02｜「艺术揭示什么，历史解释什么：多里安·韦尔与吕澎论阐释与中国艺术史学」

多里安·韦尔 吕澎 – 艺术史 Nov 21, 2026, 4:00 AM



【持续性学术对话】

本文是多里安・韦尔与吕澎教授围绕后阐释批评展开的往复讨论续篇。在上一轮吕澎教授针对《阐释的风险：20 世纪之后的后阐释批评》作出首次回应之后，本篇为韦尔接续的答复与延伸思考。对话聚焦历史解释、审美经验与过度阐释的边界，探讨历史研究与作品领会如何相互照亮而不彼此替代。

讨论仍在开放进行中，后续将继续推送双方的回应……

｜以下是多里安·韦尔的回复（中英文对照）：

一、历史解释与过度阐释

历史能够使一件艺术作品进入我们的视野，却不等同于它所呈现的作品。读到您的回复时，我不断回到这一点，并将其视为我们讨论的哲学核心。历史知识或许是理解作品不可或缺的条件，但一份历史叙述是否充分，本身并不能证明我们对作品的理解已经完整。

您在结尾提出，为这一区分提供了共同的起点：历史语境帮助我们理解作品，而作品可能超出语境所能解释的范围。您所问的是，实践中应如何作出这一区分。

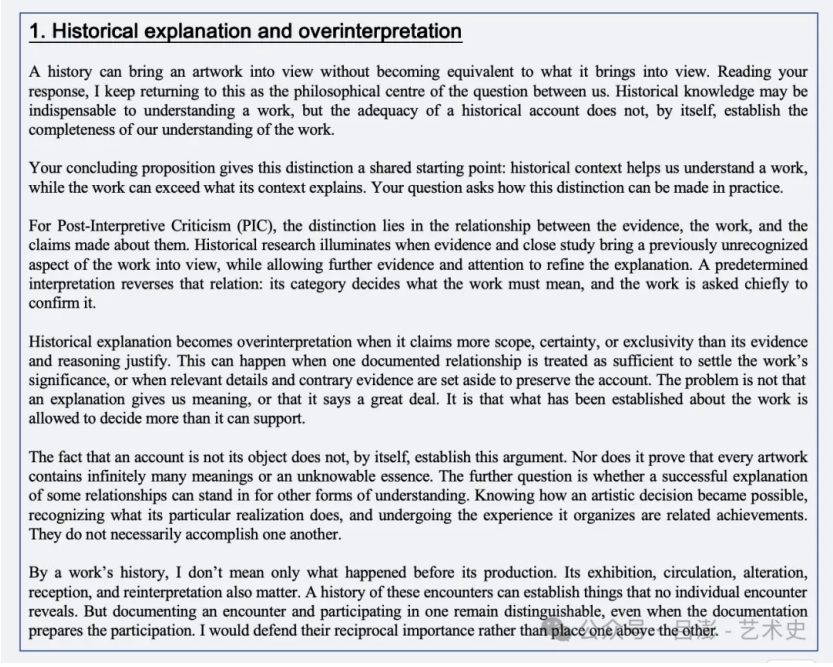
在后阐释批评（PIC）看来，关键在于证据、作品以及关于它们所作主张之间的关系。当证据与细读使作品中此前未被认识的层面显现出来，同时又允许新的证据和关注不断修正解释时，历史

研究便发挥了阐明作用。预设好的阐释则颠倒了这一关系：它的范畴先行决定作品必须意味着什么，作品主要被用来印证这一范畴。

当历史解释所声称的范围、确定性或排他性超过证据与论证所能支持的程度时，它就成为过度阐释。例如，把一项有文献记录的关系视为足以定论作品的意义，或为了维护既有叙述而搁置相关细节和相反证据。问题不在于解释是否赋予作品意义，也不在于它说得是否很多，而在于关于作品已经确立的事实被用来决定超出其支持能力的结论。

一份叙述并不等同于它所叙述的对象，这一事实本身并不能证明上述论点，也不能证明每件艺术作品都蕴含无限意义或不可知的本质。进一步的问题是：对某些关系作出成功解释，是否就能代替其他形式的理解？了解某项艺术决定如何成为可能，认识它的具体实现产生了什么效果，以及亲身经历它所组织的经验，彼此相关，却未必能够相互替代。

我所说的作品史，并不只指作品创作之前发生的事情。作品的展出、流通、改动、接受与再阐释同样重要。对这些相遇的历史考察，能够确立任何一次单独相遇都无法揭示的事实。但记录一次相遇与参与一次相遇仍然有别，即使记录能够为参与作准备。我主张承认二者的相互重要性，而不是把一方置于另一方之上。



1. Historical explanation and overinterpretation

A history can bring an artwork into view without becoming equivalent to what it brings into view. Reading your response, I keep returning to this as the philosophical centre of the question between us. Historical knowledge may be indispensable to understanding a work, but the adequacy of a historical account does not, by itself, establish the completeness of our understanding of the work.

