

ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PRAGUE
FILM AND TV SCHOOL OF ACADEMY OF PERFORMING
ARTS IN PRAGUE

What Does Today's Image Record.
Analysis of documentary photography in the
Digital and We Media Age

Xiang Yu

Final Theoretical Dissertation
Master Degree Project

Prague, April 2017

CONTENT

1. Abstract

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose and Significance

2.2 Literature Review

2.3 Issues

2.4 Methodology

3. Chapter

Chapter I Digital Imaging, Internet, Smart Phone -
The Technical Background of Image Development
in the New Era

Chapter II Is There a Concept of “Traditional Photography”
- The Origin of Documentary Photography

Chapter III "Traditional Photography Language"
- The Questioning of the Core Foundation of
Documentary as the Photography Language

Chapter IV Why Do We Tamper with Photos?
- The Dishonesty of Photography

Chapter V New Features Presented
by Photography Grammar in We Media Age

Chapter VI Deconstruction of the Media Authority in

We Media Age

Chapter VII Discussion of Key Features of Post-documentary
Photography

Chapter VIII Documentary Value of the Image in the
Post-documentary Era

4. Conclusion

5. Bibliography

6. Illustration

7. Acknowledgment

1. Abstract

Photography has been invented so far less than two centuries. Accompanied by its technological progress, it accelerates into the new era when language features undergo drastic changes. There are many factors that contribute to change, and the most important factor is the development and evolution of the media. New photography and new media are increasingly showing the relationship that they depend on each other and coexist. As the inherent uniqueness of the photography language, documentary is rapidly being disintegrated and transformed into new forms of existence. All are established on the basis of the recording of their language, regardless of the social function of photography, or the artistry exhibited by photography, and if it is disintegrated, where will the future photography be? What are the characteristics of the "post-documentary" that are faced with the changes of the new era after the traditional understanding of the photographic documentary, and what are the theoretical mechanisms behind these characteristics? This paper attempts to discuss these issues.

Keywords

**photographic documentary new media we media
photography and politics democracy choose and be chosen**

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose and Significance

Photography was born in 1839. The silver plate photography invented by the French Daguerre created the beginning of human photographic images. It is well known that human beings can use two-dimensional visual means to experience, cognize, and describe the world before the invention of photography because of the existence of painting. Photography therefore has been used as a visual communication tool from the very beginning; it is inevitably identical to painting in terms of the function. But soon people found the difference between photography and painting. In the later hundred years of development, photography is not only a new, unique, irreplaceable visual expression and means of transmission, but also constantly consolidates and develops, with its own language characteristics completely different from that of the painting. By mastering this means, people find that their own camera is not just a toy; the photos it takes has the new ability to develop a deep understanding of the world, and share and communicate with others. Traditional documentary photography, based on the unique "objective record" ability of photography, is actively participating in social life and flourishes. In this period of more than a hundred years, documentary photography as a category of photography, and also as the composition of the basic language of photography, has played a role that cannot be ignored in human life, image art expression and other fields. Even we can say that the modern history of mankind has become a history of image participation and composition since the invention of photography.

As we have seen, photography from its birth is doomed to develop with much dependence on technological innovation. All rests on technology, regardless of the development and achievement at the level of photography

behavior or the photography aesthetic level. Each and every major progress of social applications and aesthetic theories of photography is closely related to the technological innovation. The popularity of photography benefits from the reduced cost of making a photo, so that technological progress makes the cost of getting photos from the initial very expensive to today's almost zero cost. The popularity of photography also requires a reduction in the requirements of the photographer's skills, so the technology once again shows the power - the requirements of the photographer's skill are changed from the original extremely complex to complex to simple and to present almost zero skills. At the same time, the development of photographic images is more dependent on the communication than other means of expressions. Following the photography, human enters "just" in a timely manner into the media age. Photography and the media have always been like a pair of magnets, hugging each other closely, from newspapers, magazines, televisions to today's networks and from traditional media to new media. So, when discussing the "photography" without consideration for the media, we will assess the entire image situation of the era we live in only from the changes of the "photo taking" behavior itself, which is a bit too single. As known to all today, in this digital age, almost all people take pictures not only for taking pictures, the behavior after which will be immediate exchange and communication.

Over the past 30 years of the rapid development of digital technology, human beings have indisputably entered into the new stage of information civilization when the language and the grammar of images have undergone major changes. So far, although the process of taking a photo (at least the material collection stage of digital photography is also the case) still theoretically follows the mirroring correspondence generated by the lens on the subject, people optionally modify the result of such correspondence - photos, reaching the extent of flooding and necessity. Concurrently, the channels and methods of communication of the image have also undergone tremendous changes. The rapid development of the Internet and handheld terminals (smart phones or other similar devices) has led to the fact that dissemination and release completely put aside the traditional printing form that is subject to time and space costs to achieve delivery to the watchers of the large groups at the exact moment.

In other words, this is a we media era when not only everyone can receive and read at any time, and almost everyone can freely create, modify and

publish images. Photographic behavior, whether manufacturing or viewing, no longer provides a sense of ritual and mystery, of course, no longer authoritative. Manufacturing and reading images as an individual way of communicating with others, quickly approach to "speak" and "listen to others" in terms of the form. Photography in the form has lost the traditional privilege. The documentary function on which the traditional documentary photography survives as well as the people's sense of trust of it, which has been maintained for hundreds of years, is being rapidly disintegrated. And almost at the same time, the image has been greatly filled, shaping and curing our lives, so that we cannot imagine a life without photos, a life beyond communication (network disruption phobia); that is the case that the image-based recognition and communication are taken away. We cannot imagine what life will be if language dialogue is taken away from life.

On the other hand, we can see that the rhythm of the whole change is indeed showing the acceleration according to the changes in the experience of the image reader. Over the past 100 years, the focus of our reading experience has been shifted from books to the newspaper, and quickly shifted from the illustrated newspaper to television and magazines (media), and ultimately to the we media era whose carrier is the Internet. If we agree with Marshall McLuhan's opinion that "the media is the message", as we call this stage of civilization as "information civilization", we intend to explore the role of photography in which it plays. It will be necessary to have a discussion on the new features of the so-called photography documentary function presented in the new information age (or we can directly call the photography before the digital age as "traditional photography").

We have come to an unprecedented and noisy crossroad. We can see the way to the road, but we are uncertain to know where to go. Some of the predictions made by the previous prophets have expired, some have been realized (the realization also means the failure), and some have been partially realized; however, it still remains a strong suspense in the future. George Orwell had a concern that truth and democracy would be eventually strangled by power. However, the year 1984 has gone. The collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1991 marked the victory of universal values, and the worsening of authoritarian political ideology. The global development of the Internet as the side witness effectively removes his concern. Only Neil Postman's prophecy gradually comes true even

much beyond his imagination. When he died in 2003, he probably could not have expected and imagined that to what extent people can reach with the help of media and images in only more than ten years after his death.

The media has provided us with entertainment, while regional conflicts and growing global terrorism add to our anxiety. The image surrounded us in an unprecedented way and penetrated into each and every corner of our life in such an era travelling at high speed just like a train that is out of control, whether it is entertainment or anxiety. When did we start to be very cautious, hesitating to stop believing in a photo, even though it seemed that it was not different from those pictures we believed in? And, we no longer believe in the image, but why do we still allow them to continue to surround or even build our lives? The image has made us believe that the "documentary" function is disintegrating and collapsing, but after that, is there a so-called "post-documentary" period? If so, how do we define and understand this concept? These will be discussed in the paper.

2 . 2 Literature Review

Since the 1930s, the academic community began to study photography language and photography aesthetics. Today, research and discussion on photographic documentaries has been extensively seen in books, network and various media interviews. In the contemporary era when the Internet is popular, many artists and media practitioners and researchers have made extensive research and reflection on the changes in the new era of photography language. Over the past few years, I have read books, viewed online articles, and referred to Chinese papers, network data query, record, etc., contributing to a collection of and reference to about 200 books or so. They generally include:

1. Record and research of the history of photography;
2. Discussion and research of photographic language;
3. Cultural reflection and criticism on photographic behavior;
4. Research of media;
5. Research of the application of modern technology to human life;

6. Analysis of the photo-taking features in the digital age;
7. Analysis of the features of new media (including we media);
8. Research of we media cultural ecology;
9. Analysis of ethics norms of we media;
10. Analysis and research of the influences of traditional media and we media.

2 . 3 Issues

During the course of the research, I find that "digital image participates in the lifestyle of the new era" has become a consensus in both the Chinese world and the English world. There are not only tremendous but also profound discussions and researches on this topic, which facilitates my research a lot. At the same time, the new features of photography language in the new era have been presented, but the theoretical level has not made a systematic response and follow-up as the traditional research of photography language is relatively small in number, which case is particularly prominent in the Chinese world. A large number of definitions such as "photographic images truly reflect the objective world" are still the dominant search results when I search for "photography language". Extensive search is the only way to finding the doubt of photographic documentary at the level of little snippets of language. Such definition may be acceptable 50 years ago. However, today, the image has come to the "information material" level. Sticking to it, cannot help saying that it is not appropriate. From the above, the main issues of this paper are as follows: an analysis of the formation of photography language and the existing questioning; attempt to elaborate the changes of contemporary image documentary with the concept of "post-documentary"; and an analysis of the homogenization between the image and media in the we media era.

2 . 4 Methodology

1. Survey
2. Observation
3. Content analysis
4. Text analysis

3 Chapter

Chapter I

Digital Imaging, Internet, Smart Phone -The Technical Background of Image Development in the New Era

Early in the 1960s, the Bell Labs in the United States demonstrated the feasibility of digital imaging in principle. 1960s is the period when the modern silver salt film with gelatin as the carrier experienced rapid development. The world's first laboratory-grade digital camera was invented by Steven J. Sasson of Kodak Applied Electronics Research Center in 1975. The camera was 8.25 inches wide, 6 inches thick and 8.9 inches high (20.9x15.2x22.5 cm), and weighed 8.51 pounds (3.9 kg). 16 AA cells were needed to power it when a photo was being taken. For the storage media, the standard 300-foot Philips digital tape was used as the storage. For taking a picture, the oldest digital camera had the exposure time of 50ms. It took 23s to take a photo. Each tape could store 30 photos.

In 1976, when the digital camera was just born, the shares Kodak had in the US film and camera markets were 90% and 85%, respectively, and the global film market share was up to 65%. Over 20 years, Kodak film production profits fell by 70% during 2000-2003. On September 26, 2003, Kodak announced the implementation of a major strategic change: to abandon the traditional film business. In 2004, Kodak laid off 20% of its staff. In 2007, Kodak blew up its film R & D building. On January 19,

2012 - despite struggling, Kodak has come to this step - with an application for bankruptcy protection in New York. On the fourth day of that September, the National Museum of Nature and Science, Tokyo enriched its collection with Casio QV-10, the world's first civil digital camera with a built-in LCD picture.

It seemed that the facts shown in those tedious data were more a commercial war that happened at other locations and had nothing to do with it. Just like the famous slogan of digital product manufacturers - the "digital revolution", each time when business drives technology change, the party representing the emerging technology will fan the flames with the encouragement that excites consumers, seeming that it is a speech delivered by the commander before going to a real battle. In the user's view, this war may be essentially a commercial war. For example, Kodak launched the commercial dry plate which quickly replaced the old wet plate collodion technology. What users can do is to delightedly accept the new love and abandon the old love. However, in 1974, Steven Sasson's original summary of the project presented the following paragraph, "The camera described in this report refers to the first successful camera. The test aims to prove that with the progress of technology, photography system will have a substantial impact on the way of taking a picture in the future." As the prophecy is proven, the war as one of the important factors has imposed rapid and profound impact on each of our lives over the past 30 years.

Initially, consumers were not so enjoyable when the digital camera came into people's sight. This is not all because of the immaturity of the original digital technology, but in the eyes of people who are familiar with the history of photography - at least in a certain perspective, photography just returns to the state where the image can be seen immediately when photo taking keeps going. Like the beginning of photography, Daguerre's silver plate and wet plate collodion era was the same as Tintype: the one photographed could share with the photographer the effect of this magic on the spot. Not to mention the Polaroid image flourishing in the era of digital's birth, in fact, some people simply call the initial digital image as a "digital Polaroid". However, compared to the real Polaroid, digital "Instant Image" appears to be rougher, boring, insufficient diversification of style, but the only advantage is inexpensive.

Therefore, people familiar with the history of photography will inevitably be a little confused when reviewing the war when dynasties pass. From the perspective of the history of photography, isn't this just a technology change of photosensitive material? Technology changes of photosensitive materials in the history of photography have taken place for many times. Even for the progress of photography, one of the important clues is the renewal of photosensitive materials. We abandon the conventional photosensitive materials at the average speed of a few decades. We fully accept and use the new materials, although the digital photosensitive materials have unprecedented characteristics. We no longer indulge in sensitivity and mobility and even no longer on the meaning of the moment. Images can be digitally obtained with ease and modified from time to time. However, it is ultimately technology changes. Why are previous technological changes the accumulation of quantitative change, and why does only the qualitative change this time lead the human into the new image era?

For the drastic changes as a result of the development of any tools, such tools cannot be separately evaluated without consideration for the times background; it seems that this is a law. We need know the overall social requirements when such tools were born, and all available external environment and conditions provided for their birth. The latter, however, may take more time to accumulate. Just imagine and if time travel would come true, with the same technology of our time, one comes to the cold weapon age with a machine gun and an electric razor, what consequences will both machines bring? The machine gun is not only "useful" in the society where it is but also "being wanted"; importantly, it can bring significant consequences. Its holder can easily kill the king, become a new monarch, and even change the history of mankind. In the World War II, the United States developed and actually used for the first time (also the only time in human history) the atomic bomb, which was an example that a technology just appeared in the time when it is needed. However, if the electric shaver were brought back to ancient times, it would only attract onlookers that were surprised as it separated the requirement that "may trigger great changes" of the time where it went although it may have gathered the most sophisticated technology of the times it came from. It

could not be used for other purposes other than a gift presented to the king.

Neil Postman(1993): “technolog- ical competition ignites total war, which means it is not possible to contain the effects of a new technology to a limited sphere of human activity...Technological change is neither additive nor subtractive. It is ecological.”^[1]

Again it is just like the birth of photography. For the birth of photography, we now only remember the important year of 1839; in fact, however, it was decades theretofore, when not only the core technology findings have been stocked (the technology finding considered to be the most central for photography is imaging other than fixation. The ability of sodium thiosulfate to fix was found by Joho Herschl in 1819), and even a variety of essentially the same imaging experiments have been successful. As the principle reserve of photographic imaging – imaging was found earlier. It is said that the principle of pin-hole imaging can be dated back to China's "Mozi" era. It has been technologically reserved for thousands of years, and in the last few years, it came to the situation where multiple sides race against, demonstrating that in the first half of the 19th century, the early rapid expansion of capitalism in the setting of the European industrial revolution provides the most wanted requirement for the birth of photography. In a certain view, perhaps it is such requirement that invents photography. It is not so important for the fact that to whom the title of the final inventor was granted.

