

场景

中国摄影家典藏
Classic Works by Chinese Photographers



姜健 著 By Jiang Jian

浙江出版联合集团 浙江摄影出版社

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语言的形上建构与纪实摄影的视觉逻辑 004

——关于姜健三个影像文本的粗疏解读

刘树勇

姜健：记忆与历史 018

(美) 维基·格德堡

话说《场景》 030

——1996年《场景》摄影集研讨会发言摘要

作品 057

作者简介 178

后记：时光的记忆 182

姜健

目录

Contents

- 005 The Metaphysical Construct of Language and the Visual Logic of Documentary
Photography: A Tentative Reading of Jiang Jian's Three Image Texts
Liu Shuyong
- 019 Jiang Jian: Memory and History
(U.S.) Vicki Goldberg
- 031 All About *Scenes*:
Selected Remarks from the 1996 Seminar on the Book *Scenes*
- 057 Works
- 179 Jiang Jian: A Profile
- 183 Afterword: Memory of the Times
Jiang Jian

语言的形上建构与纪实摄影的视觉逻辑

——关于姜健三个影像文本的粗疏解读

刘树勇

一、回到形式主义的批评视角

关于当代中国纪实摄影的社会学考察，或者从文化批评这样大的视角进行的描述与评价，这些年来谈到的人很多。这样的解说，好处是立足于纪实摄影的当下性，特别是将一种摄影形态及相关文本放到一个正处于巨变动荡的中国语境当中来观察其出现、存在、发扬光大的价值与问题，其间涉及对摄影者的道德姿态、对现实问题的关切程度，以及在公众当中引发的种种影响。这些当然都是重要的。与过去那种单纯从视觉美学出发的批评，或者过度关注影像形式语言的批评相比，它不再将一种艺术样式局限于一个专业化的少数人群的视野，而是将摄影看做整个人类共同的社会经验与当下文化经验的一部分，将一个过去只有少数摄影家专司其职的神秘“魔术”（罗兰·巴特语）普适化了——当然，这也与小型自动相机，尤其是数码相机的普及及彩扩技术的民用化有关。从艺术批评发展史的角度来说，这种变化可以看做是对现代主义时期那种过度关注艺术语言纯粹性的推进行化，从而导致对现实经验缺少关切的一种抗逆和反拨。

但是，当人人相机在手，人人都可轻易地制造出焦点清晰、曝光准确的照片时，影像的判断问题并没有因此变得简单，反而变得更加复杂。这是因为，任何一种艺术样式都存在于一套独特的语言系统当中，所有影像文本的生成、运作，都必然地遵循这套语言的内在逻辑。对于摄影来说，这个内在逻辑并不简单地由那些我们熟悉的光圈、焦距等技术性语言构成，而是来源于更为复杂内在的一些要素。我们通常将这套影像语言的内在逻辑在摄影实践过程当中的规定作用称作艺术的自律性。正是每一种艺术语言独有的自律性确保其生成成为各自独特的样式而不是别的样式。沿用到纪实摄影的实践与文本的判断当中，我们亦可认为存在着这样一个视觉语言的内在逻辑。正是纪实摄影语言特有的内在性和自律作用，使纪实摄影呈现为与其他摄影形态不同的结构样态。

这个话题，在我们普遍热衷于谈论纪实摄影的社会学意义的今天，似乎很少有人谈及。但是，从影像发生的视角来看，一个好的纪

The Metaphysical Construct of Language and the Visual Logic of Documentary Photography: A Tentative Reading of Jiang Jian's Three Image Texts

Liu Shuyong

I. Towards the Formalist Critical Perspective

Over these years, many people have talked about sociological examining of the contemporary Chinese documentary photography, or been describing and appraising it from the grand perspective of cultural criticism. Such interpretations have their advantages. Based on the contemporariness of documentary photography, they have placed one photographic form and its related texts against the background of a radically changing Chinese society to analyze the emergence, existence as well as development of its values and problems. They also involve the critical concerns about the photographers' moral stance and the social reality, and over the thoughts provoked by their photos in the mass public. These important ways of interpreting are better compared with the previous critical analysis which merely focuses on visual aesthetics (or paying too much attention to image form and language). They no longer confine an art style to a small group of professionals, but regard photography as part of the common social and cultural experience of human beings. Thus, the formerly mysterious "magic of photographing" (in Roland Bartel's words) possessed only by very few photographers has now been popularized. Of course, this has something to do with the popular use of digital cameras and the technique of color printing. From the perspective of art criticism history, this change can also be regarded as an advancement and evolvement from the practice of paying excessive attention to the purity of art language, which was common in the era of Modernism, thus resulting in a rebellion and retort against the lack of concern for practical experience.

But, the judgment of photography has become even more complicated along with the accessibility of digital cameras and the excessiveness of pictures with clear focuses and accurate exposures. This is because each art form has its root in a unique language system whose internal logic guides the birth and operation of all image texts. As for photography, this internal logic does not only consist of those familiar technical languages such as aperture or focal distance. Instead, it includes some factors more complicated and internal. The logic, which often shapes the process of photography, is called the self-discipline of art. It is this discipline of each art language that ensures itself to be its true self; and the same goes with

