schools, prepares class visits at the museum, lectures and courses, publications and such, and handles the part of the museum’s work, which especially relates to the museum’s visitors – both school children and other professional groups, as well as the ordinary public. (Report 517: 164–5)

Accordingly, the following Museum Act for history museums in 1969 required that part-time museum educators be employed in regional museums (Act 273, 1969 §2, sec. 2.2 and related remarks, Folketingets Forhandlinger [FF], 1968–69 app. A col. 4258). In the corresponding Museum Act for art museums, museum educators were mentioned in the remarks as a temporarily financed ‘art historian or museum professional, who is interested in mediating art and for a short time visits a group of museums […] giving talks and doing tours’ (FF, 1968-69 app. A col. 4212). The temporality of the art educator was meant to secure a dynamic development of the museums and prevent standardization of the art museums, while the employment of educators in history museums would increase the accessibility and relevance of the museums, especially for school children.

In 1971, the DKM conducted a survey among the 16 existing regional museums revealing a very diverse group of educators: three museums reported that they had full-time educators, six museums had part-time educators and two museums reported that they did not have any museum educators at all. In two museums, the museum director functioned as the educator, in the other two museums the educators were paid by the hour and in one museum the payment was not determined. The reported educational levels of the educators also varied greatly; the educators included one architect, one student and artist, four teachers and seven people with other academic qualifications. Their work conditions also varied. While eight of the museums reported that their educational facilities were under construction, the Randers Historical Museum, which did not have an educator on staff, had a specific room for schools, film and slide projectors, a tape recorder, a record player and a selection of artefacts to be used for education (Archive of the DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1971–72).
In the revised Museum Act in 1976, the requirement for museum educators was abandoned. In the meantime, the field of specialized mediators was growing. In 1980, the National Board of Museums (Staten Museumsnævn, SMN) listed 21 full-time and 14 part-time museum educators working in Danish museums. (SMN 1980: 41), and in 1993, a survey among state-owned and state-subsidized museums showed that 149 people worked in the field of mediation, constituting 5.7 per cent of the museum work force. Moreover, the survey revealed that the mediators were generally younger than the general museum work force: 20 per cent were between 25 and 29 years old. These individuals were more often male – that is, 55 per cent of the mediators were male, in contrast to the 51 per cent proportion for males in the whole workforce. The mediators were also more often temporarily employed: 52 per cent of the mediators were temporarily employed, while this only applied to 31 per cent of the whole workforce (SMN og Museumshøjskolen 1993).

Finally, although the number of mediators is not mentioned, the latest available statistics about museums from 2012 show that 89 per cent of state-subsidized Danish museums employed educated mediators (Kulturstyrelsen 2015: 23). It therefore appears that mediation has become a specialized work field in the twenty-first century.

9.4. The Mediator as Coordinator

Analysing job descriptions in employment advertisements related to museum mediation indicates how the jurisdiction of mediators has changed over time. In the period from when the first professional museum jobs were advertised in ‘Magisterbladet’ in 1964 to the abandonment of the specific requirement for museum educators in 1976, only 13 per cent of the jobs posted had titles related to mediation (i.e. 15 out of 119 ads). Simultaneously, 77 per cent of the advertisements contained the title ‘museum curator’ (‘museumsinspektør’), indicating that jobs posted for museums during the 1960s and 1970s were predominantly multifunctional.

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1 All calculations are based on word frequency analysis using the data management software Nvivo, and all percentages were calculated by the author and rounded to whole numbers.
Judging from the early debates about museum education, the jurisdiction of educators was divided into two distinct areas of work related to either exhibition or education. For example, in November 1970, at a meeting organized by the DKM, the workshop about communication split into two groups: one discussing the role of mediation in museum work, audiences and principles of exhibition, and the other discussing the relationship between schools and museums (Stof no. 1, 1971: 5–7).

Museum professionals also discussed the role of the mediator in the museums. In a seminar about mediation in 1973, one of the groups concluded: ‘Mediation is […] integrated in the professional work in museums. […] He [the mediator] must coordinate the necessary professional competences of the museum’s other employees with the necessary external, professional expert assistance’. The group also found that the concept of ‘museum educator’ introduced in the Museum Act was inconvenient because it ‘supported an unwanted specialization of the communicative function’ related to the education of children (Stof no. 6, 1973: 26).

Another group specifically discussing education concurred, clarifying that the educator should be a coordinator who prepared teaching materials and introduced teachers to teaching in the museums – but that he or she should not necessarily teach (Stof no. 6, 1973: 9-10). As such, the role of the professional mediator was already characterized by hybrid professionalism including both mediation and coordination of theirs during the 1970s.

9.5. From Educator to Mediator

With the revised Museum Act of 1976, the focus of museum legislation changed so that the specific emphasis on mediation was replaced by a focus on administration and coordination of the museum field (see Jensen 2019a). As a result, between 1977 and 2001 job titles specifically related to mediation were only used in 76 out of 811 job ads (i.e. nine per cent). The title most frequently used (in 20 ads) was that of ‘museum educator’ (museumspædagog), while ‘museum mediator’ (museumsformidler) was less frequent (five positions). From the middle of the 1990s, a new job title, ‘mediation curator’ (formidlingsinspektør) was introduced, defining mediators as specialized curators.

An analysis of the frequency of words used to describe the advertised positions suggests that the jurisdiction of the jobs was rather broad in the period. Table 1 shows the
frequency of words used to describe jobs in museum mediation posted between 1977 and 2001.

**Table 9.1 Frequency of recurring words used for describing mediation jobs in advertisements posted 1977–2001 (n=76)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of ads (percentage)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>31 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching (undervisning)</td>
<td>27 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>21 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/development</td>
<td>18 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Fourteen ads (18 per cent) used both the word ‘teaching’ and ‘exhibition’ in the job description – most commonly as developing teaching materials for specific exhibitions. The jurisdiction of mediation jobs continuously centred on exhibitions and/or education. Even so, ‘curator’ was the most frequently used title for academic museum jobs during the period 1977–2001. Of the 811 jobs posted, 500 (62 per cent) used the title ‘museum curator’ and of those 500 ads and 134 (or 27 per cent) used the word ‘mediation’ as part of the job description, indicating that mediation was an integrated part of curatorial positions. This underlined the aforementioned statement that all curators were mediators and corresponded with the common discourse of ‘no mediation without research and no research without mediation’, which became one of the slogans in the professional museum debate around 1980 (Jensen 1994:18).

