



Photography
Of Chen Huochou
摄影：陈活畴

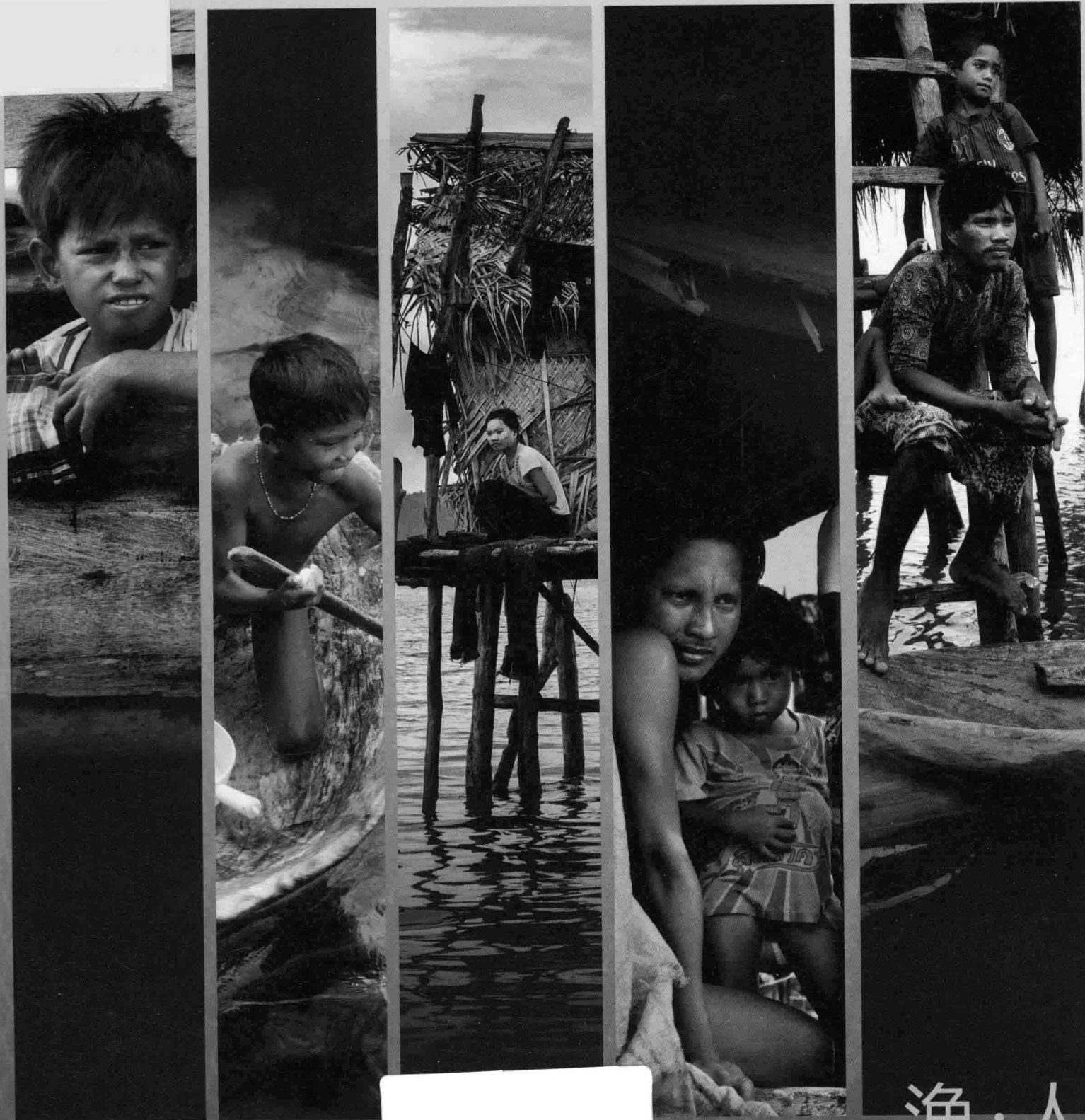
马来西亚沙巴“巴天族人”的故事
The story of the Bajau in Sabah, Malaysia