实摄影文本的出现并不仅仅基于一种社会学的判断和引导；相反，每一位纪实摄影师更多是在遵循着纪实摄影特有的语言方式来工作，更多是在考虑如何按照纪实摄影独特的内在逻辑来结构自己的影像专题，以保障自己作品在影像形态上的纯粹性。否则，他给予我们的影像作品就会陷入一种不可确定的混乱状态。也就是说，影像的文化批评更多地是从既成本分析出发，最终指向它对社会公众产生的广泛影响。而关于影像语言逻辑的专注疏解，则更多指向影像形态的内在性，对于影像发生一端及摄影师如何控制完成一个纪实影像专题有着特别的意义。这两者从来就无法相互替代。

检视国内纪实摄影在语言形态上较为完整独特且有延续性的案例，河南摄影家姜健先生的三个影像文本，当是最有代表性的作品。不妨借此文本分析，来看看纪实摄影这套语言系统是如何限定一个摄影家的影像实践，而依循这样一个内在逻辑而生成的整个作品与它所指认的现实，以及与摄影家、与作为受众的我们对于这一作品的理解构成的是一个什么样的关系。

二、三个影像文本的语言逻辑

姜健早期叫人看重的影像文本，是《场景》。在此之前，河南朱宪民、于德水、阎新法等诸多摄影家已经于河南一地的人文生态表现出一种整体的关切与多样的视觉表达。诸多现实场景，诸多俚俗风习，诸多人文状貌，通过他们相当精美确当的影像——呈示于我们面前。与后来姜健的影像相比，他们的影像更多地关注于“人”的生命活动和民生样态，而且充满着一种悲悯的情绪与史诗化的想象。在朱宪民先生《黄河人》的影像作品集中，在当年声名卓著的陕西群体摄影师的影像文本当中，这种情绪与想象尤为强烈。这种悲悯的充满历史感的宏大叙事，亦是 20 世纪 80 年代初期直到 90 年代中叶，国内摄影师普遍具有的一种情怀与影像表达。

从影像语言形态的角度来说，这样的影像显现出两个重要的特征：一个是影像的诗化与道德倾向。即通过一些夸张的视角与整饬的视觉构成，将摄影师相当个人化的感怀，借助那些经过特别选择的、能够与他的悲悯情绪相对应的现实对象——诸如黄河这样的符号、农民悲情的面孔、具有纪念性雕塑的群体造型等——表达出来。这样的影像其实已经不再是单纯地指向他所观看的现实世界，而是指向他通过影像所表达的历史想象与道义担当。另一个特征，因为这样的影像担负了较多的个人感怀，所以它失去了纪实影像应有的朴素与冷静，显现出相当明显的叙事性。每一幅画面并不仅仅指认一个对象事物，它失去了边界，因此它不再是一个自足自为的视觉系统，而成为一个引发受众诗化想象的媒介。它更多地是一个开放的视觉单元，从而向情绪表达和主观想象设定的方向无限绵延。这会导致影像内涵的丰富和多义，但正是这个多义性，使每一影像失去了它的自在性。于是，诸多这样的影像连缀为一个整体，尽管不像“图片故事”那样有一个相对严密的线性叙事构成，但已经具有一个相当主观化的线性叙事的诗化结构。

姜健的《场景》不同。姜健没有对河南一地的人文生态作全景式的概述与整体的扫描，而是仅仅选择了河南一地农村人家的厅堂场景，且在其处于无人状态下，作一全景深的影像呈现。各种经年物类残存破旧，各种日用家什杂乱纷呈，经由姜健极为冷静朴素的镜头的挑剔抚摩，一一转换为一帧帧斑驳明暗、意涵丰富的视觉符号。从社会学的角度来说，这些影像明确地指向它所呈现的场景事物，象征性地传达出关于河南平民的寻常日子、家境财富，以及他们的喜乐哀愁、种种现实生活状貌的信息。我们将此文本看做是中国当代纪实摄影的一个重要文本的理由，似乎亦在于它指认的这些场景和传达出来的这些现实信息。但是，当我们转而从语言形态的角度来看待这个

documentary photography. An internal logic of visual language is key to making documentary a unique photographic entity.

It seems that few people have touched upon this topic today when more and more people are talking about the sociological significance of documentary photography. However, considering how the picture is taken, it is easy to realize that documentary photographers are more often following this unique language system of documentary photography; they want to endow their photos with a theme conforming to the internal logic of documentary photography; only by doing so can they ensure the purity of their work and avoid causing confusion. This is to say, cultural criticism of photography starts from the image texts, and ends with their wide influence over the public community, for the logical interpretation of a photographic language, is more about the intrinsic in subject matters under certain circumstances, which guides photographers in their completion of documentary. These two separate concepts (cultural criticism and internal language logic) can not be mixed as one.

The documentary photographer Jiang Jian comes from Henan Province. His three image texts, which are complete, unique and continuous, are regarded as representative works of documentary photography in China. In this paper, I shall take these three texts as examples to illustrate how the internal logic of documentary photography may guide a photographer in his work, and what the relationship is between the facts reflected in the pictures, the photographer and the viewer.

II. The Language Logic of Three Image Texts

Jiang Jian's early image text that was well received by the photographic circles was *Scenes*. Before him, Henan local photographers, such as Zhu Xianmin, Yu Deshui and Yan Xinfu, had already showed their general concern about the cultural ecology of Henan Province and offered varied visual expressions. Through their refined and precise images, we have a chance to see different life scenes, colorful folk customs and cultural phenomena in that province. Unlike Jiang Jian, Zhu, Yu and Yan had paid more attention to humans, to their life activities and daily scenes, with great sympathy and poetic imaginativeness. This sympathy and imaginativeness is especially strong in Zhu Xianmin's image portfolio named *People of the Yellow River*, and in the works of the well-known Shaanxi photographers. This grand, sympathetic narrative was also prevailing among the photographers of the early 1980s to mid 1990s.

