

Multiple Meanings of Red: Colour Psychology, Socio-Cultural, and Cross-Cultural Analysis.

Introduction

In our world, colours are not just visual perceptions; they also have deep psychological, social, and cultural meanings. **"Colours, like features, follow the changes of the emotions,"**[1] the artist Pablo Picasso once remarked. Colour is a powerful communication tool that can signal action, influence mood, and even influence. Among them, the colour red, vivid and attention-grabbing, has always carried multiple meanings and symbols. From a psychological perspective, red is believed to evoke strong emotions and feelings, but these reactions may vary in different contexts. Meanwhile, red holds diverse symbolic meanings in various cultures and societies, ranging from traditional and religious rituals to modern advertising.

Background and Motivation

Before delving into the study of the multiple meanings of red, we must know that red has already become a significant topic in colour psychology, social and cultural studies, and the field of art. Research in colour psychology tells us that red can trigger emotions like anger, excitement, romance, and others, but these reactions may change across cultures and situations. Social and cultural studies show red's symbolic meanings across different cultures, including its application in traditions, religion, and celebrations, and its importance in advertising and brand marketing. Also, artists employ red in their works to express emotions, themes, and societal issues, making red a key element in their creations.

My research background and reason are that I used a lot of red elements in my work I want to find the reason why I use them and why I can feel so many roles and meanings in that colour when it is combined with my work why sometimes I can feel positive in that colour but some time is opposite. I want to understand the different roles and meanings of red. I want to figure out how people see it in lots of different cultures and situations and how artists use it to express things. By doing this study, we can get a much deeper understanding of how colour, feelings, culture, and art all connect.

Research Objectives and Problem Statement

Based on the aforementioned background and motivation, the primary objectives of this study are:

To examine the influence of red on individuals' colour psychology and emotional responses and find how artists use them.

To investigate how the symbolic meanings of red vary in different cultural and social contexts and the symbol of this in different artworks.

To analyse how artists use red to convey emotions, themes, and societal messages in their artworks.

To achieve these objectives, this study will address the following questions:

1. Does red trigger different emotional responses in various contexts?
2. How does the symbolic meaning and societal role of red change in different cultures?
3. How do artists use red in their works to convey emotions and information?

“I want a red to be sonorous, to sound like a bell. If it doesn’t turn out that way, I add more reds and other colours until I get it” [2]

Pierre-Auguste Renoir

1 Colour Psychology and Red

Overview of Colour Psychology

Writes historian Michel Pastoureau in *Red: The History of a Color*, ***“Red is the archetypal colour, the first colour humans mastered, fabricated, reproduced, and broke down into different shades. It was such a strong element, dominating the different cultures for thousands of years.” [16]***

Within the visible spectrum of light, there are countless variations of the colour red, ranging from almost pink or nearly orange to nearly violet or purple. Each shade of red evokes different memories and emotions. Subtle shifts in hue can bring to mind personal experiences, like a childhood encounter with a bird, picking a ripe strawberry from a field, witnessing a tropical beach sunset, or the sting of a finger cut. Furthermore, beyond these individual associations, red carries cultural significance. It can symbolize war, communism, seduction, warning, and luck. Many of the emotional, psychological, and cultural reactions that humans have developed over time to the colour red are connected to the processes involved in creating red pigments. In ancient times, one of the brightest and most vibrant red pigments was called vermilion. It was produced from the mercury ore known as cinnabar, which is highly poisonous. Those who mined and processed cinnabar for use in Roman

murals or Chinese ceramics often succumbed to mercury poisoning. However, the resulting colour was exceptionally brilliant, and the fact that lives were sacrificed in its acquisition only heightened its prestige as a symbol of power.

Nevertheless, not all red pigments posed deadly risks. Early cave paintings were crafted using red pigments readily found in clay and soil. There existed numerous safe methods for producing red dyes. The red hue on antique violins often originated from a plant resin known as dragon's blood. An ancient technique for dyeing fabric involved using a substance called kermes, derived from crushing insects that fed on sap. Another historically common plant-based red dye was madder, extracted from the red roots of the yellow madder plant.

Although the madder plant and many organic sources of red pigment have not been commercially used in red dye production for over a century, gradually replaced by synthetic red dyes, the ancient associations related to the sacrifices made to obtain these special pigments still hold a prominent place in our psyche.