Nevertheless, while 26 per cent of curatorial advertisements using the word mediation also used the word ‘exhibition’, almost none used words like ‘school’, ‘teaching’ or ‘pedagogical’ to describe the advertised position. This suggests that the word ‘mediation’ in curatorial positions was predominantly related to exhibitions during the 1980s and 1990s, while the specific field of museum education developed into a
specialty, underlining the aforementioned division of the field of mediation made by ICTOP in 2008 (Ruge 2008).

9.6. New Specialties

In 2001, a revision of the revision of the Museum Act renewed the focus on mediation by specifically requiring museums to focus on mediation for children and accessibility for the disabled (Act 473, § 14, sec.1.13–14). Correspondingly, the proportion of mediation jobs advertised grew, so that 507 of the 1800 advertisements (28 per cent) posted between 2002 and 2018 held titles related to education and development (53 advertisements), communications (kommunikation, 49), exhibitions (41) or events (22). Meanwhile, the title ‘museum educator’ (museumspedagog) was used only four times, while general titles such as ‘museum mediator’ (museumsformidler), ‘mediator’ (formidler) or ‘mediation curator’ (formidlingsinspektør) were the most frequently used (77 total advertisements). In other words, the field of mediation had become a generic work field with a number of diverse specialties.

At the same time, only 461 (26 per cent) of jobs posted between 2002 and 2018 used the title ‘museum curator’, thereby underlining the specialization of the field. Of these 233 (56 per cent) used the word ‘mediation’ (formidling) as part of the job description – showing that mediation continued to be an integrated part of a curator’s job. Still, mediation in curatorial positions was predominantly related to exhibitions. While 45 per cent of the curator jobs (161 advertisements) used the words ‘exhibit’ or ‘exhibition’, only 10 per cent (47) used the word ‘school’ and 6 per cent (28) used the word ‘teaching’.

After the turn of the millennium, the jurisdiction of mediation jobs changed. Table 2 shows the most frequently used words in mediation jobs advertised between 2002 and 2018.
Table 9.2 Frequency of recurring words used for describing mediation jobs in advertisements posted 2002–2018 (n=507)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of ads (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop/development*</td>
<td>262 (52 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation*</td>
<td>157 (33 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>154 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>142 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching (undervisning)</td>
<td>142 (28%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As shown, words such as ‘development’ and ‘cooperation’ had become important parts of the jurisdiction of mediators, which matches the earlier focus on mediators as coordinators and underlines the hybrid professionalism of museum mediators. Only 56 of the advertisements posted since 2002 (11 per cent) use both ‘exhibit’ and ‘educate’, which emphasizes the previously mentioned division between exhibition and education.

Overall, the analysis of the jurisdiction of mediators, as defined in job descriptions posted in the period 1964 to 2018, indicates an ongoing specialization of professional museum work since the 1960s. In addition, mediation related to exhibitions has continuously been part of the jurisdiction of general curatorial positions. Throughout this period, mediation jobs have been associated with either education or exhibition. Since the turn of the millennium, mediation has diversified into a number of different sub-specialties.

The professionalism of the mediator has also been characterized by hybridity, defined as the inclusion of intra-institutional coordination during the 1970s, and increasingly as a focus on development and cooperation, which corresponds to the findings of Barbara Henry that museum mediators have become community liaisons and experimenters (Henry 2006).
9.7. The Educators’ Education and Skills

The skills required of mediators were debated at the same time as museum mediation underwent professionalization as an occupational field. In 1969, the previously mentioned ministerial report on cultural mediation stated:

Just because of his scientific education, a scientist does not necessarily have knowledge about or specific prerequisites for evaluating in which way a museum audience gets the greatest benefit from a museum visit. The scientific abilities do not always go hand in hand with the pedagogical. (Report 517, 1969: 158)

Museum mediators needed skills beyond those associated with the academic disciplines traditionally related to museum work. However, the definition of such additional skills was the subject of debate throughout the period studied.

During the 1970s and 1980s, it was debated whether mediators should be teachers or academics. In 1970, a teacher at a local teachers’ college, Verner Bruhn, criticized the museums for hiring academic personnel instead of pedagogical staff. In an article in a journal for history teachers, he argued: ‘We cannot as teachers accept that the thought [about museum educators] that we have contributed to shall be volatilized; the museums shall not spend the money that will make our jobs easier on other things than pedagogical work’ (Bruhn, 1970: 40).

On the other hand, the Danish Union for Masters and PhDs (Dansk Magisterforening) criticized the hiring of teachers in jobs that, in their opinion, should be occupied by academics. The DKM maintained that different educations could be suitable qualifications for the position of mediator. In the annual report from 1982, the chair of the DKM stated: ‘DKM can and will not think that academics are better qualified as museum mediators than teachers or other competent people’ (Archive of the DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1982).

In practice, the specialization of museum mediation also led to a change in the number of educated teachers working as museum mediators, which decreased during the period. In 1980, statistics on museum personnel list 15 teachers, 13 academics and seven people with other educations working as museum educators (SMN 1980: 41).
comparison, only 55 out of 507 positions related to mediation posted between 2002 and 2018 listed a teacher’s education as a specific qualification. A pedagogical education became less important as a required skill in mediation jobs over time. Based on a word frequency analysis of the skills listed in employment advertisements for mediation positions, Table 3 shows the recurrent skills and their frequency in advertisements during the periods 1977–2001 and 2002–2018.

Table 9.3 Frequency of recurrent skills in mediation jobs 1977–2001 and 2002–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1977–2001 (n=76)</th>
<th>2002–2018 (n=507)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of ads</td>
<td>Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(percentage)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>42 (55%)</td>
<td>Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>21 (28%)</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>10 (13%)</td>
<td>Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrovert</td>
<td>10 (13%)</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
<td>Extrovert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>7 (9%)</td>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Jobs ads posted before 1976 only contained few descriptions of skills.
* The 2002–2018 the word ‘experience’ was often combined with specifications such as experience in communication, teaching, pedagogics or exhibitions.

First of all, the table indicates that a common language for skills required of professional museum mediators developed, especially after the turn of the millennium. Second, the recurring words suggest that the skills of professional museum mediators were predominantly related to practical experience and a number of personal skills.

9.8. Museum communicators or communicators in museums

Throughout the study period, the work conditions and organizational placement of museum mediators was debated as part of the definition of the occupational field, and mediation jobs were relatively more often advertised as temporary or part-time than other
academic jobs in museums. Table 4 shows the proportions of temporary and part-time positions for mediation jobs and for all museum jobs posted between 1964 and 2018.

Table 9.4 Proportion of temporary and part-time mediation positions posted compared to all jobs 1964–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Temporary jobs</th>
<th>Part-time jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>All jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964–1976*</td>
<td>4 (28%)</td>
<td>8 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977–2001</td>
<td>28 (37%)</td>
<td>101 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2018</td>
<td>152 (30%)</td>
<td>442 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964–2018</td>
<td>184 (31%)</td>
<td>551 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*More than 70% of the employment advertisements posted from 1964 to 1976 provided no information about the job besides the job title and the employing museum.