Analyzed from the perspective of imagery language, it is easy to find that such images possess two obvious characteristics. One is the tendency of being poetic and moral. The photographer tends to use exaggeration and rectified visual composition to express his personal reflections. He tries to express these strong feelings through some carefully chosen objects which are able to hold his empathy and compassion, such as signs like the Yellow River, the sorrowful faces of farmers, or group figures of memorial sculptures. These images do not only represent the reality but also points to the photographer's historical imaginations and moral missions. The other characteristic is the considerable narrativity found in this kind of photography because of the removal of plainness and calm usually found in documentary photography to make way for photographer's personal expressions. Thus, each photograph has been freed from its boundary; it does not only refer to a single object. It becomes a medium for triggering the poeticized imagination by public, instead of being a self-contained visual representation. This visual unit is open itself, enriching as far as the emotional expressions and subjective imaginations can go. Such a picture is no doubt abundant with more than one layer of meaning. However,

文本时，我们可能得出另外一些重要而特别的启示：

其一，姜健《场景》中几乎所有影像都是有关“物”的影像描述，而排除了关于“人”的行为表达。（尽管亦包含了部分呈现室外空间场景的影像，但我以为这部分影像游离了他所着力表达的意念，与那些充满了丰富繁密的细节表达的内景影像相比，显得有些薄弱了。）当然，我们会说，这些场景中的“物”并非自然之物，而是“人文”，俱是人类生命活动的痕迹，关于这样的“物”的影像呈现，仍然是对于“人”的生命活动的描述。但是，对于静“物”的凝视与那些关于动态人物的影像表达不同，正如阿恩海姆当年借助完型心理学对绘画中的运动图像作出的视知觉分析那样：处于动态序列中的人物活动，显然将人物置于事件的过程当中，置于相互作用的视觉关系当中。它正在发生着什么，它还没有结束，没有结论，它是一个处于绵延开放状态的变动不拘的视觉序列，所以它是在叙事，就像我们熟悉的文字所描述的事件那样。但是，对于静“物”的呈现不同。静“物”与肖像静照相似，它孤立地处于画面之中，即使处于与其他视觉元素的关系当中，这种关系亦是一种稳定的沉默的关系，除了可能获得画面整体的均衡之外，彼此并不发生扰动观看者疑问的相互作用。因此，静“物”的影像，或者静照式的肖像，是一个业已完成的事态，它沉默自足，没有疑问——姜健的三个影像文本恰好是将静“物”的呈现与静照式的肖像作为他影像实践的基本图式。

所以，我们看到的《场景》中的影像正是借助这样的图式排除了叙事性，它不再是在一个时空绵延序列里对人的行为作瞬间的凝结与描述，从而强化了影像对“物”的直接指认性和影像的自足完整性。因此《场景》中的每一影像都直接指向了“物”本身，没有叙事性影像或者诗化影像那种想象性的延宕可能，不再具有更为暧昧的多义外延，从而消除了此前许多摄影家关于河南的影像中的诗化倾向，将个人的主观感怀排除在外，更冷静、更朴素本质地去接近它所指陈的对象。从摄影语言发展史的角度来说，这种语言形态接近于斯蒂格利兹所谈到的“无机化”的“直接摄影”，或者韦斯顿及斯特兰德的“客观摄影”的理念。它的价值即在于通过镜头的全景深控制，尽可能客观直接地显现出这一场景中诸般物体的表面状态，尽可能地将摄影家的主观情绪或意念排除在影像之外。这些物体的清晰逼真的状态本身，这些物体之间在画面当中构成的均衡稳定的关系，即形成一个自足完整的信息呈现系统。

其二，因为《场景》中的每一幅图片皆为一个自足自为的视觉单元，因此并不存在一个在内容上相互补充的关系，彼此没有相互绵延的关联，所以图片与图片之间形成一种平行、并列存在的关系，而不是像图片故事或专题报道那样的线性叙事关系。也就是说，《场景》中的图片结构其实就是在合并同类项，而非寻找一个渐次展开的线性叙事逻辑。在这样一个并列的结构当中，图片与图片之间的前后次序可以自由调整，并不存在着一个必然的排列秩序。只有在考虑到图书或者展览的观看节奏时，才会赋予它一个按照影像浏览而进行节奏变化的编排结构。这样的构成看似简单，但它将纪实摄影的专题拍摄，与图片故事那样有着较为严密的线性逻辑的叙事结构区别开了。我们甚至可以说，正是如《场景》这样的每幅图片的独立自足性，以及并列存在的一种结构关系，构成了当代中国纪实摄影实践当中一种重要的图式。

此后，姜健的《主人》，仍然延续了他在《场景》拍摄中使用的意念和图式，稍有不同的，只是将家庭主人的肖像元素纳入《场景》所固有的纷杂物象之间的关系当中，强调了人与场景及诸多物象符号的关联，影像的空间感得到强化；再将所拍场景集中于平民居所之正堂（内景），略去《场景》原来那些游离的室外场景的影像，从而使影像的关注意念更加集中，图像样式亦更加单纯整饬；另一变化是图

these multi-layers of meaning can deprive the photograph of their “freedom”. Putting together a group of such pictures as a whole, although lacking a clear linear narrative clue in a picture story, do possess a subjective poetic touch of linear narrative clue.