Louise Bourgeois, an artist who openly aimed to convey her personal story through her artwork, didn't hide her tumultuous upbringing. She endured a famously challenging childhood, characterized by a stressful and conflict-ridden home environment, a father who was unfaithful, and an emotionally intense mother. Bourgeois fearlessly tackled themes of violence, explicit sexuality, infidelity, biology, fear, and physical pain in her art. In doing so, she frequently employed the unique expressive qualities of the colour red. In the work "Red Room - Parents" the red colour stands for blood, violence and danger, shame, jealousy, malevolence, and guilt. The exterior of this work is made up of discarded doors from a Manhattan courthouse, and the interior is a bed, with two cloth-wrapped marble sculptures on either side, symbolizing the parents' bodies. On the bed there is a xylophone box and a toy train, implying the presence of a child. Between the two pillows, the artist placed a pillow embroidered with "Je t'aime" (I love you), as if a child wanted to squeeze between the parents. This work reflects the artist's complex and contradictory feelings about sex, intimacy, family and childhood, as well as showing her unique use and combination of objects and space. This artwork makes viewers ponder the role and significance of red in art. It provides an emotional and symbolic space for contemplation, evoking various interpretations and emotional reactions.



Louise Bourgeois - Red Room - Parents (detail), 1994. [12]

In summary, "Red Room" underscores the importance of colour as a trigger and expression tool for emotions. It illustrates how red plays a key role in eliciting emotions and emotional resonance in art. The depth and power of this emotional effect make it easier for viewers to connect with the artwork and feel the emotions it conveys.

Through the analysis of "Red Room," we gain a deeper understanding of how red affects people's emotions and psychology, as well as its unique role in art. This artwork serves as a vivid example, proving how red can be a powerful tool for emotional expression and triggering emotions.

Psychological Effects of Red

Red, as a colour, has always played a vital role in human culture. It's bright, eye-catching, and full of emotions and symbols. When we think of the colour red, we might associate it with excitement, anger, romance, and a variety of feelings. But how do these emotions occur in our minds and brains?

Before we explore the psychological effects of the colour red, let's review some relevant research that gives us important clues about how the colour red affects our emotions. One important study that provides insights into the emotional impact of red is [Relationship between colour and emotion: a study of college students by Naz Kaya.

In this study, 98 college students were asked to express their emotional responses to different colours, including primary hues, intermediate hues, and achromatic colours. [five

principal hues (i.e., red, yellow, green, blue, purple), five intermediate hues (i.e., yellow-red, green-yellow, blue-green, purple-blue, and red-purple), and three achromatic colours (white, grey, and black)

Mentioned in this article. ***“Red was seen to be positive because it was associated with love and romance, while the negative aspects of red included having associations with fight and blood as well as Satan and evil.” [6] (Naz, And Helen, 2004, page 4)*** The article also mentioned ***“Overall, the participants' responses of colour-emotion associations for the principle hues were positive (79.6%), compared with the positive responses for the intermediate hues (64.5%) and achromatic colours (29.2%)” [6] Naz, And Helen, 2004, page 5)***

If as mentioned above there are 79.6% of participants feel positive about principal hues why viewer can still feel strong negative feelings about “Louise Bourgeois - Red Room - Parents” It's possible that it's because of the brightness of the red he uses in her work. As you can see she didn't use light red in her work. She used dark red-like blood to colour the bed and reddish brown furniture surrounding the red bed. The paper shows ***“Finally, the colour grey was mainly associated with negative emotions (89.8%); including feelings of sadness, depression, boredom, and confusion, as well as tiredness, loneliness, anger, and fear. Reasons given for negative emotional responses to grey consistently showed that the colour grey tends to make reference to bad weather, rainy, cloudy or foggy days and brings out feelings of sadness, depression, and boredom.”[6] (Naz, And Helen, 2004, page 5)***

So there are possibilities that the brightness of the red affects the feeling she brings to people in this work. Because most people have negative emotions towards grey.

There is some evidence that the colour preference may be culturally based. For example, ***Choungourian (1968) [7]*** found that the colours red and blue were the most preferred colours among American subjects, but were less preferred in other cultures. In a comparison of Japanese and Korean subjects, ***Saito (1996) [8]*** found unique colour preference tendencies between the two countries, and also with respect to age, gender, and geographical region within the individual country. Therefore, most of our feelings about colour come from culture and environment, and not a single colour can produce a truly strong emotional effect. Because colour is always present in something, the effect of colour is the combination of the colour and the item that gives us the feeling of the colour. If the use of colour is not consistent with your culture and environment, it will have a strong negative effect.

