THE ART OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN CHINA: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON ITS AESTHETIC CONNOTATION

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Abstract: Photography, as a tool, mainly presents the relationship between people and objects through the use of artistic elements, such as light, shadow and color in images. The creation of photography is an activity that requires inspiration and skills. It requires photographers to carefully and deeply observe and think about the overall structure of the work, in order to take good photos that are both artistic and thoughtful. The development and popularization of photography in today's society cannot be underestimated for their impact on public aesthetics and humanistic thinking. This paper aims to analyze the aesthetic connotation of Chinese photography and explore its aesthetic standards and values. The philosophical thoughts in Chinese photography are explored, and their reflections and perspectives on life and society are analyzed. The relationship and mutual influence between aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts in Chinese photography are explored, and their significance and influence on photography works are analyzed, so as to better understand and appreciate the uniqueness of Chinese photography. Chinese photography is a unique and diverse form of artistic expression that reflects China's rich cultural heritage and social development. By emphasizing harmony, the integration of painting elements, storytelling and appreciation of nature, Chinese photography provides a profound aesthetic experience and conveys deeper meanings of unity, tranquility, and the relationship between people and the environment.

Keywords: Photographic art. Aesthetic annotation. Philosophical thought. Aesthetic value.

Resumo: A fotografia, como ferramenta, apresenta principalmente a relação entre pessoas e objetos, por meio do uso de elementos artísticos, como luz, sombra e cor, nas imagens. A criação de fotografias é uma atividade que requer inspiração e habilidades. Isso exige que os fotógrafos observem e pensem cuidadosa e profundamente sobre a estrutura geral do trabalho, a fim de tirar boas fotos que sejam artísticas e bem pensadas. O desenvolvimento e a popularização da fotografia, na sociedade atual, não podem ser subestimados por seu impacto na estética pública e no pensamento humanístico. Este artigo tem, como objetivo, analisar a conotação estética da fotografia chinesa e explorar seus padrões e valores estéticos. Os pensamentos filosóficos da fotografia chinesa são explorados, e suas reflexões e perspectivas sobre a vida e a sociedade são analisadas. A relação e a influência mútua, entre as conotações estéticas e os pensamentos filosóficos na fotografia chinesa, são exploradas, e sua importância e influência nos trabalhos fotográficos são analisadas, para que se possa entender e apreciar melhor a singularidade da fotografia chinesa. A fotografia chinesa é uma forma única e diversificada de expressão artística que reflete o rico patrimônio cultural e o desenvolvimento social da China. Ao enfatizar a harmonia, a integração de elementos de pintura, a narração de histórias e a apreciação da natureza, a fotografia chinesa proporciona uma experiência estética profunda e transmite significados mais profundos de unidade, tranquilidade e a relação entre as pessoas e o meio ambiente.

Palavras-chave: Arte fotográfica. Conotação estética. Pensamento filosófico. Valor estético.

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Abstract: Photography, as a tool, mainly presents the relationship between people and objects through the use of artistic elements, such as light, shadow and color in images. The creation of photography is an activity that requires inspiration and skills. It requires photographers to carefully and deeply observe and think about the overall structure of the work, in order to take good photos that are both artistic and thoughtful. The development and popularization of photography in today's society cannot be underestimated for their impact on public aesthetics and humanistic thinking. This paper aims to analyze the aesthetic connotation of Chinese photography and explore its aesthetic standards and values. The philosophical thoughts in Chinese photography are explored, and their reflections and perspectives on life and society are analyzed. The relationship and mutual influence between aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts in Chinese photography are explored, and their significance and influence on photography works are analyzed, so as to better understand and appreciate the uniqueness of Chinese photography. Chinese photography is a unique and diverse form of artistic expression that reflects China's rich cultural heritage and social development. By emphasizing harmony, the integration of painting elements, storytelling and appreciation of nature, Chinese photography provides a profound aesthetic experience and conveys deeper meanings of unity, tranquility, and the relationship between people and the environment.

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INTRODUCTION

In China, photography has become a relatively mature art form. With the continuous development of technology, Chinese society has also put forward higher requirements for photography. In current social life, photography is mainly expressed through photos to showcase typical events to people, and photography is not just a photo (Lopes, 2018, p. 227-230). By studying and analyzing photography, it can be better applied to people's daily lives, thereby promoting the continuous improvement of people's ideological and cultural qualities. The aesthetic connotation of photography refers to the aesthetic value and expression of beauty contained in photography works, while its philosophical thoughts refer to the thinking, thoughts and philosophical viewpoints presented in photography works. The significance of aesthetic connotation in photography lies in providing aesthetic standards and values. Through the creation and appreciation of photography works, people can feel the power and charm of beauty, and improve their aesthetic ability and appreciation level.