Your concluding proposition gives this distinction a shared starting point: historical context helps us understand a work, while the work can exceed what its context explains. Your question asks how this distinction can be made in practice.

For Post-Interpretive Criticism (PIC), the distinction lies in the relationship between the evidence, the work, and the claims made about them. Historical research illuminates when evidence and close study bring a previously unrecognized aspect of the work into view, while allowing further evidence and attention to refine the explanation. A predetermined interpretation reverses that relation: its category decides what the work must mean, and the work is asked chiefly to confirm it.

Historical explanation becomes overinterpretation when it claims more scope, certainty, or exclusivity than its evidence and reasoning justify. This can happen when one documented relationship is treated as sufficient to settle the work's significance, or when relevant details and contrary evidence are set aside to preserve the account. The problem is not that an explanation gives us meaning, or that it says a great deal. It is that what has been established about the work is allowed to decide more than it can support.

The fact that an account is not its object does not, by itself, establish this argument. Nor does it prove that every artwork contains infinitely many meanings or an unknowable essence. The further question is whether a successful explanation of some relationships can stand in for other forms of understanding. Knowing how an artistic decision became possible, recognizing what its particular realization does, and undergoing the experience it organizes are related achievements. They do not necessarily accomplish one another.

By a work's history, I don't mean only what happened before its production. Its exhibition, circulation, alteration, reception, and reinterpretation also matter. A history of these encounters can establish things that no individual encounter reveals. But documenting an encounter and participating in one remain distinguishable, even when the documentation prepares the participation. I would defend their reciprocal importance rather than place one above the other.

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二、眼前的作品

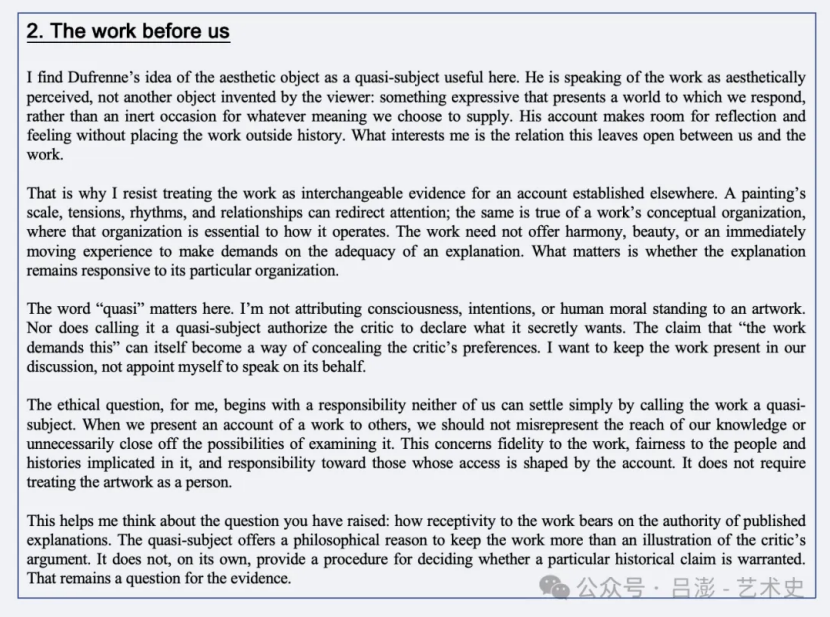
米凯尔·杜夫海纳关于审美对象作为“准主体”的观念，在这里对我很有帮助。其所指审美知觉中呈现的作品，不是观看者另行虚构出来的对象：作品具有表现性，向我们呈现一个世界，供我们回应；它并非一块任由我们赋予意义的惰性材料。他的论述为反思与感受留下了空间，同时没有把作品置于历史之外。我感兴趣的是，其观点为我们与作品之间的关系留下了怎样的开放性。

因此，我不赞成把作品当作可随意替换的证据来支持一套在别处已经确立的叙述。绘画的尺度、张力、节奏与关系能够引导注意力；当作品的观念组织方式对其运作至关重要时，这一点同样成立。作品不必呈现和谐、美感或立即打动人的经验，才有资格检验解释是否充分。关键在于，解释是否仍回应作品特有的组织方式。

“准”字在这里很重要。我并未把意识、意图或人类的道德地位赋予艺术作品。称作品为准主体，也不授权批评家宣称作品内心真正想要什么。“作品要求如此”这种说法，本身也可能掩饰批评家的偏好。我希望让作品持续在场于我们的讨论中，而不是自封为它的代言人。

对我而言，伦理问题始于一种责任；仅仅把作品称为准主体，并不能让我们任何一方就此解决这一责任。当我们向他人陈述对作品的理解时，不应夸大知识所及的范围，也不应无端封闭继续考察作品的可能性。这涉及忠实于作品、公平对待与作品相关的人及其历史，也涉及对那些因这套叙述而受到影响的受众所负的责任。这并不要求我们把艺术作品当作人。