But *Scenes* is different. Instead of doing a panoramic description of the cultural ecology of different areas in Henan, Jiang just chose a typical entry hall in rural Henan to take pictures with large depth of field. No one was in the entry hall; inside the hall there were many articles in a jumble. But they were all changed into visual symbols with rich meanings by Jiang’s calm and smart lens. If we analyze his photos from the sociological perspective, we shall find out that what these photos are trying to depict is the daily life, family circumstances, smiles and tears of Henan folks; these texts are remarkable because they reflect real life. But more inspiration lies in the interpretation from the perspective of photographic language form.

First, in *Scenes*, the photographer pays almost all attention to the objects, instead of people (Although there are some outdoor shots, their impacts are not as far-reaching as the detailed interior descriptions). Of course, with these objects, audience can trace human activities and vitality. But for observers, gazing at stable objects is different from gazing at people. Rudolf Arnheim once states in his gestalt psychology theories that people photographed in documentary photography are placed in interesting visual relations; when they move in a certain order, they form a complete process carried out in a continuous, open and changing order. We know that something is happening and the results are still unknown. This set of pictures thus forms a typical narration. However, a silent object, like a portrait, lies alone in a picture and maintains a stable and silent relationship with other visual elements. This silent relationship creates a balanced feeling in the picture; it is not likely to arouse any question from the observers. So, the stable object is a complete action. It is silent and self-contained, without any doubt. The three image texts of Jiang Jian just employed silent objects and portraits as his basic schema of photographing.

In this way, the images in *Scenes* evade narration by using such a schema. This schema no longer describes an instant action by condensing a single moment. Instead, it has intensified the directness and completeness of the picture. The pictures of *Scenes* do not depict a complete story, and there is no space for extra poetic imagination. Since subjective feelings are excluded in *Scenes*, the message conveyed is more calm and simple. From the development of photography, this language form is close to Stiglitz’s concept of “inorganic direct photography”, or Edward Weston and Paul Strand’s concept of “objective photography”. These concepts are valuable for being objective and direct rather than subjective. These clear and lifelike objects with stable relationship between themselves form a self-contained information system.

Secondly, each picture in *Scenes* forms a self-contained visual unit, and the whole set of photos is arranged in a parallel structure instead of a linear one as in that of a picture story. This is to say, unlike a piece of narration, the pictures all illustrate a common theme, and the order can be arranged freely as you wish. Only in a book or exhibition do we need to arrange these pictures in a certain sequence for the sake of the understanding of audiences. This simple way of photographing distinguishes documentary photography from picture stories with tight linear logic relations. We can even say that this self-containment and parallel structure form an important schema of Chinese documentary photography.

Another set of photos named *Masters* followed the same idea and schema as *Scenes*. A slight difference is that it has the master

像改用彩色，比《场景》当中那些具有过滤抽绎功能的黑白照片，细节更加丰富多变，亦使整个影像文本内容的呈现更加“现实”化了。

《孤儿档案》，则完全略去了《场景》和《主人》两个文本当中具有空间纵深的物与场景的视觉表达，而采用了肖像静照的图像样式，将人物置于单纯的黑色背景之下。影像失去了三维空间的观看幻觉，成为一帧帧极为单纯的二维平面影像。与《主人》纳入人物的肖像元素一样，这样的肖像必然会成为画面的视觉中心，它会将我们的视线引向对肖像人物的直接关切与确认，同时引发我们对影像中的人物纵深追问：他是谁？他的命运如何？所不同的是，处于场景和诸多物象关系中的《主人》，那些场景及物象本身即会成为“主人”身份及相关追问的阐释；而失去场景和相关说明的“孤儿”却孤立地呈现于我们的面前，他没有来源，没有背景，没有一切作为一个人的生命活动的信息提示。如果用一组图片故事来陈述回答这样的追问，我们可以用十几幅或者更多的图片来结构性地表述这个人物动态的命运过程。但姜健不是。他总是企图排除影像的叙事功能，而将这种回答追加的纵深叙事推及到文字——正是文字所具有的能够深入纵深的叙事功能——建立一个纵向的叙事轴线，回答了影像横向展开的平面景观所给出的一系列提问——从而极为节制地将自己的影像控制在静像的尺度中，使每一幅图片成为一个自足完整的视觉单元，不仅使每一个画面获得一种丰满独特的视觉张力，保持每一幅画面的自在性和自为的呈示功能，同时亦形成了姜健作为一个纪实摄影家独特的影像风格。

由此，我们亦看出姜健作为一个成熟的摄影家在选择自己的影像语言方式上的谨慎、单纯与统一，以及在视觉图式上保持的延续性。正是在这个意义上，我以为，姜健是自于德水到后来河南继起的一大批社会纪实摄影家之间的一个重要的过渡性的摄影家，亦是国内较早确立起自己明确的影像风格的纪实摄影家之一。他的这三个影像文本的递次实践，为国内摄影界提供了一种社会纪实类影像采集从专题思路设计到视觉图式选择的重要范本。这是姜健摄影实践的重要价值所在。

