



From "Political Pop" to "Cultural Pop" - Taking Trump's Political Emoji Packs as an Example

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ABSTRACT

Under the background of abnormal development of China-US relations, high aversion to Western politics and the rise of new nationalist ideological trends, political figure emoji packs in Chinese public opinion (taking Trump as an example) are widely popular. This is a manifestation of art participating in politics and a counterattack and contempt for American politics. It is also a new artistic and communication phenomenon of Chinese people accepting Western political pop and cultural pop and making it Sinicized and modernized. This phenomenon has its historical and practical rationality. However, the recklessness and willfulness shown in the evolution from political pop to cultural pop has caused distortion in political expression and diluted people's desire to understand the truth, and may become a negative factor in artistic creation and cultural dissemination.

Keywords: Trump, image politics, pop, expression package, political distortion

Because of the unique advantages of directly appealing to vision and expressing emotion, and its diversity and translation, images become the main medium for anyone to construct their own discourse power, which is widely welcomed and sought after. Especially in the era of the rapid development of the Internet, the communication between people cannot be face to face. Sometimes, the communication of words alone cannot exhaust the emotions and feelings, and the picture symbols emerge at the right moment. In fact, the so-called emojis has no accurate academic definition. From the perspective of communication characteristics, it is a "network dialect" that combines words, pictures, movements and emotions to convey feelings.¹ It starts up of punctuation marks and numerical letters to simulate the dynamics and expressions of the human body. Later, it developed to use the portraits of Internet celebrities and or exaggerated movements, with slogan-type words, or create dynamic effects to make them vivid and prominent. The field of its application from the initial needs of interpersonal communication, gradually include the real world, international politics, economy, science and technology, military and so on. Political emojis, a new thing in the online social world in recent years, is that images are mainly composed of political figures or events, accompanied by political discourse or life-style-based language. Of course, they often convey certain emotions in a playful and rude tone.

After the new US President Donald Trump took office, the Sino-US relationship has entered a historical inflection point, and the changes of the most important partnership in the international pattern have also caused global shocks. Trump change attitude towards China, actively implement the promise of the election that "let America to great" declaration, to China repeatedly cast heavy hammer, such as accused China of stealing intellectual property, with the export trade deficit, tax cuts reversed transmission in China and the United States, and vowed to sanctions against China and a big trade war. Every time Trump's sensational remarks and the rhetoric of Chinese and American diplomatic leaders at international conferences have attracted wide attention from domestic politics and international public opinion. Many people who used to know politics are more enthusiastic about politics and compete to speak. In this process, the current political emojis have become a widely used language symbol. Both the United States and China, including the Chinese media and the Internet. In the US side, what we can see is a skilled and more provocative persuasion than words, mainly in the propaganda effect, pointing to Trump's policy policy. In China, what we can see more is the banter of its image and behavior based on the influence of nationalist standpoint and playful realism, as well as the misappropriation after a new face.

At that time, the search engine of the Internet input concepts and words related to the diplomatic relations between the US of China and the United States, often with the overwhelming Trump expression, although each of which was different, but seemed

familiar to readers. There is a paradox here, is the image construction of these different sources of memes consistent or common? Behind the image production, can we see the relatively single attitude and value judgment of Chinese people on the political and international situation, and can the public use such images to launch another war of - dominated by public opinion? Because the emergence and development of this phenomenon is too rapid, the academic circle has not had time to make due attention and response, but it is indeed the problem that the art circle and the communication circle have faced and need to think about.

1. IMAGE STUDY - THE FORMS AND MEANINGS OF TRUMP'S FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Start from the visual presentation form and composition of such images. Although, as a visual symbol of language communication or current affairs commentary, the straightforward and concise emotional expression makes the political images do not have the rich artistic conception of artistic works, its characteristics of deep meaning cannot be denied. In the study of Imagology (1939), the American art historian Erwin Panofsky, 1892-1968) first discusses and determines the three meanings of the image: the first or the natural theme - constitutes the world of the art motif; the second or program theme - constitutes the world of the story and implication of the image; and the internal meaning and content - constitute the world of "symbolic" value.² That is, from the basic theme to the internal meaning of the work to identify and explore the artist's creative intention and ideology.