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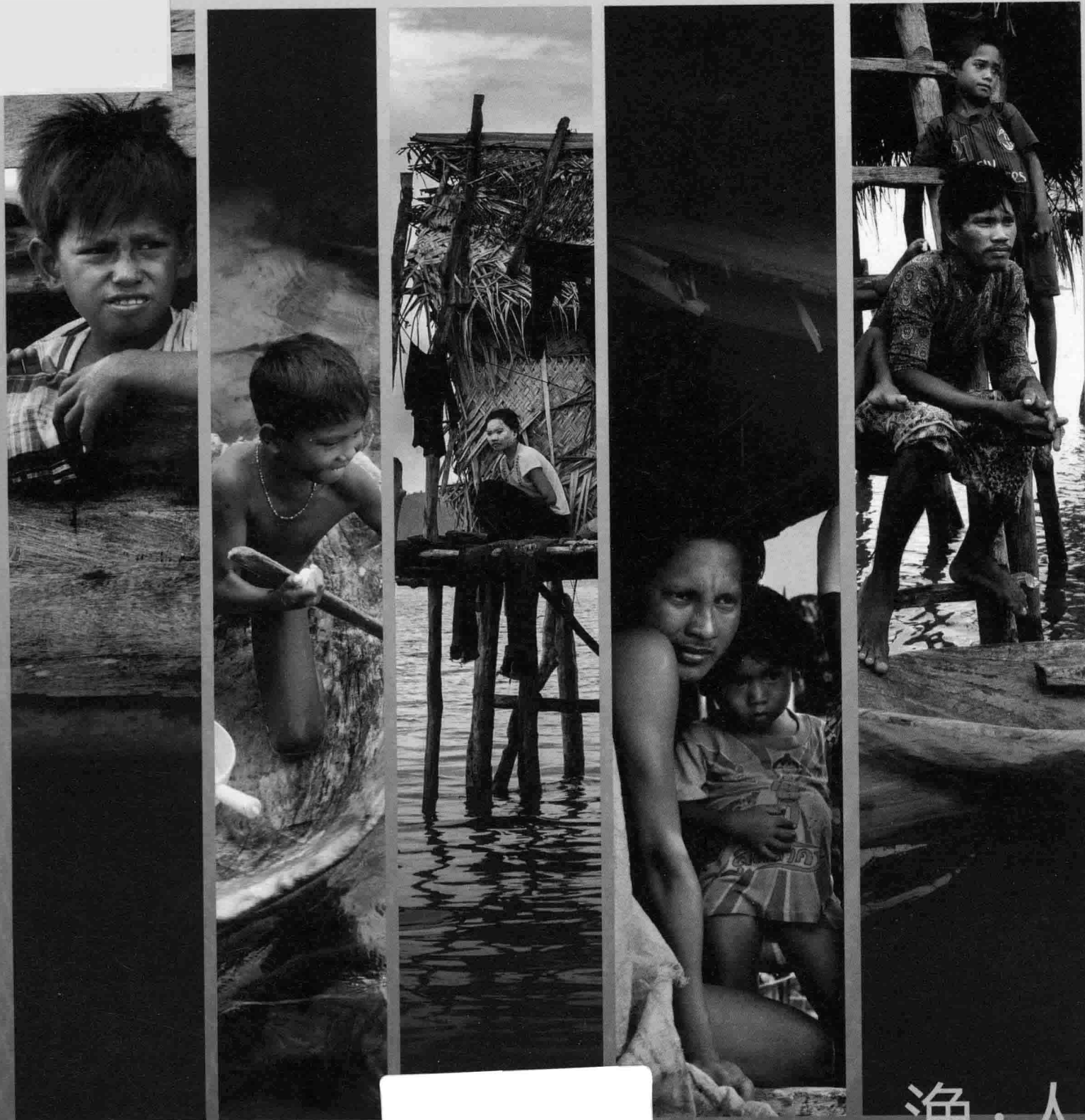
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如果我能用语言来讲述故事，我就不必拖着一部相机。
If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn't need to lug around a camera.