Just as the question raised by Marshall McLuhan: whether the car was just a faster horse, whether the light was a brighter candle. If it is out of the integrity of the times, the car is a faster carriage, or it is perhaps much worse. In places without roads, the car has not yet been faster than a horse. Although photography itself have shown a certain potential to spread and soon been granted with the mission to communicate since its birth, it was later proven that: in addition to its own reproducibility, the media representing by printing, and extension of photography thereafter - newspapers, magazines, television, formed a joint force of communication. How the period in the last century when traditional media began to flourish guided and deeply controlled human life is left in our mind. It provides access for ordinary people to be really exposed to photography, in fact, rarely through the photography itself, but through the media. This

shows that even for the photography of the last era, photography acts on human life, and the real burst is also the media.

This can be seen as another feature of photography and the media - born with each other's desire and dependency. The image gained its own evolution, while jumping off the traditional media carriage, and getting on a completely different car that drove on the "information superhighway". The media is also the same for images. From the need to dependence, the track is very obvious. The media also requires development and should be developed. The development can be interpreted later on the definition of the media. Many factors combined lead to the status we see now. Seen from the surface, the digital innovation is a replacement of old photosensitive materials with new ones. For the difference from the development of previous photosensitive material, it is just the shift from the prior photochemical reaction to photo-physical reaction. The real cause of the upheaval is the evolution of the computer, the Internet and the last intelligent terminal, all generally referred to as the "the evolution of the times". The results provide wide space for digital imaging at the most appropriate moment. Mutual needs are intertwined to call for technological progress. Technology is evolving that induces demanding; in turn, demanding propels new technologies to grow and spread in new demands.

Despite the prior reflections of Susan Sontag on photography and later criticism of Neil Postman on the media, the times were like a tsunami that would not stop. Just when Neil Postman had a deep concern for and criticized on that television destroyed the American culture, and the human is far from being satisfied with the entertainment provided only by the TV. Just in a few decades, the Internet and smart phones replace newspapers and magazines and televisions, although not completely, the war situation has no suspense, just like what the digital did to silver salt film. Compared to the role of the Internet-driven development of the entire media in the great changes in current human life, the "digital revolution", cannot be relegated to a supporting role, but would never act as the leading role, just like Jason Statham accompanying Sylvester Stallone in *The Expendables*.

As with the beginning of digital technology, the earliest origins of the Internet are not for civilian use, and everything is commercialized. It began with ARPAnet, the predecessor of the DARPA (defence Advanced Research Projects Agency), which was put into use in 1969. As a result, ARPAnet became a sign of the birth of modern computer networks. The real leap in the Internet should give credit to its commercialization. The business community, once entering into the strange world of the Internet, quickly discovered its great potential in communications, data retrieval, and customer service. Hence, many companies around the world have poured into the Internet, bringing a new leap in the history of Internet development. With the development of information technology, the Internet will turn to a "three-in-one" multimedia business platform where image, voice and data are combined and that will develop cross-integration with e-commerce, e-government, e-public affairs, e-healthcare, e-learning, etc. In ten to twenty years, the Internet will gain the influence outweighing that of newspapers, radio and television, and gradually develop into the "fourth media". By far no one and no exact data in the globe have known the true size of the Internet.

The significance of the Internet is not just its size, but rather that it provides a new global information infrastructure that bursts into such a scale in a short period of time. As an information infrastructure, presence of the Internet miracle drives intelligent terminal development. The iPhone is the first to prove that some of the features on the phone are more important than the call itself. Listening to music, taking pictures, browsing the web, and receiving information from the outside world (globally) at any time are permitted, although such information is fragmented and is called "false information" by Neil Postman. The iPhone is far more than this. In the time of Jobs, iPhone indicated that slim, beautiful appearance of the phone was also very important for users because at that time the high-performance camera phones were very big and heavy. As a commercial company, excellent industrial design and user experience meet the market's eager needs, and this is why it has gained a great success over the past 10 years. Almost when Neil Postman concerned that the United States will be destroyed by television, Apple-led smart phones successfully get people away from TV sets and firmly fixed in the small phone on the palm.

With the rise of smart phones and after 20 years of development, camera phone in the smart and 4G eras will return to photo taking itself as the most convenient photo taking tool. Improvement of picture quality and ease of use remains the focus of the major manufacturers as these are what required by customers. Mobile phone camera has become an indispensable part of mobile Internet applications. Future development will also focus on picture quality, functionality, mobile phone hardware and other aspects. It is believed that in the near future, camera phone will completely replace the digital card camera and be the first choice that records our life. With the rapid development of mobile Internet technology in the applications to smart phones, the rise of software features also profoundly affect the phone camera mode. Google has the reputed Photo Sphere, BlackBerry has Time Shift, HTC has Zoe, and Apple is to provide tens of thousands of APPs. Almost every vendor adds highlighted software camera functions to their own equipment. Of course, the changeful patterns of the filter are also essential.

Although in the traditional silver salt photography era, photo faking was no surprise, as we all know - whether it was driven by the government's ideology, or the personal expression of a photographer's intention, but after all, some skills were needed. Operations in the darkroom are challenged by difficulties; even a slight negligence may give the show away. So in that era the understanding of the public - the understanding of photo faking, was almost the same - I know someone may do, but most of the photos cannot be faked. Therefore, the photo can be photographed with the subjectivity, which is well known, but at least that picture is a real correspondence with a scene that has occurred. Now, however, we have entered a new era, however we are caught off guard. In the new era, the media evolves influence, and the photographic behavior related to this topic also develops. The evolution of multiple clues is intertwined. Photographic behavior is digital, civilian (universal), media-based, and since the media era technology builds us such a platform where not only everyone can take pictures, and we also have the software readily available and with which we modify the photos. Based on the famous Photoshop, and other similar software in great numbers, some large software is currently intelligently running on the computer, and some small image modification software with simple functions can download directly from the APP and run on the phone, while some software is even fixed in the photo taking mode. The

modified photo can be released immediately. What we receive from time to time is also the same. Image fake is made public, lawful, convenient and “intelligent”.

The last major reference frame that should be taken into account is films. The well-known industrialization enables film production to make earnings and high return. On this, it is taken for granted that films should walk in the forefront of the application of new technologies. In 1993, “Jurassic Park” directed by Steven Allan Spielberg was released. After seeing Avatar, the Chinese Director Lu Chuan (2009) said, “films can be grouped into these before Avatar and these after Avatar.” The computer imaging technique plus 3D watching experience has well prepared for mankind’s stepping into VR age. New watching experience is provided, while the old one is soon engraved with time signs and turns to history. Irresistible technological development brings new life to the front. The images come in a new look just like the experience we have when viewing a video. Neil Postman(1993) said at The Chapter 1 The Judgment of Thamus from his book “Technopoly -The Surrender Of Culture To Technopoly”: “Technology imperiously commandeers our most important terminology. It redefines "freedom," "truth," "intelligence," "fact," "wisdom," "memory," "history"—all the words we live by. And it does not pause to tell us. And we do not pause to ask.”^[2]

In view of the fact that this subject should be discussed based on the photography and the relevant "documentary" characteristics, however, it is necessary to clarify the ins and outs in a large context as it is impossible to discuss contemporary photographic documentary without consideration for the ages factor such as deviation from the media.

Chapter II

Is There the Concept of "Traditional Photography"? - The Origin of Photographic Documentary

In the face of emerging digital image, we used to compare it with a concept; that is the so-called "traditional image." When the concept is viewed from a broad perspective, especially in contrast to other means of expression, such as painting classified into classical paintings and contemporary paintings, music classified into classical music and modern music, photography of course includes traditional photography and contemporary photography. However, when asked about the exact meaning of traditional image features, or what difference between traditional photography and "today's photography" is, we often find that the answer that can be given almost cannot stand serious scrutiny.

For example, "the carriers they use to record the image are different. Traditional photography uses film, and film is produced by silver salt photochemical reaction. It is a real record of the object being taken as it cannot be easily tampered with." Just at the beginning it seems difficult to continue. Under real circumstances, and in the face of a picture we did not know anything before, we can only rely on the subject and its background to determine whether a photo is "old" and "traditional". With only the image features, in most cases we cannot accurately assess whether an image in the end is digital acquisition or film records. If the image maker deliberately confuses it, it is more difficult for us to judge. As to whether the image is a "real record" of something, and whether it has been tampered with (or not), it is more difficult to affirm.

Speaking of the documentary attributes of photography, it is necessary to pay attention to the unique social attributes and social functions of photography. The social attributes represented by photography, usually referred to the way in which photography occupies our emotion, are based on the fact the photography has taken a large number of human behaviors and social life forms. In different stages of history, different countries and different ideologies, photography and life and photography and politics are inevitably interactive. The history of photography records everything: in fact, photography in their nearly 180 years of history was almost in childhood quickly developed with such social property. It has only been deepened and widened in the subsequent periods. Non-physical properties reflected by photography at these levels are pulled out. For the technical and physical image representation, we cannot distinguish between the "traditional photography" and "today's photography".

In Chapter I, we mentioned the significance of digital imaging technology for the image itself was only replacement of the photosensitive material. This replacement does not bring any physical changes to the physical properties of the photo itself. Until today, in addition to a handful of technical staff, most people cannot accurately determine whether it is taken by the traditional film or the latest digital camera directly with image features of the picture. Digital imaging technology not only follows the traditional silver salt in terms of the final imaging results, and it cannot rise above it. For the presentation of the image, the silver salt film era has done well enough. There is a clear measure: as long as the particles or pixels constituting the image have a resolution higher than that of human eyes, it is good enough. The final viewer and judge of the image is the human eye. The excess may be redundant. Next, we are required to clarify the focus of the difference between the traditional photography and "today's photography"; it seems that the focus is on "modifying the extensiveness of the image" and "convenience in obtaining the image". This topic relates to not only the possibility of technological progress but also the new form of image participation in society. The second question will be discussed in the following sections. This chapter focuses on the question: how do we see traditional photography, or the documentary features of photography before digital and Photoshop?

When it comes to this topic, we have to raise a hypothesis - the photo should be in line with the real. However, the truth is also a complex philosophical concept. In the theory we have accepted, the truth of photography should contain at least three levels of meaning: the real world of the lens (objective existence, no degree or proportion); the significance of the photos after turning to be an independent object viewed (subject to the intervention of the choice and influence judgment of the photographer, or other factors), and; the reality of the content received by the viewer (also influenced by the viewer's judgment). Ideally, we believe (or illude or require) that all of them should be highly consistent, the higher the better as this is the only source of photographic documentary. However, they are not fully consistent, just like id, ego and superego Freud proposed in the discussion of personality. The so-called "documentary" we easily deduced is not reliable. Then, where does the documentary repeatedly demonstrated by the theory of photography come from?

Before we discuss the truth, if we are willing to trust a photo, it is necessary to first clarify the mechanism of people's trust the photo. The reason why we put forward the "trust" requirement is fully based on the principle in which the photo describes the object. In all the forms of description of the objective world, it is only the photo-photographic way that is the lens-based physical correspondence. Lens-type correspondence is the light-based linear transmission. The reality of photography originally relies on its naturalness; that is, photography is a purely objective reproduction getting rid of the subjective control of people. Either Niepce or Talbot attributes photography to natural handwriting, and Niepce called it "Sun Writing", and Talbot the "Pencil of Nature".

And even the sensitivity response of film and the photographic paper to the light, the principle of constituting the image tone based on the reflectivity of the photographed to light ray, and the inverse square law followed by light wave transmission are physical principles that are not subject to human actions and can be computed. If you repeat, as long as the initial conditions remain unchanged, the result will be the same. This is purely scientific, although it came from the understanding of the approximate "witchcraft" in the beginning of the birth of photography, but it soon found the way out, and was widely known in the scope of human scientific epistemology category beyond doubt and contradiction. In other

words, the photographer really approached to mankind with such a face, "born in science (chemistry), it follows the laws of science rather than the will" (Note 1).

Photography is the result of physical and chemical experiments. An important attribute of scientific experimentation is repeatability. Repeatability produces regularity that generates a sense of security to give rise to trust. The man who invented photography was not to develop a skill of human itself (for example, painting is actually a skill) but found a scientific phenomenon that was practical, could be repeated and was popular. Whoever has and follows the right way and pay for the experiment will surely be rewarded with the established results. It can be said that the essence of the mechanism with which human trusts in the photo originates from the trust in science.

Perhaps it was based on such way of trust that Roland Barthes turned to a firm trustor of the photo. He said that every photo was essentially to convey to us the simplest message: "that's it!" "It did exist!" Apart from these, there are no more "languages" for the photo. In his words, the object is "attached" to the photo and is inseparable - we can never clearly separate the object itself in the photo and the object that is in the photo. Just like you see a picture of a man, the first reaction is what you could not help saying: this is xx, rather than this is xx in the picture, or this is a photo of xx. Even if he further divides the elements of the photo into studium and punctum, both are based on the premise that the photo is trusted in. When it comes to the "time" problem of the photo, he even thinks that apart from photo, we do not have a way with which we "really" see the past – even the textual description is appealing, and the brush strokes are accurate, one may not be convinced that what it describes is the scene for the time being. The special of photography is that it is "irrefutable". The viewer can only admit it and accept it, whether what a picture shows is in consistent with what the viewer imagines.

In the film world, André Bazin more solidified the foundation of photographic documentary in the form of theory. In 1945, Bazin published *The Ontology of the Photographic Image* where he appreciated real aesthetic and was opposed to aestheticism. He founded the complete film realism system, and believed that documentary was the most primitive first

feature of a film. His theory seems to be the study of film language, but in reality it can be extended to the discussion of the image nature. Bazin wrote in *The Ontology of the Photographic Image* that the basis of film aesthetics was that the film truly presented the original condition of the object itself. The participatory art in which man joins is the only one that is discovered. In photography, however, human participation cannot be tolerated to the slightest extent. So the image of photography is a true reflection of things. Unity of the image and the object in the objective reality is the theoretical core and basic concept of the ontology of the photographic image.

Bazin's film realism theory had a profound influence on the creation of western films in the 1950s. However, the theoretical core of his "image ontology" is to advocate real aesthetics, and the aim is to say no to aestheticism. Bazin's theory highlights the important role of image reality, and connects the function of photography with the art history of model, establishing the essential difference between photography and painting. It seems that we could understand that since the birth of the painting, the exploration into realism by painting starting from the Renaissance was declared to come to an end. Since then, the painting has returned to the track of the subjective feelings of human. However, he overemphasized the objective function of the image and underestimated the presentation and reproducibility function of the image, and also people's eager and desire to explore into what photography "can do". The reason is that obviously photography activities can be controlled and utilized whether in terms of the process or its results.

Any tampering of a photograph based on a photography language also follows science, or on the contrary, it does not violate science. The act of tampering with the photo is not a scientific failure, but a man-made cause. Just like the magic, no magic with the secret uncovered is anti-science, whether it is wise or clumsy. When successful magic shows us all kinds of anti-science signs, we are caught in the confusion of happiness - we know it is impossible (anti-science, and therefore impossible), but it really happened before our eyes. Magic lives in such exciting contradiction - so, every time we watch the magic, we are faced with a happy choice - to believe what we see or believe our knowledge (science). On this account, in the system of trust in the photo built by man at the very beginning, human

factors were rationally taken into account. Rationally, everyone knows that the camera, however objective it is, cannot get rid of the command in the back, that subjective person. Therefore, the trust in the photo is incomplete, irrational and blind from the beginning. The reason why people ignore existence of the “person” when believing in the photo is that he/she takes the initiative to ignore the distrust in that person.