From the perspective of the form of painting expression, according to the Chinese painting tradition, the form of expression of political figures can be said to be relatively single. Body posture shows regular sitting or standing posture, dignified and serious expression or nod smile, rarely overly excited mood revealed. The landscape has a full body, half body and facial painting. Close-up facial painting images are often mainly realistic, with a commemorative meaning. For example, the portraits of the emperors, the official portraits of the leaders during the period of the Republic of China and after the founding of the People's Republic of China basically still follow the visual presentation of vivid portrayal, to highlight the extraordinary temperament and great image of the leaders, which is an obvious commendatory painting style. At the same time, under the propaganda of mainstream ideology, the audience's expectation for the image of leaders gradually forms the "stereotype" of its performance. Even the satirical political cartoons created by artists such as Brother Liao Bing in the 1980s use exaggerated and abstract brushwork, of course, with a tendency to make witty political protagonists, but the characters are the protagonists attached to the plot of the picture and do not have direct contact and communication with the appearance of the painting. In recent years, a series of eye-catching propaganda paintings made by European and American leaders due to political competition, especially the Trump statue, which is widely popular and spread. His eyes are pressing and pointed to the image outside the audience, which can be said to be very rare in the history of Chinese statue.

Trump's faces are mostly busts of political figures and close-ups of his faces, with a simple monochrome background that highlights the portrait. The facial expression of the portrait can be divided into three categories, or the face of frowning and contempt, or the arrogance of fierce eyes and scolding, or the calm expression, all of which have the visual effect due to the purity of its composition. The location and time of the production are almost invariably those of Trump making a speech or a political meeting. The most visually impressive is Trump's gestures, with his hands spread out or pointing straight above or outside the picture, giving a sense of forced impact.

This way of image composition can be traced to the West before and after World War I, where the role of images was made important in the first imperial disaster in human history. Its information transmission is fast and clear, directly appealing to the visual sense, direct to the heart without requiring too much rational discrimination, especially in each country in the propaganda of the justice of the war and encourage the morale of the army to produce an indelible contribution. In 1914, Alfred Ritter's "The British, I Need You" is the prototype of this portrait, where the British officers have sharp eyes and reach out to all the eyes who saw the picture, giving people a strong psychological shock. Another picture is "I want you to join the American Army" written by American designer Flager in 1917. It also shows Uncle Sam's eyes on the front of the forefinger, making them more severe. This painting establishes the basic type of the "index finger poster".

As the medium of political discourse and power support, it faces the general public, many of whom do not have the relatively high level of knowledge and understanding ability, so the policy side must face the difficult problem of how to convey the discourse to the public. It is necessary to win the support and understanding of the middle and lower classes to adopt the plain image text as the means of communication. As a kind of visual work, its breeding environment is full of the realistic soil of force competition, so it is inevitable to have the dominant thinking of official ideology, and how to express the dominance of this discourse power can find the answer from the creative thinking of "index finger poster". First, the initial visual effect of the index finger poster is to quickly capture and gather the viewer's attention; second, American designer Steven Heller said: "Whether the message is good or bad, the extended index finger implies position and action."³⁴ Political images like this, with a dramatic "pointing to the viewer," seem to say, "I order you to do it!" Emphasizing the psychological deterrence of power to the public, and once became a kind of psychological manipulation, is the type of image of power from top to bottom. In other words, what the public can see includes trump images with similar movements issued by the US authorities, which are not simply meaning or commemorative portrait paintings, but the logic of words to deter expectations. In the New York Times, Reuters and other news newspapers, as well as articles on Trump's political comments, such images are frequently used to refute Trump's "opponents" like China and Russia or target American political opponents and disharmonious voices at the social level. Of course, there is no lack of irony about Trump's failure and improper governance in the United States, including around the world.⁵⁶⁷⁸ Of course, the characters of the images are not fabricated out of thin air. They are consistent with Trump's good use of "Twitter governance" and amazing images. They are combined with slogans and pictures to make the expression clearer. The integration of the reality and the image strengthens the deterrent effect of the image.

When this image is misappropriated and modified by the Chinese audience and placed in the daily dialogue and communication, the change in the audience identity and use occasion subtly leads to the change in its expression logic. Greenberg said: "Image is a scene of reconstruction or reproduction. It is a table direction (appearance) or a set of table images that have been withdrawn from its initial appearance and existence." These images are not confined to the original context and its original meaning and ability, but are more related to the interaction with the audience to give the image a new value system. Apart from the original political soil and placed into the new social environment and political climate, the viewer's use and viewing of such images is far from the original appearance. It is no longer an image signal of official orders to the public and super powers to deter "others" or implicitly attack vulnerable countries, but a language symbol of ironic political icon and expressing daily emotions.⁹

