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# **The Digitisation and Open Access Politics of Social Movement Archives**

By Marco Humbel

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Information Studies

University College London

2022

# Declaration

I, Marco Humbel confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed:

London, 19.09.2022

## Abstract

Open Access to cultural heritage, also known as 'Open Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums' (Open GLAM), refers to a concept that asks heritage organisations to make, whenever legally possible, their digitised collections available online as open and interoperable data sets. So far, the discourse on Open Access to cultural heritage has primarily focussed on major art galleries. This thesis enriches the research and the discourse on Open Access to cultural heritage by focussing on the perspectives of organisations which understand archiving as a form of activism: Social Movement Archives.

I ask: What does and what could Open Access to cultural heritage mean in the context of Social Movement Archives? Through Participatory Action Research (PAR) with the Marx Memorial Library London (MML), seven interviews with Social Movement Archives practitioners and a critical reading of the academic- and grey literature on Open GLAM, I investigate the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives, as crystallised in their missions, digitisation projects and ethical and legal practices. Crucially, I highlight the relevance of Social Movement Archives as sites for questioning and reflecting on institutionalised archival theory and praxis. This thesis offers a critical intervention in Open GLAM through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives.

Throughout this thesis I demonstrate a certain, while not complete, incompatibility of Open GLAM with the political mandate of Social Movement Archives and the practical realities they operate in. I argue to move towards a social justice framework for Open Access to cultural heritage. The basis for the framework is an enhanced understanding of the archival principle of provenance, grounded in affective responsibilities towards collections' stakeholders. Due to the recognition of digital archival collections as means for political action a social justice framework also assesses the positive and negative impact of Open Access in relation to social justice.

# Impact Statement

Providing Open Access to digital collections becomes for heritage organisations increasingly a requirement for receiving funding, or for complying with data exchange agreements of major portals for unified (aggregated) online collections, like Europeana. While many Social Movement Archives have only few resources available, their collections are of significant value, because they represent the histories of non-hegemonic people and groups. In the context of major funding investments into creating aggregated online collections, like the UK's Towards a National Collection (TaNC) framework, this thesis offers a timely perspective of Social Movement Archives' capabilities and concerns of participating in aggregated online collections.

A growing number of research is concerned with the composition of digital archive collections, and questions they pose in respect to ownership, ethics, or privacy. By investigating the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives, this thesis makes a major contribution to scholarship on collections as data, archives, and Digital Humanities by demonstrating the potential of Social Movement Archives to mobilise a critical understanding of the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage. Specifically, this thesis advances the development of a critical understanding of Open GLAM's social-cultural underpinnings, and their implications for the heritage sector. I demonstrate how Social Movement Archives offer valuable sites for reflecting on the purpose of digitisation, access, legislation, ethics, and the design of aggregated online collections for the heritage sector. By investigating these issues, this thesis offers empirical insights on how digital heritage collections are shaped. This thesis makes a methodological contribution by demonstrating how PAR can be used to facilitate critical research on digital archives. This research will be reported in a range of forthcoming academic journal conference publications. Outcomes of this research have also fed into the teaching of the UCL Department of Information Studies' (DIS) Master programme in Archives and Records Management.

The prolonged engagement with the MML has consolidated a trusted relationship between the library and UCL DIS, with the potential for future collaborations. In Spring 2022 a student from the UCL Digital Humanities course has for instance started a work placement to facilitate 3D digitisation of the library's ceramic collection. A major outcome of my research project for the MML has been the upload of 1,866 digitised posters to the Social

History Portal. The project increased the visibility of the library's holdings and fostered collaboration with the International Association for Labour History Institutions' network. The participatory workshops, facilitated through this research for MML team members, explored the library's digitisation strategy, the implications of copyright, and the future use of the SHP for the library. With guest talks by experts in intellectual property rights, the workshops were of high quality and contributed to the professional development of the library's volunteers. According to the MML's annual report 2020 the workshops and the subsequent internal report will feed into the library's future digitisation strategy (Marx Memorial Library, 2020a: 4), and thus will also inform the documentation the library has to provide for the Archive Service Accreditation.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Julianne Nyhan, Dr Antonis Bikakis and Dr Andrew Flinn, as well as the MML's archivist and library manager Meirian Jump for supporting me throughout the research process. They are not only intellectually a source of inspiration, but also due to their compassion and kindness. I could not have wished for better supervisors, and collaboration than with the MML. Thank you to our departmental graduate tutor Professor Annemaree Lloyd for the additional guidance and support.

I am also grateful to each MML volunteer and team member who participated in my focus groups and workshop discussions. Special thanks to LaToyah Gill (Untamed Artists) and Matthew Lambert (British Library) for their guest talks on copyright. They made an invaluable contribution to the MML workshop series. I wish to thank Dr Donald Weber and the SHP team. Without their hard work the poster upload to the SHP would not have been possible. Thank you to my interview partners from the various Social Movement Archives. I am delighted to have had the opportunity to learn about your work, and I appreciate your time commitment as well as the stimulating discussions.

Finally, I wish to thank my family who supported me throughout the four years of this project. The generous studentship by the UCL Department of Information Studies provided invaluable support for facilitating this project.

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>Amsab-ISH</b>	Amsab Institute for Social History
<b>Antifa</b>	Anti-fascist movement/group
<b>API</b>	Application Programming Interface
<b>BCA</b>	Black Cultural Archives
<b>CARE</b>	Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics
<b>CIRA</b>	Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme
<b>CPAR</b>	Critical Participatory Action Research
<b>CSV</b>	Comma Separated Values
<b>DH</b>	Digital Humanities
<b>DNB</b>	German National Library
<b>DSM Directive</b>	Digital Single Market Directive
<b>EDM</b>	Europeana Data Model
<b>EEBO</b>	Early English Books Online
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAIR</b>	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation
<b>GNU GPL</b>	GNU General Public License
<b>HOPE</b>	Heritage of the People's Europe project
<b>IALHI</b>	International Association of Labour History Institutions
<b>ICT PSP</b>	Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme
<b>IISH</b>	International Institute of Social History
<b>ISAD(G)</b>	General International Standard Archival Description
<b>MML</b>	Marx Memorial Library & Worker's School
<b>OAI-PMH</b>	Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting

<b>OCR</b>	Optical Character Recognition
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>Open GLAM</b>	Open Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums
<b>OWLS</b>	Orphan Works Licensing Scheme
<b>PAR</b>	Participatory Action Research
<b>PID</b>	Persistent Identifier
<b>PSI</b>	Public Sector Information
<b>SHP</b>	Social History Portal
<b>TaNC</b>	Towards a National Collection
<b>TUC Library</b>	Trade Union Congress Library
<b>URL</b>	Uniform Resource Locator
<b>V&amp;A</b>	Victoria & Albert Museum
<b>WCML</b>	Working Class Movement Library

# 1. Introduction

Open Access to cultural heritage, also known as ‘Open Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums’ (Open GLAM), refers to a concept that asks heritage organisations to make, whenever legally possible, their digitised collections available online as open and interoperable data sets. The parameters for what is considered as Open Access is clearly defined as permitting “[...] reuse and redistribution of materials for any purpose, including commercial” (Wallace, 2020a: 4). Open GLAM is commonly framed as the most recent step for heritage organisations to fulfil their public mission and to provide ‘access’ to their collections. It is well known that numerous factors impede heritage organisations’ capabilities to participate in Open Access frameworks, including, but not limited to a lack of financial resources, a lack of copyright expertise, legislation, a lack of technical capacity and questions on income generation, ownership and ethics (Wallace, 2020b; Rév, 2020). So far, the discourse on Open GLAM focussed primarily on the experiences of major heritage organisations, and art museums in particular (Wallace, 2020c: 5). This thesis enriches the research and the discourse on Open Access to cultural heritage by focussing on the perspectives of organisations which understand archiving as a form of activism: Social Movement Archives (Hoyer and Almeida, 2021; Flinn, 2011). Social Movement Archives subvert the authority of mainstream heritage organisations by claiming that the histories of social movements and non-hegemonic people are best kept and preserved by members of the movements themselves (Flinn, 2007: 167–68). I ask: What does and what could Open Access to cultural heritage mean in the context of Social Movement Archives? The starting point of this research was the Marx Memorial Library & Worker’s School London (MML), where I was involved as a volunteer from 2018 to 2021. Through Participatory Action Research (PAR) with the MML, seven expert interviews with practitioners in other Social Movement Archives and a critical reading of the academic- and grey literature on Open GLAM, I investigate the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives, as crystallised in their missions, digitisation projects and ethical and legal practices.<sup>1</sup> Crucially, I highlight the relevance of Social Movement Archives as sites for questioning and reflecting on institutionalised archival theory and praxis. With reference to critical archival and Digital Humanities (DH) scholarship this thesis offers a critical intervention in Open GLAM through the microcosm of Social

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<sup>1</sup> This research is approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee as a low-risk research project (ethics ID: 15405/001). For more details on the ethics application see section 2.2.4.

Movement Archives. Throughout this thesis I demonstrate a certain, while not complete, incompatibility of Open GLAM with the political mandate of Social Movement Archives and the practical realities they operate in. By investigating Open GLAM through the perspective of Social Movement Archives I argue to move towards a social justice framework for Open Access to cultural heritage (chapter eight). The social justice framework for Open GLAM is grounded in an enhanced understanding of the archival principle of provenance that considers Social Movement Archives' "affective responsibilities" towards collections' stakeholders to not entrench inequalities and injustice through the online publication of archival collections (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 24–27). However, a move towards a social justice framework for Open GLAM also recognises the potential of digital archival collections for taking political action against oppression and injustice. For this reason, a social justice framework assesses critically the positive and negative impact of Open Access frameworks in relation to social justice (Duff et al., 2013: 337–38).

Scholars have noted how claims about the digitisation of cultural heritage often emphasise digitisations' democratising potential (Kidd, 2018: 1–2; Prescott and Hughes, 2018). Given an internet connection is available, digitised collections can be searched and browsed online, without the need to travel to the archival institution, or fragile objects can be safely viewed in their digital form (Deegan and Tanner, 2002: 32; Hughes, 2004: 9–10). Advocacy for Open Access to cultural heritage goes a step further: The argument is made that Open Access to cultural heritage has the potential to democratise access even more, because catalogue records (metadata) and digital surrogates of archival documentation cannot only be retrieved and 'viewed' through an online database. Instead, Open Access collections can also, through permissive licenses and machine-readable file formats, be reused for education, software development, business models, research, or any other purpose (Terras, 2015: 741;745-746).<sup>2</sup> In other words, heritage collections become amendable for computational manipulation, and move from "[...] boundary objects to open sets of data [...]" (Thylstrup, 2018: 3). The call for Open Access to cultural heritage thus must be considered as a wider turn that increasingly understands 'collections as data' (Ames and Lewis, 2020: 2) and corresponds to the raise of (big) data driven research in the humanities (Hitchcock, 2014). In the white paper 'On a Collections as Data Imperative' Thomas Padilla describes the "value shift" from analogue archival items towards data as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed review on the core principles of the Open GLAM initiative see section 3.2.

“For example, if the notion of a single digitized text is shifted from a surrogate of a bound paper object to consider the possibility latent in a form that is computationally processable at the level of thousands or even millions of texts, a move is made toward meaning making that engages affordances unique to data” (2017: 1).<sup>3</sup>

The narrative of opening up collections as data as Open Access is in this context often framed as the climax of a linear progression of heritage organisations to make their collections available to the public: from renaissance cabinets of curiosities, accessible to a small elite, towards collections free from institutional boundaries, which everyone is invited to freely use or repurpose (Rinehart, 2014: 105–14; Roued-Cunliffe, 2020: 8–23). Since 2011 a formal network of Open GLAM advocates exists through the OpenGLAM initiative,<sup>4</sup> which offers “[...] a space to help coordinate efforts to aggregate, advertise, connect, and support open access to cultural heritage initiatives and projects” (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022a). The advocacy for Open GLAM had some success, as releasing collections as Open Access increasingly became a requirement for organisations requesting funding for digitisation, such as through the UK heritage lottery fund (The National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2020), or wish to publish their holdings on online portals like for instance the Digital Public Library of America (2017: 3–4), or Europeana (Europeana Foundation, 2020: 3). In this context it seems for heritage organisations “[t]he only way is open” (Sanderhoff, 2017a).

The number of collections available under Open Access frameworks has indeed increased in the last ten years. But recent research made it clear that most of this Open Access data is released by major institutions in North America and Europe. Important reasons for major institutions’ dominance in making collections available as Open Access are due to smaller organisations’ lack of resources and expertise necessary for digitisation and copyright clearance. Little is known however about the specific experiences of smaller heritage organisations. This is because the discourse on Open Access to cultural heritage has tended to focus on major art museums and galleries (Wallace, 2020c: 1–5). The Open GLAM movement’s aspiration to address and represent the whole heritage sector is at

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<sup>3</sup> Depending on the discipline there are different interpretations of what ‘data’ are (Floridi, 2008: 234–35). The point I make is that physical heritage collections and their catalogue descriptions become technically (through digitisation) and legally (through Open Access) “amenable to computation” (Padilla, 2017: 1) at a scale that is unprecedented.

<sup>4</sup> OpenGLAM without a space between the words ‘Open’ and ‘GLAM’ refers to the formal initiative supporting the concept of Open GLAM/Open Access to cultural heritage. ‘Open GLAM’ with a space between the words refers to the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage (Wallace, 2020a: 4).

odds with the scholarship that has been conducted. Indeed, influential research reports on Open GLAM have predominately dealt with art collections. Examples of these studies include Simon Tanner and Kristin Kelly's studies on image licensing models in UK and US American art museums (Tanner, 2004; Kelly, 2013), the Danish Statens Museum for Kunst's 'Sharing is Caring' anthology (Sanderhoff, 2014a), Effie Kapsalis' study on impact of Open Access (2016), and the art exhibition companion and essay collection 'Display At Your Own Risk' (Wallace and Deazley, 2016). Likewise, individual case study reports are often about major institutions and/or art museums (Pekel, 2015; Pekel, 2014; Schmidt, 2018; Ross et al., 2018; Kingston and Edgar, 2015).<sup>5</sup> In 2021 the Open Access advocacy organisation Creative Commons called in response to the research bias towards well-resourced European or American institutions for Open GLAM case-studies specifically "[...] from low-capacity, non-Western institutions, or representing marginalized, underrepresented communities from various regions" (CC Network, 2021). The research focus on museums is also problematic because, while for instance museums may hold archival collections such as personal letters for example (Wallace, 2020c: 4–5), the institutional and professional traditions for collection management and care between libraries, archives and museums differ.<sup>6</sup> Archives are also more likely to experience issues in relation to orphan works (works where rights holders are not identifiable or contactable), which impacts their ability to participate in Open Access frameworks (see section 5.3). In the case of archives, the average proportion of orphan works in the whole collection are estimated between 21% to 30%. Whereas in contrast the average proportion of orphan works in museums, galleries, and libraries range between 5% to 10% (Korn, 2009: 19;39). This thesis makes a major contribution to the emerging concern to diversify the field of Open GLAM research by mapping the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives' and by investigating their perspectives on Open Access to cultural heritage. Crucially, this thesis demonstrates how studying Open Access to cultural heritage through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives mobilises a critical intervention to Open GLAM and the assumptions that underpin the concept. The result of this intervention is the proposal for a social justice framework for Open GLAM. But what are Social Movement

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<sup>5</sup> Quantitative surveys on Open Access dealt with the heritage sector in specific regions as a whole, but were for this reason naturally broad in scope (Estermann, 2016; McCarthy and Wallace, 2018; Dryden, 2014; Eschenfelder and Caswell, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> The tradition of archives to catalogue on a file level, instead as museums or libraries on an individual object level, impacts on the needs of archives towards digital infrastructures (Lemmens et al., 2011: 27–28). See also chapter seven.



Archives exactly, and why is it important to bring their perspectives to the field of Open GLAM research?

According to the International Association of Labour History Institutions (IALHI) Social Movement Archives collect “[...] the history of people's movements and individual life histories that were not part of official history, preserved by state archives and libraries [...]” (IALHI, 2013a). Social Movement Archives developed in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in parallel with the emerging working class movement, and often the archives were kept by working class organisations themselves. A new wave of Social Movement Archives developed between the 1960s and 1980s as part of the New Left, second wave Feminism, Civil Rights-, Gay and Lesbian movements. Social Movement Archives have in most cases strong relationships with the communities they collect for, and moreover see themselves as actors within these political movements. In a West European context, Social Movement Archives were at the time of their foundation mostly run independently from governmental support or institutions, and some like the MML still are independent. From the 1970s onwards, however, due to the excessive costs of maintaining archival collections, some movements transferred their collections into academic institutions or governmental archives. A process that brought a certain professionalisation and improved funding structures, but also a loss of autonomy (Kloosterman, 2009; Flinn, 2017; Schuldt, 2019; IALHI, 2013a; Moran, 2013). Examples of large, governmentally funded, Social Movement Archives include for instance the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam, which is part of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (IISH, 2020), or the Amsab Institute for Social History (Amsab-ISH), which has a governmental funding contract (Amsab-ISH and Vlaamse minister van Cultuur, Media, Jeugd en Brussel, 2019). For this reason, while speaking about Social Movement Archives it is important to consider their characteristics not as fixed boundaries, but rather as a spectrum in which different kinds of organisations with similar aspirations and yet sometimes distinct capabilities operate (Gilliland and Flinn, 2013: 11–12; Caswell, 2018: 34). The IISH and Amsab-ISH, while distinct in size from an organisation like the MML, have for instance nevertheless still a “strong political profile” (IALHI, 2013a),<sup>7</sup> and have also an important

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<sup>7</sup> Consider in this regard for instance the Amsab-ISH's mission which states: “We keep, disclose, research and valorise the historical struggle for Bread and for Roses, for material improvement of the destiny and a better quality of life. A battle that has crystallised on various themes and in many organizational forms. A struggle against ever new forms of inequality.” (Amsab-ISH, 2014) The IISH's mission contains similarly an aspiration towards social justice: “At an international level, we generate and offer reliable information and insights about the (long-term) origins, effects and consequences of social inequality. [...]”

role in supporting smaller Social Movement Archives in digitisation and publication of their collections online (see chapter seven).

Social Movement Archives form a category of ‘community archives’ (Moran, 2013: 175–76). Community archives refer to initiatives that collect histories which are absent, or only marginally represented in national collections. These may be the histories of women, LGBTQ+ people, workers, civil rights movements or other non-hegemonic individuals and groups. The term ‘community archives’, may however also be used for initiatives that do not emerge from social movements, but focus on, for instance, local history, railways, or historic buildings (Flinn, 2007: 155–58).<sup>8</sup> Community archives often operate in physical or online spaces independent from major or mainstream institutions.<sup>9</sup> The term ‘archive’ is commonly applied to these initiatives, by outsiders as well as the people involved. The boundaries between the institutional types of ‘library’, ‘archive’, and ‘museum’ are however often blurred (Flinn et al., 2009: 74). Many community archives have only few financial and personnel resources and are dependent on volunteer work. Scholars have noted that the lack of resources of many community archives endangers their physical and digital collections. There may be no continuous funding streams, a limited capacity for staff and volunteers to develop skills, a lack of technical infrastructure such as hard- and software, and difficulties to keep volunteers involved (Webb, 2022: 46). In response to these precarious conditions some community archive groups thus decide to share custody over collections with, or even hand custody over to, a mainstream institution (Flinn and Stevens, 2009: 15–16). What is the difference between community archives and Social Movement Archives? It is possible to argue that all community archives have a political character in the sense that they collect and preserve records that would otherwise get lost, and retell these histories (Flinn, 2017: 8). In this thesis I focus however on archival organisations that collect to *empower* those who experienced or still experience “oppression [...] based on white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, ableism, and their complex intersections” (Caswell, 2021: 16). I acknowledge that social movements do not

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Moreover, by preserving the heritage of often oppressed social movements, the Institute serves the quality of the world's memory. With our work we hope to contribute to a vibrant civil society.” (IISH, 2022)

<sup>8</sup> Many examples of community archives can be found in the directory of the Community Archives and Heritage Group for the UK and Ireland: <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/interactive-map> (accessed 12 March 2022). Other examples for the diversity of the UK’s small and independent heritage sector can be found in Fiona Candlin’s study on ‘micro museums’ (2016).

<sup>9</sup> In context of this thesis, I refer to ‘major’ or ‘mainstream’ heritage organisations to institutions that are associated with governmental departments, are owned by academic institutions, or are managed by major charitable trusts (e.g. the Historic Royal Palaces).

necessarily have to be anti-oppressive.<sup>10</sup> But I use the term Social Movement Archives to emphasise the *explicit political nature* and the activist context in which these organisations' archival work needs to be understood (see section 1.1), and which makes them distinct from the broader domain of community archives.

But why should one study digitisation and Open Access in organisations that are small, often independent, have few financial and personnel resources and collect the histories of people's movements? First, because, in contrast to the focus of the Open GLAM research on large institutions, the majority of the sector in the UK consists of small libraries, archives and museums. In 2017 small museums formed for instance 56% of all museums of the UK. Whereas in contrast 'large' and 'huge' museums form together only 15.36% (Candlin et al., 2020: 26).<sup>11</sup> Second, but perhaps more importantly, because Social Movement Archives have the potential to diversify the heritage sector, archival practice and (digital) scholarship (Nyhan, 2015: 9; Gomez, 2019: 400–02; Flinn, 2007: 165). According to Caswell and Jules, this is a factor that is particularly relevant to consider in the context of the emerging endeavours to create unified digital collections on a national level (2017: 1), such as in the UK under the 'Towards a National Collection' (TaNC) programme (2020-2024).<sup>12</sup> Indeed, TaNC's collection audit revealed that the UK's digital canon is dominated by a handful of major organisations.<sup>13</sup> The asymmetry between the representation of major- and smaller organisations in a future, potentially unified, UK wide digital collection, caused great concern among representatives of small heritage organisations (Gosling et al., 2022: 33–34). Considering that Social Movement Archives hold the histories of non-hegemonic people and movements, those people's marginal status in society is again reinforced by their absence in digital collections. The bias towards collections held by major heritage organisations (and indeed rich countries including the UK, the USA, and South Korea) has also been observed in the context of the digitisation programme and online platform Google Arts & Culture (Kizhner et al., 2020: 12–14). Another division emerges between digital collections released under Open Access

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<sup>10</sup> The term 'social movement' refers generally to all: [c]ollectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part" (Snow et al., 2019: 10).

<sup>11</sup> In the cited report museums' size were defined according to their visitor numbers per year. Small museums 0-10,000; medium museums 10,001-50,000; large museums 50,001-1 million; huge museums 1 million or more (Candlin et al., 2020: 10).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nationalcollection.org.uk> (accessed 12 March 2022).

<sup>13</sup> Of 230 surveyed heritage organisations the top 10% (23) hold 87% of the UK collections available online (Gosling et al., 2022: 16).

frameworks, and those without. Because Open Access encourages and fosters reuse of collections due to permissive licenses there is the potential that Open Access collections are more likely to be used in research or for machine-learning applications for instance, which conversely has an impact on society (Wallace, 2020d: 13–14). As Sharon Webb argues, the collections of Social Movement Archives “[...] face double erasure from the historical record and public memory”, due to their absence in the digital canon and the precarious situation of the physical collections (2022: 46). Given the inequalities replicated in digital heritage collections, this thesis brings the perspectives and experiences of Social Movement Archives regarding digitisation and Open Access into conversation. Moreover, I demonstrate how Social Movement Archives can help us to develop a critical understanding of Open GLAM.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is organised as follows. I first introduce the MML and unpack some of the common characteristics of Social Movement Archives in more detail (section 1.1). In section 1.2, I expand on the rationale on why I focus in this research on the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives, why Social Movement Archives allow us to rethink institutionalised archival practices, and how this thesis contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship on archives and data. I describe my thesis’ objectives and research questions in section 1.3. In section 1.4, I describe the structure of the thesis, and in section 1.5, I give a brief account on my personal motivation for having pursued this research project and an acknowledgement of my funding.

## **1.1 The Marx Memorial Library and Social Movement Archives**

The MML is an independent charity founded in 1933 by the Marx Commemoration Committee, a consortium consisting of delegates of different trade unions, the Labour- and Communist Party, to remember the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Karl Marx’s death (Rothstein, 1983: 73–74). The MML has the “aim of advancing education, knowledge and learning in all aspects of the science of Marxism, the history of Socialism and the working class movement” (Marx Memorial Library, 2022a).

To understand the library’s scope and ambitions, it is helpful to consider the MML’s address, 37a Clerkenwell Green London, which highlights the library’s roots within the working class and the labour movement. The building has an almost 300 year old history

of being a centre for workers' education, activism and Socialist publishing, or in the words of the former MML director John Callow: "[...] this building's narrative is increasingly about the power of words and the power of the press" (2008a: 49). Built in 1738 as a charity school for children of Welsh artisans (Rothstein, 1983: 15–19), the building was occupied from 1872 to 1892 by the London Patriotic Club. The latter society was more in the tradition of liberal republicanism but had nevertheless strong ties to trade unions and emerging Socialist parties. The club's most well-known attendees included, among others, William Morris and Eleanor Marx, Karl Marx's youngest daughter (Rothstein, 1983: 44–57). Later, from 1893 to 1922, Twentieth Century Press, a publisher of the Social Democratic Federation, had its offices and printing press at 37a Clerkenwell Green. Twentieth Century Press provided Lenin, who was from 1902 to 1903 in exile in London, an office space in the future Marx house in order to work on his newspaper *Iskra* (Rothstein, 1983: 58–72). Historic England recognises the MML's building as a Grade II listed building. The reading room features the mural 'The Worker of the Future Clearing away the Chaos of Capitalism', painted in 1934 by Viscount Hastings, a student of Diego Rivera (Marx Memorial Library, 2022b). Lenin's office is kept in its original appearance and can still be visited (Marx Memorial Library, 2008: 21).

Today the library's collection consists of over 60,000 books, manuscripts, archival documents, posters and artefacts about the history of the British labour movement, including: trade unionism, solidarity campaigns, anti-fascism and peace activism (Marx Memorial Library, 2022c). To the MML's key collections belong:<sup>14</sup>

- The archive of the British strand of the International Brigades, who fought during the Spanish Civil War on side of the republicans (Callow, 2008b: 52–53).
- The so-called 'Printers' Collection', which contains archival resources on trade unionism in the printing industry, worker's self-education, and radical printing, from the 1790s up to the Wapping dispute in 1986 (Callow, 2008c: 54–55).
- The personal records of various members of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and political activists, like the researcher and peace campaigner John Desmond Bernal, for instance (Marx Memorial Library, 2022d).

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<sup>14</sup> For a full overview on the MML's key collections see the library's special collections and subject guide: <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/collections/special-collections-and-subject-guides> (accessed 5 March 2022).

- The 'Music and Song Collection', which features printed scores and lyrics of worker's associations, schools, governmental organisations and activist groups from all over the world (Marx Memorial Library, 2022e).
- A collection of over 2000 posters. Examples include a late 19<sup>th</sup> century poster from the Socialist League, with Eleanor Marx listed as a speaker; prints from the Communist Party Germany during the Weimar Republic; the Peace Movement; posters of Communist parties in Socialist and non-Socialist countries; and from national liberation struggles. Prime examples are, in the latter case, the posters of the Cuban Organisation of Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, also known as OSPAAAL, and under its publishing arm Tricontinental. Through a funded digitisation and cataloguing project about 1,800 posters were made available online in 2019 (Waqif, 2019: 152–53). It was this project which brought among others my attention to the MML and led me to consider the library as a potential partner organisation for this PhD project.<sup>15</sup>

During the time I was involved as a volunteer at the MML, the library was managed by one full-time and one part-time employee. Both positions are mainly devoted to administrative tasks. A general committee, consisting of sixteen elected members (trustees), holds control of the library's funds and properties (Marx Memorial Library, 2020b: 8). Volunteers have played an important role since the library was founded (Rothstein, 1983: 82) and they have been engaged in tasks such as cataloguing, collection care, digitisation, running tours, preparing events and book sales, and building maintenance (Marx Memorial Library, 2022f). The roles between staff, trustees and volunteers are however not always clearly distinct, as it might be in major heritage organisations. Some trustees also work as volunteers at the library and some volunteers are also employed for short projects when dedicated funding permits. But why do the MML, and Social Movement Archives generally, offer an important lens for investigating the concept of Open GLAM, beyond the fact that Social Movement Archives tend to have few financial and personnel resources?

While the MML refers to volunteering to describe the voluntary and unpaid labour performed at the library, it is in the context of the aspirations of Social Movement Archives useful to understand the activity of 'volunteering' within an activist capacity (Cifor et al.,

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<sup>15</sup> I expand on my personal research motivation for focussing on Social Movement Archives in section 1.5, and why I selected the MML from other Social Movement Archives in the introduction to chapter two.

2018).<sup>16</sup> Social Movement Archives have for this reason not only close links to the movements they originate from, but their activities can indeed be understood as forms of activism themselves, in the sense that Social Movement Archives' activists seek to provide through archival practices the means for political action, self-help and history making (Flinn and Stevens, 2009: 7). Jen Hoyer and Nora Almeida, who have conducted interviews with a diverse spectrum of activist-led archival initiatives, observe as a common motivation of Social Movement Archivists:

"[...] the conviction that movement materials have value as historic artefacts and continued relevance in relation to ongoing struggles for social justice. [...] For most of the activists that we spoke to, the idea that movement material should circulate, retain agency and be used to support ongoing struggles for justice and social change is one that should inform archival priorities" (2021: 5–6).

Social Movement Archives thus do not only collect material that may fall outside the scope of mainstream heritage organisations. Moreover, the authority of mainstream heritage organisations is challenged by Social Movement Archives, as they claim that the histories of social movements are best kept by members of the movements themselves as resources for social justice and change. Collaborations with mainstream organisations or transitions of individual Social Movement Archives towards the more formal heritage sector are possible. However, the desire to have a certain intellectual and physical authority over collections is a core hallmark of Social Movement Archives (Flinn, 2007: 167–68). Connected to the perception that collections are perceived as activists' resources is the strong tradition of Social Movement Archives of having an educational provision and the mission to facilitate learning (Flinn, 2017: 9–11). The common educational arm of Social Movement Archives sits firmly within a tradition of workers-, activists-, and popular education, where people meet in collective spaces to learn and create new knowledge in order to change their living conditions (Choudry, 2015: 87–89).

Digitisation and the provision of access have in the heritage sector often been presented as common goods, without much critical assessment whether 'digitisation', or 'access' are fit for purpose (see section 1.2). Open Access to cultural heritage is, as stated above, in

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<sup>16</sup> Musick and Wilson argue that 'activism' is best considered as a sub-category of volunteering, because the concepts of 'volunteering' and 'activism' have considerable overlaps regarding aiming for social change. However, many people make a clear distinction between those two concepts as volunteering is often perceived as an unpolitical 'service' (2008: 17–23).

most cases argued to be a self-evident logical step for heritage organisations to fulfil their mission. But if we consider the importance of ownership over collections in Social Movement Archives, it becomes clear that Open GLAM comes not without tensions. The concept of Open Access to cultural heritage requires thus a much more critical and nuanced investigation about its implications (Ross et al., 2018; Wallace, 2020e: 3–4). Indeed, while financial and personnel resource issues play a significant role of heritage organisations' ability to release collections as Open Access, past research has demonstrated how Open Access to cultural heritage poses tension to, and is shaped by: questions about ownership and control, copyright, data protection, the potential loss of attribution, the loss of potential income (Verwayen et al., 2011: 14–16; Baltussen et al., 2013; Ruge et al., 2017: 82–83; Estermann, 2015: 20–21), and increasingly ethical concerns (Robertson, 2018; Rév, 2020; Anderson and Christen, 2013). The rhetoric on the opportunities Open Access to cultural heritage is envisioned to bring to the sector, the public, research and commerce sits also at odds with the quality of data that is published by heritage organisations. This is because of the challenges and difficulties Open GLAM poses in practice. Even the few organisations<sup>17</sup> which publish data under Open Access frameworks apply inconsistent licensing policies, use different file-formats, offer images in varying quality, or only release selected collections as Open Access (Wallace, 2020c: 5; Valeonti et al., 2019: 16–17). The fragmented nature of Open GLAM echoes Eve and Gray's conclusion in regard to scholarly publishing: “[...] open access is intensely messy” (2020: 10).

By investigating Open Access to cultural heritage through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives I do not only fill a gap in Open GLAM research on under-resourced heritage organisations, but I demonstrate how Social Movement Archives allow due to their explicit political and sometimes subversive mandate to reconsider institutionalised archival practices to critically reflect on the rhetoric, assumptions, and impact of Open GLAM on the heritage sector. According to Andrew Flinn, central to a critical evaluation of archival practices, like Open Access to cultural heritage, through Social Movement Archives is to abandon “[...] the idea of the archivist as a neutral, passive, reactive figure and [rather consider] the power and influence which the archivist has over framing our archival

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<sup>17</sup> Based on the ‘Survey of GLAM open access policy and practice’ (McCarthy and Wallace, 2018), Wallace estimates that less than 1% of all heritage organisations worldwide have released their digitised collections as Open Access (Wallace, 2020c: 2).



heritage and social memory” (2007: 168). In the next section I expand on the rationale on why Social Movement Archives offer a particular valuable lens for a critical investigation of Open Access to cultural heritage. I also demonstrate how my thesis contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship on critical archives, DH, and data studies.

## **1.2 Rationale for investigating Open GLAM through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives**

With the creation of nation-states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the modern archive emerged in Europe as an institution that collects the records created by governmental administrations. This core notion of the archive as an entity for providing evidence for governmental transactions informed then emerging archival theory. Important concepts of this early archival theory include the principle of provenance (the arrangement of archival documents according to the agency or department that produced the documents), the preservation of the original order, and the view that archival documents are neutral by-products of a bureaucracy’s course of business. Adhering to these principles, in theory, would make archival collections sources of objective evidence of the past (Cook, 1997: 19–26; Millar, 2017: 38–39; 45–51). Archival scholar Sir Hilary Jenkinson described in his influential ‘Manual of Archive Administration’ the core tenets of archival documents as follows:

“It would appear that not only are Archives [archival documents] by their origin free from the suspicion of prejudice in regard to the interests in which we now use them: they are also by reason of their subsequent history equally free from the suspicion of having been tampered with in those interests” (1922: 12–13).

As the quote suggests, important for guaranteeing the authenticity and impartiality of archival documents was an understanding of the archivist to be a neutral custodian. In the ideal of being devoted to provide a service to the archive and the public, the archivists’ inevitable curating role of collections is rendered invisible (Cook, 2006: 173). In the 1950s, the American archival theorist Theodore R. Schellenberg acknowledged archivists a more prominent role in the creation and shaping of archival collections, primarily in their involvement in deciding which documents should be kept by assessing the future use for

historians (appraisal). The archivists', and the related emerging profession of the records manager's, role was however nevertheless mainly conceived as the one of a technician who would develop processes that enable an effective and efficient management of records produced by governmental institutions (Cook, 1997: 26–30; Millar, 2017: 40–41). Schellenberg thus acknowledged that “[m]odern archives are selected materials”. But the archival collection was still conceived as something that would, after the archivist's intervention through appraisal and ordering, coherently “[..] reflect the functioning of the organism that produced them” (1998: 114). While core archival principles, such as the principle of provenance, were never completely abandoned,<sup>18</sup> alternative conceptions of archives and archivists came from within, as well as outside the profession (Cook, 2001: 18;21-24). The seemingly mundane and passive archival collection management practices within governmental bureaucracies, or mainstream institutions became increasingly subject of scrutiny. The social historian Howard Zinn called archivists to acknowledge that their role in society goes beyond the management of collections. Being an archivist is not just “[...] a technical job, free from the nasty world of political interest: a job of collecting, sorting, preserving, making available, the records of the society.” Zinn argued that instead the archivists have an obligation to promote social justice (1977: 20). This view becomes in particular a pressing issue to acknowledge when considering the complicit function of archives in oppressive administrations as infrastructures for surveillance, as well as information management and information exchange for oppressors (Stoler, 2002: 98–99; Ketelaar, 2002: 225–26; Ring, 2014: 391–94).

Nowadays critical interventions into archives, commonly informed by scholarship grounded in Post-Structuralist-, Feminist-, Postcolonial-, and Queer-Theory consolidate under the field of ‘Critical Archival Studies.’ According to Caswell et al. Critical Archival Studies “[a]s an academic field and profession [...] builds a critical stance regarding the role of archives in the production of knowledge and different types of narratives, as well as identity construction” (Caswell et al., 2017b: 2). Scholars argue that the interventions of Critical Archive Studies offer stimulating perspectives on fields such as data studies (Thylstrup et al., 2020: 4–10). As Caswell et al. suggest, critical interventions into archives emerge not only from theoretical scholarship, but also from the practices of archivists themselves. Critical Archival Studies, then, intersects with critical DH scholarship, which seeks to move

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<sup>18</sup> In chapter five I review the principle of provenance within a social justice framework.

away from the instrumental use of technology for humanities research. Instead, critical DH is attentive towards the material and ideological underpinnings that make up hardware, software, infrastructures, data, media, and digital culture. Crucially, the interventions of critical DH can be “both research- and practice-led” and have a “commitment to political praxis” (Berry and Fagerjord, 2017: 131). Through a critical engagement with technology, tools, and standards critical DH permits to deconstruct “[...] power, finance, and other governance protocols of the world” (Liu, 2012: 495). Social Movement Archives have a trajectory to respond to, and influence archival theory and praxis, which is why they offer a valuable lens for a critical exploration of archival principles and phenomena of digital culture, such as Open Access to cultural heritage.

Jenkinson and Schellenberg’s archival theories built upon the assumption that a bureaucracy would ‘automatically’ create records of the past. Other perceptions of the nature of archives and the archival profession developed for this reason in social environments where it was first necessary to spend significant efforts in collecting and creating histories (Ishmael, 2018: 277). One example is the notion of the archivists’ profession developed by the Black archivist Arthur Schomburg in 1925. For Schomburg an archivist had a mission to actively pursue efforts to collect histories that would otherwise get lost, and archives had an agency to be used against injustice. This is a conception of archives that we do not only encounter in Black-led Social Movement Archives, such as the Black Cultural Archive (BCA) (Ishmael, 2018: 280–83). Schomburg’s practices echo for example the collecting efforts of the Working Class Movement Library’s (WCML) founders Ruth and Eddie Frow (see chapter six), and, more recently, the MayDay Rooms’ endeavours to assemble digitised activists’ documentation on their shadow library [leftove.rs](#) (see chapter seven). Similarly, the absence of women in the historical record spurred in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the development of women libraries and archives. In the 1960s and 70s, within the second-wave Feminist movement, archives that identify with Feminist politics gained again momentum and also often linked up with LGBTQ+ movements. Archivists in Feminist and Queer archives rejected the idea of neutral archives, and instead recognised archives as means for addressing historical omissions (Cifor and Wood, 2017: 3–7). Collecting Feminist and Queer ephemera, such as Do-It-Yourself (DIY) magazines and pamphlets (zines), also required practices of custodianship that take the intimate content of these collections into account (Cifor and Wood, 2017: 11–13). My interview partner from the Feminist Library London expressed

great concerns about the ethical afterlife of archival collections, and in chapter six I demonstrate that nuanced considerations regarding access are important for many of the interviewed Social Movement Archives.

Meanwhile, the interventions of Critical Archival Studies and DH become increasingly relevant for studying heritage digitisation practices and digital archives too. Applied to digital archives, Critical Archival Studies are concerned with “[...] how records came to be in digital archives, the infrastructures that maintain them, the tools necessary to give access to and context for them, and the[ir] evolving principles and motives [...]” (Carbajal and Caswell, 2021: 1104). A growing body of research demonstrates how digital collections are often focussing only on collections’ highlights (Prescott and Hughes, 2018), are accordingly shaped by factors such as market needs (Hauswedell et al., 2020: 153–59), or used for the construction of national identities (Pickover, 2014: 10). Open GLAM becomes thus also increasingly subject of critical interventions. Scholars have noted that the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage, and collections as data, come with their own ideological underpinnings. Data are for instance often assumed to be factual evidence about a phenomenon, and not considered to be already an act of interpretation through a certain cultural, social, historical, or methodological lens (Drucker, 2011), or in the words of Gitelman and Jackson: “[...] data produce and are produced by the operations of knowledge production more broadly” (2013: 3). Devon Mordell thus reminds us that the framing of collections as data undermines the consensus that archival collections are not neutral representations of the past, but constructed, with their own absences, biases, and arrangements made by humans or machines (2019: 146–47). Also, the concept of Open Access is not to be considered to be free from social-cultural assumptions. In ‘Critical Open GLAM: Towards [Appropriate] Open Access for Cultural Heritage’ Andrea Wallace questions what appears in a first instance as a neutral concept: the demand to make collections data available for free reuse whenever possible. Wallace describes Open GLAM as a cultural construct that is not inherently ‘objective’ and not necessarily suitable to all heritage organisations (2020d: 4–5). From a postcolonial perspective, it is for instance important to note that Open Access is based on Western legal systems. Open Access is based on and facilitated by a specific notion of how intellectual property rights emerge under certain conditions from the creation of a piece of work (e.g., individuals’ authorship and ceasing of copyright 70 years after the author’s death). Deeply problematic may be furthermore the way of how digitised objects are kept and displayed in Western

collection management systems. This is because digitisation adds an additional layer of violence and appropriation of heritage from people who were dispossessed through colonialism, as certain material or knowledge is in some cultures considered as sacred and for this reason inappropriate to be disseminated. Especially creating and publishing images of deceased ancestors can be deeply harmful for descendants (Pavis and Wallace, 2019: 6–7; Wallace, 2021a: 15). In collaboration with Indigenous people and collectives Kimberley Christen and Jane Anderson co-developed interventions which disrupt archival and Open Access practices rooted in colonial logics. Indeed, the content management system Mukurtu’s “no open by default” approach is described as “a conscious and ideological choice” (Christen and Anderson, 2019: 102). Mukurtu’s flexible architecture allows instead to set bespoke protocols for access and stewardship of cultural materials according to a community’s needs and sensitivities. Cultural material may be described with different metadata records in parallel which gives space for multiple narratives and voices presenting knowledge. So-called Traditional Knowledge labels allow Indigenous custodians to highlight cultural context of material in Mukurtu and halt users to reflect and consider cultural sensitivities. For instance, gendered access protocols which need to be respected (Christen and Anderson, 2019: 99–105).

Heritage digitisation, Open Access, and collections as data are thus inherently ‘political’. But as the examples of the cultural framing of copyright and data suggest: in contrast to the explicit political agency of Social Movement Archives, the politics of digitisation operate however often in more subtle manners. Nanna Bonde Thylstrup, thus introduces the term “infrapolitics” (the politics that play out ‘below’ the obvious such as nation state politics) to describe the politics of heritage digitisation. The subtle politics of heritage digitisation play out in the infrastructures of digital archives (Thylstrup, 2018: 25). The term ‘infrastructure’ invokes images of bridges, highways or rail-networks. Infrastructure is then something that enables other operating bodies, logistics, or services to work (e.g. water pipes for taking a shower), and infrastructure becomes primarily visible when it breaks (we cannot shower anymore if a pipe has a leak) (Star and Ruhleder, 1996: 112–13). But for a more sophisticated analysis, one that takes into account the multiple facets that shape, and are shaped by infrastructures, it is necessary to go beyond such literally ‘brick-and-mortar’ images of infrastructure. Rather, infrastructures should first and foremost be considered according to how they are shaped by a range of socio-cultural and technological

components (Star and Ruhleder, 1996: 113). In the context of digital archives these components include among others:

- The composition and arrangement of the underlying physical archive.
- The conventions established by communities of practice such as archivists and other information professionals. An example is for instance the ‘tree structure’ which is commonly used for displaying archival collections online.
- The used standards for describing physical and digital collections, like the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)), or the Dublin Core metadata standard.
- The strengths and limitations of legacy technologies, standards, and infrastructures. The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) is a perfect example of such a legacy technology which is nowadays perceived to be outdated, and to hamper the aggregation of digital collections (Freire et al., 2020: 20). At the same time, OAI-PMH is still used by major portals, like Europeana, and difficult to replace because it is considered to be a “de-facto standard” (Butigan et al., 2020: 64).

If digitisation, digital archives and Open GLAM, are indeed complex socio-cultural phenomena, how then, can the study of the practices of Social Movement Archives help us to move towards a critical analysis of Open Access to cultural heritage?

Thylstrup distinguishes small-scale digitisation from mass digitisation in terms of the latter’s “[...] relative lack of selectivity of materials, as compared to smaller-scale digitization projects, and the high speed and high volume of the process in terms of both digital conversion and metadata creation, which are made possible through a high level of automation” (Thylstrup, 2018: 18). In this thesis I argue that the most significant characteristics of mass- and small-scale digitisation initiatives are less distinct in the context of Social Movement Archives. Notwithstanding this, mass digitisation and the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives do both result in ‘assemblages’. In data studies the concept of assemblages refers to the composition of the “many apparatuses and elements”, which “[...] frame what is possible, desirable and expected of data. Moreover, they interact with and shape each other through a contingent and complex web of multifaceted relations” (Kitchin, 2014: 24–25). Thylstrup uses the framework of

assemblages for taking a step back from the often as singular and mutually exclusive perceived phenomena associated with mass digitisation projects, and instead to reflect on their wider contexts, implications and infrapolitics (2018: 19–24). Rather than considering Google’s mass digitisation efforts as a commercial enterprise only, for instance, one also needs to take into account the academic public bodies which collaborate with Google (Thylstrup, 2018: 20). The seemingly binary distinction between Google vs. public digitisation efforts becomes also obsolete when we think about how the publicly funded digital library HathiTrust was created as a repository for the long term-preservation for the books scanned by the Google Books project (Helft, 2008), or how a European Commission’s funded expert group recommended to team-up with companies, like Google, for facilitating digitisation (Niggemann et al., 2011: 45–58). The concept of assemblages allows to deconstruct what is sometimes rendered invisible behind the ‘flat interfaces’ of digital archives, and rather to view the outcomes of heritage digitisation projects as heterogeneous mosaics, which are shaped by a range of human actors, corporations, legislation, institutional boundaries and computer algorithms (Thylstrup, 2018: 23).

The fields of Critical Archival Studies and DH, as outlined above, offer an extensive set of theoretical lenses that could be used to investigate Open Access in the context of Social Movement Archives.<sup>19</sup> A singular theoretical lens proves however to be unsuitable to account for the various components of the phenomenon of heritage digitisation, whether in form of mass digitisation (Thylstrup, 2018: 5), or as I argue in the case of small-scale digitisation activities of Social Movement Archives. The theoretical lens of assemblages thus offers a holistic interpretative framework for understanding the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives. Working with the concept of assemblages also allows me to contribute to a specific gap in the scholarly discourse. Kitchin and Thylstrup both point out that the concept of assemblages is at risk to reflect empirical reality only in limiting ways (Thylstrup, 2018: 23; Kitchin, 2014: 188). A contribution of this thesis is to provide empirical insights about how assemblages are constructed. Indeed, while digitisation in Social Movement Archives is conducted with few financial and personnel resources available, and on a relative small-scale, we encounter the same, or similar, components that produce and reproduce the digital outcomes of mass digitisation projects, including (Thylstrup, 2018: 23):

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<sup>19</sup> Indeed, where relevant, I refer throughout this thesis to such interventions like: Odumosu, 2020; Caswell and Cifor, 2019 and Zeffiro, 2019.

- Lobby groups such as the OpenGLAM initiative.
- Data exchange agreements with Europeana.
- Collaborations with Google Arts & Culture, Europeana and hacktivist collectives.
- Copyright law and Social Movement Archives' means to navigate through it.
- Collections' donors, and Social Movement Archive's ethical obligations towards them.
- Activist-led 'scanathons' with members of the public.
- A variety of technical equipment and infrastructure which determine the image quality and file sizes made available online.

Each of these, and other, factors and entities impose their own qualities on the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives. This means that while it may be tempting to assume for instance that the digitisation politics of Social Movement Archives are inherently anti-capitalistic, Social Movement Archives operate with their digitisation practices in the spheres of privatisation, or globalisation like the mass digitisation projects of mainstream institutions (Thylstrup, 2018: 24–25). Throughout this thesis I show however also how Social Movement Archives customise heritage digitisation, while informing the digital assemblage of cultural heritage.

### **1.3 Research objectives and questions**

Open GLAM has the aspiration to define how Open Access to cultural heritage looks like for the whole heritage sector. Critical reflections on whether Open Access to collections data fits in every context, and the consequences of the drive towards Open GLAM are emerging. While Social Movement Archives have a trajectory for informing critical theories and practices in archival studies, Social Movement Archives have so far received little attention within the Open GLAM discourse. This thesis explores the assemblages formed by the small-scale digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives, and through this microcosm my research pushes forward the development of a holistic, empirical, and critical understanding of Open Access to cultural heritage, and speaks to interdisciplinary



discourses on the composition of digital archive collections, and critical data studies.

Informed by the identified gaps in the literature this research has the following objectives:

- To move forward in developing a critical understanding of Open GLAM through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives.
- To investigate the benefits and risks perceived by Social Movement Archives, regarding Open Access to cultural heritage.
- To map the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives, and how these impact on the ability and willingness of Social Movement Archives to release collections under Open Access frameworks.

In response to these objectives, I ask in this thesis the following five research questions:

1. How has the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage developed, and which assumptions are embedded within the concept?
2. What are the digitisation objectives of Social Movement Archives, and where do the demands of the OpenGLAM initiative correspond or conflict with the missions of Social Movement Archives?
3. What are the infrastructural challenges in terms of resources, space and copyright Social Movement Archives face regarding digitisation and Open Access? How are these challenges mitigated, and how do they shape the collections available made online?
4. Which ethical considerations and obligations inform Social Movement Archives on how collections are made available online?
5. What forms of Open Access emerge in the context of digital infrastructures used and created by Social Movement Archives?

These research questions underpin the structure of this thesis. Each of the thesis' analytical chapters (chapter three to seven) addresses one of these questions. In resonance to the overall thrust of this thesis, that is developing a critical understanding of

Open Access to cultural heritage through the perspective of Social Movement Archives, my overarching research question for this research is: What does and what could Open Access to cultural heritage mean in the context of Social Movement Archives? I respond to this research question in the conclusion (chapter eight). In the following section I describe the structure of the thesis.

## **1.4 Thesis structure**

This thesis is structured in eight chapters. Chapter two explains why I identified PAR as the most suitable methodology for this research; how I applied PAR in the context of the collaborative research project with the MML; the approach of setting my research into a wider context through a critical reading of the academic and grey literature on Open GLAM and by interviewing seven additional Social Movement Archives; and the limitations of this research.

In chapter three ‘Open Politics in the Heritage Sector’ I investigate the socio-cultural assumptions that underpin Open Access to cultural heritage, by tracing back the roots of the OpenGLAM initiative within the European Commission’s Public Sector Information (PSI) policies, and the computer culture that was also linked to the emergence of Open GLAM. I suggest that within this context a form of ‘openness’ emerged that emphasises the potential commercial exploitation of cultural heritage by third parties. By reviewing the OpenGLAM initiative’s so-called OpenGLAM principles I demonstrate that Open Access to cultural heritage is primarily treated as an infrastructural question of creating technical and legal interoperability between heritage organisations and private bodies.

Open GLAM advocates and major heritage institutions often argue how Open Access to cultural heritage is a self-evident objective that supports their organisational mission (Scott, 2018; Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 68–69; McCarthy and Wallace, 2020). In chapter four ‘Open GLAM and the Missions of Social Movement Archives’, I demonstrate which factors beyond the rhetoric on providing ‘access’ inform the rationale for Open GLAM. I argue that Open Access to cultural heritage is not completely at odds with the missions of Social Movement Archives. But given their political remit and scarce financial and personnel resources, digitisation offers avenues other than Open Access to fulfil the organisational missions of Social Movement Archives.

Chapter five 'Digitisation Practices in Social Movement Archives' explores the conditions under which digitisation in Social Movement Archives takes place. Chapter five does not only address how a scarcity of resources and copyright legislation shape the digital canon produced by Social Movement Archives. I also review how the interviewed organisations navigate through the complexities of heritage digitisation, and which compromises are made. I argue that considering the resource issues of Social Movement Archives, and heritage organisations more generally, offer valuable examples of how assemblages are shaped.

Another major factor that results in digitisation assemblages are the perceptions of ownership and control over collections in Social Movement Archives. In chapter six 'ownership, provenance and instances of ethics of care' I suggest that considering an enhanced notion of the archival principle of provenance, one that is based on social justice frameworks and affective obligations, offers a useful lens to understand the ethical obligations of Social Movement Archives towards the communities they serve, and the rationale for exercising control over certain collections. Chapter six demonstrates that Social Movement Archives have much to offer to the discourse on ethical considerations in heritage digitisation and collections as data.

If Open Access to cultural heritage primarily seeks to ensure technical and legal interoperability between heritage organisations, the question then is whether and how these two issues are approached in the digital infrastructures Social Movement Archives create and participate in. In chapter seven, 'Open Access on Social Movement Archive's Digital Infrastructures' I review the infrastructural practices of two digital infrastructures that were developed by Social Movement Archives: the Europeana aggregator 'Social History Portal' (SHP) and leftove.rs, a partisan shadow library, hosted by the MayDay Rooms London. Through this chapter I demonstrate how the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives parallel and subvert the logics of Open Access to cultural heritage.

In the concluding chapter eight, I review the findings of the thesis and set out areas of future research. By building up on the critical intervention this thesis makes into Open Access to cultural heritage I argue to move towards a social justice framework for Open GLAM and I map out the framework's components.