Regardless of the reality of photography, the theoretical basis of how unreliable, one thing in the history of photography is certainly clear, however unreliable the theoretical foundation of the reality of photography is. Photography successfully walked out of the initial infancy stage when the painting is imitated and found its unique aesthetic attribute by highlighting documentary. It lasted from the “American Civil War” by Mathew B. Brady and “Old Paris” by Eugène Atget, in the budding stage to metropolitan documentary photography in the 1930s-1950s: Brassai, Weegee and Brandt and to the “New Documentary Photography” rising in the United States in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. As William Klein said that , “photography is not painting. Painting means structuring, modifying and changing, with addition and deletion given whenever necessary. Photography, however, gives a click, whether there is content, whether dead or alive.” Photography in the West experienced two world wars and dramatic social changes. In the setting that photography seeks survival and development space, and desires an independent aesthetic status, isn't the documentary of photographic lens the only breakthrough in it?

During the World War I, the dramatic changes in Western society influenced the art fashion of the time. First in Italy, the film artist walked out of the studio, and went to the streets and to the countryside, with their cameras focusing on ordinary people, turning the real social life scene to the main content of the film (Note 2). In the United States, a group called "Photo-Secession", led by Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Steichen, presented the slogan of "direct photography" against artificial modifications on negatives and photographs. This group of "radical" photographers challenged and overturned the “Pictorialism ” in the principle of "back to the real" principle, the "painting school" was challenged and subversive, attempting to thoroughly present the charm of the object itself in support of the reproducibility of the photo. It can be said that the emergence of

"direct photography" marks that photography began to walk out of the aura of painting and really return to its essence, and was finally established as an independent art form.

As a result of the introduction of "straight photography", critics have begun to speak highly of the "photos more resembling pictures" other than painting in their works, which is a sign of the establishment of the camera ontology language, and also a major change in the history of photography. At the same time, Germany launched a "new objectivism" campaign. Albert Renger-Patzsch, a German photographer and advocate of the new avant-garde movement, wrote in his preface to "Die Welt ist schön (The World is Beautiful)", "leaving art for artists, let's create photos with a unique style through photography and without the use of art; photography has the feature of photography."^[3]

I would say that new objectivism challenged the photographers who were keen on "the interest and charm of painting" and brought young photographers a new way out. In Germany, the documentary means appeared as a major representation of photography. August Sander is creative to develop and carry forward documentary photography. In his portrait of all walks of life in the community, others were left with their shadows; also, the time and the history were left with impartial witness, representing all living creatures of the Germans. These photos turn Sander to be one of the most important portrait photographers in the history of world photography.

Undoubtedly, documentary photography is the product of social development and also needed by the development of its own language. Looking back to the 180-year history of photography, it is the emphasis on documentary of photography that really presents aesthetics in history. Since the 1930s, Pictorialism photography and Salon photography have given way to the later and successful documentary photography all over the world. Photography finally ushered in the era of documentary after subordinate to painting for long time. Most of what is really known throughout the history of photography is the documentary photographers and their works. The classic masterpieces by Paul Strand (1890-1976), Lewis Hine, Edward Steichen, Edward Weston classic masterpiece have promoted social development and change.

In the United States of the 1920s-1930s, photographers exposed the social problems as a result of the industrial revolution with photography, and photographic works became powerful supporters of social change. Among them, the New York street photos and series of works on benefits of child labor by Lewis Hine showed the harsh conditions of the immigrants and the inhumane working conditions for child labor. Of course, who is most remembered by the history of photography is a group of documentary photographer organized by the National Agency for Agricultural Security: Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Arthur Rothstein and so on. Their photos of the sluggish and arid and dusty areas in the American countryside were vividly reflecting the social problems of the United States during the Great Depression. At the same time, they also brought success for the later those who care about the future of human society and the photographer a new term: "Humanist photographer", resulting in the photography movement with the aim of documentary photography. The Child Labor by Hine forced the US government to pass a bill on the protection of the child labor; The Falling Soldier by Capa imposed a positive impact on the establishment of the international anti-fascists unitive battlefront; the Minamata by Smith aroused the concern of the universe for environmental protection. Also, a number of documentary photographic works such as the Runaway Children by Mary Ellen Mark, AIDS by Reininger, The Laborer by Salgado, etc., reflecting social problems expose the tragic people to the world and turn them to a focus of the universe.

Photographic documentary developed quickly and vigorously as photography as a unique form of visual expression started to embrace the community and got closer to life. In 1974, in the United States, Leslie D. Stroebe (1974) published the "Dictionary of Contemporary Photography" where defined "Documentary Photography" that: "a professional way to produce non-fictional films or photos, emphasizing reality, generally for purpose of formal or informal educational purposes".^[4]

ICP Photography Encyclopedia (1984) also included documentary photography and social documentary photography entries, where the "documentary photography" is broadly and narrowly defined. In a broad sense, the documentary photography is defined as "documentary photography", while in a narrow sense, documentary photography is

defined as "social documentary photography". The subject matter of documentary photography relates to all aspects of human society and its environment. It uses a certain group or certain particular person as the research object (character documentary); it can also serve the present and reveal the wrong or damaging behavior and practice (problem documentary), or record those things that are gone and valuable (literature documentary).

Nearly a hundred years have passed with the hot passion. Photography with reality or documentary as the language core has found its aesthetic position. It turned to an art without using the way of art. – Or, it turned to the art by changing the definition of art. However, pending issue still remains. Prior problems approach as if they were expected. Again, Roland Barthes was recalled, The strong supporter of photographic realism predicted at the conclusion of the "La chambre claire"(1980) : Society is concerned to tame the Photograph, to temper the madness which keeps threatening , to explode in the face of whoever looks at it. To do this, it possesses two means. The first consists of making Photography into an art, for no art is mad... Photography can in fact be an art: when there is no longer any madness in it, when its noeme is forgotten and when consequently its essence no longer acts on me.[5] under the guise of highlighting the human world fully blurs the world filled with contradictions and desires." The photo becomes one of the most ordinary things, and is no longer amazing.

Chapter III

"Traditional Photography Language" - The Questioning of the Core Foundation of Documentary as the Photograph Language

As stated earlier, digital technology is just a technological innovation in photosensitive materials. The innovation of photosensitive materials in the history of photography has occurred several times. All technological innovations revolve around a goal: making photography more powerful. Things beyond achievement with past photography turn possible by the application of new technology. The acquisition of the image is more convenient, cheaper and more conducive to universal access. As we all know, the invention of the film as a technological innovation has also imposed a revolutionary impact on the previous photographic ecology. After the birth of the film, the image has entered in greater numbers into the human life. Despite the tremendous discussions, there is no relatively specific study on the ontology language of photography. People can only give some fragmented, obscure conditions to explain or distinguish it from other visual languages. Let's take one of the examples. The language of photography should even be related to the performance of the camera and the lens. The actual physical correspondence of the lens determines the basis on which people trust the photo. The lens itself has the resolution beyond the resolution of the human eye. The role of the details holds an important position in photography ontology language.

The ambiguity I refer to is – actually and clearly presented in the example above – the contradictory nature initially ignored and plenty of arguable

space. First of all, the truth what we refer to should be based on such a trust mechanism that "seeing is believing". It refers only to the difference between "seeing" and "what photo presents". The contrast almost lays all the foundations of the language of photography. However, the standard itself of such contrast is object of discussion in materialism and idealism that will surely lead to a debate to a greater extent. One of the simplest examples is that, only technically, such comparison standard is faced with multiple contradictions, including: field of view, perspective, visual effects provided by shutter speed, aperture-induced depth of field effect, etc. Smart real estate agent knows it well. They never use standard lenses to take pictures of the room he/she sells. Instead, they only choose wide-angle lens in such way that the room looks bigger. In fact, the vision provided by the picture is so strikingly different from the one directly viewed by human eyes. How do people list it as the most basic part of photography language by initially ignoring these differences and with only the reality given by the details?

The above discusses the "reality" at the technical level. However, the real "reality" matter of photography is out of the content of the picture, or the reality of the photographer at the subjective ideological level - "what the author wants you to see and what he/she does not want you to see".

Compared with other means of human expression, such as literary painting, photography has encountered many difficulties in terms of the study of language features. Personally I agree with the definition of Roland Barthes so much that the language of photography is "uncoded coding". However, unfortunately, he did not give a more specific and in-depth explanation. In other words, it means what the photography codes, what it does not code, how the boundary mechanism of coding and non-coding is determined, by whom it is determined, etc. For example, in general, we all believe that news photography is less "uncoded" (and the less the better), but it turns out that as long as news photos are loaded with ideology and subjective intent, the it is made by producers and communicators The "code in the sense" the maker and the spreader does on it will be much stronger than the art photography.

John Hilliard vividly shows us this problem in Cause of Death. In the center of a photo lies a corpse, next to which is water, fire, buildings and stones... the photographers have cut this photo separately. If the corpse

stays with water, it will imply that his cause of death is drowning; when with fire, it has the implication that he died from fire; when with stone, it implies that the cause may be impact; when with buildings, it will imply that... the author selectively shows part of it to be seen by you, it will induce on the cause of his death the audience has in mind. The author selectively shows what he/she wants you to see and what he/she does not want you to see, which can induce the audience's thinking even toward the direction deviating from the actual one. The use of simple montage psychology directly achieves the intention of the photo maker. Although this is not strictly the issue at the language level, it appears in photography in too high frequency. Importantly, all these can be completed in the framework of the photography ontology language.

Even so, the language of photography still gradually solidifies its core features. As a visual language, photography is different from the early existence of the painting. The physical correspondence of lens imaging develops the capacity to "reproduce" a field, and the understanding of photography "documentary" people has therefrom. The ability to describe the details of the photography that is beyond the resolution of human eye strengthens the trust of people in the photographic "documentary". The photo cut outs and freezes the ability of a profile of the flowing time, and grant the moment with new significance parallel to reality. Based on what is mentioned above, photography has developed the strong ability to go deep into, reflect and take part in social life at the language level and on a functional basis. In other words, the language of photography, especially the ontology language of photography is traditionally closely related to the two keywords: real and instant. All the arguments of photography language almost begin with both keywords: one is relationship between photography reality and actual reality, and the other is the relationship between the moment of photography and the nature of the event. Photography has just established its own language vocabulary system which is beyond satisfaction immediately. From the 1970s onwards, photographic aesthetics has fully begun the discussion of the traditional photography language. The question first begins with the most sensitive question - the reality of the so-called photography.

In fact, the history in which human questioned the so-called reality of photography can be dated back to a period of less than 20 years after the

invention of photography - that was almost the infancy of photography, and is a long time before the modern photography language was established. The reality of photography originally relies on its nature; that is, photography is a purely objective reproduction subject to the subjective control of people. Photographers in early time "modified" the photo with coloring of the black-and-white photo. We still can buy the small portrait of Daguerre with abrupt blush on both faces of the era on Ebay. If this is only the "modification" of the image - as the early photography is limited to creation of only black-and-white images, the intention of the photographer is to "make the photo closer to the real"- what follows soon is the modification with direct contact with the nature, say the original "post-processing" technology. The masterpieces of both Oscar Gustave Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson - *The Two Ways of Life* (1857) [*1.1] and *Fading Away* (1858) [*1.2] - were photomontage.

The first crisis of photographic reality as a result of photomontage occurred in 1869 when photographer William H. Mumler was charged with making a false "spirit photographs" by synthetic means. There were some translucent characters in Muller's spirit photographs. He claimed that there was no other person in the room when taking the photos. Those were the souls of his dead relatives. Mumler was not charged until someone found that one of the "spirits" that appeared several times in the picture was a neighbor of Muller, and that he was still alive. Several professional photographers were invited to identify the synthetic techniques used in those photographs. The three-week hearing in New York set off a wave of questioning the reality of photography. A report from the then New York World came up with a question that: "Since then, who can believe in photography accuracy?" When we learned that we saw a lot of post-processing in the photo, how could we reshape the trust in photography? Mia Fineman, curator of the photography department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York gave his reply that we can only believe in photographs of photographers who can be trusted. The reality of photography has nothing to do with photography itself. It relies on the reputation of the man who uses this tool. Alan Trachtenberg, a cultural historian, says, "Traditionally, the concept that photography is surely reliable is not an obvious truth, but a belief that is an irrational confidence in the myth."^[6]

At this point, the establishment and the development of photography language struggled and walked on a contradictory road. On the one hand, the "reality" is theoretically established as an important core and foundation of language aesthetics; on the other hand we all know it is unreliable, and in fact there is no other way out. An example touches such struggle: Lewis W. Hine, known for documentary photography, also made photographs in such way. Hine has been dedicated to the work and living conditions of child labor in such way that the government was pushed to implement the act on the protection of the child labor. His photographs revealed the cruel living conditions of child labor with the most direct portraits. However, after his death, people found the photomontage produced in 1910 when tidying up his files. He did not leave any textual descriptions of such photographs. We can only guess that Hine showed the general characteristics of the child labor with such synthesis: stunted body, and maturity inconsistent with the age, burnout and fatigue on face. In 1938 Hine said, "All along, I had to be doubly sure that my phone-data was 100% pure-no retouching or fakery of any kind ."[7] Perhaps it is for this reason that Hine has not published those photos till death.

Compared to the self-discipline of Hine, the reaction of photography in the art field was not so polite. The reality loopholes in the language of photography are immediately deemed as a tool for the expression of ideas upon occurrence. In 1924, André Breton published the famous Manifesto of Surrealism[8], in which he said that the seemingly the contradictory dream and reality are integrated and turn to a new reality that is surrealism. Surrealism originates from literature, but its influence spreads to various fields of art. Photography, as a new artistic means, plays a small but important role in the surrealist movement. Many photographers of surrealism photographs do not position themselves as photographers, such as Man Ray, Herbert Bayer, and so on. For the surrealists, they simply use the exact reproduction of photography to create a fantasy of the combination of dreams and reality, which is unmatched by other artistic means. In 1945 an exhibition of Man Ray at the Julien Levy Gallery in New York, and at the catalogue Man Ray wrote: 'Last Object or Object of destruction. It is still my earnest desire, some day while the eye is ticking away during a conversation, to lift my hammer and with one well-aimed blow completely demolish the metronome' (Schwarz, p.206).[9]

Since the 1970s, the application of the reality of the language of photography in the art circle has been fully accepted by literary criticism and entered to the mainstream art vision. One of the representatives of I refer to is Jeff Wall. As a representative of the "Vancouver School", Jeff Wall "looted" the traditional photography. As early as 1978, he exhibited *The Destroyed Room* in its window in Nova Gallery, Vancouver (Canada) [*2]; at first glance, it looked like the work of installation art at the first sight, in the middle of which was a split mattress; next to the mattress were the chest drawers all pulled open. On the chest lied a statue of a lady, with hands lifting her skirt. On the ground were filled with a variety of dresses, scarves, jewelry and high heels and other items. Careful viewers will find that, in fact, this is a light box made of photographic works: the light radiated to the back of the photo, and the color effect is very bright and full. The work is not only considered the first mature works of Wall but also has been recognized as a photograph of important historical significance in the world history of photography. He arranged a lot of detail in the picture, making his work too "real" and giving a sense of carefully simulated crime scene. Every time Wall takes a picture, he would be very careful in setting and lighting adjustment, and simulates the effect inadvertently captured in his works, which Wall called "near-documentary" photography.