2. POLITICAL IMAGES AND IMAGE POLITICS - VISUAL EXPRESSION OF POLITICS

Scholar Katherine Jamieson points out that in the evolution track of contemporary social and political rhetoric, visual rhetoric has become the main rhetoric of the construction of public discourse space.¹⁰ In today's era of the Internet and information technology, the role of images in political life has been further strengthened. The phenomenon of pan-image of politics is irreversible, image politics has become an important feature of contemporary society, and the "visual turn" of information dissemination has become the main internal cause of leading contemporary culture. "The so-called image politics mainly means that the image has become the main means of constructing political issues, and has become an important way to mobilize the general public to participate in politics." This is not only caused by objective conditions, but also related to the innate advantages and inherent internal forces of visual art in carrying and conveying information. "The abstract meaning of transmission by the written symbol that we once advocated has begun to give way to the reality and feelings based on prominent communication".^{11,12} The general public is now in a visual culture era and is exposed to much more images than words. With the high-pressure lifestyle and the high-speed pace of production, readers have no time to have the same time to read the words carefully as in the past. Visual image has become the main rhetoric in the construction of public discourse space.¹³ For them, fun is an important factor in measuring the value of information, and current political news is no exception. As a result, most Chinese and foreign press outlets, both in paper and electronic publications, often use appalling headlines or eye-catching pictures. News, of course, the fact as the foundation, but how to describe and maximize the transmission effect, how to build a explosive news beyond the public attention and public opinion focus, how in the masses of information mix and high-speed operation of the Internet world to obtain greater exposure, with visual impact of pictures is the key to success, countless editors to the sword go.

These images not only attract the attention of the domestic people, and reap the commercial fruits, but sometimes also act on politics, influence the policies of the administrators, causing a sensation and hot discussion all over the world. The most typical is the death of a small Syrian refugee. In 2015, Alan "slept" on Turkish beaches, which became the "most heartbreaking picture" since the outbreak of the European refugee crisis. In a short period of time, it occupied the front page of major European news websites and publications, and "the drowning of human nature" has become a hot topic. The Daily Mail, the Mirror and others commented, and the Independent immediately launched a petition asking Britain to accept a "reasonable share of refugees". The Sun used its cover to urge Prime Minister David Cameron to take action.¹⁴ A year after the incident, Charlie Hebdo still published a comic adaptation, which renewed the discussion on the Twitter site.

Images are not only the medium of presentation and generalization of political reality, but also evolved into a tool and weapon of interpersonal communication, including the war of public opinion. In recent years, there have been two obvious upsurge of the use of visual symbols in China's political online life. First, in 2016, when Tsai Ing-wen was elected as the leader of Taiwan, netizens from both sides of the Taiwan Straits "met" on facebook (Facebook) social media sites as weapons. Moreover, due to Trump taking office last year, the China-US relationship continued to waver, causing heated debate on the Internet, and Trump images and emojis emerged. Creative Chinese netizens took Trump's exaggerated facial expressions and accompanied him spoof slogans, which briefly went viral on the Internet. In a short time, Trump's bizarre, crazy, paranoid, impulsive and funny image became popular. In fact the idol image is not necessarily consistent with the fact, but its artistic technique or political semantics can extend, because of its simple and crude, and euphemistic and subtle is suggested that the Chinese inner monologue — — entertainment thoughts of nationalist sentiment and patriotism, the Chinese people of western countries, especially the United States charges and oppression, inner with discontent and even anger of irony. The most interesting thing is the popularity of various images of Chinese diplomats, including Wang Yi, Hua Chunying and Lu Kang. From the past boycott of Japanese goods, Korean goods, demonstrations, smashing and burning, to today's online abuse, the abuse of spoof memes, the increase of national confidence has prompted the people's way to express political issues to more relaxed and comfortable expression. This has something to do with the inevitable trend of globalization and the necessity of the stability of Sino-US relations, and also the helpless black humorous self-comfort of the Chinese people based on the reality. Of course, this emojis not only look at Trump, such as Abe, Kim Jong Un, Putin, Tsai Ing-wen, etc., all of which have become the target of creativity. Any politician or organization related to the public will, including enemies, me and friends, are "treated equally".

3. POLITICAL POP AND CULTURAL POP - A QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN THE SPREAD OF POLITICAL VISUALIZATION

Trump's similar exaggerated expressions, consistent gestures and sarcastic language express a kind of absurdity that does not conform to the visual aesthetic logic, which frames the "stereotype" of Trump in the public mind through extensive dissemination. The actual support behind such a creative logic comes from the creative concept of the so-called "pop". The translation of "Pope" is "popular" - pop art, or popular art. It was a product of World War II, and was born in the West in the 1960s as a new type of art.