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The significance of philosophical thoughts in photography lies in providing reflections and thoughts on life, human nature and society. Photography can capture the life's moments and details through the lens. Through these moments and details, photographers can express their thoughts and observations on life, nature and society. The aesthetic connotation of Chinese photography is mainly reflected through composition and visual elements, light and color, as well as perception and expression. Its philosophical thoughts are reflected through reality and fiction, subject and object, and time and eternity. The aesthetic connotation and philosophical-thoughts together constitute the core and soul of photography works. The aesthetic connotation provides aesthetic standards and values, while philosophical thinking provides reflections and perspectives on life and society. The two blend together to form the unique charm and artistry of photography.

Photography is a social practice whose norms govern the process of photography (Lopes, 2019, p. 311-313). In recent years, global photographers have begun to break away from the traditional linear order of photographic text construction and choose a new wave that allows for multiple narrative strategies, both real and fictional. They integrate files, historical photos, text and carefully constructed images, taking the audience to past times and places, as well as boundaries that can or cannot be informed. This practice not only reflects the artist's interest and urgent desire to explore history, but also reveals the rich social and cultural environment in history that has opened up space for photography practice (He, 2021, p. 133-151). The various details and aspects of photography reveal the artist's innovative spirit and his desire to keep up with the development of photography (Mendes, 2022, p. 42-69). Outstanding darkroom techniques and unique photography creation techniques can make photographers world-renowned (Ng; Chi-Kwong, 2019, p. 39-40). The cultural uniqueness of European stereoscopic photography is largely attributed to amateur photographers, who use wet cotton technology to record nature, reduce exposure time, and improve their photography with clearer and more detailed images (Flores, 2020, p. 231-248). Therefore, photography is closely related to photographers.

In China, the photography industry is filled with too many profitable exhibitions and projects (Tang, 2022, p. 223-226). The development of fashion photography is the development of photography technology, photography art and fashion related industries. This development conforms to the needs of the times and the requirements of various industries that are constantly deepening the photography (Zhang, 2019, p. 1621-1627) artistic conception (Qiu, 2020, p. 115-118). Under the high-speed transmission of online information, new value has emerged and opportunities are constantly emerging in various cultures. Cross media photography breaks away from the classification of traditional art in photography and adopts the intervention of mixed media, which can further analyze emotions and become a representative of visual art communication (Lana; Wanli, 2021, p. 30-34). By teaching photography, visual culture has been formed among teenagers (Kayumova, 2019, p.

5130-5133). The skills and creativity showcased in photography that inspire education are astonishing (Fawkes, 2021, p. 7-8).

In contemporary photography, the expression of past atrocities has encountered varying degrees of criticism and ethical challenges (Mallik, 2022, p. 57-69). The current situation of photography is that if one unconsciously sits and takes photos, few people would take them. With the emergence of new technologies at an astonishing speed, existing technologies are becoming increasingly popular. Technology is deeply rooted in daily life, so that people turn a blind eye to the promise of new technologies and are completely immersed in the technological advantages of automation, convenience and immediacy (Santanen, 2019, p. 5-14). Photography is also an aesthetic activity, reflecting not only the social ideology of a certain period, but also the cultural forms of a certain period. Photography is largely a useful entry point for evaluating the current life's visual effects (Blaney, 2019, p. 23-40). In China, in the 1920s and 1930s, early pioneers, who intervened in the art of photography, developed a certain understanding of the aesthetic paradigm of photography in practice, confirmed the independent legitimacy of photography in Chinese art categories, established a basic theoretical system that was in line with the Chinese nation's aesthetic habits and completed the modernity construction of early Chinese photography aesthetic theory (Li, 2019, p. 52-53).

In recent years, the weight of China's research on local photography has gradually increased, and the context of local photography history is gradually becoming clear. The entry points for local image collection have become diverse and rich. The capital that focuses on local photography is making its own understanding and judgment on the development trajectory of photography in China (Zheng, 2020, p. 24-27). Therefore, the development of photography is a historical necessity and a social choice, and also has its own advantages in promoting social development.