## 1.5 Research motivation

I am a librarian and archivist by training and conducted from 2010 to 2013 a vocational education at the main library of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich). My vocational education also included a work placement at the ETH's archive for contemporary history. Working with the archive's collections on Jewish history attuned me to handle collections that contain personal or politically sensitive content. A different kind of impact had to me the mass digitisation efforts conducted by the ETH library. At the time of my apprenticeship, I marvelled at the digitisation projects of incunabula and the library's Open Access policy for its image archives. The basis for this PhD project was however my Bachelor dissertation, in which I investigated how academic and research libraries in Switzerland have implemented Open Data policies for their digitised collections. My interview partners at that time highlighted as key barriers for their organisations to release collections within Open Access frameworks the (well-known) lack of resources, technical know-how, and copyright clearance (Humbel, 2017: 50). If even major organisations experience these challenges, I was intrigued to investigate the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage from the perspective of small organisations with few financial and personnel resources.

In parallel to my professional training, I have been involved for several years in a DIY music space. My involvement in autonomous spaces and left social movements have not only sparked my interest to contact the MML, but also equipped me with a sensitivity towards the ethos of Social Movement Archives. In that sense the PhD gave me the opportunity to combine my professional and personal passions. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to work with the MML, and to learn through my PhD research about a wide range of Social Movement Archives in the UK and abroad.

Invaluable support for conducting this PhD was the scholarship I received from UCL. I applied to the funding opportunity with my own research proposal. Because the UCL PhD scholarship did not set any significant parameters on the research direction, I had the privilege to explore and develop my ideas with much freedom. An opportunity which I do not take for granted. For the most part of my research, I spent one day a week working for and with the MML in a voluntary capacity. It is important to point out that not everyone has the capacity to engage in such extensive volunteering activities due to work, family, or other commitments. I thus would like to stress the importance of flexible funding schemes,

as the one provided by UCL, which provide researchers the financial security for conducting an extensive engagement and collaboration with a community of interest.

## 2. Methodology: Participatory Action Research

This chapter explains the rationale for choosing PAR as my methodology and how I applied PAR in the context of the collaborative research project with the MML. I also explain how I extended this approach and set my research into a wider context by interviewing seven additional Social Movement Archives.

In Spring 2018, while conducting my Master at UCL, I received through the UCL Department of Information Studies a job advertisement for the MML's poster digitisation project (see section 1.1). Being aware about the MML's digitisation efforts led me to consider whether the library may be a suitable case for exploring Open GLAM through the perspective of a small, independent heritage organisation with few financial and personnel resources. Moreover, the library's remit corresponded with my personal interests in social movements. In October 2018, at the beginning of my PhD, I approached the MML whether they would be interested in a research collaboration that would co-investigate means of providing online access to the MML's collections. I started to volunteer there and remained active until October 2021. Research on Open GLAM often takes form of case studies of organisations which have identified Open Access as a suitable framework for the provision of online access to their collections (Ploeger, 2016; Schmidt, 2018; Spurdle and McCarthy, 2018). However, I felt reluctant to come to the organisation as an outsider and promote Open GLAM as a one-fits-all solution for providing access to digital collections. Instead, I was interested to hear and learn what is relevant to the MML when it comes to digitisation and the provision of online access. Through my active engagement at the MML, and involvement in archival praxis with other MML team members and activists, I adopted a participatory worldview. Following Reason and Bradbury, the participatory worldview challenges the modernist paradigm of linear progression, which is insensitive towards agency and subjectivity (2006: 4–5). Open GLAM itself often replicates such a narrative of linear progression, from closed to open heritage institutions (see section 4.1). However, the participatory worldview is also sceptical towards an overly deconstructive and non-pragmatic stance of post-modernism. Instead, while I acknowledge that experience, interpretation and practice are socially constructed, I am also committed to identifying a universal experience of Social Movement Archives, which can be articulated by interpreting how practitioners in these organisations act, create and shape reality (Reason and Bradbury, 2006: 6–8).

In scholarship about digital archives PAR has among others been used for the co-production of online archives (Cocciolo, 2017; Ruge et al., 2016), or decolonising catalogue descriptions (Pringle, 2020). Possible approaches for investigating the concept of Open Access through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives may include case-study research (Yin, 2014), like applied elsewhere in Open GLAM research. Given my in-depth engagement with the MML ethnographic approaches would have also been a possibility (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019). I identified however PAR as the appropriate methodology, because PAR reflected best my ambition to co-investigate *with* the MML means for the provision of access to digitised collections without presenting Open GLAM to the MML as a ‘natural’ pathway (Stringer, 2014: 1;6). Rather than applying a given formula to a research context, a PAR researcher takes as a facilitator an active role in the research context and collaborates with a local community to co-identify systematically solutions for their areas of interest (Stringer, 2014: 6; Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 3–4), or in the words of Reason and Bradbury PAR:

“[...] seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities” (2006: 1).

PAR researchers take the experiences, standpoints and needs of those involved in a study seriously (Stringer, 2014: 55–57). This is why the first step in PAR seeks to collaboratively investigate with the participants an area of interest or issue they want to tackle (diagnosing phase) (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 4). Informed by Greenwood and Levin’s characterisation of PAR as a methodology that is grounded in ‘participation’, ‘action’ and ‘research’ (2007: 6–7), I summarise my justification for choosing PAR by the following aspects. PAR allows me to:

- Reflect on my own position within the MML (being a volunteer and a PhD researcher).
- Introduce and evaluate the changes (actions) necessary for enhancing access to the MML’s digital collection.
- Deduce from the experience of a practical project new theoretical knowledge about Open Access to digitised collections in the context of Social Movement Archives.
- Share with the MML control over the research process.

After co-identifying a desired change, the stages of the PAR research process typically consist of: planning an action, taking action, and evaluating and reflecting on the action's outcomes. Based on the reflection a new action may be enacted, which gives PAR a cyclical, or 'spiral-like' nature. In practice some of the PAR steps may overlap however and plans sometimes need to be adjusted due to changing circumstances. More important than following these steps in an orthodox manner is that the research process creates a space for collaborative learning and reflection. Creating such a "communicative space" for dialogue is the starting point of what Kemmis et al. consider to be a *Critical PAR* (CPAR) methodology, which seeks to investigate through critical reflection and collective action to change practices to be "[...] more rational and reasonable, more productive, and sustainable, and more just and inclusive" (Kemmis et al., 2014: 18–19). For my PhD research I conducted one full action research cycle. While the research limitations set out in section 2.3.2 disqualify the used methodology as CPAR I provide in this thesis the foundation for taking action how Open GLAM could be made more just (see chapter eight). In September 2019 I found research consensus with the MML's library manager that in respect of the organisation's long-term strategy, it was an immediate priority to contribute with the digitised poster collection to the SHP – a portal hosted by IALHI and which also functions as a Europeana aggregator portal. In the planning stage I prepared the data for the upload and designed a series of six evaluative online workshops for MML team members. The workshops scaffolded the participants to an informed discussion on the implications of copyright, Open Access, and a potential future contribution to Europeana. The action was completed with the successful poster upload to the SHP, and the workshops were conducted from September to October 2020.

One caveat of conducting an extensive PAR project with one community of interest is that the research outcomes may be limited to a particular setting (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 6–7). So how can the project with the MML help us to understand, and theorise, the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives more widely? To respond to this my methodology consisted of two research strands; the "core action research project" and the "thesis action research project" (Zuber-Skerritt and Perry, 2002: 171). The first strand, the core action research project, focussed on the practical project with the MML. The second strand, the thesis action research project, included seven expert interviews with practitioners in other Social Movement Archives, a critical reading of the academic- and grey literature on Open GLAM as well as the online documentation of



Social Movement Archives' digitisation projects, and the data analysis for both research strands. These two strands offer combined a multi focal view on Open Access to cultural heritage through the perspective of Social Movement Archives. The structure of this chapter reflects the distinction between core and thesis action research. In section 2.1 I describe the PAR design for the research with the MML, and in section 2.2. I discuss the expert interviews, as well as data analysis and ethics for the whole research project. In section 2.3 I account and reflect on the limitations of my study. I highlight how the sampling strategy may shaped the research outcomes, the limitations of the participatory principle of PAR, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the research process.

## **2.1 The core action research project**

In this section I describe first in section 2.1.1 the selected data collection methods for the PAR project with the MML and then I account on my position at the MML in section 2.1.2. The subject of sections 2.1.3 to 2.1.6 are the individual steps in the PAR process and the theory behind them.

### **2.1.1 Data collection methods in the PAR cycle**

PAR is a qualitative research methodology, used to investigate a context-specific setting (Stringer, 2014: 36). Where appropriate the data collection methods may include quantitative approaches such as surveys, for instance for evaluating the wider effects of certain action taken (Pickard, 2013: 161; Stringer, 2014: 118; Punch, 2014: 137). Qualitative data collection methods are however far more common and may include: interviews, focus group discussions, field notes, and an analysis of organisational documents and the relevant literature (Stringer, 2014: 104–05). I selected focus group discussions as my primary data collection method for working with the MML, instead of individual interviews with MML team members, to spark a conversation about the MML's aspirations regarding digitisation and Open Access, and to learn how different opinions crystallise throughout a discussion (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015: 44–46). Focus groups can be used at any stage of research. It is a method for initial exploration, as well as to follow up on observations in more detail, or to evaluate research outcomes (Pickard, 2013: 244–45). All focus group discussions were recorded with a Zoom H4n Pro recording

device. A research journal served me as a tool for recording notes and preliminary observations within the research context (Stringer, 2014: 113–15), which I then explored in more detail through interviews and engagement with the literature. I also used the journal in some rare occasions for capturing information that I was not able to record through other means and reflections on the research process. For my analysis I also included documents produced by the MML. Most of these resources are publicly available such as the library's annual reports, information on the MML's website and articles published in the MML's own journal 'Theory & Struggle'. A smaller number of documents are internal, like the draft collections digitisation policy.<sup>20</sup>

### **2.1.2 My position at the MML**

PAR's guiding principle is to conduct research *with* the participants, rather *on* them (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 1; Stringer, 2014: 20). Aside this tenet, the appropriateness of the form of participation is dependent on the research context. Because 'participation' is both a hallmark of PAR, and at the same time not narrowly defined, it is necessary to articulate clearly what form of participation the research involved (Townsend, 2013: 101–03).

The starting point for accounting on the form of participation that took place in a PAR research project, is to consider the researcher's position in relation to the research setting and its participants. On both ends of the spectrum sit research practices that feature little, or no collaboration with the participants. Pure insider action research is the self-study of own practices for self-improvement. Whereas on the other end of the spectrum we find the study of the methodology of action research itself. Articulating a PAR researcher's position within this continuum of insider/outsider research, determines not only the level of participation, but has also an impact on ethical and methodological stances (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 37–54). The researcher's position, as well as the form of participation, is however not set in stone and may change throughout the research project (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 37; Townsend, 2013: 79–80). Following Andrea Cornwall's (1996: 96) categorisation of modes of participation in PAR, where prepositions help to reflect on the relationship between researcher and participants (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 50), I describe my collaboration with the MML as 'cooperative', where "local people work

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<sup>20</sup> I have gained the permission from the library manager to work with them.

together with outsiders to determine priorities, responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process” (Cornwall, 1996: 96).

Because PAR is a methodology that seeks to democratise the decision-making processes in research, an ideal PAR project may be conceived as one where the participants have a say throughout the research design (Stringer, 2014: 15). A PAR project must however assess carefully who to include in the decision making processes for the research by taking into account who ultimately is affected by the consequences of the research, and by considering the local hierarchies of a research setting (Townsend, 2013: 106). While arguably the whole MML is affected by my PAR research, I identified the MML’s library manager as my main point of reference for deciding on the course of action. After all, it is the library manager who has overall responsibility for the MML, and who is accountable towards the board of trustees for her decisions. This stance was also in accordance with the institutional hierarchy in which I, having the position of a volunteer, subordinated to the library manager’s direction and guidance. In section 2.3.2 I reflect on limitations of the selected mode of ‘participation’, and how to mitigate these constraints in future research. The following sections describe the individual steps of the PAR cycle research in more detail.

### **2.1.3 The diagnosing phase**

The diagnosing phase seeks to establish an environment where a community of interest can explore and articulate their research interests. The aim is ultimately to engage the participants in a process of negotiation and consensus finding, which defines the desired action and forms the basis for the action planning (Stringer, 2014: 75). In order to create such an environment for negotiation and consensus making, the action researcher needs to - borrowing from ethnography terminology - ‘approach and enter the field’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019: 97–106; Pickard, 2013: 139). Part of this process is establishing contact with the community of interest, the identification of the main stakeholder groups and gatekeepers. Crucial for this process is not only to inform potential participants about one’s research agenda, but to become visible and accessible to as many community members as possible. This may be achieved for instance by participating in community activities and by having informal conversations with people (Stringer, 2014: 76–85).

Creating an understanding of a setting can also be enhanced by reviewing scholarly literature on similar research contexts or analysing internal reports and documents.

My diagnosing phase started when I became a volunteer at the MML. From October 2018 to August 2019, I took time to understand the MML's social context, receive permission for research, identify key players in the organisation, tell the people I met about my intention to conduct a collaborative research project, and most importantly establish trust (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 104). My work as a volunteer included various activities such as digitising and cataloguing posters or responding to users' requests for copying newspapers articles. One of my first tasks was for instance to update the digitisation manual for the newly acquired digitisation photography copy-stand in Autumn 2018. But I also attended volunteer meetings, cleaned shelves during the summer break, or helped at events like London Open Houses, book sales, or May Day. All these activities were essential for me to gain a comprehensive understanding about the MML's aspirations, the people who work there and their relationships, the organisations' financial and personnel resource capabilities, and to create a positive working relationship with the MML. In April 2019 this work resulted in formal permission by the MML's library manager and the board of trustees for a research collaboration (appendix A). I also presented my research interests and intended data collection techniques (focus group discussions, and anonymised field notes) at the MML volunteer meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

In parallel to these activities, I conducted at that time my literature review, which is now formalised in chapter three. My data collection could however only start with the UCL ethics approval, which I received in June 2019 (see section 2.2.4). The first ten months at the MML and the critical engagement with the literature on Open GLAM, made me sensitive towards the organisational and infrastructural possibilities of the MML in the context of digitisation and Open Access:

- The dissonance between the aspirations of Open GLAM, and the MML's limited resources available to invest in digitisation equipment and dependency on volunteers (see chapter four).
- Little documentation on copyright procedures at the MML.
- The MML's main priority was to apply for the UK Archive Service Accreditation. The Archive Service Accreditation is a scheme for public and private archives in the UK. The scheme validates applicants against sector standards and best-practices (The

National Archives, 2022). The accreditation requires from applicants to provide documentation on policies, plans and procedures, including how the archive provides on-site and online access; and how the mode of access responds to the needs of the archive's community and legislation (Archive Service Accreditation Committee, 2018: 13).

- The Open GLAM initiative's monolithic definition of what Open Access means and the resulting limitation of thinking where more nuanced notions of access may be required.
- The tension between the idea of Open Access and reuse for any purpose with senses of ownership.

Having established this immersed understanding about the MML through intensive volunteering activities and informal conversations with the library manager I organised a focus group discussion in order to explore the outlined themes in more detail. The focus group discussion was held at the MML on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The aim of this session was to initiate a more thorough conversation among MML team members about the library's aspiration for digitisation, and to collect ideas for possible areas of action (Townsend, 2013: 67–68). Out of six people who expressed interest, three participants (two members of staff and one volunteer) attended the discussion. Prior to the discussion the participants received a handout and were asked to look at four digitised collection items on online platforms (Wikimedia Commons, Europeana and a generic online catalogue), and to consider the licenses attached to them. The purpose of the pre-interview task was to introduce the participants to different forms of online licenses, and Wikimedia Commons and Europeana as possible platforms for making collections available online.

The discussion started with an introduction by the MML's library manager about the library's current digitisation strategy and activities. The eight questions for the focus group were structured as follows to elicit the participants' views on:

- The significance and purpose of the MML's digitisation activities (questions 1 to 2).
- Creating revenue out of digitisation activities, making collections available on the third-party platforms Wikipedia and Europeana, and preferred online licenses permissions (questions 3 to 5).

- The main MML's target group and preferred users' engagement with the online collection (question 6 to 7).
- A closing question on areas that have not been covered in the discussion (question 8).

A summary of the discussion was sent to those who indicated interest in participating in the focus group. The pre-interview task, the interview questions and the summary of the discussion are in Appendix B.

The design of this initial focus group discussion was too broad to identify a specific action, but the following areas of interest emerged:

- Having a more strategic approach to digitisation, based on user research.
- Expanding on the MML's educational work through digitisation.
- Receiving audience input on the MML's collections.
- Exploring the possibilities of creating revenue through digitisation.
- Reaching audiences through linking collections to a third-party portal.

From these areas of interest I had to identify an action that would allow me make a link between a practical project and the research questions of my PhD (Townsend, 2013: 68). In other words, the action should give me the opportunity to explore Open Access in the context of Social Movement Archives, while at the same time the action had to matter to the MML. Since PAR is a labour-intensive methodology that requires significant time for preparation, implementation, analysis and write up, I also needed to consider which kind of action could be implemented within the limited time frame of a PhD (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 122–23). In my case I set the target to complete one full PAR cycle by Autumn 2020.

More clarity on how to balance between these competing needs was established through a follow-up meeting with participants of the focus group discussion on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2019. The library manager reported that the collection's committee had decided that the main priorities for the MML were in connecting the online catalogue to the SHP and finding a print on demand solution.<sup>21</sup> I identified with the library manager the action: 'linking the MML's collection to the Social History Portal'. Focussing on the SHP allowed me to create

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<sup>21</sup> Minutes of the MML Research Group Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

an action plan, in which I could use the portal's role as a Europeana aggregator to initiate at the MML a debate on Open Access licensing policies, as demanded from Europeana. For the MML the action had the potential to enhance the visibility of their collection by contributing to an international heritage portal hosted by the IALHI network, and to use the contribution to the SHP as a starting point to discuss the MML's digitisation strategy, objectives and procedures among staff, trustees, and volunteers.

#### **2.1.4 Action planning**

Once an issue has been identified, the PAR action planning stage involves devising what can be done to tackle the identified issue, as well as articulating the steps of how the desired change can be achieved (Stringer, 2014: 166–67). Who steers the planning stage depends on the goal of how PAR research seeks to achieve change, as well as the position of the researcher in the research setting (Townsend, 2013: 75–80). As a co-operator, who sought to facilitate a link of the MML's collection to the SHP and to foster a debate about Open Access frameworks among MML team members, I kept control over the planning process. I liaised however with the MML's library manager to make sure the project would fit with the MML's intentions. With the library manger I agreed on the following project aims:

- In a pilot-project the MML contributes with its poster collection to the SHP.<sup>22</sup>
- The requirements to contribute to the SHP are sufficiently documented for future uploads.
- The project contributes to the professional development of MML volunteers.
- Based on the project's evaluation, the MML's management can assess how to use the SHP in future for making collections available online.

To evaluate the action and to create a setting for learning and reflection on the project, I designed a workshop series for MML team members, which took place online in autumn 2020. In order to plan the workshops, I agreed with the MML's library manager to set their focus on the following conceptual objectives:

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<sup>22</sup> Together with the SHP team we decided to focus on the MML's poster collection, because the poster collection provided with 1,866 individual objects a sufficient, while also feasible, amount of data for the scope of a pilot project.

- Investigate which other collections are suitable for the SHP and evaluate how they would need to be prepared for an upload.
- The SHP uses per default a 'Create Commons-Attribution-ShareAlike' license (CC-BY-SA) for the metadata. It is up to the data provider to decide which license to use. Which one would the MML like to use?
- Discuss if in the long-term a contribution to Europeana via the SHP would be desirable for the MML or not.

With support of the MML's library manager I organised two guest speakers for the workshops, who had expertise in intellectual property: Matthew Lambert from the British Library and LaToyah Gill, head of the art agency Untamed Artists. With LaToyah Gill I shared an introductory session on copyright, whereas Matthew Lambert gave a whole session on his own on copyright management workflows at the British Library. More detail on the evaluative role and design of the workshops are given in section 2.1.6. Appendix C provides the full project plan, including the workshop syllabus.

## 2.1.5 Implementing the action

What form the action takes is different in every project. But whatever the action is, it is essential that the intervention is embedded in the context of the research and that the issue is small and manageable enough to allow rigorous evaluation and reflection (Pickard, 2013: 160). The library manager and I established contact with Dr Donald Weber to discuss the feasibility of ingesting the MML's collection to the portal. Dr Weber is with other team members responsible for the administration of the SHP and based at the Amsab-ISH in Ghent. From January to May 2020, I collaborated with Amsab-ISH to make the MML's poster collection accessible through the SHP. Most of the back-end work was conducted by the SHP team. My role involved primarily exporting the poster data from the MML's collection management software Soutron, communicating with the colleagues at Amsab-ISH and documenting problems that emerged. The posters were made available through the SHP on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2020.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See:

[https://shp2.amsab.be/Search/Results?type=AllFields&filter%5B%5D=institution%3A"Marx+Memorial+Library"](https://shp2.amsab.be/Search/Results?type=AllFields&filter%5B%5D=institution%3A) (accessed 27 April 2022).



## 2.1.6 Evaluation of the action

The evaluation stage is a central aspect of PAR, as it concludes the research cycle, and the outcomes of the evaluation may form the basis for initiating a new PAR cycle. Yet, PAR theorists acknowledge that 'evaluation' has a negative connotation that is commonly associated with monitoring an individual's performance or enforcing standards defined by outsiders; both characteristics that reinforce power-imbalances and stand in opposition to the fundamental values of PAR. Evaluation in PAR, in contrast, must be rather understood as a context specific assessment of the action's outcomes that fits with the research setting and purpose (Townsend, 2013: 109-110;115-118; Stringer, 2014: 183). The evaluation stage in PAR can be either, or both, summative and formative. In case the evaluation is summative, the focus of the assessment is on the quality and effect of the action, such as for instance an evaluation of the immediate or long-term learning outcomes for the participants and their organisation. A formative evaluation is more of practical concern as its focus is on which outcomes of the action may inform the next steps of a project (Townsend, 2013: 113).

The evaluation of the action was conducted through six reflective online workshops, as outlined in the planning section 2.1.2. The aim of the workshops was to scaffold the participants towards an informed discussion on the implications of copyright, Open Access frameworks and a potential future contribution to Europeana. The workshops were designed to create an in-depth understanding of the MML's practices and attitudes towards Open GLAM. They set the pre-conditions for a CPAR project which examines local practices, conditions, consequences of practices, and – crucially - would identify with those affected how practices can be made more just (Kemmis et al., 2014: 68). The objectives of the workshops were that the participants:

- Reflect on the implications of making collections available online through the SHP or Europeana.
- Develop criteria why to make certain collections available online (or why not) and set priorities.
- Learn about heritage copyright and its impact on the MML's digitisation projects.
- Understand how the SHP and Europeana are connected and their licensing conditions.

In August 2020 MML team members were invited to sign up for the workshops. The workshop series started on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September and continued on a weekly basis until the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2020. The scope of each of the six workshops was defined in reference to my research questions, and the workshop syllabus had a cyclical nature, including a formative discussion on the workshop’s outcomes and findings on the last workshop day:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Date</b>
Why do we digitise? Part 1: Our collections online	Workshop 1	16 September 2020
Heritage Copyright 1	Workshop 2	23 September 2020
Heritage Copyright 2	Workshop 3	30 September 2020
The Social History Portal	Workshop 4	7 October 2020
The Social History Portal and Europeana	Workshop 5	14 October 2020
Why do we digitise? Part 2: Evaluation of the project	Workshop 6	21 October 2020

Table 1: Overview on MML PAR evaluation workshops.

Eight participants took part in the workshops. All workshops were conducted online, using the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant online conference tool ‘Whereby’.<sup>24</sup> The participants received an ‘exercise sheet’, one week prior to each workshop. The sheet contained suggested questions for reflection on the workshop’s topic. Each workshop started with a 20-minute introductory session, followed by a 10 to 15 minutes break-out room group session, where the participants received time to discuss the questions in the exercise sheets. The workshops concluded with a 30 to 45-minute audio recorded focus group discussion. I moderated the audio recorded focus group discussions based on the questions in the exercise sheet. All exercise sheets are in appendix D.

The exercise sheet for workshop day 5: ‘The Social History Portal and Europeana’ was also used as a pre-interview task for the expert interviews with other Social Movement Archives (see section 2.2.2). The purpose of the sheet was to ensure that each interview participant had some familiarity with Open Access policies and online licensing schemes

<sup>24</sup> See Whereby’s GDPR Statement <https://whereby.com/information/gdpr/> (accessed 27 February 2022).

prior to the interview and could prepare to respond to the most relevant questions of my research. The sheet introduced and explained the Europeana licensing agreement, which asks from Europeana content providers to release their metadata with a 'Creative Commons Zero' license and to label digital surrogates of works in the public domain as such.<sup>25</sup> The interview participants were asked how these two points of the Europeana licensing agreement align or contradict with their organisation's objectives for making collections available online. All interview partners were furthermore asked to reflect on an example public domain postcard<sup>26</sup> and to select one of the Europeana rights statements they deemed to be the most suitable.<sup>27</sup> The digitised postcard commemorates the 1908 disaster in the Hamstead Colliery, where 26 miners lost their lives (Hamstead Miners Memorial Trust, 2012).<sup>28</sup> I chose the image as a proxy for an object that is likely to be found in Social Movement Archives. It is in the public domain, but also stands for a tragic historical event in working class history.

Throughout the workshop series I transcribed the interview data on an ongoing basis, and through a first cycle of descriptive coding (see section 2.2.3) I extracted the main themes that came up during the workshops. The last workshop 'Why do we digitise? Part 2: Evaluation of the project' was specifically set up to conduct with the participants a so-called 'member checking', where I shared initial results with the participants and gave them the opportunity to provide feedback (Stringer, 2014: 93; Miles et al., 2014: 309–10). The identified areas of potential future action were:

- To investigate how copyright assessment workflows could be better integrated in existing procedures. Possible actions regarding copyright may also include adding a copyright section in the MML's digitisation manuals, monitoring evolving copyright legislation (e.g., due to Brexit), and where copyright can be ascertained to use appropriate rightsstatements.org licenses in the catalogue.

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<sup>25</sup> I explain the Europeana data exchange agreement, its relation to Open Access and the Creative Commons licensing scheme and copyright in section 3.2.

<sup>26</sup> Works are in the public domain when copyright has expired and no restrictions for reusing the work (e.g. copying or adapting it) exist anymore. For a discussion on the impact of copyright in the context of the digitisation practises in Social Movement Archives see section 5.3.

<sup>27</sup> To keep the exercise feasible, I listed for the expert interviews with Social Movement Archives only the eight Creative Commons licenses, which are intended to give permissions on reuse. Rights statements like 'In Copyright - EU Orphan Work' were thus omitted. However, in the revised exercise sheet for the MML workshop I included the rights statement 'In Copyright - Educational Use Permitted'.

<sup>28</sup> The image was taken from the Birmingham Museums Trust, which released the photograph under a Public Domain Mark: <https://dams.birminghammuseums.org.uk/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=14141&index=5&total=7&view=viewSearchItem> (accessed 27 February 2022).

- To assess through the SHP's usage analytics which audiences are reached and whether the SHP is sufficient to reach the MML's target user groups and objectives for the provision of online access. A contribution to Europeana may be valuable if the SHP proves to be insufficient for the MML's objectives but would also require an assessment on the additional work efforts needed to comply with the Europeana data exchange agreement.
- To investigate how the data ingest to the SHP could be automated via Soutron's Application Programming Interface (API), and how catalogue records and digital surrogates could receive persistent identifiers (PIDs).
- To enhance contextual information about the MML's online collection by writing short abstracts for catalogue records about the historical and social context of digitised objects, in order to make provenance and authenticity of objects as explicit as possible.

I wrote up a detailed account on the workshop results and recommendations into an MML internal report. I shared the report with the MML library manager for review and discussed whether she agreed with the content and findings. Afterwards the finalised report was distributed among the participants.

## **2.2 The thesis action research**

In this section I explain first the distinction between the core action research with the MML, and the thesis action research in more detail (2.2.1). In section 2.2.2 I account on the rationale for the expert interviews with the seven additional Social Movement Archives. I describe my method for data analysis in section 2.2.3, and the research ethics are the subject of section 2.2.4.

### **2.2.1 Overview on the thesis action research**

For dissertation research, as well as instances where overarching research questions do not translate one-to-one into a practical context, it is possible to separate the research into two strands. The first strand addresses the interests and concerns of the community of interest. The second strand, then, responds directly to the overarching research questions of a project, and uses additional data collection methods in order to contextualise the community oriented first research strand (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 104). For distinguishing clearly between the practical project with the MML (the core action research project) and the second research strand (the thesis action research project) I follow Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt and Chad Perry's model of the core and a thesis action research project (2002). Essential components of my thesis action research were the seven expert interviews with practitioners in other Social Movement Archives, a critical reading of the academic- and grey literature about Open GLAM as well as the online documentation of Social Movement Archives' digitisation projects, and the data analysis and condensation. The following schema (Figure 1) is adapted from Zuber-Skerritt and Perry and visualises the distinction between my core and thesis PAR research:

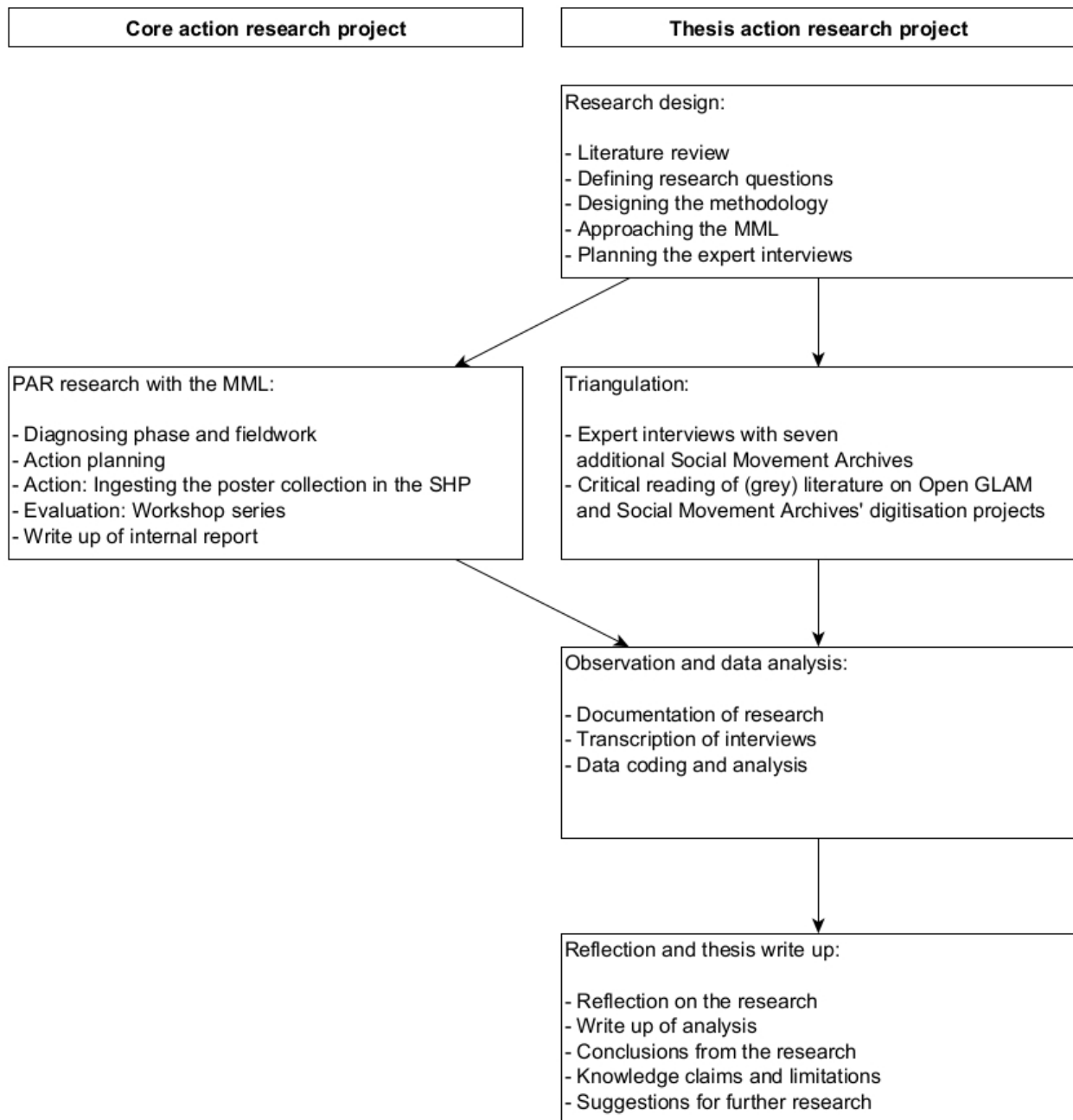


Figure 1: Core and thesis action research. Schema based on (Zuber-Skerritt and Perry, 2002: 176).

## 2.2.2 Triangulation: Expert interviews and critical reading

In addition to the extensive review and account of the MML's practices in relation to the organisation's history, aspirations, and perspectives of MML team members, I selected a triangulation method to move beyond the context-specific research with the MML.

Triangulation in qualitative research is among others a strategy for including at least two additional perspectives on a research phenomenon. Triangulation does not resolve the immanent limitation of qualitative research to make generalisable claims about a phenomenon, but triangulation contributes to a richer, more nuanced, understanding of it (Flick, 2018a: 444–53; Flick, 2018b: 87–88). To be able to investigate 'the bigger picture' of Open Access in Social Movement Archives in my research, I conducted semi-structured expert interviews with practitioners in other Social Movement Archives in summer 2020. Throughout my research I also engaged in a critical analysis of the academic- and grey literature about Open GLAM and, where possible, the online documentation of the Social Movement Archives' digitisation projects.

Through purposeful sampling I identified eight 'information-rich' Social Movement Archives. I used a sequential and emergence-driven sampling strategy (Patton, 2015: 429–34), which combined the identification of relevant cases emerging during the fieldwork at the MML (e.g. through conversations with MML team members, or the opportunity to collaborate with Amsab-ISH), snow-ball sampling through conversations with interview partners, and desk research. The sampling parameters (Miles et al., 2014: 34–35) for selecting a Social Movement Archive for an interview were:

- The organisation had a comparable thematic or political scope like the MML (see section 1.1).
- The Social Movement Archive's online catalogue, or website, featured some digitised collections.

I already had contact with the Amsab-ISH through the collaboration with the poster upload and I contacted the other organisations via email. From the eight identified organisations seven agreed to take part in an interview (including Amsab-ISH). For my preparation for the interviews, I also reviewed information about the selected archives online. However, as Hauswedell et al. have pointed out in their study on the selection criteria of digital newspaper archives, information-rich documentation, such as digitisations strategies for instance, is not always available to the public (2020: 140). Interviews are then an important

method for enriching and contextualising the information that is publicly available (see below). I selected the format of semi-structured interviews because this method provides a framework of focus, while at the same time it gives the researcher and the interview partner the possibility to depart from the pre-set questions, and expand on areas that they feel to be of relevance for the research context (Brinkmann, 2018: 579–80). The Social Movement Archives I interviewed are shown in Table 1.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Main digitisation projects (as for 2020)</b>	<b>Pseudonym and role of the interview partner</b>	<b>Date of the interview</b>
The Amsab Institute for Social History, Ghent	Amsab-ISH	- Co-host of the SHP	Head of research Amsab-ISH	12 May 2020
The Working Class Movement Library, Salford	WCML	- Images from Spanish Civil War Collection  - Selection of photographs digitised in collaboration with the University of Salford	Library manager WCML	28 May 2020
The Black Cultural Archives, London	BCA	- Google Arts & Culture	Archivist BCA	4 June 2020
The Trade Union Congress Library, London	TUC Library	- The Union Makes Us Strong: TUC History Online	Librarian TUC Library	11 June 2020



The Feminist Library, London	Feminist Library	- Google Arts & Culture	Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library	25 June 2020
The MayDay Rooms, London	MayDay Rooms	- Leftove.rs	Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms	20 July 2020
Social Movement Archive 7	Not applicable (anonymised)	Not applicable (anonymised)	Interview partner 7	18 August 2020

Table 2: Overview on the Social Movement Archives for the expert interviews

Prior to each interview my interview partners received a pre-interview task sheet, containing the questionnaire on Europeana's licensing agreement and the example public domain postcard, as described in section 2.1.4.<sup>29</sup>

The interview questionnaires for the semi-structured interviews were organised according to the following sections:

- The role of volunteers at the Social Movement Archive.
- The objectives and motivations of the Social Movement Archive to make collections available online.
- The view of the Social Movement Archive on so-called 'Open-Access' policies for online collections.

To ask organisation-specific questions I conducted prior to the interview desk research about the respective Social Movement Archive and made minor adaptations to the questionnaires. For instance, I asked the BCA and Feminist Library about their collaboration with Google Arts & Culture, whereas I asked my interview partner from Amsab-ISH additional questions about the development of the SHP. The pre-interview task

<sup>29</sup> I revised the sheet for the MML workshops slightly in order to make the explanations for the Europeana data exchange agreement clearer.

and the bespoke interview questionnaires for each institution are in appendix E.<sup>30</sup> All interviews were conducted online, using either the online conference tools Microsoft Teams or Whereby. I recorded the interviews with a Zoom H4n Pro recording device.

As demonstrated by scholars such as Bonnie Mak and Paul Fyfe (2014; 2016), digitisation projects need to be understood as artefacts with multi-layered social-cultural histories. These histories are however hidden and need to be uncovered through a close reading of the grey literature associated with the projects, such as whitepapers, project reports and commentary, or workflow documents (Mak, 2014: 1515–16; Fyfe, 2016: 550). Such documents often seem to communicate due to their official character factual evidence. But they need to be considered as constructed sources of information, which through a critical reading have the potential to foster a rich and nuanced understanding about a research phenomenon, as these documents can reveal their authors' intentions, ambitions, and biases (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019: 234–36). The analysis of project documentation was of particular importance for the analysis of the SHP, where a close reading of the projects' mission statement and vision, deliverables reports, and copyright policies gave me the ability to set the experiences of the PAR projects' action in the wider context of heritage aggregation projects (see chapter seven). For the critique on the OpenGLAM initiative, which I present in chapter three, I consulted extensively the grey literature commissioned or issued by the European Commission such as legal texts, descriptions of funding programmes, and impact assessments. In chapter four I also examine more closely how Open GLAM fits with the missions of mainstream heritage organisations. For this purpose, I reviewed the strategies of the National Library of Scotland, the Wellcome Collection and the collections of the University of Oxford. These three institutions are major players in the UK heritage sector, they have clearly articulated dedications to Open Access, and their strategies are available online. Information about the digitisation activities of Social Movement Archives themselves was however often more difficult to access. While in case of the TUC Library's online exhibitions, I was able to find more background information by retrieving the accompanying teacher's resource packs and one

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<sup>30</sup> In seeking to protect the requested anonymity of interview partner 7 I deliberately excluded the questionnaire and further information from the appendix. The questionnaire for interview partner 7 followed in structure and content the other questionnaires for the expert interviews. Interview partner 7 also received the same pre-interview task as the other interviewed experts.

academic article, there were other occasions where information about digitisation activities were even more limited, like an individual blogpost, manifesto, or press-release.<sup>31</sup>

### 2.2.3 Data analysis

I selected for the data analysis what some call the “Miles and Huberman approach” (Punch, 2014: 173), which offers a versatile and pragmatic strategy to analyse qualitative data – without being bound to a particular school of thought (Miles et al., 2014: 9). In summary the ‘Miles and Huberman approach’ consists of three main activities (Miles et al., 2014: 12–14): ‘data condensation’, ‘data display’ and ‘drawing and verifying conclusions’. These three iterative activities form the whole process of data analysis and occur during and after the data collection (Miles et al., 2014: 14). The universal applicability of the ‘Miles and Huberman approach’ is compatible with the PAR methodology, which does not prescribe a particular procedure for data analysis. A typical feature of data analysis in PAR research is however to code data by following the so-called “verbatim principle” (Stringer, 2014: 140), also known as ‘in vivo coding’ (see Table 2). In order to step back from the researcher’s own interpretation and instead to acknowledge the participants’ views, the foundation of data analysis and representation builds on the words and phrases used by the participants (Stringer, 2014: 140). For this reason, I use throughout the thesis direct quotes from my interview partners frequently. I transcribed all interview data manually, and then ‘condensed’ the data through the process described below:

Following Saldaña’s eclectic coding method (2016: 212–18), I combined three purposeful ‘first-cycle’ coding methods for exploring the data . I started with descriptive coding to get a first overview over the data, and then applied in subsequent coding cycles ‘in vivo-’ and ‘versus coding’. Table 2 provides an overview of the selected first cycle coding methods:

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<sup>31</sup> I had access to the draft digitisation strategy of the MML. My interview partner from the WCML kindly sent me their digitisation strategy. But because their strategy was at the point of the interview still in development, I was asked to treat the document confidentially. The digitisation strategy of the Amsab-ISH is in Flemish. The other interview partners have no digitisation strategy (subject to the time the interviews took place). This was confirmed at the interviews or in personal communication. The MayDay Rooms gave no response to my inquiry.

Coding method	Rationale	Example Codes
Descriptive Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarisation with the data</li> <li>• Identifying the basic topics</li> <li>• Organising the data into broad categories</li> </ul> <p>(Saldaña, 2016: 102–05)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orphan works</li> <li>• Creative Commons Licenses</li> </ul>
In Vivo Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an understanding of the participant’s worldview</li> <li>• Following the ‘verbatim principle’ of PAR: capture and honour the meaning of the participant’s experience</li> </ul> <p>(Saldaña, 2016: 105–10; Stringer, 2014: 140)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “But it was not about financial gain. It was about legacy”</li> <li>• “keeping things alive”</li> </ul>
Versus Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying contradictions</li> </ul> <p>(Saldaña, 2016: 136–40)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public mission [“keep it in the public domain”] vs. desire for control</li> </ul>

Table 3: First cycle coding methods

I used pattern coding to condense the first-cycle codes into analytic units and for developing major concepts. Pattern codes can refer to categories, explanations, relationships or theories (Miles et al., 2014: 86–91). In parallel to the data coding cycles I condensed thoughts, emerging themes, concepts and readings in analytic memos (Miles et al., 2014: 95–98). For a visual overview on the themes, I organised the emerging patterns first in mind maps which display the relationships between the thematic main categories and sub-categories. In parallel I organised the data in tables (Miles et al., 2014: 91–92). The tables consist of a column for the identified primary codes and a column for summarising the observations made. The mind maps, an example memo and analytical table are in appendix F.

## **2.2.4 Ethics**

My research is registered with the UCL Data Protection Officer (registration number: Z6364106/2019/04/117) and approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee as a low-risk research project (ethics ID: 15405/001) on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic I received additional approval for moving the research from face-to-face to online on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

All interview partners were made aware that participation was voluntary. Each participant received an invitation for research, a participant information sheet, and a consent form in advance of interviews or focus group discussions via email. For the MML workshops in Autumn 2020 consent was sought at the beginning for the whole workshop series.

All research participants were able to choose whether they would like to be anonymised, identified by institutional affiliation and role, or by role and name. Apart from interview partner 7 all participants gave consent to be identified. Throughout my research I became however increasingly concerned with the uncertain future use of data (see chapter six). I felt an ethical obligation towards my interview partners to not make their names easily retrievable via search-engines. At the same time does the detailed engagement with the individual Social Movement Archives and their practises prevent a complete anonymisation and would also render their valuable interventions to archival theory and practice invisible. After all I could also not omit their personal decision to be identifiable. As a compromise to navigate through these tensions I decided to identify my interview partners by their organisation and role only. For consistency I identified MML team members by the

individual's first name and role. Each participant received the transcripts back and had four weeks to state whether amendments, corrections, deletions (including withdrawing the whole interview) were desired. Example participant information sheets and consent forms are in appendix G.

## **2.3 Limitations of the methodology**

In this section I account and reflect on the limitations of the selected methodological approach. The first section 2.3.1 deals with the limitations of the study given by the selected cases. In section 2.3.2 I focus on the limitations of the participatory research design with the MML, and in section 2.3.3 I account on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on my research.

### **2.3.1 Limitations of the sampling strategy**

Because qualitative research works with small samples, there are limitations on what can be said about the research phenomenon (Miles et al., 2014: 295–96). The question is, which parameters need to be considered that may shape the research outcomes of this thesis?

- All interviewed Social Movement Archives have some experience with digitisation. While this experience varies widely, the selected sample does not account for the experience of Social Movement Archives that do not digitise at all. Kate Eichhorn's research on Feminist collections demonstrates how archives that do not digitise, for instance due to ethical reasons or the material characteristics of the collection, offer valuable interventions into the assumptions that underpin the rhetoric on 'access' and 'digitisation' (2014). Identifying such 'rich cases' without former connections and via desk research only is however difficult.
- Some Social Movement Archives operate online only.<sup>32</sup> In my research I have focussed however only on organisations which have a centralised, physical archive, because I sought for archives that would be comparable with the MML. Within the political left there is a tradition of digitisation projects that take place online only (see

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<sup>32</sup> See for instance Splits and Fusions: <https://splitsandfusions.wordpress.com> (accessed 21 March 2022).

chapter five) and may offer rich research avenues for exploring how these initiatives are organised, assemble physically dispersed collections, and perceive concepts like Open Access.

- It is a known limitation of focus group discussion that dominant participants may steer the discussion (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015: 48). In my role as a moderator, I made sure that everyone from the participants had the opportunity to contribute to the discussion if they wished to do so.
- The analysis of the MML includes the views of the library manager, a trustee, and volunteers. This set up allowed for a thorough account on the different perspectives on Open GLAM within one organisation. The diversity of responses from the other Social Movement Archives is however insofar constrained, as my interviews were limited to one key individual who spoke on behalf of the whole organisation. The responses of the interviewed experts are thus not necessarily representative of a commonly agreed institutional narrative. Some interview partners made also clear that, at the time of the interviews in 2020, their organisations did not have much experience with digitisation, or did not have the resources for facilitating detailed discussions on Open Access to cultural heritage yet.
- My study has a regional bias, because the majority of the interviewed organisations are based in the UK. The viewpoints of the Amsab-ISH in Ghent are not sufficient to make claims about the experiences of Social Movement Archives on a European, or even international level.

### **2.3.2 Limitations of the participatory approach**

In this section I unpack the limitations of the participatory design by reflecting on which factors reinforced the tendency that the project with the MML was first and foremost guided by myself, in consultation with the library manager (see section 2.1.2). I also articulate how the identified limitations impacted on this projects' ability to identify collective actions to make Open GLAM more just.

Typical for a PhD dissertation I was an external researcher who initiated his own study (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 47–48). Indeed, my research scope and questions were predetermined before I established contact with the MML. While I envisioned a possible

collaboration with the MML in my research proposal, UCL accepted my proposal and guaranteed funding already in July 2018, before I had established contact with the MML. My extensive volunteering activities allowed me to become an MML insider. I envisioned at the beginning of my research to establish an MML research group, a cohort consisting of MML trustees, volunteers and members of staff who would act as co-researchers. Rather than a 'cooperative mode' of participation, my initial goal was to create a co-learning atmosphere: a form of participation where the researcher still acts as a facilitator, but participants have much more say in the PAR's cycle diagnosing, planning, action, and evaluation stages (Cornwall, 1996: 96). In a CPAR project one would "engage in communicative action" through which participants reach consensus about language, situation, and action "[...] to prevent, avoid, or ameliorate the untoward consequences of our existing practices [...]" (Kemmis et al., 2014: 68). This undertaking failed however, because from the beginning there was a mismatch between my predetermined research focus on Open Access and the MML's immediate priorities (see section 2.1.3). Like Herr and Anderson observe, there was also a dissonance between my stakes in the research (completing a PhD thesis), and the potential co-researchers' other responsibilities and commitments (2015: 150–51).

Keeping the participants involved was also challenged by my occasional need to "freeze-time" in order to think about the research approach (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 100–01), and to complete the PhD upgrade report in November 2020. In other instances, I was keen to move forward in the research, but events happened that were outside of my own control. Indeed, the need to navigate and manage the complex reality of practical projects and institutional circumstances and requirements challenge the participatory and community-empowering ideals of PAR (Townsend, 2013: 104–07).<sup>33</sup> A meeting for discussing possible actions had for instance be postponed due a flood, caused by heavy rainfall on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (see section 5.1). An event that kept the library manager, other volunteers and me occupied for the following weeks, even after the most pressing salvage work had been completed.

Other MML team members' limited control over the PAR planning stage was also determined by the fact that one additional, external collaborator entered the PAR project: the Amsab-ISH, which facilitated the MML's data ingest to the SHP. The service provided

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<sup>33</sup> For a contrast compare for instance the implementation stage described by Stringer, where the researcher facilitator has a capacity building back-end role and the action is entirely implemented by the participants themselves (2014: 175–80).



by the SHP team to the MML and me for free was invaluable and made the completion of the action within a reasonable time frame possible, because of the labour and technical expertise that is usually involved in data preparation, cleaning, mapping, and ingestion. Yet, the SHP team's service also meant that other MML team members were not involved in the facilitation of the action.

With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic I had to weigh up again my stakes in the research, the MML's priorities, and the commitments of participants further. Instead of investing time in trying to revitalise the MML research group my primary concern was to structure the research in a way that would allow for an effective completion of the PAR cycle latest by the end of 2020. Being unclear at which point in-person research would become possible again, I decided with the library manager to postpone the planned evaluative workshops from May 2020 to September/October 2020, and to redesign them for an online format. My decision not to include other participants in the planning stage coincided with the leading role of our project partner, the Amsab-ISH, in facilitating the action by ingesting the poster collection into the SHP.

How could the described limitations of participation be mitigated in future? A comprehensive diagnosing phase requires prolonged engagement with a community of interest, eventually with many iterations of fact finding, analysis, consensus finding and establishment of protocols for collaboration (Stringer, 2014: 99-103;127-132). Under such circumstances PAR may unfold its full potential as a participatory methodology, but it may take many months, or even years to establish truly mutual beneficial relationships between external researchers and a community of interest. Small pilot projects can help to establish these working relationships, and may form the baseline for a subsequent full PAR research (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 48–49). As I explain in section 2.1.3, for my PhD project I had to spend a significant amount of time resources to develop a thorough understanding of the MML as an organisation. Likewise, I first had to establish with the MML workshop series a common understanding with the participants on how Open Access to cultural heritage is currently articulated and explore the organisations' attitude towards the concept before moving *with* the participants to conversations to practices that could make Open GLAM more rational, sustainable and just (Kemmis et al., 2014: 22). Moving beyond this initial baseline conversation in subsequent PAR cycles was however impeded through the Covid-19 pandemic (see section 2.3.3). Another point to consider is to work with the community of interest as early as possible on a joint funding application. This does not

only allow to set a research scope and agenda in a collaborative manner, but importantly allows a community of interest to identify how participation in the research can be reimbursed in monetary or non-monetary ways (Herr and Anderson, 2015: 153–57). Incentives for participating in research are known to bring ethical issues. To not undermine the voluntary principle of research participation, research incentives need to be reasonable and in relation to what the research participants are asked to take part in (Fisher and Anushko, 2008: 104–05). However, Cowan and Rault point out that participatory research is prone to be conducted under the assumption that the participation in interviews and other research activities for free do not need to be reimbursed, because participatory projects already serve the participants' intrinsic interests and 'the good' for their communities. Leaving "the labour of being studied" unrecognised normalises precarious working conditions, and indeed also replicates and reinforces an academic culture that increasingly runs on coercive free labour (2014: 474–82).

### **2.3.3 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic**

With the closure of the MML and the delay of the workshop series I decided to move forward with the expert interviews, which I conducted from May to August 2020. My seven interview partners from the other Social Movement Archives kindly agreed to take part in online interviews, even though all sites were closed.

Brinkmann critiques facilitating interviews in a mode that is tailored towards efficient and rationalised data collection (2018: 589–90) and also highlights the merits of face-to-face interviews, which he characterises as having an "[...] embodied presence, which enable interpersonal contact, context sensitivity, and conversational flexibility to the fullest extent" (Brinkmann, 2018: 578). Online conference tools do not allow for in-person visits to Social Movement Archives, each with a unique history and often a locality that is firmly rooted within an activist trajectory (see section 1.1), and thus the pandemic limited experiencing the space and 'interpersonal contact' which could have fed into the data collection. For instance, by obtaining consent from the interview partner to take field notes, having informal conversations with activists about their work, or gathering flyers and similar ephemeral documentation that may have been available on site. This is all information that can shape the understanding of a particular Social Movement Archive.

In case of the MML I was able to mitigate against such information loss because of my experience of having been a volunteer there for almost 18 months before the pandemic started. But facilitating group discussions online turned out to be challenging. While overall the participants appreciated the structure and content of the workshop series, I received negative feedback on the audio quality and connectivity issues participants had. Lags in the audio/video transmission or drop-outs of participants made the group discussions less dynamic as they would probably have been when taken place in person. During the introductory session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop two participants were not able to hear me at all.<sup>34</sup> Such difficulties were partly overcome by switching off the videos and by sending the participants the slides and short summaries on the workshops' content. Lags and background noises also led to some gaps in the transcriptions. To mitigate 'zoom fatigue' I planned that each workshop would not last longer than 75 minutes in total. I was able to stick to this schedule in most cases. However, especially for the two copyright workshops there was too much content to present in the available amount of time, which reduced the audio recorded focus group discussions to 20 minutes.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Field notes taken on 16 September 2020, 23 September 2020 and 7 October 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Field notes taken on 30 September 2020.