——刘易斯·海因
Lewis Hine

用诗性语言讲影像故事

蔡焕松

多年前我曾戏称中国摄影史是从外国人拿照相机从门缝看中国而开始，到有一天中国人到国外拍照片拍到人家烦为高潮。中国必定会成为拥有世界各国照片最多、最齐的影像大国。没想到随着数码技术的出现，降低了摄影的入门坎，出现了世界上哪儿能出画面的地方就有中国摄影发烧友的身影出现的现状，而且随着时间推移人数几乎成几何倍数的逐批增加，几乎是让你感觉到全民摄影的时代突然出现在你眼前。我没有调查，不知外国人对中国人带着照相机蜂涌进入他们国家拍照片感觉如何，但因工作的关系却常常接触海量海外拍回来的照片，大多数是追光逐影较低审美维度的沙龙照片，少有让你眼前一亮颇有审美价值和社会价值的影像，看多了也难免时有审美疲劳之感。

马来西亚三角区是近年发烧影友的一个拍摄热点。吸引广大影友的有蔚蓝的天空、碧绿的海水，还有那很有特点的巴天族（Bajau）的人文景观。“巴天”在印尼语里是“海上之民”的意思。他们是一个古老的海上游牧民族，他们曾经拥有海上贸易和区域性渔业精彩过去。他们从出生就开始与海洋亲密接触，潜泳技术是他们引以为傲的生存技能。只是由于时代的发展，他们仍滞留在渔猎采集的阶段，生存的艰辛与生活物质的匮乏，让主要生活在海上的巴天族人数正在锐减，登上陆地对于他们来讲也是困难重重。但那里贫困的人民和地球上海洋物种多样性最丰富区域生存环境之间的关系给人们的陌生感，加上又是拍日出日落的沙龙摄影题材好去处。基于这一切，自然是吸引着影友们百拍不厌，也自然吸引着本画册的作者陈活畴前往拍摄。

在众多前往拍摄的影友中很少有人去关注现实中巴天族这个族群所具有的对物质贫乏的适应能力。并把他们的生活状态当成一个标轴，把当今国人在物欲横流的社会现实中对物质追求的观念做个比较，思考一下物质究竟到何种程度才能让人产生满足与快乐？虽然这个因人而异的问题没有绝对标准的答案，但却是值得每个摄影人走进自己内心去探究的问题。用你的镜头去思考他们的这种现状历史能坚持延续到哪一天，也许你不需要去猜测和臆想，因为用旅游团的拍摄形式是很难真正的去了解他们，也许很少有摄影人会去关心他们的命运，但是他们是与水为亲的渔人，也许他们血液里的海水不会消逝……并不会因摄影人关注不关注而改变。

基于上面的原因，当吴晓鹏给我来电说他正帮一位朋友编一本关于巴天人的画册，征询我能否为他的朋友写一篇千字左右的评论文章。我一听，心里想这些作品会不会又是我常见拍这地方的捕风捉影旅行影像记录，鉴于晓鹏知道我从来不写自己对影像没感觉的文章加上朋友的面子我不好推辞，只好答应晓鹏先把作品发给我看看再说。当我看到画册设计稿时有些意外，当场电告晓鹏这篇文章我可以写，篇幅可能还会长点。也许这是人与人之间的共性有着相融的一面，拍摄者和评论者彼此间的相互感知对于同一事物本质的探索与理解，这也是彼此具有价值的共同发现。