In order to delve deeper into its aesthetic and philosophical connotations, and enable people to better grasp the techniques of photography creation, this article mainly studies the aesthetic and philosophical connotations in photography. Firstly, the definition and characteristics of Chinese photography are introduced; then, the aesthetic connotation of photography is analyzed. The aesthetic characteristics and artistic techniques of Chinese photography are analyzed, and the aesthetic connotations contained therein are explored. Then, the philosophical thoughts in Chinese photography are explored. On the basis of elaborating on the characteristics and aesthetic characteristics of photography, this paper analyzes the philosophical and aesthetic connotations reflected in photography, and puts forward several suggestions on how to use photography to reflect real life. Chinese photography has a unique aesthetic perspective, reflecting China's rich cultural heritage and social development. Through the composition of the image, the balance of colors, and the careful arrangement

of the relationship between the subject and background, not only does it bring beauty to the photos, but it also conveys the deep meaning of Chinese photography aesthetics.

1 OVERVIEW OF PHOTOGRAPHY

1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is an art with human beings as the main body. Its creative process involves recording the form, color, brightness, texture and other photographic elements of the subject through a camera (Hu, 2018, p. 1-17). Using photography as a tool, the subject is selected, refined, and summarized to have certain social significance. It is a human activity that has undergone artistic processing, with dual attributes of aesthetic value and practical value. As an art category, photography includes the following aspects:

(1) Expressive beauty: after the birth of photography, artists continuously innovated and fused various artistic elements together, creating unique and distinctive works. It is the process of creating various forms of art through the use of light, shadow, color, etc., after the photographer selects and extracts the subject matter.

(2) Artistic conception beauty: photography works express things that cannot be truly presented in real life through artistic means, such as light and shadow, color matching, unique composition, rich connotation, etc., making people feel a spiritual shock after watching, thereby achieving artistic aesthetics.

(3) Cultural beauty: photography can reflect social reality and express social phenomena through photography (Peddecord, 2022, p. 47). For example, in the photography work *The Forbidden City*, the architectural space, colors and cultural connotations of the Forbidden City are conveyed through visual language. The Palace Museum expresses its interpretation of traditional culture and historical stories through visual language, such as "auspicious snow and abundant years" and "universal celebration" (Xiao; Lee, 2019, p. 95-114).

In the final analysis, photography is a form of artistic expression that records objective things through photography. Compared to other forms of art, such as painting, sculpture, architecture, etc., the content of photography is more intuitive and vivid. In this process, photographers reconstruct objective things through their own imagination and thoughts, thus forming works with strong visual impact. Photographers can also express their views on real-life issues by truthfully recording and reflecting objective things. The main characteristic of photography is its strong visual impact. Under this visual impact effect, people can instantly grasp the most essential features of things, thereby achieving a profound analysis and understanding of things. It is precisely this feature that makes them highly social and political. Therefore, in this process, photographers not only need to reflect

their own aesthetic characteristics and artistic thoughts, but also need to integrate them into social reality, in order to reflect the problems that exist in social life. As a form of popular culture, photography not only has a certain impact on social life, but also enriches the public's aesthetic perspective and artistic literacy.

The main characteristic of photography is its strong visual impact, which is not possessed by other art forms and is also the main charm of photography. In photography, there are many elements that can bring a strong visual impact to people, such as light, composition, color, and so on. The strong visual impact of photography mainly comes from light. In photography, light, as the most important component of the entire photography process, directly affects the effect of the entire photography work. In photography, light has a clear directionality. To achieve the desired shooting effect, photographers must make full use of light to present a more charming side of the photography. In addition to lighting, composition is also an essential factor for a good photo. When composing, photographers need to have a thorough understanding of the shooting environment, consider and design it comprehensively. At the same time, photographers should choose a reasonable composition method based on the shooting object and scene. When choosing colors, photographers need to fully understand the meaning and symbolic significance of colors. By selecting and matching colors, photographers can showcase a more charming aspect of the entire photo.

1.2 Photography in visual arts

Photography is a visual art that utilizes visual elements, such as light, color, shape and lines to give photography a certain aesthetic connotation and create a strong aesthetic feeling. The development process of photography contains profound philosophical thoughts, which have become key factors in reflecting aesthetic connotations and values in photography works. The aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts, inherent in photography, can enable the audience to have a deeper understanding of photography, and deepen their understanding of issues, such as beauty and ugliness, truth and falsehood, and good and evil.