这有助于我思考您提出的问题：对作品保持开放，如何关系到已发表解释的权威性。“准主体”这一概念为我们提供了一个哲学理由，使作品不只是批评家论证的例证。但它本身并未提供判断某项具体历史主张是否成立的程序；这仍须由证据来回答。



2. The work before us

I find Dufrenne's idea of the aesthetic object as a quasi-subject useful here. He is speaking of the work as aesthetically perceived, not another object invented by the viewer: something expressive that presents a world to which we respond, rather than an inert occasion for whatever meaning we choose to supply. His account makes room for reflection and feeling without placing the work outside history. What interests me is the relation this leaves open between us and the work.

That is why I resist treating the work as interchangeable evidence for an account established elsewhere. A painting's scale, tensions, rhythms, and relationships can redirect attention; the same is true of a work's conceptual organization, where that organization is essential to how it operates. The work need not offer harmony, beauty, or an immediately moving experience to make demands on the adequacy of an explanation. What matters is whether the explanation remains responsive to its particular organization.

The word "quasi" matters here. I'm not attributing consciousness, intentions, or human moral standing to an artwork. Nor does calling it a quasi-subject authorize the critic to declare what it secretly wants. The claim that "the work demands this" can itself become a way of concealing the critic's preferences. I want to keep the work present in our discussion, not appoint myself to speak on its behalf.

The ethical question, for me, begins with a responsibility neither of us can settle simply by calling the work a quasi-subject. When we present an account of a work to others, we should not misrepresent the reach of our knowledge or unnecessarily close off the possibilities of examining it. This concerns fidelity to the work, fairness to the people and histories implicated in it, and responsibility toward those whose access is shaped by the account. It does not require treating the artwork as a person.

This helps me think about the question you have raised: how receptivity to the work bears on the authority of published explanations. The quasi-subject offers a philosophical reason to keep the work more than an illustration of the critic's argument. It does not, on its own, provide a procedure for deciding whether a particular historical claim is warranted. That remains a question for the evidence.

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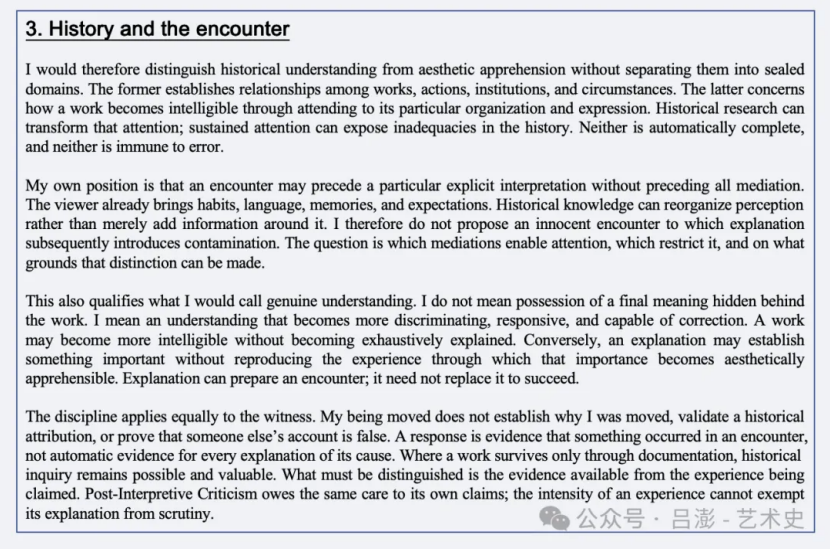
三、历史与相遇

因此，我会区分历史理解与审美领会，但不把它们割裂成彼此封闭的领域。前者确立作品、行动、机构与情境之间的关系；后者关乎通过关注作品特有的组织方式与表现形式，作品如何变得可理解。历史研究能够改变这种关注；持续的关注也能揭示历史叙述的不足。二者都不会自动达到完整，也都可能出错。

我认为，一次相遇可先于某种明确的具体阐释，却不可能先于一切中介。观看者本就带着习惯、语言、记忆与期待。历史知识能够重新组织知觉，而不只为作品补充外围信息。因此，我并不主张存在一种纯真的相遇，随后才被解释所污染。真正的问题是：哪些中介促成了关注，哪些限制了关注，我们又依据什么作出区分。

这也限定了我所说的真正理解。我指的不是占有隐藏在作品背后的最终意义，而是一种变得更有辨别力、更能回应作品且能够修正自身的理解。作品可以变得更可理解，却不因此被彻底解释。反过来说，解释可以确立重要事实，却未必能重现那种使其重要性在审美上可被领会的经验。解释可以为相遇作准备；要取得成效，它不必取代相遇。