After 1991, given the renewal of photographic equipment, he began to make images with a panoramic effect with the help of digital photography technology. He reproduced the masterpiece in the history of art with photography. In 1993, Wall transformed a piece of woodprint made by Katsushika Hokusai – a Japanese painter of ukiyoe – into a large work titled *A Sudden Gust of Wind* (after Hokusai) [*3]. The photo was taken in the outskirts of Vancouver where an actor acted out the postures of different characters in a sudden gust of wind. The work at first glance looks like a moment of capture actually edited and compose with more than 100 photos, making it more a movie stills. After the 20th century, Wall's creative technique was closer to the filming; that is the posing that has remained popular to date. In 2004, he spent a long time in Vancouver to find an apartment in line with this condition, and rent it; after repeated interviews, he picked an ideal young woman, get her to live in the room, and allowed her to decorate the room as she preferred, during which he observed the light effect of the room and its window in different seasons

and times, and discussed with the woman the effect he wanted to photograph. Finally, he asked the woman to repeatedly rehearse the action he required in the room, until she was completely in character. It took nearly two weeks to take the photo. The final piece was a scenery photo taken by the window alone in the evening when the lights just lit up, combined with the picture in which the woman was doing housework in the room where one of her friends was reading a magazine, titled View from the Apartment.^[*4] Interestingly, he preferred to call himself "Painter of Modern Life" when compared to photographer.

Upon occurrence of the digital processing technology, the foundation is more in trouble. A number of social problems grow, some of which have reached the ethical and moral level. Photoshop and a series of image processing software digitalize only the darkroom technique in the film (analog) era of darkroom technology in certain features. Of course, some software features in the film era cannot be achieved. In October 2012, the Metropolitan Museum of Art held a photo exhibition called Faking it: Manipulated Photography before Photoshop. As the name implies, all the photographs shown here are modified and manipulated to some extent. Concurrently, what is held in its opposite gallery was a photo exhibition called After Photoshop: Manipulated Photography in the Digital Age. It should be noted that the sponsor of "Faking it" exhibition is Adobe who invented the Photoshop software. It was the first time that they sponsored a large exhibition in the museum. "Adobe has been accused of breaking the reality of photography since more than 20 years upon release of Photoshop in 1990," said in Adobe's exhibition presentation^[10]. The reason why they are interested in the exhibition is to take this opportunity to show the people that before the birth of Photoshop, modification of the photo has been widely used in various photograph areas such as news, politics, advertising, business, art, etc. However, the modification was achieved in the darkroom.

The reality of photography has been questioned since its birth. The emergence of Photoshop was once again bringing the issue to the public. All such issues were moved from the darkroom to the bright room. If there is something the most important in the Faking it and After Photoshop exhibitions, I think it is the fact that it breaks through the history of modification of photos, by which people see that the reality was neither

established nor destroyed in the digital age. The history of photography is never a simple history of art, nor a pure history of technology. A variety of sociologic, anthropologic, psychological factors interspersed among them. In the previous understanding, it seemed that Photoshop was a singularity in a curve to the people, cutting off the history before and after it. However, we learn from the "Faking it" exhibition that the development of history has always been continuous. When looking back, we can always find it inextricably linked with the present.

Speaking of the theoretical research of the reality of photography, of course, what cannot be ignored is Susan Sontag we know very well. She is concerned with the meaning of "real" in the cultural dimension. Sontag's criticism on photography can be grasped from three dimensions: the criticism on the nature of photography, on the relationship between the photographer and the subject, and on the relationship between the viewer and the photographer. What is contained in all the directions is not limited to the reality, but takes the reality as the base and the point where it starts. Reality and fraudulence go in parallel. The photo has the right to tamper with the world with one of our most trusted mechanisms. The ability of images to cut the reality e cuts the reality increasingly grows. Photography has become an important tool for era simplification. It turns the experience into a picture and thinking into a picture talk. Between the image and the real, Susan Sontag described the existence of the gap between them.

Physically and technically, the impression of the image itself is the presence, the evidence of the "then existence". However, the fact is that the picture is not only an evidence of the existence of things, but also an evidence of the things a person "sees with eyes"; it not only records the world but also is the subjective choice and evaluation of such person over the world. There is no truth except in the things. The image has nothing to do with the thing itself, but we always equate it with the thing. The photographic appearance itself is accompanied by realism and holds high the banner of exposing the false and fighting against ignorance, attempting to reveal the living world to the people. In reality, however, it results in the confusion between images and life and between life and image. In Sontag's view, the history of photography more approaches to Dickens's prediction of our time in the beginning of his novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the

age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”^[11]

Defining the real, we again return to another important part of the language of photography: moment. Compared to the real, instantaneous problems are easy to solve. Given the fact that readers of the present paper should have deep understanding of the history of photography, I would like to skip a lot, and directly start from analysis of the theory of The Decisive Moment theory of Bresson. In 1952, Bresson published a collection of his photographs named "the Decisive Moment". In its introduction, it showed that he was a photographer highly calm and full of rational spirit. What is the most praised is the text, "real life occurring in every event has a decisive moment. When this moment comes, the real environment elements will constitute the most meaningful geometry, and this form is also the best way to show the complete appearance of things, and sometimes this form is fleeting. For these, when all the elements of the movement are in equilibrium, the photographer must capture this moment.”^[12]

An analysis of the decisive moment is due to the fact that it essentially covers most of the contents on the moment in the so-called "traditional photography language", and pushes the same to a new height of the era in the 1960s. However, what we should note is that in the image ruled under the concept of decisive moment, what impresses the public most is the charming visual elegance shown in the picture other than the theory. In other words, the decisive moment will always look beautiful, whether the literal meaning or what is reflected in the picture. Bresson firmly convinced us that the decisive moment was actually a visual alchemy of life. The genuine real life is an unrefined ore. The photographer is the alchemist. The camera held in his hands is the magic weapon that turns the stone into gold.

However, the most wonderful thing happened. The decisive moment established a new height of the traditional photography language. Moreover, given the excessive metaphysical perfection it has, such perfection will surely strengthen sharp contrast between the photography and the reality. It is thus to remind people of reviewing the relationship between photography and reality. The theory of decisive moment theory pushes itself into the trap of logical contradictions under the topic that photography reflects reality. With a contrast to the film, it will be easily found that in the perspective of possession of the time process, photography is only a "point" and takes the time profile as its ontology image. The film, however, is the time extension of the development process of the event itself with the "linear" timeline as the ontology. If the whole process of reality is the essence of the existence of all real things, the state of the existence of anything in a moment has been out of its connection with its essence.

The history of photography can be summarized as a struggle between two different pressing needs: one is beautifying, the other is telling the truth. Given the identity of photography as both the media and the art, that photography is a true and perfect reproduction of the real world is a suitable and ideal definition for it. When the reality of the photograph is questioned, it more lies in that it has the identity of the media that bears the responsibility of disseminating the facts other than in its identity as pure art. Faithfulness, also showing the real reduction function of media photography, emphasizes the hardness and dependability of technology, while perfection is a metaphor of the art or artistically, the psychological pleasure as a result of visual fit. However, in the secular understanding, its meaning is often simplified as "beautifying". Further, in countless truth-seeking photography, the visual perfection has become habitual. The subconsciousness deeply buried in heart without the need to be reminded makes photography as a medium more and more perfect in visual sense with the frames, even if it is true to the documentary field where photography is.

In other words, a still picture will always fall into the dilemma of a logical paradox. The photo will not be necessarily related to the real things reflected on its surface. It is no longer the real thing itself; instead, it is only a visual symbol of the real thing. It is a new real thing created by the

photographer that takes the opportunity of the existence state of real thing and the same as the basic material and with photograph as the medium. For this reason, the essence of a photo is that it is unique in its style and turn to a visual reality that exists parallel to the real world we are familiar with. The content of such visual reality represents a balanced relationship between visual components. This relationship is hidden in the reality and fleeting. It is with the photographer's discovery and capture that it is possible to be ultimately achieved in an image on the two-dimensional plane and become what can see and we can say. A still photo that captures the peak of thing movement of has become a symbol of the existence of things, and is no longer the reality of the existence of things. Only such images can be regarded as a real photography. We also often see the fact that Bresson never interferes with the object when taking a photograph as a respect for reality. Actually, he is not respecting the reality for how things approach us with photographs but for the sense of order deep in the reality and attempting to show such sense of order in still photos.

“I’m not responsible for my photographs. Photography is not documentary,” he said in the interview of “American Photo” in the October 1977.” but intuition, a poetic experience. It's drowning yourself, dissolving yourself, and then sniff, sniff, sniff being sensitive to coincidence. You can't go looking for it; you can't want it, or you want get it. First you must lose your self. Then it happens.”^[13]. Even when asked about the impact of surrealism on him, he also believed that there was too much literature and narrative in surrealism art, but he had no interest in expressing a certain fact and personal mood in photography. In his view, the function of photography is only limited to the image reproduction of the reality and to the visual description of the real events; then, the photography still remains at the position enslaved by the reality. Photography has not yet gained independence. The photography will really become a self-being and self-making art only when it is beyond the expression of reality and turns to a new real thing.

At this point, the theory of decisive moment defines the contradictory relationship between photography and reality thoroughly; that is, even if photography does come from reality, it must be independent of reality. If the photography is identical to the reality, it will not be a real art. What photography will do and what photography did are to establish a visual

reality that is parallel to the reality, regardless of the documentary or its artistry. Only when being at this step will photography be independent. If the so-called "traditional photography" does exist, the traditional photography has been unconsciously in the construction of this position, as a result of which either the makers or the audiences of the image come up with much hesitation that doubts and deludes the future. However, the dawn of the digital technology era frees all the twisting situations. It is therefore that the digital technology not only does not collapse the photographic documentary; instead, it repeatedly imposes the same on our lives. It is only that it bears down menacingly and looks a bit scary.

Chapter IV

Why Do We Tamper with Photos?-The Dishonesty of Photography

After clarifying the trust mechanism for photos, we again review the reality. Since the origin of photos, humans have begun to use them as a substitute for the real world. Images replace the reality and even replace the experience. After that, human makes images, reads images, consumes images, and relies on images. The world is composed of "reality" and "another reality comprising the image", and is difficult to distinguish. Taking pictures as a proof of experience has also become a new way of knowing the world. It changed our way of thinking and thus changed our lives. - We use the camera to find and build life in order to gain the feeling of occupying life. Such fast-food like experience is the methodology humans eagerly seek after entering into the consumerism age and that fits them and attempts to overcome their own anxiety. However, for another tampering, it has been a matter of fact that Susan Sontag was not required mentioning; that is, someone directly tamper with the reality of the image itself. In other words, the photo itself can tamper with the world, and after that, we can also directly tamper with the photo in a simple and rough manner. Unapologetically, the history of the photography's being tampered with is almost as long as the history of photography.

Anyway, however, there is no doubt that - the image is artificial, and its essence is materialized; that is, it can be viewed, be described and more be modified. The image not only comes from our observation of the object, but also becomes projection of the object. As a new objective "thing", it immediately becomes the object to be viewed, and joins the team of objects we observe, making it a new part of the target group. This is not only derived from the theoretical derivation. Also, the history is also a witness to

it. Since the date of its birth, the image has almost immediately opened the posture of the "thing", being made, viewed, known, talked about and consumed. There are numerous ways with which man describes the objective. Image is just among them. We think it "somewhat different from the past" only due to the unique way in which the image describes the object.

It is true that, at the level of the description of the object, painting, sculpture, literature, drama, music and various ways expand the experience of human reception of an objective entity essentially through description. The course when experience is expanded certainly contains a degree of overlapping and replacing. Photography causes our worries not because of its depth but its breadth. In other words, humans can make the machine that takes a photo, and develop it as a mode of operation for everyone in short time. However, it is impossible to invent a machine that makes everyone a painter, a sculptor, a writer, a dramatist and a musician in the same mode. Of course, I am very clear that in the context of the development of photography aesthetics, such machine that takes images has indeed had photography criticized at an early stage and delayed the timeline based on which photography turned into art. Despite the twists and turns, photography eventually became art. Today, the doubt whether photography is art can no longer be found in a variety of theories. It also means that no one questions that the image is also a way of describing the object, just like other means listed above. They differ in the means other than the essence.

Compared to the replacement of the "reality" by the "photo", it is much easier to understand the artificial tampering with the photo. The behavior runs through the history of photography. When it comes to this, whether we first think of the famous examples of photograph faking in the history; all of them are almost from the shameless government, and the media or individuals seeking quick success, chasing fame and fortune. Such scandals are numerous, whether it is the infamous Stalin government or the Maoist government, and whether it is the American media known as the freedom of democracy and freedom. However, however angry people are after "being cheated", all these seem to be easy to understand. Based on the "honest" way in which photography describes the world, people believe that photography has the recording function. When the camera is aligned

with human social life, the events described in the photo can carry and express the publisher's opinion, and motivation for the fact the photo is being modified is immediately found. Politics, a form of social formation human beings cannot avoid, starves for the propaganda means of photography that can be manipulated but always be inexplicably trusted by most people (trust at least in a period). Such a means quickly matures in just one hundred years, but no one has thought that it could be used, which is puzzling, is not it?

Given such cases in a large number, the present paper will not cite specific examples, nor give too much statement. What I want to say is further facts. When people find that the pictures have been tampered with, they have been taken in, and trust is betrayed. After that, what people are angry with is whether "you actually dare to lie to me", or "photos actually will lie". Obviously, the latter anger certainly occurred, but only in the beginning of photography, and only maintained for a short period of time. People immediately understand that photos can be faked so long as the fake makers are skillful. For this reason, in the numerous subsequent photo fake events, people's anger has a source from the former. Then, fake making way of the photo lost the uniqueness. That is, if someone deceives you with a photo, there is nothing essentially different, as if he deceives you with language or any other means. Contradictory elements are the same - trust vs cheated. Perhaps the only thing that makes you extra rage is that you are too trusting in the picture. However, as you have stated before, that's why he used such means.

When we digest the particularity of the means, you will soon find another interesting question. When people are angry at the false photo, "to fake is shameful", whether it is essentially a moral requirement, whether or not the same criteria should be applied to others and oneself. Just like when we condemn the crime, we must be clear that this is not only a premise at the moral level but also a single standard that can be implemented. Otherwise, if double standards are executed, we may get to the negative side of the problem - just as the famous saying for China's criticism on official corruption in the past 10 years, "the only reason why almost all the people combat against corruption is that they cannot be those officials".

There is a real joke spreading on a mobile social networking platform – WeChat (similar to Face Book) in China that: a girl angrily cursed her friend who posted her picture in the moments without being beautified. "I did not mean to do that, it was just negligence," the friend argued. Then, to prove it, but also to express the deepest apology and to make it up, the friend later posted on the WeChat her unmodified photo. If you did not understand this joke, please let me further show what these so-called "modify and beautify software" on earth can do. A typical one among them is called "Meitu Xiu Xiu". It has at least the following basic functions: beautify your skin, make you whiter; remove all spots and traces from your face; make your eyes look bigger; change your facial form, make your face thinner, and capable to modify your mandible alone, so that the cheek looks smooth; and, make your chin look shaper (an aesthetic standard popular in Asia).[*5]

If you have not been able to understand how powerful this software is, a prank picture widely spreading online can immediately explain it - someone took a picture of a potato, and it became "pretty" after treatment by software. These features almost do not require that you need to acquire any skills; it is completely intelligent and fool-like operation. If you take a picture of yourself with your mobile phone, and import the same to the software, you can complete all modifications above that sound complex within one minute. For a full- body picture, the software of course enables you to achieve the following: make your breast bigger, waist thinner and buttocks raised; make you slimmer as a whole, higher head-body ratio, and; longer legs achieved separately. The extent to which such software is popular and used has reached a surprising level. I have not done a specific data survey, but the mobile social platform has been flooded with such photos of the beauty modified with Meitu Xiu Xiu in a great number. That "a net user was disappointed by the first date" is frequently read in the box news. The term "disappointed" has been a very mild word. More accurately, the description should be "shocked".