### 3. Open politics in the heritage sector

In this chapter I pose the question: How has the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage developed, and which assumptions are embedded within the concept? The so-called open movement encompasses a broad set of loosely connected initiatives including, but not limited to: Free- and Open Source Software development, Open Access publishing of scholarly research, Open Educational Resources, Open Government Data or the Open Access advocacy organisation Creative Commons, which also developed the Creative Commons licensing framework for digital content (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 8). In essence these initiatives share the aspiration of making data and content available in accordance to the open definition, as set out by the Open Knowledge Foundation: “Open means anyone can freely access, use, modify, and share for any purpose (subject, at most, to requirements that preserve provenance and openness)” (Open Knowledge Foundation, 2022). Early examples of organisations taking up these ideas of the open movement can be traced back to the mid-2000s when heritage organisations increasingly started to distribute digital collections through various online and social media channels. Between 2004 and 2006 the Brooklyn Museum and the Walters Art Museum, for instance, experimented with permissive Creative Commons licensing frameworks to make images and data available for non-commercial use (Kelly, 2013: 5; 18–21; Bernstein, 2010).<sup>36</sup> Around 2008 institutions like the Library of Congress (Springer et al., 2008), the Powerhouse Museum in Australia (Chan, 2008), and the German Federal Archive (Kaiser and Schoneville, 2008) started to make collections available in accordance to the open definition (Baltussen et al., 2013). Open Access to cultural heritage became however in vogue between 2011 and 2012: In 2011 the European Commission co-funded with the Open Knowledge Foundation the OpenGLAM initiative, which published a set of OpenGLAM principles (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022b). In 2012 the launch of the OpenGLAM initiative was followed by the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum’s Open Access policy for which the museum received a lot of sensational attention in the press and is since then often wrongly attributed for being a pioneer of Open GLAM (Rühse, 2017: 37; 40–43).

The OpenGLAM initiative is not the only call for Open Access to cultural heritage. Examples include for instance the Heritage Data Reuse Charter (2020), the “FAIR principles for Library, Archive and Museum Collections” (Koster and Woutersen-

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<sup>36</sup> I explain the Creative Commons licensing framework in the context of the OpenGLAM principles in section 3.2.

Windhouwer, 2018),<sup>37</sup> the Santa Barbara Statement on Collections as Data (Padilla et al., 2019a), or the so-called Passenger-Pigeon manifesto (Harangozó, 2022). The OpenGLAM initiative, rebooted in 2020 through funding by Creative Commons, takes a central role in consensus building around the topic of Open Access to cultural heritage (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022b). A full historical account on how Open Access to cultural heritage has emerged is beyond the scope of this thesis. But due to the OpenGLAM initiative's defining role within the discourse on what Open Access to cultural heritage means, my focus in this chapter is on uncovering the social-cultural history and context that informed the OpenGLAM initiative's concept of Open Access to cultural heritage in its formative years. For this purpose, I first focus on how the European Union's (EU) policies for making Public Sector Information (PSI) openly available, meshed with mass digitisation efforts as crystallised in Europeana and the OpenGLAM initiative (section 3.1). In section 3.2 I introduce the OpenGLAM principles in more detail. I demonstrate that the kind of Open Access that is promoted by the OpenGLAM initiative is a specific one: creating and maintaining interoperability. The genesis of all open movements are commonly linked to the Free and Open Source Software development, as originated in the computer culture in the 1980s and 90s (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 8). In section 3.3 I examine these roots of the Open Access idea in more detail. A critical assessment of the foundations of the open movement helps to understand why 'openness' became attractive for policy makers, such as the European Commission, and illustrate the key issues that emerge when transferring the concept of Open Access, as developed within the computer culture, into the heritage domain.

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<sup>37</sup> The FAIR data principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) were originally developed as a set of recommendations for data producers and stewards to improve access and use of research data (Wilkinson et al., 2016: 1–2).

### 3.1 The Public Sector Information directive and Europeana

The provision of access to cultural heritage for education and research purposes is traditionally a key argument for justifying investments in heritage digitisation projects. Within the context of Europeana, the EU's flagship online portal for digitised heritage and associated mass digitisation projects, the focus shifted, however, gradually towards a market-based framework. Digitised cultural heritage is envisioned as a resource for the creative-, entertainment-, food-, fashion-, or the tourist-sector (Ping-Huang, 2016: 54–56; Lutz, 2018: 3–5). The reasons why the EU framed digitised heritage as a potential economic resource can be found in the early 2000s. It was then, when digitised heritage was framed as a specific type of PSI (Hanappi-Egger, 2004: 238–39). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines PSI as:

“information including information products and services, generated, created, collected, processed, preserved, maintained, disseminated, or funded by or for a government or public institution” (OECD, 2008: 4).

PSI is therefore understood as data created or collected by governmental or public organisations as a result of fulfilling their public tasks (Ubaldi, 2013: 4). The main argument behind PSI is that this data should be made available and reusable free of price to third parties, since they already funded the data creation through their taxes (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 70; Guibault and Salamanca, 2017: 215; Kitchin, 2014: 48; Hansen et al., 2013: 170). The EU's definition of what kind of information falls under PSI law is broad (Guibault and Salamanca, 2017: 212). But in the case of heritage organisations, which are subject to the PSI directive since 2013, PSI is mainly thought of being digitised heritage collections and metadata (European Parliament, 2019: 66). For the moment it is important to keep in mind that the PSI law applies only to bodies that are governed by public law. According to EU legislation, public bodies fulfil three criteria:

“(a) they are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character; (b) they have legal personality; and (c) they are financed, for the most part by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law;” (European Parliament, 2019: 69).

The PSI directive does therefore not apply to independent Social Movement Archives.<sup>38</sup> However, section 3.2 shows that the PSI directive becomes relevant to them when they want to take part in Europeana, regardless of legal applicability.

The discourse around the economic value of PSI for the European market goes back to the late 1980s and early 1990s. At this time, the European Commission started to investigate the possibilities of making PSI data available to the public and for stimulating economic growth. Likewise, the private sector argued increasingly that receiving access to PSI would be essential to be capable of competing within the world information market. The rivalry with the US's information industry was one of the main catalysts for the EU to investigate possibilities of exploiting PSI (Janssen and Dumortier, 2003: 184–89). One of the first major studies for investigating the potential value of European PSI was the so-called 'PIRA study', commissioned by the EU, which reported among others on the estimated value of "cultural information" (Pira International et al., 2000: 6–8). At that time the study estimated that €3.9 billion per annum of national income could be attributed to industries making use of PSI originating from the cultural sector.<sup>39</sup> In comparison with PSI originating from other public sectors, cultural PSI had however the lowest economic value (e.g. geographical PSI was estimated to have a value of €35.8 billion per year, while economic and social data €11.7 billion) (Pira International et al., 2000: 7–9). The potential of increasing the economic value of data produced by heritage organisations in future was an important aspect to consider their later inclusion in the PSI directive (Davies, 2009a: 2). The identified barriers hampering the commercial exploitation of PSI generally were to a significant extent of infrastructural nature: the lack of catalogues for PSI data, standardised licensing schemes and file formats (Pira International et al., 2000: 17).

In 2003 the 'EU Directive on Re-use of Public Sector Information' (PSI directive) (European Parliament, 2003) was set up as a response to these investigations and competitive concerns (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013). However, heritage organisations, as well as also other cultural establishments like public-service broadcasters, universities and theatres were explicitly excluded from the scope of the 2003 directive. In the directive's

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<sup>38</sup> Brexit made the PSI directive, at least from a legal perspective, also obsolete for UK institutions in general (Wallace and Euler, 2020: 840).

<sup>39</sup> The report is unclear what is meant by the cultural sector. The report's authors state that PSI from the cultural sector includes information from heritage organisations, namely museums and libraries. Archives are not mentioned (Pira International et al., 2000: 8). Later the term became even more fuzzy because in PSI policy documents the term cultural sector also included broadcasters, theatres, concert halls etc. In the 2003 PSI directive 'cultural establishments' referred to: "[...] museums, libraries, archives, orchestras, operas, ballets and theatres" (European Parliament, 2003: 93).

proposal, the European Commission argued that adopting the directive would cause high administrative burdens for cultural establishments, and that most data could not be provided due to copyright restrictions anyway. The directive also emphasised the special role of cultural establishments in society, as “[...] carriers of culture and knowledge [...]” (European Commission, 2002).<sup>40</sup> A fourth, and according to Janssen unofficial, concern was that the dependency on public funds would increase, since some parts of the funding of cultural establishments was generated through charging for PSI (Janssen, 2011: 448).

While heritage organisations were integrated in the end in the revised PSI directive of 2013,<sup>41</sup> their fear of losing potential income has never really changed. The justification for this concern is questionable, because charging models often come with internal transactions costs (Tanner, 2004: 40; Kelly, 2013: 29). But it was an important reason why some heritage organisations were concerned about the PSI directive (Janssen and Dumortier, 2003: 196), and research also identified the fear of losing revenue as a common risk perceived by heritage organisations in the context of Open GLAM (Kapsalis, 2016: 10; Wallace, 2020f: 2–4). On the other hand, the European Union has invested a lot of resources into heritage digitisation projects, especially through Europeana. The amendment of the PSI directive was hence also a response to the European mass digitisation efforts (Drexler, 2015: 72).

The history of Europeana goes back to 2005 when six European heads of states suggested the creation of a digital European library (Europeana Foundation, 2022). Europeana soon became a prestige project for the European Commission and was, among others, framed as a means to foster economic competitiveness (Thylstrup, 2018: 61–62). This is not surprising if we think back to the considerations about exploiting PSI as a result of economic competition with the US. The European Commission’s strategy ‘i2010: Digital Libraries’, considered digitisation not only as being beneficial from a cultural and social viewpoint, but also from an economic perspective (European Commission, 2005: 4–5). This is a narrative that, as I demonstrate in this chapter, will come up repetitively:

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<sup>40</sup> A later review on the possible inclusion of heritage organisations into the PSI directive pointed out that it was unclear what was meant by the special role of heritage organisation in society (Jančič et al., 2015: 5).

<sup>41</sup> The PSI directive has been revised again in June 2019 and is now re-framed as the ‘Open Data Directive’. However, the main political changes for heritage organisations appear in the revision of the 2003 to the 2013 directive, which is for this reason the focus of this section. See: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/public-sector-information-psi-directive-open-data-directive> (accessed 8 May 2022). Relevant for institutions based in the EU is also the 2019 Digital Single Market (DSM) Directive, which introduced in June 2021 the provision that no new rights can be claimed on one-to-one reproductions of public domain works. For a discussion of the legal impacts (and loopholes) of the 2019 directives see (Wallace and Euler, 2020).



“Once digitised, Europe’s cultural heritage can be a driver of networked traffic. It will be a rich source of raw material to be re-used for added-value services and products in sectors such as tourism and education. If properly preserved, the material can be used time and time again. Furthermore, digitisation efforts will have considerable spin-offs for firms developing new technologies” (European Commission, 2005: 5).

In 2008 Europeana was presented to the public and the EU made several million Euros<sup>42</sup> of funding for the years 2009-2010 available to research on digital libraries and improve access to heritage (European Commission, 2008). At the same time the European Commission considered to revise the 2003 PSI directive, because so far the directive had little impact on the public sector and a stronger policy was necessary for fostering the development of a European information market (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013). Identified issues included the general scepticism of public organisations to make PSI data available for commercial reuse and the pressure to recover costs (European Commission, 2009: 3). Furthermore, the European Commission also expressed concerns about the trend that some heritage organisations kept charging for access to, or reuse of, digitised content that was actually in the public domain (European Commission, 2009: 7). Posing copyright restrictions on digitised public domain material is a juristic grey zone and is treated from country to country differently (see section 3.2). However, for Europeana it is not only a juristic, but also an economic concern. The Europeana Public Domain Charter states:

“Our essential aim is to make Europe’s Public Domain cultural and scientific heritage freely accessible to citizens in digital form to encourage the development of knowledge and stimulate creative enterprise and innovation” (Europeana, 2010a: 2).

From an economic perspective the question about appropriate rights statements on Europeana is also an issue because many heritage organisations are anyway reluctant to digitise material from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to copyright (Fallon and Gomez, 2015). Charging for the access on public domain material reduces then the amount of reusable heritage data even further. Charging models were furthermore regarded as a competitive disadvantage in comparison to Google’s approach of digitising without gaining permission from copyright holders (Niggemann et al., 2011: 20). However, for Europeana copying the Google’s model of ignoring copyright was out of the question, because the European Commission was committed to advocate for copyright clearance. Implicitly Europeana was

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<sup>42</sup> €69 million through the EU’s research programme and €50 million through the ‘information society part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme’ (European Commission, 2008).

framed as being on the right side of the law, and Google not (Thylstrup, 2018: 65). In terms of proprietary vs. open infrastructure it is possible to observe a similar distinction between Google and Europeana, through the latter's embracement of the open movement.

In 2009 and 2010<sup>43</sup> the open movement, in particular in the form of the Open Government Data movement, gained momentum (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013). Advocates<sup>44</sup> of Open Government Data seek to lower legal and technical barriers of data produced by administrations to enable data reuse (Ubaldi, 2013: 5). Some EU member states, like at that time the UK, had already implemented Open Data policies, which brought for the European Commission the chance to re-brand the PSI directive with a more fashionable terminology (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013). After the launch of Europeana further investigations followed about the implications of including heritage organisations into the PSI directive (Davies, 2009b; Clapton et al., 2011). In summary the arguments about excluding heritage organisations from the directive were the same as in 2003 (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013) and it remained difficult to assess whether the advantages to include heritage organisations in the PSI directive would outweigh disadvantages such as additional costs due to copyright clearance (Davies, 2009b: 5;11). However, the European Commission was in favour of extending the scope of the directive to heritage organisations (Dietrich and Pekel, 2012: 2–3), mainly due to the rationale that access to heritage PSI would be beneficial for the public, and for commercial enterprises (Keller et al., 2014: 2). Neelie Kroes, at that time European Union Commissionaire for the Digital Agenda, stated for instance under the light of the further development of Europeana and the revision of the PSI directive:

“I urge cultural institutions to open up control of their data, and to make digital copies of public domain works easily accessible and re-usable [...] Easier access to and re-use of information paid for by citizens through their taxes has the potential to deliver efficiency, transparency, innovation and economic growth” (2011: 6–7).

However, some EU member states and heritage organisations still expressed their concerns, mainly due to the fear of losing avenues for generating income through collections data and content (Dietrich and Pekel, 2012: 18). But in the end a compromise was made, and the 2013 revision included heritage organisations. As long as material had

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<sup>43</sup> See the US Open Government policy from 2009 (Orszag, 2009) or the UK Open Government licence from 2010 (Cabinet Office and Maude, 2010)

<sup>44</sup> A mix of tech-companies, layers, scholars, and NGOs. See for instance: [https://public.resource.org/open\\_government\\_meeting.html](https://public.resource.org/open_government_meeting.html) (accessed 8 May 2022).

not already been made available for reuse, heritage organisations were able to choose if they wanted to comply with the PSI directive or not. Museums, archives, and libraries were also allowed to cover the costs which occur through the preservation, reproduction, and dissemination of collection items. For digitisation projects in collaboration with private companies the reuse of digitised material can also be held to exclusive terms for 10 years and, if deemed necessary, indefinitely renewed every seven years after a review. In summary complying with the 2013 PSI directive was for heritage organisations therefore somewhat optional (Janssen and Hugelier, 2013; Guibault and Salamanca, 2017: 225–26). The inclusion of heritage organisations into the 2013 PSI directive seemed more to pave the way for the further development of Europeana, which was stated in several instances as a flagship project for PSI heritage and Open Data (Guibault and Salamanca, 2017: 226). Indeed, by 2013 Europeana had already established firm connections with the open movement, among others with the non-profit organisation Creative Commons to harmonise Open Access licensing management among Europeana content providers.

Creative Commons provides a standardised online licensing framework which was of interest for Europeana. Creative Commons Zero, a tool to voluntarily waive copyright and database rights, was first released in 2009 and emerged out of close collaboration with the scientific community (Peters, 2009). Organisations within the academic and research library sector, such as the CERN Library, picked up Creative Commons Zero for metadata licensing soon (Gray, 2010). While not uncontested (for details see section 4.3.1) Creative Commons Zero provided for Europeana a tool for metadata licensing. But because the Public Domain Certification was based on US- and not on European legislation<sup>45</sup> close collaboration between Europeana and Creative Commons was necessary to create a robust license to strengthen Europeana's Public Domain Charter through a tool for signposting digital reproductions of works in the public domain as such. Between 2009 and 2010 Europeana collaborated as part of the 'EuropeanaConnect' project (2009-2011) with Creative Commons to develop the Public Domain Mark which would also work in a European context (Purday, 2011: 58–59; Eechoud, van, 2011: 178). As a result of this collaboration with Creative Commons Europeana became "[...] the first major adopter of the Public Domain Mark" (Peters, 2010). The Public Domain Mark is like Creative

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<sup>45</sup> See: Creative Commons' Copyright-Only Dedication\* (based on United States law) or Public Domain Certification  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20100314025615/http://creativecommons.org/licenses/publicdomain/deed.en> (accessed 16 January 2023).

Commons Zero a corner stone of the Europeana Data Exchange Agreement now, and content providers are required to label works in the public domain as such (see section 3.2). Establishing the legal basis for Open Access to cultural heritage in a European context was in parallel supported through advocacy work. The Digitised Manuscripts to Europeana (DM2E) project collaborated with the Open Knowledge Foundation to build up a “[...] supporting a network of open metadata evangelists who will help to raise awareness of legal and technical best practices in a variety of different domains” (Leon and Trkulja, 2013: 19). From this network, which consisted at that time of proponents from Creative Commons, Wikimedia, Europeana, the Digital Public Library of America and heritage organisations, the OpenGLAM initiative emerged (Leon and Trkulja, 2013: 19–20).

The next section illustrates the underlying principles of the OpenGLAM initiative in more detail. From a legal perspective the EU’s PSI directive only applies to organisations governed by public law and which are based in one of the EU’s member states. However, the following section suggests that organisations wanting to contribute to Europeana need to comply with the main principle of the PSI directive: digitised heritage and metadata must be made available for any kind reuse, whenever legally possible. The framing of the PSI directive has hence an effect on Social Movement Archives, and other types of heritage organisations, which may want to take part in Europeana.

### **3.2 The OpenGLAM initiative and its principles**

Both nongovernmental organisations (such as the Open Knowledge Foundation, or Creative Commons), and governmental policy makers are key drivers in making data and content ‘openly’ available (Wessels et al., 2017: 66). The OpenGLAM initiative is a perfect example where both of these drivers worked collaboratively. While the so-called OpenGLAM principles, which I discuss below, must be understood as a set of recommendations, they have the aspiration to establish a common standard for what signifies an ‘open heritage institution’ (Neely, 2016: 265; Sanderhoff, 2014b: 23–24). Like other projects and initiatives within the open movement (such as Open Educational Resources, or Open Government Data) the standardisation takes place in form of a set of recommendations, or principles. The OpenGLAM initiative makes direct reference to the open definition established by the Open Knowledge Foundation. From this notion of ‘open’ the OpenGLAM initiative derived five recommendations:

- “1. Release digital information about the artefacts (metadata) into the public domain using an appropriate legal tool such as the Creative Commons Zero Waiver. [...]
2. Keep digital representations of works for which copyright has expired (public domain) in the public domain by not adding new rights to them. [...]
3. When publishing data make an explicit and robust statement of your wishes and expectations with respect to reuse and repurposing of the descriptions, the whole data collection, and subsets of the collection. [...]
4. When publishing data use open file formats which are machine-readable. [...]
5. Opportunities to engage audiences in novel ways on the web should be pursued. [...]” (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022c).

Since 2020 the OpenGLAM initiative, with support of Creative Commons, works on a revision of these principles to a ‘Declaration on Open Access for Cultural Heritage’ (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022b).<sup>46</sup> But comparing the old principles and the draft of the new declaration illustrates the key expectations of the OpenGLAM initiative towards heritage organisations. First, copyright and licensing issues; in form of maintaining and expanding the public domain. And second, ensuring compliance with open and interoperable technical standards, in particular for metadata. In context of the OpenGLAM initiative this emphasis on ensuring a liberal copyright regime and an interoperable infrastructure is not a coincidence. Both copyright restrictions and insufficient interoperability are obstacles for the creation of digital infrastructures for providing access to unified collections, such as Europeana (Thylstrup, 2018: 64–70). Indeed, organisations wanting to contribute to Europeana must comply in essence with all OpenGLAM principles except number five, which is mainly an encouragement for heritage organisations to pursue crowdsourcing projects.

The first and fourth principles are two sides of the same coin. Metadata should be made legally and technically open. The Europeana data exchange agreement requires from data providers to permit Europeana to make metadata available with the ‘Creative Commons Zero’ license (Europeana Foundation, 2020: 3). In many legal systems, moral and legal rights automatically come into existence with the creation of a piece of work. But the

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<sup>46</sup> A draft of this declaration is accessible at: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/16tcyayOAAAt-rJo4sPp7nQINZZ4DYiz5hel\\_PpRvtcL8/edit#heading=h.dumg4x1zukva](https://docs.google.com/document/d/16tcyayOAAAt-rJo4sPp7nQINZZ4DYiz5hel_PpRvtcL8/edit#heading=h.dumg4x1zukva) (accessed 20 March 2022). At the time of the last revision of this section, 20.03.2022, the new declaration has however not been published yet.

'Creative Commons Zero' license allows creators or owners of copyright-protected material to waive copyright and related rights as far as legally possible and to state "no rights reserved" (Creative Commons, 2019). However, the crucial point here is that data alone is in most cases not protected by copyright, but the database itself is commonly protected by the data-base right (Guadamuz and Cabell, 2013: 6–9). In the UK, the right of the database creator is infringed if a person without permission "[...] re-utilises all or a substantial part of the contents of the database" (CRDR, 1997). The use of the Creative Commons Zero license must thus be understood as a sign-post to signal that the content of a database can be extracted without doubt (Kreutzer, 2011: 15). Europeana provides for this case several APIs which support open machine readable file formats like JSON and RDF/XML (Europeana Foundation, 2019). Europeana gives contributing organisations however the freedom to choose which metadata fields they want to make available through Europeana, because in case some metadata may be protected by third-party copyrights for instance (Europeana, 2014: 9).

The second Open GLAM principle is a critique of some heritage organisations' practice to maintain or execute copyright on the digital surrogates of public domain material (Roued-Cunliffe, 2018: 290–91). According to UK legislation, it is unlikely that the one-to-one reproduction of 2D works leads to new copyright, because the threshold for originality is not met. The UK Intellectual Property Office has also released a statement (the 2015 Copyright Notice) which supports this stance. There is however in the UK no binding law that would prohibit the claim of copyright on non-original reproductions of public domain works (Wallace, 2022: 18–23). The situation in the UK contrasts with the European Union where it is since June 2021 through article 14 of the EU DSM Directive (and bolstered through the PSI/Open Data directive), against the legislation to apply new copyright on reproductions of public domain works (Keller, 2019: 2; 6–7; Wallace, 2022: 25–26). But even before this legislation came into place, Europeana content providers had to label works that are in the public domain as such through a Public Domain Mark (Europeana, 2014: 10;16), and this requirement remains present in the most recent data exchange agreement (Europeana Foundation, 2020: 3).

As discussed, metadata and reproductions of public domain material should be clearly labelled with a Creative Commons Zero license or Public Domain Mark. However, what happens with objects which are still in copyright, but the providing heritage organisation is the rights holder or can negotiate with a third-party rights holder the potential reuse of

digital surrogates? The basic idea behind the third OpenGLAM principle is to clearly label such content and indicate what kind of use is permitted (Roued-Cunliffe, 2018: 291). In Europeana this can be done by selecting a Creative Commons license or a license of the rights statements consortium, sometimes also referred to as rightsstatements.org licenses (Europeana Foundation, 2015).

Reviewing the basic concepts of OpenGLAM make clear that for becoming an 'open heritage organisation', both expertise in copyright and technical skills are required. Proficiencies that are not necessarily available in every organisation and strongly contrast with the overall simplicity the OpenGLAM principles suggest (an organisation can become 'open' in five steps). Symptoms of the difficulties that arise for an organisation to comply with these open standards can among others be observed in Europeana itself. While Europeana assumes and expects from data providers to use the correct rights statements (Scholz, 2019: 26–27), a study has shown that the rights statements for content on Europeana are not necessarily accurate. From a representative sample of 1,462 digital objects on Europeana, 9% of the rights statements were inaccurate, and in 17% of the cases the rights statement was questionable (Blijden, 2018: 14–15). For Europeana this is an issue since wrong right statements bring uncertainty for the potential reuse of data and content. However, Blijden suggests that determining the correct copyright status of an object is in many instances complex, due to missing information about a work's rights holders. Additionally, many heritage organisations do not have the required resources and expertise for detailed copyright investigations (2018: 21–22). This corresponds with and complements other factors that create challenges, or even resistance in heritage organisations of all sizes and types to make collections available online and/or as Open Access, as discussed in section 1.1, like: limited skills, financial and personnel resources, a sense of losing control, and the loss of potential income (Verwayen et al., 2011: 14–16; Baltussen et al., 2013; Ruge et al., 2017: 82–83; Estermann, 2015: 20–21).

In this section I have shown how the concept of Open GLAM is focussed on ensuring technical and legal interoperability between heritage organisations. On close examination the OpenGLAM principles map almost one-to-one to the legal and technical conditions Europeana content providers need to fulfil. The vital role that 'openness' takes within the debate on creating interoperable systems has however a longer socio-cultural trajectory than the emergence of Open GLAM. In the 1980s and 90s, within the computer and information-systems sector, 'openness' became a "cultural imperative" to tackle the

monopolism of major computer cooperates like IBM, and the widespread of idiosyncratic hardware- and software systems (Kelty, 2008: 147–48). The debate on openness in computer culture is underpinned by a rhetoric that also plays out in the Open GLAM and PSI discourse: democratic liberalism, technological progress, unrestricted access to knowledge, and free market politics (Kelty, 2008: 148; Berry, 2008: 153). An illustrating example of this debate is the discourse between the Free Software- and the Open-Source Software movements. Focussing on the debate between these two movements is relevant as both are commonly identified of having influenced other open movements, like Open Access publishing or Open Government Data (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 8–9; Tkacz, 2015: 393).

### **3.3 The origin of the current notion of ‘openness’**

The origin of the open movements’ ethos is commonly identified to have emerged from the computer culture developed in US American research institutions from the 1950s up to the 1970s. At that time computer scientists, often employed for major governmental and military research projects, were accustomed to experimental and cooperative work practices. Of particular importance was the sharing of software code (Berry, 2008: 104–06). This is because many computer applications require similar functionalities (for instance storing information in a list and sorting the list’s content), and programmers realised that once such an effective function has been developed there was little need to rewrite the same code from scratch. From a practical perspective, the principle of copyright to protect an original piece of work from being copied has within the environment of computer programming a potential stifling effect, as there are only a limited amount of possibilities to write code to solve the same problem in an effective way (Berry, 2008: 132). Software production turned however increasingly into a lucrative market to embark on, and the practice of sharing code was an obvious anathema to the commercial software sector. Copyright, contracts, patents and non-disclosure agreements became essential means for companies to sustain and raise their position within the market (Berry, 2008: 107–08). It was this emerging proprietary ‘enclosure’ of software working practices that became a concern within the computer culture community, among others for the computer scientist Richard Stallman.



The story Stallman likes to recall when explaining how he became, according to his biographer, “[...] a crusading activist applying traditional notions of liberty, equality, and fraternity to the world of software development [...]” (Williams, 2002), goes briefly as follows: Stallman asked for access to the source code of a Xerox printer driver, so that he could fix its malfunctioning. However, the code could not be shared with Stallman due to a non-disclosure agreement, preventing Stallman from the ‘freedom’ to inspect and modify the code for improvement. In the aftermath of this incidence Stallman decided to start developing his own operating system (GNU) and made its source code freely available and modifiable to everyone. To prevent propriety co-option of GNU, Stallman worked with support of the legal scholar Eben Moglen on a software license which was ultimately published as the GNU General Public License (GPL) in 1989 (Berry, 2008: 112–13). The GNU GPL license has two crucial features: First, the license ensures to protect what Stallman identified as the four essential ‘freedoms’ of software users: “(0) to run the program, (1) to study and change the program in source code form, (2) to redistribute exact copies, and (3) to distribute modified versions” (Free Software Foundation, Inc., 2021). Second, GNU derivatives need to be licensed again with a GNU GPL license, which ensures that the four software freedoms remain in place also for any of GNU’s derivatives. This is the so-called ‘copy-left principle’, or sometimes also referred to as the ‘viral nature’ of the GNU GPL license. Crucially, the GNU GPL license does not place something into the public domain, but instead makes use of copyright legislation to permit certain uses and to prevent an erosion of the four freedoms (Kelty, 2008: 182–83; 191; Berry, 2008: 112–13). The GNU GPL license had a significant impact on the further development of the open movement, in particular Creative Commons whose co-founder Lawrence Lessig takes explicit reference to Stallman in his writings. Like GNU GPL the Creative Commons licensing system makes use of copyright law to offer copyright holders options to license their work permissively in ways that go beyond ‘All Rights Reserved’ (Lessig, 2004: 280–86).<sup>47</sup> But what kind of social-cultural context do we encounter in Free Software, and by extension the open movement?

The primary argument for the importance of Free Software is justified on ethical grounds, which go beyond “[...] the individual user’s sake, but for society as a whole they [the four software freedoms] promote social solidarity – that is, sharing and cooperation” (Stallman, 2015a: 75). For Stallman access to software code is understood as a human right that

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<sup>47</sup> Compare the copyleft principle within the ‘Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike’ license (CC BY-SA). See: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> (accessed 14 September 2022).

goes beyond conceptions of property in the sense of copyright ownership. Being able to access, study, and reuse code is perceived as an unconditional tenet for an individual's ability for independent thought, expression, choice, and, moreover, to determine the own destiny and society to progress (Berry, 2008: 154–59).

While later the Open-Source Initiative sidestepped Stallman's ethical imperative, we find within Stallman's rhetoric already one of the main characteristics of the 'open'. That is the creation of "antagonism" (Tkacz, 2012: 403). The rhetoric on Free Software, and by extension openness, fosters a black and white binary of what is considered as morally right or wrong. There is not only little room for perceptions of where perhaps more nuanced notions of free/open are required (Berry, 2008: 163;169). Moreover, because open is usually already framed as the superior good between two states (open vs. closed) it becomes difficult to account for the deficiencies that may be immanent to something that is labelled as 'open'. In other words, once something has achieved being open it cannot become even more open, and is thus immune for improvement (Edwards, 2015: 255; Tkacz, 2012: 402–03).

The definition of Free Software was never anti-commercial, as Stallman clarifies in his infamous "[...] 'free' as in 'free speech', not as in 'free beer'" parable (2015b: 3). Indeed, the freedom of commercial use, or redistribution of Free Software is guaranteed by the GPL license, as long as the copyleft principle is respected (Stallman, 2015b: 5). However, some regarded Stallman's rhetoric on freedom as too ideological, and the term 'free' as unattractive for making a business case for Free Software development. Consequently, at the peak of the dot-com bubble, it came to an ideological split between 'Free Software', and the at that time newly set up 'Open-Source Software Initiative'. The latter had, like Free Software, a vocal advocate: the (right-) libertarian Eric S. Raymond (Tkacz, 2012: 392; Kelty, 2008: 108–09). While there is from a practical perspective no difference between 'Free Software' and 'Open-Source Software' (Kelty, 2008: 112), it was the "business-backed" emphasis of the latter with a rhetoric around "[...] participation, transparency and increased efficiency [...]" that appealed to a wider audience and was transferred from the computer culture into other domains, including the Open Government Data and PSI directives (Tkacz, 2012: 393; 397–98).

In his essay 'The Cathedral and the Bazaar', the Open-Source co-initiator Raymond reflects on two competing means for software production. Raymond uses the 'bazaar' as a metaphor to describe how the Open-Source Linux operating system was developed by a

mass of programmers, collaborating through the internet. This mode of production is regarded as superior to the established practice of the 'cathedral' where a small team works in a centralised manner (Raymond, 2001). The rationale for Open-Source Software is, in contrast to Free Software, not based on ethical concerns, but on the presumption that the decentralised mode of production fostered through Open-Source is economically the most efficient one for creating software (Kelty, 2008: 109; Berry, 2008: 172), or as Raymond argues:

"The Linux world behaves in many respects like a free market or an ecology, a collection of selfish agents attempting to maximize utility which in the process produces a self-correcting spontaneous order more elaborate and efficient than any amount of central planning could have achieved. [...] Perhaps in the end the open-source culture will triumph not because cooperation is morally right or software 'hoarding' is morally wrong (assuming you believe the latter, which neither Linus [Torvalds] nor I do), but simply because the closed-source world cannot win an evolutionary arms race with open-source communities that can put orders of magnitude more skilled time into a problem" (2001).

As the quote suggests, despite Raymond's intention to side-step the political agenda set by Free Software, the imagery of the bazaar comes with its own social-cultural import as it speaks well to free market politics and lean modes of organising society. Moreover, Open-Source is presented in a Darwinian logic as the natural choice to go that will naturally out-compete any other mode of production (Berry, 2008: 176–77). Profits through developing Open-Source software, as brought forward by Open-Source advocates to investors, should be made by cutting the production costs of software by capitalising on volunteer labour and through the stock-market (Kelty, 2008: 105;109). To maximise the economic potential of Open-Source software development, the Open-Source Initiative set up its own licensing scheme, which makes the copyleft principle an optional choice (Berry, 2008: 176; Tkacz, 2012: 392). This is known as a 'permissive Open-Source license' which "permits proprietary derivative works" (Open Source Initiative, 2022). Increasing the potential for businesses to make use of and profit from openly licensed content is also a concern of Open GLAM.

Within the Open GLAM discourse, the argument is made that heritage organisations' (restrictive) licensing conditions are primarily shaped by the will to have exclusive commercialisation opportunities. The concept of Open Access to cultural heritage is then contrasted with "a culture of copyright and commercialisation" within heritage organisations

(Wallace, 2022: 102). This argument obscures however how the Open GLAM advocacy is at the same time not agnostic towards a 'culture of commercialisation', as it seeks to maximise the commercial potential of digital heritage collections for third parties (Wallace, 2022: 89–90). The technical and legal interoperability advocated by the OpenGLAM initiative, which are indeed also central tenets of mass digitisation programmes, is thus not only about interconnecting collections between heritage institutions. But to a considerable extent, about exposing heritage collections for value extraction in digital capitalism. Indeed, the imagery of the bazaar and its close relative, the 'platform', have also entered the cultural heritage domain, as sites that anticipate the creation of economic value (Thylstrup, 2018: 129).

In the article 'the temple and the bazaar' Wikipedia it is for instance argued to become a "platform" where museums and the public meet to collaborate and share authority on the meaning making about collections. Crucially, while the museum is acknowledged to have its own authority and biases, these are to be resolved through the free market of ideas on Wikipedia because the latter functions "[...] as one such digital platform, a true bazaar that negotiates diverse knowledge on a global scale in the name of encyclopedic neutrality and access" (Phillips, 2013: 227). Platforms are argued to have an empowering potential because they provide data and tools to third parties, which can use these services on top of the platform for research, leisure, or the creation of new products. In Europeana's 2015-2020 strategy the commercial potential of platforms is clearly articulated. The strategy draws analogies to Airbnb, and portrays Europeana as:

"[...] a cultural innovator that brings together people and businesses who want to view, use and re-use heritage, and people and organisations who have heritage to share" (Europeana, 2015a: 11).

While in its most recent strategy paper Europeana seems to have retreated from this business oriented language to some extent, the concept of the platform plays still a role as reference is made to the Danish Statens Museum for Kunst, which is well known for its Open Access policy: "Today, SMK is a platform for participation, collaborating with the people who use its digitised assets – from educators and Wikipedians to creatives and start-ups" (Europeana, 2020: 19).

It is indeed the case that platforms have extended the ability of heritage organisations to facilitate novel and interactive ways of audience engagement, or research projects.

Problematic about the concept of platforms, as the example of the open platform Wikipedia suggests, is that platforms are often presented as neutral, or moreover neutralising spaces, whereas instead platform owners determine how, and which interactions take place (Thylstrup, 2018: 130; Wilson-Barnao, 2021: 78). It is in this context crucial to distinguish between publicly funded platforms, like Europeana, and private-commercial initiatives such as Google Arts and Culture, because of the latter's clear disempowering consequences, as the users interactions are steered, captured, and assessed for the sake of advertising campaigns, or other purposes (Wilson-Barnao, 2021: 78–84). But due to the increasingly blurred interfaces between platforms (e.g. visiting the SMK's Open Access collection via Google Arts and Culture) it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between these "assemblatic" relationships (Thylstrup, 2018: 130–31). As Caroline Wilson-Barnao argues; a public platform like Europeana presents to some extent an alternative to commercial platforms, and for "[...] decoupling of these [heritage] institutions from commercial interests [...]" (2021: 87). But by adopting the immanent commercial logic of the open movement and the extractivist logics of platforms it becomes increasingly difficult to imagine how an initiative like Europeana differs from commercial ones.

### **3.4 Summary**

In this chapter I asked: How has the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage developed, and which assumptions are embedded within the concept? I examined some of the roots and the trajectory of the OpenGLAM initiative. I do not claim to cover the complete picture of how the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage has developed, because its history is intertwined with a mesh of interrelated developments, such as web technology, Open Education, or Freedom of Information legislation (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 12–21). My focus is also on a European perspective, whereas Open Access to cultural heritage may have developed differently elsewhere. But by bringing together how the OpenGLAM initiative has developed as a component of the European Commission's PSI directives, the initiative's close connection to Europeana, and the influences of the computer culture on the notion of openness, I'm presenting a critical assessment of the main ideas embedded within Open GLAM.

The notion of 'openness' that the OpenGLAM initiative inherited from the computer culture is an understanding of access that centres around an individual's right for access and use.

To enhance the potentiality of this access, reusing material should not be bound to conditions that could limit the economic gain made. This is an understanding of access that is perfectly compatible with the economic emphasis of the PSI directive. The PSI directives fostered a development that framed information created, or housed, by heritage organisations as a raw resource that could potentially fuel the information market. An important driver for the PSI directive was the vision to increase the return of investment in the heritage sector, by enabling access to collections data for commercial enterprises. Examining the principles published by the OpenGLAM initiative makes clear that Open Access to cultural heritage is primarily treated as an infrastructural question, concerned with ensuring technical and legal interoperability. The fusion of free market politics and the commercial friendly rhetoric of openness crystallise in the imagery of the platform.

The call for ‘openness’ comes in most cases as a reaction or critique to perceived instances of closure (Tkacz, 2012: 403). So is Open GLAM a response to the practise of some heritage organisations to impose new copyright on digital images of public domain objects, which impedes their reuse (Roued-Cunliffe, 2018: 290–91). But the rhetoric of openness makes it challenging to account for where nuanced understandings of openness are necessary. For instance, because within an organisation compromises regarding Open Access are required, as some staff members may fear the loss of revenue (Ross et al., 2018). As pointed out in section 1.2 another reason may be that restrictive licenses, or indeed decisions for non-access to collections, are necessary due to cultural sensitivities (Pavis and Wallace, 2019).<sup>48</sup> It is also worth pointing out that organisations contributing to Europeana do not always comply with these open principles outside of Europeana. This leads to the paradoxical situation where the same digitised objects are openly available through Europeana, but for instance not through the online catalogue of the content provider (McCarthy, 2019).<sup>49</sup> In summary we may follow Tim Sherrat who observes:

“By focusing on the technological drivers [such as interoperability or the possibilities of platforms], we obscure the resourcing decisions, ethical judgements, political controls and

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<sup>48</sup> The Auckland Museum restricts for instance the open reuse of images which are considered as Taonga Māori (cultural treasures) See.: <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/legal/rights-and-permissions> (accessed 8 May 2022). See also (Schmidt, 2018: 38).

<sup>49</sup> See for instance an image of a walking cane, held by the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) on Europeana [https://www.europeana.eu/de/item/2048213/europeana\\_fashion\\_http\\_collections\\_vam\\_ac\\_uk\\_item\\_O99679](https://www.europeana.eu/de/item/2048213/europeana_fashion_http_collections_vam_ac_uk_item_O99679) and the V&A online catalogue <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O99679/cane-saint-cloud-porcelain/> (accessed 8 May 2022). On Europeana the image is licensed as ‘Creative Commons Attribution’ and on the V&A for non-commercial use only.

historical processes that define the boundary between open and closed and construct our experience of access” (2019: 118).

I suggest for this reason that the rhetoric on openness is not well suited to account for the assemblages of heritage digitisation projects. As Tkacz points out, because open is first and foremost articulated to be an undisputable ‘good thing’, that makes a binary distinction to what it is not, it becomes almost impossible for criticism and developing a nuanced understanding of the concept (2012: 402–03). The idea that Open Access is an undisputable goal for heritage organisations to achieve is often picked up in their justifications, and strategies for digitisation. In the next chapter I examine how Open Access to cultural heritage fits within the goals Social Movement Archives seek to achieve through digitisation.

## 4. Open GLAM and the missions of Social Movement Archives

Chapter three ‘open politics in the heritage sector’ discussed the main concepts of the OpenGLAM initiative. Heritage organisations are asked to maintain and expand the public domain, and to comply with open and interoperable technical standards. I have also outlined the implications the discourse has for heritage organisations. ‘Openness’ frames access to collections as an economic right for reuse. The framing of openness as the superior of a binary between ‘open’ and ‘closed’ makes it also challenging to account for the assemblages created by heritage digitisation projects. In this chapter I investigate how the missions of Social Movement Archives corresponds with the demands of the OpenGLAM initiative. I explore the implications of Open Access to cultural heritage on Social Movement Archives further through the following question: What are the digitisation objectives of Social Movement Archives, and where do the demands of the OpenGLAM initiative correspond or conflict with the missions of Social Movement Archives?

Open GLAM is often framed as the most recent step for heritage organisations to fulfil their role to preserve heritage, facilitate research, reach public audiences and most importantly to provide ‘access’ (Roued-Cunliffe, 2020: 1–14). Moreover, to fulfil their public mission. Open Access to cultural heritage is hence arguably a self-evident objective for all libraries, archives and museums (Baltussen et al., 2013; Verwayen et al., 2011: 14; McCarthy and Wallace, 2020). Because Open GLAM is primarily pursued by major institutions I also review in this chapter the digitisation strategies of the National Library of Scotland, the Wellcome Collection and the collections of the University of Oxford. These three institutions are major players in the UK heritage sector, they have clearly articulated dedications to Open Access, and their strategies are available online. In this chapter I argue that Open GLAM is not completely at odds with the missions of Social Movement Archives. Yet, the interviewed Social Movement Archives have identified other means to fulfil their mission through digitisation. The review of the digitisation strategies of mainstream institutions allows to highlight why Open Access to cultural heritage is attractive, but also imperative, for large libraries, archives and museums. Bringing major institutions into the discussion also gives the opportunity to situate my research into the wider critical discourse on heritage digitisation that takes place within the sector (see section 1.2). This chapter contributes to this debate by exploring how the (political)



missions of heritage organisations manifest in their objectives for digitisation. I propose that the self-understanding of an organisation plays a significant role if and how Open Access to cultural heritage is considered to be an appropriate means to fulfil the institutional mission.

In section 4.1 I examine the rationale and justification for Open GLAM. I discuss how the politics of openness manifest in the digitisation strategies of major institutions which have adopted an Open Access framework. Section 4.2 moves on to the mission of Social Movement Archives, and how they use digitisation to fulfil political goals. How my interview partners perceived the demands of the OpenGLAM initiative, crystallised in the Europeana data exchange agreement, is subject of section 4.3. In section 4.4, I summarise the chapter's findings.

#### **4.1 The rationale for Open Access to cultural heritage**

Open Access to cultural heritage is commonly argued to be supportive for fulfilling the missions of heritage organisations. The basis for this argument is the assumption that digitisation strategies of libraries, archives and museums at their core seek to facilitate access to collections and to foster use of digitised objects (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 68–69). From here the argument goes on to an enlightenment ideal of heritage organisations, which from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards increased access to collections to a wider public to foster learning, research and enjoyment (Sanderhoff, 2017b). This development is divided up into three phases: first by increasing physical access to non-specialist audiences and second by online access to everyone who has connection to the internet. The climax of this development is to provide Open Access to the collections' data, which permits the widest possible reuse (Roued-Cunliffe, 2020: 8–23; Rinehart, 2014: 105–114). In this ethos 'digitisation', 'providing access' and 'facilitating reuse' are rendered to universal goods and ethical imperatives. It is a commonsensical argument that is typical for the open movement and can also be found in the advocacy for similar initiatives like Open Government Data (Kitchin, 2014: 49). Many heritage institutions embrace this narrative. The joint digitisation strategy of Oxford University's Gardens, Libraries, Archives and Museums seeks for instance to "[...] utilise the opportunities offered by digital to democratise access to the collections". Moreover, digitising the collections will "[...] facilitate further research, teaching, lifelong learning and public engagement, and

encourage new collaborations and experimentation, both now and in the future” (University of Oxford, 2016: 5). In a similar vein the Wellcome Collection aims “[...] to sustain our digitisation ambitions to provide ever greater access to the full range of our collections into the future” (Wellcome Collection, 2020: 3). ‘Openness’ and digitisation fuse into complementary means to fulfil the mission of the organisation. As Tom Scott, Head of Digital Engagement at the Wellcome Collection, states in an interview with Douglas McCarthy:

“Being open is in our DNA. Wellcome exists to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. For ideas to thrive, we believe, they need to exist in the open so that others can integrate them, use them, learn from them and improve upon them. We hope that is true for the data, code and content we are publishing as part of our work” (Scott, 2018).

Many major institutions such as the National Library of Scotland also have a statutory function<sup>50</sup> for making collections available to the public. Restrictive access policies to online collections seem from an ethical and legal perspective hardly justifiable for organisations with a juridical public mission (Petri, 2014: 8–9). It is also possible to support the commonsensical argument of Open Access to cultural heritage by considering the history of archives in Western democracies, which have increasingly embraced an ethos of public service since the French Revolution. This conception obscures however the politics that shape the content, composition and access to collections, and their use (Harris, 2010: 103–10).

A close reading of digitisation strategies suggests that Open GLAM is not only a self-evident endeavour, which emerges inherently from the altruistic missions of heritage organisations. First and foremost court decisions have bolstered the notion that faithful reproductions of two-dimensional works in the public domain are not subject of new copyright, because the threshold for originality is not met (Petri, 2014: 2–7). This stance is not only consolidated by Article 14 of the EU DSM directive, and in the UK recommended by the Intellectual Property Office’s 2015 Copyright Notice. But also increasingly supported by private and public funding bodies who make it mandatory to release created data under Open Access frameworks (Kapsalis, 2016: 6–8; Wallace, 2022: 24–25). In September 2020 the Heritage Lottery Fund, a major funding body for digitisation projects in the UK

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<sup>50</sup> See: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/3/contents/enacted> (accessed 29 January 2021).

sector, changed its licensing policy. Funded projects now need to use by default a 'Creative Commons Attribution' license, instead of 'Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial'. Furthermore, digital copies of works in the public domain must by default be labelled as such (The National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2020). This external, political, pressure is also reflected in the digitisation strategies of major institutions, in particular of those organisations which are primarily funded through taxes. The National Library of Scotland for instance is, as a public institution that is mainly funded by the Scottish government (National Library of Scotland, 2020: 4), subject to a number of political frameworks. The frameworks referenced in the library's 'Open Data Publication Plan' include the Scottish Government's Open Data Strategy, the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, the UK's signed G8 charter 'Open Data by Default' and the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) (National Library of Scotland, 2019: 6). But regulatory frameworks do not halt from institutions that are not, or only partly funded, through the government. The Heritage Lottery Fund is an important funder for many community archives projects (Flinn and Stevens, 2009: 18), and financed digitisation projects in various Social Movement Archives (see section 4.3.2 and section 5.1). The change of the Heritage Lottery Fund's licensing policy will thus not only affect major, but also community archives in future.<sup>51</sup> Likewise the digitisation strategy of the University of Oxford's collections acknowledges that Open Access frameworks are more and more required by legislation and funding bodies (University of Oxford, 2016: 11).

Funding bodies need to account for how resources are invested, and likewise are heritage organisations in duty to demonstrate impact for their digitisation projects in terms of social, cultural and economic aspects (Tanner, 2020: 2–4). The rationale for making the outcomes of digitisation projects that were financed through public money again available under Open Access frameworks is thus also closely related to the increasing need to justify the expenses for mass digitisation programmes (Lutz, 2018: 19). The Europeana Impact Playbook, a resource for heritage institutions to evaluate digital projects, argues for example that cultivating Open GLAM leads to increased reuse of collections and thus more impact (Verwayen et al., 2017: 5). However, the sole assessment of performance indicators such as 'page views' is not enough anymore. Rather the impact of heritage organisations is now additionally assessed through the number of applications built up on

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<sup>51</sup> The Heritage Lottery Fund's policy allows however for some flexibility, and recognises potential exemptions in the context of colonial collections and/or where other sensitivities need to be considered (The National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2020).

collections data, and the number of partnerships between archives and the tourism- or creative sector. Digitisation thus takes a central place in the business plans of heritage organisations (Ping-Huang, 2016: 56).

This development is not entirely new. Through image licensing digitised heritage has been a commercial asset before Open GLAM. But the discourse on Open Access amplifies the perception of collections data as an economic resource, for third parties and heritage organisations themselves. Due to the loss of income through image licensing fees, Open GLAM comes with the urge for heritage organisations to create new business models around their collections, such as donation systems (Wallace, 2020b: 10), print on demand services (Valeonti et al., 2018), or even brand licensing (Kapsalis, 2016: 29–30). Case studies also demonstrate how economic value could be created through data-driven use of heritage collections by third parties (Terras et al., 2021: 5–6). However, the authors of these studies also admit that the economic expectations raised through mass digitisation are not only in opposition to restrictive licenses, but also to the financial and personnel resources heritage organisations need for creating sustainable business models (Terras et al., 2021: 10). Samantha Lutz observes a gap between the rhetoric on what could be achieved through Open Access programmes and the actual practices of heritage institutions, but also the general public for whom Open GLAM plays a marginal role in their day-to-day lives (2018: 18–19). Rather than a conclusion on the actual impact of Open GLAM, the described expectations highlight how digitisation and Open Access to cultural heritage become rhetorical means for heritage organisations to hold their ground in a competitive environment. The National Library of Scotland provides in this regard again an illustrating example. The organisation identifies digitisation as a “strategic priority” (2018: 5). According to Ames and Lewis (2020: 2) a mass digitisation programme takes place at the library to achieve the library’s goal of having digitised one third of the collection by 2025 (National Library of Scotland, 2020: 13). In parallel the National Library of Scotland embeds Open GLAM into its institutional strategy, which should ensure the library’s pioneering position: “We believe that opening our public data will further our strategic vision to be the leading national libraries in Europe” (National Library of Scotland, 2019: 2).

The flagship of the National Library of Scotland’s digitisation efforts is the Open Data service platform ‘Data Foundry’. Selected collections that range from newspaper runs, the Encyclopaedia Britannica 1768-1860, the National Bibliography of Scotland, maps and

organisational information from the library are made available as Open Data sets.<sup>52</sup> An annual fellowship supports three-months research projects with the data (National Library of Scotland, 2021). Similar initiatives were launched by other major research libraries under the buzzword 'GLAM Lab'.<sup>53</sup> While general reuse of the collection is encouraged, the focus of the National Library of Scotland's Data Foundry is clearly on fostering digital scholarship. Which has implications on how the data must be presented in order to satisfy the needs and expectations of DH researchers (Ames, 2021: 2–4). In order to respond to the requirements for digital scholarship the National Library of Scotland provides via the Data Foundry: specialised open file-formats, cloud storage solutions for hosting files with up to 40 GB size, Digital Object Identifiers and a documentation of the selection and creation process of the data sets (Ames, 2021: 5; 7–11). These needs correspond well with the OpenGLAM principles<sup>54</sup>, but also go clearly beyond the sole publication of images through open licenses.

Providing 'access' and facilitating 'reuse' have obvious roots within the missions of heritage organisations. But equally the rationale for Open Access to cultural heritage is shaped by legislative frameworks, expectations of funding bodies, growing pressure to demonstrate impact, the expectation to exploit collections in business models, and to cater for the needs of digital scholarship. Thinking of Open GLAM as a salutary goal for fulfilling an organisation's mission has thus the potential to obscure the multiple and competing goals memory institutions have. As the next section suggests, for Social Movement Archives digitisation is explicitly connected to fulfil a political mission. Understanding digitisation as part of a political agency provides the foundation to understand if Open GLAM is conceived to be relevant for Social Movement Archives.

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<sup>52</sup> See: <https://data.nls.uk/data/> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>53</sup> See: <https://glamlabs.io/> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>54</sup> In particular principle one and three: publishing metadata into the public domain in machine-readable file-formats (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022c)

## 4.2 Digitisation as a means to fulfil the missions of Social Movement Archives

The main political characteristics of Social Movement Archives are that they represent the histories of movements and people who are either absent, or only marginally represented in mainstream heritage organisations, and that the archiving of social movement collections needs to be understood as a form of activism itself (see section 1.1). Indeed, many practitioners in Social Movement Archives are commonly “[...] conceptualizing themselves as active agents [...]” and their organisations serve “[...] as means of, promoting social change and justice to benefit their communities and wider society through history-making activities” (Cifor et al., 2018: 84). As a result, the collections in Social Movement Archives are by their communities not perceived as static representations of the past. Social Movement Archives are rather to be understood as activists’ bodies, located within broader political movements, and with the aim to provide a space and resource from which action, or even resistance can be organised (Flinn, 2017: 6–7; Flinn, 2011: 13). The archive is not simply a preserving body, but instead has the aim “to sort of put into use these documents of the past in relation to previous struggles [...]” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). The ethos of archiving resources for political action corresponds with the common strong tradition of Social Movement Archives to also have an educational arm, and a mission to facilitate learning (Flinn, 2017: 9–11). Interview partner 7 (2020) elegantly described their organisation’s aim as: “[...] to give people a better understanding about how to fight the struggles of today through an understanding of the struggles past”. The archive’s collection as a means for political action is a theme that also occurs in the missions of the organisations which share in terms of size or institutional affiliation much more the characteristics of mainstream libraries, archives, or museums. The case of the TUC library, based at the London Metropolitan University, illustrates how the strategic goals of a Social Movement Archive and the affiliated organisation are sometimes closely aligned. The TUC’s academic liaison librarian sees for instance part of his organisation’s purpose in “[...] supporting the role [of] the TUC and all their campaigns and all their policy work, provide historical support and context for the work they do” (2020). He facilitates this objective by assisting the TUC and the London Metropolitan University in educating about trade unions, by supporting TUC campaigns on social media, and through giving inductions that raise the awareness of the university’s own history of activism (Librarian TUC Library, 2020).