As early as the museum legislation of 1969, museum educators in history museums were allowed to be part-time employees due to the budgetary constraints of the museums. Still, during the 1970s some of the regional history museums found it difficult to find means to employ extra personnel – even if it was only part-time. In two regions (the counties of Ribe and Vejle in Jutland), the educators were hired by the county to work part-time in a local school and part-time as museum educator covering a number of museums in the region.

Subsequently, in 1975, the Committee for revising the Museum Acts authorized this model of employment and concluded in a report that museum educators should primarily work part-time and that the jobs should be fixed-term employment (Report 727 1975; 153–4). This statement was criticized for making it impossible for teachers working part-time as museum educators to meet a satisfactory professional standard (Stof no. 13 1975:2 2–5). Nevertheless, the proportion of temporary or part-time jobs in the field of mediation continued to be larger than for the occupational field as a whole throughout the period, suggesting that museum mediators to a certain degree were placed at the periphery of museum organizations.
9.10. Skoletjenesten and Professionalism

In 1970, a collaboration between the so-called biological collection in Copenhagen, which was part of the municipal school system, and the Zoological Museum, resulted in a new organization called ‘Skoletjenesten’ (The Educational Services), which spread to include a number of museums in and around the city within a short number of years. The museum mediators in ‘Skoletjenesten’ were hired partly by museums and partly by the municipality of Copenhagen. The service provided professional educational programmes for schools based on the museums and their collections. The activities organized were predominantly practical in the form of field trips or historical workshops, courses for teachers or temporary exhibitions, which soon became very popular. During the 1980s and 1990s, about 75,000 students participated each year (Staak 1994).

According to Steen Krog Clausen, the creator of Skoletjenesten, the organization provided a professional network for museum mediators and facilitated cooperation between the participating institutions (Krog Clausen 1980: 37). Meanwhile, museum professionals criticized Skoletjenesten for impeding the integration between research and mediation in the individual institutions and warned against the tendency to equate museum mediation with school education (Strandgaard 1980: 42).

The idea of mediators covering several museums also caused a heated debate during the 1980s. In 1982, Skoletjenesten posted a job as mediator covering five different museums north of Copenhagen, including the art museum, Louisiana, and the Maritime Museum (Handels- og Søfartsmuseet). As part of the public school system, Skoletjenesten also insisted on hiring a teacher, thereby defining the professionalism of the mediator as being based on pedagogical skills rather than knowledge about the museum collections.

In contrast, the working museum professionals defined the professionalism of mediators as academic knowledge. In a post in ‘Museumsmagasinet’ entitled ‘Museum Mediation or the Pedagogical Octopus’, the museum mediator at Koldinghus in Jutland commented:

‘One must be amazed that anyone can imagine that one person, teacher or professor, could possess the commitment to properly communicate something as different as national history, trade and maritime history, technical history,
the introduction of modern art in Denmark and the many programs at Louisiana from large historical exhibitions to the most contemporary art.
(Jensen 1982: 13) “

Hans Jeppesen, the director of the Maritime Museum (1981–2007), summarized the conflict between the museums and Skoletjenesten in a 1982 memo:
Skoletjenesten wishes that educated teachers are hired […] to undertake as much of the museums’ exhibitions and educational activities as possible. The museums wish that Skoletjenesten also hire people with other qualifications that are more academic, and that the cooperation with Skoletjenesten mostly concerns education at the museums, while the museums wish to be responsible for other outward activities. (Memo 1 October 1982, Archive of the DKM, Formandens arkiv 1982-85)

The organization and jurisdiction of the museum mediators were therefore subjects for debate due to differences in the perception of professionalism as being based either primarily on pedagogy or academic knowledge.

9.11. A Professional Identity
Meanwhile, an independent professional identity for mediators developed in the professional museum field since the 1970s. During the 1970s, a professional field of mediators emerged from the group of museum professionals. The director of exhibitions at the Zoological Museum (1965–1979), who participated in a number of the annual meetings organized by the DKM around 1970, remembers:

‘[the people interested in mediation] was a group of interested and interesting characters […] We were 12–14 people talking about mediation […] and we bubbled from excitement for the new kind of museums, we would make’
(Bent Jørgensen, interview, 26 October 2017).

After mediation had been the topic of discussion in a number of specific workshops and meetings at the beginning of the 1970s, the first annual conference on museum mediation was organized in 1976 and attracted no less than 160 participants (The Chairman of DKM’s report 1975–76, p. 3, Archive of the DKM, Bestyrelsessager 1976). The
conferences were held in the spring to make it possible for museum professionals to attend both the DKM’s ordinary conference for museum professionals in the autumn and the conference on mediation. However, Nils Jensen, the director of the Association of Danish Museums (ODM) since 2008, noted that the annual conferences on mediation was also a way to rebel against the established professional meetings, implying a potential conflict between the traditional museum professionals and the new professional mediators (Nils Jensen, interview, November 2016).

The spring conferences focused on exchanging experiences about best practices and presenting specific projects. In 1978, for instance, the conference included a workshop on showcases, one on experiences (oplevelser) and another on videotapes (Stof no. 22, 1978). The conferences both established mediation as a practical, specialized work field and facilitated a professional network for people working with mediation in museums, emphasising a specific identity for mediators.

In 1976, a group of mediators also started addressing the need to formulate a theoretical standpoint, which resulted in the launch of the ‘Dansk Tidsskrift for Museumsformidling’ (The Danish Journal of Museum Mediation) setting up a model for ‘the technical planning of mediation in museums’ (Gregersen 1976: 2). Nils Jensen has noted: ‘Dansk Tidsskrift for Museumsformidling was one of the first platforms where mediators started to formulate their own language’ (Nils Jensen, interview, 18 November 2016).

The journal was published by the independent association ‘Foreningen for Danske Museumsformidlere’ (the Association of Danish Museum Intermediaries), which in 1999 became the ‘Museumsformidlere i Danmark’ (Museum Communicators in Denmark)² and only accepts personal memberships³ – thereby highlighting the specific identity of museum mediators.
Finally, the museum field also contributed to the definition of professionalism for museum mediators by organizing a number of workshops for on-the-job-training. From 1967 to 1988, the DKM organized an annual summer course consisting of a number of workshops on different topics. Of the 177 different workshops organized, 35 focused on mediation – predominantly related to exhibitions such as exhibition technique (1968), visual communication (1971) or graphic organization (1980) – or the use of different media such as picture (1979), sound (1981), video/TV (1984,1985) or dioramas (1984). A recurring theme was also the use of the landscape in museum mediation (1984, 1985 and 1986). Meanwhile, only one workshop in 1976 specifically addressed the theory of mediation (Archive of DKM, Materiale vedr. kurser, studieture 1967–1999), and in 1981 a workshop discussed how to select artefacts for school programmes (Stof no. 32, 1981: 26-27).