2 Social and Cultural Significance of Red

Red, as a bright and attention-grabbing colour, plays unique and diverse symbolic roles in cultures around the world. Its symbolic meanings span various areas, including traditions, religion, celebrations, and rituals, offering us a deep look into different cultures.

In Chinese culture, red symbolizes happiness, prosperity, and good luck. It is prevalent in traditional Chinese weddings, where brides often wear red dresses to symbolize auspiciousness. Red envelopes, known as "hongbao," are also a tradition during the Spring

Festival, conveying blessings and good fortune. In Chinese religious ceremonies, red holds an important role and is seen as a symbol of protection and divine blessings.

Red is deeply connected to communism in history. This connection started early 20th century when socialist and communist movements started worldwide. In the communist movements, red became a symbol of the power of the working class and the spirit of revolution.

Communist countries often use red flags, making them a symbol of socialism and communism. For example, the Soviet Union's flag was red with a golden hammer and sickle, the golden hammer and sickle was the samble of the workers and peasants. The flag of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) was also red with a yellow emblem, symbolizing socialist rule. The red flags, party emblems, and symbols of these countries not only represented their government but also reflected the influence of socialist and communist ideologies.

Red flags are common at political rallies and celebrations in communist countries. People wave red flags, symbolising unity and the spirit of revolution. These gatherings often involve political propaganda and activities that promote socialist ideologies. Red flags are not only a national symbol but also represent political movements, conveying the ideals of communism.

Colour is an important political symbol. As Lynn Hunt, an American cultural historian, says, ***“Colour, decorations, clothing, tableware, coins, calendars, and playing cards can all serve as political symbols. She notes that these symbols aren’t just about expressing a political position; they are tools through which people understand political stances.”*** [3]

In Russian, the word "красный" (Krasny) means "beautiful," and red is considered a bright and radiant colour. The famous Red Square in the Soviet Union (Красная площадь) translates to "Beautiful Square." This naming can be traced back to the mid-17th century when it was named during the Tsarist era.

After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks repurposed the meaning of the colour red in Russian culture. They transformed it into a symbol of revolution, signifying the socialist nature of their cause. Red was used to encourage uprisings, promote bravery, and self-sacrifice, and inspire the spirit of revolution. Red in Russian and European culture carried meanings of "heroism," "selflessness," "revolution," and "sacrifice," as well as more negative connotations such as "violence" and "bloodshed."

In the Soviet Union, red covered everything symbolizing the state, including the national flag, party flag, red scarves, and propaganda posters. ***Soviet institutions and publications often included "red" in their names, such as the Red Army, newspaper "Red Gazette" (1918-1939), historical magazine "Red Archives" (1922-1941), and various other publications like "Red Virgin Lands" (1922-1942), "Red Fields" (1923-1931), "Red Yearbook" (1922-1937), "Red Youth" (1921-1925), and "Red Reporter" (1920).*** [9](Pan 2018)

This transformation of the meaning of red from "the blood of Christ" to "the blood of martyrs" and eventually to a symbol of revolution and socialist ideals represents a continuity with

traditional values. This transformation is particularly evident in the adoption and adaptation of the "red scarf" symbol. The red scarf originated in Russian Orthodox traditions, where red symbolized the blood of Christ. Children would wear red scarves as a symbol of attending "Sunday school" classes. After the 1917 Revolution, the Soviet government established the Young Pioneer organization to strengthen children's education in communist ideals. At that time, Russian society embraced the red scarf as a symbol of honour, and the Soviet government adopted it as an emblem of the Young Pioneers, now signifying the corner of the red flag.

Soviet authorities took possession of the traditional Russian colour red, not only increasing the legitimacy of the Soviet Revolution and government but also reducing the psychological distance between the population and the new regime. From a political communication perspective, this transformation was highly effective.

In short, red in the Soviet context became a symbol not just of traditional Russian beauty but also of revolutionary fervour and socialist ideals. This redefinition allowed the Soviet government to connect with the people and promote the new order effectively.



Irakli, M, T. (1941) The Motherland Is Calling. [13]

The Motherland is Calling is a renowned Soviet propaganda artwork made in 1941 by Soviet artist Izrail Aronovich Agol. The art piece portrays a valiant female standing in front of a lot of soldiers brandishing bayonets. The lady is wearing a red costume and holding a flyer that shows "The Motherland is Calling." The art's core message is a plea for national solidarity and a firm stand against the invaders.