The emergence of pop art marks the transformation of Western art from modern to postmodern art. It is different from the war background of the emergence of the "index finger poster". Its source comes from the values and attitudes emphasizing standardization, typicalization, replication and repetition in the industrial civilization and commercial era, such as the flow operation products of modern industrial machines, typed commercial buildings, mass media and so on. The remarkable feature of pop art is to advertise, packaging, trademark, comic books and other details to enlarge or copy and take the effect of widespread dissemination. Known as the originator of pop art - American pioneer artist Andy Warhol, through the form of numerous printing star Marilyn Monroe, Coca-Cola cans, Campbell cans. Here is the impact of the commercial explosion and the high-speed mechanical forces on people's mind, which leads to the path of people's image acceptance and the change of visual aesthetic habits.

In the era when the big industrial machine dominated the supremacy of commercialism, most western avant-garde artists at that time believed that since commercial culture and mass tended to be fait accompli, art was better to actively respond to and actively participate in, and artists should become the standard-bearer of mass culture in industrial civilization. This kind of "replication" of actively following and catering to modern industrial civilization, to a large extent, eliminated the gap between elite art and public aesthetics, and thus was rapidly accepted and widely welcomed. But a series of negative effects caused many artists and thinkers and refute, mechanical repression in the field of culture, lost personality lead to originality, genius, eternal value and deepen the traditional concept abandoned, avant-garde art its inherent "self-discipline" consciousness, began to reflect on their own internal system and open social criticism.¹⁵¹⁶ Pope uses "copying" to "reverse" copying ", which can be called as an art type integrating rebellious and advanced nature, especially the playful rebellion and sarcasm for the bondage of human nature.

The influence of Western Pope on China is clearly visible. In Chinese pop art, the first one is the political pop. In 1991, Su Xianting put forward the concept of "Chinese political pop": " The so-called Chinese political pop is the pop of politics. It is with the help of the shock wave of the trend of western consumption culture in China, turning the 'sacred' of the MAO Zedong era into the truly popular ironic political ideological trend.....¹⁷ This trend uses pop graphics style, showing a sense of humor, humor and absurdity to western consumer commercial symbols."The earliest political pop was specifically appeared in the 1880s. From the perspective of art, it shows that Chinese modern art strives to integrate into the trend of western modern art and strive for the right of discourse without losing the characteristics of China itself. It is the pop embodiment of the statue of Chairman MAO: it is widely printed in daily necessities and popular as the folk "blessing god" image. This is under the background of reform and opening up, "the first attempt of artists to remove the internal shackles of 'political politics' with 'artistic politics', which is the confession of artists' personal independent discourse driven by the development of market economy".¹⁸ The artistic reconstruction of idols has got rid of the characteristics of "people", which is higher than the masses and far away from the ordinary people, and restores the individual existence. From the perspective of deep cultural psychology, political pop is the reflection of this social mentality.

Popular, copied, rebellious, ironic, and playful pop art will not spare Trump, the "alternative president" with a distinctive realistic personality. In the present materialistic and consumption culture in the rise of modern cultural atmosphere, with pop meaning trump package, its political ideology was completely dissolved, idol burden was completely abandoned, and even trump almost all identity information, into personal emotional expression of visual symbols. Margaret Mead pointed out that in the youth subculture, "the'digestion" of the original ideology runs through the whole process of its growth ". The so-called" digestion "is the resistance and rebellion against the elite culture and the mainstream culture, while the result of this" resistance and rebellion "is" self-propaganda "and" self-satisfaction ".thereupon, Trump seems to be printed on T-shirts, stickers and stationery, and even toilet paper, Designed to be dolls or nude models, etc., This is not an expression of worship or disdain for Trump himself, Neither or a clear political position, But with a sense of the current preference for cynicism, Use political "idols" to express their emotions and even irony the reality and ridicule themselves, Provide a humorous and ingenious expression to the long-suppressed subject discourse, Turn political discourse into life expression through the way of visual art, Put politics and life in the process of ready translation and transformation, This is one of the biggest characteristics of the political pop that has evolved into a further popular cultural pop. Chinese visual political culture has undergone an obvious turn: from political pop to cultural pop - the rising popularity process, the political image has completely entered the main theme of mass culture. As British scholars featherstone criticized postmodernism, in the era of consumerism, when norms and constraints tend to weaken and loose, consumption society from essentially become a culture, the audience in endless reproduction and reproduction of the image and symbol bombardment under ecstasy, lost the grasp of fixed meaning, some scholars denounced as "no depth culture", but for the majority of netizens, "no depth culture" is no solution.¹⁹²⁰²¹