三、纪实摄影，乃是创造一种与现实平行的影像语言现实

当我们从受众的角度，或者从社会学的角度来理解姜健这样三个纪实摄影的文本时，我们会相信和看重那些影像当中指认的有关河南一地人文生态的种种现实，我们会确信，正是摄影家秉持的这种纪实摄影特有的冷峻、客观的社会观察的姿态，才让我们通过这样的影像感受到那些重要的现实信息。但是，当我们确认并解析《场景》、《主人》或者《孤儿档案》三个影像文本的基本语言构成形态时，我们会发现，摄影家并不仅仅将这样的影像语言作为工具或者手段来使用，在更多的时候，这套独特的风格化的影像语言本身即成为了目的。更为准确地说，这套影像语言本身并不完全如我们过去想象的那样始终被动地服务于对象“内容”的表达，语言本身的活力和固执自为的能量常常会凌驾于它所面对的对象之上，从而为我们重构一个崭新的语言的现实景观。看起来这就像一个阴谋，但这个阴谋确实发生了，只不过我们因长期受到辩证唯物主义观念的洗礼，我们早已习惯的那种“内容”与“形式”的二元关系的粗糙而简单的艺术观念，却常常让我们忽略掉这一重要事实。正是这一点，在更深的层面上会让我们对纪实摄影所纪之“实”产生怀疑。

语言学以及符号学的研究，已经在诸多方面证实了文学作品以及影像的现实呈现并不就是真实地呈现一个我们经验中的现实，而是再造重构了一个新的现实。在这个向度上，这些年来，我们看到的相关研究与阐释已经很多了。我们不妨略去这样一个高度理论化的表述，仅仅从国内摄影师熟悉的影像实践的经验操作层面，从观察姜健这三个影像文本从发生到完善的整个过程，来看看这一纪实性影像语言

of family taken in, emphasizing the complicated relationship between objects and people. The picture has an intensified sense of space. Also, unlike *Scenes*, most of the pictures were taken in the hall, thus simpler and neater. Another change has to do with the color. A series of colorful photos contain more details, compared with the black-white ones, are closer to reality.

The third set of photos, *Archives on Orphans*, has omitted the visual exploration of space depth found in *Scenes* and *Masters*. Portraits of the orphans are placed against a dark background, causing little delusion for three-dimensional space. As in *Masters*, the portraits no doubt occupy the center of picture, arousing our concern with the person: Who is he? What's his experience? But, the person in *Masters* has his answer in the pictures; while the orphan is always alone. He has no family, no home...if we use a group of pictures to answer the questions, we may need a set of pictures to demonstrate. But Jiang chooses a different way. He does not like narrating with pictures. He prefers using words. Only the words can offer answers for the questions. The pictures remain silent. Then, we can sum up Jiang's style as follows: each picture is a self-contained, impressive and well developed visual unit.

Jiang, as a matured photographer, is cautious about choosing what objects to shoot. His photos are pure, unified and continuous. In this sense, we consider Jiang as one of the important photographers of social documentary in Henan Province after Yu Deshui in the transitional period, as well as one of China's documentary photographers with distinct photographic styles. His three image texts have in turn provided an important paradigm for documentary photography in China, in terms of choosing a specific subject and forming an appropriate schema. This is where the value of Jiang's photographic practice lies.

III. Documentary Photography: Creating a Visual Language Parallel with Reality

When we try to understand the three image texts from the perspective of audience or sociology, we will value the reality of human cultural ecology in Henan reflected in the photos and admire the solemn and objective social gaze adopted by the photographers. However, when we come to analyze the photographic language form of the above-mentioned three image texts, we find that these language forms are not the means but the objective. Instead of passively expressing the picture contents, these language forms have transcended the objects taken and reconstructed a totally new scope of factuality in photographic language. This looks like a conspiracy, but it has really happened. The dialectical materialism that we have grown accustomed to has the rough and simple binary opposition of "form and content" rooted in our mind, making us neglect this important fact. But this important fact can make us doubt if documentary photography is truly slice-of-life.

Studies of Linguistics and Semiotics have confirmed in many aspects that instead of reflecting the reality in our experience, the image texts create a new reality itself. These years we have read many related researches and interpretations. Here we shall not discuss in highly theoretic terms. Instead, we shall only discuss how the very language system of documentary photography dilutes many facts and re-construct a new imagery reality out of the reality. Jiang's three sets of pictures shall be used as examples.

When choosing a theme to photograph, Jiang is faced with a chaotic and changing reality. This reality exists in a meaningless and empty state before the photographer pays attention to it. Just as Alain Robbe-Grillet of the nouveau roman says, "The world is neither meaningful nor ridiculous. It just exists." (Quoted from *La voie de roman futur*) An artist is more eager to find

系统是如何过滤掉诸多现实信息，而最终在现实之上重构了一个崭新的影像现实。

当姜健企图选择一个主题进入影像拍摄之时，他面对的是一个混乱嘈杂、变动无序的现实世界。这个现实世界存在着，在没有被关注和言说之前，它处于一个无意义的空洞的状态。正如当年法国新小说派的代表人物罗布－格里耶说的那样：“世界既不是有意义的，也不是荒诞的。它存在着，如此而已。”（《未来小说的道路》）当艺术家企图观察和把握这样一个无序流变的对象世界时，他的动机并不是针对他所面对的现实世界，而是基于一种急于理解自己在现实世界中的位置、作用和再造自己的意识。用约翰·伯格的话来说就是，“我们从不单纯注视一件东西，我们总是在审度物我之间的关系”（《观看之道》）。从这个意义上说，观察对象世界的初始出发点，就已经与对象世界无关，而只与拍摄者自己的内心企图有关。

但任何摄影家站在这个出发点上，他都会有一种无从入手的焦虑与惶恐，因为这个对象世界没有秩序，所有事物都处于一种绵延不断和变动不拘的状态。它们相互交错、相互作用，无法通过影像来条理清晰地予以呈现与言说。在到达理性的认识高度之前，我们关于现实的理解更多地是一种混乱的直觉和移情式的想象，在想象当中我们感受到一系列假想的本质和虚幻的意义。因此，“我们必须制造出一个更实体、更直观的世界，以代替现有这种充满心理的、社会的、功能的、意义的世界”（罗布－格里耶语）。