It is in light of the self-empowering remit of Social Movement Archives that the otherwise ambiguous terms ‘access and use’ need to be understood. This is not to say that the commonly articulated benefits of digitisation such as the provision of remote and free access, the support of research, promoting the own institution, or minimising the handling of fragile items are not considered (Hughes, 2004: 8–17). Each of the interviewed Social Movement Archives mentioned these points. But as discussed in section 4.1, the rationale for digitisation (or subsequent Open Access programmes) is rarely one dimensional. In the case of Social Movement Archives, it is their political goals that translate into their digitisation aims and practices. Digitisation is one means to fulfil a Social Movement Archive’s political objective. The managing director of the BCA, Arike Oke, stated for instance when the archive completed its digitisation project with Google Arts & Culture: Online access “[...] is a perfect compliment [sic] to our mission to put our history on the map” (Black Cultural Archives, 2019).

An illustrating example in this regard is the MML’s digitisation policy. Indeed, it is the organisation’s mission, which combines political with educational goals, which frames the digitisation policy:

“The Marx Memorial Library aims to spread knowledge and understanding in the science of Marxism, the history of socialism and the working-class movement through the provision of a library and archive” (Marx Memorial Library, 2020d: 1).

The rationale for online access, facilitating digital preservation and the selection criteria derive explicitly from this mission statement (Marx Memorial Library, 2020d: 1–2). The participants’ responses of the MML PAR evaluation workshops illustrate that this mission is not only carried out on a management level, but also from the people who volunteer at the library. Indeed, research in Southern California suggests that it is not uncommon that activists feel appealed to work for Social Movement Archives, because the archives have an explicit political mission (Cifor et al., 2018: 85–86). The participants of MML workshop 1 were asked to prioritise common reasons to digitise heritage collections.<sup>55</sup> Preservation, research and education are for the MML the most important reasons, which corresponds to the outcomes of the Enumerate survey on reasons for digitisation in the heritage sector in general (Nauta et al., 2017: 33). Digitisation is a way to raise the awareness about the MML and reaching potential supporters for the organisation. As the MML trustee Ann

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<sup>55</sup> The list used (appendix D1) was taken from the Enumerate survey. See: (Nauta et al., 2017: 57).

described: “[digitisation] is a powerful way of extending accessibility of the collections and inspiring enthusiasm” (2020b). However, from the perspective of the workshop participants a significant aspect also has the political and commemorative use. An MML volunteer noted in the focus group discussion of the PAR project’s diagnosing phase also the potential “functional use” of the digital collection “for people who are campaigning” (Claire - Volunteer MML, 2019). Likewise, the participants of workshop 1 reported how the digital collection has a function to spark an interest in the audience to get active in politics. In May 2020 the MML has just began with the evaluation of usage analytics of its digital collection (Marx Memorial Library, 2020d: 2), and user research is outside the scope of this study. The extent of actual use of the MML’s collection in a campaigning setting thus remains to be investigated.

An area where the political use of digital content is evident, is in the MML’s educational activities. But the MML’s educational programme aims not so much at activists, but more at a general audience which is hoped to be made aware of causes for social justice: “The educational thing I think is very important, that young people know that they are actually part of a larger tradition, which actually stretches back to [the last] 150 years” (Will - Volunteer MML, 2020a). The MML’s educational arm played a central role in most part of the archive’s history. Recently, efforts are being made to make more use of the archival collection within the educational programme, because records are seen as primary source material that account for the absent voices in major heritage institutions (Jump, 2018: 129–30). As an educational charity the MML curates an extensive programme of courses which cover topics like: ‘Making our own history: Marx’s Historical Materialism’, or ‘Women, Work & Trade Unions’ (Marx Memorial Library, 2021a). The MML’s educational arm is situated in the working class movement’s tradition of establishing complementary, self-empowering facilities. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century workers’ choirs, sport-clubs as well as schools and libraries gained huge popularity within working-class communities. Often linked to parties and trade unions, these facilities had in common that they were established with the explicit purpose to support the cause for social justice, or even to foster the development of an alternative form of society. Working class organisations were thus always also as a critique on structures that support the status-quo (Schuldt, 2019: 3–5). The educational missions of the MML and the TUC are clearly rooted in the self-organisation of the working class. But also the emphasis on education at the BCA (Black Cultural Archives, 2020a: 8; Black Cultural Archives, 2020b: 1–2) and the Feminist Library



emerge from a similar vision of self-empowerment through learning (2020).<sup>56</sup> Classes, workshops and seminars are still common means to pursue educational goals. But also digitised objects and records from the collection play an increasing role (Jump, 2018; Jump, 2020). For this purpose the MML creates online exhibitions, collaborates with other institutions where digital surrogates are used as learning material, or in an ideal scenario the MML combines both approaches, as focus group participants highlighted at the discussion on the MML's digitisation strategy (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019; Joseph - Volunteer MML, 2019).

Examples of outreach activities with other institutions include a collaboration with the World Transformed Festival and the Science Museum London. On both occasions, visitors were invited to create their own poster collages from the MML's digitised collection. Another example mentioned by the MML's library manager (2019) was the digitisation of a scrapbook that contains photographs, newspaper clippings, notes and ephemera of Basque refugee children, who fled from the Spanish Civil War in 1937. The digitised scrapbook forms the basis of an online resource, enriched with contextual essays.<sup>57</sup> The publication of the resource was accompanied with an exhibition hosted by Islington Museums, a workshop series aimed at families and children, and a collaboration with a local school class (Jump, 2020: 129–30).

The example of the scrapbook illustrates how the educational goals are not only pursued through the provision of classes and workshops on-site. A common approach of Social Movement Archives is to use the output of digitisation projects to create curated online exhibitions. The MayDay Rooms offer for instance an extensive online exhibition on the Wapping Dispute, featuring short essays and corresponding digitised documents from the archive.<sup>58</sup> Some of the most extensive online exhibitions are hosted by the TUC library. The flagship 'The Union Makes Us Strong: TUC History Online' and its complementary resources 'The Worker's War: The Home Front Recalled' and 'Winning Equal Pay: The Value of Women's Work', were developed between 2001 and 2007. Funding for these sites was provided by the lottery fund and the European Social Fund (Coates, 2009: 55–57).

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<sup>56</sup> I unpack the educational roots of the interviewed Social Movement Archives, and the affective relationship between self-help through learning and perceptions of ownership in more detail in section 6.2.

<sup>57</sup> See: <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/project/basque-children-refugee-album/scrapbook#overlay-context=project/basque-children-refugee-album/child-refugees-spanish-civil-war-scrapbook-tells-story> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>58</sup> See: <https://exhibitions.maydayrooms.org/wapping/intro/> (accessed 26 March 2022).

The most recent online exhibition, which is also still in development, is 'Britain at Work: Voices from the Workplace 1945-1995' (Librarian TUC Library, 2020). These resources do not only hold digitised records, manuscripts, photographs, and ephemera, but in case of the three latter exhibitions they also contain oral history interviews. Various historians and experts have contributed contextual essays to the exhibitions (Coates, 2009: 57–58).<sup>59</sup> The creation of online exhibitions were also focal point of the digitisation activities at the BCA and the Feminist Library London. Both organisations collaborated with Google Arts & Culture to create 'online stories' that focus on topics like 'The Brixton Uprising 1981'<sup>60</sup>, or the 'Second Wave Sisterhood'.<sup>61</sup>

For Social Movement Archives online exhibitions are attractive because they allow to respond to smaller funding grants that come up as part of contemporary debates and anniversaries (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019; Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020a). The MML's online exhibition on the 'Socialist Opposition to WW1'<sup>62</sup> is the result of such a centenary. Also the scrapbook and its accompanied exhibitions formed part of refugee week and were funded through grants by Islington Council (Jump, 2020: 128–30). The provision of online exhibitions for anniversaries or current affairs is not necessarily unique to Social Movement Archives. Online exhibitions were for instance subject of the 2009 Europeana content strategy (Heijink, 2009: 19–20). But for major institutions, or large digital heritage aggregators, the production of exhibitions is not the dominant way of presenting collections online, and the creation of digital exhibitions are in most cases not driven by "[...] the themes leading the content digitisation and ingestion [...]" (Heijink, 2009: 5). Online exhibitions provide for Social Movement Archives in contrast the opportunity to digitise and present unique resources in their area of expertise with a manageable budget. The controlled but limited scope of a physical exhibition is extended through the internet, with the potential to reach out to a global audience. Another reason why online exhibitions are attractive for Social Movement Archives is because they allow to present collections in context (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020a). Moreover, in online exhibitions Social Movement Archives have the opportunity to present history in own narratives that support the organisations'

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<sup>59</sup> All TUC library exhibitions can be accessed via: <http://www.unionhistory.info> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>60</sup> See: <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/brixton-uprising-1981/tALCwW9BGSVDJQ> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>61</sup> See: <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/second-wave-sisterhood/AJiUCGMLJ8FIQ> (accessed 26 March 2022).

<sup>62</sup> See: <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/project/socialist-opposition-ww1/socialist-opposition-ww1> (accessed 26 March 2022).

political remit. The consequences of digitisation that dissolves “[...] boundary objects to open sets of data [...]” (Thylstrup, 2018: 3) is sought to be mitigated:

“[...] the things we are really, really careful about, or what we are trying to do, is to make really sure that history is told properly and in a much better contextualised way and to have images floating around in the internet that are decontextualised could be more damaging, or more harmful than it not being [con]textualised [...]” (Archivist BCA, 2020).

The quote illustrates how the experienced marginalisation of some Social Movement Archives’ activist groups results in a strong desire of controlling their collection’s legacy. However, it is important to point out that not all collections fall under the same level of scrutiny. The facets that lead to a sense of “control and ownership” (Flinn, 2007: 153) over a collection in Social Movement Archives will be discussed in chapter six. For here it is relevant that ‘control’ is part of Social Movement Archives’ political mandate that is carried out in conversation with collections owners and donors. The BCA’s exhibition on Google Arts & Culture was not created by members of staff alone, but whenever possible in collaboration with the donors of the material. The donors provided additional information or made adjustments to the exhibition texts where necessary (Archivist BCA, 2020). Online exhibitions provide for Social Movement Archives, and their communities, a framework to respond with an own narrative to experienced absences, marginalisation, or even violence. The online collections of Social Movement Archives are not neutral, they present rather what Abigail De Kosnik calls in reference to Feminist, Queer and Postcolonial theory “counterinstitutions”. It is their archival political mandate to make and keep marginalised voices visible, also in online spaces (2016: 135). The online collections of organisations like the MML or BCA have thus the potential to diversify the digital canon. But equally it is necessary to also challenge and to engage critically with the narratives that are told by Social Movement Archives, because they themselves are not necessarily free from marginalisation and silences (Flinn, 2007: 165). It is no coincidence that the teacher’s guide for ‘The Union Makes Us Strong’ points out how the resource depicts primarily the viewpoint from the political left. For this reason the guide encourages a critical assessment of the source, to question how the material in the collection was used to shape opinions, or to compare it with other source material that hold a different viewpoint (Walsh, 2004: 25;28). The emphasis on source criticism is here likely to be informed by the project’s funding body’s aim to enhance information literacy skills (New Opportunities Fund, 2002). Source criticism plays in contrast to the emphasis of the teacher’s guide a rather minor

role in the TUC course curriculum for which 'The Union Makes Us Strong' was designed (Walsh, 2004: 20–22). Social Movement Archives have always needed to gauge between their own political interests and criteria set by financing bodies. It is likely that some flexibility in future funding for digitisation projects in Social Movement Archives will be required to accommodate their needs.

The political agency of Social Movement manifests in their digitisation practices. Digitisation is seen as a means to educate about past struggles, and to inspire new generations of activists. Online exhibitions are for many Social Movement Archives a feasible approach to transfer their educational provision into the digital domain. Online exhibitions have also the advantage that digitised objects can be embedded into own narratives. The collections are not perceived as 'open sets of data', but rather histories in context. The emphasis of Social Movement Archives for providing context about their digital collections poses a challenge to the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage, because contextualised collections are a counter to the idea of repurposing collections for any kind of possible use. Is Open GLAM then incompatible with the mission of Social Movement Archives? The next section suggests that the opinion of Social Movement Archives' practitioners on the main principles of the OpenGLAM initiative is more ambivalent than the strong sense of ownership might suggest.

### **4.3 Social Movement Archives' view on Open GLAM**

Section 3.2 discussed the OpenGLAM principles and how they are represented in the Europeana data exchange agreement. The data exchange agreement consists of two points:

- “1. All metadata submitted to Europeana will be published as open data under the terms of the Creative Commons Zero Public Domain Dedication (CC0).
2. Each digital object (which includes the associated preview) that is available via Europeana needs to carry a rights statement that describes its copyright status and informs the users what they can or cannot do with the digital object. If an underlying material object is in the public domain, its digital surrogate should remain in the public domain” (Europeana Pro, 2015).

The interviewed experts as well as MML team members (at the PAR workshop 5: The Social History Portal and Europeana) were asked how these two points align or contradict with their Social Movement Archives' objectives for making collections available online. All interview partners were furthermore asked to reflect on the digitised public domain postcard that commemorates the 1908 disaster in the Hamstead Colliery (see section 2.1.6). Section 4.3.1 explores the responses on the first requirement of the data exchange agreement. The responses to the photograph and the second requirement of the agreement are discussed in section 4.3.2. In 2020, from the interviewed organisations only the TUC library and the Amsab ISH contributed to Europeana. The discussion with my interview partner from the Amsab-ISH on licensing focussed on the SHP's policy, which I review in chapter seven.

### **4.3.1 Open licensing of metadata**

Present-day advocacy for Open GLAM demands from heritage organisations to not claim new copyright on digital surrogates of public domain works (Wallace, 2020e: 2–3). However, between 2009 to 2010 it was the open licensing of metadata that was most actively promoted. At that time Europeana worked towards a new data provider agreement, one that would remove the non-commercial clause for metadata through a Creative Commons Zero license (Europeana Foundation, 2011: 1). The non-commercial clause was ultimately removed from the agreement in 2011 (Europeana, 2012). But the question whether the non-commercial clause should be kept or not was prior to the amendment not uncontested in the Europeana network (Europeana Foundation, 2011: 2). Verwayen et al. (2011) report in a Europeana white paper on the potential risks and opportunities national archives, libraries and museums perceive when making metadata openly available. The main benefits for open metadata were identified as bolstering the relevance of heritage organisations in the digital era (e.g. the use of open metadata in social media, or as Linked Open Data), to support the public mission, and to attract new user groups (Verwayen et al., 2011: 14–15). The primary risks identified were “[...] loss of attribution, loss of potential income and unwanted spill-over effects [...]”. The latter refers to the possibility that third parties might create revenue out of the provided data (Verwayen et al., 2011: 15–16). Which are the opportunities and risks Social Movement Archives perceive regarding open metadata?

For the librarian of the TUC library the case is clear: “I don’t have any strong feelings about making the metadata we are talking about available [as Open Data]” (2020). The same applies for the digital archivist at the MayDay Rooms (2020) and interview partner 7 (2020). The other interview partners were in favour for open metadata, but also had a more nuanced view on the matter. The Feminist Library makes for instance use of the catalogue data that is provided by the British Library. Although the Feminist Library has implemented a Feminist classification system to organise and describe the collection, the data itself is not perceived as something unique (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020).<sup>63</sup> The exchange of bibliographic data between institutions has particularly in the library sector a long tradition. For the MML library manager sharing metadata with other institutions is an important aspect to “[...] contributing to kind of an international effort [...]”. Indeed the MML appreciates the possibility to adopt the catalogue records from other libraries through COPAC.<sup>64</sup> Likewise the MML is “pleased about” when its metadata is used by other organisations because it potentially brings attention to the MML (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d).

My interview partner from the WCML saw a similar advantage in open metadata “[...] because it’s pointing people to us again [...]”. But a vital point in this reasoning was the assumption that someone reusing the metadata would need to attribute the providing institution in some way (2020). Also interview partner 7 who is in favour for people reusing metadata for any-kind of purpose stated that attribution would make nevertheless sense in terms of scientific rigour (2020). At PAR workshop 5 one concern expressed by the MML library manager in terms of unattributed use was due to the amount of labour that goes into “[...] original research [...]” when cataloguing archival documents (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d). The fundraising coordinator at the Feminist Library (2020) also considered that the reuse of metadata by third parties could be an issue if the data would be more than bibliographic information. There is a general legal stance that bibliographic records do not meet the threshold of originality (Cornish, 2015; Deazley, 2017a: 21–25). Attributing the creator of metadata is furthermore argued to be impractical when datasets are combined. However, the question if metadata is subject of attribution is

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<sup>63</sup> The classification system was developed by the library’s co-founder Wendy Davis in 1978 (McKibben, 1991: 4; The Feminist Library, 2022). Unlike common classifications systems like the Dewey Decimal Classification, it “[...] take[s] issues of concern to women as its central organising principle”. According to the Feminist Library, Davis’ system was the first of its kind and is used in other Feminist Libraries around the globe too (2022).

<sup>64</sup> Succeeded by Library Hub Discover: <https://discover.libraryhub.jisc.ac.uk/> (accessed 28 March 2022).

not entirely uncontested (Wallace, 2020g: 11), and may also be an important factor for heritage organisations for demonstrating impact (Tanner, 2016: 245). Scholars have also pointed out how the labour of heritage professionals (if acknowledge at all) is traditionally feminised and devalued to a mere service function for the provision of access to collections (Cook, 2006: 169–70; Caswell, 2016: 10–13; Shirazi, 2018). Indeed, copyright experts and stakeholders of the PHAROS consortium of photo archive repositories identified that extensive curatorial descriptions of images might need to be attributed, and suggest to investigate how this could be accomplished in future data models (PHAROS Intellectual Property Working Group, 2020: 13). A further point of consideration, and common argument of Open GLAM, is that the creation of metadata is considered to be part of the public task. Thus, if an organisation is funded by taxes the metadata should be made available again for unrestricted public reuse (Hamilton and Saunderson, 2017: 70; Guibault and Salamanca, 2017: 215). Apart from Amsab-ISH and the TUC library all interviewed Social Movement Archives are independent organisations, often charity bodies. The experience of having none or only little recurrent financial support make organisations like the MML, the BCA and the WCML wary towards spill-over effects. Not because these Social Movement Archives generate themselves income through metadata,<sup>65</sup> but because of the potential exploitation of the free labour by volunteers and the scarcity of financial resources (Archivist BCA, 2020).

The responses of my interview partners suggest nevertheless that in general the first point of Europeana's data exchange agreement would not be a criterion of not taking part in Europeana, despite the critical reception of the data exchange agreement's first condition. This tendency is mirrored in the conclusion of the participants of MML workshop 5. Although in workshop 4 of the PAR evaluation stage it was questioned why an organisation whose mission is grounded in educational goals should apply a license that permits commercial use, the participants of workshop 5 found consensus that open metadata might be in alignment with the MML's goal as an educational charity. Will, a volunteer at the MML, concludes the discussion on open reuse of metadata:

“If someone actually wants to use any information [metadata] that we have got, I would be happy, personally, for them to use. I think that's part of our mission. You know, to reach out. So I've got no problem with that” (2020b).

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<sup>65</sup> Some national libraries reported that selling metadata is an important source for generating income (Verwayen et al., 2011: 12–13).

From the perspective of the workshop participants there is little risk of copyright infringement (a concern that was expressed in relation to digital images), and the data is not seen as something third parties could significantly benefit from commercially.<sup>66</sup> In the best case the metadata might bring people to the MML, which has the potential to “[...] increasing the discourse on the subject” (Sarah - Volunteer MML, 2020). Social Movement Archives’ practitioners thus see the benefits of open metadata in terms of reaching out to users. Open metadata could even be aligned with the mission of an organisation like the MML (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d; Will - Volunteer MML, 2020b). Social Movement Archives would nevertheless like to be attributed for the work that is primarily done by volunteers. Because financial and personnel resources are scarce it could be problematic if third parties would make commercial gain out of the data. None of my interview partners raised privacy issues regarding individuals who appear in records. According to Verwayen et al., (2011: 15–16) a central point for some archives. However, privacy is a consideration when deciding what to make available online in a first place (see chapter six).

Does open metadata then fit with the mission of Social Movement Archives? It could, but it is likely that in terms of scarce resources most Social Movement Archives identified the means discussed in section 4.2 as much more appropriate for their purposes. MML volunteer Mick concluded the discussion on open metadata as follows:

“No I think it’s technically a good thing, but I think the amount of work, if we balance [against] the amount of work, what would be the return on that? And also where does it sit in our priorities of the organisation at the moment?” (2020)

Research conducted as part of the UK TaNC programme found similar concerns among smaller heritage organisations. Making collections data available is considered as low priority, because it requires additional resources without a clear gain in sight for doing so (Gosling et al., 2022: 34).

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<sup>66</sup> Especially in the context research services specialised on family history, like FindMyPast, metadata has however gained on commercial value (Wallace, 2022: 28).



### 4.3.2 Open licensing of digital surrogates

Andrea Wallace diagnoses the practice of heritage organisations to claim copyright on digital surrogates of public domain works as the result of legal uncertainty, mitigating risks, a desire to create income through licensing fees, or as a way of protection from potential insensitive use (Wallace, 2020d: 9). Digitising an object that is in the public domain is unlikely to meet the threshold for originality, unless significant efforts into post-processing were taken (Cornish, 2015: 8). Applying licenses to public domain works remains nevertheless a common practice in the UK, even at some major institutions (McCarthy and Wallace, 2020). Likewise with open metadata none of my interview partners would disagree with the principle of Open Access to digital images. However, in practice most interview partners would rather prefer to seek a “compromise” (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020) or a “balance” (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). But if the interviewed practitioners generally see Open GLAM as fitting with their institutional goals, what are then the factors that make Social Movement Archives reluctant to open licenses for digital images?

The second condition of Europeana’s data exchange agreement first requires assigning the correct copyright status for each digital object. For the MML library manager this point would present already a “key barrier” (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d), because for most of the items in the collection the copyright status is unknown. The MML also does not have the capacity and expertise for a comprehensive search to identify potential copyright holders. A similar concern was expressed by interview partner 7 who explained that the effort for complying with the second requirement of the data exchange agreement is not considered to weigh up for the benefits that come with a contribution to Europeana (2020). Within the PAR workshops at the MML the discussion on this part of the data exchange agreement was characterised by anxiety of infringing copyright, applying the wrong license, and concerns about feasibility. One MML volunteer reflected:

“I must say the copyright workshop that we had, what was it two weeks ago, made me think better to have some caution. I mean something that I can guarantee that is not [in] copyright I’ve got no problem with. I would be worried about being sued if, you know, there is a possible author out there [...]. So I think it would be a very long and laborious process to actually decide what’s without copyright and what’s not” (Will - Volunteer MML, 2020b).

If the MML were to contribute to Europeana, it would be likely that the MML would follow a risk-averse practice. So asked the MML library manager regarding Europeana's condition of assigning each digital object with a rights statement: "Could that rights statement be 'we don't know'?" (2020d). Indeed, 'Copyright Not Evaluated' would be a Europeana compliant rights statement (Europeana Foundation, 2015). But from a user perspective the gain of this information is questionable, as the statement does not give audiences the targeted security on how an image can be used. Participants of the MML workshop also expressed a scepticism on how other organisations are able to assign the correct copyright status for each digital object.<sup>67</sup> Guidance for organisations on determining copyright provide for instance the assessment frameworks developed by The National Archives,<sup>68</sup> or the National Library of Scotland and The National Library of Wales.<sup>69</sup> But even with such tools at hand copyright clearance remains a complex area where specialised expertise is required. Reports like the one of the PHAROS working group (2020) indicate how copyright poses legal uncertainty even for major institutions. Chapter five revisits the main challenges copyright poses for Social Movement Archives and how they approach copyright.

The second point of Europeana's data exchange agreement further requires labelling works in the public domain as such. The MML would be committed to comply with this requirement, as the library manager's response suggests: "If something is already in the public domain it's in our interest to make sure that that's clearly stated" (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d). MML team members see the clear benefit of using appropriate rights statements. MML volunteer Sarah notes:

"From the research point of view it slows things down massively when you just don't know what you are dealing with and whether you can use something or not. [...] And so from the MML point of view if everything would be marked as public domain it would be more likely to be picked up and used, just because of the confidence you have in using that material" (2020).

Indeed, various case studies confirm how images labelled with a Public Domain Mark can lead to significant high numbers of downloads, reach international audiences, illustrate

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<sup>67</sup> Research suggests that Social Movement Archives would not be the only ones who have difficulties assigning correct right-statements to digitised heritage (Blijden, 2018: 15–16). See also section 3.2.

<sup>68</sup> <https://cdn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/non-crown-copyright-flowchart.pdf> (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>69</sup> See: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f-89Nuw1uWZxkdNIWXmqZO3YAM2C7HQWmgel\\_oYZPJY/edit#gid=140253477](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f-89Nuw1uWZxkdNIWXmqZO3YAM2C7HQWmgel_oYZPJY/edit#gid=140253477) (accessed 28 March 2022).

Wikipedia articles, are used in teaching, tourism, publications or in public engagement activities (Pekel, 2015: 14–15; Schmidt, 2018: 33–34; Kingston and Edgar, 2015; Ploeger, 2016: 8–9). It is also the case that openly licensed images can be a great relief for the budgets of researchers who otherwise need to pay significant licensing fees (Rudy, 2019). However, the responses on the preferred license for the digitised commemorative postcard indicate that most interviewed Social Movement Archives would prefer to seek a more nuanced approach to image licenses. This would be one or a combination of the following licensing properties: attribution, non-commercial, share alike, and no derivatives. Three out of the seven interviewed experts chose a Public Domain Mark. The ambivalence towards image licensing, despite a general commitment to Open GLAM becomes apparent if we consider why Social Movement Archives seek to exercise some control over their collections.

At the MML in PAR workshop 5 some participants expressed concerns that an image labelled with a Public Domain Mark could be used in contexts the organisation would regard as inappropriate, in particular commercial ones. A contradiction within this reaction is that the MML itself has an interest in creating some revenue through its digitisation activities. The image licensing company ‘Mary Evans Picture Library’ issues licenses for the MML, and the MML itself offers in its online shop image reproductions of 11 postcards and seven posters.<sup>70</sup> Requests for reproductions of collection items are charged too, whereas fees depend on the intended use of the images (for instance £30 for academic or educational publications, whereas for newspapers £60) (Marx Memorial Library, 2018a). Such licensing models are very common in the UK, and have due to funding cuts and the Covid-19 pandemic even received a revival (Wallace, 2022: 81–83). In case of the MML the effective “own commercial gain” of these approaches was however described as being more of a “rare occasion” (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020b). While the MML thus creates some income through digitisation and is perhaps even interested in extending these activities to a certain degree like through a print-on-demand poster service (see section 2.1.3), the commercialisation of digitised collections does not seem to be a focal point of the MML’s digitisation activities. Indeed, the MML’s digitisation policy does not mention the creation of revenue through digitisation at all (Marx Memorial Library, 2020d). The TUC Library, WCML and the Amsab-ISH charge likewise for image reproductions services. But among all Social Movement Archives I have interviewed there

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<sup>70</sup> See: <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/product/cards-spanish-civil-war-solidarity-banners> and <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/category/poster-prints> (accessed 1 April 2022).

was a consensus that they could not imagine that the creation of revenue through digitisation would ever play a role due to the remit of their organisations, and because they would not have the resources to invest into a sustainable image licensing business model anyway. My interview partners were overall more concerned about spill-over effects, because their organisations are in most cases not, or only partially publicly funded (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020; Library Manager WCML, 2020; Archivist BCA, 2020; Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d)

Far more informative for explaining a reluctance towards Open Access than maintaining exclusive rights for commercial purposes seems to be, in the context of Social Movement Archives, a sense of ownership over the collection, or as a volunteer in focus group 1 explained:

“So if it’s an image of people in desperate circumstances, or something. Just to kind of tackily use it as a picture for people to buy birthday cards with, can be insensitive and could also be counterproductive of what we really are here for” (Claire - Volunteer MML, 2019).

Social Movement Archives have a responsibility of custodianship for people in society who are only marginally represented in mainstream archives. It is a political concern if images are used in a context that might be disadvantageous for the people and their histories Social Movement Archives stand for. Similar concerns were thus expressed by the archivist of the BCA, whose rationale for a restrictive license is among others grounded in the nature of the collection that is intended to empower Black people, and not to be used against them (Archivist BCA, 2020). The matter is delicate because what is regarded as appropriate to be shared with open licenses is context specific and can vary from organisation to organisation. The fundraising coordinator of the Feminist Library would choose for instance the Public Domain Mark for the example postcard. But also, for the Feminist Library it is of primary concern what the creator of an object has intended it to be used for. The available online licensing schemes are perceived as insufficient to reflect such considerations: “So yeah very much for Open Access, but how do you ensure the ethical afterlife of the product afterwards?” (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020) The subjectivity of why a digital object is appropriate to be labelled with a Public Domain Mark can further be exemplified through the MML workshops. In case of the postcard of the Hamstead Colliery disaster a Public Domain Mark could according to some of the PAR workshop participants be appropriate, because the image itself provides already a strong

intellectual context. MML volunteer Will argued: “The picture itself is almost an icon isn’t it?”. Because the image can stand for itself “[...] it’s making a statement [...]” (2020b). For Will, sharing this image openly even in a commercial or unfavourable context could align with the MML’s objectives. Another consideration that spoke at the discussion at workshop 5 for a Public Domain Mark was that, although relatives of the miners might still be alive, there is a “[...] distance over time [...]” now (Sarah - Volunteer MML, 2020). Furthermore, the postcard does not compromise anyone’s personal data because the image “[...] doesn’t identify people” (Mick - Volunteer MML, 2020). Why then, was the attribution property still so popular among all my interview partners?

The favour for the attribution property is often grounded in a desire to keep an institutionalised context, even if images are used for different purposes on the web. Attribution matters for most interviewed Social Movement Archives because it signals others where an item came from, and thus is hoped to attract new audiences (Sarah - Volunteer MML, 2020; Library Manager WCML, 2020). Attribution is in view of interview partner 7 also a way to acknowledge someone else’s work and to give another person, as part of scientific practice, the possibility to follow up a source (Interview partner 7, 2020). The MayDay Rooms have a commitment to Open Access in their founding manifesto (GCB et al., 2011), and omit copyright on their own digital archive [leftover.rs](http://leftover.rs).<sup>71</sup> Referencing to the original source is nevertheless a practice done by the MayDay Rooms (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). For the Black Cultural Archive being attributed is also of concern because of the scarce financial resources the organisation has:

“So at the moment, we’re still very much in a position of having to make user cases and use cases for why we kind of need to exist. [...] So at the moment, so in this kind of very current climate, we would be quite, I would be quite cautious about making sure that we are attributed and that we know where things are being used. Not that we would be against people then turning it into artwork, we just like to know” (Archivist BCA, 2020).

A final rationale for choosing restrictive licenses in Social Movement Archives, which is also a factor in larger digitisation projects, are legacy licensing agreements with funders (McNeill, 2022: 12). As described in section 4.1, it is only in 2020 that the Heritage Lottery Fund changed its requirement to label digital surrogates of public domain works as such.

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<sup>71</sup> I argue in chapter seven however that the type of Open Access embraced by the MayDay Rooms is better understood within the context of the so-called Guerrilla Open Access movement, rather than Open GLAM.

For past projects, such as the ones funded at the TUC library, it was the directive to license images with 'Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial' (Librarian TUC Library, 2020). Relabelling images again due to policy changes can require additional time, work efforts and infrastructure investments (McNeill, 2022: 26).

The discussion at the PAR MML workshop 5 concluded with the realisation about the complexity of making licensing decisions, even for just one image. The MML would "[...] need a very clear policy [...]" on this subject (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020d). Like open metadata, Open Access to digital images is not necessarily outside the scope of a Social Movement Archive's mission and is indeed also explicitly taken up in a radical form by the MayDay Rooms (see section 7.2). The WCML' library manager also concluded on the second requirement of the Europeana data exchange agreement, that labelling public domain images as such could resonate with the organisation's mission (2020). But for the participants of the MML workshop 5 it remained questionable if the organisation's purpose could not be better fulfilled through other means.

## **4.4 Summary**

Open Access to heritage collections is often argued to be a self-evident objective for heritage organisations to support their mission. This chapter demonstrates that this is only true to some extent. The rationale for Open GLAM is rather shaped by political factors including: legislation, funding frameworks, the raised expectation to demonstrate impact and to develop sources of income through digitisation activities. Open Access to heritage collections data supports some organisations to also respond to the needs of digital scholarship.

Open GLAM is not completely at odds with the missions of Social Movement Archives, and most of the interviewed organisations see also the benefits of Open Access frameworks. But given the explicit political remit and scarce financial and personnel resources of Social Movement Archives, they have identified other means to fulfil their missions through digitisation, namely online exhibitions. The Heritage Lottery Funds' change of licensing policy and legislative frameworks will also affect future digitisation projects in community archives generally. But the compliance of Open GLAM standards, like the Europeana data exchange agreement, poses multiple challenges for Social Movement Archives.

The example of the Data Foundry demonstrates (Ames, 2021: 5; 7–11), that the sole publication of Open Data sets is not enough. Open GLAM requires a bespoke strategy with significant investments in outreach activities, support and infrastructure. Otherwise there is little gain for the providing institution, nor the targeted audiences (Roued-Cunliffe, 2020: 15–16). From a mission point of view the focus on online exhibitions or similar learning resources seems thus to be much more appropriate for Social Movement Archives. Through online exhibitions a wide audience can be reached, and digitised objects can be situated within contextual narratives. Social Movement Archives have little resources and thus most of the interviewed organisations digitise on a small scale only. Resource issues for digitisation are to some extent overcome by either collaborating with commercial partners, such as Google Arts & Culture, the initiative of individual activists, or the involvement of volunteers. Especially the latter case made some interview partners wary of the consequence of Open GLAM that work of volunteers might be left unattributed. In the following chapter five I discuss the practical challenges Social Movement Archives face when they digitise their collections, how they are overcome, and what the implications for potential Open Access programmes are.

The responses of the interview partners on the preferred license for the postcard commemorating the Hamstead Colliery disaster illustrates that what is perceived to be appropriate to be shared for reuse is context specific and can vary from organisation to organisation. The more recent discourse on Open GLAM acknowledges that not all collections are equally suitable to be published as open collections data. It might be against an organisation's mission to permit reuse of objects in contexts that are identified of being damaging for its reputation (Tanner, 2016: 245). Some heritage institutions also have ethical obligations to protect sensitive collections (in particular for collections with colonial legacies and/or human remains) that need to be excluded from Open Access frameworks, digitisation, or access systems entirely (Wallace, 2020e: 3–4). Social Movement Archives have affective responsibilities of care towards the people their organisations serves (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 33–41). In chapter six I will explore how the provenance of some collections make them unsuitable for the publication online.

## 5. Digitisation practices in Social Movement Archives<sup>72</sup>

This chapter investigates the conditions under which digitisation in Social Movement Archives takes place. Specifically, I ask: What are the infrastructural challenges in terms of resources, space and copyright Social Movement Archives face regarding digitisation and Open Access? How are these challenges mitigated, and how do they shape the collections made available online? By reviewing the conditions under which digitisation in Social Movement Archives takes place, it becomes evident how these practices always require to make compromises and come with contradictions. Chapter four argued that the interviewed Social Movement Archives see digitisation primarily as a means to fulfil their political mission and tend to focus on the creation of online exhibitions. Online exhibitions are attractive because they situate collections in context, reach wide audiences with a political message, and can be setup with relatively small budgets. In section 1.2 I argued that while digitisation in Social Movement Archives is conducted with few resources available and on a relative small-scale, we encounter the same or similar components in form of human actors, corporations, legislation and machines that shape the output produced by mass digitisation projects (Thylstrup, 2018: 23). In this chapter I suggest that considering the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives, and how these practices are shaped by limited resources, offer a particular powerful means to investigate the nature of assemblages of digitised cultural heritage.

Financial and personnel resources are needed to sustain an archive in terms of space (physical and digital), funds, supplies, labour and expertise, no matter if we speak of mainstream-, or small and independent heritage organisations (Sheffield, 2018: 6). All these fundamentals have an impact on an institution's capability to release open collections data. To sustain digitisation, some heritage organisations also see the potential to restrict reuse to issue licensing fees. In other instances contracts may secure exclusive rights for companies that facilitate digitisation in partnerships (Wallace, 2020b: 2). In order to appreciate the sustainability issues of Social Movement Archives, and their impact on digitisation and Open GLAM, it is however crucial to recapitulate some of the specific characteristics of Social Movement Archives. First of all, the operation of Social Movement Archives is in most cases dependent on a few key activists. A small proportion of them

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<sup>72</sup> It is important to note that it was a selection criterion for my interviews that an organisation has an extensive physical collection and engaged in some digitisation activities (see section 2.2.2 and 2.3.1). This chapter should not suggest that digitisation is a standard practice within Social Movement Archives, or community archives more generally.



might be paid, but overall, those few employees need to rely on a support network consisting of volunteers, sympathisers, and other community members. Another crucial aspect is that many Social Movement Archives have a strong desire on remaining independent. Each funding-grant or collaboration with third parties has not only the potential to undermine this autonomy, but also the essential custody over a collection (Flinn et al., 2009: 79–81). It is in context of this chapter also helpful to bear in mind the costs of digitisation. A rough estimate can be made if we consider for instance the costs charged from ordering images by a major organisation, like the British Library. Ordering a scan costs £13.20 for the first image of each item, and then £0.49 for any additional image of the same item. A book with 250 pages would thus cost £135.21. When digitising with photography quality the price raises to £23.62 for the first image, and to £6.26 for any additional image of the same item. For a book with 250 pages this would be then £1,582.36 (British Library, 2022).<sup>73</sup> Clearly, the capacity of Social Movement Archives to facilitate digitisation is hampered by all these conditions (Caswell and Jules, 2017: 7–13). The starting point of this chapter is section 5.1, where I examine the structural challenges Social Movement Archives face, and what significance digitisation has from an operational perspective. In section 5.2 I review the involvement of staff and volunteers in digitisation activities. How my interview partners deal with copyright is discussed in section 5.3. I summarise the chapter's findings in section 5.4.

## 5.1 Structural challenges

Studies from the US show that it is a rare case that community archives have access to long-term funding. The result of this condition is a vicious cycle where practitioners in community archives seldom have the capacity to invest in sustainable strategies, or apply for grants that would go beyond a project-by-project base (Jules, 2019: 8). Low financial resources require thus from community archives to assess carefully where and how capacities are invested. If then an organisation is in a precarious situation due to its

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<sup>73</sup> The numbers for scanning correspond with an earlier study conducted by Poole, where scanning a book in-house with 250 pages was estimated to cost between €124 and €170.50. Determining the costs for digitisation depends however on several factors, such as the capital costs for equipment, or whether digitisation takes place in-house, or is outsourced. All figures do not include the costs for right clearance (see section 5.3 for cost examples). The example of the British library also demonstrates that the costs can raise significantly depending on the quality of mages (or metadata) intended for creation. The costs for digitisation also raise in the context of artworks, sculptures or audio-visual material (Poole, 2010: 30-32;49-72).

premises or workforce, it is not surprising that digitisation has not top-priority. For many community archives with resource issues, the focal point is on the management and preservation of the physical collection (Caswell and Jules, 2017: 11–12). Similar conditions are evident at the interviewed Social Movement Archives of this study. It is not unusual that ongoing projects need to be interrupted, staff and volunteer capacities reallocated, or perhaps even campaigns raised to ensure the survival of the organisation. A dramatic, but illustrating example is the flood at the MML on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Heavy rainfall caused water pouring into the MML through a leak in the roof and water stood in the basement six inches high. A quick intervention by the fire brigades and the Islington Museum saved the collection from severe damage. Islington Museum not only helped MML staff and volunteers to recover documents but also offered space to dry documents (Finch, 2019). In the following days and weeks, MML team members had to dry the archival rooms and needed to check the collection for mildew (Fraser, 2019). While operations slowly normalised by the second week of October,<sup>74</sup> the library had to raise £50,000 to conduct redevelopment work on the building (Fraser, 2019; Social History Portal News Service, 2019).

The MML's flood appeal was successful. Yet, many of the interviewed Social Movement Archives have also faced immediate threats not only to their collections but to their very existence. The Feminist Library had to crowdfund £30,000 in order to facilitate the move to their new space at the Sojourner Truth Community Centre, after redevelopment plans forced the library to leave their old location (Emma, 2019). The BCA faced risk to be closed after a four-year funding grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund ran out (Weale, 2018), and only a £200,000 short-term funding from the government ensured the BCA's immediate survival (Reid, 2018). While the creation of online collections plays a role within the BCA's 2030 strategy, the main concern is to invest into the premises in order to increase income through the café, the bookshop, or exhibitions (Black Cultural Archives, 2020a: 9;13). Fiscal concerns are also present at the WCML, which receives £23,000 annually from the Salford City Council. Nevertheless, the remainder of the £120,000 necessary to run the organisation needs to be raised every year through donations (WCML, 2022).

Closely linked to such immediate fiscal concerns is the lack of technical infrastructure that is necessary to facilitate digitisation and displaying collections online. The BCA's catalogue

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<sup>74</sup> Field notes taken on 9 October 2019.

explicitly addresses in its FAQ section that with a few exceptions no digital images can be viewed online (BCA, 2022). According to the BCA's archivist (2020) the software used for the catalogue was bought in 2010 and has never been upgraded. Although the archive is interested in displaying collections' items through the online catalogue, so far there was not enough financial capacity to invest into the required hard- and software. The BCA is not an exception when it comes to such infrastructural limitations. Copyright concerns are one reason why the MML only publishes thumbnail images online (see section 5.3). But in preparation for the PAR's action, when making an additional set of digitised posters available online through Soutron, it was also necessary to create low-resolution images for keeping the upload to the MML's catalogue feasible.<sup>75</sup> It is then questionable if the MML would be capable to meet the technical expectations raised by Open Access to cultural heritage advocates, or digital scholarship. The 'Declaration on Open Access for Cultural Heritage' asks to release whenever possible the highest quality of images, or even raw data formats (2019: 4). Users with commercial intents require high-resolution images for reproductions too (Valeonti et al., 2019: 16–17). The National Library of Scotland evaluated for its Data Foundry user requirements, which suggest that the needs for digital scholarship go beyond the sole publication of images through open licenses. In order to accommodate the huge file sizes (up to 40GB) the library had to invest in Amazon's cloud storage solutions (Ames, 2021: 5; 8–9).

In terms of digitisation facilities, the MML is otherwise well equipped. A workstation with two flatbed scanners is used for imaging photographs or pamphlets, and a photography copy-stand for fragile and large items (e.g., posters, or newspaper volumes). However, the room where the digitisation of large items takes place is shared with the office of the International Brigades Memorial Trust and is thus not always ideal in terms of light conditions and space for handling items. The MML is able to mobilise its support base when extra resources are needed. A crowdfunding campaign enabled the library to invest the £1,000 necessary for the photography copy-stand (Marx Memorial Library, 2018b). Other Social Movement Archives do not have the facilities to digitise large objects. The WCML reports of having one scanner only, with A3 the largest format that can be imaged. If the organisation wants to digitise large, or fragile items, it is dependent on extra funding like the Salford University's Advantage Fund that facilitated the digitisation of parts of the collection on the Spanish Civil War (Library Manager WCML, 2020).

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<sup>75</sup> Field notes taken on 5 December 2019.

The MML was able to secure funding for a number of digitisation projects from public as well as charitable trusts. A grant from the People's Support Foundation enabled the MML for instance to employ two digitisation assistants to catalogue and digitise parts of the poster collection from April to August 2018,<sup>76</sup> which was released online in February 2019 (Waqif, 2019: 150). The digitisation of the Basque refugee scrapbook by a professional company was sponsored by Islington's Local Initiative Fund (Jump, 2020: 129; Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019), and the Heritage Lottery Fund supported the MML to create the online exhibition 'Socialist Opposition to WW1' (Marx Memorial Library, 2022g). These examples demonstrate how digitisation has to some extent a relative prominent role at the MML, but they also illustrate that funded digitisation is conducted primarily on a project-by-project base and does not belong to the MML's core operations. The same applies to the WCML, the Feminist Library, the BCA, and the TUC library. Indeed, the TUC with its four online exhibitions funded between 2004 and 2012 (see section 4.2), illustrates how fragmented and irregular digitisation efforts can be. The extent of digitisation in Social Movement Archives stands in contrast to the expectations some interview partners report on from the public in making large proportions of the collection available online (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019; Joseph - Volunteer MML, 2019; Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). Similarly expressed the BCA's archivist a sense of frustration on what possibilities digitisation seems to hold ready for the sector on the one hand, and on the other hand the fundamental precarious conditions Social Movement Archives need to cope with:

"Because I keep saying, I've said it many times, we don't really have that much money. So I've been looking in quite a lot digitisation projects, and they seem to be very much around these kind of big interventions and doing really cutting edge research. And for the BCA, we're not at cutting edge. We're just at making things work" (2020).

The BCA and the Feminist Library both accepted partnerships with Google Arts & Culture for facilitating digitisation. The offer from a company like Google to provide equipment, staff and a popular platform without financial costs (Google Arts & Culture, 2021) is in the context of scarce financial and personnel resources not only for organisations like the BCA or the Feminist Library an attractive opportunity. Indeed, collaborations with private digitisation enterprises are in the heritage sector not uncommon (often referred to as public-private partnerships). The nature and reception of such partnerships is however

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<sup>76</sup> Job advertisement received as a personal email on 22 March 2018.

ambivalent. Non-disclosure contracts bind the partners of public-private endeavours to each other and nurture relationships that blur the distinction between public and private (Thylstrup, 2018: 48–52). The ambivalent reception of public-private partnerships within the sector is in particular evident in the ‘New Renaissance’ report, commissioned by the European Commission. While the report’s authors see a clear potential for such partnerships to leverage digitisation when public funding is not sufficiently available, they also emphasise that contracts should be negotiated without compromising rights-holders and the access to digitised collections (Niggemann et al., 2011: 13; 45–48). Exclusive rights, that might arise from public-private partnerships and accordingly limit access to public domain content, are also a key concern of the OpenGLAM initiative (Wallace, 2020b: 4–5). Yet, at least in the case of Google Arts & Culture the distinction between open and closed collections is not clear cut. Indeed, because image rights remain with the participating institution (Google, 2021) collections from institutions that are well-known for their Open Access advocacy can be found on the platform, and as Open Data sets on the institutions’ websites. As for instance the Danish Statens Museum for Kunst, or the Rijksmuseum.<sup>77</sup> Public-private partnerships are thus not necessarily the antagonists of Open GLAM. The more far-reaching implications of public-private partnerships are that they foster an environment where heritage organisations need to become market actors, and digitised collections from such partnerships are embedded into market oriented platforms (Thylstrup, 2018: 48–52). The Feminist Library’s fundraising coordinator recounts how her organisation declined several offers from companies that sought to create direct revenue out of the digitised collection through subscription models (2020). Yet, although Google Arts & Culture offers access to collections for no monetary costs, the platform offers the company financial value. As Wilson-Barnao argues, it is the user’s interaction with heritage objects on Google Arts & Culture that is tracked, evaluated, and fed into the company’s machine-learning applications. The user profiles generated through this process are an asset that can either be used to refine Google’s own advertisement campaigns and services, or sold to third parties (2017: 568). User tracking and analytics are also used by other platforms that result from public-private partnerships, and inform scope and rationale for future digitisation projects (Hauswedell et al., 2020: 157–59).

The literature on community archives indicates that partnerships with major heritage institutions or universities can be successful but potentially also pose tensions due to

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<sup>77</sup> For a list of Google Arts & Culture partner organisations see: <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner> (accessed 4 April 2022).

power imbalances. For example if the community archive's independence and essential custody over the collection becomes questioned, or the expertise of volunteers working in community archives is not acknowledged (Flinn et al., 2009: 80–81; Jules, 2019: 9–10). There is little reason to assume that private partnerships with Social Movement Archives are free from such challenges. Both the BCA and the Feminist Library expressed for instance a strong concern about the ethical and commercial use of their collections (Archivist BCA, 2020; Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). How Social Movement Archives weigh up the implications of private partnerships with their benefits remains nevertheless an area to be investigated in more detail.

In this context it is also worth highlighting that providing Open Access to cultural heritage is not only a question about having the means to digitise and sufficient infrastructure, because it is possible to publish open collections data on a small-scale. Martin Fell from the York Museum Trust recommends for instance to use the Wikimedia Commons in order to publish images (Ploeger, 2016: 11). However, the implementation of an Open Access framework is not only about expensive investments in infrastructure, digitisation programmes, or metadata enrichment. Significant time and resources are needed to be invested in discussions with staff members, strategic planning, and changing workflows (Glasemann, 2020; Ross et al., 2018). My expert interview partners were aware of the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage. But some of them confessed that so far they neither had the resources to put Open GLAM on their internal agendas, nor Open GLAM has been a priority yet in light of the day-to-day operations (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020; Library Manager WCML, 2020; Archivist BCA, 2020). The precarious situations Social Movement Archives commonly operate in, make it questionable why Open Access to cultural heritage should be a focal point of interest, especially as Social Movement Archives found other ways on how to use digitisation for fulfilling their political goals.

How, then, could these structural challenges of Social Movement Archives be approached? The call for Open Access to cultural heritage often comes with suggestions to leverage volunteer capacities for enriching digital collections especially through crowdsourcing (OpenGLAM Initiative, 2022c), but also to work with volunteers in digitisation itself (Wallace, 2020b: 5). Yet, as Wallace also indicates, the involvement of volunteers is not unproblematic. The next section suggests that an overly reliance on volunteer labour for digitisation is unlikely to align with the ethical values of Social Movement Archives.

## 5.2 The involvement of staff and volunteers in digitisation

The MML employs two members of staff, an 'archivist and library manager' and an 'administrator and library assistant', but digitisation is not part of their job descriptions. Rather both roles are responsible for running the essential operations of the MML: management of the physical collection, responding to research inquiries, supervising volunteers, welcoming visitors and organising events (Marx Memorial Library, 2021b; Marx Memorial Library, 2019a). However, the descriptions of volunteer roles ('running guided tours', 'membership & admin tasks', 'assisting with basic archive & library jobs', 'digitising our archives' and 'preparing for events and meetings') on the MML's website suggest that even for fulfilling these core tasks additional voluntary labour is required (Marx Memorial Library, 2022f). Volunteers have indeed always played a major role in running the MML (Rothstein, 1983: 82) and the library's annual report from 2019 stated that 25 volunteers were engaged at the MML (Marx Memorial Library, 2019b: 5). In February 2020, before the lock-down, three volunteers of this cohort were engaged in digitisation activities once a week. The primary tasks of the digitisation volunteers were at this point to scan the photographs of the Printers' Collection, working on a remainder of the 2018 poster digitisation project, and to a significant extent making copies of articles for research inquiries. The latter task falls in most heritage institutions often under copy-services, and not digitisation.

At the Feminist Library there is one volunteer interested in embarking into small imaging projects (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020), and also the library manager of the WCML could imagine to involve volunteers in digitisation projects in the future. But at the moment volunteers are primarily engaged in tasks such as: welcoming visitors, assisting in cataloguing tasks, or helping with exhibitions (Library Manager WCML, 2020). The TUC library has one volunteer who assists in setting-up physical exhibitions and sorting archival deposits (Librarian TUC Library, 2020) and at the Feminist Library the focus of volunteer work is primarily on organising events (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). At the BCA volunteer roles include assisting staff at the reception desk and the reading room (Archivist BCA, 2020). Volunteers sometimes assist in minor digitisation tasks at the Amsab-ISH, but similar to the MML these are often copy-services (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020). Except for the MML, the involvement of volunteers in digitisation is in all interviewed organisations practically not existent. One reason for this is that the involvement of volunteers for tasks that are considered to be core operations of

an organisation is not unproblematic. Indeed, the two organisations which have the most extensive digitisation activities, the MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7, have both paid roles responsible for digitisation.

Volunteer work is an immanent characteristic of the UK heritage sector. It mirrors on the one hand a growth of the sector, in particular in form of small and independent heritage organisations, from the 1960s and 70s onwards (Candlin et al., 2020: 34; Millar, 1991: 6–7; Gilliland and Flinn, 2013: 6). And on the other hand governmental policies that promoted volunteering, also since the 1970's, as a means to foster good health, individual self-responsibility and community building (Howlett, 2002: 43–44). While it is the overall tendency in the UK heritage sector to portray the involvement of volunteer as something good (Hill et al., 2013: 3), the reliance on volunteer labour is not perceived without criticism. As Fredheim argues, heritage volunteering in the UK is institutionalised through a tandem consisting of austerity politics and an overly positive charged rhetoric on 'participation'. Funding cuts make the replacement of staff roles through volunteers a common phenomenon, which not only devalues professional roles, but also leaves volunteer tasks extensively performed by those members of society who can afford to work for free. Which has a negative impact on the heritage sector's diversity (2018: 623–24). It is in this context that some of the interview partners stressed the importance of volunteers for the survival of the organisation, but also put emphasis on distinguishing between staff and volunteer roles. According to the WCML's library manager "It needs to be clear what is a staff role and what is a volunteer role." Volunteers at the WCML are given tasks that are valuable, but not essential for the day-to-day operation of the organisation (Library Manager WCML, 2020). However, sometimes it is unavoidable for the survival of Social Movement Archives that volunteers are set in charge of core tasks. But such situations are sought to be avoided and suspended again as soon as possible. At the BCA volunteers became crucial during its precarious financial situation in 2018. While volunteers were of "[...] significance in kind of keeping the organisation going in that [...] interim period" the BCA takes nonetheless careful considerations on which roles are assigned to volunteers and which to members of staff. The BCA's archivist explains in this regard how the organisation must carefully weigh up between giving people work experience in an archive and not collocating tasks to volunteers who belong to member of staff's job descriptions (2020). The dependency on volunteers puts Social Movement Archives in a peculiar contradicting situation. It is not uncommon for Social Movement Archives to have their roots in personal



collecting endeavours of individual activists. Indeed, the introduction of staff roles is in itself a matter of controversy as it can, like in case of the National Museum of Labour History (later renamed People's History Museum), sign-post a departure from activists' origins, because with the appointment of staff the institution opens-up from an activist towards an academic, or public audience for instance (Flinn, 2017: 11–20). It is possible that the BCA and MML with their efforts towards the Archive Service Accreditation (Black Cultural Archives, 2020a: 9; Marx Memorial Library, 2019b: 4), undergo just at the moment a similar development towards a more 'mainstream' institution. But as section 5.1 shows, the lack of financial resources makes the involvement of volunteers for most interviewed archives imperative. Thus, while the contributions of volunteers are highly appreciated, there is a concern that volunteer schemes which are set up in poor, or even in exploitative manners, have the potential to undermine the political values Social Movement Archives as "good working class organisation[s]" stand for (Library Manager WCML, 2020). An example that highlights in particular the ambiguity of involving volunteers in Social Movement Archives is given by the MayDay Rooms. The archive encourages people to approach the organisation for specific projects, research, events or exhibitions and funding partnerships (MayDay Rooms, 2022a), but at the same time volunteer labour is explicitly rejected:

"We are aware of the exploitation that masquerades as 'internships', and we discourage all forms of voluntary labour which are in effect coerced" (MayDay Rooms, 2022a).