Iconic photos have profound meanings in Chinese photography. These photos convey rich information and emotions through their unique perspectives, techniques and themes, causing resonance and reflection among the audience. These photos can record important historical events, cultural traditions, or social changes, becoming witnesses of history and carriers of culture. They convey past memories and values to the audience through the power of images, allowing people to reflect and cherish their cultural heritage. They are not only records of images, but also expressions of culture, art, society and thoughts. Through their unique perspective and emotional expression, these photos stimulate the audience's thinking and emotional resonance, providing important inspiration and reference for the development and promotion of Chinese photography.

1.2.1 Taking natural beauty as the aesthetic object

Nature is the home for human survival, and it contains a lot of beauty. Photography is an art form that takes natural beauty as the aesthetic object, and it can express the beauty in nature through photos. In photography, humans and nature are two independent aesthetic subjects. As subjects, humans participate in nature and transform it through observation, recording and reflection, presenting the nature's beauty through photographs. Nature contains rich natural beauty, which can be expressed in different ways. For example, the nature's natural beauty is demonstrated through elements, such as light and shadow, color and lines; by combining and arranging light and shadow, the nature's formal beauty is presented; the nature's artistic beauty is presented through the collision and fusion of different elements.

1.2.2 Expressing emotions through light and shadow

There are various ways of expressing light and shadow in photography, which can be presented in colors, such as black, white and gray, as well as visual effects, such as light and dark. Different types of light and shadow express different emotions, and photography creators can express their insights into life through light and shadow, thereby allowing people to understand the emotions conveyed in their works. Photographers usually use light and shadow as an important way to express emotions when creating. During the shooting process, the photographer would use light to present the content to be expressed, and this use of light is the key to the expression of light and shadow in photography. To some extent, light and shadow are both visual language and emotional language. When a photographer is creating, he needs to showcase what he sees and wants in life through light, so that people can understand the emotions conveyed in the work.

1.2.3 Aesthetic connotation centered on "meaning"

Photography forms an aesthetic relationship among people by visualizing their activities, which is the aesthetic connotation of photography. In photography, "meaning" is the core content of aesthetic connotation and the most important aesthetic feature in photography. In photography, "meaning" refers to a subjective emotion, which is a unity of subjective consciousness and subjective emotions. Photographers integrate their aesthetic emotions and experiences into their works by subjectively expressing their subject consciousness, thus giving their works a strong infectious power. For example, when taking a photo of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, the photographer may focus on "harmony" as the theme, showcasing the beauty of harmony between humans and nature through the expression of their relationship. In this process, the photographer expresses his understanding and perception of beauty and life through "meaning".

1.2.4 Taking "human" as the aesthetic subject

People-oriented concept is the core value of photography and the soul of photography. In photography, there is an equal relationship between the photographer and the subject. During the shooting process, photographers must take the subject as the aesthetic subject, rather than themselves, in order to better present the beauty of the subject through the screen. In photography, photographers can showcase the spiritual world of the subject, giving it more aesthetic value and connotation. In addition, during the shooting process, the photographer can also choose the shooting angle and shooting method, based on the emotional changes of the subject. For example, when shooting a sunrise, the photographer can ask the subject to shoot from a higher position, which can present the sunrise in its most beautiful state. By comparing and analyzing photography works from different angles and emotions, it can be found that the aesthetic connotations and values, presented by photography works from different angles and emotions, are also different.

1.2.5 Taking "truth" as the aesthetic pursuit

Photography is an art whose fundamental purpose is to record and disseminate beauty. In the process of the development of photography, photography technology has been continuously improved, from simple recording to deeper expression. The development of photography is also a process of constantly improving human aesthetic consciousness. From primitive human paintings to the popular photography in modern society, it constantly pursues the essence of truth. In this process, photography has evolved from its initial means of recording to a higher level of aesthetic pursuit. It can be said that the pursuit of "truth" in photography reflects the continuous improvement of human aesthetic consciousness. Truth is an aesthetic pursuit that reflects the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, as well as between humans and society. This pursuit of truth is manifested in many aspects. Firstly, photographers should pursue objectivity and authenticity when shooting, and should not distort facts or maliciously hype for their own benefit. Secondly, photographers should start from reality when shooting and cannot create falsely to achieve a certain purpose. Once again, photographers are responsible for the equipment used during their filming process. Finally, photographers should follow the rules of art when creating, and cannot blindly pursue the so-called "artistic value". In summary, truth is an aesthetic pursuit and also an attitude towards life.

