Cultural Transpractices:
Method as Performative Tool of Change

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Abstract
This paper speaks to the conference's concern with the 'politics of value' and the over-arching interest in transvaluation through discussion of two transdisciplinary and collaborative research projects that were developed with Tate in London (2007-14): 'Tate Encounters: Britishness and Visual Culture' (2007-10) and 'Modelling Cultural Value within New Media cultures and Networked Participation: Cultural Value and the Digital' (2014). Both projects examined the limits and opportunities of curatorial and organisational practices and knowledge-formation in the production of value within national public culture. Based on the research findings detailing the negative impact of instrumentalisation, auditing and risk management in cultural and higher education policy, the research highlighted the level of disjuncture between theory, practice and policy which continues to mitigate against the development of new models of transvaluation.

The research to be presented advances arguments for a revision of models of applied as well as theoretical research related to cultural value and offers a model of transvaluation, termed by the authors as 'post-critical'. This term was proposed from the AHRC Tate Encounters project which understood method as 'a performative tool of change' developed through a collaborative, embedded, transdisciplinary and co-production method for valuing the public's encounter with the art museum. The research investigated organisational barriers to change in the negotiated modes of cultural authority between users of the museum and professionals and in the process elaborated upon the concepts of transvisuality, transculturality and transmediality. The second AHRC-funded project, 'Cultural Value and the Digital' traced the connections and disconnections between the theory, practice and policy discourses in culture and digital domains through bringing together curators, artists, policy-makers, theorists, and museum professionals in a series of public research seminars based upon an analytical matrix of their inter-relation. Finally, the paper will also draw on a three-year major collaborative research project focused on 'Curatorial and Artistic Research' as part of the EU-multi-partner 'Museums in an Age of Migrations' (MeLA) which extended the Tate organisational research enquiry into modes of curatorial collaboration and public programming.

In focusing on research method as a performative tool of change the paper considers the problem surrounding the relationship between individual and professional reflexivity in institutional contexts, looking at the problems of what to do with theory in practice, whilst looking at the conditions in which theory is practiced. The paper underlines the crucial importance of translation as a means of overcoming epistemological and methodological separations. Translation as a central understanding of method is, the paper argues, constitutive of the process of new knowledge formation which, as the conference call notes, could be understood as a 'faculty through which collective patterns of dissent and new design for collective life emerges' (Appadurai 2000). Analytically the research owes much to understandings derived from Actor Network Theory as well as the employment of progressive social science and ethnography.

Keywords: Performative, Post-critical, Transdisciplinary, Transmedial, Transvisuality

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