“The Motherland is Calling” embodies the unity and resolve of the Soviet people under immense pressure and threats. It became a symbolic depiction of the Soviet Union during World War II, demonstrating the nation’s resilience and tenacity during wartime. The artwork inspired millions of Soviet citizens, instilling in them the bravery to protect their homeland. This piece also underscores the importance of propaganda art during that era, effectively transmitting political and social messages through its potent visual impact and symbolism. It’s a historically significant artwork and is regarded as one of the most crucial propaganda pieces of World War II.

In the painting "The Motherland is Calling," the colour red holds a rich and diverse set of meanings, symbolizing several important concepts and emotions:

Red has a long history and tradition in various socialist and communist movements. The iconic colour of the October Revolution in Russia was red, marking the establishment of the Soviet Union.

Red represents the colour of the Soviet Union's flag, strongly conveying patriotism and loyalty to the motherland. Red symbolises the willingness to fight for the defence of one's country. Red can also symbolize sacrifice and bloodshed. In the communist movement, many individuals sacrificed their lives for the revolutionary cause, and red represents these sacrifices.

The enormous and striking red dress in the painting is another way to show the colour of the red flag it signifies that people are filled with courage and unwavering determination, ready to persevere at any cost to safeguard their homeland.

All in all, the symbolism of red transcends culture and politics, encompassing concepts such as beauty, revolution, sacrifice, patriotism and unity, making it a powerful tool for conveying complex messages.

3 Cross-Cultural Comparison

In this section, we will delve into cross-cultural comparisons, focusing on the contrasting perceptions and interpretations of red in Chinese and English-speaking cultures. Highlighting the differences in how various cultures perceive and interpret the meaning of red. Culture plays a significant role in shaping the significance of the colour red. This comparison will explore how Eastern and Western cultures view reading differently.

The significance of red in Chinese culture

1 Red mostly represents a positive meaning in Chinese culture

Red symbolizes happiness and good luck. In various celebrations, red is definitely in a "leading" position, such as the red lanterns, red spring couplets, and window grilles hung high in festivals. In Chinese weddings, red sedan chairs, red wedding costumes, expressions red envelopes and red eggs for wishes.

Red symbolises success. In ancient China, the five colours of green, red, yellow, white, and black were called the main colours. The main colour is a symbol of status and cannot be used casually. Only the official uniforms of prominent officials can be red. Words such as "popular", "suddenly popular", "red list", "booming" and "red sun" there are all include the word red in Chinese. And it all means success, development and prosperity. Therefore, red is very popular in China.

Red symbolizes beauty and health. For example, "red light in the face" means that the person described is energetic and healthy. "This child's face is rosy", the "red" here means that the child is cute and lovable. In Chinese, women's attire is often called, and use red attire refers to beauty, and women's beautiful appearance is called "Red face", which also refers to beauty.

Red symbolizes the Chinese nation's national psychology of pursuing auspiciousness. There is a Chinese folk story about using red firecrackers to drive away the Nian beast for peace. The image of Zhong Kui who appears in folklore has red hair, red robes, and leopard eyes. The red face can scare away evil spirits, so it is used to suppress evil spirits. Chinese culture associates ancient superstitious legends with the colour "red", giving "red" the meaning of exorcising evil spirits. This reflects the national psychology of the Chinese people who are eager to avoid disasters and turn misfortunes into good fortune.

2 The negative meaning of red in Chinese culture

Red also represents death and warning in China. In ancient China, death row prisoners generally wore red. After the public trial of the death row prisoners, they had to make a big cross with a red brush on the name tag hanging on their chest. When an announcement was made, a big red check was put on their name. The colour red also became The look of a prisoner. "Wearing a red hat" means bearing the crime of serving a prison sentence. In some places in China, there is also a saying that writing a person's name on a red brush means cursing the person's death. It can be seen that red has the meaning of eliminating accumulation in Chinese culture, implying death and warning.

3 The political significance of red

Red symbolizes "revolution" and "progress" in China. In contemporary Chinese, red is undoubtedly the colour word with the strongest political overtones, such as: "red flag", "red army", "red regime", "red heart", "red and expert", "red women's army", "red" Base area" and so on are frequently used to symbolize revolution and progress. The Chinese flag is bright red, and Tiananmen Square is also solemn red. Both of them fully reflect China's solemn and solemn national image. It can be seen that red is not only a symbol of life, but also a shocking colour in the field of political thought, a colour that calls out to the people, a colour that spreads passion, and a symbol of national power.