The sensitive question about the heritage sector's involvement of volunteers is amplified in the context of digitisation activities. As Susan Leigh Star and Anselm Strauss have argued, it is the labour that is expected, conducted by people with a low social status, and/or that's products are quantified and consumed remotely from the worker (in our case digitised objects and metadata retrieved through the internet), which is prone to being rendered invisible (1999: 15; 19–20). Indeed, the heritage sector has a trajectory of devaluing the labour of digitisation. Prime example is the mass digitisation project of Google Books, which became infamous for underpaying and marginalising its outsourced 'ScanOps' workers (Zeffiro, 2019: 142–46). It is in the heritage sector and DH projects also not uncommon to outsource the transcription task for historical texts, like at the Early English Books Online (EEBO) (Mak, 2014: 1519). How the digital canon is shaped through those digitisers becomes rarely visible through acknowledgement, but rather through the errors they have made. In case of Google Books the accidentally imaged hands or fingers of the

digitisers (Thylstrup, 2018: 42–43; Zeffiro, 2019: 137–42), or at EEBO in form of the remark that the transcriptions should not be regarded as authoritative, because they were created by ‘non-experts’ (Mak, 2014: 1519).<sup>78</sup>

The MayDay Rooms’ digital archivist expressed a strong resentment for the labour conditions and set-ups in mass digitisation projects, which reminded my interview partner of the “hand mills [treadwheels] of the industrial revolution” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Where the MayDay Rooms involves external people in digitisation tasks, they seek to form ideally a symbiosis where both parties mutually benefit from a specific project. In practice this can take a form as follows:

“Like someone came in and digitised all our collection of [anonymised collection]. Which was great, because it is an amazing publication that is not online. But he was also using that for his research. But he maybe would have only used a couple of copies, but he digitised some, I don’t know, 30 editions of it. And I gave him some training on digitisation and then he did that” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

According to the MayDay Rooms’ digital archivist in particular the first generation of the organisation was wary about potential exploitation of volunteer labour. While the MayDay Rooms have eased their approach to volunteer work slightly, there is through the roles of the paid members of the archive’s collective still a clear indication of what are considered to be core tasks for keeping the organisation running. The responsibilities of the paid members of the MayDay Rooms collective include: archiving, digital archiving, and accounting (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). The paid positions and the archive’s premises are funded by an annual grant of £50,000 by the Sainsbury family’s Glass-House Trust, which is explicitly tailored to the “[...] extensive transfer of fragile materials into digital forms, and exploration of these materials through workshops, public events, discussions, exhibitions, and the training up of ‘citizen archivists’” (The Glass-House Trust, 2019: 5).<sup>79</sup> Such a regular source of income presents an exceptional case within the Social Movement Archives discussed in this thesis, and puts the MayDay Rooms in a privileged position. It is for the MayDay Rooms nevertheless necessary to make compromises, despite this fiscal stability. All positions are part-time, and focus on the essential activities for operating the MayDay Rooms (MayDay Rooms, 2021a). But combined with the

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<sup>78</sup> See p.2 of the EEBO training workshop: <http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digital/wp-content/uploads/sites/166/2017/01/EEBO-TCP-training-workshop-27-01-2017.pdf> (accessed 2 April 2022).

<sup>79</sup> See: <https://sfct.org.uk/about.html> (accessed 8 May 2022)

MayDay Rooms' position that sees digitisation "[...] integral to [the] strategy of making things accessible [...]" (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020), the archive is in a position to give digitisation a prominent role in its operations. This includes also more experimental forms of digitisation activities, as the Glass-House Trust's grant description indicates with its reference to "citizen archivists". Part of the development of leftove.rs (see chapter seven) included a workshop series of scanathons and cataloguing events, like on the 'Irish Struggles after 1968' (MayDay Rooms, 2019). The MayDay Rooms' digital archivist describes how at this event people whose parents were involved in the Irish struggles not only catalogued and scanned, but came together, exchanged experiences, and read out of archival sources (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). The concept of scanathons at the MayDay Rooms thus is not so much oriented on output, which would contradict with the critical stance towards volunteer labour. Rather the purpose of scanathons is to "[...] integrate digitisation into the process of working and reading the archive [...]" (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Comparable initiatives include the so-called scanning socials of the online project 'Black in the Day', which among others also took place at the BCA (Black Cultural Archives, 2018). Ishmael et al. situate such scanathons within a set of emerging participatory approaches that aim not only to reclaim heritage and challenge institutionalised archival practices, but also include a healing process through engaging with archival sources (2020: 213–16). The engagement with archival resources becomes a means for social change, which is significant for the political goals of Social Movement Archives (see chapter four) and thus embeds the people involved in scanathons more into an 'activist', rather than a volunteer framework that makes their involvement for organisations as the MayDay Rooms less problematic.

A much less participatory approach to digitisation takes the organisation of interview partner 7, although this institution has, similar to the MayDay Rooms, put significance efforts in creating a digital collection. Interview partner 7 is part of a collective that is responsible for strategic decisions, but the whole archive is primarily run by my interview partner, and only funded by a few individuals and organisations. The thousands of items online are the result of a labour intense collection management process with digitisation as the last step. Interview partner 7 describes this workflow literally as "[...] from bin bag full of paper to it's in an acid-free box as well as being on a server in a certain searchable way." Volunteers are not involved in the scanning process. Interview partner 7 has built up an efficient routine, and the threshold to gain the required knowledge on using the software

and equipment are in their opinion regarded as too high as assistance from volunteers would be effective (2020).

What connects the digitisation efforts of interview partner 7 and the MayDay Rooms, is not only the paid positions for digitisation and the scale of their online collections. Both organisations can be placed within a wider activists' movement that has devoted itself to the creation of extensive left online archives (Cornell, 2019: 25). The 'Marxists Internet Archive'<sup>80</sup> is perhaps one of the most prominent examples of these initiatives.<sup>81</sup> The MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7 also embrace to a certain extent a departure from professional standards.

This should not suggest that such activists-led 'mass digitisation projects' are made without professional expertise. The in Lausanne based 'Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme' (CIRA) published for instance in their bulletin a set of best practices for digitisation. The article's authors demonstrate a high level of sophistication as they cover issues including: colour-scale, file compressions, archival file formats and the impact of historical fonts on the quality of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) (2016). But as interview partner 7 explains, given the scarce financial and personnel resources, and being independent, there is also room for being sometimes more flexible and pragmatic than perhaps a mainstream institution would be (Interview partner 7, 2020). However, this approach has an impact on how the online collections are shaped.

The MayDay Rooms provide participants of scanathons with the necessary equipment, but if not enough scanners or cameras can be provided, the issue is overcome by using mobile phones instead. It is a sector wide best-practice to create lossless high-resolution images, in order to ensure long-term preservation (Digital Preservation Coalition, 2015). But for the MayDay Rooms "[...] it's better that it's digitised and not top quality than not digitised at all" (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Similar compromises are necessary at the scanathons of Black in the Day. The metadata quality is not sufficient for research purposes (Ishmael et al., 2020: 214). Copyright presents another barrier to make collections available online. The interviewed organisations emphasised that they do not have resources to deal with copyright questions (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager

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<sup>80</sup> See: <https://www.marxists.org/> (accessed 2 April 2022).

<sup>81</sup> 'Radical online collections and archives', curated by the historian Evan Smith, provides a good overview on such initiatives. However, the list also contains collections from archives that are not strictly activists-led, like the IISH in Amsterdam. Chapter seven discusses in more detail the nexus of Shadow Libraries where the collection of the MayDay Rooms belongs to. Smith's list can be found here: <https://hatfulofhistory.wordpress.com/radical-online-collections-and-archives/> (accessed 2 April 2022).

MML, 2020d; Library Manager WCML, 2020; Archivist BCA, 2020; Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020). Yet, the MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7 both decided not to deal with copyright (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020; Interview partner 7, 2020). While this does not mean that they consider everything to be part of the public domain (see chapter six), the material that is made available through their catalogues can be reused without any restrictions imposed by the hosting organisation. The MML and the BCA's efforts towards the Archive Service Accreditation suggest that such practices could be problematic for most of the other interviewed Social Movement Archives from a legal-, but also from a professional perspective. How professional practices are implemented in their organisations is an essential question for them to receive institutional accreditation and acknowledgement. Yet, the move from strictly activists' organisations towards more mainstream organisations is also a continuum that develops over time (Flinn, 2017: 8–9). It is thus also possible that the MayDay Rooms or the organisation of interview partner 7 change their practices if their strategic focus requires to do so in future.

Volunteers play a marginal role in the digitisation activities of the interviewed Social Movement Archives. The MML with its digitisation assistants, and the MayDay Rooms with their scanathons are exceptions. What rather leverages the MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7 to put a strategic focus on online collections is that both organisations have paid positions responsible for digitisation, and that they break to some extent with professional practices. In particular copyright is omitted by both organisations. How copyright is approached by the other interviewed Social Movement Archives is reviewed in the next section.

### **5.3 Copyright practices**

The OpenGLAM initiative's key concern is that no new copyright should be claimed on non-original reproductions of public domain works (Wallace, 2020e: 2–3); making all collections whose creators passed away more than 70 years ago<sup>82</sup> potentially suitable to be released as open collections data (Wallace, 2020d: 6). The assessment of deciding what can be made openly available online appears thus in a first instance as a binary decision, either something is in the public domain, or not. Yet, copyright assessments are

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<sup>82</sup> In UK legislation the 70 years rule applies to “[...] literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work[s]” (CDPA, 1988).

in practice complex, labour intense, and ambiguous processes. As a result the question whether and how a digital surrogate of a heritage object is made available online is often based on a risk-assessment (Wallace, 2020d: 8–9; Deazley, 2017b: 4–5; Stobo, 2016: 281). Besides mitigating risks, heritage organisations also limit reuse of digitised public domain works to issue licensing fees, or as a means to protect the original work. The legal justification for restrictions on reuse can be grounded in property-rights, user/visitor contracts (e.g. regarding photography at the reading room, or website terms of use), or through copyright claims on digital reproductions (Wallace, 2020d: 9–11). All these legal groundings are to varying degrees evident at the interviewed Social Movement Archives. The focus of this section is, however, not an assessment upon which legal basis Social Movement Archives justify their reuse restrictions. The aim is rather to highlight how copyright ultimately shapes the way how social history collections are made available online.

The consideration that the online publication of public domain works is from a copyright perspective likely to be a safe bet, does not make rights considerations obsolete (Stobo, 2016: 281–87). UK law requires for instance to consider the so-called ‘2039-rule’. Works that were unpublished before or on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1989 remain in copyright for a further 50 years from the end of the year the 1988 copyright act came into force, until the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2039 (Deazley, 2017c: 18–22). A work might also have multiple copyright holders, which makes the determination of its potential public domain status a challenging endeavour. In a study commissioned by Europeana, the German National Library (DNB) reports on how in order to evaluate the public domain status of books, each work needs to be checked for illustrations or photographs that might have a different copyright holder than the book’s author. For works that have more than four contributors the DNB abandons the clearance process entirely, and the book is not made available online (Peters and Kalshoven, 2016: 3). The complexity of rights clearance increases even further for collections that originate from the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Europeana, 2015b: 1). A case-study of the IISH shows for instance how the archive traced down rights holders of its photographic collection’s 250 top photographers. Potential rights-holders were tried to be identified, contacted, and negotiated with, for rights clearance. The costs of the overall process were estimated to be €15,000, or €60 for each photographer, with no guarantee if the rights-clearance would be successful. The expenses of this process were even for a

publicly funded archive like the IISH described as “prohibitive” (Peters and Kalshoven, 2016: 16).

Rights-clearance is in itself already a challenging and costly endeavour, but for being successful it is necessary that the copyright holder is known and contactable. In practice interview partners report that for the majority of their collections it is likely that these are still in copyright, but unknown who the copyright holders are (Library Manager WCML, 2020; Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020; Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020b). Works for which copyright holders cannot be identified or contacted are known as orphan works. The phenomena of orphan works is well known in the heritage sector, and has even been approached by the European Parliament through the 2012 directive ‘On certain permitted uses of orphan works’ (European Parliament, 2012). A study prepared for the Collections Trust UK showed that particularly archives are affected, and the report estimates that archives’ collections consist in average, conservatively speaking, between 21% to 30% of orphan works (Korn, 2009: 19;39). There are two main reasons for orphan works. First, copyright comes into place automatically if specific criteria, like the threshold for originality, are met. Especially for unpublished works it might be unclear by whom and when a document was created. Secondly, it is possible that the copyright owner issued rights to third parties (e.g. companies, or heirs) that still need to be considered (Deazley, 2017d: 4–5). Orphan works present for my interview partners in particularly a challenge when documents were produced by activists in a DIY ethos (Archivist BCA, 2020), such as pamphlets, posters, ephemera or zines. Interview partner 7 described the challenges of identifying copyright holders for such objects as follows:

“But to actually get to the detail of working out who produced this; Is that person still alive? Is that person still contactable? Who might know that person? We just know a weird pseudonym from [anonymised location] from 75. So who was that? Like in order to dig down and to work out what kind of attribution we could give that is just not worth our time on a practical level” (2020).

As interview partner 7 also notes, it is not uncommon that DIY items were explicitly created to be anti-copyright which can make the online publication of such collections less problematic.<sup>83</sup> While the organisation of interview partner 7 made the decision to omit copyright entirely (2020), there is in the UK a legal instrument to license orphan works

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<sup>83</sup> There are however data protection and ethical considerations that need to be considered for the online publication of zines. See section 6.3.

under the 'Orphan Works Licensing Scheme' (OWLS).<sup>84</sup> The Intellectual Property Office issues a non-exclusive orphan works license for seven years; given that the requesting party provides evidence for having conducted a diligence (comprehensive) search and an application and licensing fee is paid (Deazley, 2017d: 10–11). However, as interview partner 7's response indicates, the practicalities of copyright legislation are for heritage organisations limited and so is also the OWLS scheme barely used by heritage organisations for a number of reasons.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, while the registration licensing fee of £0.10 per work<sup>86</sup> can be considered as a reasonable price, the licensing cost does not cover the labour needed for the due diligence, and the costs also quickly scale-up if thousands of items need to be registered as part of mass digitisation programmes (Martinez and Terras, 2019: 32–41; Deazley, 2017d: 28). But even for small digitisation projects, which are more likely to occur at the interviewed Social Movement Archives, the OWLS scheme's practicality is limited. The OWLS license must be renewed after seven years and is also exclusively valid for the UK, which makes the publication of material online prohibitive (Martinez and Terras, 2019: 13–14; Naomi Korn Associates, 2021: 3).

Because the MML has neither the financial resources, nor the in-house expertise that is necessary to deal with copyright, the library adopted a number of workarounds and strategies. Their purpose is to enable access, but also to decrease likelihood of being made liable for copyright infringement. A copyright infringement might result in a complaint by the copyright holder, reimbursements, and losing reputation (Stobo, 2018: 71). A significant proportion of the MML's digitised collections (most of the Spanish Collection Photographs and the Printers' Collection) are for instance not made available online, but only for internal research purposes (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019). Here the MML makes use of an exception in copyright law for museums, archives and libraries that permits copying for preservation purposes. This exception allows heritage organisations to make works available through a terminal on site, but not online (Deazley, 2017e: 4;13-14). In some occasions like for the Basque refugee scrapbook, which includes multiple orphan works and press-cuttings from various newspapers, the MML makes the judgement that it is unlikely that anyone would come forward to challenge the library

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<sup>84</sup> The EU's 'Orphaned Works Exception' scheme is since the UK left the EU not available anymore for UK institutions (Heritage Digital consortium, 2021: 8–9)

<sup>85</sup> 1,197 works were registered in June 2021 <https://www.orphanworkslicensing.service.gov.uk/view-register/search?workCategory=All&filter=All> (accessed 9 June 2021)

<sup>86</sup> £0.10 per work is for non-commercial use. The costs for commercial use are case-dependent. But a commercial license for a reproduction of 5000 items or less can cost for instance around £2,500 (Terras, 2014).



(Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020b). A rationale that also guides interview partner 7 (2020). Given time and resource constraints of digitisation projects, some major institutions report likewise that right-permissions cannot be sought for every object (Stobo et al., 2018: 11–12; 49). So far there has been no case where a UK heritage organisation was sued for copyright infringement (Stobo, 2018: 71), but it is not unthinkable to happen. The IISH was for instance involved in a law-suit in 2014 (Peters and Kalshoven, 2016: 16). The MML introduced for its online collection thus several measures in order to mitigate the risk for potential copyright infringement by the library or its users online. All of them are common practices in the heritage sector (Dryden, 2014: 53–66; Stobo, 2018: 109–10):

- Images on the website/catalogue are published in low-resolution and sometimes with a watermark stating, ‘Marx Memorial Library’. Images are attributed where possible. A selection of example images from the Spanish Collection and the Printers’ Collection are also made available through the viewer software ‘juicebox’ that disables the internet browser’s copy/download function.<sup>87</sup>
- A take-down policy is in place for material the MML published on its website, or in any other media. In case someone reports copyright infringement, material will be withdrawn until the case is fully investigated (Marx Memorial Library, 2020c).

Applying technical or legal restrictions to the whole digital collection including public domain material is from the Open GLAM movement’s perspective problematic, because it introduces additional layers of legal uncertainty. Users cannot be sure whether a work is still in copyright or not. And in case a heritage organisation claims copyright on a digital reproduction of a public domain work, this reproduction will be in copyright for another 70 years from the year the digitiser passed away (given this person can be identified in future, otherwise the digital reproduction becomes orphaned) (Wallace, 2020d: 5–8).<sup>88</sup> Heritage organisations ultimately contribute through “risk-averse practices” to a legitimisation of legally questionable copyright claims on non-original reproductions of public domain works, with the consequence of eroding the public domain (Wallace, 2020d: 8–11). Stobo suggests, however, that many heritage organisations apply use restrictions on all their collections in order to mitigate the risk for making more challenging collections than public

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<sup>87</sup> See for instance: <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/item/international-brigaders> (accessed 8 May 2022).

<sup>88</sup> In the UK copyright ownership can be transferred to an employer, but the duration of copyright is nevertheless calculated based on the creator’s date of death (Deazley, 2017c: 11–12).

domain works, namely in-copyright and orphan works, available (2016: 287). Indeed, research has shown that not only copyright plays a role for a risk-assessment. Points of consideration also include the relationship with the depositors, the purpose an object was created for, private information and an item's content (Stobo, 2016: 283–85; Eschenfelder and Caswell, 2010: 7). These considerations can either increase or limit the possibilities for the online publication.

Donors can determine through a depositor agreement the requirements of how collections can be accessed, regardless of whether they are the copyright holders of the deposited collection. Heritage organisations will naturally try to secure rights through depositor agreements. However, in some cases it might be necessary to weigh up between securing rights and establishing trust with donors (Stobo, 2016: 283). Indeed, some of the interviewed Social Movement Archives would be far more concerned about damaging their donor relationship, rather than the one with a copyright holder (although for significant proportions of the collection there will be overlaps, especially for DIY material). The BCA consulted its donors before objects were made available on Google Arts & Culture, and some of the donors were subsequently heavily involved in the curation of the exhibitions. As the BCA's archivist sums-up: "[...] it's up to the donors to decide how things are used" (2020). In case of the MML donor relationships can also include contacts to descendants of donors. For the Aid Spain Banners, which were produced on behalf of the Hammersmith Communist Party in the 1930s, it was possible to obtain the permission of one of the artists' sons to digitise the banners, and to create postcards. The library manager also explains at the PAR evaluation workshops how the library focusses on publishing material online from rights-holders with whom the MML has established good contacts with; such as politically left-oriented publishers, parties and organisations. These relationships sometimes include just verbal agreements or are occasionally even less formalised. But the MML judges that through the measures discussed above, rights-holders will agree with the library's use of the collections. Primarily because they are used within the labour movement, without commercial intent and in order to fulfil the library's political remit (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020b). The MayDay Rooms hold in general the position that "if it [an object] was public we think it should remain public", and thus available through leftove.rs without any restrictions. However, the archive is ultimately nevertheless strongly dependent on fostering an active relationship with its donors. While the MayDay Rooms manage to get an agreement with most depositors that collections can be made available

without any restrictions, there are exceptions where the archive needs to respect the wishes of the donors to make collections only available through the reading room (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). The case of the MayDay Rooms also highlights a different understanding of the public domain than defined by legislation. Rather than taking a creator's date of death as the basis for determining the public domain, the central question is for which purpose an object was created for. The Feminist Library's selection rationale for the collection on Google Arts & Culture was only secondarily guided by copyright questions, but whether an object was produced within a collective activity, for the purpose of being seen by a wide audience, and likely to be available online anyhow. The type of objects that are primarily viewable on the Feminist Library's Google Arts & Culture pages are thus posters, badges, or flyers (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). A stance that can also be observed in the documentations of other activists' archives. The online based Irish Left Archive argues in its copyright section for instance that its digitisation activities do not infringe copyright, because it is in line with the objects' original purpose:

"In the majority of cases, the documents and posters we reproduce were intended for widespread dissemination, as a means to expose people to the ideas expressed in them, or to further awareness of the organisation which produced them. As a result, we believe our reproduction of them is in the spirit of their original production, rather than prejudicing the interests of the copyright holders. Further, other than to scan and digitise them, we do not modify the original materials" (2022).

The article in the CIRA Bulletin covers copyright too. But the authors consider that as long as creators are credited and no financial gain is made, the risk of copyright infringement for Anarchist publications can be considered as low. Of far more concern are privacy-rights and object that might be harmful for living individuals (2016: 25). While this stance extends the notion of the public domain as it is defined by law, it does not mean that everything will be regarded to be suitable for publication online. Some Social Movement Archives might hold back objects due to ethical reasons, which could from a legal perspective be placed online without doubt; either due to their public domain status, or because they could be registered under the OWLS scheme.

A case study of the V&A suggests that the practice of some Social Movement Archives to focus for rights assessments on an object's intention or donor's wishes, rather than its copyright status, is not completely at odds with rights-clearance practices of major institutions. When the V&A contacted the creators of 'Disobedient Objects' (a collection of objects used for political purposes, such as badges, banners, masks, or spoof newspapers) for imaging rights, the creators of these objects were not primarily concerned about copyright questions. Of more interest was for them whether there would be a commercial exploitation of the objects, like an exhibition entry fee, and if objects could be shared "[...] to the public under a creative commons ethos" (Peters and Kalshoven, 2016: 11–12). Complying with the law is only one consideration heritage organisations need to make for their online collections. The depth of due diligence is dependent on an organisation's resources and expertise on copyright. And for some collections it is necessary to respect the donor expectations, or the intention of objects too. Past research has pointed out that while questions on authenticity and ownership are important, they should not be resolved through copyright claims, or other measures that restrict reuse (Dryden, 2011: 542–43). However, this section has also shown that depending on the object, questions on ownership can also give heritage organisations the confidence to make collections available online. Essential for this approach is to have good relationships with the community a collection represents, and curatorial expertise. There is a clear dissonance between the expectations of heritage organisations to make collections available online and the way how copyright law is tailored (Deazley, 2017e: 4; Martinez and Terras, 2019: 40–44). Nevertheless, copyright law is not set in stone and there are attempts to give heritage organisations more exceptions in copyright. So does the 2019 EU DSM Directive contain an exception that makes the online publication of out of commerce works without rights-clearance under certain conditions possible.<sup>89</sup> There is thus an opportunity to take some of the copyright practices of the interviewed organisations in consideration for future amendments in UK legislation.

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<sup>89</sup> For a full discussion of the directive's exception see: (Keller, 2019: 2–6).

## 5.4 Summary

This chapter has illustrated how access to online collections of Social Movement Archives is shaped by a variety of factors. None of these factors are clear-cut and independent, but form assemblages which determine the engagement with digitised heritage. But as issues like the partnerships with Google Arts & Culture, the invisibility of digitisers, and the challenges of copyright legislation suggest; the conditions under which digitisation in Social Movement Archives takes place are not exceptional, but rather symptomatic for how digitisation in the heritage sector works. Open GLAM with its focus on creating legal and technical interoperability is a reaction to these conditions. But if we reflect on the fragmented nature of the Open GLAM landscape Wallace and McCarthy have identified through their survey (Wallace, 2020c: 2), it becomes evident that Open Access to cultural heritage does not resolve access to collections by adding a layer of interoperable infrastructure to the existing ones. Open GLAM forms rather another element of the assemblage we encounter when engaging with digitised heritage. This is however not a devaluation for the efforts that were put in creating open collections data, or in digitisation in general. But it requires a contentious critical and interdisciplinary reflection when working with this material. Bonnie Mak builds for her ‘archaeology’ of the EEBO for instance among others upon manuscript studies, philosophy, bibliography and digital media studies (2014: 1515). This background gives her the foundation for stepping back from the seemingly technical neutrality of digitisation. The digitised object:

“[...] is instead framed in this analysis as a material, bibliographical object. As a product of human labor, a digitisation transmits clues in its very instantiation about the circumstances of its manufacture and dissemination. Such clues—paratextual and peritextual; formal and material—may be drawn together and scrutinized to develop a more nuanced understanding of that digitisation and its politics, for it is within such an infrastructure that meaning is made” (Mak, 2014: 1515).

Scarce financial resources are without question a fundamental limiting factor for most of the interviewed Social Movement Archives that impacts on their general operations, and thus also on their ability to digitise and to consider Open Access frameworks. As argued in chapter one, the collections of Social Movement Archives are important for diversifying the digital canon and scholarship. Specialised funding opportunities for supporting Social Movement Archives to make collections available in their own terms is thus crucial, in

particularly for organisations like the MML and the BCA which aim to move towards professional accreditation. Yet, the cases discussed in this chapter also suggest that the adoption of Open Access frameworks are not only dependent on the availability of funds or expertise. The digitisation practices of the MayDay Rooms, interview partner 7, and the Feminist Library point to a much more liberal understanding of the public domain than advocated by the OpenGLAM initiative. But their enhanced notion of Open Access is also not without ambiguities, and should not be conflated with a radical interpretation of Open GLAM. The Feminist Library has strong concerns about the implications that come with providing access to collections online. The scope of its digital collections will always be limited to the ethical considerations made by the Feminist Library's activists. The MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7's ethos to make, whenever possible, collections available without any restrictions does not apply to all collections and is furthermore to some extent only possible because both organisations operate within a relatively small network of activists' initiatives. If their collections are reused, then it is likely to be predominately for political purposes and in alignment with their original intention. To consider Open Access to cultural heritage in the context of Social Movement Archives it is thus necessary to examine in more detail the nature of their collections, and how these characteristics lead to conceptions of ownership. The following chapter six addresses the facets of ownership in Social Movement Archives in more detail.

## 6. Ownership, provenance, and instances of ethics of care

Open GLAM advocates often argue that ‘giving up control’ is something to be accepted due to the low barriers for copying digital data, and because the benefits of Open Access frameworks, like a higher visibility of content outweigh any potential negative effects (Sanderhoff, 2014b: 72–73). The prominence of the issues around ‘control’ in the Open GLAM discourse suggests that a sense of controlling how collections are used or interpreted is a characteristic that can be found throughout the heritage sector (Verwayen et al., 2011: 14–16; Baltussen et al., 2013; Estermann, 2015: 20–21). However, for heritage initiatives that have close ties to the communities they represent “[...] community participation, control and ownership [...]” are the defining qualities (Flinn, 2007: 153). For the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives it is for instance essential to take into account the wishes and expectations of donors, and privacy rights of individuals represented in the archive (Ruge et al., 2017: 83). Chapter four and five demonstrate that conceptions of ‘ownership’ are immanent characteristics for most of the Social Movement Archives in this study. Indeed, ownership and control over the collection goes beyond the physical collections and have an impact on how collections are made available online. For this reason, the characteristics of major heritage organisations and Social Movement Archives differ not only in terms of political remit and available resources, but also which significance the control over collections has. These conditions make it necessary to investigate the implications of ownership on Open Access in more detail. The central question of this chapter is: Which ethical considerations and obligations inform Social Movement Archives on how collections are made available online? The responses to this question reveal not only more about the nature of assemblages of heritage digitisation. They also speak to a wider debate about the ethical implications of using collections as data and suggest that the archival principle of provenance offers a framework for making nuanced decisions for what to include into Open Access frameworks.

The most common means to exercise control over a collection is by claiming copyright on digital reproductions. Permissions for using digitised content, often combined with licensing fee models, must then be sought from the providing institutions (Wallace, 2020b: 7). Michelle Light from the Special Collections of the University of Nevada reports on

several motivations that informed her institution's decision for restrictive practices in the past:

- The notion that physical ownership entitles for a certain level of control.
- It is common practise in the sector.
- The organisation invests in the collection (cataloguing, preservation, digitisation) and is thus entitled for a share in any profit made through the collection from commercial enterprises.
- There is a desire to know how material is used (attribution).
- The organisation does not want to be made liable for copyright infringements (Light, 2015: 49).

Especially the latter case illustrates that it is not always possible to pinpoint motivations for control to one or another reason, and that factors like copyright risk-assessments also play an important role in the decision-making for how access is provided (see section 5.3).

Concerns about potential "inappropriate use" are other well-known factors for restrictive licenses. Heritage organisations fear that a piece of work might be used in a disrespectful manner, or in ways that are not in line with an organisation's values (Tanner, 2004: 27).

While it is possible that heritage organisations have made arrangements with the copyright holders to issue works under certain licenses only, there is no legal basis for imposing restrictions on reuse through licenses for non-original reproductions of works in the public domain (Wallace, 2020b: 7).

There are nevertheless in some cases good reasons to exclude collections from Open Access frameworks or digitisation entirely. The insight that binary legal assessments for creating Open Access collections are insufficient receives increasingly attention within the Open GLAM discourse. The main focus is here on collections with colonial legacies (Wallace, 2020h: 3).<sup>90</sup> But also collections with other sensitive content, or with privacy issues play a role too (Wallace, 2020e: 3–4). The tension between providing public access to information, while at the same time having an obligation to restrict access to information that is either protected by law, or because other responsibilities towards individuals, community groups, or society exist, is a well-known issue in archival scholarship (Dalglish,

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<sup>90</sup> Tensions emerge in this context not only in terms of restitutions, but also because due to differences between Western and Indigenous legal systems. For an introduction to the latter topic see: (Nayyer, 2021).



2011: 69–70; LeClere, 2018: 290–91; Rév, 2020: 236). These debates also predate the emergence of mass digitisation and Open GLAM. Elena Danielson observed for instance already in 1989 how the maxim to provide access, is in reality rather a “balancing act” (1989: 53), and often more complex than commonly acknowledged. The archivists’ role is thus being a mediator, who needs to weigh up between public interest in access and factors like donor relationships and file closure periods (Danielson, 1989: 53;59).

The relationship between providing access, archival ethics, and professional practice is thus contradictory and contentious. A field in archival scholarship that offers a particularly rich debate and approaches for creating nuanced understandings of access frameworks is the one on social justice. Indeed, the tensions that Danielson describes fall into what David Wallace notes as the [...] space that archival social justice and archival ethics find both cleavage and confluence (Wallace, 2020i: 36). The field of social justice in archives consists according to Punzalan and Caswell of interrelated fields consisting of, but not limited to:

- The archivist as an activist, who endeavours to collect the histories of those who are only marginally represented in history and who supports access to records of human rights violations.
- Activist- and community-led archival initiatives.
- And the critique and enhancement of archival principles, in particular the principle of provenance (Punzalan and Caswell, 2016: 27–31).

In section 6.1 I review the role of provenance in archival social justice frameworks. I argue that an enhanced notion of provenance, especially one that puts emphasis on caring for the subjects of collections, provides a useful framework to understand the sense of control and ownership of Social Movement Archives on their collections. In section 6.2 I build up on this argument by discussing the significance the collections, and their histories, have for the communities Social Movement Archives serve. How these theoretical conceptions play into practice is the focus of section 6.3, before I come to a final discussion and summary in section 6.4.

## 6.1 The role of provenance in archival social justice frameworks

The call for Open Access puts institutions with collections consisting of documents with personal and sensitive information in a literal catch-22 situation. Heritage organisations need to gauge between a public interest of providing access and the public interest of remaining trusted institutions. In order to be trusted, archives have an obligation to take measures to safe-guard personal information as well as to ensure the authenticity and integrity of archival records, by adhering to the principle of provenance (Rév, 2020: 236). Laura Millar defines the basic principle of provenance as follows:

“In the archival context, provenance is defined as the origin or source of something, or as the person, agency or office of origin that created, acquired, used and retained a body of records in the course of their work or life. [...] In order to preserve the provenance of groups of archival material, the archivist does not put together archival materials from different creators nor reorganize groups of archives by subject, chronology, geographic division or other criteria. To do so would be to destroy the context in which the archival record came to be, diminishing the role of the creator and the relationship that person or agency had with other people or groups” (2017: 46).

The principle of provenance is one of the core principles in Western archival practice. Nevertheless, provenance is like other archival principles subject of debate and it has been interpreted differently since its emergence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Millar, 2017: 44–54; Douglas, 2017). The concept of provenance has developed over time from the above narrow organising principle of not intermixing collections of different creators, to a model that represents “[...] the numerous relationships that exist between records, creators, and functions” (Douglas, 2017: 33). Further advancements in the notion of provenance were influenced by postcolonial and social justice frameworks. These fields of archival scholarship recognise the social, cultural and historical context in which records were created (Douglas, 2017: 35-36;42-44; Wood, 2019: 16). An enhanced notion of provenance is thus a critique on the practice to assign exclusive ownership on a record to a single entity (typically an administrative, governmental or corporate body), rather than acknowledging the rights and stakes of those who are represented in archival records (Iacovino, 2010: 359–60). Moreover, a careful and nuanced understanding of provenance is thinking about whose histories archives tell (Berry, 2021: 4–5). Each of the following

approaches demonstrates how interrogating the principle of provenance from a social justice perspective leads to reconsiderations on who has ownership or custody over archival records (Wood, 2019: 19–20).

Jeannette Bastian offers for instance a case-study on the former Danish colony of the Danish West Indies (since 1917 the Virgin Islands of the United States), where custody over the islands' colonial records has been divided between the US and Denmark. The division of the records has not only led to a corruption of the files' integrity, but also deprived the people of the Virgin Islands from legitimate ownership-, custody- and access-rights. Rather than considering exclusively the Danish or United States' colonial administrations as the records' provenance, Bastian argues however that the records' provenance is equally determined by the space, content and people the records deal with (2001: 110–11). Joel Wurl suggests similarly that the notion of provenance could be enhanced, and crucially could foster an archive's capacity to empower and support people, by acknowledging the records subjects' identity. While the focus of his argument is on ethnicity, other social constructions that form the basis for structural inequality like class, gender, or religion could be considered (2005: 67–71). An example of how such extended notions of provenance, and ownership rights, can be applied in practice has been articulated in Livia Iacovino's 'participant relationship' model. Record subjects are acknowledged of being co-creators of records which comes with "[...] legal and moral rights and responsibilities in relation to ownership, access and privacy, which in turn are evidenced by records providing proof of the existence of the rights and/or obligations" (2010: 362). The participant relationship model is bolstered by a wide number of frameworks including: archival professional codes of ethics, consultation processes with donors or community representatives, and human- privacy- and amendment-rights. While the model was developed for the context of indigenous rights in Australia, the articulated strategies are according to Iacovino, due to their universal ethical and legal basis, also applicable in non-indigenous contexts (2010: 354;365-369). Arguments are made for instance that what could also be conceptualised as "'shared' provenance", has among others relevance in child social-care records (Hoyle et al., 2019: 1870).

An enhanced notion of provenance can also be useful to identify and mitigate issues on private information in archival collections. This is demonstrated by Steven Bingo who discusses the parallels between provenance and Helen Nissenbaum's concept of

'contextual integrity'.<sup>91</sup> Bingo highlights how considerations on the social context of a record's creation – what kind of information is contained, for whom it was intended for, by which means it was transmitted, who is the records' subject – allows the archivist to make nuanced decisions when weighing up access and privacy rights (2011: 513–16).

These enhanced notions of provenance shift the focus on the archives' responsibilities from the record creators towards the record subjects. Section 6.3 shows that the stakes of record subjects are indeed a primary concern for the interviewed Social Movement Archives, but not exclusively. One social justice framework that takes a more holistic view on the numerous obligations archives have towards their stakeholders is the 'Feminist Ethics Of Care' framework, as articulated by Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor (2016). An ethics of care brings together approaches based upon "affective responsibilities" towards the creators and subjects of records, the users of the archive, and the wider communities an institution serves (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 24–28). These affective responsibilities are informed by "radical empathy", which requires to open-up oneself towards the lived experience of those who are most vulnerable (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 25;31; Caswell and Cifor, 2019: 160). The ethics of care framework is also useful because the notion and nature of social justice is context dependent and perceived differently by different actors. It can be challenging to identify and acknowledge injustices where they are only experienced by a minority. Especially if the perceptions of what constitutes injustice are deeply embedded and justified through social norms, practices, and assumptions (Wallace, 2020i: 28–29). Feminist scholarship, which advocates for social justice approaches based on affect, care, mutual responsibilities and compassion, offers a set of approaches that can foster a deeper understanding for inequalities which are more subtle (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 27–30).

While the principle of provenance and its facets as I discuss them above stem from archive studies, the fields of computer and data science become increasingly concerned with the provenance of data too. The possibilities of reusing and aggregating data pose serious issues on the trustworthiness of the data sets themselves (Yeo, 2013: 220), and the use of data in machine-learning techniques (Geburu et al., 2018). In particular Open Data sets are prone to suggest an alleged neutrality and for having little documentation about their origin, creation or scope (Huggett, 2014; D'Ignazio and Klein, 2020: 5–8).

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<sup>91</sup> The framework of contextual integrity takes into account the norms of what kind of information is appropriate to be shared in a specific situation, as well as whether the expectations for (not) distributing personal information are met (Nissenbaum, 2004: 138–43).

Some heritage organisations respond to these issues by accompanying their Open Data sets with additional descriptive metadata and information on the digitisation selection rationales (Ames, 2021: 9–11). But the provenance of data is also crucial when considering ethical implications when working with data (D’Ignazio and Klein, 2020: 5). In the context of research data management Carroll et al. recognised that the FAIR principles (see chapter three) are insufficient to address power inequities replicated in collection, management, and publication of data of Indigenous people’s provenance. The so-called CARE principles (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics) aim to enhance the FAIR principles and are explicitly situated within the wider context of Indigenous rights- and social justice movements to tackle “[...] the negative effects of unconscious bias and structural racism” (Carroll et al., 2020: 2). The CARE principles’ authors express some caution until the principles are fully matured, but in principle welcome their application in non-Indigenous contexts in future (Carroll et al., 2020: 8; Carroll et al., 2021: 5). Indeed, the CARE principles’ emphasis on “[...] how scientific data are used in ways that are purposeful and oriented towards enhancing wellbeing of people“ (Carroll et al., 2021: 3) chimes with the described archival social justice frameworks, and in particular with the Feminist ethics of care.

Viewing data provenance in light of social justice frameworks, highlights the relevance of the archival principle of provenance when assessing the consequences of Open Access frameworks to heritage collections’ stakeholders. As several scholars have pointed out, the unmediated and unrestricted access that comes with the online publication of archival material could not have been envisaged by its creators or depositors. Neither do we know which unforeseeable consequences archival data that is online retrievable, crawled and aggregated into new contexts has for those who have a stake in a collection (Ziegler, 2020; LeClere, 2018: 299; Rév, 2020: 243; Agostinho, 2019: 162). When working and engaging with archival collections, archivists, as well as users, have thus a duty to consider their ethical obligations towards people represented in collections who are most vulnerable, even if there are no legal limitations set. Otherwise, there is a risk of appropriation and entrenching unequal power relations. This point has been among others discussed in the context of photographs of people with disabilities, who were exhibited in so-called ‘freak-shows’ (Nicholas, 2014: 141), and the photographs “of enslaved and colonized subjects” (Odumosu, 2020: 289–93). The ethical implications of the uncertain future of digitised archives can be illustrated further. Who could for instance have anticipated that archival

First World War medical photographs, of identifiable people with severe facial injuries, would be used to design hostile characters in a video game (Biernoff, 2011)? Rehbein highlights how it is also not unthinkable that the data extracted from digitised church registers, and used for research on hereditary diseases, could also provide the basis for inferring a living descendant's risk for getting certain illnesses (Rehbein, 2016: 641–42). The archival principle of provenance (Padilla et al., 2019b: 14), and in particular the ethics of care have been identified as a useful starting point to consider the ethical implications of the digital afterlife of archival collections (Agostinho, 2020: 69–70; Ziegler, 2020). In the context of digital archives, the framework is in particular helpful because it takes explicitly into account the ethical obligations that result from the uncertain future uses of collections.

Caswell and Cifor summarise their proposed framework for digital archives as: “[...] a feminist ethics approach to digitisation calls for culturally situated, mutually dependent, ongoing relationships between the stakeholders of digital archival projects” (2019: 166). Considering the relationships and power-dynamics between creators, subjects, users and an archive's community is also essential in order to navigate through the tensions that may arise between the different interests of the parties who have a stake in the collection held by an archival institution. For this reason, there is no one-fits-all approach how an ethics of care framework looks like in praxis (Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 34–36). In terms of digital archives Caswell and Cifor give as an example how as part of an ethics of care framework an advisory board consisting of community members was established prior to the creation of a digital archive. In another instance digitisation was not set up as a means for preservation only. The project had rather a political mandate that aimed to create awareness about the injustices people with HIV/AIDS experience and was sensitive towards its contributors privacy (2019: 165–66). The BCA's co-curation practices with donors on Google Arts & Culture and the digital exhibitions of the MML, TUC- and the Feminist Library thus resonate with Caswell and Cifor's examples (see section 4.2). Nevertheless, what is considered to be appropriate to be shared online, or under which conditions, depends on the individual institution and how priorities are set. Section 6.3 shows how The MayDay Rooms for instance tend to put the emphasis on providing access, whereas the Feminist Library is more concerned with the competing interests of record subjects. The manifestations of ethics of care should thus, like other archival practices assessed under a social justice framework, be considered as being multidimensional, with possible positive or negative implications for one or another group (Duff et al., 2013: 339).

But why do the collections of Social Movement Archives, and indeed the organisations themselves, have such a significance for their communities? The next section suggests that considering how the interviewed organisations came into existence, what kind of material they collect, and where they are located, illustrate the affective nature of social movements' collections. Thereby it is important to not simply equalise the struggles of the different people and groups the interviewed Social Movement Archives represent. However, as Flinn et al. observe, activist-led archives “[...] are all united by the desire to tell their own stories [...] on their own terms” (2009: 83).

## **6.2 The affective nature of Social Movement Archives and their collections**

“[...] the collections at the Marx Memorial Library are about struggle, representing people's struggle [...]” (Ann - Trustee MML, 2020a).

One of the most important motivations for establishing an activist-led archival initiative is the perception that the community's records of the past are not, or insufficiently represented within governmental or academic archival institutions (Flinn, 2007: 156). The Feminist Library was founded in 1975 as the Women's Research and Resource Centre as a response to: “[...] the increasing quantities of printed material emanating from the women's liberation movement, most of which was in either periodical or ephemeral form and was not being collected by other libraries” (Collieson and Follini, 1995: 159). Furthermore, it is not uncommon that the motivation for putting efforts into collecting and preserving a community's heritage goes hand in hand with emotive or traumatic experiences. Such experiences may range from social change of an area (e.g., the decline of the mining industry) up to immediate political marginalisation and threat towards a community. Gaining authority over their past through the means of 'archiving' becomes then an act of empowerment (Flinn, 2007: 156–57). The BCA is in this regard a powerful example. While not exclusively, the uprisings against racial discrimination in 1981 formed an important catalyst for the archives foundation (Black Cultural Archives, 2022).<sup>92</sup> Caswell et al. highlight in their study on community archives in South California how the experienced invisibility, marginalisation or exclusion within society, and within mainstream

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<sup>92</sup> The BCA makes in this regard a reference to the New Cross Massacre. An overview on this event can be found in (Johnson, 2019).

memory institutions specifically, evoke emotions that range from “[...] anger and injustice at misrepresentation and also excitement at what archival collecting makes possible [...]” (2017a: 15). The specific affective impact of community owned collections depends on the individual. But crucial is that the spaces (which may also be virtual) where collections are held by activist-led archival initiatives form the basis for creating a sense of belonging. This is because the collections confirm and consolidate a community’s, or an individual’s, identity that is negated elsewhere (Caswell et al., 2017a: 19–20).

The idea of the archive as a space where one can develop a sense of belonging, by learning about a collective past, is commonly reflected in the educational provisions of Social Movement Archives (Flinn, 2011: 12–13). Education as a way to address and overcome injustice became an important form of action for Black activists in London in 1981. Education as a form of activism was a longer tradition in the Black education movements of the 1960s and 70s, in which the BCA’s founders were leading activists (Ishmael and Waters, 2017: 466). In the vision of Len Garrison, the BCA’s co-founder, the archive should provide Black school children through educational resources, positive reference points in Black British history in an anti-racist framework (1990: 238–41). Such a combination of library/archive and centre for education sits firmly within a tradition of workers-, activists-, and popular education, where people meet in collective spaces to learn and create new knowledge in order to change their living conditions (Choudry, 2015: 88–89). The rationale of activist-led archival initiatives is thus to provide the means for political action, self-help and history making. Social Movement Archives have for this reason not only close links to the social movements they originate from, but can indeed be understood as forms of activism themselves (Flinn and Stevens, 2009: 7). It is hence not a coincidence that in 1933 the MML was set up by the Marx Commemoration Committee as library *and* worker’s school, which held regular evening classes on history, Marxist philosophy, economics but also on literature, science, public speaking and art (Rothstein, 1983: 73–75). After the Second World War the MML’s emphasis shifted towards the provision of a library and archive (Cohen, 1990: 149–50). Since 2013 however, with the re-establishment of the education subcommittee, the MML’s educational arm has gained significance again (Jump, 2018: 129). Moreover, efforts are made to integrate the MML’s archives into the classes as resources which are characterised by an affective intimacy to learn and act up-on. As the library manager reflects in the MML’s journal *Theory & Struggle*:



“Why not just pick up a history book? Archives have a unique agency and strength. As manifestations of lived experience, they have an immediacy unrivalled in narrative and thematic histories. [...] Letters, printed appeals, even minute books have the power to transport the imagination. Not to a foreign land, but into the boots and shoes of working people in struggle, up against the same power structures. Through the MML’s archives, their voices are heard” (Jump, 2018: 130).

Educational activism is a central characteristic for the self-understanding of most of the interviewed Social Movement Archives, which is among others evident in their digitisation activities I discuss in section 4.2. It is however possible that education may not have been the primary motivation for establishing an archive. The TUC Library was for example founded in 1922 as the TUC-Labour Party Research Department (Coates, 2009: 54). In other instances, like the MayDay Rooms, the motivation for founding the organisation emerged from the realisation that without archival salvage work “[...] documents of dissent and radical expression [...]” would be inevitably lost (MayDay Rooms, 2013a). Another important aspect when considering the affective nature of collections held by Social Movement Archives are thus the efforts that were taken to build the collections, and which kind of objects the focus is set. Indeed, collecting and caring for the collections held in Social Movement Archives may also involve significant personal expense (see also their dependency on volunteer work in section 5.2). The founders of the WCML, Eddie and Ruth Frow, report on how for over 20 years they have spent their vacations travelling across the UK foraging in second-hand bookshops for resources that document the history of the working class (Frow and Frow, 1976). The fruits of their collecting efforts were always available to the public, even though until 1987 their library was stored in their home. Because Eddie and Ruth Frow were both active trade unionists and members of the Communist Party (WCML, 2021), the couple is also an example of how collecting and caring for archival material of their own community is for some a deeply personal act which is indistinguishable from wider political activism. The backbone of the BCA’s collection forms similarly to the WCML the personal collection of its co-founder Len Garrison. While building his collection, the focus has been especially on the ephemeral: objects that were used by Black activist communities (Ishmael and Waters, 2017: 465–69), but would fall outside the radar of the collecting efforts of mainstream institutions (Flinn, 2007: 154). As Sellie et al. point out, it is this interwoven relationship between collecting body and the

activists' communities who take care for their own memories, that distinguishes community-led archival initiatives from mainstream institutions (2015: 456).

The question of where social movements' collections are held is thus not insignificant. In many activist-run archives there is a fear of losing legal and physical custody due to experienced misrepresentation, or erasure of the own history by the formal heritage sector. Even where mainstream institutions are regarded with sympathy, there is a reluctance to place collections outside a community's custody, as it might lead to new hurdles for accessing the collections. An academic institution may have for instance different access protocols than a community archive, or the new location of the archive might be removed from the physical community (Flinn, 2007: 167–68). The locality of a collection may also be of importance to donors who want to have the assurance that their materials are safeguarded in a specific intellectual, or symbolic context (Eichhorn, 2014: 232). Indeed, the localities of Social Movement Archives and their collections have often a symbolic, even emotive character that resonate with a community's identity, which aim to strengthen their position in society. Moreover, the physical location does often emphasise the archive's purpose as a site where activists meet, learn, discuss and take action (Moore and Pell, 2010: 260; Flinn, 2017: 19–20). The historical significance of the MML's premises, as described in section 1.1, is only one example in this regard. 88 Fleet Street has for the MayDay Rooms similarly a symbolic character, as it places the archive close to the history of activists' publishing in East London, as well as the address highlights through its proximity to the financial district the organisations' opposition to one of the centres of global capitalism (MayDay Rooms, 2013a). The BCA's location on Windrush Square Brixton does likewise not only situate the archive firmly within the area's history of migration from the Caribbean after the Second World War (Garrison, 1990: 242–43), but also highlights Len Garrison's vision to create an institution of national significance for Black history (Ishmael and Waters, 2017: 468). The symbolism of the BCA's locality is even strengthened further, as the archive's address is number 1 Windrush Square; named in 1998 in commemoration of the ship 'Empire Windrush' that brought in 1948 people from the Caribbean to Britain, who helped rebuilding the post-war country (Garrison, 1990: 243; Royal Museums Greenwich, 2021). That some of the interviewed organisations are located in academic institutions appears only in a first instance as a contradiction to the importance for activists' communities of where collections are housed (Flinn, 2017: 19). The decline of trade union memberships forced the TUC to move its library to the London

Metropolitan University in 1996. Ownership of the library is however kept by the TUC (Coates, 2009: 54). Furthermore, the TUC's choice for the Metropolitan University was not a coincidence, as the university has itself a strong relationship to the working class, a tradition of activism (e.g. supporting the miners' strike), teaching trade union studies and is well-known for its students' diversity (Librarian TUC Library, 2020). In case of the Feminist Library the locality of the archive takes even a hybrid form. The library itself is an independent organisation, and since 2020 located within the Sojourner Truth Centre in Peckham London. The centre is named after the African-American abolitionist activist Sojourner Truth (born Isabella Baumfree) and located in an area that has its own history of women-led anti-slavery movement (Corser, 2020: 31–32). However, due to the lack of resources for conservation, the Feminist Library's archival collection - in particular fragile material like posters, pamphlets or ephemera - were given in custody to the Bishopsgate Institute, while ownership is maintained by the library (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). The context of where the Feminist Library's collection were created is nevertheless maintained, as the Bishopsgate Institute has a proficiency for taking care for archival collections from sub-cultures, activists, LGBTQ+ people, labour and women's history (Bishopsgate Institute, 2021).

As I discussed throughout this section, social movements' collections are affective in nature because they provide a community a sense of identity by situating their own memories within an activist context and close to their provenance (the people from which the collections originate from). The subject of the next section is how my interview partners negotiate access through an enhanced notion of provenance, which considers the stakes of creators, subjects, users and the wider society in the collection. Legal frameworks, especially data protection law, play a role but they are not the determining factor to establish access policies.

### **6.3 Instances of ethics of care**

A major concern for my interview partners is the protection of personal information which through the online publication of archival material may cause harm or distress for record creators and subjects. So is data protection law for the Amsab-ISH and the WCML the primary reference for assessing whether files can be made accessible online, or more generally, available to a reader (Library Manager WCML, 2020; Head of research Amsab-

ISH, 2020). The definition of personal data in UK data protection law is broad, and applies to any form of information (e.g. name, photograph, insurance number) that can be used to identify a living person (Maguire, 2018: 76–77). Under UK data protection law, which consists of the EU GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, the processing and retention of personal data requires a lawful basis. Archives establish their lawful basis through the public interest<sup>93</sup> in archiving, which also applies to activist and/or community-led initiatives. Archiving for the public purpose gives archives not only the legal basis to process and archive personal information, but also exempts or limits data subject from rights, including ‘the right of erasure’ and ‘the right to be informed’ (The National Archives, 2018: 12-14;23). However, before information can be made accessible, an archive must carry out a data protection impact assessment, which seeks to identify and mitigate potential risks through data exposure. Unless there is an outweighing public interest for disclosure, a record might be kept closed, and personal information is withheld from the online catalogues until access to the data is unlikely to have a substantial negative effect on an individual. Like financial, physical, or mental harm for instance. In some cases a record can only be opened if it can be assumed an individual is not alive anymore.<sup>94</sup> Files might be made available for research purposes if personal information is kept anonymised (The National Archives, 2018: 15-16;28-31).