Starting in 1987, the sector-specific training institution, the Museumshøjskolen, took over the organization of courses for museum professionals and continued the focus on practical mediation. In 2001, the Museumshøjskolen offered courses on museums and schools, how to write exhibition texts, lighting design and best practices for Christmas events (Archive of Museumshøjskolen, Forstanderens arkiv 1997-2006).

In 2001, the Museumshøjskolen developed an educational programme in museum mediation (Museumsformidleruddannelsen) subsidized by the National Council for Children’s Culture (Børnekulturrådet). The programme offered a 14-day course divided into four modules aimed at professionals working with mediation for children. One of the first participants stated in 2002: ‘I have achieved what I would call professionalism at a high level […] I have received tools to evaluate, focus and contemplate my methods of mediation.’ (Seligmann, 2002:24). In other words, the training aimed at professionalizing already working museum mediators and provided this by focusing both on best practices and the organization of the work.

Likewise, in 2009 the Skoletjenesten and the training division of the Association of Danish Museums (ODM), which took over the organization of vocational training for museum professionals in 2005, launched another training specifically for museum educators working with programmes for schools (Museumsunderviseruddannelsen, MUU). The training, which is still offered, consists of two different programmes to provide a ‘tool-oriented education that will prepare museum employees for attending to
the development, advertisement and implementation of educational activities for different groups in the Danish school system’ (Damsgaard Andersen 2000: 30–1). The MUU specifically requires the equivalent of two years of practical experience and the responsibility for teaching in a museum to sign up for the course. The practical hybridity of the work of the professional museum mediator is thus emphasised by the training focused on best practices as well as development and advertisement.

Since the 1970s, the occupational field of museum mediators has professionalized by organizing specialized conferences, forming an independent association and establishing a professional journal, thereby developing a professional identity for museum mediators. The museum field has also organized on-the-job training since 1967 in the form of annual workshops focusing on exchanging best practices in the field of exhibitions and the use of different media. These courses have contributed to the definition of professionalism as practical knowledge. After the turn of the millennium, comprehensive educational programmes focusing on mediation for children and schools were developed, constituting an ongoing professionalization of the field of museum education and underlining the hybridity of professional museum mediation by combining best practices in mediation with organizational and evaluative skills.

9.12. Conclusion

In this article, I have tracked the development of professionalism for museum mediators in Denmark from the end of the 1960s to the present by mapping the ongoing definition of the jurisdiction of museum mediation, the skills required of professional mediators and the developing professionalization of the field. I thus offer a comprehensive historical analysis of the development of museum mediation as an occupational field.

Based on content analysis of empirical data from Denmark, I found that the introduction of professional mediators was facilitated by the legislative focus on

4 Source: [https://www.dkmuseer.dk/aktivitet/museumsundervisningsuddannelsen-2018](https://www.dkmuseer.dk/aktivitet/museumsundervisningsuddannelsen-2018)
mediation during the 1960s, and the autonomy of the field has been consolidated as a result of an ongoing process of professionalization, that is, the organization of seminars and vocational training, the establishment of a journal and the creation of a specialized association for mediators.

I have also demonstrated that mediation related to exhibitions has been a continuous part of the general jurisdiction of curatorial positions, dividing the field into mediators focused on exhibition work and educators centred on teaching. This division was maintained by different definitions of the properties of professionalism held by traditional museum professionals on the one side and pedagogues with an interest in museums on the other.

In 2006, American scholars Munley and Roberts argued that changing conditions for professional museums had led to the jurisdiction of mediators being divided between other functions in the museum, thereby threatening museum mediators as an autonomous specialty (Munley and Roberts 2006). In contrast, I found that the professionalism of mediators in Denmark has diversified, especially since the turn of the millennium, and a number of sub-specialties have developed. In general, my case study indicates that the development of the occupational field of museum mediators can be seen as an ongoing progressive professionalization.

The present historical study of museum mediators in Denmark also demonstrates that the definition of professionalism has been characterized by hybridity combining pedagogical, academic and organizational logic throughout the period. The development has also been strongly influenced by the practical museum field, meaning that self-organization is an inherent part of professionalism for museum mediators. This suggests that professionalism for museum mediators has been a combination of hybrid and organizing professionalism since the 1960s. This indicates that the history and development of hybridity in the professionalism of mediators in an international perspective would make an interesting topic for future research. However, further study falls outside the scope of this paper.

During the last three decades, the academic interest in museum mediation has been growing, and, as already stated, a number of international studies focusing on different aspects of mediation have been published since the 1990s and have affected the professional practices of museum mediators around the world. In Denmark museum
mediation has likewise become an established field of research. For instance, from 2014 a research programme studying mediation has been developed including five Danish universities and eight museums studying the history and practices of museum mediation (‘Our Museum’, see www.ourmuseum.dk). This suggests that professional mediation is a developing occupational field in need of further research to which the present study offers a historical perspective.
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Interviews

Bent Jørgensen, former director of exhibitions at the Zoological Museum, 1965-1979, interviewed by author 26 October 2017, Bornholm, Denmark, digitally recorded.

Nils Jensen, director of the Association of Danish Museums 2005-, Interviewed by author 18 November 2016, Copenhagen Denmark, digitally recorded.
Chapter 10
The Development of Museum Professionalism 1958 to 2018.
Conclusion and Final Remarks

In this thesis, I have mapped the professionalization of the Danish museum field, i.e. based on an empirical mixed-methods study I have tracked the changing discourse on professionalism as institutional conditions and occupational values in the period from 1958 to 2018, based on an empirical, mixed-methods study. Theoretically, the analysis has been grounded in social constructivism and inspired by theories on historical institutionalism and the sociology of professions. As such, professional museum work has been studied as a negotiated set of characteristics and skills commonly defined as constituting professionalism. To use the conceptual framework of Pierre Bourdieu presented in chapter 3, I have tracked the development of the doxa of professional museum work in Denmark through six decades.

Seeking to identify what has characterized professional museum work and museum professionals in Denmark, I have operationalized my research question in three specific discourses (an organizational, a practical and an educational) negotiated by three identified stakeholders in the field (i.e., regulators, practitioners, and educators in the form of higher educational institutions).