这一规约同样适用于见证者。我的感动不能证明我为何感动，不能验证某项历史归属，也不能证明他人的叙述是错的。一次回应能够证明相遇中发生了某种事情，却不能自动证明对其原因所作的每一种解释。如果一件作品只能通过文献记录留存，历史研究仍然可能且有价值。必须区分的是现有证据与所声称的经验。后阐释批评也必须同样谨慎地对待自身主张；经验的强烈程度不能使对它的解释免受审查。



3. History and the encounter

I would therefore distinguish historical understanding from aesthetic apprehension without separating them into sealed domains. The former establishes relationships among works, actions, institutions, and circumstances. The latter concerns how a work becomes intelligible through attending to its particular organization and expression. Historical research can transform that attention; sustained attention can expose inadequacies in the history. Neither is automatically complete, and neither is immune to error.

My own position is that an encounter may precede a particular explicit interpretation without preceding all mediation. The viewer already brings habits, language, memories, and expectations. Historical knowledge can reorganize perception rather than merely add information around it. I therefore do not propose an innocent encounter to which explanation subsequently introduces contamination. The question is which mediations enable attention, which restrict it, and on what grounds that distinction can be made.

This also qualifies what I would call genuine understanding. I do not mean possession of a final meaning hidden behind the work. I mean an understanding that becomes more discriminating, responsive, and capable of correction. A work may become more intelligible without becoming exhaustively explained. Conversely, an explanation may establish something important without reproducing the experience through which that importance becomes aesthetically apprehensible. Explanation can prepare an encounter; it need not replace it to succeed.

The discipline applies equally to the witness. My being moved does not establish why I was moved, validate a historical attribution, or prove that someone else's account is false. A response is evidence that something occurred in an encounter, not automatic evidence for every explanation of its cause. Where a work survives only through documentation, historical inquiry remains possible and valuable. What must be distinguished is the evidence available from the experience being claimed. Post-Interpretive Criticism owes the same care to its own claims; the intensity of an experience cannot exempt its explanation from scrutiny.

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四、解释能够确立什么

您对影响与艺术主体性的区分，使这一问题有了具体形态。历史学者可以先确立某位艺术家曾接触一种视觉语言，再论证艺术家是否采用了它，继而解释这种采用的目的或意义。这些主张彼此相关，但每一项都需要论证。支持前一项主张的证据，不能在未加说明的情况下包办后续主张的证明。



（左起）
安德鲁·怀斯，《1946年的冬天》，1946，板上蛋彩，79.7 x 121.9 cm
安德鲁·怀斯，《克利斯蒂娜的世界》，1948，板上蛋彩，81.9 × 121.3 cm

您将何多苓与安德鲁·怀斯、王广义与安迪·沃霍尔作比较，对此很有启发。正如您所指出的，相似性与影响关系会引出关于具体情境、抱负和艺术主体性的进一步问题，却不能替这些问题作答。假设某个案例中，一份有日期的记录能够证明艺术家接触过另一位艺术家的作品；比较分析支持其有意采用某些手法；其他材料再帮助解释采用这些手法的目的。这样的研究可以让此前未被认识的成就显现出来，也可能纠正“后来的作品不过是模仿”这种化约性判断。



（左起）
何多苓，《春风已经苏醒》，1982，布面油画，95 × 130 cm
何多苓，《克利斯蒂娜之后的世界》，2010，布面油画，150 × 200 cm

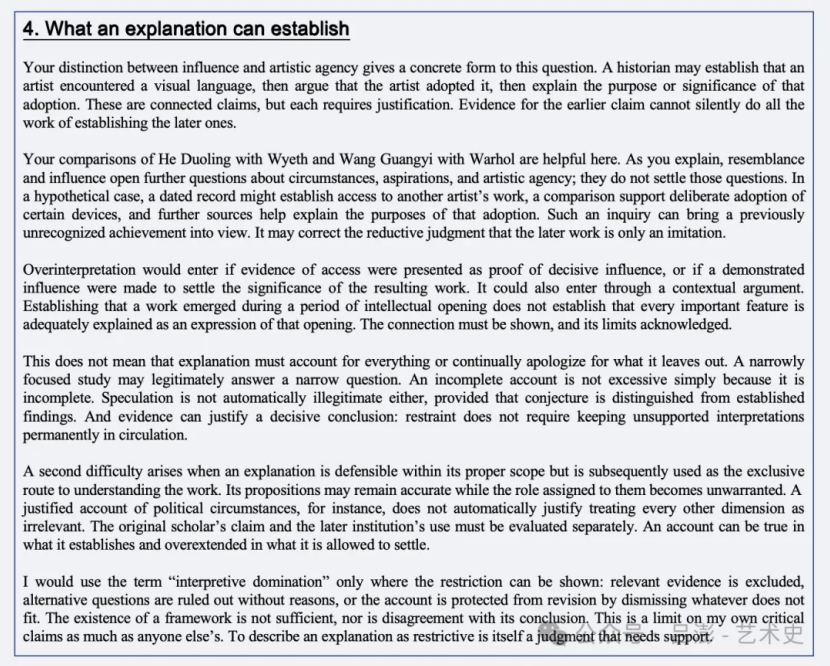
如果把接触某作品的证据说成决定性影响的证明，或者让已经证实的影响关系直接定论后续作品的意义，过度阐释就出现了。语境论述也可能如此。证明一件作品产生于思想开放的时期，并不能证明作品的每个重要特征都能被充分解释为这种开放的体现。两者之间的联系必须得到展示，其限度也必须说明。