Interview partner 7 reports in this context on minutes from meetings of anti-fascist groups (antifa) in the 1990s. Such documents that include information, which in the wrong hands could put record creators and subjects into danger, are exempt from the archive’s usual extensive digitisation efforts (see section 5.2). Documents containing such personal, sensitive information are only catalogued on a rudimentary level, and marked in the online finding aid to be of restricted access for 40 years. After that period of time the access policy to these documents is assessed again. According to my interview partner exemptions to this restrictive access policy are nevertheless possible. If someone has for instance an ethics approval from a university, the terms of access to such records on-site can be negotiated. Digital copies may be made upon request, but only through anonymising all personal information (Interview partner 7, 2020). The MayDay Rooms are

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<sup>93</sup> There is no definition for ‘public interest’ in UK legislation. However, archiving for business purposes alone is for instance not in the public interest. Archiving should: serve a clear purpose (e.g. creating a community identity or contributing to organisational accountability); consist of archival practices which adhere to relevant standards and ensure the records ‘enduring value’; be done by an organisation that makes its archiving endeavours and scope transparent (The National Archives, 2018: 24–25).

<sup>94</sup> A lifespan of 100 years is usually assumed if the date of death is unknown (The National Archives, 2018: 31).

like interview partner 7 cautious about making information about activists available. The main consideration of how records can be accessed is whether they were created for public or private purposes. Files that contain internal documents of political groups, like minutes or letters for instance, can be accessed only within the archive's reading room. Yet, my interview partner admits that determining an access policy for a document, through its either 'public-' or 'private/internal character' is not always clear-cut (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). On some occasions the control over access can also be entirely up to the donor of a collection. The MayDay Rooms' digital archivist mentions in this case the files of a police monitoring project, where the permission for access must not be sought from the MayDay Rooms, but from the depositors (2020).

The examples of interview partner 7 and the MayDay Rooms illustrate the importance of the physical reading room in contrast to the online environment, because the reading room functions as a space of where access can be mediated and negotiated according to a community's expectations for access (Dalglish, 2011: 71–72). Interview partner 7 and the MayDay Rooms' handling of antifa minutes and police monitoring files fit well within the scope of data protection law and in a first instance they do not differ significantly from standard archival practice. The UK National Archive's guide to archive personal data highlights for instance that on-site access might be appropriate, whereas online access to the same material not, because an individual name would be retrievable through catalogue systems and search-engines (The National Archives, 2018: 34). What distinguishes legal from ethical considerations to determine access conditions is that in the latter case the archivist has an active role in navigating through legal or ethical ambiguities (Bingo, 2011: 508). Crucial in the described cases of interview partner 7 and the MayDay Rooms is the role of the reading room, which sets the boundaries where control over access is not primarily governed by copyright and data protection law, but rather through social control and the prerequisite to gain trust from the archivists or depositors. In the case of files like the antifa minutes, the reading room gives interview partner 7 literally the possibility to “[...] keep an eye on what you do [...]” (2020). My interview partners' care about potential threat for individuals is best understood in the activist setting the archive situates itself, and the sensibilities of some Social Movement Archives to protect information about activists would predate the recent strengthened personal rights through the amendments in data

protection law and professional guidelines.<sup>95</sup> While today the physical archives of the interviewed organisations are available to everyone, the principle of public access has in some Social Movement Archives evolved over time and used to be much more exclusive. In the MML's early years membership for the lending library was for instance only available for people who could demonstrate to be associated with a working class organisation (Flinn, 2017: 10–11). In 1991 the Feminist Library changed similarly its access policy and became a women-only space. A decision which at that time was seen as a “[...] political step that placed the library firmly in a radical context and indicates that its frame of reference is feminism rather than librarianship” (Collieson and Follini, 1995: 163).<sup>96</sup> The (past) exclusivity of access to the MML and the Feminist Library's physical collections are illustrative for the organisations' identity to establish control and ownership for their communities' histories (Flinn, 2017: 10–11), which includes the protection from real or perceived malicious intent from 'outsiders'. These examples of establishing control over collections through the archivist and archive as mediators serve also as reminders of how power asymmetries are immanent to caring (Agostinho, 2019: 161; Caswell and Cifor, 2016: 32), and that the practices of the interviewed archives should not be spared from critical assessments. But as Agostinho argues in her critique of the colonial trajectory of caring: acknowledging the limitations of caring, taking it not as an intrinsic good, allows to identify and address where care consolidates or counters injustice (2019: 161–62).

In the online environment the control over access through the means of a reading room, and the possibilities to establish trust between user, archive, and donors is however limited (Dalglish, 2011: 71). Gaining and maintaining trust from the people a Social Movement Archive serves is thus essential and, as Kirsty Fife observes in the context of a Queer online archive, is best “[...] fostered through the capacity to care [...]” (2019: 236). As described in section 6.1, caring for archival collections builds up on an extended understanding of provenance. The impact of an online publication on collection creators, subjects, donors, and the wider society are weighed up, rather than determining an access policy through legal ownership. An important aspect for some of the interviewed Social Movement Archives, rather than relying on legal frameworks, is for instance to obtain

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<sup>95</sup> The code of practice for archivists for the 1998 Data Protection Act considered for instance that “[...] membership of an extreme political group or party may be of little interest after 20 years and none after 40 and disclosure therefore may not damage the data subject's reputation or standing in the community” (The National Archives et al., 2007: 37).

<sup>96</sup> There is no membership required for accessing the MML's collections anymore and the Feminist Library puts emphasis on being an all-gender inclusive space now. See: <http://feministlibrary.co.uk/about/> (accessed 3 September 2020).

consent and permission from collection donors and creators before digitisation takes place. The MayDay Rooms and interview partner 7 make it both explicit to donors that, within the limitations described above, material will be digitised and made available online.<sup>97</sup> At the time of the interview the BCA is evaluating on how procedures could look like that aim to gain consent for digitisation from donors on an ongoing basis (Archivist BCA, 2020). The MayDay Rooms' digital archivist points out that while most donors are willing to give permission for digitising their collections, sometimes the negotiations with donors are not without tension because they fear losing intellectual control over their works or collections (2020). Difficulties in gaining consent can also arise due to the age of some archival documents. The age of some collections and/or the lack of contact information make the task of obtaining consent from record owners, creators, or subjects in some cases just not feasible. As discussed in section 5.3, it is often the original intention, or purpose of an archival object that helps to determine what kind of access does not undermine the trust of a Social Movement Archive's stakeholder then. My interview partner from The Feminist Library mentions in this context objects that were created for the purpose to be distributed in order to raise awareness about political causes, like posters, flyers and badges (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020).

In those examples considerations on an object's purpose give the Feminist Library the freedom to depart from copyright frameworks, but sometimes caution due to an archival object's content must be given. Some of the Feminist Library's collections were created for women only and are excluded from digitisation (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). My interview partner speaks here of archival collections like zines; magazine-like ephemeral documents, created in a DIY ethos and usually in small print runs. While zines are in a strict sense published documents, the content of zines is however often highly personal in nature, and thus produced within and for intimate contexts. The small networks of friends and like-minded people where zines are usually shared, allow zine authors to assume a certain safety to speak about sensitive topics, that is not given in other publication formats (Chidgey, 2006: 6). Similar concerns about consent of collection co-creators or contributors are relevant in the context of erotica or pornography, as Tara Robertson illustrates through the case of the digitisation of a lesbian porn magazine. Many contributors to the magazine gave consent to be included in the magazine before the advent of the internet, and assumed that the small edition of such a publication would only

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<sup>97</sup> See: <https://maydayrooms.org/archives/> (accessed 11 September 2021).

be shared within the relative safe-space of a confined and intended community (Robertson, 2018: 227–29). Social media scholar danah boyd discusses how information which is intended for a specific audience in a certain social context is difficult to control online. That is because information on the web can be searched, found, consumed, and replicated asynchronously by an anonymous audience, and from a distinct social sphere. As a consequence of these factors the context of the information collapses (2008: 34–37).<sup>98</sup> The often positive, or at least neutral, framed connotation of digitisation of breaking up the constraints of physical objects and to create Open Data collections (Thylstrup, 2018: 3), is in the described cases problematic because the context collapse is unintentional and unknown by the content creator and has potential negative effects (Davis and Jurgenson, 2014: 481). Indeed it is the “negotiated intimacy” in which Feminist and LGBTQ+ ephemera is commonly produced, that holds the potential to compromise someone’s reputation, relationships as well as physical and mental health by exposing such content through web archives (Cowan and Rault, 2018: 124–25). An intimacy that contradicts in particular with the unmediated nature of access through the internet (Fife, 2019: 235; Barton et al., 2016). Which is why some of the interviewed Social Movement Archives seek to counter the potential decontextualization of digitised collections.

Flinn observes how the defining principle of Social Movement Archives to exercise “physical custody” over collections can translate in the online environment to a desire to “[...] retaining the intellectual ownership [...]” (2011: 8–9). Such an ‘intellectual ownership’ and mediated access is for the interviewed organisations in particular crucial for collections that depict the core struggles and marginalisation of their people. Indeed, as demonstrated in section 6.2, collecting, archiving and gaining authority about such collections is the primary purpose of Social Movement Archives. My interview partner from the BCA reflects on how the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage to allow reuse of digitised material in different or new contexts, poses a serious challenge to the authority the archive seeks to gain by embedding its collections into an own narrative:

“[...] some things are very emotive, and some of the collections we have are very traumatic, like our collections do deal with state violence, racism, and kind of difficult topics. But again, I would be cautious about just having them out there free to be used without context. I think a slightly more closed open policy helps mitigate against that a little bit. It's

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<sup>98</sup> I would like to thank Leontien Talboom, PhD student at the UCL Department of Information Studies, for bringing my attention to the theory of context collapse.



not like it's a picture of a flower. If we had like lots of pretty pictures of flowers, yeah sure do what you want. But it's just kind of that we are a bit more wary about the context or the content as well" (Archivist BCA, 2020).

Contextualising collections, the perception that "[...] we can't just whack-up stuff online" (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020a), was also a central theme throughout the PAR research with MML team members. MML volunteer Claire noted in the diagnosing phase that while users need the freedom to make their own sense of an image, the library must put efforts in providing contextual information:

"You can't simply just put pictures on the website and just leave it like that. The determining of the context and why they're there, why we've we got them and a bit about where they connect to must be a big consideration for the library" (2019).

MML volunteer Will sees even for the MML, besides working in alignment with legal frameworks, "[...] a moral responsibility to make sure [...] that the audience is aware of what the original author was actually intending that [original work] for" (2020c).

Contextualisation fits thus well within the MML's educational and political remit and is most evident in the online exhibitions I review in section 4.2. Intellectual ownership over a collection also explains the reluctance of my interview partners towards commercial use of collections. Rather than a desire to maintain exclusive rights for creating revenue (Wallace, 2020f: 2–4; Wallace, 2020d: 10–11; Sanderhoff, 2014b: 70–72), some interview partners perceive a commercial use of their collections as a contradiction to either the original purpose of their collection's items, or to a creator's intellectual legacy. Both cases may challenge Social Movement Archives' crucial relationship with their donors, who, at worst, could lose trust in the archive's capabilities to safe-guard their donations (Caswell and Jules, 2017: 8; Eschenfelder and Caswell, 2010: 6). In this context the BCA's archivist asks: "Would a member of the Black Women Movement, who's you know, broadly Marxist, be happy for us to be selling their image on a T-shirt? I'm not really sure" (2020). In the rare occasions where the extent of digitisation activities in the interviewed organisations makes a discussion on creating revenue through digitisation relevant, as came up in the PAR diagnosing focus group discussion (see also section 4.3.2), there is the perception that this is to be done "[...] tastefully [...] in sympathy with the original artistic material and also the message that we are trying to promote as an organisation [...]" (Joseph - Volunteer MML, 2019).

Another area where intellectual ownership and the mediation of access plays a role is when Social Movement Archives are faced with the challenge of how to provide access to documents that subvert or contradict their political values. However, what is perceived as appropriate to be made accessible and by which means is regarded differently from organisation to organisation. The display of white supremacy content in a physical exhibition has for instance caused some debate at the New York based 'Interference Archive', and was only acceptable because the material fit with a particular strand of the exhibition, and visitors would not access the documents unprepared (Descartes et al., 2020: 184–85). In contrast, my interview partner from the TUC library explained to me that in his opinion the online publication of documents from the British Union of Fascists would not be problematic as long as the material is contextualised (Librarian TUC Library, 2020). In some instances, Social Movement Archives may mediate online access to their collections by informing users that the collection contains material that could be distressing. The MML's poster collection contains for instance two records which warn a user that "[...] this poster contains graphic content that some may find disturbing".<sup>99</sup> The posters were created by the 'Union Internationale des Étudiants' to draw attention to repression in Mexico and contain photographs of people who were shot. However, given the limited available resources for digitisation in the interviewed organisations it remains to be investigated whether Social Movement Archives would give material that they perceive as problematic a priority to be digitised at all. A search through the TUC's online resources on British fascist organisations for instance, brings up only one document with actual fascist propaganda.<sup>100</sup> The low presence of fascist material suggests that while my interview partner could imagine making such material available online in the context of an online exhibition, it is questionable whether material from fascist organisations would be given priority when selection for a digitisation project is made. The two mentioned posters of the MML are likewise the library's only digital items with trigger warnings. The rationale to exclude material from digitisation entirely due to ethical reasons is perhaps far more

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<sup>99</sup> See: Union Internationale des Étudiants (n. d.). Halte Aux Crimes!. <https://marx.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/RecordView/Index/71923> (accessed 25 July 2021) and Union Internationale des Étudiants (1971). Journée de Solidarité Internationale Avec La Lutte Du Peuple et Des Étudiants Mexicains : 2 Octobre, 1971. <https://marx.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/RecordView/Index/72010> (accessed 25 July 2021).

<sup>100</sup> The document found is The National Fascisti Emergency Manifesto, 3 May 1926. The organisations searched for were: 'British Fascists', 'National Fascisti', 'Imperial Fascist League', 'British Union of Fascists', 'Militant Christian Patriots', 'National Socialist League', 'English National Association', and 'Scottish Fascist Democratic Party'. The search was conducted on the 18th of October 2021 through all the TUC's online packages at <http://unionhistory.info/workerswar/advsearch.php>

common, and indeed resonates with the ethics of care (Caswell and Cifor, 2019: 166–67), rather than making problematic or sensitive archival material available with accompanying contextual information. Some of interview partner 7 organisation’s holdings, contain for instance texts written with the intention to decriminalise paedophilia. While it is according to my interview partner important to preserve such material for future research, and to remain aware that within the discourse on sexual liberation such ideas were present, interview partner 7 either excludes such documents from digitisation entirely, or makes relevant sections unreadable prior to the online publication (2020). Caring can also include considering whether the function of an archival document is still of relevance today, or whether a publication online would be insensitive towards record subjects. At the PAR evaluation workshop ‘Why do we digitise: Part 1’, the MML’s library manager questions in this case if digitising a file of photographs taken from children who were killed during the Spanish Civil War would be appropriate, despite the pictures were in the late 1930s published and distributed to raise international awareness on the war (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020a). The decision not to digitise these images is not grounded in considerations on data protection, which would only apply to living subjects. Neither is the MML’s decision based on copyright which would determine works as part of the public domain, where the creator has passed away more than 70 years ago. The primary rationale is rather grounded in the MML’s responsibility to act as the custodian of the International Brigade Memorial Trust’ archives, and to be compassionate towards traumatic experiences that is shared across generations.

## **6.4 Summary**

In this chapter I have discussed why exercising control over access to some collections is crucial for the interviewed Social Movement Archives. To fully appreciate the complexity that Open Access frameworks pose to Social Movement Archives, it is important to consider the affective significance Social Movement Archives have for the communities they serve. This affective nature becomes evident when we consider the emotive founding history of the organisations themselves; the personal efforts and sacrifices that were made collecting rare and unique archival material; as well as the significance of Social Movement Archives for their communities as physical spaces for political education, action, commemoration, and creating a sense of belonging. But the most important factor that

requires Social Movement Archives to make nuanced decisions on whether collections can be made accessible online, are considerations on the collections' provenance. The Feminist ethics of care provides a useful framework to account for the numerous affective obligations the interviewed organisations have due to the provenance of their collections towards the creators and subjects of records, the users of the archive, and the wider communities an organisation serves. These obligations are a result of the content of social movement collections which contain personal information about political activists and material that was created with the intention to be accessed by certain peer-groups only. The content of some collections may also be unsuitable for digitisation because certain items could cause harm to vulnerable members of society, or digitisation is perceived as being insensitive towards groups who experienced traumatic events. Unmediated online access may also be problematic for some Social Movement Archives because the content of some collections undermines their political values. All these factors, like the digitisation practices in chapter five, shape how we access digitised, and in some cases also physical, archival collections. Social Movement Archives mediate access due to ethical concerns which form another piece of the mosaic of digital assemblages and invite us to reflect on how realistic fully 'open' digital heritage collections could be.

The means of control and statements I have discussed in this chapter should not tempt to consider Social Movement Archives as being naïve about the extent of how much control over online collections is possible. Indeed, particularly the decision not to digitise certain items is informed by the potential harm that digitisation could cause to individuals, due to the unrestrictive nature of online access. Furthermore, if even major institutions do not have the resources to control how digital collections are used (Schmidt, 2018: 32), then any attempt to do so would be out of reach for most Social Movement Archives. However, the degree of the willingness to give up control depends on the individual organisation. And although ownership and control are central characteristics of Social Movement Archives, it would be wrong to frame them as political orthodox. The MML's library manager makes for instance clear that "[...] we can't police as how people use our collection. I feel quite strongly about this. You know people come and use our collection, we don't [check the] politics of our readers for obvious reasons" (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2019). I also do not argue that Open GLAM may have no relevance for Social Movement Archives. Indeed, section 4.3 shows that my interview partners see also the potential benefits of Open Access frameworks. But as discussed in this chapter, if

there were for instance funding opportunities that support initiatives to make collections of social movements openly available, it is necessary to have a nuanced understanding of Open Access to cultural heritage. A conception of Open Access that considers the diverse responsibilities Social Movement Archives have due to their collections' provenance. And these responsibilities may go beyond the legal frameworks of copyright and data protection. The OpenGLAM-, as well as the 'collections as data' initiative have acknowledged that not all types of collections are suitable to be made accessible online (Wallace, 2020e: 3–4; Padilla et al., 2019a: 3–4). This chapter demonstrates that Social Movement Archives, with their nuanced approaches to facilitate access, based on collections' provenance, have much to offer to the discourse on the heritage sector's ethical obligations before embarking into digitisation projects. Moreover, the significance of provenance, context integrity, considerations on creators' consent, as well as the theory of ethics of care receive also increasingly attention in the field of digital scholarship (Blanke and Prescott, 2016: 16; Suomela et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2020: 138; Moravec, 2017: 189–90).

Research in the United States has shown that community archives are sometimes reluctant to contribute to digital heritage infrastructure platforms, like the Digital Library of America, because a contribution has the potential to undermine the community archives' values, autonomy and the contextual integrity of their collections (Caswell and Jules, 2017: 9). Concerns that also informed to some extent the development of the SHP. However, as the next chapter suggests, while the SHP subverts to some extent mainstream archival practises and objectives, it also replicates them in other instances. In the MayDay Rooms' 'partisan shadow library' [leftove.rs](http://leftove.rs) we encounter an infrastructure that operates as a critique to copyright, and as a means of knowledge production.

## 7. Open Access on Social Movement Archives' digital infrastructures

In order to fulfil an ideal of free flow of information in form of aggregated and linked collections, heritage organisations must overcome the limitations set by copyright and technical interoperability for their digitisation projects (Thylstrup, 2018: 66–67; 97). It is thus no coincidence that the OpenGLAM initiative's main concerns are focussing on a harmonisation of copyright practices, with the main emphasis on not adding new rights to digital surrogates of public domain material, and the promotion of interoperability for exchanging collections data between different parties (see section 3.2). If interoperability and a "copyright consensus" (Wallace, 2020e) are the ideals of the OpenGLAM initiative, the question is then whether and how these two issues are approached in the digital infrastructures Social Movement Archives produce and participate in. For this purpose, I focus on the SHP and leftove.rs. The former links also some collections to Europeana and is hosted by the International Association of Labour History Institutions (IALHI). The latter, leftove.rs, is a project co-ordinated by the MayDay Rooms. I ask: What forms of Open Access emerge in the context of digital infrastructures used and created by Social Movement Archives?

The provision of access to digital collections through portals like the SHP or leftove.rs is especially within the field of the DH a fundamental characteristic of what is deemed to be an 'infrastructure' (Edmond, 2016: 61; Rockwell, 2010: 616; McGillivray et al., 2020: 12). In the context of digital archives or portals we thus speak of a form of information infrastructures, which may be more specifically described as: "[...] the set of organizational practices, technical infrastructure and social norms that collectively provide for the smooth operation of scientific work [or in our context, any other engagement with digital archives] at a distance" (Edwards et al., 2007: 6). As indicated above, crucial for the 'smooth operation' of infrastructure and its compatibility with other systems is the incorporation of interoperable standards (Star and Ruhleder, 1996: 113). In the UK the use of computers within archival institutions and the development of cataloguing standards have developed as individual strands, but from the mid-1970s onwards these two paradigms fused together under what Jenny Bunn calls "[...] a project of systematization [...]" (2019: 173). This development forced archivists to create standards which needed to fulfil two needs: First, standards need to be as unambiguous as possible to be processable by machines, and

second, they have to be as generic as possible so that standards can be used across different institutions. Within the archival profession it is little acknowledged how adhering to these two requirements shaped archival work practices, despite computers impose their own logic and limitations on how knowledge or information can be stored, structured or represented (Bunn, 2019: 170–73). Interoperability is thus “[m]ore than denoting a technical fact [...] interoperability emerges today as an infrastructural logic, one that promotes openness, modularity, and connectivity” (Thylstrup, 2018: 68). Interoperability and standards permit interconnecting and exchanging data between different parties, but as scholars have pointed out, standards may equally create barriers for different communities or stakeholders to participate in a system (Pargman and Palme, 2009: 190; Busch, 2011: 239; Borgman, 2015: 46–47). Caswell and Jules report for instance how practitioners from community archives expressed among others concerns to participate in a national digital infrastructure, because standards force them to adapt to dominant forms of knowledge organisation, and leave little or no room for own ways of thinking and expression (2017: 9–10).

The focus of this chapter is how the SHP and leftove.rs navigate through the legal and technical standards that hamper and accelerate digitisation projects. The practices of the SHP and leftove.rs disrupt and enhance the way Open Access to digital collections is promoted by the OpenGLAM initiative. Borrowing a phrase Thylstrup has used in her analysis of the infrastructures of so-called shadow libraries (see section 7.2), I argue that the SHP and leftove.rs both operate “[...] in the area of tension between resistance and standardization” (Thylstrup, 2018: 86). The first part of this chapter, section 7.1, focusses on the SHP. I introduce Europeana’s aggregator model, and then review the development history and ethos of the SHP and its aggregator HOPE. In section 7.1.2 I discuss how HOPE facilitates the metadata exchange between Social Movement Archives, and in section 7.1.3 how copyright and licensing are approached. In both instances I feed in experiences from the PAR project’s action, the MML’s poster upload to the SHP. Leftove.rs is subject of section 7.2. I situate leftover.rs in the context of shadow libraries. I argue how leftover.rs’ Open Access politics subvert the Open Access model promoted by the OpenGLAM initiative (section 7.2.1). The subject of section 7.2.2 is how leftover.rs aggregation practices need to be understood in an activist context. In section 7.3 follows the chapter summary.

## 7.1 The Social History Portal: A Europeana aggregator portal

From 2010 to 2013 the European Commission dedicated funding to bolster the EU strategic framework i2010 under the ‘Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) (European Commission, 2010: 3). Three out of the six objectives of the ICT PSP’s theme 2: ‘digital libraries’, were specifically set up to support and enhance the digital library Europeana.<sup>101</sup> One of the objectives was in particular concerned with enriching the content of Europeana through culminating existing content from European heritage organisations, the standardisation of metadata, and ensuring the interoperability between content providers. Not only from a sole technical perspective, but also through establishing ‘Best Practice Networks’ (European Commission, 2010: 14–15). According to the 2009 ‘Europeana Content Strategy’, essential for achieving these tasks, and in order to diversify the pool of content providers,<sup>102</sup> was the development of an aggregator network (Heijink, 2009: 4–5).

An Europeana aggregator is an infrastructural body that collects content from participating heritage organisations, structures data submissions into a common format (in case of Europeana into the Europeana Data Model – EDM) and mediates digital collections to the Europeana portal. In particular the normalisation of metadata is an important feature of aggregators due to the abundance of different metadata standards in use within the heritage sector (Europeana, 2010b: 2). According to the 2019 Europeana Publishing Guide, the Europeana aggregator network consists of 33 bodies with 3,500 content providers (Scholz, 2019: 6). Europeana aggregators can be domain specific, such as the European Fashion Heritage Association, or the Jewish Heritage Network. Other aggregators have a national or regional scope. Examples include here the Czech Digital Library, Cultura Italia, or the Digital Repository of Ireland (Europeana Pro, 2021). Some aggregators publish the data of content providers exclusively to Europeana, others have also their own portal (Europeana, 2010b: 3), like the Archives Portal Europe<sup>103</sup> and the SHP. While aggregators are invisible for most Europeana users, aggregators are essential components of digital heritage infrastructures similar to Europeana, such as the Digital Public Library of America

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<sup>101</sup> The objectives of theme 2 digital libraries were: ‘coordinating Europeana’, ‘enhancing/aggregating content in Europeana’, ‘digitising content for Europeana’, ‘access to European rights information/registry of Orphan Works’ and ‘Open Access to scientific information’ (European Commission, 2010: 13–19).

<sup>102</sup> According to a content analysis, which informed Europeana’s 2009 content strategy, almost 70% of Europeana’s approximately 5 million items were at that time provided by the National Library of France, Culture.fr, the Saxon State Library and Memory of the Netherlands (Heijink, 2009: 4; 24–25).

<sup>103</sup> See: <http://www.archivesportaleuropefoundation.eu> (accessed 11 December 2021).



or DigitalNZ, as they enable access at scale to collections across institutional repositories. As the 2009 Europeana Content Strategy points out:

“[t]he model of aggregation of content is of crucial importance and will enable Europeana to reach its objectives. Aggregators, on a national, regional or vertical level [domain specific aggregators], play a key role not only in aggregating content, but also in the organizational structure, standardization of content, services to end-users and future sustainability of Europeana and related projects and aggregators” (Heijink, 2009: 7–8).

Aggregators are also a perfect example of how infrastructural logics of modularity enter cultural-, social-, economical- and political-spheres (Thylstrup, 2018: 68–70), and support and foster a mode of lean operations. Rather than Europeana collaborating one-to-one with content providers, aggregators act as intermediaries between Europeana and individual organisations, and thus mitigate the goal conflict between achieving the economies of scale that Europeana aims for and the high amount of resources required for the data ingest and copyright clearance (Heijink, 2009: 8–9). Europeana aggregators were also envisaged to link up the cultural heritage domain with other sectors like tourism and the creative industries, and to create return of investments through service provisions for these sectors (Heijink, 2009: 10).

Aggregators need to ensure that the data submitted by content providers fulfil a minimum technical baseline set by Europeana. Aggregator services may support individual content providers in meeting these criteria where possible. The technical baseline set by Europeana is:

- A minimum of metadata elements (e.g., title, object type, subject etc.) must be provided and the metadata is to be submitted according to the EDM.<sup>104</sup>
- Each submission must have an associated digitised surrogate (some exception may be made for hierarchical archival collections, where not every level of a description has associated digitised objects). Europeana generates through inline linking a preview thumbnail image that is displayed on Europeana.

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<sup>104</sup> For more information about the recommended metadata quality see: (Scholz, 2019: 15–17)

- A unique and persistent identifier that links digital objects back to the content provider. Based on the identifier Europeana creates a permalink for the object (Scholz, 2019: 9–11; 18; Europeana, 2010b: 13).

Europeana also sets out a number of legal requirements for content providers. Content providers must sign the Europeana data exchange agreement, or an equivalent contract with their aggregator (Scholz, 2019: 6). According to the data exchange agreement no rights on metadata or digitised content are transferred to Europeana. But metadata provided to Europeana must be released under a 'Creative Commons Zero' license, thus making metadata available to third parties without any use restrictions (Europeana, 2014: 8–10). The preview of digitised images must be accompanied with one of Europeana's approved rights statement (for instance 'Creative Commons Attribution'). Digital surrogates of works in the public domain must be labelled as such (Europeana, 2014: 15–16).

### 7.1.1 The SHP's development history and ethos

The SHP is hosted by IALHI; a professional network founded in 1970 that brings together heritage organisations dedicated to preserving archival resources of social movements (IALHI, 2016). As of 2020, IALHI reports on having 121 member institutions worldwide, including organisations based in the US, Cuba, South Africa and Nepal. The majority of organisations are based in Europe however (Poy, 2020: 10). The perhaps most prominent and largest IALHI member is the IISH in Amsterdam, but also the MML, the TUC Library, the WCML or the CIRA, are IALHI members too.<sup>105</sup> The IALHI's flagship is the SHP, which is not only an online portal for accessing the collections of 21 European IALHI member organisations, but also houses a news service, links to domain-specific conferences, features a set of 'best practices for the Social History Domain' and a selection of additional resources and digital exhibitions.<sup>106</sup>

By the mid-2000s the technological developments around online access to collections and digitisation became a matter of interest for the IALHI network. A first shared infrastructure for remote access has been the Labour History Index, the predecessor of the SHP (Poy, 2020: 15–16). First ideas about what should later become the SHP were formally

<sup>105</sup> For a full list of member institutions see: <http://www.ialhi.org/members> (accessed 20 November 2021).

<sup>106</sup> All information retrievable through the SHP's main page: <https://socialhistoryportal.org> (accessed 20 November 2021).

discussed by IALHI member organisations at the workshop ‘For an International Concerted Policy of Labour History Archives Digitisation’, held in Paris in February 2009 (HOPE, 2010: 48). The participants met as a response to the increased mass digitisation efforts made by Google Books, European National Libraries and Europeana in order to share experiences IALHI member institutions had made with digitisation so far, to define common objectives, and to foster collaboration (IALHI, 2009: 10–13). The individual reports of the workshop participants pinpoint many of the factors that create digitisation assemblages and which I discuss in the preceding chapters of this thesis: the high costs of digitisation and storage; a lack of joint strategies; private and public funding bodies which set the conditions for collaborations; the different priorities needed when the focus of digitisation is on access or long-term preservation; difficulties to apply standards across different institutions; and the limitations set by data protection and copyright law. Among the workshop participants consensus emerged that to approach these issues a joint effort between IALHI members was required, especially for supporting smaller member organisations. Not only in financial matters, but also to help organisations with strong political and activist remits to maintain a certain amount of autonomy within mass digitisation projects (IALHI, 2009: 11). In particular the IISH was keen to develop the existing infrastructure of the Labour History Index further, and saw the opportunity that a new IALHI infrastructure could become a specialist portal within Europeana (IALHI, 2009: 18). However, the IISH workshop attendee also expressed concerns whether the nature of existing mass digitisation efforts by public and private bodies would fit with the values, needs and perceptions of ownership of Social Movement Archives (see chapter six):

“If you believe the policy makers and the Big Players, our national heritage is saved when the collections of the big national institutions have been digitized. Collections from ‘small’, ‘private’ or ‘specialist’ institutes can sometimes be of ‘additional’ value, so it can sometimes be digitized with project funds as long as the results are ‘donated’ to the national repositories and portals [...]. And, even worse, heritage material is used as a tool to create a ‘national identity’, or a ‘European identity’, whatever that may be. Many of our most important archive creators would be horrified by the idea...” (IALHI, 2009: 16–17).

IALHI made a successful application to the European Commission’s ICT-PSP digital libraries funding programme with the Heritage of the People’s Europe (HOPE) project. HOPE started on labour day 2010 for a three-year period (West, van der, 2013: 7). HOPE,

co-ordinated by the IISH and initially involving 11 IALHI content providers,<sup>107</sup> aimed to establish first and foremost “a Best Practice Network” (Werf, van der, 2009: 20). This network was envisioned to foster standardisation of metadata and digitisation practices among IALHI member organisations to make social history collections available online through Europeana, and to create an updated version of the Labour History Index. The SHP and Europeana would receive their data from IALHI content providers through the HOPE aggregator service (Werf, van der, 2009: 20–23). In the ambition of breaking up institutional silos of archival collections through the means of interoperability, HOPE did not differ from the nature and logics of Europeana aggregator services described in the introduction of this section. Indeed, a part of the HOPE infrastructure was imagined delivering content directly to a variety of Social Media platforms. Even collaborations with commercial web stores for image reproductions were considered in order to recover the costs for the maintenance of the HOPE Shared Object Repository for digital preservation (Siebinga et al., 2012: 25;31).<sup>108</sup> However, HOPE’s mission also resonated with an activist perception of archiving and digitisation to make the archives of those people accessible who are absent in the historical canon, and to support IALHI member institutions in their mission to conduct salvage work of archival records that have been dispersed in Europe throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Siebinga et al., 2012: 4–5). HOPE’s mission statement concluded:

“HOPE will make a major contribution to ensuring that the authentic voice of the working people of Europe, as preserved in the private collections of IALHI rather than in the records of the state, continues to be heard” (Siebinga et al., 2012: 5).

A key concern for HOPE was to foster best practices about providing digital access to social history collections. HOPE recognised in particular the importance of smaller IALHI member organisations as custodians of unique social movement collections, and in the long-term, aimed to leverage these organisations to benefit from the expertise of the larger IALHI members, like the IISH, and their maintained infrastructure. An infrastructure that should however be built in a way that would keep participating institutions as independent

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<sup>107</sup> Four additional content providers came to the HOPE project at a later point. See: <http://www.peoplesheritage.eu/content/partners.htm> (accessed 28 November 2021).

<sup>108</sup> However, at least for HOPE the potentials of integrating heritage collections into other web services turned out to be limited. Copyright concerns as well as the costs for using the APIs of Social Media platforms let the HOPE project abandon the Social Media content delivery (Caldeira and Lobato, 2013: 9). The HOPE Shared Object Repository was ultimately primarily funded through IALHI member institutions and in the end had to be shut down due to the high maintenance costs (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020).

as possible and not “[...] locking them in the HOPE system” (Siebinga et al., 2012: 7). According to the requirements of HOPE’s technical information architecture, the use of open standards and Open Source Software would be important to design a federated system that mitigates dependencies from proprietary vendors. HOPE also acknowledged Europeana’s Open Access policy, while pointing out that for some collections access may need to be restricted due to copyright or privacy considerations (Siebinga et al., 2012: 12–13). The infrastructure planned and created by the HOPE project is thus informed by practices that aim to ensure technical and legal interoperability. While HOPE was a project that aimed to foster a standardisation of professional practices among IALHI member organisations, HOPE recognised that also some nuanced practices may be necessary to accommodate the bespoke needs and capabilities of Social Movement Archives. The next two sections discuss how these nuanced practices come into play from a technical- (section 7.1.2) and copyright and licensing-perspective (section 7.1.3). Flexibility and sometimes even a departure from set requirements are from both perspectives necessary to accelerate the content aggregation of IALHI member organisations, and the MML specifically.

### **7.1.2 The HOPE aggregator’s technical practices**

From a technical perspective, one of the biggest challenges for the HOPE project has been the use of heterogeneous metadata schemes and standards for describing objects or collections (IALHI, 2013b). If the archive sector has spent decades in efforts for standardisation, why then is the metadata landscape of the IALHI network scattered? The IALHI network consists of archives, libraries and museums. Each of these types of heritage organisations have different traditions and standards for cataloguing collections. Provenance is for instance a description that is commonly found in archival finding aids, but not in library catalogues. Another example is that libraries or museums typically catalogue on an item level, whereas for archives it is more common to catalogue on a series- or file-level. The HOPE project had also to deal with eight different languages used in IALHI members’ cataloguing systems, and about 50% of the catalogue records were encoded in local, “idiosyncratic metadata” standards (Lemmens et al., 2011: 27–28). The phenomenon of idiosyncratic metadata standards was among others also the result of what the IALHI best-practice documentation calls “[...] self-made, patch-work type information systems [...]” for collection management. Systems that were built due to the

lack of bespoke solutions needed for managing and curating heterogeneous social history collections (IALHI, 2013b). Such problems are by no means entirely unique to IALHI and neither overcome by the heritage sector. Millerand and Bowker point out that while standardised metadata is a key enabler for exchanging information between digital archives, agreeing on standardised metadata is at the same time also one of the main challenges for any digital infrastructure project (2009: 150). The aggregation of metadata is thus not only hampered due to technological reasons. In addition to the reasons mentioned above studies also demonstrate how data exchange between heritage organisations is limited by an assemblage of in-house rules for cataloguing, working habits, staff turnover, dispersed documentation, resource and time constraints (Darcovich et al., 2019: 1–2), or broadly speaking, we may say, the histories of collections and their arrangements themselves (Sloan and Nyhan, 2021: 209–14).

HOPE addressed the encountered obstacles by creating a flexible metadata scheme for the IALHI domain through the ‘Common HOPE Metadata Structure’. The baseline for harmonising the catalogue records of content providers with the Common HOPE Metadata Structure are five metadata domain profiles. The five domain profiles are tailored for archive-, library-, museum-, and audio-visual collections, and based on common metadata standards used in these domains (for archives the ISAD(G) for instance). A fifth profile, based on the Dublin Core standard, was introduced as a “generic” domain category (Lemmens et al., 2011: 119–21). To publish collections on the SHP, the individual domain profiles are harmonised with the HOPE metadata structure. For collections which are additionally released on Europeana a third step involves the transformation of the HOPE metadata structure into EDM (Lemmens et al., 2011: 39–40).

The MML’s posters were catalogued according to a custom-made template, created by the MML’s collection management system provider Soutron. For the purpose of the pilot-project, the PAR project’s action, the SHP team was provided with the catalogue records of the poster collection in form of a ‘comma-separated values’ (CSV) file.<sup>109</sup> The SHP team mapped the poster catalogue records to the Dublin Core standard. Despite the flexibility of the Common HOPE Metadata Structure, the cleaning and ingest of the MML’s poster data into the HOPE aggregator involved nevertheless significant amount of labour for the SHP team.<sup>110</sup> A recent report on the landscape on Europeana aggregator services

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<sup>109</sup> Field notes taken on 30 January 2020.

<sup>110</sup> Field notes taken on 15 April 2020.

demonstrates that automation of metadata aggregation is the exception. The complexity of workflows for harmonising metadata standards and practices are at best semi-automated, or in most cases even entirely done on a manual basis (Butigan et al., 2020: 61).

The SHP's curtesy to accommodate the MML's capabilities were however in particular necessary in regard to a technology and best-practice which "[...] can be viewed as a cornerstone of the infrastructure required to unify collections" (Kotarski et al., 2020: 4): persistent identifiers (PIDs).<sup>111</sup> PIDs ensure the reference to digital resources and to retrieve a resource even if an archive changes its collection management system, or a digital resource changes its location entirely. This long-term reference to digital resources is usually achieved through a unique identifier and an identification service that is independent from the referenced digital resource. Thus, PIDs are essential tools for the digital long-term preservation of collections (Digital Preservation Coalition, 2015: 36). HOPE also recognised the importance of PIDs to identify ingested duplicates (Siebinga et al., 2012: 23). Despite the SHP's requirement that each submitted catalogue record and digitised collection object is assigned to a PID (Siebinga et al., 2012: 21), the SHP accepted the MML's data submission by using the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) as a reference to the MML's catalogue records.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, similar to the heterogeneous metadata standard landscape in the heritage sector, the HOPE project and also recent research suggests that the use of PIDs in libraries, archives, and museums is constrained by a number of barriers. Many collection management systems, especially from commercial vendors, do not support PIDs and small organisations in particular do not have the resources to setup the procedures and technical infrastructure that is required for the long-term management of PIDs (IALHI, 2013c; Kotarski et al., 2020: 20–21). Furthermore, many heritage organisations find it hard to make a business case for investing resources in PIDs, while no consensus has been reached yet which kind of PIDs solutions actually fulfil the needs of the sector best (Kotarski et al., 2020: 20–22).

But the SHP is also tailored towards the capabilities of Social Movement Archives in less subtle grounds than PIDs. A HOPE survey on the collections that could be ingested into the SHP and Europeana revealed that the vast majority of collections held by HOPE project partners were not digitised, due to a lack of resources, copyright or because past

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<sup>111</sup> Field notes taken on 13 March 2020.

<sup>112</sup> The HOPE aggregator used to host its own PIDs service for organisations that cannot provide their own PIDs (Lemmens et al., 2011: 161). However, this service does not exist anymore and now the SHP does commonly accept from data providers URLs, where no PIDs can be provided (verified through a personal email with one of the SHP's administrators on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022).

digitisation projects focussed primarily on the most popular or fragile collections. While the list of non-digitised collections was perceived as an instrument for scoping future digitisation projects, the HOPE project partners also realised that aggregating digitised collections only, would not provide a comprehensive picture on the collections held by IALHI organisations (Caldeira and Lobato, 2013: 29–30). Because Europeana does not accept metadata records without digital surrogates linked to it, the development of the SHP was also motivated by the need of the Social Movement Archives' domain to have an infrastructure that gives content providers the possibility to submit metadata only (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020). The MML's other digitisation activities on the Spanish Civil War photographs and the Printers' Collection would fit thematically into the remit of the SHP as well as Europeana. But these collections are like most of the MML's holdings catalogued on a series or file level, without individual digitised items attached to catalogue records. At the PAR evaluation stage the MML's library manager discussed how a change of practice workflows would need to be established, data cleaned and tests conducted (Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020c; Meirian - Archivist and Library Manager MML, 2020e). The SHP thus offers for the MML, at least in the intermediate run, a technical feasible option to participate in aggregated collections. How the HOPE aggregator's licensing and copyright practices supported the MML's contribution are subject of the next section.

### **7.1.3 The HOPE aggregator's licensing and copyright practices**

The HOPE project dedicated a bespoke work package to the development of Intellectual Property Rights best practices, due to the challenges copyright poses to digitisation projects (Caldeira and Lobato, 2012). The authors of the work package's report saw in HOPE the potential to tailor copyright practices of IALHI project partners towards online distribution of content, and were committed to non-restrictive copyright frameworks (Caldeira and Lobato, 2012: 13–14). Indeed, permissive copyright frameworks were seen to be in alignment with the political trajectory of IALHI member organisations:

"[...] Social History institutions traditionally have seen themselves as guardians of their collections, not owners, and their mandate is not to exert monopoly-like control over their holdings, but to serve public needs" (Caldeira and Lobato, 2012: 13).



This rationale echoes common arguments made for Open GLAM (see section 4.1), but the HOPE project also acknowledged that nuanced practices would be required to mitigate risks and obligations towards collection stakeholders.

The biggest obstacles for digitisation identified were that either HOPE project partners, archives in particular, have difficulties to identify or contact copyright holders of collections' items (orphan works), or that copyright is still held by an author or donor (Caldeira and Lobato, 2012: 14). Identified domain specific challenges for IALHI project partners consisted of the limited resources and expertise available for clearing copyright, and the need to accommodate the legal and ethical interests of collection stakeholders, such as authors, donors and record subjects, whose sometimes competing interests must be considered (Caldeira and Lobato, 2012: 15). But Caldeira and Lobato's report also highlighted work-practice-based reasons that pose constraints to copyright clearance, including:

- Depositor donation forms which do not include permissions for digitisation or online access provision.
- Archival collection management focussing on whole collections, rather than individual items.
- Idiosyncratic metadata standards which did not included fields for rights statements.
- The limited applicability of online licensing schemes, Creative Commons in particular, for heritage collections (2012: 15–16).

By the end of the HOPE project in 2013, the HOPE aggregator adopted Europeana's licensing requirements. Metadata submitted to HOPE had to be licensed under a Creative Commons Zero license, copyright for digital surrogates cleared, and reproductions of works in the public domain labelled as such (IALHI, 2013d). According to my interview partner from the SHP, this licensing practice ultimately changed however into a more nuanced practice that is informed by the priorities and capabilities of IALHI content providers, due to the challenges posed by copyright. For subsequent SHP exclusive submissions, the HOPE aggregator decided to not set licensing requirements for the metadata (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020), neither was the MML required to provide rights statements for the digital surrogates of the posters, or to sign-post posters in the

public domain.<sup>113</sup> HOPE is not the only aggregator with a nuanced licensing policy. The data exchange agreement of the Archives Portal Europe explicitly leaves the decision of whether data can be reused by third parties up to the individual content providers (Archives Portal Europe Foundation, 2021: 2). Only if metadata is made available through the API service it has to be licensed with the Creative Commons Zero license (Archives Portal Europe Foundation, 2020). In the context of HOPE my interview partner explains that the aggregator's practice is primarily informed by the experience how copyright and online licensing schemes are in their current remit not reflecting the needs and practicalities of the heritage sector. Another reason is the difficulty to keep up with new developments in legislation and the changing demands of content providers (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020). These last two points should be considered in light of the SHP's funding situation. Since 2016, after another funding iteration by the Europeana Digital Service Infrastructure project (Doek and Weber, 2017), the HOPE aggregator's further development and maintenance is solely dependent on the capacities provided by the IISH, the Amsab-ISH and the Archive of Social Democracy and Library of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020).<sup>114</sup> For HOPE the relevance for using online licensing schemes, at least for metadata, may also be low because as of December 2021 the SHP does not offer a publicly available API service.

It is in the responsibility of HOPE's individual content providers to ensure that they have the permission for ingesting digital images to the SHP (IALHI, 2013d). Like Europeana, HOPE thus follows a so-called "[...] 'clean hands' approach [...]" (Scholz, 2019: 26). While the clean hands approach operates on a policy level, there is also a technological equivalent that minimises the risk of copyright infringement for aggregators. For displaying digital surrogates of heritage collection items, the HOPE aggregator, as well as Europeana, make use of thumbnail images (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020). Thumbnail images, low resolution surrogates, direct users from a search interface to the location of the full-resolution image through an inline link. The technical requirements for thumbnail images are ambiguous and not definite. Yet, precisely because of their fuzzy character, thumbnail images became infrastructures in their own right for directing internet users to information, as well as encouraging consumption. US court decisions ruled that thumbnails are not to be considered as a copyright breach, because the actual image is stored on a different

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<sup>113</sup> Field notes taken on 21 April 2020.

<sup>114</sup> For an overview on the SHP's technical development between 2010 and 2019 in Dutch see: (Doek and Weber, 2019).

server. And as thumbnails serve as navigation tools another purpose than the original image, the use and creation of thumbnails falls under the provision of fair use (Thylstrup and Teilmann, 2017: 281–83; 288–89). But the rationale for providing only access to thumbnail images via inline links also intersects with the technical capabilities of Social Movement Archives. Similar to the MML, which hosts low-resolution images on its online catalogue due to copyright concerns and limited server capacities (see sections 5.1 and 5.3), HOPE would not have the capacity to store high-resolution images on its own servers (Head of research Amsab-ISH, 2020).

As a Europeana aggregator portal the SHP operates within and outside the technical and legal parameters set by Europeana. While the MML does not rule out a future contribution to Europeana, and thus an alignment with Open GLAM, it is the SHP's dissent from set Open Access standards that lowered the threshold for the MML to become a SHP content provider. The focus of the next section is on a digital social movement infrastructure that offers an even more significant break with the institutionalised concepts of the OpenGLAM initiative.

## **7.2 Leftove.rs: A partisan shadow archive**

In 2018 and 2019 the MayDay Rooms received funding from the politically left oriented 'Barry Amiel & Norman Melburn Trust' and the 'Lipman-Miliband Trust' for developing a digital Social Movement Archive and repository for educational resources: leftove.rs (Barry Amiel & Norman Melburn Trust, 2018; Lipman-Miliband Trust, 2019).<sup>115</sup> As of December 2021 leftove.rs is still in development, but visitors are encouraged to explore, make use of, and get involved in the cataloguing of the collection through leftove.rs' backend. Leftove.rs was developed in collaboration with the Berlin based '0x2620' (MayDay Rooms, 2021b); a non-profit agency specialised on the development of media archive software, and "[...] extensive research on intellectual property and piracy [...]" (0x2620, 2021).

Similar to the SHP, leftove.rs has in its political ambition the aim to assemble and disseminate the dispersed archival documentation of social movements, or literally "[...] the material traces they have left" (MayDay Rooms, 2022b). Yet, while there is a clear overlap between the remit of the project HOPE and leftove.rs, the latter has also distinct ambitions. Where HOPE has worked with institutionalised conventions on how to provide

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<sup>115</sup> Leftove.rs is available via: <https://archive.leftove.rs> (accessed 28 December 2021).

access and disseminate digitised heritage collections, leftove.rs breaks conceptually with institutionalised practices for digital archives. As my interview partner from the MayDay Rooms explains the rationale behind leftove.rs:

“I saw digitisation as something that people put so much money into, and time. And often that is either contained by digital rights management, or is just used to make kind of the catalogue better. It [leftove.rs] is not necessarily interested in breaking out of an institutional context and being something where material can circulate online, or be disseminated, or be reused. But more this sort of like fidelity towards the catalogue” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

Where HOPE aimed for standardising digitisation activities among IALHI project partners, leftove.rs is rather perhaps best understood as a “provocation” that seeks to challenge digitisation practices in the heritage sector, copyright frameworks, and how archival documents of social movements are disseminated (MayDay Rooms, 2022b). Leftove.rs’ interface, at least in its current version, confronts the user with its whole collection of around 18,000 documents. While a search-bar exists, the emphasis is on exploring the collection through an abundance of search filters, which can be mixed and matched in any desired combination.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, leftove.rs positions itself in a network of so-called ‘shadow libraries’ (MayDay Rooms, 2022c). The operations of shadow libraries parallel, perhaps commonly better known, copyright infringing platforms for music, movies and software (Eve, 2021: 84–85). In the academic discourse the term ‘shadow library’,<sup>117</sup> is however mostly used distinctively for infrastructures which infringe intellectual property rights, in order to provide access to academic and non-academic literature that would otherwise reside behind a publisher’s paywall (Karaganis, 2018: 1–2; Ostromooukhova, 2021). The following section explores how the politics of leftove.rs present a subversion of the monolithic notion of Open Access, as defined by the Open GLAM initiative (section 7.2.1). A pushback that goes however beyond a sole urge to provide unlimited access to cultural heritage. The appropriation and contextualisation of digitised heritage is for leftove.rs rather an accelerator for making sense of the own past (section 7.2.2).

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<sup>116</sup> For the leftove.rs’ guide see: <https://maydayrooms.org/leftovers-guide/> (accessed 2 January 2022).

<sup>117</sup> Scholarly literature uses increasingly the term ‘shadow library’ instead of ‘pirate library’ due to the judgmental (celebratory as well as dismissive) image of the pirate (Thylstrup, 2018: 160; Ostromooukhova, 2021). Shadow library was also a term used by my interview partner to describe leftove.rs’ relationship to memoryoftheworld.org and similar initiatives (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

## 7.2.1 The Open Access politics of leftove.rs

Already in the MayDay Rooms' 2011 manifesto the organisation strived "to push back against the enclosure of the public domain (Google, Corbis, Getty, etc.), and to foster the creation of new commons" (GCB et al., 2011). First ideas about how the MayDay Rooms could employ "collective and non-centralising" strategies to counter the enclosure of the commons were also discussed at the 2012 workshop 'Neither Private Nor Public: Information in Common?', with contributions from: 0x2620, Open Access activists, artists, and intellectual property researchers such as Lawrence Liang (MayDay Rooms, 2013b).<sup>118</sup> Influential for the MayDay Rooms' affinity with shadow libraries was also the initiative 'Memory of the World' (sometimes also known as 'Public Library'), to which personal contacts were present. Moreover, initial plans existed to link the MayDay Rooms digital archives to Memory of the World, rather than developing leftove.rs (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

The rationale for creating and using shadow libraries range from, and intersect with: economic necessities, geographic or political constraints, ambitions to create all-encompassing digital libraries, or ethical and political motivations for Open Access (Thylstrup, 2018: 81–82). Leftove.rs' position within the nexus of shadow libraries is primarily informed by the latter point. On its about page leftove.rs criticises how digitised heritage collections become subject of copyright restrictions:

"In a time where most institutions of historical resources are engaging in mass digitisation projects of archival holdings, the fruits of this labour are more often than not heavily confined by digital rights management with occasional tokenistic gestures made towards open access" (MayDay Rooms, 2022c).