摄影理论家李树峰把摄影的影像途径分为说明性和诗性两大路径，当每个摄影发烧友面对巴天人和他与生俱来赖以生存的大海环境，用什么观看角度是个问题。假如用影像的说明性来叙述巴天人和生存环境之间的关系，我深信普通发烧友靠一两次出国旅游的机会拍摄，是不可能像24岁的英国摄影师詹姆斯·摩根那样，从小在海边长大，他深深地热爱着大海，但是为了这个拍摄计划，他也不得不做了些特殊准备：他在英格兰南部的海域里练习潜水、在浴缸里学着憋气，并且自学马来西亚语和印尼语。在英国皇家摄影协会(Royal Photographic Society)的资助下，跟随拍摄了巴天族人，用油画般的摄影作品呈现了巴天族人的传统生活，同时也展现出了巴天族人所面临的压力：记录一些经济便捷的捕鱼技术对环境产生了很大的破坏(比如氯化钾之类)的状况。可能对贫困和恐惧的巴天族人置入危险的境地，因为过度捕捞会摧毁养育巴天族人的每一块珊瑚礁等等。用他的影像作品向世人昭示巴天族人的困境。

许多发烧友的拍摄大都是因为面对这些拍摄对象产生了美的感受才拍的，但往往这种审美的层次尚停留在光影、色彩、构图的低维度上。这影像就像装饰画的感觉一样，构图、色彩、形式都很不错，但价值永远达不到好的画家画出来的画。其原因就是甜，所以才有人把这类作品称为“糖水”。我觉得《渔·人》的作者陈活畴恰当的找到了自己有别于其它“糖水”照片的影像叙事语言，假如影像只有事物的说明性没有一点可让受众想象的空间，那就是概念化的产物。对于有才华的摄影家来说往往会让影像的说明性和诗性有机的融合在一起。摄影创作要想把握自然，“就必须把自然事物占领住，修改它，改变它

的形状”，把人的“心灵的定性纳入自然界事物里”，“自然事物才能达到一种较大的单整性”。黑格尔这段话对摄影艺术创作和作者的拍摄实践也是同样适用的。面对蓝色的天空、清澈发青的海水、服装色彩艳丽的巴天女人的种种动人色彩，既要有说明性又要有诗性，作者陈活畴既没有把拍摄物做表面性的叙述，也没有做自然奴隶的“好色之徒”。而是像黑格尔所说的去占领、修改、改变这一切，把自己的心灵定性融入自己的影像之中。面对拍摄对象作者陈活畴选择了对众人喜欢的色彩持扬弃的态度，全部采用黑白影像的呈现形式。黑白影像对具象的形态再现更具有抽象性，这是由影像载体材料特性所决定的。其材料在还原大自然色彩时已抽象成黑白灰几种单纯的调子，这就拉开了作品画面影像和自然景物本来面目的距离。画面上的具象虽然失去了一定的具象性，却大大增强了抽象性，使摄影家的主观表达更加自由。

在作者的黑白作品系列中，蓝色天空被抽象成深灰色的调子和丝丝白云，大自然的色彩已变成带本质特征而抽象的黑白灰调子在画面形式中显现出来。清澈见底的海水被抽象成有几何装饰图案意味的色块，并经常在画面占了很大面积。作者用这深沉而有变化的色块暗示大自然神秘伟力，体现作者从艺术审美知觉直至表现的审美过程的一致性。多数画面形式中，天空被抽象了的大块的灰色调，这大块的灰色调和浅白色调的云彩则成了隐含着大自然的空灵美和作者丰富的情思。由此可见，作者用这黑白交融的形式美的良苦用心最终是表现为一种富有诗意的暗示的美。

记录一个弱势群体的人和生存环境的关系是一个很大的题材，一个异国的摄影师仅仅靠几次拍摄就要全面的说明一个部落各个层面人士和生存环境的关系，的确是难上加难的事情。如何调整自己的观看角度是考验摄影师的智慧和功力的门坎。摄影的镜头运用有自己的话语方式，隐含着作者意识形态方面的需求，被摄体在镜头中的远近意味着与作者之间的亲疏，作者聪明地选择了以儿童为拍摄主体，因为孩子们是未来的希望。因为这个部落的人群中，孩子们是最自由的因素，最能自由自在地表达情绪、情况和状态。大人们面对摄影师镜头相对的叙述性是封闭的，而孩子们却是开放的。孩子们的生活状态并不能明确的说明这个群体生存的问题，受众要深入了解必须从作者呈现的影像讯息去