这并不意味着解释必须面面俱到，或不断为自己的遗漏道歉。一项范围明确的研究完全可以正当地回答一个有限的问题。叙述不完整，不会仅仅因为不完整就构成过度阐释。只要把推测与已确立的发现区分开来，推测也不必然不正当。证据有时足以支持明确结论；克制并不要求让缺乏依据的阐释永久流传。

第二个难题是：一项解释在其适当范围内站得住脚，之后却被当作理解作品的唯一途径。它的论点可能仍然准确，但后来赋予它的作用却已不合理。例如，一份关于政治情境的可靠叙述，并不

能自动证明其他所有维度都无关紧要。最初学者提出的主张，与后来机构对它的使用，必须分别评估。一份叙述在其确立的事项上可能为真，却在被允许定论的范围上遭到过度延伸。

只有在能够证明限制确实存在时，我才会使用“阐释支配”这一说法：相关证据遭到排除，其他问题在没有理由的情况下被拒斥，或者叙述通过排除不合之处来保护自己免受修正。存在一个框架本身并不足够，对其结论持有异议也不足够。这一限制同样适用于我自己的批评主张。说某种解释具有约束性，本身也是需要证据支持的判断。



4. What an explanation can establish

Your distinction between influence and artistic agency gives a concrete form to this question. A historian may establish that an artist encountered a visual language, then argue that the artist adopted it, then explain the purpose or significance of that adoption. These are connected claims, but each requires justification. Evidence for the earlier claim cannot silently do all the work of establishing the later ones.

Your comparisons of He Duoling with Wyeth and Wang Guangyi with Warhol are helpful here. As you explain, resemblance and influence open further questions about circumstances, aspirations, and artistic agency; they do not settle those questions. In a hypothetical case, a dated record might establish access to another artist's work, a comparison support deliberate adoption of certain devices, and further sources help explain the purposes of that adoption. Such an inquiry can bring a previously unrecognized achievement into view. It may correct the reductive judgment that the later work is only an imitation.

Overinterpretation would enter if evidence of access were presented as proof of decisive influence, or if a demonstrated influence were made to settle the significance of the resulting work. It could also enter through a contextual argument. Establishing that a work emerged during a period of intellectual opening does not establish that every important feature is adequately explained as an expression of that opening. The connection must be shown, and its limits acknowledged.

This does not mean that explanation must account for everything or continually apologize for what it leaves out. A narrowly focused study may legitimately answer a narrow question. An incomplete account is not excessive simply because it is incomplete. Speculation is not automatically illegitimate either, provided that conjecture is distinguished from established findings. And evidence can justify a decisive conclusion: restraint does not require keeping unsupported interpretations permanently in circulation.

A second difficulty arises when an explanation is defensible within its proper scope but is subsequently used as the exclusive route to understanding the work. Its propositions may remain accurate while the role assigned to them becomes unwarranted. A justified account of political circumstances, for instance, does not automatically justify treating every other dimension as irrelevant. The original scholar's claim and the later institution's use must be evaluated separately. An account can be true in what it establishes and overextended in what it is allowed to settle.

I would use the term "interpretive domination" only where the restriction can be shown: relevant evidence is excluded, alternative questions are ruled out without reasons, or the account is protected from revision by dismissing whatever does not fit. The existence of a framework is not sufficient, nor is disagreement with its conclusion. This is a limit on my own critical claims as much as anyone else's. To describe an explanation as restrictive is itself a judgment that needs support.

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五、语境、经验与历史判断

您提出的三个问题，有助于把这些区分放回历史书写实践之中。第一个问题涉及语境如何变成一种只筛选印证性证据的框架。我会区分两类范畴：一类为研究提供起点，另一类则预先决定答案。关于市场化或思想变化的问题可能很有启发性。关键在于如何考察这种关系，如何对待相反证据，以及随着对作品及其情境理解的加深，是否允许调整范畴。