The OpenGLAM initiative as a critique of imposing copyright on surrogates of digitised works in the public domain, resonates with leftove.rs' ambitions. However, although the OpenGLAM initiative has played a role in harmonising EU copyright legislation (Wallace and Euler, 2020: 836), Open GLAM operates nevertheless first and foremost in pre-existing legislative frameworks. Calls for Open Access to digitised cultural heritage are indeed commonly "[...] not framed as criticism of copyright, but rather as a defense [sic] of the public domain [...]" (Wallace, 2020d: 4). The MayDay Rooms navigate around the

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<sup>118</sup> In 2012 Liang used the image of the 'shadow library' as a metaphor that connects the utopian conception of the library as a space of unlimited, yet also overwhelming, access to knowledge with ambitions that parallel the library of Alexandria, public libraries, personal libraries, as well as copyright infringing file-sharing libraries (2012).

limitations of digitisation projects set by copyright legislation, which also affect the majority of Social Movement Archives I discuss in this thesis (see section 5.3), by omitting copyright (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). A stance that is ultimately for the MayDay Rooms possible to pursue because the organisation explicitly retreats from institutionalised archival praxis (MayDay Rooms, 2013b). The MayDay Rooms' rejection of taking copyright into consideration should however not lead to the assumption that the archive does not have exemptions to what can be made available online. As discussed in chapter six, the MayDay Rooms' archivists or donors may decide to restrict access to documents to be consulted in the reading room only if collections contain information that is of potential threat to activists. Leftove.rs questions the system of intellectual property rights as a whole and goes thus a step further than the OpenGLAM initiative. As my interview partner extends on leftove.rs rationale:

"[...] I'm not really trying to attack libraries there [on leftove.rs' about page]. More the kind of the laws that make a problem, that make what they can do to make things even more expensive to exist. But also publishing, or this sort of trend towards a kind of poverty of Open Access in academia is maybe more what it's talking about" (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

Leftove.rs' subversion of copyright has thus more parallels with the so-called 'Guerrilla Open Access' movement for academic publishing, than with Open GLAM. Coined after Aaron Swartz's manifesto of the same name (Swartz, 2008), Guerrilla Open Access emerged in the prospect of an ever increasing asymmetry between, among others, raising journal subscription fees, the austerity in the higher-education sector and the economic disadvantages of non-Western academia (Bodó, 2016: 5). In contrast to formal Open Access publishing initiatives, which work within legal boundaries and seek to complement subscription-based models publishing models, Guerrilla Open Access called for abolishing access restrictions due to copyright entirely. The movement became most visible in the first half of the 2010's, through the lawsuits against the activists Aaron Swartz in 2011 and Alexandra Elbakyan in 2015, and the take-down of the shadow libraries library.nu, LibGen, Sci-Hub and aaaarg.org (Bodó, 2016: 6–12). Proponents of some shadow libraries, like Memory of the World's most visible activists Marcell Mars and Tomislav Medak, make direct reference to the Guerrilla Open Access manifesto in their writings. They argue that "[p]iracy has mounted a truly disruptive opposition [...]" which in the prospect of lawsuits "[...] can become an agent of change only if it is embraced as a kind of mass civil

disobedience” (2019a: 65). By transferring this ethos of ‘civil disobedience’ into the heritage domain, leftove.rs operates at the intersection of the Guerrilla Open Access movement, and the tradition of left social movements to develop digital libraries in order to disseminate political texts (Cornell, 2019: 25). Informative for the MayDay Rooms’ praxis is probably also the archive’s political orientation towards left-libertarianism (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Especially within the Anarchist movement exists, while not uncontested, an affinity to internet technology as a means for decentralised information exchange at net-zero costs, and to subvert intellectual property (Gordon, 2008: 131–34).

Compared to digital archives typically developed in the heritage sector the explicit omission of copyright is a central and distinguishing characteristic of leftove.rs. It would be however limiting to reduce the disruptive actions of leftove.rs to an Open Access provision to digitised heritage alone. As the next section suggests, leftove.rs reverses the by Open GLAM advocated reuse of collections through appropriation. Although leftove.rs does not limit the reuse of the hosted material, the appropriation of content serves primarily the MayDay Rooms’ itself as a means for knowledge production.

## 7.2.2 Aggregating dissent

By adopting Mars and Medak’s ethos of ‘civil disobedience’, leftove.rs collection is not limited to material digitised by the MayDay Rooms. My interview partner reports on how a motivation for creating leftove.rs was also grounded in the realisation that most archival resources from social movements are either held by large institutions, by small archives that only insiders would know about, or on websites of political groups or individuals. Where the HOPE project set up a formal project consortium, the MayDay Rooms inverted the mode of aggregation described in section 7.1 and embarked instead into a “scavenger hunt” and assembled archival resources from other sites (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Leftove.rs is as such a highly selective and curated collection. Significant efforts were spent on considerations how to break out of the confined conception of archival documents (such as small press publications in particular) as ‘isolated’ objects,<sup>119</sup> and instead acknowledge the relations between them:

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<sup>119</sup> Theoretical resonance is in this context evident in Nicholas Thoburn’s ‘anti-book’ which, among others, discusses the characteristics of pamphlets as experimental and ephemeral publication formats which are distinct from the by market expectations confined ‘book’ (2016: 79–104). The MayDay Rooms make

“So, we started thinking about leftove.rs as a way of looking at ephemera, but also realising that often collections just stay within collections. So, you have a collection called [anonymised collection], and these are all the documents that are linked to [anonymised political organisation]. But actually, as you start to see this, get to know these collections, you realise that they are very interrelated. And that interrelation doesn’t have to be because they [the activists] were hanging out at that time, but it could be 10 years later” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

It is this ambition that gave the MayDay Rooms the impetus to develop with leftove.rs a bespoke platform that accommodates their needs, rather than contributing to the Memory of the World. The way of how in Memory of the World publications are treated as discrete published objects stood in opposition to the MayDay Rooms’ goal to put the collected archival documents “in conversation with each other” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

Leftove.rs’ development and approach to navigate through its collection was not predefined, but emerged throughout a process of experimentation, that was facilitated through a series of public workshops. These events included thematic- or collection-specific scanathons (see section 5.2), but also tests with different technologies that could be used to manage, display, and use leftove.rs collection. The MayDay Rooms considered for instance to employ technologies like the peer-to-peer Samiz-Dat protocol, or Media Wikis (MayDay Rooms, 2019). But the MayDay Rooms eventually settled down to customise together with 0x2620 their video archiving software Pandora.<sup>120</sup> A software which, in contrast to a wiki for instance, has according to my interview partner the advantage to organising information in a non-hierarchical way (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). Through OCR and Natural Language Processing software, keywords from the assembled archival collections were extracted, and used to generate new metadata fields including ‘tactics’ or ‘antagonisms’. Tactics refer to strategies that could inform activists’ campaigns (e.g., squatting, flying picket, or pirate radios, but also militant forms of action). The metadata field for antagonism is used to describe how the archival document stands in opposition to certain concepts (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020). My interview partner explains the idea of antagonism as follows:

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reference to the anti-book on leftove.rs’ project page. See: <https://maydayrooms.org/leftovers/> (accessed 27 December 2021).

<sup>120</sup> See: <https://pan.do/ra#about> (accessed 7 January 2022).



“So then we came up with a thing which is called antagonism, which was not necessarily just people, but it could be, I mean it could be [something] like patriarchy, it could be like anti-. So this is seen as something that is like a partisan archive, where there is conflict and this is the focus of these struggles and that also should maybe be acknowledged in that” (Digital Archivist MayDay Rooms, 2020).

Leftove.rs is thus not a celebratory project. The MayDay Rooms’ focus on antagonisms serves rather as a reminder that the past of social movements, and their tactics used, is contentious and full of tensions.

This section demonstrates how the provision of Open Access is thus only one aspect of leftove.rs ambitions. Leftove.rs can rather be seen as a digital extension of Social Movement Archives’ remit to collect, sometimes even reappropriate material, and using the praxis of archiving as a means of empowerment by making sense of the own past (Flinn, 2007: 156–57). Considering the practices and intentions of leftove.rs offers a point of reflection to the growing discourse on the curated, yet often rendered invisible, nature of collections data (Hauswedell et al., 2020; Mak, 2014; Fyfe, 2016). In the processes of aggregating, rearranging, and describing archival documentation the MayDay Rooms create through leftove.rs something which might be better considered as a political collage, rather than an archival repository that is expected to provide passively information as in the manner of a platform. Through the MayDay Rooms exaggerated intervention into the archival process, leftove.rs provokes to acknowledge, what Cook called, the archivists’ “own historicity” (2001: 16). The archivist takes an active role in the production of knowledge and is component within the various actors and factors that shape the mosaic of the historical canon (Cook, 2001: 16), and digital assemblages. The collections available through leftove.rs are in principle reusable in any new desired context, and through an API the extraction of data from leftove.rs could even be automated (MayDay Rooms, 2022d). But in the prospect of the MayDay Rooms’ intervention the common alleged neutrality of Open Data sets is damasked (Huggett, 2014; D’Ignazio and Klein, 2020: 5–8). Any reuse of leftove.rs should prompt a critical interrogation into the data itself.

## 7.3 Summary

This chapter has investigated which forms of Open Access to digitised heritage emerge in the context of the SHP and leftove.rs. Furthermore, I have argued that the SHP and leftove.rs' practices might be best described as an "[...] area of tension between resistance and standardisation" (Thylstrup, 2018: 86). The SHP operates within the legal and technical boundaries set by mainstream heritage organisations, and the those articulated by Europeana in particular. While the HOPE project has been tailored to standardise digitisation practices among IALHI member organisations, HOPE already anticipated that some bespoke solutions would be necessary to accommodate the capabilities of Social Movement Archives. The SHP's acceptance of catalogue data only reflects for instance the abundance social movement collections that are not digitised yet, but which are still valuable to be accessible through an aggregator portal. The resistance towards standardisation also crystallises in the concessions made that accelerated the MML's contribution to the portal. In the context of the PAR project's action in particular: the SHP's curtesy to accept the MML's poster collection despite an absence of PIDs, and the non-requirement to accompany images with rights statements. Interoperability is thus not a sole technological question, but is facilitated or hampered through socio-cultural factors (Borgman, 2015: 47).

In case of leftove.rs the resistance towards institutionalised practices is much more explicit with its omission of copyright, and the critique on the system of intellectual property rights as a whole. To represent the characteristics of ephemeral documents, the MayDay Rooms decided to introduce bespoke metadata and software. A praxis that projects like HOPE aim to resolve, but in the context of leftove.rs can also be understood as an important means for knowledge production about social movements' own past. The MayDay Rooms' practice to rip and aggregate digitised heritage from other sources serves as a reminder of the constructive nature of archival collections, and how digitised archives become loose objects of data (Thylstrup, 2018: 3), and are potentially remediated and reassembled into new contexts. Whether leftove.rs' praxis of appropriation poses a challenge to the importance for Social Movement Archives for exercising control over their collections, or whether the activist context of leftove.rs would be an acceptable form of reuse remains a question to be investigated.

Europeana acknowledges in its 2020 to 2025 strategy the challenges limited resources and expertise pose to small- and medium sized heritage organisations for taking part in digitisation or digital infrastructure projects. The provision of training, domain specific expert networks and investments in aggregator services are recognised as important means to support small libraries, archives and museums (Europeana, 2020: 37–39). Similar conclusions were made by a 2019 study commissioned by the UK Collections Trust. National and domain specific aggregators are key accelerators for heritage institutions with little resources to participate in national or international digital libraries (Collections Trust, 2019: 54–55). This chapter has demonstrated how a bespoke infrastructure like HOPE lowers the threshold for Social Movement Archives to participate in digital heritage infrastructures. The value of domain specific aggregators is to provide access to collections that would otherwise not be represented in Europeana: either because content is not digitised yet, or the content providers' limited capabilities to comply with technical or legal standards. And yet HOPE showcases that digital infrastructure without continuous funding becomes challenging to sustain and may mean to shutdown services, which could be supportive for less well-resourced heritage organisations, such as the HOPE repository for long-term preservation. The importance of investing into heritage infrastructure is also recognised by some shadow library activists. Mars and Medak, inspired by the artistic and intellectual avant-garde movement, suggest that libraries and universities should invest their resources in the maintenance and care of existing infrastructures, rather than following the temporal urge to 'innovate' (2019b: 345; 358–60). How Social Movement Archives can help us to identify a shift in emphasis regarding the 'temporal urge' towards Open Access is among others subject of my concluding chapter, in which I response to my overarching research question and identify areas for future research.

## 8. Conclusion

I began this thesis with the observation on how Open Access to cultural heritage is often presented in a commonsensical manner as a universal good for heritage organisations to make their collections available online. Critique on Open GLAM is emerging (e.g., due to privacy concerns or collections with colonial legacies), but critical assessments of the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage are nevertheless rare. Reflective and critical engagement with Open GLAM is however important because of the concepts' increasing relevance for the heritage sector. So is Open GLAM subject of a significant amount of advocacy and policy making. The adoption of Open Access frameworks becomes for instance more and more a requirement for obtaining funding. Likewise, the participation in aggregated online collections, as in the case of Europeana, is dependent on complying with Open Access frameworks. Open GLAM research has however so far mostly dealt with the perspectives of mainstream heritage organisations, especially art museums. Despite most of the UK heritage sector consists of small and independent heritage organisations little attention has been given to their experiences regarding Open Access and digitisation.

Because of Social Movement Archives' potential as sites for critical interventions into archival theory and praxis, as well as due to their absence in the Open GLAM discourse, I identified them as the focus of my study. My thesis had the following objectives:

- To move forward in developing a critical understanding of Open GLAM through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives.
- To investigate the benefits and risks perceived by Social Movement Archives, regarding Open Access to cultural heritage.
- To map the digitisation practices of Social Movement Archives, and how these impact on the ability and willingness of Social Movement Archives to release collections under Open Access frameworks.

Through PAR research with the MML, seven expert interviews and an extensive consultation and critical analysis of the academic- and grey literature, I investigated in this thesis the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives. This research makes an important contribution to diversify research on Open GLAM by bringing the perspectives of Social Movement Archives to the discourse on Open Access to cultural heritage. Throughout this thesis I offer a critique of the concept of Open GLAM, and I make

a major contribution to scholarship on collections as data, archives, and DH by demonstrating the potential of Social Movement Archives to mobilise a critical understanding of the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage. By extension I show how Social Movement Archives offer valuable sites for reflecting on digitisation, access, legislation, ethics, and the composition of aggregated online collections for the heritage sector. Indeed, throughout this thesis I have articulated how the assemblies of mass digitisation initiatives and the small-scale digitisation projects of Social Movement Archives overlap. A contribution of this thesis is that it advances the empirical understanding of how digitised heritage collections assemblages are shaped by factors that include: heritage organisations' missions, compromises due to a lack of resources, legislation, ethical obligations, and infrastructural practices. Studies that have investigated the composition of digital collections were based on critical reading of grey literature or interviews (Mak, 2014; Fyfe, 2016; Hauswedell et al., 2020). This thesis makes a methodological contribution by demonstrating how PAR can be used to facilitate critical research on digital archives. The PAR project with the MML also led to practical outcomes for the organisation. 1,866 digitised posters of the MML's collection are now available on the Europeana aggregator portal SHP. The evaluative workshops of the PAR project explored the MML's digitisation strategy, the implications of copyright, and the future use of the SHP for the library. The workshops featured two guest talks by copyright experts and contributed to the professional development of MML volunteers. The MML annual report 2020 highlights that the workshops and the subsequent internal report will feed into the library's future digitisation strategy (Marx Memorial Library, 2020a: 4). The workshops' outcomes and report will also feed into the library's application for the Archive Service Accreditation.

The remainder of this concluding chapter is organised as follows. In section 8.1 I summarise this thesis' findings and I respond to my overarching research question: What does and what could Open Access to cultural heritage mean in the context of Social Movement Archives? I argue for a shift in emphasis in Open GLAM towards a social justice framework. I accounted on the research's limitations in chapter section 2.3. In section 8.2 I expand on these limitations and suggest additional areas for future research. In section 8.3 I make my concluding remarks.

## 8.1 Towards a social justice framework for Open GLAM

Having moved towards a critique on Open Access to cultural heritage through the microcosm of Social Movement Archives I return in this section to my thesis' overarching research question: What does and what could Open Access to cultural heritage mean in the context of Social Movement Archives? To respond to this question, I first revisit the starting point of my research, the MML, and how my prolonged engagement with this Social Movement Archive allowed me to develop a critical perspective on Open Access to cultural heritage.

As I describe in chapter two, in my work as a MML volunteer I have been involved in activities that ranged from cataloguing and digitising collections, supporting the MML at events, collections care, up to salvage work during the flood in September 2019. All this engagement was essential for me to develop an in-depth understanding of the organisations' priorities and its capabilities regarding digitisation and potential Open Access frameworks. In addition to these experiences, conversations with the library manager and other volunteers made clear to me that Open GLAM is a concept that is far removed from the practical realities an organisation like the MML operates in. Essential for the development of how I would develop the research with the MML was also my literature review, in which I unpacked how Open GLAM is underpinned by a framing of digitised heritage collections as raw data resources, which are envisioned to feed into the information economy (chapter three). By investigating the roots of the Open GLAM initiative I followed Tkacz's suggestion to engage more deeply with the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage, instead of adopting its rhetoric (2012: 404) The PAR methodology, despite its limitations and challenges (see section 2.3.2) proved to be an invaluable framework to identify a project with the MML that would matter to them, namely contributing to the SHP, and at the same time to foster a discussion about the concept of Open Access to cultural heritage in a non-advocating way.

Later, during my interview conversations with other Social Movement Archive practitioners and activists I not only learned more about the many structural challenges Social Movement Archives experience, but also how these challenges are approached (chapter five). Like the MML, many Social Movement Archives have only few resources available for operation, and not the capacity to engage in extensive digitisation or Open Access programmes. There are however exceptions like the MayDay Rooms, where the organisation has identified digitisation as a key strategy to "[...] activate radical and

experimental historical material [...]” (MayDay Rooms, 2022e), and dedicated funds for employing a digital archivist are available. Chapter four discusses how also other interviewed Social Movement Archives have identified digitisation primarily as a means to fulfil their political and educational missions. But due to the few resources available, these digitisation activities then tend to crystallise in online exhibitions. I argue that online exhibitions are attractive for Social Movement Archives because they allow them to present their collections in contextual narratives. Based on the responses my interview partners gave me on the Europeana data exchange agreement, I suggest that Open GLAM does not necessarily contradict with the missions of Social Movement Archives. Yet, due to Social Movement Archives’ explicit political remit and scarce resources, online exhibitions present a more fitting and feasible option.

Social Movement Archives are not exceptional in the matter that Open Access frameworks are difficult to implement with limited resources available. A study commissioned by TaNC reported that a lack of resources is across the heritage sector a key barrier to release collections as Open Access. This constraint is reinforced due to the complexity of copyright legislation and that only few institutions have access to the expertise of copyright specialists, not to mention lack of an own intellectual property rights department. If institutions cannot assess the public domain status of a piece of work, they are likely to apply risk-averse practices (disabling download functions, watermarks, or low-resolution images etc.) (Wallace, 2022: 80–81). As demonstrated through the PAR’s action in chapter seven, domain specific initiatives like the SHP accelerate the capability of organisations like the MML to disseminate collections online because the SHP does not require from participating organisations to apply online licensing schemes. Chapter five and six contribute through the perspective of Social Movement Archives to the understanding of the complexities of legislative and ethical frameworks heritage organisations need to navigate through when making collections available online. I also demonstrate how risk-averse practices often present a compromise to make collections available where the copyright status cannot be assessed, or obligations towards collections’ stakeholders, such as donors for instance, need to be considered (Stobo, 2016: 287).

Within the discourse of Open GLAM the desire to exercise control over collections is often framed as a barrier towards Open Access. It is known that the reasons for the desire for control are grounded in concerns like potential inappropriate uses of digitised collections, not being attributed, spill-over effects, or copyright infringements by third parties (Tanner,

2016: 245; Light, 2015: 40). Little has however been said why or how these concerns relate to the histories of specific institutions and their collections. In chapter six I demonstrate that in the context of Social Movement Archives it is important to acknowledge the affective nature that social movement collections have for the people who created, collected, and use them. I argue that an enhanced understanding of the archival principle of provenance, based on social justice frameworks, is useful to understand why Social Movement Archives seek to mediate access to certain collections due to ethical obligations towards collections' creators, subjects, donors or users. I suggest that the desire to exercise control should not be perceived from a one-dimensional perspective as a barrier to be overcome. Social Movement Archives offer instead an important reminder on the ethical considerations that should take place before digitisation or online publication of collections. To paraphrase my interview partner from the Feminist Library again, Open Access in Social Movement Archives means to consider the ethical afterlives of digitised collections (Fundraising Coordinator Feminist Library, 2020). Based on my analysis in chapter three I suggest however that the notion of openness that developed in the computer culture, and which is primarily concerned with an individual's right to access information for competing in a free-market society, does not take into account the ethical concerns of Social Movement Archives in respect to Open Access.

Instead, I suggest that rather than the common mantra-like repetition that Open Access to cultural heritage is a self-explanatory good, a more reflective discussion on what heritage organisations seek to achieve through Open Access is necessary. I do not argue for a rejection of Open GLAM, but for a shift in emphasis. Andrew Prescott and Lorna Hughes have argued for a 'slow digitisation' approach, that focusses on less output, but instead on how digitisation can foster sophisticated analysis and scholarship (2018). In the context of anti-colonial archival practices Christen and Anderson called similarly for a "slow archives movement". The movement is based on an "ethics of care" and fostering long-term relationships with people (in Christen and Anderson's case Indigenous people) who experience oppression and injustice to build a "new archival ecosystem [...] within the bounds of personal, affective, ethical relations" (Christen and Anderson, 2019: 112). Translated into the context of Open GLAM, such slow digitisation and archival praxis thus requires to reflect critically on where nuanced access frameworks are required, and who might be negatively impacted by Open Access (Pavis and Wallace, 2019: 9). Taking the 'slow digitisation and Open Access' approach a step further by combining it with the activist'



stances of Social Movement Archives I suggest moving towards a social justice framework for Open GLAM.

The positive impact and benefits of making digitised collections available as Open Access is commonly reported on increased clicks, downloads, or use in Wikipedia articles (Pekel, 2015: 14–15; Schmidt, 2018: 33–34). A reason for this focus may be the relative novelty of Open Access practices and that these indicators are relatively immediately measurable. Yet, section 6.1 discussed how digitisation and Open Access publication of archival collections can come with uncertain and harmful futures for collections' creators, subjects, users, and the wider community an archive serves. Examples where injustice is replicated through Open Access include for instance archival collections of people who were enslaved, abused, exploited or mutilated (Biernoff, 2011; Nicholas, 2014; Odumosu, 2020). Online publication without consent also harmed the personal wellbeing and risked the reputation of individuals in the context of LGBTQ+ erotica (Robertson, 2018: 227–29). These examples illustrate that there is a need to develop a more in-depth understanding of the social justice impact of digitisation and Open GLAM to not entrench inequalities in society, and as reflected in digital collections (Punzalan and Caswell, 2016: 33–36).

Interrogating the social justice impact of Open Access would assess the concept's potential to counter or entrench “[...] inequalities of power and how they manifest in institutional arrangements and systemic inequities that further the interests of some groups at the expense of others in the distribution of material goods, social benefits, rights, protections, and opportunities” (Duff et al., 2013: 324–25). What would make the assessment of the social justice impact of Open Access in particular valuable is that such an evaluation is multidimensional and accounts on the intended and unintended, positive and negative impact of using archival collections in regard of social justice. Important to consider is also which role the use of collections had, or whether the “archival component” was just one of many aspects that led to the impact. Finally, the overall significance of the impact must be assessed (Duff et al., 2013: 337–38). The Balanced Value Impact Model provides a framework to facilitate holistic impact assessments of digital collections. The model is adaptable to local contexts, as the impact assessment is based on a heritage organisation's strategy, values, and priorities (Tanner, 2020: 33–36). Future research may thus build up on, test, or alter existing frameworks for evaluating the impact of Open Access collections, like the Balanced Value Impact Model, by tailoring them towards the

assessment of social justice impact and embracing “principles of empowerment” like: co-research design with affected people, co-learning and capacity building among stakeholders, or being culturally responsive (Duff and Caswell, 2020: 65).

When speaking about the purpose of digitisation in their organisation, some interview partners expressed an interest, and sometimes also an anticipation, that digitised collections by extension could provide the basis for political action. The potential of data as a means for activism for social change has indeed been recognised (Milan, 2017: 156), and the field of data justice seeks to address “[...] social justice concerns and ongoing historical struggles against inequality, oppression and domination” (Dencik et al., 2019: 876). Archival scholars have also articulated how the disciplines of data activism and archival activism overlap, and can benefit from each other, for instance by using archival practices for digital salvage work and ensuring the long-term preservation of US federal environmental data that was under threat due to the Trump administration (Currie and Paris, 2018: 133–37). Another prominent example of how archival and data activism can intersect is the so-called ‘Nefertiti-Hack’. In 2015 the media artists Nora Al-Badri and Jan Nikolai Nelles published an unauthorised 3D scan of the Nefertiti bust that is held by the ‘Neues Museum Berlin’ “[...] to promote a contemporary and critical approach to how the so-called ‘Global North’ deals with heritage and the representation of ‘the Other’” (Al-Badri, 2015). Also Social Movement Archives’ activists have used data, gained by Freedom of Information requests, to campaign against gentrification by creating visualisations and timelines that illustrated the impact of the displacement of local residents (Carter, 2017: 34–35). What is to be explored in more detail is how Open Access collections provided by Social Movement Archives, and other heritage organisations, could be used for activist causes, and what the social justice impact of these interventions is. What these examples demonstrate, is how a turn of Open GLAM towards social justice approaches speaks to, and has the potential to advance, interdisciplinary scholarship on archives, data, technology and social justice (Mordell, 2019: 159). An example is for instance the discourse on social justice in DH (Risam, 2019: 17).

However, the reorientation of Open Access towards social justice would be more than assessing the social justice impact of digital collections and using them for activist purposes. The marginal status of non-hegemonic people is reinforced in their absence of the digital record, and as within the Open GLAM discourse argued, potentially even more

entrenched if these collections are not available as Open Access (Wallace, 2020d: 14). Crucially, however, for social justice practices in creating digital archives it is not enough to add the records of those people who are absent from the digital canon. It is the very design of digital archives that need to work against hegemonic world-views, values, norms and practices. Instead of 'Open Access collections data dumps' social justice-oriented digital archives give users low-threshold means for critical reuse and knowledge production (Risam, 2019: 47;55-58). Or, as Miriam Posner argues: "[...] it's about ripping apart and rebuilding the machinery of the archive and database so that it doesn't reproduce the logic that got us here in the first place" (2015). The intervention of leftover.rs with its salvage work of dispersed digitised social movement collections and their re-contextualisation to facilitate political action is the most radical intervention of rethinking archival databases discussed in this thesis. But there are also other pathways of how such interventions into the design of digital archives could look like. The most prominent example is probably Mukurtu (see section 1.2), which is tailored towards the curatorial needs of Indigenous people and unlike mainstream digital archives has for instance the possibility to implement bespoke access protocols for certain community and non-community members (Christen and Anderson, 2019: 102). From a methodological perspective rethinking the design of archival Open Access repositories could embed feminist working practices in project development, from software coding and data modelling up to user testing (Intersections, Feminism, Technology & Digital Humanities network, 2022). Management and stewardship of collections data may not only involve adapting the FAIR principles (Koster and Woutersen-Windhower, 2018) but using the CARE principles (Carroll et al., 2020: 5). Critical and ethical interventions into digital archival praxis also involve participatory design approaches (as also used by the Mukurtu project) to ensure community accountability, control and co-ownership with those involved in and affected by the development of online archives (Costanza-Chock, 2020: 99–101). Co-design approaches will also be of importance to ensure that digital Open Access archives are usable for audiences who have disabilities (Wallace, 2021b: 7–8).

## 8.2 Research limitations and future research

In the introduction I made a distinction between Social Movement Archives and 'community archives'. Both concepts refer to initiatives that collect and preserve the records of people and movements that fall outside the radar of mainstream heritage organisations, and in both cases physical and/or intellectual ownership are core characteristics of these types of organisations. Community archives and Social Movement Archives are also commonly dependent on a cohort of volunteers or activists to keep the organisation running and have few financial resources available. However, in contrast to Social Movement Archives, community archives do not necessarily emerge from social movements and do not have an explicit political mandate to facilitate social change. Some community archives may instead be more oriented towards family and local history, or special interest subjects like historic buildings (Flinn, 2011: 8–9). A limitation of this thesis is that it does not engage with archival initiatives which do not have an explicit political and activist emphasis of their work. Recent research on museums suggests that small and community-led museums form the vast majority of the UK sector (Candlin et al., 2020: 26). They cover a diverse range of specialised subject areas such as ropeworks, barometers, toys, ornamental plasterwork, or radio and television devices (Candlin, 2016: 6–10). The digitisation activities of such heritage organisations, and whether they are existent, remain to be explored. Likewise what kind of benefits and risks other small and community-led heritage organisations perceive regarding Open Access to cultural heritage. Also, the focus of my thesis was on organisations that emerged broadly speaking from the political left. Some of the critique on Open Access to cultural heritage brought forward in this thesis, in particular considerations on access based on collections' provenance and the argument for a social justice framework in Open GLAM may not be transferable to other types of heritage organisations. My research has also not considered the perspectives of community-led initiatives that operate online only. Future research may consider these other types of small and independent heritage bodies and their priorities, needs, and aspirations regarding digitisation and Open Access in more detail. Likewise, there is scope to research on Social Movement Archives and community-led heritage projects outside of the UK.

As argued in chapter two, I made the decision to not advocate for Open GLAM at the MML. This means that my thesis has not explored how Open Access to cultural heritage could be facilitated in organisations with few financial and personnel resources. These question,

among others, will be addressed in the GLAM-E Lab project, which seeks to support small heritage organisations with few resources in Open Access by establishing an “[...] an interdisciplinary cross-border clinic [...] that provides cultural institutions and community organizations with support on aspects of law and digitization, and it co-produces tested and scalable best practice resources to support digital heritage initiatives beyond the [p]roject” (Wallace et al., 2021). Projects like the GLAM-E Lab could address similar issues identified as areas of future action through the PAR project with the MML. For instance, how copyright assessment workflows could be integrated better in existing procedures. An infrastructure such as the GLAM-E Lab may also monitor copyright legislation and inform small organisations about changes in a jargon-free way. Depending through which infrastructures small heritage organisations want to make their collections available, there are also technological questions to be addressed which are tangential to Open GLAM. Another future action identified through the PAR project with the MML included as an example the need to add PIDs to catalogue records and digital surrogates. TaNC research has pointed out that for smaller heritage organisations a centralised PID infrastructure may be the only way for them to take part in aggregation projects (Kotarski et al., 2022: 18).

Related to such infrastructural support could be dedicated funding schemes for supporting digitisation and Open Access activities for organisations with fewer resources. In the context of Social Movement Archives, but also community archives more broadly, it is however important that such schemes are tailored towards the capabilities of small and independent heritage organisations. Applying for funding and the attached reporting structures are themselves again commonly labour-intensive tasks that require specific skills and dedicated capacities within an organisation. For many community archives it is also essential to remain independent from major heritage institutions or governmental funding schemes that could jeopardise local practises or community values (Jules, 2019: 7–10). Future consultancy work may identify what kind of funding structures and conditions are best suited for different kinds of community-led heritage projects and Social Movement Archives.

In section 2.3.2 I accounted on the limitations of the participatory research design. PAR does not prescribe the nature of the research’s participatory element, but it is possible to argue that an ‘ideal’ PAR project would have involved more research co-design (Stringer, 2014: 15). It is however also known that for establishing mutual beneficial relationships for co-research design many months, and sometimes years are necessary (Herr and

Anderson, 2015: 48–49). The PAR cycle’s evaluation workshop had the potential to be the first of a series of activities that would have built up towards more consolidated research relationships at the MML through which new PAR cycles could have been initiated. The Covid-19 Pandemic, however, required to postpone the workshops from spring to autumn 2020. It was necessary for me to assess my stakes in the research, and I decided to rather have one complete PAR cycle instead of follow-up research activities to move from a PAR to a CPAR project. By consolidating the established “communicative space” (Kemmis et al., 2014: 35–36) of the MML workshops there would have been potential to identify through collective action how Open GLAM could be made more rational, sustainable and just. For instance, through exploring the ethics of care framework in the MML’s context in more detail by co-writing the contextual abstracts for the MML’s online collection. Participatory research methodologies gain increasing relevance for DH and scholarship on digital archives (Ortolja-Baird and Nyhan, 2022: 17–18; Pringle, 2020: 10–11), and a methodological contribution of this thesis has been to demonstrate the capability of PAR to facilitate critical research on digital archives. However, in a time of increasing uncertainty due to pandemics, economic instability, nuclear threats and climate change, work remains to be done to identify techniques to make participatory methodologies more robust towards unpredictable circumstances.

### **8.3 Concluding remarks**

In this final chapter I concluded my research on the digitisation and Open Access politics of Social Movement Archives. Compared to mass digitisation efforts, such as Google Books, the digitisation activities of Social Movement Archives operate on a small-scale. In this thesis I have demonstrated how studying the concept of Open GLAM through Social Movement Archives’ small-scale digitisation activities allow us to critically assess seemingly commonsensical concepts like digitisation and Open Access. Taking the concept of slow digitisation and Open Access a step further and combining it with the activist mandates of Social Movement Archives, I argued for a shift in Open GLAM towards a social justice framework. This shift needs to assess the social justice impact of Open Access collections. The fields of data activism and data justice may provide fruitful avenues for further exploration on how Open Access collections could be used for political interventions that address injustice. The outlined social justice framework for Open GLAM also includes practices for redeveloping archival Open Access repositories that empower

people to make critical and reflective use of the collections. A further development, but also critical review, of the Open GLAM social justice framework offers a rich avenue for future research. Other areas for further inquiry may include the digitisation and Open Access practices of small and community-led heritage organisations which do not have an explicit political mandate. Crucial research needs also to be done to investigate the support structures for community archives in general to participate in digitisation activities and Open Access frameworks. With the increasing relevance of participatory methodologies in DH and projects that create digital archives there is also a need to develop approaches that make participatory principles more robust towards external factors and crisis, such as pandemics.

This thesis shows that Social Movement Archives play a vital role in thinking through the implications of digitisation activities and Open Access for the heritage sector and the wider society. At a time where often scale and velocity are treated as the hallmarks of progress, the encounter with Social Movement Archives invites to pause and reflect. Building social justice frameworks into Open Access frameworks is one approach to think about heritage organisations' role as agents for change towards equitable societies.

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(accessed 11 November 2019).

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Partnership agreement with the MML<sup>121</sup>



**Archivist & Library Manager**

37a Clerkenwell Green, London, EC1R 0 DU  
Open Monday-Thursday 12-4pm

15 April 2019

To whom it may concern

On behalf of the Marx Memorial Library, I am writing to confirm that we would like to work in partnership with Marco Humbel on his PhD research project, OpenGLAM in independent heritage organizations - Increasing the access and engagement with the Marx Memorial Library's digital collection. We look forward to working with him and provide permission to conduct his participatory research project at the Marx Memorial Library, London.

Yours sincerely

[www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk](http://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk)



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<sup>121</sup> Contact details removed in accordance with UCL deposit policy.



## Appendix B: Documentation MML diagnosing focus group discussion

### B1: Pre-discussion task

Thank you very much for taking part in the focus group discussion. The discussion takes place on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 10:00-11:30** at the Marx Memorial Library. The purpose of the discussion is two-fold:

1. Reflecting on the recent developments around our digital collection (e.g. launch of the poster collection, new website...). The particular aim is to find out in which direction we would like to develop our digital collection further and determine which knowledge or actions are necessary to do this.

2. Related to the first point, how people in future might be able to use our collection, I would like to invite you to look before the discussion at the four images below (this works best if you copy the whole link into your browser). If you have time please feel free to explore the webpages further, since they might be inspiring for our own digital collection.

1. Karl-Marx House Trier: Porträt Karl Marx

[https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/2022037/11088\\_58AF3D67\\_E063\\_4A63\\_AEC\\_C\\_7AA43CAB1B20.html?q=karl+marx+trier](https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/2022037/11088_58AF3D67_E063_4A63_AEC_C_7AA43CAB1B20.html?q=karl+marx+trier)

2. Birmingham Museums: The Burning Mine

<http://dams.birminghammuseums.org.uk/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=14141&index=0&total=628&categoryId=1577&categoryTypeId=2&collection=Birmingham+History&sortAttributeld=0&sortDescending=false>

3. Wellcome Collection: Microscope drawings including a drawing of a flea

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Microscope\\_drawings\\_including\\_a\\_drawing\\_of\\_a\\_flea.\\_Wellcome\\_M0013991.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Microscope_drawings_including_a_drawing_of_a_flea._Wellcome_M0013991.jpg)

4. National Library of Scotland: American Labour Representatives photographed in France

[https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/9200316/BibliographicResource\\_3000073808378.html?q=trade+union](https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/9200316/BibliographicResource_3000073808378.html?q=trade+union)

All images have a clear licence, stating the conditions an image can be used:

- Image number one cannot be reused (probably because the image is still in copyright).
- Image number two can be used for any purpose (including commercial purposes).
- Image number three can be used for any purpose but the providing library needs to be cited.
- Image number four can be used for non-commercial purposes only, requires the attribution of the providing library and any new work created out of this image needs to use the same licence.

Would one type of licence in particular align or contradict with the MML's objectives of making its collections accessible? Could you imagine the MML would link its collection to a platform like the Europeana or Wikipedia?

## **B2: Focus group discussion questions**

1. The library manager just mentioned some of the recent developments in our digitisation programme.

How do you feel about them and which of these projects seem to you the most significant?

2. When you think about the wider mission of the MML, what is in your opinion the main goal when we digitise our collection?

3. Recently we made some of our posters available as postcards for purchase. What do you think about creating revenue through our digitisation programme?

4. In general, what was your impression of the online collections on Europeana and Wikipedia?

How would you feel if the MML would link its collection to one of these platforms?

5. When copyright permits, some heritage organisations make their digital images available for free reuse. What kind of permissions would you like to give our users?

6. The Archive Service Accreditation requires from us to have a clear policy about how people access and engage with our collection.

Thinking back to the questions I asked:

Who is the main target group of our online collection?

How do you want users to access and use our online collection?

7. Thank you very much again for participating. Is there an area we haven't covered but you would like to address?

### **B3: Summary of the focus group discussion**

The focus group discussion was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 10:30-11:30 at the MML. The discussion was themed around two overarching research questions:

- How can we develop our digital collection further?
- Where and how should people use our online collection in future?

These questions were based on my PhD project, my experiences as a volunteer, and conversations with other MML team members. Seven questions were used to moderate the session. However, their purpose was to give an input for an open discussion and not thought of being answered in a closed way. In the following I first summarise why we digitise at the MML (following mainly the library manger's introduction). Afterwards the questions above are addressed with responses that were given at the discussion.

#### **1. Why do we digitise at the MML?**

The current digitisation programme focussed so far primarily on our visual collections, which mainly were: the Poster Collection, the Spanish Collection photographs and the Printer's Collection photographs. Other recent projects were conducted in respond to current events or anniversaries, such as the First World War, Tolpuddle or the Basque Children Refugee album. The rationale for digitising is a combination of considering preservation needs,<sup>122</sup> making collections accessible (to users but also internally), raising our profile, responding to user requests and let people engage with our collection (especially for an educational purpose). In terms of access, the digitised items allow to browse through the collection in a more user-friendly way. However, this is not only thought of as a service for our users, but also to facilitate internal research (not all of our digitised collections are made available online). The facilities we have are two scanners and a photography table. Digitisation is mainly done in house by volunteers, but sometimes for complex or fragile items we also engage external companies.

What is digitised and made available depends mostly on:

- Current topics/events where we can contribute with our collection (Russian Revolution, space race, refugee week) -> this often results in collaborations with other organisations e.g. the Science Museum or creating online exhibitions.

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<sup>122</sup> Note: We talked only little about preservation in the discussion. However, preservation plays a role by selecting object for digitisation, but also in terms of digital preservation.

- Available funding, as for our Poster Collection and Spanish Collection photographs.
- User requests -> This also presents an important financial income for the MML.
- What copyright permits (this determines what and how we can make something available).
- The availability of volunteers, who are doing most of the digitisation work. → Also indirectly implicated by space. Where can volunteers work and where can we accommodate our equipment?

Overall we (like many other memory organisations) experience a high expectation to digitise, especially from our users. We are for instance often asked by users to digitise resources for free, or cataloguing projects are automatically thought of also involving digitisation. It is worth noting that this high expectation towards the library is not only experienced towards digitisation, but also for other services we offer like, donations. On the other hand, there were also cases where donors provided us with digital surrogates additionally to their “analogue” collection.

## **2. How can we develop our digital collection further?**

As seen in the previous section, we have already developed our digital collections in an active and ongoing manner. The ideas in this and the following section therefore do not necessarily require to start something complete new, but could build up on what we already have. They can potentially also be combined with each other.

### **2.1 Supporting our development through evidence**

An overarching topic that came up during the discussion is the wish to have a more strategic approach towards what we digitise. Connected to this; we have anecdotal knowledge about our different audiences, but during the discussion the desire to have a more informed understanding of our users came up. Having evidence that we respond to a certain (internal or external) need will play therefore an important role for any steps we decide to take next as well as evaluating these.

### **2.2 Expanding our educational work**

An important part of the MML’s mission is also educational work. There is a wish to make better use of our digital collection within our educational programme. Also, because the audience who visits our collection for research is not necessarily the same who come to

our events. With the Basque refugee children scrapbook we recently had a successful example of combining a digitised object with our educational and local history programme. Also, our Soviet space poster workshop at the Science Museum is an example where we used our digital collection in combination with “hands-on” educational work.

### **2.3 Receiving input from our audiences**

We made some experiences with Oral History projects around the Printer’s Collection, where people identified individuals or situations on our photographs. So, there is a tradition at the MML of letting people contribute to our collection with their knowledge. Especially for our poster collection it could be interesting for receiving additional information to our descriptions. There are successful examples of larger organisations who have experiences with such online crowdsourcing projects. The question for us is here again, what is feasible within our resources?

### **2.4 Creating revenue with our digitisation programme**

As said above, we are already creating revenue to some extent through our digitisation activities. Creating income is important to maintain the library and is also seen as a way to raise the profile of the MML. The library manager currently explores print on demand services for posters. However, copyright limits our possibilities and it’s unclear how much additional income actually can be generated. Furthermore, any kind of reproduction (especially when it is done for commercial purposes) should be done in a sensitive manner in alignment with the works original intension and by providing context.

### **3. Where and how should people use our online collection in future?**

We didn’t identify a specific resource (apart from our own website) where we would like that people access our online collection. Making our collection accessible through other sites as the Europeana or Wikipedia was perceived as a way to reach new (perhaps also international) audiences. But wherever people find our collections online, it would be nice if this could also be the starting point to come to our library, events or engage with our educational programme. We also made some experiences in sharing objects from our collection via social media, in particular Twitter. However, the discussion also brought up some issues to be considered:

- **Attribution:** Wherever images from our collection are made available they should be identifiable as our own and be credited.

- **Context:** Making images available online comes with the cost of de-contextualisation. Trust into another website and the ability to maintain the original context and intention of an object as much as possible was regarded as important. Providing intellectual context was also remarked by users of being valuable.
- **Copyright:** We need to make sure that the MML complies with copyright legislation. This determines again what we can actually make available through our own website but also other platforms, since often we don't hold the copyright.
- **Our resources:** How much extra work/resources are necessary to make our collection more available?

## **Appendix C: MML project action plan**

### **Linking the MML's collection to the Social History Portal project and research plan**

**Marco Humbel**



## 1. Introduction and area of concern

Last autumn we discussed within a focus group the MML's recent digitisation activities and how the library could potentially develop its digital collection further in future. As a result of this focus group discussion, a follow-up meeting with its participants and discussions with the MML library manager, the MML expressed a clear interest in contributing with its digital collection to the Social History Portal. The Social History Portal is a collective catalogue, hosted by the International Association of Labour History Institutions (IALHI), and primarily administrated by the Amsab-ISH in Ghent. The Social History Portal is also an aggregator for Europeana - Europe's digital library - which would potentially allow the MML to contribute to Europeana via the Social History Portal. The aims of the project are:

- In a pilot-project the MML contributes with its poster collection to the SHP.
- The requirements to contribute to the SHP are sufficiently documented for future uploads.
- The project contributes to the professional development of MML volunteers.
- Based on the project's evaluation, the MML's management can assess how to use the SHP in future for making collections available online.

## 2. The implementation of the pilot-project

From January to May 2020, the MML collaborated with the Amsab-ISH to prepare the poster collection for the upload. This involved exporting the poster data from Soutron, creating test-cases, communicating with the colleagues at the Amsab-ISH and documenting issues that emerged. The posters were made available through the Social History Portal on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2020.<sup>123</sup> A workshop-series that will be held in autumn 2020 aims to evaluate the pilot-project and to explore in which form the Social History Portal can be used in future for the MML.

## 3. Evaluation of the pilot-project

Most digital resources of the MML are displayed on its own website. This allows a certain level of control over the collection. Sharing resources through external catalogues has

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<http://shp2.amsab.be/Search/Results?type=AllFields&filter%5B%5D=institution%3A%22Marx+Memorial+Library%22>

advantages, such as increased accessibility and visibility of the MML's collection. However, sharing collections also requires to give considerations on which objects actually can be made available (e.g. due to copyright, privacy, or ownership), how they are contextualised, or how the MML is acknowledged. These points not only need to be given attention depending on the type of objects made available, but can also differ from the Social History Portal and Europeana. In case organisations want to contribute to Europeana, they have to follow for instance a different licensing policy for their catalogue data and digital images, than for the Social History Portal. MML team members are invited to evaluate, discuss and reflect on the opportunities and implications of contributing to the Social History Portal and eventually Europeana through a series of workshops. The workshops address in particular the following points and aim to allow the MML's management to make an informed decision on:

- Investigate which other collections are suitable for the SHP and evaluate how they would need to be prepared for an upload.
- The SHP uses per default a 'Create Commons-Attribution-ShareAlike' license (CC-BY-SA) for the metadata. It is up to the data provider to decide which license to use. Which one would the MML like to use?
- Discuss if in the long-term a contribution to Europeana via the SHP would be desirable for the MML or not.

While the workshops are open to all MML team members, it is up on the MML's library manager and trustees to decide upon these points. The workshop syllabus is described in section 5.

### **3.1 Objectives of the Workshops**

The participants.....:

- Reflect on the implications of making collections available online through the SHP or Europeana.
- Develop criteria why to make certain collections available online (or why not) and set priorities.
- Learn about heritage copyright and its impact on the MML's digitisation projects.

- Understand how the SHP and Europeana are connected and their licensing conditions.

#### **4. Conducting the workshops online**

The MML closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic on 20<sup>th</sup> March. It is likely that also after the lock-down period restrictions to group gatherings apply and the workshops' participants health must be ensured. The workshops will thus be conducted online. Microsoft Teams caused problems in past informal meetings with MML team members. Therefore, the online conference tool Whereby<sup>124</sup> will be used instead.

##### **4.1 General workshop set up in Whereby**

The pro version of Whereby allows to set up 3 meeting rooms. Each workshop starts in meeting room 1, where a short introduction to the workshop's topic is given. The participants will then be divided into two groups and each group assigned to its own meeting room. The participants are then asked to conduct an exercise within their group for 20-30 minutes. A time will be given when we meet again in meeting room 1. In this session the 30-minute-long audio recorded focus group discussion takes place.

##### **4.2 Limitation of conducting the workshops online**

- A Whereby meeting is limited to up to 12 participants. It is likely that this aligns with the amount of people interested in the workshops, but it sets a clear limit of how many of the MML community can take part in the workshops.
- Online meetings have the potential to exhaust participants relatively quickly. The content of the workshops will have to be divided into 6 instead of 5 workshops. Each workshop is set up to not exceed 75 minutes.
- Technical difficulties can possibly cause disruptions. Any difficulties that arise would have to be documented and considered when analysing the data.

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<sup>124</sup> <https://whereby.com/>

## 5. Workshop syllabus

<b>Linking the MML to the Social History Portal</b>				
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Workshop Tasks</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Day 1 Why do we digitise? Part 1: Our collections online	16 <sup>th</sup> September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The participants reflect on the implications when collections are made available online.</li> <li>- The participants develop an understanding why certain collections should be digitised, why some not.</li> <li>- The participants discuss the aims and priorities of the MML's digitisation activities.</li> </ul>	20': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction: explaining nature and scope of workshops and the objectives.</li> <li>- Show where the MML makes collections available online and where it could in future:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Own website</li> <li>- Archives Hub UK / Discovery</li> <li>- Social History Portal</li> <li>- Europeana</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Show our poster collection on the Social History Portal.</li> <li>- Short presentation of collections we work with during the workshops: 'The Spanish Collection Photographs: Medical Aid and Hospitals', Justice, and the poster collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercise sheet day 1</li> </ul>

			<p>Participants in teams of 4 are allocated to one of the sample collections.</p> <p>25' Participants investigate the collections. Exercise sheet 1.</p> <p>30' Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1), based on the questions in exercise sheet 1.</p>	
Day 2 Heritage Copyright 1	23 <sup>rd</sup> September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The participants develop a basic understanding of heritage copyright.</li> <li>- The participants reflect on how copyright impacts the MML's digitisation practices.</li> <li>- The participants understand the concept of online licenses.</li> <li>- The participants develop a set of</li> </ul>	<p>45': Introduction of the basics of heritage copyright (LaToyah and Marco - meeting room 1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basics of copyright (work and idea)</li> <li>- Literary and artistic works</li> <li>- Database protection rights</li> <li>- Public Domain and fair use</li> <li>- Exceptions for Library and Archives</li> <li>- Orphan works</li> <li>- Creative Commons</li> </ul>	- Exercise sheet day 2

		<p>questions for the Q+A session.</p>	<p>30': Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1): We develop together a set of questions that we would like to ask a copyright expert in the Q+A in the next workshop (meeting room 1).</p>	
<p>Day 3 Heritage Copyright 2</p>	<p>30<sup>th</sup> September</p>	<p>- The participants reflect on how copyright affects the MML's digitisation activities.</p>	<p>45' Q+A with copyright expert, based on developed questionnaire (meeting room 1).</p> <p>30' Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1).</p>	<p>- Questionnaire for copyright expert (send in advance).</p> <p>- Questions for group discussion (on slides).</p>
<p>Day 4  The Social History Portal</p>	<p>7<sup>th</sup> October</p>	<p>- The participants understand what the HOPE aggregator is.</p> <p>- The participants know which metadata fields of the MML catalogue correspond with the ones on the Social History Portal.</p> <p>- The participants</p>	<p>20' Introduction to Social History Portal (meeting room 1):</p> <p>- The SHP as an IALHI catalogue (purpose, participating organisations).</p> <p>- Resources on the SHP.</p> <p>- The SHP's metadata</p>	<p>- Exercise sheet day 4.</p>

		<p>reflect on how collections are contextualised on the Social History Portal.</p> <p>- The participants discuss the Social History Portal's licensing policy for catalogue data.</p>	<p>scheme (Europeana Data Model).</p> <p>30' Group A and B work separately on exercise sheet 3 (meeting room 2 and 3).</p> <p>30' Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1).</p>	
<p>Day 5</p> <p>The Social History Portal and Europeana</p>	<p>14<sup>th</sup> October</p>	<p>- The participants understand what Europeana is and the differences/similarities between the Social History Portal and Europeana.</p> <p>- The participants reflect on the opportunities and implications that come with potentially contributing to Europeana.</p> <p>- The participants understand Europeana's licensing conditions and what is meant by Open Access to cultural</p>	<p>30' Introduction with background information to Europeana (meeting room 1):</p> <p>- Who made them for what purpose.</p> <p>- How the Social History Portal and Europeana connect.</p> <p>- The conditions that come with contributing through Europeana → Europeana data exchange agreement.</p> <p>- What 'openness' means in context of Europeana and how 'Open Access' to</p>	<p>- Exercise sheet day 5</p>

		heritage.	heritage collections is currently defined.  30' Group A and B work separately on exercise sheet 4 (meeting room 2 and 3).  30' Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1).	
Day 6  Why do we digitise? Part 2: Evaluation of the project	21 <sup>st</sup> October	- Discuss with the participants the themes that emerged through the discussion and ask for feedback on interpretation.  - Provide a space for questions, open issues and feedback.	15' Summary of themes/trends that emerged during the workshops.  30' Audio recorded group discussion (meeting room 1):  - Reflection on workshop themes and outcome.  - Space for open questions/issues.  - Thank you.	



## Appendix D: Exercise sheets for MML workshop series

### D1: Why do we digitise? Part 1: Our collections online

Please complete in your group the tasks below. Discuss the questions that are given to each exercise and take notes. We will discuss your findings together in meeting room 1 later.

1. Look at the catalogue record of your example collection in Soutron and the digital surrogates.

Try to think of the original, physical object and compare it to its digital representations:

1.1 How does the catalogue data represent the historical and social context of the digitised object?

1.2 Does the digital image represent an authentic representation of the original object? (e.g., did something get lost through the digitisation, or does the digitisation enhance the object?)

1.3 What was the purpose of the object? Is the content, or subject of the object appropriate to be seen online?

2. There are several reasons<sup>125</sup> why heritage organisations make their collections available online. Prioritise the reasons below according to your values and why you think we digitise.

- Academic research
- Creative reuse
- Educational use
- Political or commemorative use
- Personal enjoyment
- Reducing the use of the physical originals
- Sales, commercial licencing (for us)
- Commercial use by third parties

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<sup>125</sup> Based on (Nauta et al., 2017: 57)

- Other reasons?

2.1 How is your decision affected by the responses you gave to question 1?

3. We have over 60,000 items in our collection, which means we have to set clear priorities of what we digitise.

3.1 On what kind of objects would you focus on?

3.2 How would you set priorities what do digitise?

4. Are there any other points or issues you would consider before digitizing the collection, and then making it accessible online?

## **D2: Copyright 1**

Next week our guest speaker will also offer a Q+A session on copyright. Please use the questions below as a guide to think about questions you would like to ask. In our group discussion we will then articulate three to four questions for our guest speaker.

1. Which kind of rights need to be considered for your example collection?

1.1. Does copyright apply to items in your collection?

1.2. Do we know the copyright owner?

1.3 Do privacy issues need to be considered?

1.4 Could one of the online licenses of either [rightsstatements.org](http://rightsstatements.org), or Creative Commons be applied to items in your collection? What would be the benefits, and what would be the drawbacks using them?

2. Think back to the reasons of why we digitise from last week.

2.1 Where does copyright legislation support our digitisation objectives?

2.2 Where does copyright legislation hamper our digitisation objectives?

2.3 Does copyright legislation has an effect on how you would set the priorities for selecting items for digitisation?

### **D3: Copyright 2**

1. How has your understanding of copyright and its impact on the MML changed throughout the last two workshops?
2. What were your thoughts on the online licensing schemes I talked about last week. What would be the benefits, and what would be the drawbacks using them?
3. When thinking back to the reasons of why we digitise from last week, where does copyright legislation support or hamper our digitisation objectives?

