Twitter Thread by The Troll Zoo



The Troll Zoo
@TrollZoo

1. This beautiful and thought provoking piece of 21st century art was shared widely in anti-EU Facebook groups, Twitter replies to journalists and elsewhere online, in 2016.

Is it an untrackable, untraceable, Cambridge Analytica-style, fake?

2. The design is obviously substandard, to be charitable .

But look a bit closer, it appears intentionally bad.

3. A lightning strike blended through a Union Jack is not the work of a beginner, in Photoshop.

4. Is it believable that a designer capable of creating that effect in Photoshop, would also be virtually illiterate?

Literate enough to spell “Sovereignty” correctly.

5. But not literate enough to spell “corrupt”.

6. Does that seem likely?

Cambridge Analytica boasted on hidden camera that they created “untraceable, untrackable” social media themes, memes and propaganda that spread.

7. In undercover footage Cambridge Analytica’s CEO said:

“We put the information into the bloodstream of the internet and watch it grow.

Give it a little push.

This stuff infiltrates the online community and expands.

With no branding.

So it’s unattributable, untrackable"

8. So, where’s it from?

It’s impossible to find out unless you work at Facebook or Google.

But there are some strange clues.

9. Google image search shows nothing.

TinEye reverse image search shows that it was first saved by their web crawler in 2016.

A few days before the EU referendum in the UK.

10. One of the very first signs of the meme on the internet were from a Twitter user called: “johnny”

With the username “niteoflight”.

Note the strange spelling and grammar; ‘re_election'

11. The user “Johnny”’s favourite news outlet, the one Johnny shared the most often, was Russia Today (RT).

(A table of Johnny's most shared accounts on Twitter)

12. Niteoflight “Johnny” went quiet in early 2018, after 4 years of activity of tweeting.

Unusually for a pro-Brexit British man named Johnny, he often used “Beeter”.

An obscure Japanese Twitter app, to Tweet.

13. During his time on Twitter, Johnny’s unusual approach to the English language made some people suspect he might not be a real person.

14. "Politiants & mister’s, Chukka will Drive the 350"

"Take one get one free. "

15. Strange.

But probably just a random weird guy, from the UK?

Who can’t really speak English.

Who likes Russian government TV more than any other news outlet.

Who uses a defunct, obscure Japanese language Twitter app, to post to Twitter.

16. We can’t really know where this meme appeared first.

But searching back further, the earliest example of this meme that we could find was not on Google, Twitter or Facebook.

17. The earliest appearance of the 40 YEARS EU RULE meme was on Vkontakte, or VK, the Russian version of Facebook (a clone).

The first evidence of it anywhere online, is from a guy called “Martin Corner”. Who posted the meme on Russian Facebook (VK), on the 3rd of June 2016.

18. 'Martin Corner' on VK purports to be a far right person based in the North of England.

The people who liked the 40 YEARS EU RULE post on VK purport to be English neo-Nazis and fascists, if their posts on VK are to be believed.

19. Like this guy, who liked the 40 YEARS EU RULE meme on Vkontakte: He's called ‘Chad Ingverbart’.

He loves Hitler and IKEA candles.

But hates the EU.

Who’d have thought.

20. He seemed bored in 2016.

21. Whatever the truth, this meme was not an amateur creation that has gone viral.

22. The evidence could suggest that someone made it to look amateur.

Seeded it online via various “independent” groups and activists, who spread it so that it multiplied across social media without being tracked back to the creators.

23. It is “unbranded, untraceable” and spread by 'activists'.

Just like the Cambridge Analytica salesman boasted in the undercover footage.

24. The full undercover report from the UK’s Channel 4 News is here.

https://t.co/4YNFn0gV0K

25. Very genuine. Very cool. It could never happen here!

Welcome to the @TrollZoo ¯_(■)_/¯