1.2.6 Taking "beauty" as the ultimate goal

In the process of the development of photography, the aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts, possessed by photography, have gradually formed a unique artistic

form. With the continuous development of technology, photography has become a new form of art that is highly integrated with modern technology, occupying an increasingly important position in people's lives. In contemporary society, people place greater emphasis on aesthetic, artistic and cultural values. Therefore, the art of photography has gradually shifted from its simple recording function to its ultimate goal of "beauty". In this process, the photographers' subjective aesthetic consciousness has gradually become an important influencing factor. Due to the continuous progress of photography technology and concepts, photographers not only need to meet the basic requirement of "beauty" in their creations, but also need to integrate their subjective aesthetic consciousness into their works. If simply recording life is the most basic function of photography, then integrating subjective aesthetic consciousness into works is the goal that photographers need to pursue when creating. At the same time, this is also the embodiment of the aesthetic connotation and philosophical-thoughts, inherent in photography, in the process of photography creation.

2 AESTHETIC VALUE AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONNOTATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

The development of photography is closely related to the society's development and, in today's society, photography has already occupied an important position in people's lives. For photography, people should not only focus on "technology" and "form", but also pay attention to its "aesthetic value" and "philosophical connotation". In the process of photography creation, its aesthetic connotation and philosophical thoughts have important application value. With the continuous improvement of people's living standards, people's pursuit of beauty is also becoming increasingly strong. In the process of photography creation, its aesthetic connotation and philosophical thoughts can deeply explore beauty, thus making photography works have high artistic value. In addition, in the process of photography creation, its aesthetic connotation and philosophical thoughts can accurately express the theme of the work, and deeply explore the theme expressed in the photography work. In terms of aesthetic value, photography works have a certain aesthetic value. Firstly, it is a visual enjoyment that can bring people the enjoyment of beauty. Secondly, photography works contain rich philosophical thoughts, which are the most important aspect of aesthetic value. Finally, photography works have a certain sense of modernity and constantly change with the times' continuous development. Therefore, when appreciating photography works, it is necessary to always maintain an aesthetic perspective and not be limited to past photography works.

2.1 Aesthetic connotation of photography

In the development process of photography, this one has strong aesthetic connotations, which are mainly reflected in two aspects: one is to showcase people's living conditions based on their daily lives, using photography works as carriers. The second is to use photography works as carriers to showcase the essence and characteristics of things (Conkie, 2016, p. 135-149). Therefore, in the process of creating photography, it is necessary to fully understand its aesthetic connotation (Viswanatha; Mukherjee; Thakur, 2020, p. 1561-1570). Secondly, it is necessary to analyze and study photography works based on a thorough understanding of aesthetic connotations. In addition, there are also some issues in the process of creating photography works:

Firstly, the understanding of the aesthetic connotation of photography works is not comprehensive enough;

Secondly, the mastery of creative techniques in photography is not deep enough;

Thirdly, the grasp of aesthetic taste is not comprehensive enough.

Therefore, in the process of photography creation, it is necessary to continuously explore its aesthetic connotation, and conduct in-depth analysis and research on the philosophical thoughts contained therein. It is also necessary to pay attention to the continuous improvement of one's own aesthetic literacy and level in the process of photography creation (Vera; Celona; Fernandez, 2022, p. 34148-34161). This can help people create more excellent photography works with high level and quality.

2.2 Philosophical thoughts of photography

The photographers' thinking style, emotions and aesthetic concepts would have a certain impact on the art of photography, and thus have a certain impact on the improvement of their artistic level (Wang, 2018, p. 1531-1544). Therefore, in the process of creating photography, photographers should fully understand and master philosophical thoughts, and integrate them into photography works through certain creative methods, in order to better reflect the connotation of photography works. For example, John Hughes, a famous photographer, made an in-depth study and analysis of loneliness in the process of creating his work *Solitude*. In his view, loneliness is an emotional experience that cannot be described in words, and this emotional experience cannot be felt through interpersonal communication or interaction (Giles, 2018, p. 35-36). Therefore, in the process of creating his works, he mainly adopted a relatively simple creative approach to integrate this emotional experience into his photography works. The photographer presents a lonely individual through his work *Loneliness*, which can be used to explore people's sense of loneliness and social isolation

phenomena in modern society. The role of revealing social issues can attract public attention and reflection on these issues, thereby promoting the development of social movements.