In chapter 1, I presented my research question and outlined the model of the study, in chapter 2, I related to relevant perspectives in the existing literature in the field of museum studies, and in chapters 3 and 4, I presented my theoretical and methodological frameworks. In chapter 5, I analyzed the organizational discourse on professionalism, looking at the development of the Danish museum legislation since 1958. In chapter 6, I tracked the definition of professional work and the skills required through an analysis of 2,730 job advertisements posted between 1964 and 2018, and in chapter 7, I investigated the
development of training and education for museum professionals from the 1960s until today. Moreover, in chapters 8 and 9, I zoomed in on the field of mediation and the museum mediator in order to study the specialization of museum work.

Finally, in this concluding chapter, I first characterize the development of museum professionalism in the Danish museum field and the specialization of the mediator, based on the findings in chapters 5-9, using the model presented in chapter 1. Second, I discuss the identified development from the perspective of historical institutionalism. Third, I consider the definition and evolution of museum professionalism in Denmark in relation to the sociological theories on profession presented in chapter 3, and finally, I put my research in perspective by summing up my contribution to the existing knowledge and by pointing out possible topics for future research.

10.1. Three Phases of Professionalization 1958-2018

Identifying three significant shifts in the legislative discourse on professional museum work, in chapter 5 I established three consecutive phases in the development of professionalism in the Danish museum field, defined as a political professionalization (1958-1976), an institutional professionalization (1977-2001) and an administrative professionalization (2002-today). These phases were subsequently used as the basis for the analysis of the practical discourse on museum professionalism in chapter 6. Figure 10.1 summarizes this division.
A similar, although partly shifted, division was established in the educational discourse investigated in chapter 7. There, the first phase (from 1966 to 1987) was dominated by vocational training, the second phase (from 1987 to 2001) can be summarized as institutional training and the third phase, starting around the turn of the Millennium, has been characterized by the development of academic educations in museology and an increasingly marked division between post-graduate training and pre-entry education.

Returning to the model presented in chapter 1, in this section I combine the findings of the development of the three discourses in order to characterize the overall discourse on museum professionalism and the distribution of influence between the three stakeholders in the three established phases. However, first, I must briefly make some general comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the constructed model as a way to characterize the development found in the empirical material.

As initially mentioned, the model focuses on three specific discourses and three distinct stakeholders related to the general discourse on museum professionalism. As such,
it represents a manageable representation of an otherwise unruly topic. However, confronted with the empirical material, I found two inherent weaknesses, which must be mentioned. First of all, in the graphic representation, the three discourses are depicted as parallel and equal. However, in practice, the importance of the discourses and their mutual influence have been shifting over time. For instance, while the practical definition of museum work formed the basis for the discussion about the educational discourse during the first phase of professionalization, the educations increasingly became independent topics for discussion over time.

Second, the definition of the stakeholders has been fluent over time. For instance, museum practitioners participated actively in legislative committees during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and as members of the supervisory structure until 2001. As such, they functioned both as regulators and as practitioners. Likewise, the ongoing development of collaborations between museum practitioners and universities also produces stakeholders, which are both practitioners and part of the field of higher education. However barring these reservations, the model offers a comprehensive – albeit stylized – way to describe the process of professionalization of an occupational field spanning six decades.

10.1.1 The Political Professionalization 1958-1976

During the first phase (1958-1976), the discourse on professionalism was mainly characterized by a political debate about the relevance of museums as public institutions and a definition of two parallel professional fields, one for history museums and one for art museums. The importance of the preservation and accessibility of cultural heritage as a public task was established, and the need for museums to be relevant for the broad public was discussed as a way to modernize and create legitimacy for a coherent, publicly subsidized museum field.

The practical discourse on professionalism was marked by the use of a small number of inclusive job titles – mainly curator (museumsinspektør) – with very little explanation of the content of the job, and by standardized, academic credentials. The museum institutions were predominantly small, employing only one or few museum professionals to take care of the whole operation of the museum, including research, administration, and mediation. However, as a result of the focus on public relevance, mediation (or education) grew as a specialized occupational field from the end of the 1960s, although the organizational position of the mediator was much debated at the time.
The rapid growth of the museum field during the 1960s and the visionary first generation of museum professionals led to a strong field of museum practitioners, which actively influenced the discourse on professionalism, e.g., by participating in the legislative debate and by organizing professional training. As such, the organization of the museum field, outlined in the Museum Act in 1976, was a result of a strong influence from a small number of museum professionals. However, the political influence on the organizational and the practical discourses was also strong. For instance, the Minister of Cultural Affairs, who in 1969 juxtaposed museums with new media such as radio and TV, defined entertainment as part of the purpose of professional museums and introduced the requirement for museum educators in regional history museums.

However, the regulators did not interfere in the need for professional museum education, and the universities similarly showed little interest in developing academic educations in museology besides the practical, supplementary courses, which were offered in relation to traditional museum disciplines such as history, archeology, art history, and material history (ethnology). As a result, vocational peer-to-peer training organized by the museum professionals came to dominate the educational discourse on professionalism.

From the outside, the development was influenced by the surging economy of the 1960s, which enabled growing, local, financial support to local museums – thereby securing state subsidies and expanding the field. Also, the idea of the welfare state as the provider of public goods of which museums were one, affected the development of the museum field. Figure 10.2 depicts the discourse on professionalism in the first phase of professionalization from 1958 to 1976.
10.1.2. Institutional Professionalization 1977-2001

The economic downturn, which set in during the first half of the 1970s, changed the discourse on professionalism, and with the revision of the Museum Act in 1976, a new phase of professionalization commenced. This second phase (1977-2001) was characterized by an organizational discourse, which focused on coordinating the museum field, e.g., dividing the areas of interest between the individual museum institutions, and on defining professional museum work – e.g. by introducing “the five pillars” of museum work (collecting, registering, preserving, researching and mediation) in the Museum Act in 1984 (see chapter 5).

The labor market and the institutions grew, and a managerial level was introduced. Also, the discourse on professionalism was diversified by increasingly defining personal skills, performances, and behaviors as part of the required professional skillset (see chapter 6). Meanwhile, the educational discourse was characterized by discussions about the format
and content of professional museum training, which resulted in the institutionalization of vocational training in 1987 – an idea, which had already been proposed by writer and museum director Peter Seeberg in 1966. Simultaneously the interest in developing courses in museology grew at the universities, although the idea was heavily criticized by the practitioners. As such, the educational discourse in the second phase can be characterized as a transition from the previous training defined as an exchange of ideas and experiences between peers, towards a demand for formalized, qualifying educations (See chapter 7).

