

# Research on the Creative Expression of Font Design in Poster Design Taking Public Poster as an Example

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## ABSTRACT

At present, human beings are in a new era of design culture, which is also an information age that people take graphic language as communication tool and integrate design and culture. As a means of public communication in modern social life, public posters carry certain cultural deposits and social responsibilities. Nowadays, font design has been widely used in poster design with its profound cultural connotation and unique expression. In addition, its expression forms are rich and varied, and some are even directly used as graphic elements. It can be seen that people have realized the special value of font design in poster design. From the perspective of the development history and characteristics of font design, this paper makes case analysis and discusses the performance effect and artistic value of font design in public poster design with the help of design works.

**Keywords:** *Font design, Public poster, Culture.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

2020 is a special year in which countries, people and even the whole world are undergoing new tests with the advent of the epidemic. Topics such as anti-Japanese war and saving food have attracted people's attention again. In March 2021, major organizations also organized online anti-epidemic poster design exhibitions and other activities, hoping to resonate with everyone through public posters. It can be seen that designers take the public posters as an important carrier to reflect human living environment. Font design has a long history and culture. In recent years, it has gradually been used as a form of expression in poster design. With the integration of modern design concepts and techniques such as font design, public posters are created, which can not only form a strong visual impact, but also make the public have more profound memories.

## 2. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF FONT DESIGN

Before understanding font design, it is required to start from language and writing. Language is the medium through which people convey their thoughts and feelings, and writing is the auxiliary tool for recording language. The three elements that constitute the writing are "form", "sound" and "meaning" [1], but "form" plays a key role here, because it gives people a visual aesthetic feeling. Gradually, words began to be graphical, and even some works directly took the words as graphics. Therefore, designers began to pay attention to font design and use font design as an expression technique for poster creation. At the same time, font design has been widely used in various design fields.

### 2.1 The Concept of Font Design

As mentioned above, the three elements constituting the writing are "form", "sound" and "meaning", in which "form" plays the role of pursuing visual beauty, and this form is called font

design. Typographic is the English name, which means a design art that carefully arranges and decorates the writing according to the visual law. With the progress of society, font design has been applied in many art fields. In today's life, the concept of font design has entered the life and vision of more people under the guidance of modern design concepts and relying on the highly developed science and technology of modern society.

## **2.2 The Development and Evolution of Font Design**

At first, human beings would think of the introduction of western modeling concepts and the rise of modern artistic calligraphy. Due to the differences in history, geography and cultural backgrounds, there are great differences in the eastern and western modeling concepts and aesthetic consciousness. Dating back to the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, with the publicity of Western missionaries, Chinese people absorbed some Western modeling concepts. Secondly, the rise of modern artistic calligraphy has also played a key role. When it comes to artistic calligraphy, it is inevitable to think of keywords such as folk character, expressiveness, and diversity. Artistic calligraphy is very expressive and full of creativity without being restricted by restrictions. As early as the first year of the Republic of China, artistic calligraphy had been used in "Truth Pictorial". Until the 1930s, the creation and frequency of use of artistic calligraphy can be said to have reached a peak.

And then, in the early 20th century, when the Chinese Communist Party was founded, China's national industry and commerce had been developed. During this period, the publishing and printing industry had achieved the most rapid development. As everyone knows, text communication needs a carrier. At that time, it just caught up with the trend of many new written media. While promoting social and economic development, it also led to the development of modern artistic calligraphy and created the artistic calligraphy style of new China. The form of artistic calligraphy in the liberated area is solid, solemn and generous, suitable for the design of characters expressing political propaganda and the general environment. And then, modern artistic calligraphy had also been in a prosperous period.

When it comes to the artistic fault after the founding of the People's Republic of China, it is not

difficult to find that China was influenced by modern art as early as the early 20th century. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the modern artistic calligraphy entered its third stage of development until the reform and opening up. In the 1950s, after China entered the planned economy track, most of the advertisements and decoration in cities were disintegrated, leading to the gradual changes in the development of artistic calligraphy. Moreover, in 1955, a simplification movement of Chinese characters started. The formal artistic calligraphy represented by Song typeface and boldface had achieved an unusually vigorous development. In serious popular propaganda, not to use beautiful variant artistic calligraphy seems to be a discipline. After the "Chinese Character Simplification Plan" was issued, the design form of artistic calligraphy began to become thinner and thinner, and the types became less abundant. Human and complex font design is gradually disappearing and replaced by simple and tagline design.

After the reform and opening up, a new decorative font began to appear in China. This decorative font is a graphic symbol with the use of exaggeration, addition and subtraction, deformation, symbol and other artistic techniques, which takes Chinese characters as the main component, such as, many of the logos human beings see in life today [2].

## **3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FONT DESIGN IN PUBLIC POSTERS**

Public posters are relative to commercial posters. Public posters are not for profit, but for the whole society. Therefore, the design will take into account the acceptance of the public. Its meaning is to make the world better and more harmonious. In today's life, when people enjoy the convenience brought by technological progress, many problems in the progress of human civilization have gradually emerged, such as food waste, war, killing animals, and so on. People must look at and solve these problems rationally in order to make all-round progress. It can be seen that the themes of public posters are mostly on social topics. In addition, public poster in the field of art design is a part of social welfare and helps to promote the development of social welfare undertakings.