This paper explains the philosophical reflection of photography from two perspectives: Eastern philosophy and Western philosophy:

(1) The Eastern Philosophical Thought of Photography

Eastern philosophy emphasizes the importance of harmony and balance, believing that all things should pursue balance and harmony. In photography, photographers can convey a sense of harmony and balance by choosing balanced composition and color combinations, allowing viewers to feel the harmony and balance in the photography work. Photographers use natural elements, traditional cultural symbols and abstract expressive techniques to bring viewers into a realm that transcends the material world. The embodiment of Eastern philosophical thoughts in photography enables viewers to feel inner peace and resonance with nature. The Chinese philosopher Laozi's "Tao Te Ching", due to his understanding of the "Da Dao Zhi Jian", in mainstream Chinese literature in the 1950s and 1960s, mainly focused on simple black and white tones, with the most natural, authentic and simple theme content as the main theme. With his own understanding and sensitivity to light, he often could capture natural lines, and the natural geometric shapes and lines formed were often accompanied by certain dramatic effects, enhancing the realism of photography.

(2) The Western Philosophical Thought of Photography

Western philosophy emphasizes the concepts of realism and existentialism, believing that the individuals' existence and free will are crucial. Truth and reality are relative, and there is no absolute truth and reality. In photography, photographers can capture individual moments and express their emotions and thoughts through abstract expressive techniques and visual effects, conveying the importance of individual existence and free will, and conveying a different understanding and perspective on the real world. Socrates' description of art is: understanding oneself. He hopes that all artists can gain a new understanding of their own souls through their own understanding. He stands in opposition to the theory of relative sensibility, attempting to acquire rational knowledge and capturing the essence of things, based on human rational thinking. This concept of "sincerity" has been well demonstrated in photography. The photography techniques of the previous century's end continue to showcase an endless inner world, including emotions, life, childhood, memories, etc., following the principle of minimalism, applying Western philosophical thoughts to the inherent essence of photos and giving people profound thinking. Thus, freeing them from anxiety, returning to nature and returning to their true nature.

In the photography, its aesthetic and philosophical concepts are usually complementary and integrated. The aesthetic connotations in photography can demonstrate

profound philosophical principles, and the philosophical insights it expresses often reveal aesthetic emotions and ideals.

2.3 Specific embodiment of the aesthetic value of photography

In the process of creating photography works, it is necessary to fully reflect the aesthetic value of photography. If people want to create high-quality photography works, people must deeply explore the aesthetic connotations contained in photography and deeply analyze the philosophical thoughts contained in it, in order to create more photography works with aesthetic value (Glebova, 2018, p. 56-90). In the process of photography creation, it is necessary to take photos of representative events, then use certain technical means to make them into photos, and then perform post processing to create photography works with aesthetic value. For example, in the process of creating photos of *One Family*, creator expressed and displayed the relationships among different family members in real life, in order to present a story with family and family beauty. At the same time, he also provided a profound explanation of the relationship among this family's members.

With the society's continuous development, photography plays an increasingly important role in social life, not only providing people with good visual enjoyment, but also reflecting various aspects of people's lives. By analyzing the aesthetic connotations contained in photography, people can recognize the unique charm and aesthetic value of photography. In addition, by analyzing the philosophical thoughts contained in photography, people can better understand the philosophical thoughts contained in photography, and guide people to conduct in-depth research and exploration of the aesthetic thoughts of photography through these philosophical thoughts.

Photography creation tools can serve as an effective supplement to modern teaching methods. By utilizing photography creation tools, teachers can create more attractive and interactive teaching content, stimulating students' interest and participation. For example, teachers can use photography creation tools to guide students in on-site photography and editing of photography works, allowing them to understand and apply the knowledge they have learned through practice.

At the same time, photography creation tools can also help teachers establish closer connections with young audiences. The modern smartphone addiction generation has a strong interest and demand for images and visual expression. By utilizing photography creation tools, teachers can create more visually impactful and personalized teaching content, attract the young audiences' attention, and stimulate their creativity and thinking abilities.

Photography creation tools can also help teachers communicate and interact better with young audiences. By using photography creation tools together with students, teachers

can better understand their interests and needs, thereby better adjusting teaching content and methods, and improving teaching effectiveness.

3 Aesthetic thought of photography

From an aesthetic perspective, the concept of beauty is relatively broad. The aesthetics of artistic works are usually analyzed by linking them with factors, such as content, theme, style and techniques. In aesthetic activities, people experience the beauty and ugliness of things through various senses, and enjoy beauty through visual art. Photography directly applies human visual perception to images to express aesthetic objects. It emphasizes the use of images to express things with certain subjective colors and meanings in the objective real world (Qi, 2020, p. 014003).

