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I understand the review format is not rigid and my report is therefore in two sections: the first provides an overview and the second uses the thesis's Table of Contents as a framework within which to comment on specific points and details.

1. Overview

The thesis question, 'Within the Prague Zoo what does the gaze of human visitors consist of when looking at the animal?' was both timely and apt, as it combined the recently burgeoning subject of critical animal studies with a number of other contemporary concerns such as the semiotics of representation, the construction of identity and the social role of the modern urban zoo. The thesis's implicit, but well-tempered challenging of many official orthodoxies and assumptions should also be commended.

Inevitably, the necessity for an ambitious degree of interdisciplinarity carried attendant risks of insufficient depth or inconsistency of approach, but the candidate appears to have been well supervised and these possibilities were not in evidence. Breaking the research question down into the following four sub-questions was an effective strategy that facilitated the employment of critical theories and methodologies from several different disciplines.

Sub-questions:

What are the human visitors looking at?

How are they looking?

What is this 'animal' that is the subject of the gaze?

How does the zoo institution influence this gaze?

I found these sub-questions both well-chosen and well-considered. They also contributed to the overall clarity of exposition and the candidate should be congratulated on her successful assimilation and integration of these theoretical sources into the addressing of her principal question .

Inevitably, some aspects of their investigation could have been taken further, or would have benefitted from additional critical perspectives (in particular see suggestions in sections 1.2. and 2.2 below). It is also possible the thesis would have benefitted from an appendix of an observational diary, or field notes which gave e reader a more detailed insight into the investigative process.

However, overall these are only minor caveats, as can be seen from the following section of this report. Instead, it is important to add that many of the observations below are not criticisms of omissions, but encouraging suggestions for future investigation, as I believe that although the principal research question has been successfully answered, it can provide a solid foundation for further explorations.

2. Specific points, details and observations

Table of Contents

Introduction.....1

P.1, para.2 'The first zoos were shaped either as scientific institutions (e.g. the Zoological Society of London) or as an attraction for the general public (Hagenbeck's zoo in Hamburg).' The Jardin des Plantes (1793) is a century older than Hagenbeck's Zoo (1907) and even though it had an Enlightenment proto-zoological aspect, would have been a more suitable example of the latter. Furthermore, zoo historians

usually consider Hagenbeck’s as being the model for a later generation of zoos on account of its barless enclosures. *En passant* one could then have appropriately noted that the early Paris and London collections both contained animals from royal menageries.

1.1 Objective of the Thesis and Research Questions.....3

P2, para 3 For precision and consistency with subsequent usage, suggest, ‘... what is *an animal* for the people who visit a zoo and how is the concept of ~~animal~~ zoo animal constructed through their gaze.’

1.2 Entering the Field and Research Methods.....4

There was an appropriate choice of research methodologies, though perhaps the lack of statistical evidence and the phenomenological methodology can in places make the observational aspect of the account appear slightly anecdotal. I would also have welcomed specific detail on the selection of observation points – for instance, one ‘charismatic’ animal enclosure, Nevertheless, in fairness one must also mention that this section made very interesting reading.

However, the investigation could perhaps have also intentionally considered studying visitors’ behaviour at some of the older, more contentious sites, such as the surreal giraffe display, or if possible the old elephant and hippo house (which must have already been obsolete at the time of its construction).

The observational methodologies might have been usefully supplemented by interviews with official shapers of the Zoo’s visual environment (architects, landscape architects, graphic and display designers) to establish their criteria and intentionality in structuring or re-structuring the spatial and scopic regimes of the Zoo site.

P.5, p.4 Grammar: *where* should be *were*.

2.1.1 Humans and Other Animals.....6

Overall, this was a very comprehensive and highly commendable historical overview.

P.7,p.4 Would have been pertinent to have mentioned the effect of domestication on the evolution of species such as the dog.

P.8 Could also have included the allegorical animals of Aesop’s fables and the medieval Christian bestiary.

2.1.1.1 Animals Set Paw in Modernity.....10

Many developments listed (national parks, wilderness preservation, environmentalism, sentimentalisation of animals/pets) originated in the C19th, not the C20th.

P.12 Recreational hunting and fishing have been practised for many centuries, so are hardly ‘C20th developments’.

2.1.1.2 Postmodernity: The Animal in a Post-Human World.....12

P.13 Franklin (2007, 77) appears to overlook vast areas such as the Sahara, the Upper Congo, most of Papua New Guinea and the Arctic, and of course, the world’s oceans.

2.2 What Are We Looking at?.....18

P.19, p.2 Much of the discussion of ‘otherness’ (which seems derived from early post-colonial theory) would have greatly benefitted from knowledge of more recent developments, such as Homi Bhabha’s writings, particularly his redefining of Said’s simple binary model of imperial and subaltern cultures through more complex concepts such as ‘hybridity’ and the ‘Third Space’.

NB. Despite the preference for ‘chimera’ in section 3.4.9 the above advice remains valid in principle.

2.2.1 Wild Animals, Zoo Animals.....20

P.21 Lee’s arguments are not absolute. Firstly, even the general correlation between a mammal’s size, the size of its natural territory and the degree of errant behaviour it displays in zoos (eg African elephants and giraffes) is not universal. Secondly, examples such as Prague Zoo’s successful re-introductions of Przewalski’s horses into the wild may indeed be exceptions, but they still provide a heartening counter to Lee.

3.1 Zoo History.....	30
The historical account would benefit from:-	
i) More dates in order to provide a stronger sense of chronology; for instance, it is not apparent that Hagenbeck's zoo opened eighty years after the LZS. It is also arguable that the latter became principally a place of public amusement in 1846 after being opened to paying visitors.	
ii) Noting the many links between C19th colonial projects and the burgeoning of zoos in the European imperial capitals and the principal cities of the British Empire.	
3.3.2 Disappearing through Overexposure: Zoo, Pornography and Power.....	36
P.37, p.3 Mention of Foucault might also prompt consideration in section 3.3.4 as to whether the zoo possesses Foucault's definitive criteria of a heterotopia.	
3.3.4 Artificially Created Natural Environment.....	40
In addition to Foucault's theory of heterotopias, this section (and/or 3.4.2) could also have drawn on Baudrillard's concepts of simulation and hyperreality.	
3.4.2 Decorations of the Environment.....	46
This section was particularly notable for its rich, phenomenological investigation of Elephant Valley. P.48, p.2 'The elephants' exhibit draws heavily upon the aesthetics of exoticism as well as that of colonialism.'	
i) Worth formally noting the architectural resemblance to common C19th practice, albeit having an (ostensibly) different rationale.	
ii) I would suggest the iconography is pre-colonial, rather than being evocative of the British Raj.	
3.4.3 Human Images and Mirrors.....	51
P.51, p.4 Grammar: 'learned' should be 'taught'.	
3.4.7 When Animals Educate.....	62
P.63'p.1 Grammar: 'many informations' should be 'much information'.	
3.4.8 Why Look at Animals... When There Are Other Things to Do.....	65
P.65, p.4 Grammar: 'appealed to' should be 'attracted to'.	
Bibliography.....	71
Recommendation:-	
Bataray, Eric and Hardouin-Fugier, Elizabeth (2004) <i>Zoo: a History of Zoological Gardens in the West</i> (London, Reaktion), not least on account of the excellent illustrations.	