Week 1-Break away from one-sided thinking when looking at problems.

Category: Uncategorised
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To understand issues, we must break free from a one-dimensional perspective.

When I was studying the course, I found that there were three terms that hindered my understanding: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, and The Billion Black Anthropocenes. After establishing a clear understanding, I connected the internal relationships among these three phrases, which form a progressively deepening internal logic.

The concept of the “Anthropocene” (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000) was introduced at the end of the 20th century, in the context of escalating global ecological crises, to address the core issue of who is shaping the future of the Earth. The ecological crisis was attributed to “the human race as a whole”.

After 2010, with the questioning of the notion that “humans as a whole are guilty”, in 2014, the concept of “Capitalocene” (Moore 2014) was systematically expounded to explain “which human activities and what systems led to the crisis”, clearly identifying the institutional root of the ecological crisis.

In 2018, people again proposed that the crisis should not be solely attributed to the economic dimension. It is also necessary to consider the relationship between capital accumulation and racial oppression. Subsequently, to clearly define that the crisis is a dual product of capital and racial oppression, the concept of “The Billion Black Anthropocenes” (Yusoff 2018) was proposed.

From “phenomenological description” to “institutional roots” and then to “justice dimension”, it delves deeper layer by layer. This realization led me to understand that for comprehending phenomena, it is necessary to break away from a single dimension.

Project Paradise, Edinburgh, 2023–2024

With this mindset, I analyzed the case of Sarah Wood’s “Project Paradise” mentioned in class.

https://vimeo.com/893289187?fl=pl&fe=sh

I summarized this exhibition as “reconstruction of existing images + presentation from an all-seeing perspective”. The artist used existing images combined with drone perspectives to create a film, highlighting the integration of historical fragments and personal memories.

However, I identified two issues. Firstly, the exhibition failed to take into account the racial power dynamics emphasized by The Billion Black Anthropocenes, so the “Paradise” discussed in this context was not profound enough. Secondly, the selection of films in the exhibition was subjective and fragmented. It relied solely on fragmented archival image collation for narration, without questioning elements such as the filmmaker’s stance or the historical context of image production. These fragments were unable to interpret the complex connotations of “Paradise”, such as ecology, justice, and history.

The innovation and limitations of “Project Paradise” made me reflect: The charm of curating lies in awakening thoughts through unique forms, and depth stems from the respect for diverse perspectives and historical contexts.

Also, as the group discussion for the first week, everyone introduced themselves and their specialties. It was great to hear that the group members have specialties in installation, editing, communication and modeling. We are looking forward to working together in the future.

Reference

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Zalasiewicz, Jan, et al. “Are We Now Living in the Anthropocene?” GSA Today 18, no. 2 (2008): 4-8.

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Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. Fruitmarket Gallery. “Sarah Wood: Project Paradise.” Edinburgh, December 9, 2023-January 21, 2024. https://www.fruitmarket.co.uk/archive/sarah-wood-project-paradise/.