The meaning of red in Western culture

1 The positive meaning of red in Western culture

In Western culture, although red symbolizes happiness, it is not widely used. The red carpet is used to show respect and welcome guests; red-letter day refers to a day of commemoration or celebration because in ancient times the Catholic Church used red text to write festivals and holy days on the calendar. But for weddings and other celebrations, most Westerners will choose other colours considered auspicious in Western culture, such as pure white, noble purple, and vibrant green.

2 The negative meaning of red in Western culture

In Western culture, red often has negative connotations. Red symbolizes blood and violence. Such as Red Revenge, Red Revolution, Red Activity, the Red Rules of Tooth and Claw, red-ruin, and Red Battle, The Red Brigade refers to Italy's secret terrorist organization, which specializes in a series of terrorist activities such as kidnapping, murder and sabotage. The red flag used by matadors to irritate the bull is called "an angry thing", and a red flag is a "danger flag". At the same time, when "red" means the Communist Party or communism, it sometimes contains an insult. For example, the red belt refers to the former Soviet Union or the red areas controlled by the Communist Party.

Red symbolizes loss liabilities. In Western countries, it is customary to use red ink to record loans in meetings, so red is often used to describe losses and responsibility, such as being in the red (debt), out of the red (turning losses into profits), red ink/figure (deficit), red-baiting in American colloquialism refers to labelling red elements for political persecution, "running a business in the red" refers to doing business at a loss, which is equivalent to "losing money" in Chinese, and red balance (deficit balance), a red month (deficit month).

Red symbolizes unpleasant, unpopular things or people. For example, red eye means jealousy. There is also red-eye flight, which means that flying at night is very tiring. Red chicken refers to crude heroin, red tape refers to formalism, and red flag refers to a sign that something bad is happening. In addition, there is also the "red-haired villain". In Christianity, Thirty pieces of silver were the price for which Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus, according to an account in the Gospel of Matthew 26:15 in the New Testament. There is no description in the New Testament of Judas' physical appearance, but it became traditional for artists in the Middle Ages to represent him with red hair, what Shakespeare described as 'the dissembling colour'. It was a physical trait that had long been associated with treachery which is different from the symbolic meaning of red in Chinese.

3 The political significance of red in Western culture

The political meaning of red in the West is relatively weak. In addition to the red belt mentioned above, which refers to the red areas controlled by the former Soviet Union or the Communist Party, Red activities refer to left-wing radical activities, and the games during the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, such as "Command & Conquer: Red Alert series", Emergency Alert, this is a real-time strategy game produced by the Westwood Studios in 1997. The ultimate goal of the game is to defeat the "Red Army" and occupy the Soviet Union. It alludes to the fact that if the Soviet Union is not eliminated, the Red regime will bring instability and disaster to the world.

4 Red in Artistic Expression

Artists use red in special ways to show feelings and ideas in their art. The colour red can make people feel different emotions and leave a strong impression. In this part, we'll look at how artists use red to express themselves and make people react. We'll also check out how red affects how people feel when they look at art, creating a special link between art and emotions.

Sun Yuan and Peng Yu are Chinese contemporary artists known for their provocative and often controversial artworks. "Can't Help Myself" is one of their notable installations. This installation features a massive industrial robot arm programmed to continuously sweep a pool of blood-red liquid around a gallery space. The red liquid is a significant element in the artwork and carries various symbolic meanings.



Sun, Y & Peng, Y. (2016) Can't Help Myself. [14]

This artwork shows the artists' absurd and Sisyphean views on modern problems like immigration and sovereignty. It also hints at the violence caused by watching and guarding the border areas. Red for Sun Yuan and Peng Yu means blood, violence, danger, shame, jealousy, malice and guilt. This artwork also talks about the interaction and dependence between humans and machines. And it talks about the possibility that machines can have consciousness and emotions. This artwork is a scene full of conflict and tension. It is attractive and scary, beautiful and cruel, real and surreal.

Anish Kapoor's artwork titled "Shooting into the Corner," created between 2008 and 2009, is known for its dynamic use of the colour red. The installation involves a cannon-like device firing red wax pellets into a corner of a room, where they splatter, spread, and accumulate

over time. This repeated action creates an evolving landscape of red wax, gradually altering the appearance of the corner.