Modern digital photography plays an important role in the field of photography in China. It enables photographers to more flexibly control light, color and composition through the application of digital technology, achieving more accurate and creative expression. The emergence of digital photography has made the photography process simpler and more efficient, while also providing photographers with more creative space and possibilities. Filters play an important role in digital photography. Filters can change the color, contrast and tone of a photo, enhancing or weakening specific colors to achieve artistic effects or express specific emotions. Utilizing visual appeal to achieve popular color processing is one of the commonly used techniques by modern photography designers. By processing and adjusting colors, photographers can create vivid and attractive visual effects that attract the audience's attention and resonate.

However, modern photography designers and the industry need to maintain respect and authenticity for Chinese philosophy and thoughts in their pursuit of color processing and visual appeal. Color processing and visual appeal can be a means, but cannot become an end in itself. Photographic designers and the industry should convey the connotation and value of Chinese philosophy and ideology through the composition, theme and emotional expression of photos, rather than just pursuing external visual effects. As a special form of aesthetics, photography is the most extensive and important component of human aesthetic activities.

From the perspective of aesthetic philosophy, the aesthetic ideology of photography is a higher-level aesthetic ideology that emphasizes the understanding and expression of beauty while pursuing photography technology (Ladkin, 2018, p. 35-51). In terms of aesthetic thinking, photography mainly has three aspects: aesthetics, expressiveness and sociology. These three aspects constitute the essential characteristics of the beauty of photography to varying degrees. Aesthetics refers to the use of photography to reflect and record objective things and their development and changes, resulting in aesthetic feelings. Expressiveness refers

to the use of photography to reflect the objective real world and its laws of development and change, leading to aesthetic experiences. Sociology refers to the use of photography to reflect the objective real world and its development and changes, leading to aesthetic evaluation. In the process of photography, what people exhibit is the pursuit and discovery of beauty. Therefore, the art of photography is worthy of exploration and study, both on a technical level and on an aesthetic level (Harvey, 2017, p. 133-137). It can bring people reflection and insight into life, and also enable them to have a deeper understanding of beauty. Therefore, in this process, it is even more important to consider how to balance the technical beauty of photography with humanistic thoughts.

4 THE CULTURAL EXCHANGE IN PHOTOGRAPHY AND ITS REFLECTION ON SOCIAL REALITY

In photography, cultural exchange and reflection on social reality are interrelated. Cultural exchange refers to the process of conveying human culture, values and emotions through photography works, while the reflection of photography on social reality refers to the photographer capturing and presenting problems, challenges and changes, in society, through the lens. These two aspects are intertwined in photography, promoting and influencing each other. Cultural exchange helps to reflect social reality in the photography. Through cultural exchange, photographers can communicate and exchange thoughts with their subjects, understanding their stories, experiences and emotions. This kind of communication can help photographers better understand social reality and accurately reflect the problems and challenges, in society, in their photography works. The reflection of photography on social reality also contributes to the development of humanistic exchanges. Through observation and reflection on social reality, photographers can discover problems and challenges in society and convey them to the audience through their photography works. These works can evoke resonance and reflection among the audience, thereby promoting the development of cultural exchanges. However, in the process of creating photography, photography creators often start from social phenomena and, to some extent, reflect some social problems, thereby expressing their own humanistic thoughts and attitudes (Hedman, 2018, p. 1-12).

At the same time, this is also a reflection and summary of social reality issues. Therefore, in photography works, things can be observed and studied from different perspectives. In this observation process, one can gain a deeper understanding of social reality issues and find their own thoughts and perspectives. When observing and studying things from the perspective of humanistic thought, many different viewpoints and perspectives often arise. These viewpoints and opinions may be the result of analyzing and researching a certain thing or event. For example, in "Feminism", the creator links some social phenomena with the feminist movement through observation and analysis. Through this analysis process, it can be found that women face some problems in different social backgrounds. Women

can only truly achieve personal independence after gaining their own dignity. This viewpoint is the humanistic thoughts conveyed by the creator through photography works (Bowman, 2000, p. 540-559). The work "Feminism" can reveal the gender discrimination issues in society, and showcase the unfairness and oppression faced by women in work, education and life. The role of revealing gender discrimination can attract public attention and reflection on these issues, thereby promoting the development of social movements.