## D4: The Social History Portal

Please complete in your group the tasks below. Reflect and discuss the questions that are given to each exercise and take notes. We will discuss the questions below together in meeting room 1 later.

Open the poster 'Todos con un pensamiento único...' in our catalogue ([Link](#)) and the same poster in the Social History Portal ([Link](#)). Compare and contrast the two catalogue records (click in the Social History Portal on the tabs: 'Holdings', 'Description', 'Similar Items' and 'Full Details').

1. Think about the differences between the poster in our catalogue, and the poster on the Social History Portal:

1.1 How clear is the provenance (the MML) of the poster on the Social History Portal?

1.2 Can you find any information that got lost, or is shown differently by publishing the poster on the Social History Portal (e.g. the catalogue data or the digital surrogate itself)?

1.3 How does the Social History Portal enhance our poster?

2. Now open the catalogue record of the Spanish Collection Photographs ([Link](#)). One reason we chose the poster collection as a pilot-project is because each poster is catalogued on an item level.

In order to publish for instance the Spanish Collection Photographs on the Social History Portal, it would be necessary to catalogue them in Soutron as well on an item level. However, we could also just add the catalogue data to the Social History Portal without any images:

2.1 How do you consider the feasibility of cataloguing on an item level for collections where we have digital surrogates?

2.2 Would it be for our purposes sufficient to contribute only with our catalogue data to the Social History Portal?

3. Our catalogue data on the Social History Portal is by default licensed with a Creative Commons-Attribution-Share Alike license. Do you consider this license as appropriate, or would another license be more suitable? Why?

## **D5: The Social History Portal and Europeana**

You've heard how the Social History Portal and Europeana relate. As soon as collections are on the HOPE aggregator, it is a relatively small step to make them also available through Europeana. However, organisations that contribute to Europeana must follow its licensing conditions. Please think about the two conditions regarding catalogue data and digitised images below.

### **Catalogue data**

The first point of Europeana's data exchange agreement<sup>126</sup>:

"1. All metadata submitted to Europeana will be published as open data under the terms of the Creative Commons Zero Public Domain Dedication (CC0)."

The first point requires to make catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use). Users of the data are also not required to attribute the MML. This would qualify our catalogue data as 'open data'.

1. How does this concept align or contradict with the MML's objectives for making collections available online?

### **Digitised objects**

The second point of Europeana's data exchange agreement:

"Each digital object (which includes the associated preview) that is available via Europeana needs to carry a rights statement that describes its copyright status and informs the users what they can or cannot do with the digital object. If an underlying material object is in the public domain, its digital surrogate should remain in the public domain."

The second point requires to indicate for each digitised object the correct right status and which use is permitted. In case an object is in the public domain it must be labelled as such. Thus it is made available for any kind of reuse and users are not required to attribute the MML.

2. How does this concept align or contradict with the MML's objectives for making collections available online?

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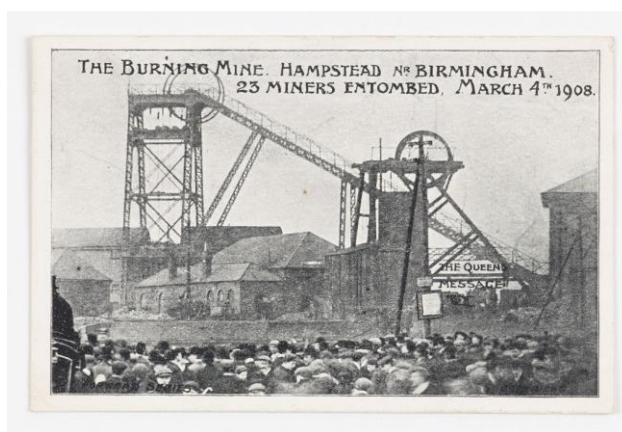
<sup>126</sup> <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/the-data-exchange-agreement>

## Preferred online licenses

3. Please look at the photograph on the next page, and the available right statements Europeana offers for rights holder of images.

3.1 The photograph on the next page is from 1908 and in the public domain. Think about the rights statements for images on Europeana. Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image and why?

### Example image<sup>127</sup>



### Available rights statements for rights holder on Europeana<sup>128</sup>

- 1. A public-domain mark:** Digital images that are labelled as being in the public domain can be used by anyone without any restrictions, even commercially.
- 2. Attribution:** The digital image can be used without any restrictions, even for commercial purposes, as long as they attribute the rights holder (e.g. your organisation).
- 3. Attribution-Share Alike:** The digital image can be used without any restrictions, even for commercial purposes, as long as they attribute the rights holder as described in the licence. All new works based on the original licensed work will carry the same licence, so any work based on the original one will also allow commercial use.
- 4. Attribution, No Derivatives:** allows for redistribution, including commercial and non-commercial use. However, no alteration is allowed and the rights holder must be attributed.

<sup>127</sup> Image credit: **Birmingham Museums Trust** (2022). 1995V632.322 The Burning Mine. Hampstead Near Birmingham

<sup>128</sup> The full descriptions are available on <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/available-rights-statements>.

- 5. Attribution, Non-Commercial:** The digital image can be used for any non-commercial purpose and the rights holder must be attributed.
- 6. Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike:** The digital image can be used for any non-commercial purpose. The rights holder must be attributed. All new works based on the original licensed work will carry the same licence and thus will also be for non-commercial use only.
- 7. Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivatives:** allows others to download the licensed works and share them with others as long as they attribute the rights holder as specified in the licence. Users cannot change the work in any way or use them commercially.
- 8. In copyright:** Any use would require the permission from the MML.
- 9. In copyright - Educational Use Permitted:** The re-use of the image is allowed for educational purposes only. All other uses would require the permission from the MML.



## **D6: Why do we digitise? Part 2: Evaluation of the project**

- What are your thoughts on the presented summary?
- What are your thoughts on the potential areas of further inquiry?
- In which areas did the workshops change your understanding on the topics we discussed?
- Are there areas where the workshops might change your future work at the MML?
- Which aspects did you like about the workshops and what could be improved?

# Appendix E: Expert interviews with Social Movement Archives

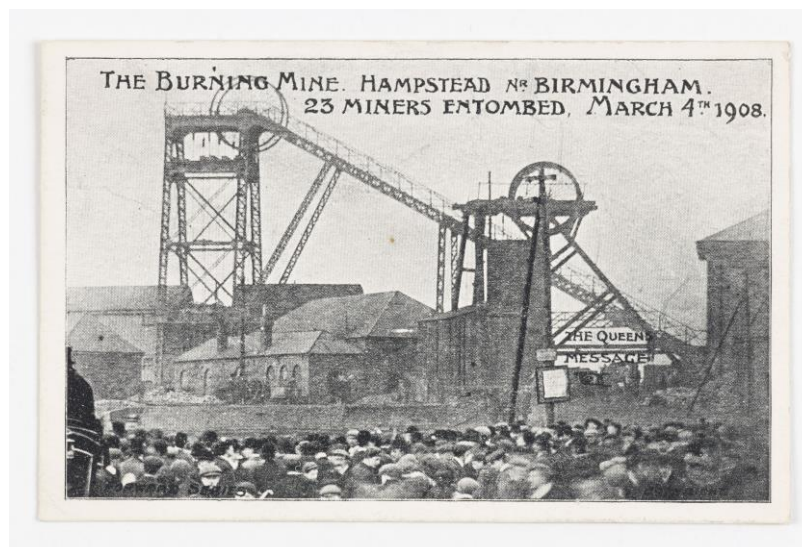
## E1: Pre-interview task expert interviews

Many thanks for taking part in the interview on DATE. Before the interview takes place I would like to ask you to think about the two tasks below on Open Access policies.

### 1. Image licensing

Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. A popular way to indicate the preferred use is to use so-called Creative-Commons licenses. The postcard below is from 1908 and out of copyright. From a legal perspective it is hard to claim copyright on the digital image. Nevertheless, think about the 8 licenses below and:

- Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?
- Is your decision affected by the historical context of an object (see text on the postcard)? <sup>129</sup>



<sup>129</sup> Image credit: **Birmingham Museums Trust** (2022). 1995V632.322 The Burning Mine. Hampstead Near Birmingham

## Licenses to choose<sup>130</sup>

- 1. A public-domain mark:** Digital images that are labelled as being in the public domain can be used by anyone without any restrictions, even commercially.
- 2. Attribution:** The digital image can be used without any restrictions, even for commercial purposes, as long as they attribute the rights holder (e.g. your organisation).
- 3. Attribution-Share Alike:** The digital image can be used without any restrictions, even for commercial purposes, as long as they attribute the rights holder as described in the licence. All new works based on the original licensed work will carry the same licence, so any work based on the original one will also allow commercial use.
- 4. Attribution, No Derivatives:** allows for redistribution, including commercial and non-commercial use. However, no alteration is allowed and the rights holder must be attributed.
- 5. Attribution, Non-Commercial:** The digital image can be used for any non-commercial purpose and the rights holder must be attributed.
- 6. Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike:** The digital image can be used for any non-commercial purpose. The rights holder must be attributed. All new works based on the original licensed work will carry the same licence and thus will also be for non-commercial use only.
- 7. Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivatives:** allows others to download the licensed works and share them with others as long as they attribute the rights holder as specified in the licence. Users cannot change the work in any way or use them commercially.
- 8. In copyright.** Your organisation would preferably claim the copyright on the digital image. Any re-use requires additional permission from you.

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<sup>130</sup> The descriptions were taken and adopted from <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/available-rights-statements>. More information on Creative Commons licenses can also be found on <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/?lang=en>

## 2. Data exchange agreements

Some external catalogues have clear licensing policies for organisations that want to contribute. The data exchange agreement of Europeana<sup>131</sup> has two central points:

“1. All metadata submitted to Europeana will be published as open data under the terms of the Creative Commons Zero Public Domain Dedication (CC0).

2. Each digital object (which includes the associated preview) that is available via Europeana needs to carry a rights statement that describes its copyright status. If an object is in the public domain, it must be labelled as being in the public domain.”

Please think about these two points. A Creative Commons Zero Public Domain Dedication is used to waive any rights you might have on your catalogue data.

- The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This would qualify your catalogue data as ‘open data’. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?
- The second point requires from you to use for your digital images one of the licenses above. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such and make it available for any kind of re-use. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?
- In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility by contributing to Europeana, or retaining control over how your catalogue data and images in the public domain are used?

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<sup>131</sup> See: <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/the-data-exchange-agreement>

## **E2: Interview questionnaire Amsab-ISH**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about your organisation and what your role is at the Amsab and the Social History Portal?

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the Amsab? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3. Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities?

2.4 How about cataloguing?

2.5 In a former conversation it was mentioned that the Amsab-Institute of Social History pays for the infrastructure of the SHP, but the daily-to-day-work behind the SHP is also volunteer based. How many people are involved?

2.6 What are their roles?

### **3. Digitisation activities**

3.1 You mentioned that volunteers are/are not involved in digitisation activities. Does the Amsab also collaborate for digitisation projects with external partnerships?

3.2 What are the objectives of your digitisation activities?

3.3. Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

3.4 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

3.5 Are there objects you would not put online?

### **4. Views on Open Access policies**

4.1 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume you have all the rights on the image in the document:

4.1.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

4.1.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of the image (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

## **5. The Social History Portal**

5.1 The Amsab was involved in the development of the Social History Portal, as part of the HOPE project. Can you tell me about the motivations and objectives for creating the Social History Portal?

5.2 How did the Social History Portal's role as an Europeana content provider come to pass?

5.3 The metadata available through Europeana is available through a Creative Commons 0 license. However, the Social History Portal does not publish its catalogue data under a CC0 license, despite the close collaboration between Europeana and IALHI during the HOPE project. What led to that the Social History Portal's licensing policy differs from Europeana's?

5.4 At least in 2012 the HOPE collections policy framework stated that metadata offered to HOPE should be licensed under a Creative Commons 0 license. Can you tell me when and why this requirement changed?

5.5 Another difference between the Social History Portal and Europeana is that the latter stores copies of thumbnails on its own server. The Social History Portal uses a link to refer back to the thumbnail in the catalogue of the data provider. Can you tell me more about the Social History Portal's rationale for this approach?

## **6. The notion of 'Openness'**

6.1 The so-called OpenGLAM movement advocates for making both metadata, and digital images available for any-kind of re-use, whenever legally possible. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives the Social History Portal has for making collections available online?

6.2 In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility and accessibility by adopting open licences for your metadata and digital images, or retaining control over how your collection is used online?

6.3 Some argue that the adoption of such 'open-access' policies in the heritage sector are necessary for being competitive in the 'knowledge economy'. How do you feel about this demand for becoming 'open' in context of the Social History Portal?

6.4 The concept of openness that is advocated by OpenGLAM primarily aims to ensure a liberal copyright regime and an interoperable infrastructure. Could you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of the Social History Portal?

6.5 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **7. Closing question**

7.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?

## **E3: Interview questionnaire WCML**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about your organisation and what your role is.

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the WCML? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3 Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities?

2.4 Which are the other tasks volunteers are engaged in?

2.5 How about cataloguing?

### **3. Digitisation activities**

3.1 You mentioned that volunteers are/are not involved in digitisation activities. Do you also collaborate for digitisation projects with external partnerships, such as other heritage organisations, professional networks, or funding bodies?

Prompts:

- The University of Salford's Digital Repository

3.2 Can you tell me about the objectives of your digitisation activities?

Prompts:

- Images from the Spanish Civil War collection
- Posters in the catalogue

3.3 Can you tell me if creating revenue through digitisation plays a role for the WCML? (e.g. selling images to photo agencies, creating objects for the WCML shop, or responding to user who ask for digital copies).

3.4 Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

3.5 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

3.6 Are there objects you would not put online?



#### **4. Views on Open Access policies**

In the last few years some organisations started to introduce so-called open-access policies. 'Openness' is here primarily understood as a concept to make catalogue data and digital images of objects whenever legally possible, available online to third parties for any kind of re-use, which includes commercial purposes.

4.1 First I would like to know if you have heard of this concept?

4.2 How does this concept align or contradict with the digitisation objectives you described?

4.3 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume the WCML has all the rights on the postcard in the document:

4.3.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

4.3.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of an object (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

#### **5. Infrastructures**

5.1. I saw that the WCML contributes to the Archives Portal Europe. What influenced your decision-making in choosing to contribute to this particular catalogues?

5.1. I'm aware that the Working Class Movement Library is like the Marx library a member of the International Association of Labour History Institutions. However, as far as I know you are not contributing to the Social History Portal. Was there a particular reason why you decided for the Archives Portal Europe instead?

5.2 According to the rights-statement on the Archives Portal Europe, your catalogue data on the portal is available through a Creative Commons Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike license. Was there a particular reason you decided for this license?

5.3. I sent you also in advance to this interview Europeana's data exchange agreement. The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This would qualify your catalogue data as 'open data'. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

5.4. The second point requires from you to label your digital images with one of the licenses we discussed before. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such, and make it available for any kind of re-use. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

5.5 In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility by contributing to Europeana and agreeing to the conditions we discussed, or retaining control over how your catalogue data and images in the public domain are used?

5.6 Heritage organisations that make their catalogue data and digital images available for any kind of re-use are in the current discourse and policy document often advocated for being 'Open'. Can you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of the WCML?

5.7 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **6. Closing question**

6.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?

## **E4: Interview questionnaire BCA**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about your organisation and what your role is.

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the BCA? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3 Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities?

2.4 Which are the other tasks volunteers are engaged in?

2.5 How about cataloguing?

### **3. Digitisation activities**

3.1 You mentioned that volunteers are/are not involved in digitisation activities. Do you also collaborate for digitisation projects with external partnerships, such as other heritage organisations, professional networks, or funding bodies?

3.2 Can you tell me about the objectives of your digitisation activities?

3.3 Can you tell me if creating revenue through digitisation plays a role for the BCA? (e.g. selling images to photo agencies, creating objects for the BCA shop, or responding to user who ask for digital copies)

3.4 Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

3.5 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

3.6 Are there objects you would not put online?

### **4. Views on Open Access policies**

In the last few years some organisations started to introduce so-called open-access policies. 'Openness' is here primarily understood as a concept to make catalogue data and digital images of objects whenever legally possible, available online to third parties for any kind of re-use, which includes commercial purposes.

4.1 What would you say, how well known is this concept in your organisation?

4.2 How does this concept align or contradict with the digitisation objectives you described?

4.3 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume the BCA has all the rights on the postcard in the document:

4.3.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

4.3.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of an object (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

## **5. Infrastructures**

5.1 In 2019 the Black Cultural Archives collaborated with Google Arts and Culture to digitise items from your collection. Can you tell me how it came to this collaboration and why you decided to collaborate with this partner?

5.2 Where there any points that spoke against collaborating with Google?

5.3 Organisations that contribute to Google Arts & Culture maintain rights they eventually have on digitised images. Would you have considered to collaborate with Google if you had to abandon your rights, or had to adopt licenses that permits third parties free reuse of images?

5.4 Does your organisation contribute to any other portals? If so, please describe why you chose these.

5.5 Some external catalogues have clear licensing policies for organisations that want to contribute. I sent you also in advance to this interview Europeana's data exchange agreement. The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This would qualify your catalogue data as 'open data'. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

5.6 The second point requires from you to label your digital images with one of the licenses we discussed before. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such, and make it available for any kind of re-use. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

5.7 In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility by contributing to Europeana and agreeing to the conditions we discussed, or retaining control over how your catalogue data and images in the public domain are used?

5.8 Heritage organisations that make their catalogue data and digital images available for any kind of reuse are in the current discourse and policy document often advocated for being 'Open'. Can you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of the BCA?

5.9 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **6. Closing question**

6.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?

## **E5: Interview questionnaire TUC Library**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about the TUC library and what your role is.

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the TUC? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3. Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities?

2.4 Which are the other tasks volunteers are engaged in?

2.5 How about cataloguing?

### **3. Collaboration with TUC**

3.1 The TUC library is since 1996 part of the London Metropolitan University Library. Could you please tell me more about how the collaboration between the university library, TUC library and TUC looks like?

3.2 Are there any outreach activities the Metropolitan University undertakes to co-operate with the TUC's community?

3.3 Who is responsible for the strategic decisions regarding the library's collection, or digital catalogues?

Prompts: Deposited records of the:

- Workers' Educational Association
- Labour Research Department
- Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust

### **4. Digitisation activities**

4.1 You mentioned that volunteers are/are not involved in digitisation activities. Does the TUC also collaborate for digitisation projects with external partnerships, such as other heritage organisations, professional networks, or funding bodies?

Prompts:

- The Union Makes Us Strong
- The Worker's War
- Winning Equal Pay
- Britain at Work 1945-1995

4.2 What are the objectives of your digitisation activities?

4.3 Can you tell me if creating revenue through digitisation plays a role for the TUC? (e.g. selling images to photo agencies, or responding to user who ask for digital copies)

4.4. Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

4.5 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

4.6 Are there objects you would not put online?

## **5. Views on Open Access policies**

In the last few years some organisations started to introduce so-called open-access policies. 'Openness' is here primarily understood as a concept to make catalogue data and digital images of objects whenever legally possible, available online to third parties for any kind of reuse, which includes commercial purposes.

5.1 What would you say, how well known is this concept in your organisation?

5.2 How does this concept align or contradict with the digitisation objectives of the TUC library you described?

5.3 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume you have all the rights on the image in the document:

5.3.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

5.3.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of the image (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

## **6. The Social History Portal**

6.1 Your organisation decided to contribute to the Social History Portal. Can you tell me about the motivations and objectives for contributing to this portal?

6.2 The Social History Portal is also a data provider for Europeana. However, not every organisation that contributes to the Social History Portal does also contribute to Europeana. Could you please describe what spoke for and what against the TUC's decision to contribute to both?

6.3 I sent you also in advance to this interview Europeana's data exchange agreement. The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This qualifies your catalogue data on Europeana as 'open data'. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

6.4. The second point requires from you to label your digital images with one of the licenses we discussed before. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such, and make it available for any kind of reuse. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

6.5 Does TUC library contribute to any other portals? If so, please describe why you chose these.

6.6 Heritage organisations that make their catalogue data and digital images available for any kind of re-use are in the current discourse and policy document often advocated for being 'Open'. Can you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of your organisations?

6.7 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **7. Closing question**

7.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?



## **E6: Interview questionnaire Feminist Library**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about your organisation and what your role is.

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the Feminist Library? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3 Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities?

2.4 Which are the other tasks volunteers are engaged in?

2.5 How about cataloguing?

### **3. Collaboration with the Bishopsgate Institute**

3.1 As far as I understand some of the Feminist Library's archival collection are at the Bishopsgate Institute. Yet the Feminist Library maintains its independence. Could you please tell me how this collaboration with the Bishopsgate Institute look like?

3.2 How do you make sure that the Feminist Library maintains ownership of its collection?

### **4. Digitisation activities**

4.1 Could you please tell me about the digitisation activities you had in the past?

4.2 Did you collaborated for these activities with external partnerships, such as other heritage organisations, professional networks, or funding bodies?

4.3 Could you tell me about the objectives of your digitisation activities?

4.4 Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

4.5 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

4.6 Are there objects you would not put online?

4.7 Could you tell me if creating revenue through digitisation plays a role for the Feminist Library? (e.g. selling images to photo agencies, creating objects for the Feminist Library shop, or responding to user who ask for digital copies)

## **5. Infrastructures**

5.1 I saw that the Feminist Library publishes some of its collection on Google Arts and Culture. Could you have chosen Google Arts and Culture for this purpose?

5.2 Were there any reasons that spoke for, or against contributing to Google Arts and Culture?

5.3 Some external platforms have clear licensing policies for organisations that want to contribute. Were there any special licensing agreements you had to fulfil for Google Arts and Culture?

5.4 Does your organisation contribute to any other portals? If so, please describe why you chose these.

## **6. Views on Open Access policies**

In the last few years some organisations started to introduce so-called open-access policies. 'Openness' is here primarily understood as a concept to make catalogue data and digital images of objects whenever legally possible, available online to third parties for any kind of re-use, which includes commercial purposes.

6.1 What would you say, how well known is this concept in your organisation?

6.2 How does this concept align or contradict with the digitisation objectives you described?

6.3 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume the Feminist Library has all the rights on the postcard in the document:

6.3.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

6.3.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of an object (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

6.4 Some external catalogues have clear licensing policies for organisations that want to contribute. I sent you also in advance to this interview Europeana's data exchange agreement. The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This would qualify your catalogue data as 'open data'. How

does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

6.5 The second point requires from you to label your digital images with one of the licenses we discussed before. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such, and make it available for any kind of re-use. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

6.6 In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility by contributing to Europeana and agreeing to the conditions we discussed, or retaining control over how your catalogue data and images in the public domain are used?

6.7 Heritage organisations that make their catalogue data and digital images available for any kind of re-use are in the current discourse and policy document often advocated for being 'Open'. Can you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of the Feminist Library?

6.8 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **7. Closing question**

7.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?

## **E7: Interview questionnaire MayDay Rooms**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Please tell me for the beginning about your organisation and what your role is.

### **2. Volunteer work**

2.1 Do volunteers play a role in the MayDay Rooms? Could you please describe.

2.2 Are there tasks done specifically by volunteers and others by members of staff; if so which?

2.3 Are volunteers also engaged in digitisation activities (e.g. Scan-a-thons)?

2.4 Which are the other tasks volunteers are engaged in?

2.5 How about cataloguing?

### **3. Digitisation activities**

3.1 Could you please tell me more about the digitisation activities with leftove.rs you have?

3.2 Could you tell me about the objectives of your digitisation activities?

3.3 Which objects are at the focus of your digitisation activities?

3.4 What influences your decisions of selecting what to digitise?

3.5 Leftove.rs does not only contain material from the MayDay Rooms, but also collections from other libraries and archives. What is your rationale when deciding which collections to add, or which not?

3.6 Are there objects you would not put online?

3.7 Have you collaborate for these activities with external partnerships, such as other heritage organisations, professional networks, or funding bodies?

3.8 The material you are publishing through leftove.rs are relatively recent. How do you collaborate with the donors, or even creators of the materials you publish online?

3.9 Could you tell me if creating revenue through digitisation plays, or could play a role for the MayDay Rooms? (e.g. selling images to photo agencies, creating objects for the MayDay Rooms shop, or responding to user who ask for digital copies)

#### 4. Views on Open Access policies

In the last few years some organisations started to introduce so-called open-access policies. 'Openness' is here primarily understood as a concept to make catalogue data and digital images of objects whenever legally possible, available online to third parties for any kind of re-use, which includes commercial purposes.

4.1 What would you say, how well known is this concept in your organisation?

4.2 How does this concept align or contradict with the digitisation objectives you described?

4.3 Some organisations use licensing schemes to indicate what kind of use they allow for their collections online. Before the interview I sent you a sheet with different examples of such licenses. If we assume the MayDay Rooms has all the rights on the postcard in the document:

4.3.1 Which one would you preferably choose for the digital image, and why?

4.3.2 How is your decision affected by the historical context of an object (e.g. the text on the postcard)?

4.4 In the description of leftove.rs you are criticizing the digital rights management some heritage organisations apply for their online collections. Yet, digital rights-management can also be a way to protect the creators, or owners of collections from insensitive use. How do you balance for leftove.rs between those two sides?

4.5 Some external catalogues have clear licensing policies for organisations that want to contribute. I sent you also in advance to this interview Europeana's data exchange agreement. The first point requires from you to make your catalogue data available for any kind of purpose (incl. commercial use), and users of the data are also not required to attribute your organisation. This would qualify your catalogue data as 'open data'. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

4.6 The second point requires from you to label your digital images with one of the licenses we discussed before. However, in case an object is in the public domain you need to label it as such, and make it available for any kind of re-use. Users are also not required to attribute your organisation. How does this concept align or contradict with the objectives your organisation has for making collections available online?

4.7 In your opinion, what do you consider as more important; having potentially a higher visibility by contributing to Europeana and agreeing to the conditions we discussed, or retaining control over how your catalogue data and images in the public domain are used?

4.8 Heritage organisations that make their catalogue data and digital images available for any kind of re-use are in the current discourse and policy document often advocated for being 'Open'. Can you think of an alternative meaning of 'openness' in the context of the MayDay Rooms?

4.9 Are there any other issues in digitisation practices, than openness, that require attention? If so, which ones?

## **5. Closing question**

5.1 Thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to talk about, in relation to the areas we discussed?

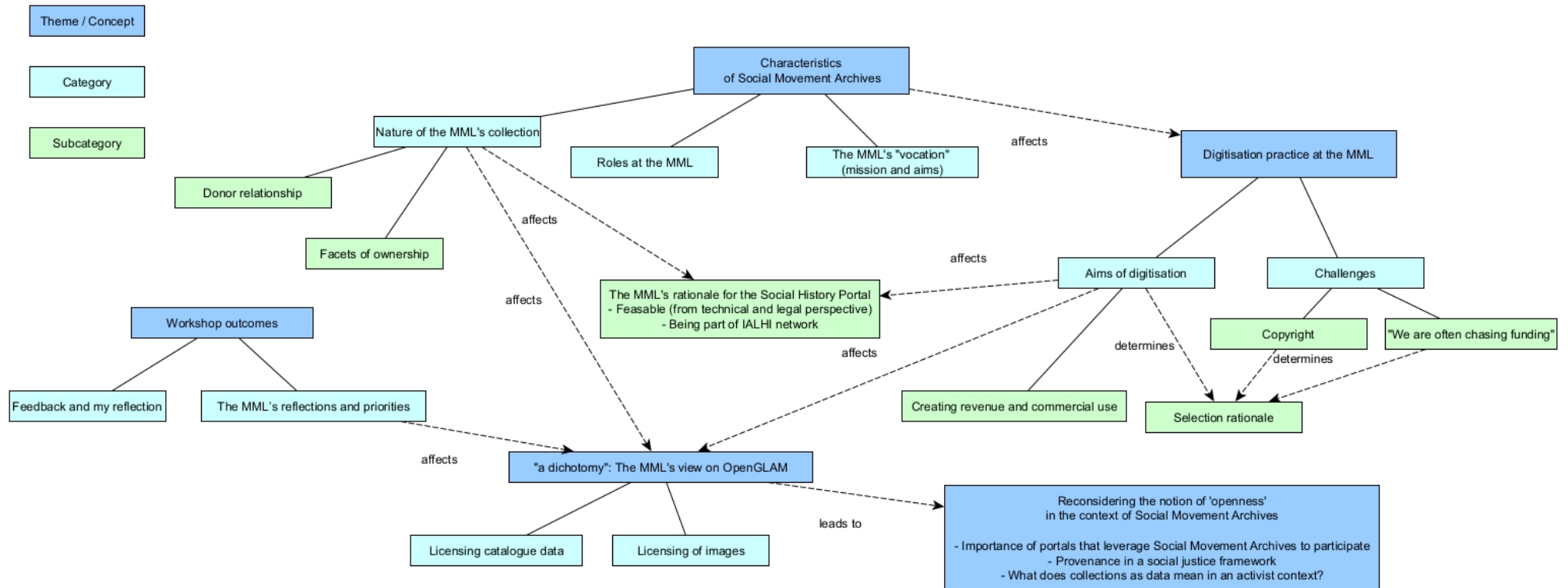
## **E8: Interview questionnaire Interview Partner 7**

In seeking to protect the requested anonymity of interview partner 7 I deliberately excluded the questionnaire and further information from the appendix. The questionnaire for interview partner 7 followed in structure and content the other questionnaires for the expert interviews. Interview partner 7 also received the same pre-interview task as the other interviewed experts.

# Appendix F: Data analysis

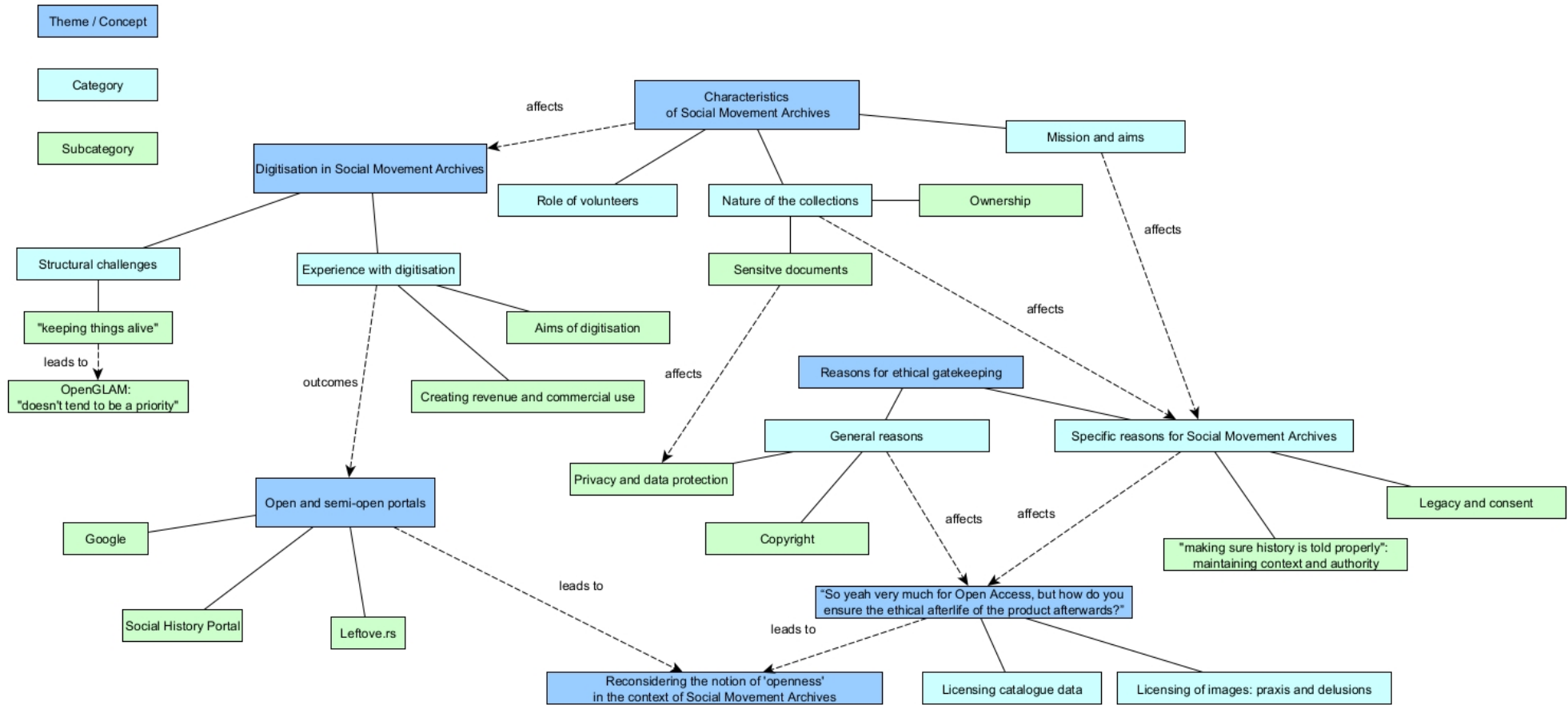
## F1: Visual overviews on categories

### Categories MML interviews





# Categories expert interviews



## **F2: Example memo**

### **17.12.20 dichotomy**

A participant described the pros and cons (or better said implications?) of Open GLAM as a dichotomy (a partition of a whole in two disjoint parts). First I thought this might be an interesting term to describe the problems with the term 'open'. But in the whole there are much more facets and grey zones what speaks for or against Open GLAM. There are potential implications for the organisation itself (e.g. amount of workload), there is scepticism on the value of Open GLAM, and a self-conception how the mission is reached with own means, not through openness. But there are also aspects that speak for Open GLAM: the vocation of an educational charity, international collaboration, and benefits such as increased use of the collection. Something is not right with this dichotomy as good as it sounds. I need to think of another term to describe the matter.

**Addition 18.12.20:** Maybe it's not about a binary distinction between pro and con Open GLAM. But more fruitful to think of dimensions/facets that form an interplay that make it possible for organisations to go for Open GLAM or not?

### F3: Example analytical table

#### Category: Role of volunteers

Participant	Primary Codes	Observation / Summary
WCML	<p>“[volunteers are] absolutely crucial for us”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “exhibitions team”</li> <li>- “trustees”</li> <li>- “helping with cataloguing [enriching subject terms]”</li> <li>- “in future [...] have volunteers help us with digitisation”</li> </ul> <p>“2 full-time, one part-time member of staff”</p> <p>“needs to be clear what is a staff and what is a volunteer role”</p> <p>Huge volunteer base vs. regular/core volunteers that run organisation</p>	<p>The majority of interviewed organisations are independent charities. While core funding is rare, there is in all cases at least one ‘member of staff’ that receives either some wage or another form of reimbursement. The literature and most of the interview partners highlight the importance of volunteers for community archives. But how the effective involvement of volunteers look like, varies from organisation to organisation. In most cases a relatively small cohort of volunteers is “keeping the organisation running”. Yet there is in all organisations a clear distinction between what paid members and volunteers do. So are members of staff responsible for the very</p>
BCA	<p>“[volunteers] keeping the organisation running”</p> <p>“five people who work”</p> <p>“extra pair of hands”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “help man the reception</li> </ul>	<p>responsible for the very</p>

	<p>desk”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“help in the reading room”</li> <li>- “don’t do cataloguing [...] they do listing”</li> </ul> <p>80-100 volunteers in system vs. 10-20 regular volunteers</p>	<p>core tasks, like administrative or finance work and volunteer coordination. Typical volunteer roles include reading room assistance, sorting documents, creating exhibitions and organising events. Sometimes they are</p>
TUC	“one main volunteer”	involved in smaller
Feminist Library	<p>“always been volunteer run”</p> <p>“not officially funded”</p> <p>“four paid workers” “part-time”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“admin work”</li> <li>-“finance work”</li> <li>- “fundraising”</li> <li>- “volunteer coordination”</li> </ul> <p>“keen volunteer [...] wants to do a bit of digitisation”</p> <p>[small number of] regular volunteers vs. 100 volunteers in whole</p>	<p>cataloguing or digitisation tasks. But these are not common roles, because specialised skills are required. Some organisations think about involving volunteers in digitisation. Yet, digitisation plays generally a marginal role in the community archives’ sector. Unless there is not a staff role for digitisation, volunteers are unlikely to digitise (the MML is here an exception).</p> <p>There is great emphasis on not exploiting</p>
Amsab-ISH	“we have like staff of 35 persons”	volunteer labour. The work that is done by

	<p>“trying to complement this with a number of volunteers”</p> <p>“smaller procedures – we ask volunteers to help out”</p> <p>“cannot really ask volunteer to enter this kind of specialised metadata”</p> <p>“four or five volunteers”</p>	<p>volunteers is mainly understood as something “extra” or “nice to have”. The MayDay Rooms even “discourage all forms of voluntary labour which are in effect coerced” (e.g. internships). The MayDay Rooms instead “prefer people to come with an interest”, with a specific idea for a project, research, or exhibition.</p> <p>The literature and the</p>
<p>MayDay Rooms</p>	<p>“a charity”</p> <p>“collective of four of us that run the archive”</p> <p>“everybody is paid the same”</p> <p>“exchange for space [building collective]”</p> <p>“autonomous working”</p> <p>“against volunteer labour”</p> <p>“prefer people to come with an interest”</p>	<p>interview partners suggest that volunteers play a crucial role for Social Movement Archives. However, they do not seem to be involved in core functions that are necessary for running the organisations. This might illustrate that digitisation (and thus Open GLAM) is just not a core priority for Social Movement Archives. However, organisations like the MayDay Rooms could indicate how a more</p>

Interview partner 7 <sup>132</sup>	“the role of volunteers mostly is relatively limited”  Volunteer skills and knowledge vs. required level of expertise	ethical involvement of ‘volunteers’ in digitisation could look like.
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<sup>132</sup> Some codes are removed to preserve confidentiality.

# **Appendix G: Example participant information sheets and consent forms**

## **G1: Information sheet MML workshop series**

### **Linking our collection with the Social History Portal**

#### **Participant Information Sheet for team members of the Marx Memorial Library**

**Sheet Number:** 2020-3

**UCL Research Ethics Committee Approval ID Number:** 15405/001

**Department:** Information Studies – University Collection London (UCL)

**Researcher (PhD student):** Marco Humbel [e-mail address removed]

**Principal supervisor:** Dr Julianne Nyhan [e-mail address removed]

**Subsidiary supervisors:** Dr Andrew Flinn [e-mail address removed] and Dr Antonis Bikakis [e-mail address removed]

#### **About the project**

As part of a focus group discussion last autumn with MML volunteers, trustees and staff we were thinking about where and how we could make our collection accessible outside of our own catalogue. We found consensus that we would like to contribute with our poster collection to the Social History Portal. The Social History Portal is a collective catalogue that brings together the online collections of heritage organisations from all over the world, that are devoted to heritage, history and theory of labour and social movements. We added our posters to the Social History Portal in May and you can find them by clicking on this [link](#).

Now it's time to evaluate the pilot-project and discuss how we are going to use the Social History Portal in future for our collections. Sharing resources online has advantages, such as increased accessibility and visibility. But we also need to consider which objects can actually be made available (e.g. due to copyright), how they are contextualised, or how the MML is acknowledged. The Social History Portal would also allow us to contribute to Europeana (Europe's digital library), which raises further questions. To explore these and

other issues we are going to host a series of interactive online workshops. There is no prior experience required in any area the workshops cover.

Before you decide if you want to take part, it is important that you understand what the participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others. If anything is unclear, or if you would like more information do not hesitate to ask [e-mail address removed]. Take time to decide if you want to take part or not. Thank you very much for reading this.

### **What does the project involve?**

You will be asked to take part in a series of online workshops. Each workshop starts with an introduction to the main topic and is followed by an audio recorded group discussion. Each workshop starts at 2pm and lasts for about 75-90 minutes. The workshops take place on the following dates and cover:

**16<sup>th</sup> September** Why do we digitise? Part 1: Our collections online

**23<sup>rd</sup> September** Heritage Copyright 1 (moderated by LaToyah Gill - Untamed Artists)

**30<sup>th</sup> September** Heritage Copyright 2 (guest speaker)

**7<sup>th</sup> October** The Social History Portal

**14<sup>th</sup> October** The Social History Portal and Europeana

**21<sup>st</sup> October** Why do we digitise? Part 2: Evaluation of the project

### **Do I have to take part?**

It is entirely voluntary if you want to take part in the workshops. Refusal to take part does not involve any penalty or loss of benefits you might be entitled to, as a team member of the MML. You can withdraw at any point.

### **Why am I asked to take part in this research project?**

You are contacted because you are a team member of the MML (member of staff, trustee, volunteer or member of the charity). Being over 18 years old and being a team member of the MML are the only inclusion criteria for this part of this research.



### **What data will be collected?**

The workshops will be conducted through the online conference tool Whereby. The researcher (Marco) will record and transcribe the group discussions through an audio recording device. No software is used to record the interview. He will also take notes in a research diary during the discussions. Any data will be per default anonymised. At no point sensitive personal data (e.g. ethnic background, political opinion or membership of a trade union) will be collected. You will have the possibility to waive your anonymity (see consent form). The transcriptions of audio recordings made will only be used for analysis and for illustration in later publications and presentations. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one except Marco and his supervisors will be allowed access to the recordings and transcriptions. Audio recordings will be deleted after you approved the transcription (see: can I approve finished transcriptions?). Transcriptions will be deleted with the end of the researcher's PhD on the 15.09.2022. The research diary in paper form will be kept after the project safely at his home in a locked drawer.

### **Can I approve finished transcriptions?**

The researcher will share the transcription of the audio recording with the group that was present on that workshop day. Your sections of the transcript will be indicated. From the point the researcher shared the transcription, you have 4 weeks time to require deletions, corrections, to make comments, or to block further processing for your sections of the transcript. After everyone approved a transcription the audio recording will be deleted.

### **Are there any possible risks or disadvantages of taking part?**

Overall there are no significant risks in participating in this research. Please raise any issues before serious disagreements arise.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There is no immediate benefit for participating in the project. However, the workshops aim to be beneficial for your skills development. In particular you will:

- Gain expertise on the Social History Portal
- Learn about copyright which is relevant for the heritage sector and the MML

- Gain knowledge about what heritage digitisation involves that is applicable to the whole sector

### **What if something goes wrong?**

If you wish to raise serious complaints please contact my principal supervisor:

Dr Julianne Nyhan

[e-mail address removed]

[phone number removed]

In case your complaint has not been treated to your satisfaction please contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee – [ethics@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@ucl.ac.uk)

### **How can I withdraw from the project?**

You can withdraw at any point without prejudice and without providing the reason. You can withdraw by telling the researcher in person or writing him an email. If you decide to withdraw the researcher will share any transcriptions you have not approved yet. From the point the researcher shared the transcription, you have 4 weeks time to require deletions, corrections or to make comments and to block further processing.

### **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information the researcher collects about you during the course of the project will be kept strictly confidential. The researcher's supervisors and he himself are the only ones who have access to any collected data. Any names or sensitive information which might appear in audio recordings or documents will be deleted.

Since the MML is a small organisation it will not be possible to keep your anonymity from other team members of the MML. However, you will not be able to be identified in any ensuing reports or publications. This is of course not the case if you gave the permission in the consent form to identify you by name or role (see: What data will be collected?).

### **Limits to confidentiality**

Please note that confidentiality within the MML may not be guaranteed; due to the limited size of the participant sample (see: Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?).

Participation in the workshops cannot be confidential towards other participants of the workshops (See the procedure for approving transcriptions in 'Can I approve finished transcriptions?')

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

### **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The data collected will be presented within the researcher's PhD thesis and disseminated through articles or presentations. Unless you have not give explicit permission, you will not be identified in any publication. The researcher will report on our project regularly at our volunteer meetings. Links to published journal articles or presentations can be found at:

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/information-studies/marco-humbel>

### **Local Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at [data-protection@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@ucl.ac.uk)

Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/sites/legal-services/files/ucl\\_general\\_research\\_participant\\_privacy\\_notice\\_v1.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/sites/legal-services/files/ucl_general_research_participant_privacy_notice_v1.pdf)

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

The categories of personal data used will be as follows:

Name (if you waive your anonymity)

Your role

The lawful basis that would be used to process your *personal data* will be performance of a task in the public interest.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project (until the 15.09.2022). If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at [data-protection@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@ucl.ac.uk).

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering to take part in this research project. If you decide to participate you will be given this information sheet and a consent form to sign.

## **G2: Consent form MML workshop series**

### **Linking our collection with the Social History Portal**

#### **Consent to participate in a workshop series and use data:**

**Used in conjunction with participant information sheet: 2020-3**

**Researcher:** Marco Humbel – [e-mail address removed]

Thank you for considering taking part in the workshop series 'Linking our collection with the Social History Portal'. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the information sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep and refer to at any time.

#### **Participant information sheet**

I have read and understood the participant information sheet and agree to participate in workshop series 'Linking our collection with the Social History Portal'

I hereby confirm that I understand the inclusion criteria as detailed in the Information Sheet and explained to me by the researcher. I confirm that I meet the inclusion criteria.

#### **Withdrawal**

I understand that the participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw at any point from the project without prejudice and without providing the reason.

#### **Data collection within the workshops**

I understand that the interview takes place online via the conference tool Whereby.

I understand that as part of the workshops, the researcher (Marco) conducts the following data collection techniques:

1. Audio recording and transcription of group discussions

2. Taking notes from the workshops and reflecting on group developments

## Use of data

The lawful basis to process your personal data is the performance of a task in the public interest.

I understand that at the time of their creation, recordings and transcripts have a copyright jointly owned by the interviewer (Marco Humbel) and the interviewee (myself). **I agree** to permanently assign my portion of this copyright to the interviewer. In assigning my portion of copyright, I understand that the interviewer will:

Create a transcript of the recordings which I will have an opportunity to edit and approve

Store copies of this material in secure IT-systems of UCL

These copies will be deleted by 15.09.2022

I also understand that any data collected through the workshops will be used for the purposes of the research described in the information sheet. This will result in the researcher publishing quotes or paraphrasing from interview recordings. When using quotes the researcher (please select one):

- must not identify me by name and endeavour to preserve my confidentiality (you will be referred as “interviewee Marx Memorial Library”)
- may identify me by my role when quoting or paraphrasing from the approved transcript
- may identify me by name and role when quoting or paraphrasing from the approved transcript (I waive my anonymity)

The MML is a small organisation. I understand that other team members of the MML will know that I participated in the workshops. Complete anonymity or identification by my role can be only maintained against people outside the MML.

I understand that I will receive the finished transcripts and **I shall have then 4 weeks time to:**

1. Require deletion of sequences I appear in recordings or transcripts
2. Correct transcripts or comment on quotes/paraphrases should errors be discovered
3. Right to block further processing of all sequences in which I appear in recordings or transcript

**Participant**

**Date/Signed:**

**Print Name:**

**Researcher**

**Date/Signed:**

**Print Name:** Marco Humbel

### **G3: Information sheet expert interview**

#### **Views on Open Access policies in small and independent heritage organisations**

#### **Participant Information Sheet for expert interviews**

**Sheet Number:** 2020-1

**UCL Research Ethics Committee Approval ID Number:** 15405/001

**Department:** Information Studies – University Collection London (UCL)

**Researcher (PhD student):** Marco Humbel – [e-mail address removed]

**Principal supervisor:** Dr Julianne Nyhan - [e-mail address removed]

**Subsidiary supervisors:** Dr Andrew Flinn [e-mail address removed] and Dr Antonis Bikakis [e-mail address removed]

#### **About the project**

As part of my PhD research I am interested in how small and independent heritage organisations digitise their collections and their views on so-called Open Access policies. You might be also aware of the so-called OpenGLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) movement, which promotes the idea of making digitised collections available for free reuse. I collaborate for this research project with the Marx Memorial Library London. In order to investigate some of my research questions in a wider context I would be interested in conducting interviews with practitioners in other small and independent heritage organisations. With this interview I hope to be able to explore the following areas:

- The role of volunteers at your organisation
- The objectives and motivations of the to make collections available online
- The view of the on so-called 'Open-Access' policies for online collections

Before you decide if you want to take part, it is important that you understand what the participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others. If anything is unclear, or if you would like more information do not hesitate to contact me [e-mail address removed]. Take time to decide if you want to take part or not. Thank you very much for reading this.



### **Why have I been chosen?**

I asked you to take part in this interview because the size of your organisation falls into the scope of my research, or because your organisation is a member of the 'International Association of Labour History Institutions'. Being over 18 years old and having expressed interest in taking part in this interview is the only inclusion criteria.

### **Do I have to take part?**

It is entirely voluntary if you want to take part in this interview or not. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you are asked to sign a consent form. Refusal to take part does not involve any prejudice or penalty. You can withdraw at any point without giving the reason.

### **What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be interviewed and the interview will be audio recorded. The interview takes about 45 minutes.

### **Will I be recorded and how will the recorded media be used?**

This interview will be held online via Microsoft Teams or Skype. The interview will be recorded through an audio recording device. No software is used to record the interview. I do not collect any sensitive personal data (e.g. ethnic background, political opinion or membership of a trade union). You can waive your anonymity if you wish to do so (see consent form). The transcriptions of audio recordings made during this interview will only be used for analysis and for illustration in later publications and presentations. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one except my supervisors and I will be allowed access to the recordings and transcriptions. Audio recordings will be deleted after you approved the transcription (see: can I approve finished transcriptions?). Transcriptions collected in this interview will be deleted with the end of my PhD on the 15.09.2022.

### **Can I approve finished transcriptions?**

After the interview I will share with you the transcription of the audio recording. From the point I shared the transcription, you have 4 weeks time to require deletions, corrections or to make comments and to block further processing. After you approved a transcription the audio recording will be deleted.

### **Are there any possible risks or disadvantages of taking part?**

Overall there are no significant risks in participating in this research. Please raise any issues or discomforts, if they should arise.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There is no immediate benefit for participating in the project, besides hopefully contributing to a better understanding of small and independent organisations in the heritage sector.

### **What if something goes wrong?**

If you wish to raise serious complaints please contact my principal supervisor:

Dr Julianne Nyhan

[e-mail address removed]

[phone number removed]

In case your complaint has not been treated to your satisfaction please contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee – [ethics@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@ucl.ac.uk)

### **How can I withdraw from the project?**

You can withdraw from the interview at any point without prejudice and without providing the reason. After the interview I will share with you the transcription of the audio recording. From the point I shared the transcription, you have 4 weeks time to require deletions, corrections or to make comments and to block further processing.

### **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information I collect about you during the course of the project will be kept strictly confidential. My supervisors and I are the only ones who have access to any collected data. Any names or sensitive information which might appear in audio recordings or documents will be deleted. You and your organisation will not be identifiable in any ensuing reports or publications. This is of course not the case if you gave me the permission in the consent form to identify you by name, role or organisation (see: Will I be recorded and how will the recorded media be used?).

### **Limits to confidentiality**

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

## **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The data collected will be presented within my PhD thesis and disseminated through articles or presentations. Unless you have not given explicit permission, you will not be identified in any publication. Any outcome of the project will be listed on my web page: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/information-studies/marco-humbel>

## **Local Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at [data-protection@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@ucl.ac.uk)

Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice:

[https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/sites/legal-services/files/ucl\\_general\\_research\\_participant\\_privacy\\_notice\\_v1.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/sites/legal-services/files/ucl_general_research_participant_privacy_notice_v1.pdf)

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

The categories of personal data used will be as follows:

Your name (if you waive your anonymity)

Your role and the name of your organisation (if you waive your anonymity)

The lawful basis that would be used to process your *personal data* will be performance of a task in the public interest.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project (until the 15.09.2022). If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at [data-protection@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@ucl.ac.uk).

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering to take part in this research project. If you decide to participate, you will be given this information sheet and a consent form to sign.

## **G4: Consent form expert interview**

### **Views on Open Access policies in small and independent heritage organisations (expert interview)**

#### **Consent to interview and use data:**

**Used in conjunction with participant information sheet: 2020-1**

**Researcher and interviewer:** Marco Humbel – [e-mail address removed]

Thank you for considering taking part in an interview. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the information sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep and refer to at any time.

#### **Participant information sheet**

I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet and agree to give an interview for the described project.

I hereby confirm that I understand the inclusion criteria as detailed in the Information Sheet and explained to me by the researcher. I confirm that I meet the inclusion criteria.

#### **Withdrawal**

I understand that the participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw at any point from the interview without prejudice and without providing the reason.

#### **Use of data**

The lawful basis to process your personal data is the performance of a task in the public interest.

I understand that the interview takes place online via Microsoft Teams or through a Skype phone call.

I understand that the interview will be recorded through a recording device. No software will be used to record the interview.

I understand that at the time of their creation, recordings and transcripts have a copyright jointly owned by the interviewer (Marco Humbel) and the interviewee (myself). **I agree** to permanently assign my portion of this copyright to the interviewer. In assigning my portion of copyright, I understand that the interviewer will:

1. Create a transcript of the recordings which I will have an opportunity to edit and approve.
2. Store copies of this material in secure IT-systems of UCL.
3. These copies will be deleted by 15.09.2022.

I also understand that data from my interviews will be used for the purposes of the research described in the information sheet. This will result in the researcher publishing quotes from my interview or paraphrasing my interview. When using quotes the interviewer (please select one):

- must not identify me by name and endeavour to preserve my confidentiality.
- may identify me by my role and organisation when quoting or paraphrasing from the approved transcript.
- may identify me by name, role and organisation when quoting or paraphrasing from the approved transcript.

I understand that I will receive the finished transcripts and **I shall have then 4 weeks time to:**

1. Require deletion of sequences I appear in recordings or transcripts.
2. Correct transcripts or comment on quotes/paraphrases should errors be discovered.
3. Right to block further processing of all sequences in which I appear in recordings or transcript.

**Interviewee**

**Interviewer**

**Date/Signed:**

**Date/Signed:**

**Print Name:**

**Print Name:** Marco Humbel