积极参与在说明性的构建之中。这是一个令人愉快的参与框架，它已淡化了在说明性中摄影师的垄断话语资格。作者的主观倾向却是用诗性的语言去唤起受众填充影像意义的冲动，启动自己的知识积累去填补画面的意义空间，而这填补的方式却是因人而异。进而必然产生了各种各样的意义可能性。尽管作者对被摄对象在说明性叙述的同时进行诗意的再现，其人文关怀和对弱势群体未来的良好期盼不可避免掺杂其中，让观者同情之心也油然而生。

在影像语言方面上，作者较好的把握了影像说明性和诗性结合上的度，没有具象支撑的诗性影像时常让人感到为诗性而诗性是一种无病呻吟；虚假和表面的说明叙述往往又是被摄影者精心地编码，误导受众朝着自己设定的思维方向前进。不难想象有知识和定力的受众自然会从作者设定的定势中抽身出来对这些说明性的叙事的指向持保留态度，甚至怀疑和批判。而本画册作者陈活畴却没有在意识形态支配下对巴天部落的生活现状做出明确的叙述判断说明，影像中有意将自己对巴天部落的主观判断用诗化的影像语言去淡化，提供一个可能与受众讨论的平台。容许受众看到一个客观的世界，而不是一种用自己观点的影像去劝说受众接受作者的观点，让影像令人可信并认可。影像的力量在于传播，影像传播靠的是受众的认可、参与和自觉推广，受众的认可与否在于你的影像给予什么，是知识、是美的享受，还是其它。基于这一点我相信本画册肯定能得到受众的欢迎。

蔡焕松 《中国摄影家》杂志艺术总监
中国摄影最高奖金像奖获得者
著名摄影理论评论家

Tell a Story with Images in Poetic Language

Cai Huansong

Years ago, I joked that Chinese history of photography started from when the foreigners took the camera to peek at China through the keyhole, and would achieve the climax when one day the foreigners get annoyed by the Chinese taking photos all around the world. China will definitely rank top among other countries with images worldwide of the largest quantity and varieties. Unexpectedly, the threshold of photography has been lowered by the emergence of digital technology. Thus, where there are scenes for photos in the world, there are Chinese photography enthusiasts. As time goes by, their population almost increases exponentially in batches, making you feel that the era of "All men are photographers" has become true. I never investigate how the foreigners feel about the Chinese crowd flooding into their countries for photo shots. But for work's sake, I often view tons of photos shot abroad. Most of them are salon photos showing light and shadows in low aesthetic level. Few images can jump out to amaze me by its aesthetic and social value. From time to time, it causes aesthetic fatigue to view so many images.

In recent years, Malaysia delta is a hot spot for the photography enthusiasts. It attracts so many people with the azure sky, the turquoise sea and the unique Bajau people there. Bajau in Indonesian means "people at sea". As one of the ancient sea gypsies, the Bajau own a wonderful history of sea trade and regional fisheries. The Bajau have intimate contact with the ocean since their birth. They are proud of their survival skill — diving. As the world develops, the Bajau still live on fishing, hunting and collecting. The harshness of living and the lack of supplies lead to the rapid decrease of the Bajau population living at sea. It is also very difficult for them to live on land. However, they live in a place with most diversified species on the earth. The people's poverty and the nature's richness create a sense of unfamiliarity. In addition, it is a good place to shoot sunrise and sunset for salon photos. Naturally, the photography enthusiasts can never be bored to shoot everything here. Chen Huochou, the author of this photo album, is also attracted by this place.

Among the crowd of photography enthusiasts, few people pay attention to the Bajau's adaptability to their material shortage. Fewer people take the Bajau's living as a pole to measure the pursuit of material wealth in China nowadays, and think about the question: how much material wealth could make one satisfied and happy? Though there is no absolute standard answer for everyone, it is a question worth investigation for every photographer. You can think about how long the Bajau can maintain their current life style with your camera. Perhaps, there is no need for you to guess or imagine, because it is difficult to really understand them when you join the group tour to shoot your photos. Perhaps, few photographers care about their fate. But they are fishermen of the sea, who have an eternal gene in their blood. Getting the photographers' attention or not, this will not change.