The problem seems to be so understood that: whether it is a woman or a man, not to mention those young girls or boys, they are always trying to make them more alluring to the opposite sex - assuming that everyone has such a desire, "I hope I look more beautiful (handsome) than the actual appearance", we have to say that there is nothing wrong in such wish, and

it is even very simple. It should be compared to the fact that how such wish was reached by portrait photographers half a century ago. At that time people would make an appointment with the photographer before taking photos. They would take good rest a day in advance so that they were full of energy and aglow. The make-up artist would be careful in make-up, and carefully modify the portion of our face that is less desirable. For example, our eyes will be made bigger, nose taller (for most Asian faces) and lip fuller. The photographer would take full advantage of his skills and highlight the merits by using the light while covering the defects. Finally, the whole picture looked solemn and beautiful, and the end result should be: "it looks much better than who I am."

There are stars that appear on the magazine cover. There is no one but knows their beautiful faces. Although we all know that their beauty contains a lot of "modified" ingredients because an example proves it - when our friend said he or she saw...in the parking lot yesterday, we would ask, "Really, what did she look like?" If the friend said, "Oh, my God, she looks beautiful as on the magazine," it would be almost the highest praise for her beauty (although it is rarely the case). Yes, we know that the way she shows to the public will not be the same as the real life, but usually, passing through the magazine booth, or talking about her name, what comes out of my mind is that face, the modified face, as if it were her true look. We still actively ignore the fact that their beauty is actually modified.

In China, a commercial television station has a blind dating program whose rule is that a man faces 24 ladies, and shows himself and understand the ladies through short videos. If lucky, there will be more than one woman willing to date with him. He finally can choose to start a relationship with one of the ladies. After the ladies select the man, the right will go to the man. When it is the turn of the man to make the final choice, the man has the right to see the "photos without makeup" of three ladies, which means the way they live in their true look. This is a wonderful, intimate, and slightly ironic right, because every lady wears heavy makeup. Although the real person just stands in front, you still do not know their "real" look, and must use another mechanism to know what the real look is.

In Korea, a simple make-up is not enough to meet nitpick of women's for their faces. Almost every woman is eager to undergo a plastic surgery to get

permanently beautified face. Korea's beauty industry has become a very mature industry with the world-renowned beauty salons across the country, attracting countless people to permanently change their faces through the plastic surgery. After an American plastic surgeon Ralph Millard performed the first double eyelid surgery in the South Korea in 1954, it is shown in the report of International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS) cited by Korea Healthcare Medical Research Institute (NECA) that one out of five Korean women has taken the plastic surgery. However, the proportion of plastic surgery taken by American women is one twentieths. There are two jokes describing Korea's increasingly crazy plastic surgery situation. One is: in the South Korea, a wanted poster of a beautiful woman can only describe her behavioral characteristics with language, and the photo is completely invalid, because the photo is useless. The other one is: if you want to know the true look of a young couple, it will be invalid to have a look at the couple's faces; instead, you may have a look at their child.

By enumerating these examples, I would like to mention the fact that photography can be used by politics, even if only for each individual. If the essence of the photo is that it conveys the information by visual means, whether beautifying and modifying the information (faking) is intrinsic in human and reasonably demanded. As the language shows, since the date of emergence of language, the lie is born along with the language. The motivation of lying is complex to the language itself and cannot be fully described. It is almost entirely an illusion to think that the previous photography is not good at lying and the anger of the public for the fake photo sources from the constraint standard at the social morality level. Because it is simply a result of technical limitation; the technology limits the quantity of difference which results in quantitative illusion. In the past technology environment, ordinary people could only achieve taking a photo with "one-click" but could not achieve tampering with the image with "one-click". However, once the technology emancipated the ability, just like Pandora's Box had been opened, a variety of desire and demand was doubly released. If we are in the moment we are faking our own photos every day, and doubt the photos of others we see every day, why do we be angry with a fake news photo, whether emotionally or logically? Why do we believe the joys and the sorrows that the so-called "documentary photography" shows us?

Whether all these are only bound to the moral obligation, or maintained with our trust in consuming the so-called "traditional image", the important premise must be mentioned again: photography was born for just 180 years. Compared to painting closest to it, the history of photography is as young as the infant. At the same time, photography seems "very contemporary" at each moment along her way. She is the most keen to accept the changes of the times, and sometimes even contribute and lead these changes. For this reason, in present days when the photos can be tampered with, we plainly should not discuss that "photos should not be modified", which needs no more discussions because millions of photos have been tampered with every day. If one thing is being performed to such a wide degree, we must face it, find the formation mechanism behind the phenomenon, and develop effective and new response rules as soon as possible.

Chapter V

New Features Presented by Photography Grammar in We Media Age

Fred Ritchin said in his "After Photography": "As we know, photography is a kind of end, but also an extension and has an evolving medium hidden inside of it." ^[14]Indeed, photography outweighs other means of visual expression in terms of its evolution speed at the media characteristic level. Also, photography is highly dependent on technology evolution. The photography language grammar evolves with the evolving technology. Do you remember when the argument over the moment in photography started? Before the better photographic material was found, there was no the term moment in the original state of photography. New features will show only when all the conditions are met.

The innate "reproducibility" of photography is deeply engraved in its own language as a gene. On this account, the British still believe that photography is what they invented because in their view, only the "film - copy - widespread" mode is the real photography mode. The "unique type" image of Daguerre is nothing more than a derivative of the painting. The British enumerated a number of important events in the history of photography, including William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877), who owned the first film for man early in 1834. The British astronomer Sir John Herschel first introduced the term "Photography" in 1839. The terms "Negative", "Positive", "Snapshot", etc., were also first introduced by him.

The British believe that Talbot's Calotype process has not only the "negative - photograph" as the real photography method, but also civilian foundation with which it was born and that enables photography to be civilianized rapidly due to the lowly priced Calotype process. As for the fact that the original silver salt negative provides blurred images, it is a

technique that can be quickly improved. In fact, Frederick Scott Archer's wet plate collodion process also improved the same quickly in 1851. In contrast, Daguerreotype seems to be exquisite. In reality, however, it has come to a dead end since its birth. It indeed is not equal to the fame of "the origin of photography".

Fortunately, photography has gone back to "right way" in the subsequent history of photography. It is well known that photography is one of the most suitable forms of mechanical reproduction in all forms of art. Photographs and other forms of images derived from it are present in almost the most saturated way in modern society, and even the printing techniques (or other technologies) for reproducing photos are extended to the main applications for photography. At the communication level, the replicas of the photographs are basically of the quality of the original; therefore, for the photography, a large number of scattered copies are distributed in each and every corner just like the original. In *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, as the title implies, Benjamin put forward the idea of "Aura". He put aura in such a manner that: this is a kind of characteristics that only the original artwork has; due to the oneness of the original, works is left with the reality of the artist's creation and its location in a particular space, making the original be with a unique value. In addition to correlation to reality, originality and historical origin, the concept of "original" is basically related to the interaction among art institutions (such as art galleries, art museums, etc.), art historians and artistic creators. Although works of art are essentially replicable (such as copying in painting), the reproduction of works of art by mechanical means symbolizes the beginning of another new era. Benjamin argues that the uniqueness and sense of reality of the original will be diminished with the circulation of a large number of replicas, under which the disappearance of the "aura" and the withdrawal of the original from the historical background are unavoidable.^[15]

However, photography alone with the unique negative - positive system gets the photo away from "aura" or can be independent of such aura. Replicas will not make existing "stab" in the photo and the whole "aura" that confers vitality upon the photo disappear. The photo essentially has nothing to do with the original. Each replica can (may) present a single and unique presence of the subject. The "once existed" nature of the subject

is not affected even after repeatedly copied. The most original photo has proven that the "once existed" of the subject. Subsequent replica proves the reality of the original. In such repetitive process, even if the number of copies is so big that the image quality is deteriorated, "aura" in a copy of the photo will be continued provided that the viewer is willing to believe that the photo is real (which is why the newspaper always presents some irrelevant news photos).

In fact, we can further interpret Benjamin's aura concept which distinguishes two epochs: the end of the era of religious values, and the beginning of the era of political dominance. Mechanical reproduction is just a catalyst. The image produced by the photography just fit all the requirements. It does not come from the religious atmosphere, nor does it assume sacredness and uniqueness. It is born with the nature of revolutionary, democratic and the times. It can be said that photography as a new specimen can be an evidence to the existence of aura and is also not subject to aura. We can say that each photo retains aura, and at the same time it is very clear, as Benjamin predicted, the new era is an "aura gone" era.

Interestingly, mechanically reproduced photos can keep "aura", but it does not have the uniqueness of other original artwork. Photography as a work of art in this era has been out of the pure spirit level and entered into the market. The artwork in the real world can be priced just like all the goods available in the market. Therefore, when the photographic preserves the value of "aura" at the spiritual level, it does not have the rarity as a result of the single existence at the material level. The commercial value of photographic works is reduced as it is the one and only even it possesses the artistic value. When the photographic works is to compete in the art market, the "stab" and "research point" referred to by Barthes is no longer the focus to be considered. However, Benjamin believed that the disappearing "aura" in the photography should be a way the photographic works uses to improve the "artistic attribute". It will be easy for photographic works to be the subject sought by collectors in the art market while it undoubtedly leaves the author's "handwriting" and create the rarity that cannot be reproduced. Limiting the reproducibility of photographic works becomes one of the ways in which the photography remains in the

art market. Limited the number of photos, addition of a unique number to the photo and even the author's signature can achieve the purpose.

After all, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* was published in 1935. In his book, he clearly pointed out the meaning of "mechanical reproduction" was to turn culture from "audible" (oral culture), "readable" (print culture) to "vision" (copy culture). Considering the age, we cannot but exclaim over Benjamin's foresight. Roland Barthes also highly praised that the "photography is crazy" and predicted that if great efforts were made to suppress the crazy photography, there were only two means: the first is to turn the photography into art, and; the second is to popularize photography, so that photography is "gregarious" and photography is made ordinary. These great prophets foresaw the face of the new world before the digital established a new world.

The previous sections discussed that the basic elements of the language of traditional photography was documentary and the ability to capture the moment. Then, in the image-based living context in the new era, the uniqueness based on the language of traditional photography - "reality" is rapidly being disintegrated. The convenience in image acquisition, high reproducibility and high communicability, as a set that is difficult to be defined but can be perceived, more and more and quietly turn to a new language feature that is not obvious but already exists. Now who will have doubt on the speed at which a picture is made and spread? In the technology created public media platform, its speed has been faster than that of language and text. The digital revolution is intertwined with its social thought as the background. It constructs an unprecedented virtual and realistic living space based on rapid manufacturing and rapid modification of the image.

In 1990, George H. W. Bush started the Gulf War. The world's TV screens continued to play the US Air Force's "laser-guided bomb" silently and accurately hitting the ground target, just like the virtual game "virtual bomb" in the virtual game. The close combat of traditional warfare in Robert Capa style is no longer in existence. What is shown to us is the first high-tech-oriented "virtual war", a "war that exists only on television". It is in the same year that Adobe Photoshop software was officially available. It is almost able to seamlessly synthesize and modify any photo and the most

common tool for digital photography post-processing to which everyone has an easy access so as to create imaginative "virtual reality".

On the 11th day of September, 2001, humans witnessed the computer-designed scenes in Hollywood movies imitated by terrorists', where aircrafts were used as weapons to crash the World Trade Center in New York. In 2004, the photos captured by US soldiers with the digital camera and in which Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib prison were abused were circulated on the Internet, exposing the atrocities of some US soldiers. A photo in which the Iraqi prisoners wore black hat and stood on the box with hands on power became the most symbolic picture of the Iraq War. Amateur photographer's photo would also be a classic as long as it was newsworthy and repeatedly circulated. In the same year, Flickr site supporting uploading, storing and circulation of a great number of photos without editing or screening came into view. As of September 2010, the site has been known for its possession of more than 5 billion photos, and in every minute and second there are still people uploading photos to the site.

Thomas L. Friedman published *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* in 2005, where he believed that with the impacts of the factors such as end of the Cold War, personal computers and globalization, etc., the differences among the countries over the world were shrinking and were "flattening", and all of them were at the same starting line. In 2006, Noah Kalina, a graduate from the School of Visual Arts, made the self-portraits he captured in each day from January 11, 2000 to 2006 into a video accompanied by music and entitled *Every Day*, and uploaded the same to YouTube. The click-through rate (CTR) was quickly over ten thousand, getting him instant fame. As of June 2011, the video's CTR has been approaching 20 million person-clicks, proving that the virtual space of the Internet has turned the world into the largest exhibition hall.^[*6] In the same year, Google purchased YouTube for \$ 1.65 billion. Later, the site turned to an important tool for US presidential campaign.

Digital technology and the Internet also enable the Internet users in the world to live in the "virtual community" on the computer screen plane. When the action film star Schwarzenegger could be elected in power,

when farmers knew how to use of digital technology deception; when people spent a lot of time on living in the network "virtual space", the boundary between Hollywood movies, video games, advertising and real life will become more and more blurred, and the virtual nature of digital technology is just suitable for reflecting this virtual world. The previous concept of "taking pictures" still exists, but it is as easy as talking. For most people, the real convenience of digitalization is zero-cost image "modification". This process could almost be realized simultaneously with taking pictures by using the various dazzling software. In the era of digitalization, the pixel is completely genetically encoded. The uncoded coding has become history, while coding becomes normal and inevitable.

Chapter VI

Deconstruction of the Media Authority in We Media Age

It should be like this if the modern media form is classified by the order of the emergence: 1. newspaper publications should be the first media; 2. the radio should be the second media; 3. the TV should be the third media; 4. the Internet should be known as the fourth media; 5. the mobile network should be the fifth media, of which 4 and 5 fall into the new media category. In terms of current influence, the present of the radio is the tomorrow of TV. In terms of the influence, television is gradually descending to the "second media", while the Internet is gradually ascending to the "first media."

The concept of "We Media" sources from Dan Gillnor, Silicon Valley's most famous IT columnist. He raised the "Journalism 3.0" idea in his blog on September 28, 2001. In such an idea, Journalism 1.0 is the traditional media or the Old media, Journalism 2.0 is the New media, and Journalism 3.0 is the "We media" in which the blog is the trend. In March 2002, he further called his "Journalism 3.0" the "Journalism's Next Wave". At the end of 2002, he formally proposed the concept of "We Media". He wrote an article entitled News for the Next Generation: Here Comes "We Media" on the famous journalism journal Columbia Journalism Review published in January 2003, where he pointed out that many skilled players were too impatient to wait but naturally involved in the journalism dialogue as a result of the surging new things on the Internet such as network discussion area, blog, etc., making them an important and influential link in the entire journalism communication process. "We Media" will be the mainstream of the future media.