Throughout the second phase, the museum practitioners’ influence was still strong. They dominated the National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn), which supervised the field. They were active participants in the legislative committees and debates, and they controlled the training of museum professionals. However, towards the end of the period, this influence was increasingly challenged both in the organizational discourse, where the introduction of new management strategies in the public sector, inspired by New Public Management, slowly led to changes in the distribution of influence over the discourse on museum professionalism from the second half of the 1980s. Meanwhile, the universities also started taking a stronger interest in museums as a subject for research and education. Figure 10.3. sums up the discourse during the second phase.
10.1.3 Administrative Professionalization 2002-2018

The substitution of the peer-controlled National Board of Museums (Statens Museumsnævn) with the bureaucratic Heritage Agency of Denmark (Kulturarvsstyrelsen, KUAS) in the revised Museum Act in 2001 marked the transition to the third phase of professionalization in the Danish museum field. Even though the coordination of the field was still on the agenda in 2001, a focus on public relevance was reintroduced and combined with growing attention to economic and academic sustainability, spurred on by an external discourse on the experience economy (chapter 5).

In practice, the focus on sustainability led to several institutional mergers, and as a result, the individual institutions grew, which contributed to the diversification of the professional field. Therefore, the museum field during the third phase has been characterized by a number of cooperating specialists, and in the discourse on professionalism the five traditional pillars have been supplemented by a focus on administration, cooperation, and
development, while standardized, academic credentials have been replaced by a requirement for performativity and behavioral skills (chapter 6).

In the educational discourse on museum professionalism, the demand for qualifying educations grew, on the one hand representing an academization of the discourse, corresponding to the demand for academic sustainability displayed in the organizational discourse. On the other hand, the offered educations had strong practical elements, e.g., in the form of internships, which challenged the discourse on academic educations in general. The dichotomy between practical post-graduate vocational training organized by the museum field and critical pre-entry academic education offered by the universities has been underlined in the last decades – if not in the practical museum world then in the discourse on professionalism (chapter 7).

Even though museum professionals are still very active in the legislative debate on museums, the museum practitioners lost a significant part of their influence on the organizational discourse on museum professionalism with the introduction of KUAS. Correspondingly, the regulators have gained power over the field, even though it has been repeatedly pointed out in the current debate that the proportion of the museums’ funding, coming from the State, is decreasing. This development has introduced new significant stakeholders, such as non-profit foundations, to the field.

Simultaneously, the universities have gained influence on the educational and the practical discourse due to their interest in developing academic educations in museology and because of the focus on formal qualifications and academic sustainability within the field and in the organizational discourse. Finally, these developments have been affected by various external circumstances such as the structural reform in 2007, in which the regional counties were abolished, and the universities’ increasing focus on educating candidates for a non-academic labor market. Figure 10.4 shows a representation of the third phase of the discourse on professionalism.
10.1.4. Museum Mediation as a Specialized Sub-Profession

In chapters 8 and 9, I tracked the professionalization of museum mediation as a specialized sub-field in museum work. I found that the definition of museum mediation in the museum legislation was initially specified as accessibility and education, but during the 1960s, it became a significant part of the discourse on the relevance and legitimacy of museums, and in 1969 experience and entertainment was accentuated as a legitimate (and necessary) way for museums to engage the broad public.

As demonstrated, mediation became defined as one of the central tasks in professional museums, and since 1984, mediation has been part of the legal definition of professional museum work. However, the discourse on museum mediation has changed significantly – especially after the turn of the millennium, where the rapid development of new media and paradigmatic shifts within the field led to new tasks and skills required of mediators. Meanwhile, the reintroduction of the discourse on public relevance and legitimacy has led
to mediation becoming related to the sustainability of the museum institution. As a result, museum mediation has been commodified – i.e., it has increasingly come to be perceived (especially by stakeholders outside the field) as a way to obtain economic sustainability by providing experiences for a broad public.

However, the first generation of museum professionals, which were hired during the 1960s, were repeatedly combining education and experience in their mediation to engage the public in new ways. As such, my study underlines that education and experience have been inherent parts of museum mediation throughout the period. However, the growth of museum institutions and the diversification and specialization of professional museum work, in general, might threaten to break this balance in the future, since they have increasingly come to be part of different professional functions, providing the possibility for a hierarchical relation between mediation as education and mediation as experience.

While mediation has continuously been part of professional museum work, in chapter 9, I studied the negotiation of the jurisdiction, the establishment of autonomy and the education of museum mediators since the 1960s. I found that museum mediators have undergone a continuous professionalization starting with the introduction of the function of educators in the legislative discourse in 1969. Thus, the professionalization of the sub-field was set in motion by a political agenda related to museums as public institutions. The field of mediators grew during the 1970s, establishing independent conferences, specific courses, an association, and a journal. Around the beginning of the millennium, specific educations were developed, and during the last decades, the interest in museum mediation as a topic for research has grown.

Based on a study of job ads and archives related to the education of museum professionals, I found that the work as a professional mediator has always been characterized by hybridity including practical, pedagogical, academic and organizing tasks. I also found that mediation continuously has been defined as the development of exhibitions and/or as education. However, following the initial political focus on education, the field was divided, so that exhibition work became a recurring part of the general, curatorial jurisdiction, while education more often occurred as an independent specialty. Thus, the specialization of exhibition-related job functions has been slower, maybe also because the initial, academically-trained museum professionals related more to the organization of exhibitions than to the education of school children.
The debate about the skills needed of museum mediators during the 1970s and 1980s centered on a focus on academic or pedagogical skills, and likewise the organizational position of the mediator was the subject of an ongoing debate. However, as was the case in the general museum field, a growing number of sub-specialties also developed for the mediators, thereby indicating that the specialization of the museum field has also progressed in already specialized fields of work.

10.4. The Development of Museum Professionalism as Historical Institutionalism

In my research, I have asked how the development of professionalism in museums can be characterized. In general, my empirical analysis has indicated that the process of professionalization shows clear signs of self-reinforcement and path dependence led by positive feedback, as defined in chapter 3. In itself, the subsidiary system has always been self-reinforcing, because state subsidies are given in proportion to local funding. Thus, the early growth of the professional, Danish museum field was actively facilitated by the local stakeholders’ success to secure subsidies from their local municipalities, and later also from other stakeholders, thereby providing a positive feedback mechanism.

As mentioned, political scientist Paul Pierson listed four characteristics of a path-dependent process – namely the possibility for multiple equilibria, the importance of contingency, the significance of timing and sequencing and the presence of resistance against change (see section 3.2.1). My study has indicated that all these aspects have been present in the professionalization of the Danish museums. The first division between legislation for history museums and for art museums with differing definitions of professional organization demonstrates the possibility of multiple equilibria in the field. Moreover, the vocational training and university courses in museology are other examples of co-existing (and battling) ways to define professionalism.