Photography originates from life, and life is the human society's most fundamental component (Chianucci, 2020, p. 227-242). For photography, when reflecting social reality, it also integrates the life's most basic elements into photography. Therefore, from this perspective, photography is also a true reflection of life. In the photography, creators integrate their own understanding and feelings of life into photography, and then capture and present their own views of life to the audience. In real life, people can express social reality by observing and understanding things around them. However, when expressing this idea, it is necessary to ensure authenticity. Therefore, photography needs to take reality as the fundamental factor in reflecting social reality. For creators, this is achieved through their own observation and understanding of the real society.

Of course, for creators, achieving this goal is not an easy task. Therefore, it is necessary to constantly hone and exercise oneself in reality, in order to obtain a true feeling and experience during the shooting process. When creating photography, it is also necessary to maintain an objective and fair attitude to face all things that exist in life. This can truly reflect everything that exists in social reality. For example, *Worker* and *Exile* are the renowned Chinese photographer Yang Fudong's works. *Worker* is a work shot in the 1980s, showcasing the Chinese working class's life and labor scenes. *Exile* is a work shot in the 1990s, documenting the Chinese migrant workers' mobility and hard life in cities, reflecting the photographer's concern and reflection on human dignity and social justice. Through these works, the photographer demonstrates his profound understanding of cultural exchange and social reality reflection. He captured their lives' moments and details through communication and observation with the subjects, showcasing the attention and reflection of human dignity and social justice. At the same time, he also reflected the difficulties and challenges, brought about by the working class and refugee issues in society, through these works, calling on society to pay more attention and care for these vulnerable groups. These works reflect the importance and value of cultural exchange and social reality reflection in photography.

Conclusions

Unlike traditional art genres, such as literature and painting, photography is a visual art form that expresses artists' thoughts and emotions by capturing light and images in reality. The visual essence of photography lies in its ability to accurately capture real-world

images and light, and convert them into static two-dimensional images. This visual essence enables photography to express unique aesthetic qualities, such as light and shadow, color and composition. The use of photography technology is also an important factor contributing to its unique aesthetic quality. For example, using different lenses and apertures can create different depth of field and focal length effects, thereby affecting the visual effect of the image. From the perspective of traditional Chinese aesthetics, photography, as an emerging art category, has a long history and profound cultural heritage, compared to traditional art categories, such as literature and painting.

From a philosophical perspective, photography is also a comprehensive art category with humanistic spirit and sentiment. With the continuous improvement of social living standards, people's requirements for the spiritual life's quality are also constantly increasing. Photography, as an emerging art category, has its own unique aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts in terms of creative form and aesthetic value. The aesthetic thoughts it contains not only have a significant impact on photography creation, but also reflect human aesthetic consciousness in the field of art, with very profound philosophical connotations. Photography, as an art form, can create beauty and aesthetic enjoyment through the use of elements, such as composition, light and shadow, and color. Photographers can express their thoughts and insights on social reality and other issues by selecting specific themes, thereby giving their photography works a richer and deeper connotation. The promotion of aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts has given photography higher value and significance as an art form. The pursuit of aesthetic connotations makes photography more artistic and ornamental, while the introduction of philosophical thoughts gives photography deeper connotations and meanings. This comprehensive effect enables photography works to stimulate the audience's thinking and reflection, thereby enhancing their artistic value and social significance. By studying and analyzing the aesthetic connotations and philosophical thoughts of photography, people can better understand the value of photography.

The research objective of this article is to explore the aesthetic concepts and values in Chinese photography, study their relationship with Chinese culture, analyze the artistic elements and techniques used in Chinese photography, reveal their impact on the expressive power and aesthetic feeling of works, and explore their reflection on society and culture. In the photography in China, aesthetics reflects the uniqueness and diversity of Chinese culture. Chinese photography emphasizes the concept of "harmony", emphasizing the balance of images and color coordination, and reflecting the Chinese society's unity and balance. In addition, Chinese photography also draws on the elements of traditional Chinese painting, adding poetry and expressiveness, making photography works more expressive and beautiful. Chinese photography also emphasizes the ability to tell stories, documenting social and cultural changes through photography works, and showcasing the Chinese society's diversity and complexity. Finally, Chinese photography also expresses admiration and awe for nature,

reflecting the harmonious relationship between humans and nature in traditional Chinese philosophy. In short, Chinese photography embodies the uniqueness and diversity of Chinese culture through aesthetics, bringing deeper feelings and reflections to the audience.

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