而意欲通过理性来把握这个现实的世界，就必须寻找到一个切入点。对于一个摄影家来说，这个切入点首先就是他寻找的一个主题。但是，对象世界没有“主题”。“主题”是人的一种意义化的诉求，它与现实无关，而与人的知识构成与价值倾向有关。所以，现实世界没有“场景”，亦没有什么“主人”和“孤儿档案”。所有的这些主题皆是摄影师主观意志企图理解和把握对象世界的命题结果。于是我们发现，任何纪实摄影的主题——当然也包括一切言说世界的出发点，一开始就是一种概念化的假设。摄影师在此之后的一切工作，都不过是在完善这个先在的概念化的假设。

当“主题”这个概念化的假设存在之后，摄影师便要在现实世界当中寻求支持与佐证。他看到了什么呢？他看到的并不是一个丰富驳杂的现实世界的诸般事物，他看到的只是那些可以为这个主题概念提供佐证材料的事物。也就是说，他关心的其实不是河南一地民生的丰富状貌，他看到的只是那些可以构成“场景”、“主人”、“孤儿档案”这一些言说词语所指向的那个空间景象。他的表达诉求，他企图介入社会观察的主观视角，他只能看到他想要看到的事物，只能看到那些可以支持这一“主题”概念的事物。就像阿恩海姆所说的那样，“我们看到的其实是我们一直想要看到的事物”。或者如约翰·伯格说的那样：“我们只看见我们注视的东西，注视是一种选择行为。注视的结果是，将我们看到的事物纳入我们力所能及的范围内。”

什么是摄影师姜健“力所能及的范围”？一个是他的知识经验所及的范围，这就是说，姜健从事这个主题的影像表达时，所有的选择与对现实世界诸般事物的认识皆无法溢出他的所知范畴。这个范畴包含着一个特别重要的知识经验，那就是姜健对纪实摄影那套语言规则的理解与把握。另一个重要的范畴，则是他建立在这套语言规则基础之上的、意欲完整地呈现他的影像主题的企图。而这两点，不仅决定着姜健在观看些什么，同时也决定着他在如何地观看。

这就是说，并不存在一个纯粹的观看。作为纪实摄影家的姜健已经丧失了那些所谓的纯粹的观看，而只有一种限定在纪实摄影语言法则之内的观看。这是一种知识经验始终作用的过程，或者说是一种“纪实摄影的观看”。这样的观看，意味着他要在变动不拘的现实

out his position and reconstruct his consciousness in the real world than to describe it. As John Berger says, "We never simply look at a thing. We are always considering the relationship between things and us." (Quoted from *Ways of Seeing*) In this sense, the starting point of observing this world has little to do with this world but concerns the artist's inner wishes.

Photographer, from this starting point, cannot help but worry a bit over this ever-changing and interplaying world. No image can clearly and correctly reflect this world. Before we start a rational understanding process, our understanding of this world is more of a chaotic intuition and transference imagination, in which we can only feel the nature of imagination and illusive meaning. Therefore, in the words of Alain Robbe-Grillet, "we must create a more real and direct world, to replace this psychological, social, functional and meaningful one."

If we want to understand this world rationally, we have to find a starting point, which, for the photographer, is the theme of his work. But the world itself offers no theme. "Theme" is a meaningful desire of people; it has nothing to do with reality but is related with the photographer's knowledge composition and value priorities. So in the real world, there is neither "scenes", nor "masters" and nor "archives on orphans". And these themes all come from the understandings of the photographer. These understandings are all assumptions. All the other works of the photographers are refining this conceptual assumption.

After the assumption – namely, the theme – is clarified, the photographer has to find supporting evidences in this real world. He finds his answer in an exclusive way by only paying attention to those things which provide evidence for the theme. Instead of giving priority to Henan people's colorful life, the photographer pays all his attention to the special images referred to by such words as "scenes", "masters", and "archives on orphans". The photographer's subjective perspective determines the things he perceives. Just like Rudolf Arnheim says, "Actually, we can only see what we want to see". Or like John Berg says, "We only see what we want to see; it's a matter of choice. We stare in order to bring what we want to see in our eyes."

Then what does Jiang want to see? The answer has to do with his intellectual experience. The intellectual experience restricts his choice and understanding whenever he works for a theme. This restricted scope, however, contains an important intellectual experience – Jiang's understanding and use of the language rules of documentary photography. Another important scope is shown in his attempts to completely present his image subject according to the set of language rules. These two scopes not only determine what Jiang is observing, but also how he observes.

This is to say, there is no "pure" observation in Jiang's documentary photography. Jiang, as a documentary photographer, has lost his sense of "pure" observation and replaced it with observation within the scope of documentary photography language. This is a process in which intellectual knowledge play its part. In other words, Jiang has to seek and capture the elements which conform to the self-discipline of image, and perfectly combine them to form a balanced picture. This also indicates that a number of images have to follow a unified structure and unique visual style, and the whole image text has to present a full visual presentation of the stated theme. From this perspective, Jiang does not pay most of the attention to the reality of Henan Province, which draws the attention of the sociologists and cultural criticism scholars. For him, these are just materials for expressing the theme.