Characters play an important role in the design of public posters. The characters can be processed graphically, and the characters and graphics can

complement each other. At the same time, it can also be explained through text layout to make it more suitable for the theme expression [3]. In the design of public posters, designers usually make use of people's sense of identity and intimacy with text, and then use a variety of creative forms to organize and typeset text information, thereby enriching the cultural connotation of public posters and expanding the influence. Finally, the theme expression would be clearer, and its content would go deeper into the hearts of the audience.

### ***3.1 The Recognizability of Characters***

As everyone knows, whether it uses direct graphics or text graphics in public posters, as a symbol, the most important thing is to convey its information clearly and accurately. In order to make the users not hesitate, it is required to have a good recognizability. The graphic design of the characters can not only quickly and intuitively make users understand the information conveyed by the public poster, but also turn the ideas contained in the poster work to the "presentation" [4] along with the "narrative" function of the text itself, adding the interest. However, if the key factor of recognizability is neglected when designing, it will also cause problems that readers cannot understand. It can be seen that in the design, recognizability takes the first place.

### ***3.2 Nationality of Characters***

As a tool for recording thoughts and expressing exchanges, characters represent the culture of a region, a nation, and even a country, with extremely distinctive features. At the same time, it is a symbol of a nation and also reflects the aesthetic characteristics. Therefore, the text embodies its unique national spirit and has a strong national character [5].

However, most designers tend to ignore this feature of text when designing public posters. Because visual designers often look at issues perceptually when designing, more attention is paid to the match between typesetting of text and the whole picture. However, if it can be used reasonably, it will be able to make the national character of the text in public posters expressed incisively and vividly. The core and soul of public posters are mainly to convey clear ideas and concepts, which is also the responsibility and obligation of designers.

## **4. THE CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF FONT DESIGN IN PUBLIC POSTERS**

Public posters are one of the means of publicity for public welfare undertakings. The themes, content and ideas conveyed in the pictures must achieve the effect of being deeply rooted in the memory. Therefore, in order to strengthen the theme of the poster and arouse the strong emotional resonance of the audience [6], in addition to attracting the attention of the audience in color and elements, it is required to make the reconstruction with the help of font disassembly, image and other design techniques to further strengthen its concept.

### ***4.1 Dismantling***

The so-called dismantling means reconstruction, with multiple meanings. That is to say, it is suggested to disassemble or reconstruct on the basis of the original text, and give it a new meaning without affecting the original meaning. When designers make public posters, it is suggested to disassemble or reconstruct the text or words related to the theme to make it more suitable for the theme people want to convey. When it comes to saving food, the public poster design elements that everyone thinks of include "Clean Plate Campaign", rice, chopsticks, and so on. In this design, the authors started from different perspectives. "Figure 1" is different from other posters of food saving and "Clean Plate Campaign". A series of public posters designed to save food were designed by using the traditional characters of "饕" and "飲" to be disassembled. The poster on the left is "饕", and the meaning of "饕" itself is delicious food. The traditional character "饕" is disassembled as "食" (food) + "羞" (shame) to express the sense of maintaining frugality when enjoying food. The poster on the right is "飲", and its original meaning is to drink. It has the same expression method as that of the previous poster. The traditional character "飲" is disassembled as "食" (food) + "欠" to express the theme, which makes this series of posters have a strong visual impact and personality characteristics.



Figure 1 Poster design of saving food — "Wasting Food".

#### 4.2 Imagery

The so-called image is to replace and use form to explain meaning. Without destroying the structure of the font, it is suggested to replace the specific image in terms of font shape or strokes, and the font can be visualized, thereby enhancing its interest. However, to reconstruct is to find the relationship between the text and the thing, so as to achieve the purpose of font design. When making public posters, this method can be used to achieve unexpected but reasonable visual effects. For example, "Figure 2" achieves the desired effect by replacing the series of posters with the words "囚" and "困". In the poster on the left, the word "囚" is replaced by the iron sheet pierced by bullets, and the word "人" is replaced with a gun at the same time, meaning that human beings can't be imprisoned in the war. The second public poster with the word "困" in the same series has similar design and expression methods, except that the left-falling stroke and right-falling stroke of the word "木" are replaced with a felling saw, and the word "十" is replaced with the felled wood, meaning that human beings can't be trapped in the ecological environment. By reconstruct the visual change, designers leave a certain space for users to understand and supplement, thereby realizing the focus of the appeal of public posters.



Figure 2 Poster design — anti-war and environmental protection.

Generally speaking, the application of font design in the creation of public posters not only involves the two methods mentioned above, but also includes the techniques such as text graphics, reshaping the image and visual simplicity, and leaving white space. But no matter which method is used, it is necessary to ensure the accurate transmission of information, so as to further enhance the aesthetic charm of font in public posters [7].

#### 5. CONCLUSION

With the development of the times and the progress of society, public posters have received more and more attention in the society because of their non-profit nature and educational purposes. At the same time, the application of font design in public posters will continue to update itself. With the combination of more diversified and modern design concepts, it would communicate its theme more accurately and quickly. Therefore, public posters will have more tenacious vitality and space for improvement.

#### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Zhengze Zhang wrote the manuscript, and Zhiqiang Cai contributed to revising and editing.

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