At the same time, the era of picture reading inevitably comes from the "fighting map competition". Holding various pictures in his hands has become the capital of visual social network dialogue skills, and the image has become a normal cultural phenomenon. Therefore, it is natural that the news that attracts high public attention in reality is quickly created as emojis, including in international political events. Of course, there is no lack of individuals themselves to follow the development trend, close to the advanced nature of political events and The Times deliberately flaunt and build. Past authority through the political image to people one-way type political discourse and standard information mechanism has changed, grassroots people can become a political image makers and tamper, political images of use and translation accident along also gradually expand, once let the political events image and interpersonal daily language boundaries increasingly blurred. Especially image symbol is subjective and imagination, in interpersonal discourse communication will brand different emotions and consciousness, make its applicability and flexibility in daily communication, political expression package shape in shadow finally simplified into daily thoughts and emotional expression symbol, trump the image of perverse and sharp declaration naturally into ordinary interpersonal communication run joke language symbol. If the Trump memes are already the deterioration of political truth, then the development of political pop to cultural pop is even more widespread.

4. THE POLITICAL DISTORTION HAZARDS OF POLITICAL POP

In the new era of Internet in the 21st century, cultural communication needs to constantly reflect on itself and adjust its existence form and communication path according to the practical requirements, so as to maximize social and commercial benefits, so as to better serve the masses and feed life. As for communication receptors, British scholar Timothy Beves believes that due to the ideological deconstruction of postmodernity, the "end of politics" crisis has appeared in the West.²² Today's political communication is based on vision, based on images, followed by written narration.²³ It is a common phenomenon for "feeling politics" to suppress "feeling politics" against "traditional rational politics", talk about politics, cynical without thinking, even cynical banter and distortion, and talk about "feeling politics" in the current society.²⁴ It is a common phenomenon in the current society. Chinese society moved from the "Cultural Revolution" to the reform and opening up, and still remembers the previous high-pressure political memories. The development of the political pop represented by Trump emojis into the mass pop is undoubtedly the natural choice of real artistic life and political life.

However, in this wave of timely visual boom, should we re-examine its rational political visual effect under the information explosion and media assist? Powerful copy-paste and cutting and editing techniques can dismember the picture of real history into various fragments. The so-called political images are just countless trivial projections of reality, and spread out the fragmented, scattered consciousness presentation. Especially under the control and construction of commercial value and power consciousness, all the things that happen in the current society and the original historical context are more complicated and confusing, and people are more elusive about the truth of the facts. The political revely in the name of art is a greater emptiness and anxiety over people's minds.²⁵ The French sociologist Baudrillard said: " Mass communication has excluded culture and knowledge. It can never allow truly symbolic or didactic processes to work, because it will damage the collective participation in which the ritual meaning lies. Such participation can only be achieved through a liturgical code, a set of symbolic codes that carefully contain the meaning." This is the negative effect brought by political pop, which will not only cause the distortion of artistic expression and the spread of politics, but also paralyze people to try to understand the real demands. Local American scholars also began to reflect that Trump's exaggerated gestures and expressions are certainly the embodiment of the artistic entertainment value and political style of his comedy, but more importantly, it is a misleading political discourse and the supplement and reinforcement of the weak correctness of political speech.²⁶ Negative images in the news reports are more likely to be remembered and recalled by the audience than in the text.²⁷ Image is also the embodiment of a relationship, and all the images are derived from and influence the consciousness of the cognition of "self" and "other".²⁸ Trump expression images from the origin of the American made, its capture a series of exaggerated expressions, is essentially a certain degree not objective, with political purpose of provocative value orientation, and the image once frequently related about china-us relations and reports, for the image of China overseas construction and spread, inevitably is extremely unfair is bad.

In order to resist the discomfort brought by this post-modernity and the restriction and repression followed by a certain universal culture, will the human wisdom and creativity begin a new journey? Before China, the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were the first to prevail political pop, which should also take warning of the impetus to the earth-shattering political disaster. In recent years, the voice of whipping and scolding the lack of ideological depth has become more and more strong, and the search for the roots of traditional culture and how to establish a new civilization more conducive to the process of modernization are also becoming increasingly deep. Political pop and cultural pop, the darling of the three fields of politics, art and communication, are under the test of human civilization in this complex social context, and shape its times and history.

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