It seems that this has reversed the relationship between form and meaning. And this is the fact. The German art

世界当中发现并捕捉那些合乎影像自律的元素，并在瞬间将它们完美地组合到一个均衡的画面构成当中去；意味着具有一定规模数量的影像必须要保持一种单纯统一的结构和属于自己的独特视觉风格；意味着整个影像文本必须达成对设定主题的充分完整的视觉呈现。当他用这样一种独特的眼光观看河南一地民生状貌之时，他的关注点已经不再是那些现实事物，相反，那些为社会学家和文化批评学者以及公众看重的现实事物不过是一些构成材料，它们按着纪实摄影家姜健的知识经验，按着纪实摄影特有的语言逻辑重新排列聚合，以实现他事先设定的那个叫做“场景”的或者是“主人”、“孤儿档案”的命题。

按照我们的惯性理解，这个过程似乎颠倒了内容与形式的相互关系。事实正是如此。德国艺术史学家奥古斯特·施马尔佐夫在上个世纪初就谈到，艺术的创造其实就是一种“形式的创作”，而将现实诸般事物纳入这个纪实摄影的语言逻辑的过程其实就是一个将“人与自然实现分离的过程”。1912年，康定斯基在他著名的《论艺术的精神》一书中亦表达过相似的观点：“对于我来说，艺术的领域愈来愈和自然的领域相分离。”正是这个分离的努力，人在自然现实面前确认了自己的智慧、力量与位置，人在他的创造之物当中实现了自己的本质力量的对象化。

而对于摄影家来说，最现实亦是最重要的，乃是借助于纪实摄影的语言规则，通过这些形式统一整饬的合乎纪实内在规律性的影像，来达成对现实世界的理解与把握，以最终赋予他所关注的现实以秩序。这就是说，“他并不反映现实，而是制作出一个新的现实。作为一个艺术家，他看到他自己站在一个任务面前，穿过一个未被理解的、混乱的、现实的多样性以达到未知界；通过纯粹的艺术语言去寻找找到秩序、意义与完整性，使它凸显出来并为人们感知到。”（德国现代艺术理论家瓦尔特·赫斯语）

因此，任何纪实影像的采集过程，都是一个在现实之上发生的，或者说在语言层面上发生的赋予被言说对象以秩序的过程。影像呈现的逻辑已经成为一个视觉语言的逻辑，而不再是现实的逻辑。这个过程的结果，包括我们通过画册、展览所能够看到的文本，就是一个被摄影家的知识经验重新构成的一个崭新的物化的现实。那些影像中的场景，那些画面上的“主人”，那些处身黑暗背景中的孤儿们，除了那些描述性的文字约略可以透露出他们的一些身份和运命的信息之外，他们都已经不再是现实中的场景和人物。作为一个摄影家，重要的已不是他看到的现实事物，重要的是他如何观看，依循一种什么样的方式在观看。他在影像当中展示的不是现实本身，而是作为一个摄影家对现实事物本质的认识与理解。正如塞尚说的那样：“人们无需再现自然，而是代表着自然。”现实中的诸般事物被摄影家从现实当中挑剔出来解放出来，按照纪实摄影的语言逻辑重构成为一个新的视觉客体，而不再是一个自然的客体。同样，现实世界混乱无序的关系，在影像文本当中最终转换成为一个充满秩序的、影像语汇之间和谐完美的视觉关系。这种秩序在姜健的三个影像文本的每一幅照片当中显现出来，在整个画册、展览的编排结构当中显现出来。当我们从这些文本当中观看那些图片时，我们看到的已经不再是一个纷乱多样充满变化的河南一地农村人家的现实境况了。它被影像语言的呈现与纪实摄影的逻辑结构描述成为一个形式严整的意义化的平面，一个借助于现实场景事物，却最终与现实场景事物失去紧密关联的新的影像语言的现实。也就是说，从主题的选择设定，到图片的展览出版，纪实摄影的语言逻辑延伸入姜健的影像实践的整个过程当中，最后导致的结果却不再指向现实，而是影像自身成为一个新的现实，一个被塞尚称做“与自然现实平行存在”着的语言的现实！

当然，这样的理解不独限于关于纪实摄影的理解。任何人类的艺术创造都是一种崭新的语言建构。关于姜健这三个文本的粗疏分析，

historian August Sehmarrow stated in the early 20th century that art creation is a kind of “form creation”, and the process of bringing the reality into the language logic of documentary photography is “a process of separating human from nature”. In 1912, Wassily Kandinsky expressed a similar idea in his *The Spirit of Art History*: “For me, the scope of art is increasingly separated from that of nature.” This effort of separation has demonstrated the wit, strength and position of human in face of nature. Human beings have shown their objectification of essential power.

For photographers, the most important and practical factor is the language rules of documentary photography. The set of images following a same form can reach an understanding of the reality and finally endow the reality with an order. “He creates a new reality instead of reflecting it. As an artist, he finds himself facing a task, passing through an incomprehensible, chaotic, various and realistic world to the still unknown. He seeks order, meaning and completeness through pure art language, emphasizing them for us knowing.” (In the words of Walter Hess, German modern art theorist)

Hence, documentary photography is based on facts. The logic of the image has become that of visual language, but not the logic of reality. The results – or the image texts displayed in an exhibition – demonstrate a new materialized reality reconstructed by the photographer’s experiences. “Scenes”, “masters” and “orphans” in darkness are not from the reality any more, except the description which tells us some limited information about them. As a photographer, the most important thing is how he perceives the world, but not what he finds in this world. The photographer shows in his work his understanding of reality instead of the reality itself. Paul Cezanne once said: “We need not to re-create nature, but we must represent it.” Photographers pick his objects from reality, and reconstruct them into a new visual unit. Similarly, the chaotic relationship between elements are converted into a harmonic, orderly and perfect visual relationship in the image texts, just as in the three photos of Jiang Jian and the structure of the exhibition. In them we find out an integrated and meaningful show of Henan Province coming out of the reality of documentary photography. This demonstration is a new image reality that has lost connection with the real world. The whole process of theme-choosing and photo exhibiting and publishing, where the language logic of documentary photography has found its way into the Jiang Jian’s photographing practice, results in a creation of a new world, a reality of languages “parallel with the true reality” as Cezanne has called it!