In July 2003, the media center of the American Press Institute published a study report for "We Media" of more than sixty pages jointly written by Shayne Bowman and Chris Wiley, stating that "We Media is a way to start to understand how the general public provides and shares the fact and the news of their own after the general public is connected to the global knowledge system through digital technology consolidation." The definition stresses that the communication topic of we media is the "general public", the communication content of we media is "the fact of their own and the news of their own" of the general public, and the communication means or technical conditions of we media is "digital technology consolidation and connected to the global knowledge system". In the West, the concept of we media was then replaced by citizen Journalism. We media everyone has been saying is actually a disguised form of citizen media.

Commerce society and Consumer Society is the key part to build the authoritative of Media. Too single values (money values) to help people break the moral and ethical restrictions

The essence of business is the exchange, optimization and distribution of materials. After industrialization, the role of business becomes more and more evident as a result of high concentration of production capacity. The formation of a commercial society and a consumer society has played a key role in establishing the authority of the media. Too simple values (money values) help people break through moral and ethical restrictions. After World War II, Western capitalism ushered in a golden age. From 1945 to 1973, the economy continued to develop at a high speed. The material life was greatly enriched. The rise of mass media and the rise of popular culture, especially the rise of youth culture in the 1960s declared that the Western capitalist society entered the commodity society at high-speed. A set of data showed the economic development of such period: the US gained the GDP of 355.2 billion US dollars in 1945 and 907.4 billion US dollars in 1940; owned 27.5 million cars in 1940 and 90 million cars in 1970; had 7,000 TV sets in 1940 and 90 million TV sets in 1971; and, had 10 TV stations in 1946 and 673 TV stations in 1969.^[16]

Next, the only fate of the highly developed commodity society is high-speed access to consumer society. Michael R. Solomon, a well-known US

scholar, defines commercial society in his *Consumer Behavior* [17] that: the economically developed commercial society is often referred to as consumer society. People living in this society spend a lot of time on consumer activities. Every year, tens of thousands of companies spend hundreds of millions of dollars, trying to influence you, your friends and your family. This attempt is reflected not only in advertising, packaging, promotional activities, shop environment and many other aspects but also in the content of television programs, the products used in films and the books and reading materials received by primary and secondary school students. George Soros once said: "The history of the world economy is a series of illusions and lies. To get wealth, the practice is to recognize its illusion, get into it, and exit from the game before the illusion is known by the public".

In 1970, Jan Baudrillard (1929-2007) published "The Consumer Society" that defines the nature of social form from the special needs theory and beginning with the relationship between people and things in the modern society. In Baudrillard's view, consumption in the contemporary society (the 1970s) has become a core activity. Consumption is not an economic behavior but also a social and cultural behavior. Commodity is not only of economic significance, more importantly, of cultural significance. In addition to value and practical value, what is more important is the symbolic value. The consumption of goods is not simply to meet the individual material needs, but to distinguish between people's social fame and grade. People express and convey certain meaning and information to society by means of consumption, including their status, identity, personality, sentiment, taste, identification, etc. In the consumer activities, people not only consume the goods themselves, but also things outside of consumer products, i.e. a certain sense, mood, grade, sentiment, atmosphere, etc., that they symbolize and represent. They penetrate each other and it is difficult to distinguish. Consumerism as a kind of values and way of life no longer just meets the demand but rather encourages the constant pursuit of the desire beyond satisfaction.

Consumption as a symbol of status distinction is a collective decision rather than a personal decision. Individual consumer functions are chosen in this social logic and express meaning and information by making a choice. This social system forms a stable social code that is circulated

through media which possesses authority and centralization both of which no one can escape from. In the consumer society, people forget the original motivation of consumption; instead, they are controlled by the authority of the media and drowned in the goods. Under the logic of consumer society, the media authority is a myth and GDP is a myth. In the consumer society, culture is secular and popular. The originality of the elite culture gives way to the simulation and reproduction of the mass culture. Popular culture prevails. Media and commerce work to create the symbols of business logic and ideology. People only have the right to passively decode. In Baudrillard's view, the authority of the media is not only built on the form of capital society; at the same time, it actually stood on the opposite of people and was the object we need to resist though he pessimistically believed that people were unable to resist. The stronger the power of the media is, the more the people's way of life will be bound; eventually, it becomes formality.

Art plays a role in clearing up the media authority.

If the media is a product and concept of sociology, it will unavoidably be affected by the evolution of social form. However, the art plays a role in the change of the times and all the related lifestyles in a form that comes from human life and reacts upon life. Modernism Art - Capitalist Industrial Revolution 1874-1960, Postmodernism Art - Capitalism Post Industrial Revolution, two world wars and the end of the Cold War 1913 - 1989, emergence of contemporary art after 1989 - the end of the cold war, the beginning of economic globalization and information, other countries other than the Europe and the United States (the rise of Asia and Africa, Eastern European art revival), if we established the correspondence of the trend of art to capitalism development stage, we may find something in it.

Art is always at the front of life and serves as a forward-looking demonstration. Modern art, postmodern art and even the contemporary art trend played a certain enlightenment role in digesting the authority of the media in the social and political form and the public psychology. As Jean-François Lyotard, a famous contemporary philosopher and postmodernist theorist in France, pointed out that postmodernism was the doubt over the "meta-narration" or "grand narration" that was based on scientific rationality and determined all the differences with a single criterion to

unify all the discourses. He declared that: meta-narration has been out of date, and the social context of meta-narration has been scattered into the postmodern messy words. People no longer believe the great "promoters" such as heroes, saints and authority. Instead, they only believe that the postmodern world is a "mortal" world. Post-modern is a democratic era that makes the art civilian, in which it is not only to make art easy to understand, but also to allow the audience to participate in, deconstruct and resolve the subjectivity of modernism. As a result, it coincides with the statement of Thomas L. Friedman that "the Earth is flat".

In the logical framework of "The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures", Jean Baudrillard is pessimistic and desperate. He wrote in a section "Popular: A Consumer Art?" particularly provided in his book, "The logic of consumption eliminates the traditional lofty status of artistic expression. Strictly speaking, the essence or meaning of an item no longer has a priority for the image, and the two are no longer faithful to each other: Their extensibility coexists in the same logical space, where they also 'act as' symbols. All the art prior to popular is based on some kind of 'deep' world view. However, popular hopes it is homogeneous with the inner order of the sign and with their industrial and serial production, and thus with the characteristics of all the surrounding artifacts as well as the completeness of the extension and the abstract cultural attainment of the new order of things."^[18]

Obviously, the art of consumption here is not simply referred to the fact that the art is consumed by the public or art works becomes a commodity. It is more referred to the fact that how the consumer society makes certain items, daily necessities, daily behavior and even the body the object of art or culture and the symbolic system. The research object of consumer culture may be what we usually call the mass culture, or is the popular culture, media culture, and also the visual culture, etc., in part or in full; these are irrelevant. It is important to highlight the structural principles and symbolic use of the commodity world. As a result, the emergence of the concept of consumer culture represents a Baudrillard's cognitive logic.

However, art, especially postmodern art and contemporary art, goes against the elitism position such as modernism with an emphasis on noumenal self and rational speculation and arrogant attitude. As Jean-François Lyotard, a

famous contemporary philosopher and postmodernist theorist in France, pointed out that postmodernism was the doubt over the "meta-narration" or "grand narration" that was based on scientific rationality and determined all the differences with a single criterion to unify all the discourses. He declared that: meta-narration has been out of date, and the social context of meta-narration has been scattered into the postmodern messy words. People no longer believe the great "promoters" such as heroes, saints and authority. Instead, they only believe that the postmodern world is a "mortal" world.

Therefore, post-modern art not only makes the art civilian but also ideologically creates a democratic era of performance desire in which it is not only to make art easy to understand but also to allow the audience to participate in, deconstruct and resolve the subjectivity of modernism and also find a way to fight against the authority in the fragmented division of the discourse. With the evolution of the media itself, the we media platform provided by the Internet just meets such need. As a result, as all things have two sides, on the one hand, it is more diversified; on the other hand, the attitude of postmodernism towards deconstructing, denying and doubting all the things further promotes the mediocrity, imposing a threat on developing into nihilism.

The access of network media to the field of communication inevitably formed a powerful shock wave on the traditional media. According to a study by Editor & Publisher in June 1999: about one third of those who read online electronic news lost interest in traditional media, television ratings fell by 35 percent, broadcast viewing rates fell by 25% percent, newspaper purchase rates dropped by 18%. According to a survey by Paragon, a research company in the United States, in 1998, 13% of American families unsubscribed the newspaper as a result of the Internet. The aggressive development trend of network communication has brought great impact and pressure to traditional media. Network media with its own dissemination advantages inevitably causes a great shock to the traditional media. The network links the world together. You will know whatever the network media wants you to know. You will have access to it whenever it wants you to know. For the traditional media, however, you can only know whatever the traditional media gives to you. You can only have access to it only at the time when it provides such access. The difference is

obvious that it will greatly weaken the people's dependence on traditional media and get the audience to nestle in the arms of the network.

Chapter VII

Discussion of Key Features of Post-documentary Photography

The definition of the concept of post-documentary does not specify and define a specific new school in the present image ecology but rather conceptually describe the photographic image of the we media era. The description relies mainly on two important parts. 1. Although disputed continuously, the picture itself still has had the documentary in a traditional sense so far. It can be regarded as the inertia continuation of features of the photographic ontology language; 2. Since the media era of language structure of the photography image in we media era has changed, conflict and reconciliation occur between new and old language features in the new context. The key features of the post-documentary photography are:

7 . 1 For the change of the ontology language structure of the image, the post-documentary turns from the original "record" mainstream to the clear "expression" unilateral mainstream. This is not a formal change but a change in concept. This is both a change in the photographer as it is the viewer's cognitive change.

This is an evolution of the concept, the result of which was reflected in both content and form. Looking back to the history of photography, it seems that photography takes a circle. She was anxious to get rid of the hug of painting, and was so determined to "return" a hundred years later. I mean, whether is it possible to view the "documentary" of photography, which is both the key feature of the fact that photography becomes photography and also the limitations of photography? In other words, in the traditional context under which we build the expression of

photography on the basis of the documentary, have the documentary never limited the expression of photography?

"Posing" and any cases that intervene with the subject can be used as an example of resistance to such restrictions. In the art world, almost all authors who use images as a means of expression have experienced such restriction, and almost everyone has chosen to resist. Surrealist painter Salvador Dali [7] has said that his paintings are "hand-painted dream photos" or "snapshot of the mind". In his works, the accurate description of the details of the article and the image has the indexicality similar to photography, and his way of deformation, exaggeration and re-combination of the items also echoes the photography montage approach. Although this style is considered by some critics to be superficial, it has the most sustained impact on the field of photography - especially after the arrival of digital technology.

Herbert Bayer believes that photography shows objects and photography montage expresses. It is the most powerful tool to interpret this era. Let's take *The Lonely Metropolitan* (1932) [8], a masterpiece of Bayer for example. The palm floating in the air is surrounded by the city's architecture, where the artist's eyes appear in the palm of the hand to look at the audience. An irresistible depression and tension fills with them. This is Bayer's psychological understanding for people living in the big city. Man Ray said in 1926, "I want to shoot an idea rather than an object, but I more hope to shoot a dream." [20] For surrealist artists, they merely use the accurate reproducibility of photography to create an illusion combined with dream and reality. This feature is beyond comparison with other artistic means because only the reality attribute of photography occupies the dominant position of the work. With the language features, works will no longer be innovative.

Another well-known practitioner of this style is Jerry Uelsmann, who has been experimenting with photomontage since the 1960s. His photographs have inherited the ultimate tone of the F64 team and also have reached the real seamless photomontage. It can be said that the technique of darkroom photomontage is pushed to the peak. When Photoshop 3.0 was released in 1994, he was also invited to promote the same with his production of

photographs. However, in recent years, each time being interviewed, he almost always has to answer related questions such as how to consider digital technology. In 2007, he answered in an interview with Chinese media, "Than sitting in front of the computer, I'm still willing to stay in the darkroom. The difference is the production process, whether in a traditional darkroom or in a digital stunt; this is not important. What is important is the final work." In addition to the application to show the dream, the means of post-processing is also widely used by artists to explore self-identity, which also has an important relation to Freud's id, ego and superego. Claude Cahun, a French female artist born at the beginning of the twentieth century, appeared in several images in photographs with multiple impressions and photographic montage methods.[*9] Each image had different expressions and different dresses. Sometimes she will appear in a male image. She allows herself to travel between different sexes and identities in order to tap the deepest consciousness of ego.

Artists emerging in the periods after digitalization of darkroom technology till the contemporary are countless, including Andreas Gursky who reproduces and collages the production of oversized scenes to reflect the social phenomena of capitalist socialism, Jeff Wall who uses traditional painting as the index and the contemporary objects as the topic, Penelope Umbrico who integrates photos on the search sites (ebay, flicker, etc.) into a huge picture, Debbie Grossman who turns men in the picture of Farm Security Administration to women in order to build another narration.

If one asks which artist has made outstanding contributions to the means and language of the digital processing technology in the field of photography, I think this person must be Thomas Ruff who has been trying to find where the boundaries of digital technology are. The Jpegs series which he completed in 2007 should be an example. Ruff magnified the various images he had found on the web to a very large size (usually greater than 2m×1m) so that he could clearly see every pixel grid, and the photos so made look like a chess board puzzle. This series of photographs includes many different kinds of pictures: there is pastoral scenery like travel photos, scenes of war and the environment destroyed by mankind as well as those events with significant impact in the global context, such as 911, the tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004, the slaughter in Cambodia, etc. These iconic images are like an encyclopedia of contemporary visual culture, which constitutes the understanding of the world in the Internet age.

However, the means used by Ruff enlarges the size of the picture to a large famous scene which seems like an abstract painting when closely looked at and that can still be clearly identified in a far distance. A small amount of digital information carries a great number of cultural information.

The film is especially true. The image on the screen relies on both realism and imagination. With a comparison between the science fiction films before the 1980s and after the 1980s, we can immediately feel the visual "new language" category created by the digital technology. Compared with the modern science fiction films such as Jurassic Park, Star Wars, The Terminator, etc., the ancient science fiction films such as Frankenstein, Metropolis, A Trip to the Moon, etc., are basically puppet show. Since the Avatar released in 2009, the film has fully entered into the 3D era, starting a new era of visual effects. The machine killer described in The Terminator is an image that has a mechanical skeleton but looks like a man. In the later sequel, the killer is upgraded. It looks more and more like a man. The ability of Hollywood writers to gain an insight into human heart is beyond doubt. For the look of the future artificial intelligence (AI), the compared to alien-like nausea and metal skeleton of the cold, the concept of "no alien to human" more scares me compared to the alien-like nausea and ruthlessness of the metal skeleton.

What will happen if you assume a situation that can express the free imagination of painting and to which the language of photography is added? The clearest lies in the world are logical lies. Each sentence is built on the basis of facts. Digital image exactly achieves the same. Each pixel comes from a real collection but is re-encoded. The devil's ability of details is maximally released. Bresson must use imagination when building its decisive moments. However, his imagination is limited on the one because it must be constrained by reality; on the other hand, even if there is a "offer" beyond its imagination, there is also the question whether actions are alert, i.e. the "catch" and the "miss". In other words, imagination and action are limited at the same time. However, the digital is clearly breaking the bottleneck.

7.2 The integration of image and media has been formed. The purpose of image manufacturing directly points to the communication. The

communication channel should be filled with images, and the timeliness is emphasized, which is the interdependence of such integration.