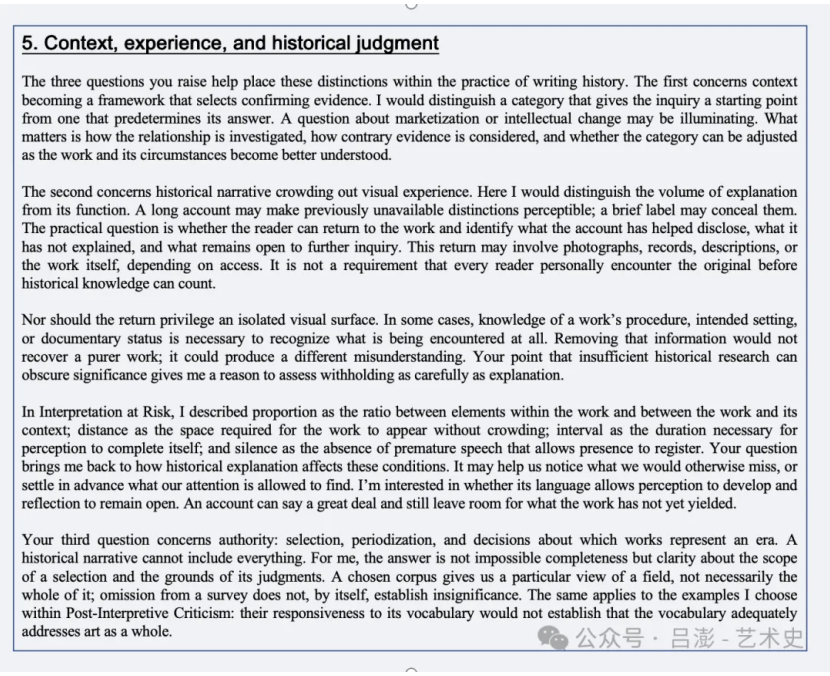
第二个问题涉及历史叙述挤压视觉经验。这里我会区分解释的篇幅与它所发挥的作用。较长的叙述可能使以往无法辨识的差异变得可感；简短的说明牌也可能将它们遮蔽。实践中的问题是：读者能否重新回到作品，辨认这套叙述帮助揭示了什么、未能解释什么，以及哪些问题仍可继续探究。视条件而定，这种回返可能借助照片、档案、描述或作品本身。这并不意味着每位读者都必须亲自见到原作，历史知识才算成立。

这种回返也不应只重视孤立的视觉表面。有时，了解作品的制作程序、预定场所或文献属性，是辨认我们究竟在面对什么的必要条件。移除这些信息并不能恢复一个更纯粹的作品，反而可能造

成另一种误解。您指出历史研究不足可能遮蔽作品意义，这促使我同样审视不提供解释的做法。

在《阐释的风险》中，我将“比例”描述为作品内部各要素之间、以及作品与其语境之间的比率关系；将“距离”描述为作品得以显现而不受挤压所需的空间；将“间隔”描述为知觉完成自身所需的时间；将“沉默”描述为避免过早言说、从而使在场得以显现的状态。您的问题使我重新思考历史解释如何影响这些条件。它可能帮助我们注意到原本会错过的东西，也可能预先限定注意力能够发现什么。我关心的是，解释的语言是否让知觉得以展开、让反思保持开放。一份叙述即便内容丰富，仍可以为作品尚未呈现的部分留下空间。

第三个问题涉及权威：选择、分期，以及决定哪些作品能够代表一个时代。历史叙述不可能囊括一切。对我而言，答案不是追求不可能的完整，而是明确说明选取范围和判断依据。所选的作品群体呈现的是某个领域的特定视角，不一定是全貌；一项综述没有提及某件作品，本身并不能证明它不重要。对于我在后阐释批评中选取的例子，道理也一样：这些例子能够回应其术语体系，并不能证明这套术语足以论述整体艺术。



5. Context, experience, and historical judgment

The three questions you raise help place these distinctions within the practice of writing history. The first concerns context becoming a framework that selects confirming evidence. I would distinguish a category that gives the inquiry a starting point from one that predetermines its answer. A question about marketization or intellectual change may be illuminating. What matters is how the relationship is investigated, how contrary evidence is considered, and whether the category can be adjusted as the work and its circumstances become better understood.

The second concerns historical narrative crowding out visual experience. Here I would distinguish the volume of explanation from its function. A long account may make previously unavailable distinctions perceptible; a brief label may conceal them. The practical question is whether the reader can return to the work and identify what the account has helped disclose, what it has not explained, and what remains open to further inquiry. This return may involve photographs, records, descriptions, or the work itself, depending on access. It is not a requirement that every reader personally encounter the original before historical knowledge can count.

Nor should the return privilege an isolated visual surface. In some cases, knowledge of a work's procedure, intended setting, or documentary status is necessary to recognize what is being encountered at all. Removing that information would not recover a purer work; it could produce a different misunderstanding. Your point that insufficient historical research can obscure significance gives me a reason to assess withholding as carefully as explanation.

In Interpretation at Risk, I described proportion as the ratio between elements within the work and between the work and its context; distance as the space required for the work to appear without crowding; interval as the duration necessary for perception to complete itself; and silence as the absence of premature speech that allows presence to register. Your question brings me back to how historical explanation affects these conditions. It may help us notice what we would otherwise miss, or settle in advance what our attention is allowed to find. I'm interested in whether its language allows perception to develop and reflection to remain open. An account can say a great deal and still leave room for what the work has not yet yielded.