Of course, this understanding is not limited to documentary photography. Every human artistic creation is a new construction based on language. This analysis of Jiang’s images is also trying to illustrate this point: the comments of documentary photography from the sociological perspective mostly come from our imagination and expectation, instead of the objects taken. We tend to overestimate the relationship between images and reality.

So, if the image language does not reflect the real world, how should we comment on its value as a documentary photography text? For one thing, this world of image language results from the creation of photographer. This processing of reality is rational, witty and full of strength. The real world is chaotic, but the pictures are not. These orderly texts form a starting point for us to understand this world without which we shall get lost. For another, to extend the idea expressed by German esthetician M. Wallinger in *Abstraction and Moving* (1908): when we are faced with a complicated and changing world, we tend to feel unsure and insecure. Hence there is a strong desire for reason and peace. In this sense, we will turn to empathy, trying to mirror ourselves in the real world. To quote

意思也在于说明：关于纪实摄影的社会学意义上的评价，更多地来源于我们的道德想象和期许，而并不是那些影像本身指认的现实。可见，有关纪实影像与现实的这种关联我们在大多数时候还是将它看得过高了。

如果这样一个影像语言的现实并不指向现实本身，那么，它作为一个纪实摄影文本的价值又当如何被评价呢？一方面，通过影像语言建构起来的这个与现实平行存在的视觉客体，显然是摄影师的创造力的产物，是人类从现象世界当中进行理性抽象活动的结果。它不仅在对现实对象的观照与抽绎过程当中充分显现出人的智慧与本质力量，同时也为我们经验着的这个有机纷乱的现实世界给出了一个冷静而理性的秩序。这个秩序化的文本，正是我们理解这个现象世界的切入点，否则我们面对这个无序的世界之时将会无从理解与把握。另一方面，引用德国美学家 W. 沃林格尔 1908 年的著作《抽象与移情》一书中的观点，那就是，当我们面对一个纷乱复杂、变幻不定的世界时，我们会有一种茫然无所适从的不确定感和不安全感，我们会产生一种强烈的寻求解释与安定的内在需要。正是在这个意义上，人类有时会以一种将自己沉潜到外物之中的移情方式——所谓“我见青山多妩媚，料青山见我应如是”——从现实世界当中来玩味自身。但更重要的方式，则是要“将外在世界的单个事物从其变化无常的虚假的偶然性中抽取出来，并用近乎抽象的形式使之永恒。通过这种方式，它们便在现实的流逝中寻找到了安息之所”。这个抽象的形式及作用，在纪实摄影的实践当中，最重要的表现，即这个纪实摄影的语言逻辑对现象世界的过滤与抽绎过程。正是这套语言逻辑作为一个专业摄影师必需的知识经验，让他摆脱了处于三维空间及一维时间延宕过程中的现实事物那种偶然性和纷乱杂陈的无序状态，最后将他的观察与认识聚合成为一个秩序井然的二维平面化的视觉实体。当我们观看读解这样一个语言化的视觉实体时，我们感受到的不再是现象世界那些有机生动却变化无常的东西，“而是必然律和合规律性，观赏者在这种必然律和合规律性当中，随着他的生命关联而获得心灵的慰藉”。

约翰·伯格说得对：“所有的影像都是人为的。”他还说：“影像乃是重造或复制的景观。”当我们确认姜健先生最具代表性的影像文本乃是三个并不指认现实事物，而是按照纪实摄影自身的内在逻辑重构而成的与现实平行存在的视觉语言实体时，这并不是在贬低这些作品的价值与意义。相反，正是依靠着这样一个崭新的影像语言重构的现实，使那些在我们的现实经验当中熟视无睹的现实事物陌生化、可视化了。它们以一种现实所没有的样式和切近姿态直逼我们的眼前，引发我们关注的欲望。试想，我们何时注视过那些河南寻常平民人家的厅堂是个什么样子？我们什么时候反复地打量过那些籍籍无名的平头百姓并了解他们的身世？我们总是与日常经验中的“现实”擦肩而过。只有当这些现实事物经由影像语言的抚摩、挑剔、抽绎，按着影像语言逻辑的重新组合，才会让我们驻足观看仔细打量，我们才会发现那些平常生命的生动细节。

这正是影像语言之功。尽管我企图从影像语言形态的视角对姜健先生的三个文本作出尽可能详细的解读，但其中涉及的许多问题其实仍然悬而未解。比如，有关纪实摄影的语言特征，尽管近年来有许多学者、批评家努力地作出过一些描述，但完整的富有说服力的解释仍然付之阙如。又比如，“纪实摄影”作为一个舶来的译词，至今仍然是一个模糊不清的概念。如何廓清它的意涵边界，它与“纪实性的”摄影区别何在？在这些问题尚未明晰之前，此处所作的这些讨论就有某种假定的嫌疑。好在这些问题我倒有一些理解和说法，限于版面，此处不论，不妨将来找个机会再作另说。

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