Watch or read? Let us return to the difference that is increasingly displayed between painting and photography also based on transmission of visual information. We first give a hypothesis that the painting delivers information in the form of viewing. The concept watching has its broad definition. However, in the present paper, it has an important narrow limit that the viewer must visit the site and watch it in person without using any media. Although we can also say that we "read" a picture in certain context, it is only a literal expression. The viewing with the help or through the media is the illusion of viewing although such illusion can sometimes be spurious.

At the birth of photography, the ability of photographic images to accurately describe the objective world dealt the possibility of an important expression of painting a head-on blow. It also directly constitutes the backbone of the main body of photography. Although the painting has also developed a school called "photorealism", the mainstream painting no longer develops toward a description of the realistic details. In the 180 years when painting and photography coexist, we will find an interesting phenomenon: when it comes to the concept reading, the form we first think of is the text. We read a book. The visual information is made into a book, and we usually call it "album". There is such a fact that is inarguable: we usually think that reading a photographic album is appropriate. We can obtain all the information of the image from the album at hand. However, when reading a painting album, we always think it is a "temporary alternative". The real right way is to go to the gallery and watch the original.

Can it be seen as a psychological contempt for photography? I mean that from a hundred years ago the photographic images entered the gallery, hung on the wall, projected the elegant light, and was watched and sold as art work. But, after a hundred years still it did not get the "watched" status in the deepest of the popular psychology? We all know that photography was once very concerned about whether they also had the "watched" qualifications. The history of photography recorded the process how it eventually obtained the title of "art" through hardships. It passed the old

criteria of human for the art with difficulty, including problems such as what complex technique is required, reproducibility, etc., but until today it has not yet shaken the attitude at the last psychological level of human: in a broad sense, (visual) artwork is to be watched. The image, however, or the vast majority of images, is to be read. In other words, for the last attitude, whether has photography never really become a visual art?

The explanation I can give is that for the issue, what is the difference between painting and photography? One of the important reasons is that the painting itself is not the media in the full sense, or the "affinity" of painting and media was significantly weaker than that of photography. The main attribute of painting is artwork. The natural thing is projected in the painter's heart and is shown through the painter's skill because big differences occur in different painters, from the content to the form. The relationship between painting and the media is a process relationship; that is, the audience obtains the "information" or "knowledge" of the painting through the media, but the audience is very clear that they cannot see the painting in the "whole". I would like to quote Benjamin's "Aura" concept for further description although there are many ambiguities in concept "aura" itself.

In 1932, Benjamin defined “ aura ” in his “Kleine Geschichte der Photographie(A Short History of Photography)” that: “What is aura? A strange web of time and space: the unique appearance of a distance, however close at hand.”As a concrete manifestation, he portrayed it as an atmosphere that people perceived and felt when they watched and experienced the nature:

“On a summer noon, resting, to follow the line of a mountain range on the horizon or a twig which throws its shadow on the observer, until the moment or hour begins to be a part of its appearance — that is to breathe the aura of those mountains, that twig”^[21] We can know from his description that watching and the distance of watching are two elements that gather aura. The term aura just emerged at the time when the art in the mechanical reproduction era rose. Benjamin recalled the mystery of the times that the era lost and the complete experience in the appreciation of art. The distance watching stressed by aura is simply reading and browsing but staring. He even emphasized "peer gaze and communication", which

must be a face-to-face form without passing through any media. He further explained in his *On the Themes of Bolt Raleigh*, "The experience of aura is based on the fact that the universal relationship between people spreads to people and no life, or with natural things. The person we are looking at or feeling that he/she is being looked at by us is also looking at. Seeing the halo of a thing confers it upon the ability to look back at us." The ages separated by mechanical reproduction can be seen as an era with or without media or intermediate media.

And about Photography, the observing to photography, Susan Sontag gives a double definition. First of all, she believes that the photographer's shooting behavior itself is to watch the subject. In her book "On Photography" she said, "They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing ."[22] Sontag's concept of viewing is almost exactly the same as the concept of painting, and her "watch ethic", at some point of view, is in the light of the light of Benjamin, that is, there is some form of restriction. Second, the final product of photography, photos, as a physical existence, it certainly also has the "watch" the possibility. The camera is not an automatic painting machine, the description of natural objects, photography has its own unique way, that reveals the "difficult to describe" the details of the ability. Two watch the foundation, so that photography eventually into the art of the category.

On the other hand, since the photography is a description method based on the "physical correspondence" of the lens, and because such description is relatively fixed in the form, the photography itself is "born" with media attributes. Susan Sontag said that photography was first a medium and then an art. She further elaborated that photography could not be stylized because it was not generated in the midst of a living. In the *How to Read a Photograph* by the British historian Ian Jeffrey, a large number of historical photographs were listed. He gave his own interpretation to these photos from the perspective of reading. When reading this book, we have all the information requirements of these photos met through the "book" itself. We are not required to visit the gallery in person to read the original, which means that the information provided by the photography as a medium is sufficient at the level of reading, and there is no need for a deep "watching" mode.

There is also a clear example that when people watch the performance work, if they cannot watch them in the place where they were performed, they can only achieve the same through the media of the image. Let's try to compare the differences among the drama, the film and the rebroadcasting of the Oscar Awards Ceremony. In essence, the drama is able to achieve a purely "watch" without use of a medium, the rebroadcasting keeps us to be always aware of the existence of the media, and the film swings between the two; actually, it is a image version that achieves "watch a show" through the media. The image version itself does not diminish the value of the drama itself while becoming the art. Photography is also the case. Since its birth, photography has been with some of the nature of the media, making the image inherently possess the duality of being watched and read. To verify this view, another example shows that in the traditional sense (at least 30 years ago) all those images that are works of art are "watched" in the display of the original form, and the mass communication is done in print.

7 . 3 Image is informational, fragmented and de-specialized, and the documentary of photography is transformed and shelved.

For photography we recognize not only the "body" carried by the medium but also the form of media itself, just as we recognize the film. However, for the painting, we have not been able to be so "tolerant". People always think that the entity is the entity and the media is the media. They both must not be confused. At this level, this attitude towards both also has a double interpretation: one is the contempt for photography, the other one is the blame on the painting. Alternatively, it can be said that such double interpretation actually delivers the same meaning. That painting cannot be a medium is also attributed to the cost and efficiency problem. Different mechanisms with which it is made make photography easy to make. The demand for efficiency and cost of the media is almost stubborn.

Contemporary paper media is replaced by electronic media. Traditional film is replaced by digital imaging. Both are related to cost and efficiency. The direct result is that the painting-style "watch" cannot be fragmented or time sensitive, but read can do so. Images in the film era images cannot be time sensitive, but the digital age can. It closely caters to the characteristics and the rhythm of the times.

We allow and are accustomed to the existence of this dual attribute of photography. Early at the beginning of the last century, the narrative function of photography in terms of the expression has begun to be completed by virtue of photo form, especially in documentary image. The media attributes of photography are also included in other characteristics. For example, although countless photographers also claim that their work needs no explanation, and "all the facts are illustrated by the picture itself", the facts tell us that photography is more dependent on the interpretation and description by words. Reliance on and good interaction with other media means also makes the image a more appropriate part of media. Roland Barthes said that a photo without text support is no anchor. It means that the meaning of a photo is uncertain and should be fixed with the text. The experience of watching and reading is different. For watching, a certain distance should be kept. The relations between the whole and the part should be grasped. For most people having the experience of watching art work, the viewer needs to grasp considerable background knowledge of the work. This is true, whether it is painting or photography. However, reading is less demanding on the reader. Readers are concerned about the information. In contrast to the number of information and acceptance speed, the vertical depth of information is not so important.

Now, the problem has been unexpectedly resolved. At the level of information, no one is concerned about whether it is art or something else, whether it is suitable for hanging in the gallery, or appearing in the album; these are not important. What is important is that it currently appears on my phone screen and is being read by me. At the information level, even today the painting is also treated equally. The images of contemporary photography (not those contemporary art images in the gallery, but images that are alive in contemporary life, and are made and delivered in large amounts every day). They completely get rid of the expectation of being watched and thoroughly throw themselves into the arms of being read. The watching way still exists. There are still artists manufacturing of the object to be watched. There are still curators searching the best in tremendous daily images. However, the social mission of the image has been liberated by the public. It is completely informational and fragmented and de-

routinized in the context of the information society and therefore also de-aristocratic and even de-specialized.

In an expression losing the special voice, the image as an important part of the composition of the media does not lose the documentary; instead, it transforms and shelves the documentary. The reason is that as long as the relationship of photography that "lens is a physical correspondence" exists, its documentary inertia can be saved even if it exists only in the part of the information collection. Jeff Wall said, "If a work is expressed in a medium, it must have something that is unique to the media, and if done with other media, there will be something unique and irreplaceable." For those images tampered with, people know that it must have an "original image" that carries the gene of photographic documentary. In the face of false images that can be modified immediately, people instinctively expect to find a containment mechanism with which we can also see the "mystery" that is the traditional photographic "documentary".

Over the past 30 years, digital imaging has become the mainstream collection of news photography, after which the world has been filled with news of false photos. There are calls for industry ethics and yearning voices for containment mechanism. As mentioned in the previous section, there is no causal relationship between the false photo and the digital age. Lewis Hine said the picture would not lie, but the liar could take pictures. Like language and words, truth and lies coexist on the day when there is language and words. What goes wrong is not the tool; it is always the man. Photography is freed by digital technology for almost everyone. We are just calling and waiting for a screening and restraint mechanism.

7.4 The photographer and the audience become the same population. The new media platform integrates the photographer with the audience. The image is democratic, chooses and is chosen, and spontaneously generates new class invoice based on the democratization.

"IPhoneography" is intended to refer to the behavior of picture taking with iphone. But now, it has been extended to all picture taking behaviors with smart phones. A joke goes like this: the most directly affected person of mobile photography is the "group photo cameraman" at the Munich Oktoberfest. Their once did well because those who went to the

Oktoberfest were groups. No one would like to bring a camera. A group photo cameraman appeared and took a picture of several drinking buddies, each to pay a few Euros. The business was good. The Oktoberfest group photo taking business has made less money since smart phones come into being. Everyone is taking a "camera" that is sufficient for taking a group photo. Why should I pay others? News photography is also facing this dilemma. Even if there are still some places others cannot go, such as the Parliament or the White House, passers-by other than news cameramen are the first ones that take photos of what is happening on many common streets and squares in the world. As a result, many photographers feel helpless and worried about the "competition" the enthusiasts bring to them.

Susan Sontag said: "Photography means creating a relationship that is similar to acquiring knowledge and is therefore similar to power between the photographer and the world." What Sontag discussed more is the role that photography as a means plays in social class and power. She did not exaggerate the attribute of photography as an instrument of right. On one hand, photography in publicity is used to ironize, uglify and even remove the enemies from the photo. On the other hand, it is used to beautify the characters, from political leaders to advertising models. This means can be described as the widespread application of photo modification technique. However, photography as a political propaganda is not just top-down. The dissenting voice will come out from the bottom to top.

Before the advent of digital processing technology, this bottom-up resistance can basically be done only by artists, such as John Heartfield and Barbara Morgan. The former has been committed to the production of anti-Nazi photomontage, while the latter criticized the US big capitalists by virtue of this means. A special person in the field is Weegee, whose work people know well is his straightforward documentary photos of the crime scene. Since 1950s, he has begun to produce photos with darkroom processing. He distorted and twisted a variety of celebrity photos to make the effect of comics. In one of the pictures, Draft Johnson for President (1968)^[*10], he stretched the politician's nose in the photo, just as the Pinocchio whose nose grew longer as a result of lies, which is an irony of the inconsistent conduct and words President Johnson provided in the policy for the Vietnam War.

In the digital field, each picture is a mosaic puzzle that needs to be modified. The distance to establishment of knowledge (power) relationship with the world is widened. The pictures in the digital age are closer to the illusion rather than knowledge (power) in terms of the relationship established between people and the world. When the digital processing technology appeared, the situation that only a few people can use photography to resist was completely broken. In 2001, a high school student produced with Photoshop a photomontage of Bert (a character in Sesame Street) and Bin Laden entitled "Bert is evil"^[*11] and posted the same on his personal homepage. A Bangladesh publisher cut out the photo and produced anti-American propaganda posters with the same. Later, the scene in which thousands of people paraded, holding the poster was shown in the CNN news. Although the high school student produced several photomontages for entertainment only, the profound effect they produced went far beyond his imagination. Photoshop enables the threshold for which the people get involved in political propaganda activities to be "grass-roots". It is only after being "grass-roots" that ordinary people can get rid of the truth created by the mainstream media with pictures and builds their own understanding of the world.

Photography itself is more democratic than painting given the characteristics such as "quick manufacturing", "no need to go through hard training to master the skills" and so on. The importance of media application for photography is no longer vague, but go directly into the public's daily art. As Apple has launched a series of mobile phone products along with the introduction and hot selling of personalized supporting software, mobile photography is separating from the elite art museum space of power. They do not depend on the space with the show function. Instead, they directly bridge the relationship between the public and the network. Mobile photography is more for sharing and dissemination of daily life and emergencies, confirming the comment by the photography critic that "we all have a right to express". At the same time, mobile phones take photos and upload the same to microblog, removing the review by artistic power and facing directly to the public, accepting evaluation of and interaction with the public. It reflects the sharing function of photography in the microblog era of. It is also a good response to the

"democratization" desire where the hope is placed on photography of
Walter Benjamin.

Chapter VIII

Documentary Value of the Image in the Post- documentary Era

" Although there is a sense in which the camera does indeed capture reality, not just interpret it, photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings and drawings are." says Sontag.^[23] With the rise of the film industry, extensive use of DV and digital cameras and rapid progress of computer technology, the real life is more and more imaging. The image is almost the dominant visual experience in the life we now have. The prominent character of contemporary culture is not only commercialization, globalization, more importantly, visualization. In 1936, the first issue of the American magazine Life announced such trend. In the magazine, "internal pictures are photos of life." These "photos themselves are life." Sontag was keenly aware of the fact that photography "is valuable acquisition" in three aspects: as part of the memory, "alternatively has a beloved person or thing"; as a means of access to information, "fill into a never-ending archival material with" fragments of the real world; and "develop a consumer relationship" with the incident through the photo.

Eric McLuhan noted that photography was also a piece of message as other media in the electronic age. Something that has been taken as part of a huge information system has been incorporated into the sequence of classification and storage to form the literature. It ranges from the snapshot sequence that is pasted in the family albums in a rough chronological order to the functional use of all aspects of photography, those daily and official accumulations and patient and meticulous archiving and arrangement, astronomical records, medical research, geology, police work, military reconnaissance, art history, etc. The image document greatly increases our material capacity. The reality is also redefined - as an item to be displayed,

as a record of the thorough investigation, as an object of supervision. This is unimaginable in the earlier information recording system, i.e. the era of writing.

Barthes said that there was a punctum, i.e. the time. In the picture, we will see another time – a point in time in the "past", or the "history". The special thing about photography is that it is "irrefutable". Whether what a picture shows conforms to the viewer's imagination or cognition, the viewer can only admit it and accept it. In our world there is another kind of photography, its relationship with time is very suspicious: it is basically super-time. Photographers do not capture scenes, but create scenes. Because the thing appearing in the photos has never existed before, there is no need to mention the time, such as the "no age" life records we have discussed in the previous sections and flooded in large numbers on the online social platform. The big data nature of participation of the image itself as the document, the retrieval mode of hypertext links, personalization of retrieval mode and uncertainty retrieval results will together completely change our future image history view.