Your third question concerns authority: selection, periodization, and decisions about which works represent an era. A historical narrative cannot include everything. For me, the answer is not impossible completeness but clarity about the scope of a selection and the grounds of its judgments. A chosen corpus gives us a particular view of a field, not necessarily the whole of it; omission from a survey does not, by itself, establish insignificance. The same applies to the examples I choose within Post-Interpretive Criticism: their responsiveness to its vocabulary would not establish that the vocabulary adequately addresses art as a whole.

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六、历史研究是否也有同样的风险？

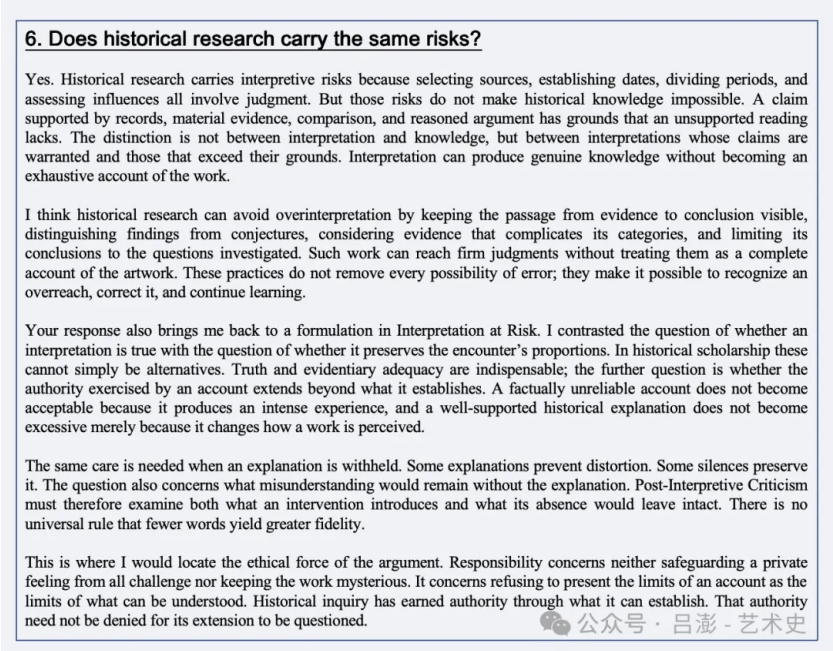
的确。历史研究也有阐释风险，因为选择史料、确定年代、划分时期、评估影响都涉及判断。但这些风险并不意味着历史知识不可能成立。得到档案、实物证据、比较分析和合理论证支持的主张，具有无依据的解读所不具备的基础。区别不在于阐释与知识，而在于阐释的主张是否有根据，还是超出了其根据所能支持的范围。阐释能够产生真正的知识，却不必因此成为对作品的穷尽性叙述。

我认为，历史研究可以通过以下方式避免过度阐释：让从证据到结论的推理过程清晰可见；区分研究发现与推测；考虑那些会使既有范畴变得复杂的证据；并把结论限定在实际考察的问题范围内。这样的研究能够作出明确判断，而不把判断当成对艺术作品的完整说明。这些做法不能消除所有出错的可能，却能让我们识别推论越界、加以修正并继续认识作品。

您的回复也让我想起《阐释的风险》中的一个表述。我曾把“阐释是否为真”与“阐释是否维护了相遇的比例关系”作对照。在历史研究中，二者不能被简单地当成替代选项。真实性与证据充分性不可或缺；此外还要追问，一份叙述所行使的权威是否超出了它实际确立的范围。事实不可靠的叙述，不会因为带来强烈经验就变得可以接受；有充分依据的历史解释，也不会仅仅因为改变了人们对作品的感受，就成为过度阐释。

在不提供解释时，也需同样谨慎。有些解释能够防止歪曲；有些沉默却会保留歪曲。问题在于，如果没有这项解释，哪些误解会继续存在。因此，PIC 必须同时考察介入带来了什么，以及缺席会让什么原样保留。少说一些就必然更加忠实，并不存在这样的普遍规则。

我将其视为论证的伦理力量所在。责任既不意味着保护私人感受、使其免受一切质疑，也不意味着让作品永远保持神秘。责任在于拒绝把一份叙述的限度说成理解的限度。历史研究凭借能够确立的事实赢得权威；我们可以质疑这种权威被延伸到何处，而不必否认它本身。



6. Does historical research carry the same risks?

Yes. Historical research carries interpretive risks because selecting sources, establishing dates, dividing periods, and assessing influences all involve judgment. But those risks do not make historical knowledge impossible. A claim supported by records, material evidence, comparison, and reasoned argument has grounds that an unsupported reading lacks. The distinction is not between interpretation and knowledge, but between interpretations whose claims are warranted and those that exceed their grounds. Interpretation can produce genuine knowledge without becoming an exhaustive account of the work.

