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As a third year student of a PhD in Art History, I have now gathered a certain amount of documents and information to start building the general structure of my research about the Britishness of British art from 1980s until now. What I intend to develop in my research thesis is lead by the question: how has the term Britishness played a role in the British art world since the 1980s? It follows the question: how have the definitions been kept in motion? Who is defining Britishness in the art world? How is it expressed? Why and how is this term being used? How does the British identity topic nurture artworks, debates, research, museology, and cultural policies since the 1980s in particular?

In order to answer these questions, I have decided not to study exclusively artworks in relation to the development of symbols of British identity, exhibitions made from a nationalist viewpoint, or articles in reviews with a nationalist analysis on artworks. Instead, I want to give a wider perspective to my research by studying the relationship of institutions, academics, museums and artists as well. Above all, I quickly understood that any definition of Britishness would be problematic and insecure because it is constructed. With the help of a series of interviews during my master degree, and a first overview about what is at stake in British contemporary art, I had proposed to develop an account of the wavering of Britishness meanings. I now prefer the more challenging approach of investigating areas of art in which the term is used: in art practices, in art institutions, in narratives or art histories, and in different levels of cultural policies developed in the art museum, art galleries, art national agencies, and in the main governmental sectors.

Tate Encounters Research is connecting several groups of people and institutions. Tate Encounters is tackling, instead of avoiding, the defects of previous institutional approaches to issues such as 'diversity'. Being conscious of the innovation of the research, I wish to study the research team as a social group, and not the results of the Research Team. Tate Encounters is in the process of erecting a new framework for the benefit of a new interpretation of the term 'Britishness', which I will look at to discuss the British art world in my thesis.

I would like to integrate my study of Tate Encounters as one of the final reports concerning the relationship between academics, museums and their public, and how this affects notions of British identity over the past five years.

The general aim of the research is to study Tate Encounters as a social group in order to evaluate if and how the use of the term “Britishness” is being kept in motion and is interpreted through the project.

Under this umbrella, I would like firstly to work on the construction of the common structure of thought, definitions, and language which shape the research as a whole, and also inform the framework used to devise workshops, programmes, and to mediate all sort of interactions between participants, artists, academics from different backgrounds, team leaders, as well as institutional supporters and funding agencies.

Secondly, I would like to focus on transparency of information, and the freedom and capacity of individuals (co-researchers and research team) to innovate. I intend to sketch the dialogue between participants and institutions such as the DCMS and the Arts Council and/or the AHRC.

Thirdly, I would like to study more closely the collaborative dialogue between Tate Education and LSBU, and Wimbledon College of Arts, focusing specifically on how museology, anthropology and fine arts interact in as part of the programme.

I would like to conduct the research in three stages in order to take into consideration the web of people, archive, methodology and objects:

A. An historical approach to frameworks

Firstly, I tend to produce an archive of the nature of the relationship between each member, and each group, by studying unpublished documents relating the history of Tate Encounters from the pre-project to the present time.

The aim is to obtain a simple overview of the relations of power that exist inside Tate Encounters, and to figure out to what extent people are free to develop and nurture new ideas according to methodological and institutional frameworks.

The object of study would be confined to archives, official documents and personal records that relate to the different and varied stages of the work within the research team in terms of definitions, key topics, and key bibliographies.

I would like to sketch the way Tate Encounters works. This means asking which ideas are left, kept or compromised, how and by whom, and in which circumstances? What language is used in institutional papers and how does this compare to unofficial and personal papers? I hope to do this in order to define the progress and metamorphosis of ideas, and to understand the power relationships that are instituted inside the team. Above all, I wish to understand how the general framework of definitions, language tools and key terms are chosen over the course of the project. I will look at the nature of interaction between groups of people, institutions and team members, from a documentary perspective. What do the documents say about these issues?

B. A process of innovation defined by frameworks

The main aim of this is to question the transparency and access of information to the issues discussed by the Tate Encounters team by students and co-researchers. This research would challenge the personal involvement, and the individual reception of the general framework of the research project (discussed earlier) in terms of how people experience interactions and the evolution of their own ideas of Britishness that result from the programme.

I would like to conduct interviews of members in two stages

The first would concern a set of interviews with people who have participated in some form and in a decision making capacity with the research team. Secondly, I will interview a selection of Tate Encounter participants. I have identified these initial groups:

- Students participants
- Each members of Tate Encounter research
- Artists involved
- DCMS and AHRC collaborators

The results will be disseminated in records and papers, and would shed light on the ways that people who are involved in the project perceive it now, how they experience it, and how this experience has changed their view about the British identity.

C. Interrelationship between museology, anthropology, and artworks

In addition to the previous research outlined above, I propose another level of analysis that focuses on the relationship between museology, anthropology and artworks. After studying the building of a language and framework, as well as studying the process of innovation and the experience of participants of the Tate Encounters workshops, I would like to focus on the question of translation and the union of academic language for the benefit of the audience.

Consequently, I would be particularly eager to determine what connects museology, anthropology and the audience. This is important to be able to specify what is the language spoken between these fields; is there a new language that emerges from these encounters? Moreover, to what extent do the current cultural policies play a role in this relationship?

Firstly, I would like to shed light upon Victoria Walsh, David Dibosa, and Andrew Dewdney's perspectives. I would then read the results of these interviews in light of the general cultural policy of the British government.

I then intend to situate the object and the place of the artworks as part of these dialogues between anthropology, museology and audiences of museum.

I intend to question if the workshops help shape definitions of Britishness and ask if the artworks act as an active tool in the moving definition of the British identity. Is any place left for the object? Do the artworks add something, or play a part in the framing of Tate Encounters as a social group? Is there an interaction between artworks, people engaged in the project and the official and scientific viewpoint of the Research Project?

A Common agreement

The project would be based on a collaborative approach and a common agreement. Any methods used during the course of my research will be submitted to the Research Team as often as it is needed.

To make the study work, I need to first of all integrate into the team. That is in itself a point that needs to be discussed as it requires a 'process of integration'.

B Collaborative work.

Each stage of my research has been developed with the idea of collaboration. Partly because I don't believe that being a neutral observer of a social group could work, exists, or is even wanted. I would prefer to integrate, participate and collaborate with the project, giving what I can according to my level of knowledge and ability. This is because I would like to observe how new ideas, innovations, and advice circulate through the Research Team. Above all, I consider that any project has a better chance to go further with a wider perspective than with the lone individual viewpoint.

Collaboration in this context means the exchange of ideas, and the scope of my research is relative to this.