Based on the reasons above, I was a bit hesitated when Mr. Wu Xiaopeng called me, saying that he was editing a photo album of the Bajau, and asking me if I could write a review of about one thousand words for his friend. I doubted whether the photos are the commonly seen ones, like the travelogue pictures with only nice

sceneries. Xiaopeng knew that I never write anything for the photos I have no chemistry with, and I was unwilling to decline a friend's request. So I agreed to see the photos first. When I saw the draft of the photo album, I was rather surprised. I called Xiaopeng immediately, telling him I could write the review and maybe a longer one. Perhaps this is how people can connect with each other by their common ideas. The photographer and the reviewer perceive each other's exploration and understanding on the same issue, which is also a jointly discovery of mutual values.

Photography theorist Li Shufeng divides the ways to photographic images into two: descriptive and poetic. When each photography enthusiast faces the Bajau and the living environment they depend on since their birth, it is a question that how to choose the perspective. If one tries to use the descriptive way to narrate the relationship between the Bajau and their surviving environment, I am convinced that with one or two tours abroad, an ordinary enthusiast can never shoot photos like what James Morgan did. Growing up by the sea, the 24-year-old British photographer James Morgan deeply loves the ocean. For this shooting schedule, he had to do some special preparation. He learned diving in the south sea of England. He learned to hold his breath in the bathtub, and he studied Malay and Bahasa by himself. Sponsored by the Royal Photographic Society, James followed the Bajau to shoot painting-like photos, showing the traditional life of the Bajau and the pressure they are confronting. He recorded that some convenient fishing skills (like using potassium chloride) destroyed the environment severely, which might put the poor and panic Bajau into danger because excessive fishing would destroy the coral reefs that had raised the Bajau. James unveiled the difficult situation of the Bajau to the world with his photographic images.

Many photography enthusiasts shoot photos because they feel it beautiful. However, this aesthetic level stays in a lower level of light and shadow, colors and composition. The image looks like a decorative picture, nicely composed, great in color and form, but its value can never compete with a painting by a good artist, because it is too "sweet". That's why some people call these aesthetic photos "sugar water". I think Chen Huochou, the author of Fishing & Fishermen, found his proper photographic language different from other aesthetic photos. If the image is merely descriptive with no space for the viewers to imagine, that is a product of concepts. A talented photographer tends to integrate the descriptive and the poetic ways in the images. If you want to capture Nature in creative photography, you must "occupy the natural object, modify it, and change its shape", to "include human spirit in the natural object" so that "the natural object can achieve larger single integration." Hegel's words are also suitable for artistic photography creation and the author's shooting practice. Facing the blue sky, turquoise sea water, and colorful dress of the Bajau women, Chen Huochou neither describes his objects superficially, nor is enslaved by the magnificent colors of Nature. For descriptive and poetic aims, Chen resolves his soul in his photos, like what Hegel said, to occupy, modify and change everything. He abandons the colors that the majority favors, and chooses to present the images in black and white. The black and white images are more abstract when representing the concrete objects. This

feature is decided by the image carrier, which represents the colors of Nature with simple hues of black, gray and white. Thus, it distances the photographic images from the real natural objects. Though the actual images in the photo lose some concreteness, they gain much abstractness which gives more freedom to the photographer to express his subjective ideas.

In Chen's black and white series, the blue sky is abstracted, becoming a dark gray hue with lines of white clouds. The colors of Nature are presented in the essential but abstract black, gray and white hues. The crystal clear sea water becomes abstract color patches with decorative geometric patterns, which usually takes a large area in the photo. The author implies the mysterious and magnificent power of Nature in these deep and changeable color patches. It shows that the author's artistic sense is in accordance with the aesthetic presentation. In the form of most photos, the sky becomes an abstract large gray patch. The large area of gray hue and the white clouds implicitly convey the ethereal beauty of Nature and the rich emotions of the author. Therefore, the author's final goal is to present a poetic and implicit beauty by the form of blending black and white.