I think historical research can avoid overinterpretation by keeping the passage from evidence to conclusion visible, distinguishing findings from conjectures, considering evidence that complicates its categories, and limiting its conclusions to the questions investigated. Such work can reach firm judgments without treating them as a complete account of the artwork. These practices do not remove every possibility of error; they make it possible to recognize an overreach, correct it, and continue learning.

Your response also brings me back to a formulation in Interpretation at Risk. I contrasted the question of whether an interpretation is true with the question of whether it preserves the encounter's proportions. In historical scholarship these cannot simply be alternatives. Truth and evidentiary adequacy are indispensable; the further question is whether the authority exercised by an account extends beyond what it establishes. A factually unreliable account does not become acceptable because it produces an intense experience, and a well-supported historical explanation does not become excessive merely because it changes how a work is perceived.

The same care is needed when an explanation is withheld. Some explanations prevent distortion. Some silences preserve it. The question also concerns what misunderstanding would remain without the explanation. Post-Interpretive Criticism must therefore examine both what an intervention introduces and what its absence would leave intact. There is no universal rule that fewer words yield greater fidelity.

This is where I would locate the ethical force of the argument. Responsibility concerns neither safeguarding a private feeling from all challenge nor keeping the work mysterious. It concerns refusing to present the limits of an account as the limits of what can be understood. Historical inquiry has earned authority through what it can establish. That authority need not be denied for its extension to be questioned.

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七、继续对话

您在结尾提出的观点将这些关切汇集起来：历史解释帮助我们理解作品，而作品可以不断修正我们对历史的理解。我珍视这种相互作用，因为它使历史研究与审美关注能够彼此贡献，而不让任

何一方代替另一方。

对我而言，这也让“超出解释”有了更准确的含义。作品中的某个细节可能促使我们重新思考一种历史关系，不过要确立由此得出的结论，仍需要证据与论证。超出既有叙述的部分不一定是不可知的剩余；它也可能只是叙述尚未帮助我们理解的东西。承认这种可能性，就意味着允许重要细节改变叙述，而不只是把它安置在一个始终不变的结论之中。

我很愿意继续与您思考这个问题，并沿着您认为最有启发性的方向展开。我们可以寻找一个能让这一区分更加清楚的历史案例，也可以继续探究历史知识与审美经验之间的关系。我很期待我们不同的经历能够让彼此共同注意到什么。

我不认为这些责任是后阐释批评必须带给艺术史的新东西。您的回复已经在历史实践内部为它们留出了位置。我希望后阐释批评能够作出的贡献，是继续追问一项解释确立真实内容之后还会做什么：它如何塑造后续关注，又留下什么继续敞开。这似乎是我们的路径能够相遇之处，也为双方进一步发展留有余地。

在我看来，理解艺术作品的历史与理解作品本身，在重要方面彼此不可分，却又不是可以互换的成果。我珍视您回复中所展现的、将二者一并把握的可能性：历史解释可以深化我们的关注，而重新焕发的关注也能为历史研究提供新的认识对象。我们已经学到的，不会因为作品仍有更多可供呈现而有所减损。

让作品与它的历史继续彼此照亮。

7. Continuing the conversation

Your concluding proposition brings these concerns together: historical explanation helps us understand the work, while the work can continue to revise our understanding of history. I find that reciprocity valuable because it allows historical inquiry and aesthetic attention to contribute to one another without making either stand in for the other.

For me, this also gives “exceeding an explanation” a more precise meaning. A detail in a work may invite us to reconsider a historical relationship, although evidence and argument are still needed to establish what follows. What exceeds the account need not be an unknowable remainder; it may be something the account has not yet helped us understand. Recognizing that possibility means allowing a consequential detail to change the account, rather than only finding a place for it within an unchanged conclusion.

I would be glad to continue thinking this through with you, following whichever aspect you find most fruitful. We may find a historical example that brings the distinction into clearer view, or there may be more to understand in the relationship between historical knowledge and aesthetic experience itself. I’m interested in what our different experiences allow us to notice together.

I don’t regard these responsibilities as something PIC must introduce to art history. Your response already gives them a place within historical practice. The contribution I hope Post-Interpretive Criticism can make is to stay with what an explanation does after it has established something true: how it shapes further attention and what remains available beyond it. That seems a useful point of contact between our approaches, with room for both to develop.

Understanding an artwork’s history and understanding the artwork remain, for me, inseparable in important respects without being interchangeable achievements. What I value in your response is the possibility of holding them together: historical explanation can deepen our attention, and renewed attention can give historical inquiry something further to understand. What we have learned need not be diminished by what the work still has to offer.

Let the work and its history continue to illuminate one another.

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历史是有问题的烟云，艺术史也不例外



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