Change of methodology -search, fragment assembly, screening

Until now, at least, the current computer software and computer intelligence cannot define the image simply by relying on the visual information of the image itself. We can only describe, define and classify the image with the text by depending on the understanding of the image. The term "keyword" just has the exact meaning. We search in the net world for what we need with keywords. This is somewhat ironic. Barthes argues in the preface to the *Essais Critiques* that the task of literature is not as expressed in what people usually think. The literature that expresses what cannot be expressed is the "soul literature" he despises. The literature should try to "turn the content that can be expressed indescribable". If photography should photograph things "indescribable by text", it has to return to the information level of the text when retrieved as a document.

Setting a keyword in the computer, one may immediately get a massive image search results. By adding a few keywords as restrictions, the search will continue and go deeper. This is our currently available search experience. However, no one would not complain that the search is a

drudgery because the result is either very much identical or it is difficult to distinguish the true and the false, not to mention those irrelevant and inexplicable results among the search results at a glance. Time is wasted in screening and identifying these pieces. For many times, we have to return to the library or the file room to refer to those bound in a volume. Although each text is "the thinking of others", after all, it is more efficient and goes deeper.

Despite the fact, we can almost find everything in the Internet, even what is banned by local law. After the authority of traditional media is removed, the role of media in moral education is also weakened. In recent decades, cyber pornography and the spread of violence has been almost out of control. Search engines such as Google, Baidu in China, etc., have to restrict the search content prohibited by laws. However, users can still get what they want in some other clever ways as long as they take the time to do it. The content is not "inexistence" on the network. It is only restricted by some software and taken out of the "surface" of the search results.

As we all know, the laws of mainland China prohibit foreign media, foreign search engines and all information with an adverse effect on the exercising of the powers by the government from being found and read. However, countless network proxy software helps users go beyond the limit, which people joke such behavior as "over the wall" As a result, competitions begin among the software. The wall is getting higher and higher, so does the ladder for climbing over the wall. The people who went out of the wall saw that the information outside the wall was so diametrically opposed and posted the same inside the wall. The government announced that these dissents were "rumors". In many cases, information uploaders were arrested for their violation of the law.

Personalized way - for specific issues, there may be an official statement, but more personal conclusions will be drawn

In the Internet environment, we can ask any questions that will have an answer. Questions have become more and more random and more and more detailed. Many problems are even meaningless and absurd. In previous library that can be called "document", such questions cannot be read, nor will any answer be given. Susan Sontag discusses in her

Regarding the Pain of Others how the public's attention is subject to the media's attention. The media here refers to the most decisive images, including traditional authoritative media and images posted by individuals. Once the image is influential, and the information is documentary, the war will be "real", and the atrocity will be seemingly "moral". On this account, the war of the United States against Iraq and the protest against the Vietnam War are initialized by the image. This concept shows that photography has a decisive influence on what atrocities, disasters and crises we concern about, what we care about and how we ultimately assess these conflicts.

At the same time, the most ridiculous thing in this era is being staged: in the same event, the opponents of the view will find the image document they trust or in support of them in the same network, and they will deny the opponent's document in the most extreme way. The images of dead civilians and shattered houses in war can be used to reinforce hatred against the enemy. If the evidence provided by the image is contrary to one's own point of view, it will be charged that it is deliberately arranged before the camera, or just denounced that the opponent has tampered with the image. If the photo provides evidence of the atrocities of one's own, the standard reaction is that the photo is fabricated and in no way has such atrocities had happened. The corpses were moved from the mortuary in the downtown in a truck by the opponent and placed on the street; or, yes, it happened, but that's what the opponent did.

Indeed, the image has a great effect on the public's attention. The camera is also the tool that makes the objective subjective. Then, there is no doubt that the photography may be misleading to the public. Sontag wrote that: "The camera has the power to catch so-called normal people in such a way as to make them look abnormal. The photographer chooses oddity, chases it, frames it, develops it, titles it. "[24]

In addition, the tampering with the photo is far before the digital photography and the "image processing software" era: misunderstanding by the photo has always been possible. Historically, most of what is provided by the photographers is the positive images in support of being a soldier and the positive images that meet the requirements of the war or the continuation of the war. If the government does whatever they want,

war photography will argue for the devotion of soldiers, like most of the war poetry. Shooting is the creation (if the object is a living soul, it is posing), that kind of desire to deliberately arrange various elements in the photo has never gone as the object keeps still or is fixed. It is no wonder that a lot of orthodox early war photos were later proved to have been deliberately arranged, or its objects were fooled. However, once the wave of questioning the image grows to tsunami, the meaning of the image will be arbitrarily given, and the documentary of the image will meet unprecedented challenges.

Uncertainty of the results - description, not the record, just like the text

Photography is subjective aesthetic means and objective recording tools. According to Susan Sontag's understanding, at first, the meaning of photography can be extended to photography with a unique personal view and photography of objective records. People often mistakenly believe that this is the difference between art photography and documentary photography. In fact, they are two attitudes recording the possible angles of all things: one is that, in a sufficiently keen sense of view, there is beauty or at least meaning in anything. The other one is to regard everything as something that is useful at the moment or in the future, as what is to be judged, resolved and predicted in the future, that is, a record. Photography is excellent for both. In the shadow of photography today, the consequences of these two attitudes are that there is nothing that should not be seen and there is nothing that should not be photographed.

Photography consumes the reality and possesses the past, the present and the future through so many narcissistic ways. They complement each other, recycle and reappear, being a new way to face reality. The real world is downgraded to the image, while the image is upgraded to the seemingly real existence. In such an era with a mountain of images, under such a mechanism where network search finds the answer, different individual search methods and random direction of hyperlinks have led to a problem: the final result received by each and every person is completely different. The documentary value of the photo is no longer a definition of meaning, but a description and an evidence of an idea. For example, in the paper writing I am working on, the image plays a "quote" role, which means that, look, these pictures support me. I am right, and you are wrong.

In China, facts prove that the "rumors" captured by the government did publish false information. Some of them knew that the evidence was wrong and did it out of revenge arising from the anger for monopoly of the media resources by the government. However, some others were misled by their own "way of study", and they got the wrong message but were convinced that it was correct. In such cases, the image is diluted as an objective reflection of the factual value of the facts, and its unique role in helping people perceive reality is weakened. As Guy Ernest Debord put it, "Science is no longer required to understand the world or to improve the world in a certain aspect. Instead, it is required to quickly prove the rationality of what is happening at present."

4. Conclusion

The key point described and discussed in this paper relates to a concept that is neither clearly nor authoritatively defined - post-documentary photography. Traditionally, the documentary functions where photography serves as the media have been challenged in many ways today. In particular, the results of new media technology development have directly led to a change in the foundation of the structure of the photographic language. Documentary as the inherent uniqueness of the photography language is rapidly disintegrated and gradually transformed along with the changes. This paper intends to present the post-documentary characteristics shown in photography in contemporary society by sorting out and analyzing many major factors that affect the documentary of photography and comparing the differences among historical, social, and political factors.

5. Bibliography

- [1] Postman. Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology .United States.Vintage Books. 1993[04-1993]: p18 . ISBN-13: 978-0679745402
- [2] Postman. Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology .United States.Vintage Books. 1993[04-1993]: p8-9 . ISBN-13: 978-0679745402
- [3] Albert Renger-Patzsch.Die Welt ist schön (The World is Beautiful).Germany.Kurt Wolff.1928.TR 650.R4
- [4] Leslie D. Stroebe.Dictionary of Contemporary Photography.US. Morgan & Morgan, 1974 - 217.ISBN 13: 9780871000651
- [5] Roland Barthes.La chambre claire(Camera Lucida).France.Hill and Wang. 1980. p117-118. ISBN 0-8090-3340-2
- [6] American History.the Ghost and Mr.Mumler. 02-08-2008.
<http://www.historynet.com/the-ghost-and-mr-mumler.htm>
- [7] Fineman, Mia etc.Faking it : manipulated photography before Photoshop.Metropolitan Museum of Art;New Haven.2012.p114-115. ISBN:9781588394736
- [8] Breton André,Manifestoes of surrealism. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press. 1969. ISBN:9780472061822

- [9] Indestructible Object 1923, remade 1933, editioned replica 1965.
Tate.T07614.
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/man-ray-indestructible-object-t07614>
- [10] <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2012/faking-it>
- [11] Charles Dickens .A Tale of Two Cities.1985.p1.
ISBN-13: 978-0486406510
- [12] Henri Cartier-Bresson.The decisive moment. Simon and Schuster. 1952.
ASIN: B0006EUM12.
- [13] Henri Cartier-Bresson.American Photo.September/October 1997. p96
- [14] Fred Ritchin.After Photography.W. W. Norton & Company.
2010(15-02).ISBN-13: 978-0393337730
- [15] Walter Benjamin.Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen
Reproduzierbarkeit(the Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical).
(Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung.1935).New York: Schocken Books,
1969 .p4-6.
- [16] The economic history of the United States.WIKIPEDIA.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_history_of_the_United_States
- [17] Michael R. Solomon.Consumer Behavior.Prentice Hall (10 edition).
2012.ISBN-13: 978-0132671842
- [18] Jean Baudrillard.La société de consommation: ses mythes, ses
structures(The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures).George
Ritzer.1998.ISBN 0761956921

- [19] The Editor & Publisher Co. Web Slices Into Use of Other Media; New Study by The Editor & Publisher Company. Jun 30, 1999
<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/web-slices-into-use-of-other-media-new-study-by-the-editor--publisher-company-74990267.html>
- [20] Indestructible Objec 1923, remade 1933, editioned replica 1965.
Tate.T07614.
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/man-ray-indestructible-object-t07614>
- [21] Walter BENJAMIN. Kleine Geschichte der Photographie (A Short History of Photography). 1934. vol.15.p7. trans. P. Patton
[http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:8QdVcesSjnMJ:www.goodwin.ee/ekafoto/tekstid/Benjamin,%2520Walter%2520-%2520Short%2520History%2520of%2520Photography%2520\(1934\).rtf+%&cd=6&hl=pl&ct=clnk&gl=pl](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:8QdVcesSjnMJ:www.goodwin.ee/ekafoto/tekstid/Benjamin,%2520Walter%2520-%2520Short%2520History%2520of%2520Photography%2520(1934).rtf+%&cd=6&hl=pl&ct=clnk&gl=pl)
- [22] Susan Sontag. On Photography. Farrar. Straus & Giroux. 1973. p1. ISBN 0795326998
- [23] Susan Sontag. On Photography. Farrar. Straus & Giroux. 1973. p4. ISBN 0795326998
- [24] Susan Sontag. On Photography. Farrar. Straus & Giroux. 1973. p27. ISBN 0795326998

6. Illustration



*1.1 Oscar Gustave Rejlander .The Two Ways of Life (1857)



*1.2 Henry Peach Robinson -Fading Away (1858)



*2 Jeff Wall The Destroyed Room (1978)



*3 Jeff Wall A Sudden Gust of Wind (after Hokusai) 1993



*4 Jeff Wall View from the Apartment 2004



*5 Meitu Xiu Xiu effect



*6 Noah Kalina four of his series self-portraits 2000-2006



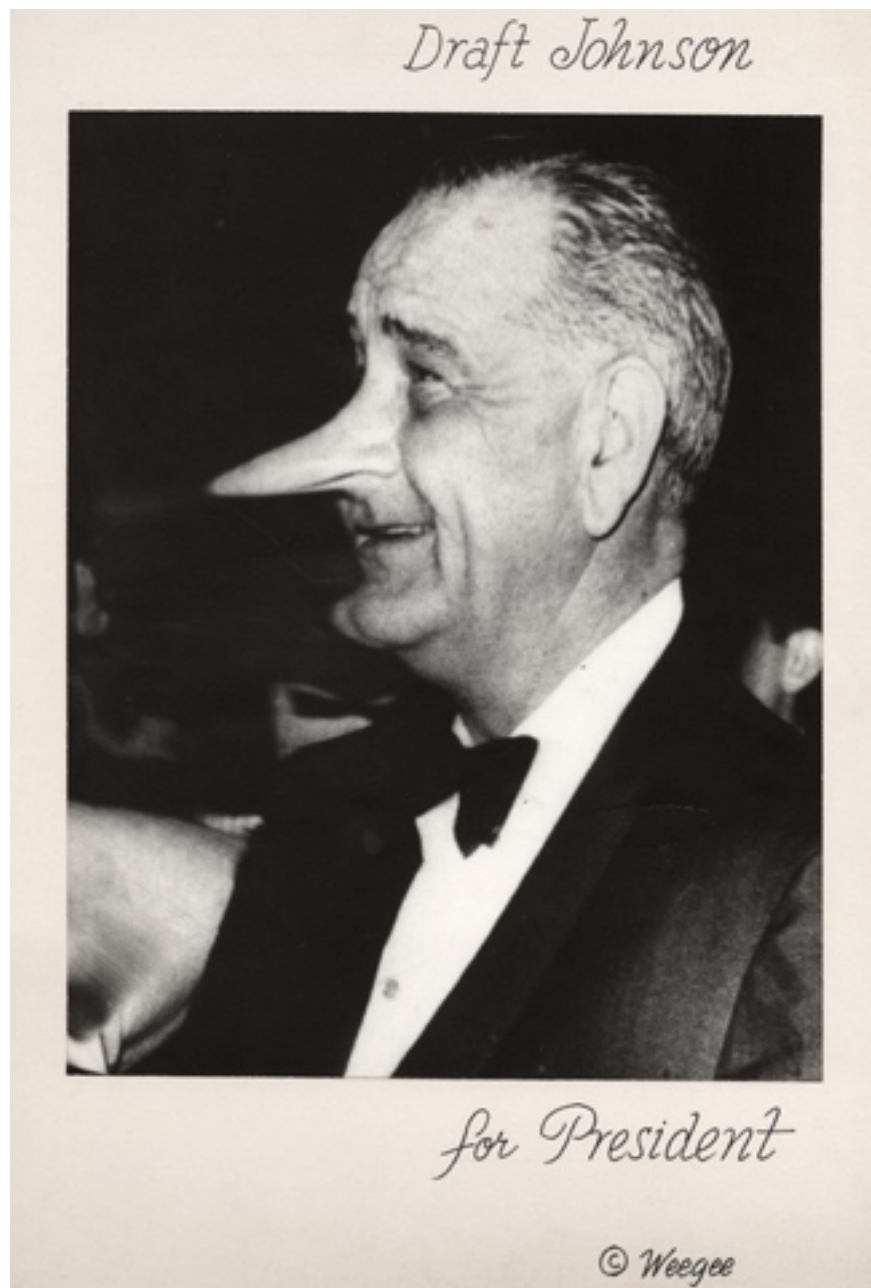
* 7 Salvador Dali Painting



*8 Herbert Bayer The Lonely Metropolitan (1932)



*9 Claude Cahun self portrait 1894-1954



*10 Weegee Draft Johnson for President (1968)



*11 Bert is evil

7. Acknowledgement

I am particularly grateful to my instructor Tomas for his support in the paper. He recommended a lot of important reference books for my thesis, and kept urging my progress at different stages of the paper. I would not give an ending to the paper without his help. I understand that the present paper is written in a very simple manner with my limited vision and ability as well as the time I give to myself. I will continue improving the topic in the future time.