Contingency, timing, and sequencing have all been essential parts of the development of professionalism in the museum field. Bruno Ingemann addressed this by describing the development of cooperation between the universities and the museums as contingent on personal contacts (section 7.7.). Finally, I have demonstrated that the resistance towards change has been recurrent throughout the period e.g. in the form of a recurring debate about the structure of the museum field, which made the revision of the Museum Act during the beginning of the 1970s difficult, and which led to a strong critique of the ideas about a new
structure of the museum field during the 1990s (see chapter 5). Also, in the practical discourse, the resistance has been evident, e.g., in the rejection of the adoption of the PhD as a qualifying education for museum professionals (see chapter 6). Likewise, in the educational discourse, the strong reaction to the suggestion from Odense University to develop a museological education in 1976 underlines such resistance (see chapter 7), just as the slow implementation of professional museum mediators attests to the reluctance towards change (chapter 9).

Nevertheless, the resistance has changed considerably during the last decades, probably due to changes in the distribution of power and the coherence within the field. On the one hand, the museum field has become increasingly coherent since 1976 with the distribution of topics between the museums, and with the merger of the museum associations in 2005. On the other hand, the ongoing specialization within the field and the focus on formal qualifications have created various specialized work fields with independent networks and perceptions of professionalism, which challenge a future coherent definition of professional museum work.

10.4.1 Exogenous events and Endogenous Processes

The three phases outlined above are delimited by so-called “critical junctures” (see section 3.3.2), i.e. points in time, where significant shifts in the definition of professionalism in the Danish museum field have occurred. These junctures were the introduction of national museum legislation in 1958, a change of focus from relevance to coordination in 1976 and the introduction of KUAS in 2001. It could also be argued that the new emphasis on economic and academic sustainability in the Museum Act of 2012 constituted a fourth critical juncture. However, the argumentation for the changes was different, since the changes were motivated as simplifications and clarifications of existing practices and therefore as a continuation of the previous definition of professionalism rather than as a break.

Following the theoretical tradition of historical institutionalism presented in chapter 3, each of the junctures can be related to various exogenous developments. First, the political idea of the welfare state led to the drafting of museum legislation, in which museums were defined as a public good, which should be subsidized, and the roaring economic growth during the 1960s made the expansion of the museum field possible.
Second, the general economic downturn during the beginning of the 1970s produced a need to slow down the growth of the professional museum field and develop a coordinated structure. Third, a general discourse on efficiency in the public sector and a growing focus on performativity and quality in cultural policy brought about a showdown with the peer-controlled structure of the museum field in 2001 as well as a number of institutional mergers, which enabled further specialization and diversification within the workforce. Finally, the structural reform in 2007 significantly affected the structure and funding of the museum field, by abolishing the counties as administrative units and by merging a number of municipalities – a development that has directly contributed to the current debate about the structure of the subsidiary system.

In addition, my empirical studies of the discourse on museum professionalism show examples of so-called ‘near misses’. For instance, the master program developed by Aarhus University during the beginning of the 2000s represented a potentially significant change in the organization of post-graduate training for museum professionals, but it has not yet taken hold mainly due to a lack of profitability both for the university as the provider and for the museum institutions as customers. As such, the theory of path dependence and critical junctures has proven to be a fruitful way to understand the development of museum professionalism in Denmark.

Nevertheless, the development of professionalism in the Danish museum field can also be interpreted as results of incremental and endogenous processes, which can be described by using the framework of Mahoney and Thelen (see section 3.3.2). Before the establishment of the museum legislation in 1958, the perception of declining conditions for museums and a lack of economic and human capital in the field led to the formulation of a need for a reformation of the existing subsidiary system. The resulting legislation constituted a displacement of the previous ruleset, which was not strong enough to counter nor to include the advocated changes. Likewise, the revision of the Museum Act in 1976 can also be categorized as a displacement of the previous ruleset generated by the articulated need for further coordination and a stronger political position formulated by the museums, since the beginning of the 1970s.

Due to the strong position of the first generation of museum professionals (e.g. demonstrated in the debate about the proposed museological program at Odense University mentioned in section 7.6) changes in the ruleset following the Museum Act of 1976
predominantly occurred as layering – for instance in the form of a specification of academic fields in which the museum director should be educated in 1984 (see section 5.7).

Simultaneously, incremental changes in the organization of mediation and education occurred as drifts. The introduction of the educational service, ‘Skoletjenesten’, represented a drift in the discourse on professionalism by challenging the organizational position of the museum professional without formally affecting the ruleset. Likewise, the introduction of qualifying educations organized by Museumshøjskolen at the end of the 1990s constituted a drift brought on by internal changes in the perception of professionalism within the field (chapter 7).

As mentioned, the distribution of power gradually changed from the end of the 1980s. The museums’ perceived dependence on public subsidies led to an increasingly asymmetrical distribution of power in favor of the regulators, which enabled the introduction of a supervisory body independent of the museum practitioners. As such, the introduction of KUAS in 2001 represents a displacement, where the veto-power of the existing ruleset had grown weak, and the possibility to adopt alternative interpretations was low. The revised mission statement and the abandonment of the specific requirements for the education of the museum director in the Museum Act of 2012 were argued to be formalizations of existing practices (section 5.12). In other words, the changes were an adaption of the ruleset to a drift in the discourse on professional museum operation and museum professionalism. Furthermore, the much-debated changes in the system for awarding research grants were also argued to be an enforcement of already existing rules, thereby rectifying a previous conversion of the ruleset.

Finally, the current negotiations about a revision of the museum legislation, which has been going on since 2017, has been accompanied by arguments about an outdated and inscrutable subsidiary system, thereby indicating a possible future change either as layering or as displacement, depending on the power in the existing system to veto formal changes. As such, applying concepts borrowed from historical institutionalism has provided a way to understand the development of professionalism in museums as driven by external processes as well as by internal discourses. However, the empirical analysis also indicates certain difficulties in categorizing the development using the concepts related to endogenous changes due to the shifting roles of the stakeholders in the discourse. For instance, the ongoing definition of the field during the 1980s was not the result of a conflict between an existing system and subversives. It was instead a process of definition, which occurred as
layering because of an overall wish to uphold the existing structure combined with a need for further precision in the ruleset. Except for this reservation, the overall framework of historical institutionalism provides a detailed way to understand the process of professionalization as a whole over an extended period of time.

10.5. What Characterizes Museum Professionalism?

In the project, I have sought to define museum professionalism in relation to categorizations and definitions developed in the sociology of professions. As I have demonstrated, museum professionalism has always been characterized as a combination of a requirement for education in one or more of a number of established academic disciplines and the need for practical expertise in various fields. As such, professional museum work does not qualify as a so-called “pure” profession due to the practical element, and it cannot be categorized as a semi-profession or as a pre-profession because it has always been linked to academic skills – even though those skills have not been related to an independent discipline (see chapter 3).