It is a big theme to record the relationship between the vulnerable groups and their living environment. For a foreign photographer, it is even a mission impossible to thoroughly illustrate the relationship between people from different levels of the tribe and their living environment by merely several tours for photos. How to adjust the perspective is the threshold testing the photographer's wisdom and experience. Every photographer has his own way to use the camera, which implies his ideological needs. The distance between the camera and the objects suggests the relationship between the photographer and the objects being shot. The smart author chooses children as his objects, because children are the hope of future. In the tribe of Bajau, children are the best element of freedom. They can freely express their emotions, situation and status. Comparatively, the adults facing the camera show closed narration while children can show openness. The living conditions of the children cannot clearly demonstrate the survival problems of the tribe. If the viewers want to have a deep understanding, they have to actively participate in the construction of its descriptiveness from the image information presented by the author. This is a pleasant frame for participation. The dictatorship of the photographer in descriptiveness has been faded. With his poetic language, the author intends to arouse the viewers' impulse to fill in the image meaning, and then use their knowledge to complete the space of meaning in the photos. However, the filling ways vary individually, so that the possible meanings can be diverse. Though the author describes the objects and represents them in a poetic way at the meantime, his humane care for the vulnerable groups and his good hope for the future are inevitably mixed in the photos, which evoke the viewers' sympathy.

As for the image language, the author desirably controls the integration of descriptive way and the poetic way. The poetic image without the support of concrete objects often makes people feel that it is a pointless fake moaning for poetic sake. Some fake and superficial descriptive narration is often exquisitely

coded by the photographer, misleading the viewers to the direction set by himself. It is not difficult to imagine, that viewers with knowledge and strong will can isolate themselves from the stereotype set by the author, and keep their stand to these descriptive narrations, or even doubt and criticize them. However, Chen Huochou, the author of this photo album, does not subjectively make a clear narration, or a judgment, or an illustration on the current living situation of the Bajau. He intentionally weakens his subjective judgment on the Bajau with poetic image language, offering a platform for the possible discussion with the viewers. He allows the viewers to see an objective world, instead of using the images with his own opinion to persuade the viewers to accept that. Thus, his images are convincing and get accepted. The power of the image lies in its spreading. The spreading of an image depends on the viewers' acceptance, participation and volunteer promotion. The acceptance of the viewers is determined by what you give to your images. Is it knowledge, the enjoyment of beauty or anything else? Based on this, I believe this photo album will be definitely popular among the viewers.

Cai Huansong,

Art Director of Chinese Photographer, winner of the China Photography Award, famous critic of photography theory













渔·人 / Fishing & Fishermen

巴天族早在200年前已登陆沙巴。巴天人漂泊海上，以捕鱼为生，是名副其实的“海上吉卜赛人”。

The Bajau landed in Sabah as early as 200 years ago. Living a seaborne life by fishing, the Bajau are the "Real Sea Gypsies".



渔·人 / Fishing & Fishermen

“巴天族”通常是外界对他们的称谓。他们习惯用自己或是部落的名称来称呼自己。他们是一个古老的海上游牧民族，拥有海上贸易和区域性渔业。海上巴天族人在海上度日，在船上生活。潜泳技术是他们引以为傲的生存技能。为了能在水中潜得更深、更久，传说他们在小时候就故意弄裂耳鼓膜。他们每天都潜入深深的海底，这一切只为寻找珍珠、海参和鲜鱼。

"Bajau" is usually a name called by the outsiders. They prefer calling themselves by their own names or the group's name. As one of the ancient sea gypsies, they own their sea trade and regional fisheries. The Bajau live a sea-oriented and boat-dwelling life. They are proud of their survival skill: free-diving. In order to dive deeper and longer in the water, it is said that they rupture their eardrums at an early age. Every day, they dive into the deep ocean to find pearls, sea cucumbers and fresh fish.