Instead, museum professionalism is characterized by hybridity as defined by Mirko Noordegraaf as a combination of different logics in a professional field (i.e., autonomous, academically based logic, managerial logic, and organizational logic). However, while Noordegraaf argues that hybridity is a result of ongoing developments in the general labor market, I argue that museum professionalism constitutes a specific form of hybrid professionalism, which adds to the existing definition by demonstrating that hybridity can be a fundamental characteristic rather than a result of recent events.

In order to be able to track the changes in the hybridity of museum professionalism, I elaborated on the concept of hybrid professionalism by identifying three types of hybridity in the educational discourse on museum professionalism – namely academic hybridity, functional hybridity, and organizational hybridity (see table 7.1). Over time, I found that the discourse on professionalism changed from a combination of academic and functional hybridity during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to increasingly combining functional hybridity with organizational hybridity since the 1990s. Furthermore, I demonstrated a difference in the definition of professionalism between the vocational training organized within the museum field, which advocated a combination of behavioristic functionalism and integrated occupationalism, and the academic educations defined by the universities combining critical reflection and situated professionalism (see chapter 7).
In addition, my analysis has indicated that the hybridity of museum professionalism has been increasingly challenged by the ongoing specialization and the professionalization of sub-fields. While museum professionals during the 1950s and 1960s were predominantly general curators combining a number of academic and practical functions, the ongoing specialization and division of labor within the Danish museum field have led to new professional identities such as manager, conservator, mediator, administrator or collections manager, challenging the definition of one professional identity.

To a certain degree, my study confirms the observations of Mirko Noordegraaf that professional work has become re-organized, re-stratified, and re-located (section 3.3.4). Just as he concluded that this recent development has made a single definition of professionalism difficult, I argue that the re-organization, re-stratification, and re-location in the Danish museum field have challenged the previous coherence of the professional identity by requiring specialized professionalism in specific functions. Thus, museum professionalism has been re-organized as the role of the museum has become increasingly complex, it has been re-stratified by increasing engagement in international cooperation, and it has become re-localized due to the technical advances and the paradigmatic changes in relation to the audiences.

Nevertheless, in my empirical studies, I also found traces of a fixed identity for museum professionals characterized by a combination of academic knowledge, practical expertise and certain personal skills such as an aesthetic sense, commitment to a historical subject or a geographical location and implicit or articulated social competences. This combination can be seen as a core in the definition of museum professionalism throughout the last six decades.

Sociologist Julia Evetts has pointed out that the overall discourse on professionalism has become less autonomous and increasingly focused on commercialism and performativity (section 3.3.4). This development is also recognizable in the professional museum field. However, I found that the professional Danish museum field has focused on performativity as a result of its inherent focus on practice throughout the period of my study. It has always been oriented towards transnational and international cooperation, with the museum association organizing study tours and participation in international networks since the 1960s, and it has always been open to new localities – e.g., developing registration systems for a digital platform since the 1970s. Finally, museum professionals have never been autonomous, but have always been employees in bureaucratic organizations. Thus,
museum professionalism constitutes a particular kind of professionalism, which might be contingent on historical events, but at the same time, it is characterized by being a dynamic combination between an academically based profession and a practical trade.

To sum up, in this thesis, I have mapped what it meant to be professional in the Danish museum field from 1958 to 2018. I found that the discourse on professionalism in Danish museums has persistently described museum work as a combination of theory and practice, which has undergone a growing institutionalization, an ongoing specialization, and an increasing academization, throughout the last six decades. The development of the Danish discourse has been strongly influenced by the museum practitioners, led by visionary museum professionals, such as writer and museum director Peter Seeberg, who defined broad practical expertise, commitment, experience and collegial networks as primary traits in museum professionalism.

However, recurrent ideas about institutionalization and coordination of the museum field and academization of professional museum education have challenged this perception of professionalism, just as shifting economic conditions, new trends in public management and changes in the definition of the purpose of higher education have affected the distribution of influence over the definition of museum professionalism between the stakeholders.

10.6. Contribution and Final Remarks

By collecting and interpreting six decades of Danish museum history, I have contributed to the existing knowledge about an important field in the cultural sector in Denmark. Moreover, I have presented a prism for understanding the overall development of the Danish welfare state since the middle of the 20th century, just as I have provided in-depth empirical knowledge about the development of museum work as a professional field. As such, my research may form the basis for further studies of museum professionalism and professionalization both historically and in a contemporary perspective in Denmark and internationally. I shall here only mention five perspectives, which would be interesting to pursue.

In this thesis, I have focused on professionalism as defined at an institutional level. In future research, it would, therefore, be interesting to elaborate my findings by adding a practical perspective – i.e., to investigate the actual tasks performed by museum
professionals and the skills possessed by the candidates, who got the museum jobs both in a contemporary but also in a historical perspective.

A second interesting aspect for future research would be to study the characteristics and development of different functions in museum work. As I have pointed out, the growing size of the museum institutions has led to a diversification of the workforce, which in turn has enabled specialization. In this thesis, I have zoomed in on the development of museum mediation and the establishment of the mediator as a professional occupational field. However, other job functions in the museum have undergone or are undergoing a similar specialization in Denmark. For instance, ‘registratur’ and ‘curator of collections’ have become recurring job titles since the turn of the millennium, and in a Danish context, the characteristics and development of the field of museum management have not been sufficiently investigated. Furthermore, the many new job functions related to the use of digital media also pose fascinating questions about competences and professionalism. Such areas would make interesting topics for future research, which would supplement a growing amount of related studies from around the world.

A third area, which merits further empirical studies, is the development of the definition and the role of volunteers and assigned labor in the museum field. Questions about how the requirement for professional performativity has been combined with amateur engagement and local participation over time, and how different labor market reforms have affected the museum workforce could provide intriguing insights into the development of museums as public institutions and as custodians of cultural heritage.

Fourth, also the definition and development of the discourse on museum professionalism, which I have found in my research, could be compared with the professionalization in other related fields such as libraries and archives in order to study the empirical basis for a convergence in the GLAM-sector.

Finally, my findings may form the basis for future Nordic, European or international comparisons, either focusing on museum professionalism as a whole or on one of the derived discourses. In the course of my research, I embarked on such a comparative perspective by exploring a number of European and Californian museum studies programs in order to establish, what characterized the Danish definition of museum professionalism. While I made a number of interesting observations, the perspective proved to be too widespread and peripheral to contribute significantly to answering my specific research question of this dissertation. However, it helped me understand the Danish case, and it showed me the
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