Red also plays a significant role in this artwork just like how red in "Can't Help Myself", serves as the central visual element. The vibrant red colour of the wax pellets contrasts sharply with the surrounding space, drawing attention to the corner where the pellets accumulate. The boldness of the red hue stands out, emphasising the energetic and dynamic nature of the installation.



Anish, K. (2008-2009) Shooting into the Corner. [15]

Beyond its visual impact, red in "Shooting into the Corner" also evokes various symbolic meanings and emotional responses. In Kapoor's installation, the repetitive act of shooting red pellets into the corner creates a sense of energy, transformation, and accumulation, it combines with the feeling of red there are suggests blood, flesh, and sexuality, as well as creation and destruction. The piece challenges the viewer's perception of space, form, and time, and explores the relationship between the artist, the machine, and the audience.

In conclusion, these two artworks show how artists use red to create powerful and expressive installations. Red is a colour that can stimulate, shock, and communicate different meanings and emotions. By using red in their artworks, Sun Yuan and Peng Yu, and Anish Kapoor challenge the viewers to think and feel deeply about the issues and themes they explore.

5 Conclusion and Discussion

In this article, I have conducted a deep study of the different meanings of red and analyzed them from various aspects. From the psychological research on red to how artists use this psychology to express the meanings in their works. In the process, we have re-recognized why red can bring people different feelings. I have discussed the differences in feelings caused by different cultures. I have also explored how people use red as a political tool and a medium to convey specific ideas. Moreover, based on my understanding as a Chinese, I have compared the differences and meanings of red in the Chinese cultural sphere and the Western culture, which also explains why red has different meanings in different cultures. In addition, I have also mentioned four artworks that are related to red, and they are vivid examples of how artists use red. Now, after my research, I have been able to answer the three questions I raised at the beginning.

1. Does red trigger different emotional responses in various contexts?

In different backgrounds, red can evoke different emotional responses. In ancient times, red often felt dangerous because obtaining red pigment was risky and red resembled the colour of blood. However, as civilizations evolved, red gained diverse meanings. Studies show that colour preferences might be culturally based. Therefore, people unfamiliar with certain cultures may have varied feelings toward red.

Some countries use red as a symbol of their national identity, while others integrate red into daily life, associating it with positive concepts in their language. Conversely, some nations link red to negative notions and use it in words expressing negativity. This diversity in cultural interpretations of red leads to varying emotional reactions. Despite this, with the world interconnected via the internet and advanced transportation, red has acquired manifold meanings.

2. How does the symbolic meaning and societal role of red change in different cultures?

In some countries, the symbolic meaning and social impact of the colour red are extremely significant and powerful. People integrate red into their daily lives, language, various festivals, and customs. Political parties use red as a tool to convey their political ideologies.

These parties associate red with positive concepts, influencing people with political ideologies in their lives. In these countries, red has become a useful tool for conveying complex messages. However, in some cultures, red is not revered due to the influence of different ideologies and religions. Yet, in modern times, red doesn't hold a fixed meaning within a single culture; its significance continually changes based on its usage patterns.

3. How do artists use red in their works to convey emotions and information?

In this article, I mentioned 4 works. The four artworks I researched are all related to the colour red but in different ways. Louise Bourgeois's *Red Room - Parents* shows a room with a huge red bed and old furniture in the room. The red colour suggests intimacy, passion, violence, or trauma, depending on the viewer's interpretation. IRAKLI M. TOIDZE's *THE MOTHERLAND IS CALLING* is a propaganda poster that shows a woman in a red dress holding a document and gesturing to the viewer. The red colour here represents patriotism, sacrifice, and communism. Sun Yuan & Peng Yu's *Can't Help Myself* is an installation that features a robotic arm that constantly tries to prevent a pool of red liquid from spilling over the edges of a glass enclosure. The red liquid resembles blood, oil, or paint, and the work explores themes of surveillance, control, and futility. Anish Kapoor's *Shooting into the Corner* is a performance that involves firing a cannon loaded with red wax at a wall. The red wax creates a splatter effect that evokes violence, aggression, and art-making.

The four artworks have some similarities and differences in their use of the colour red. They all use red as a powerful and expressive element, that evokes strong emotions and associations. They also all deal with themes of violence, trauma, and conflict, in different contexts and scales. However, they also differ in their medium, style, and intention. Bourgeois and Toidze use red figuratively and realistically, to represent human characters and situations. Sun Yuan & Peng Yu and Kapoor use red abstractly and conceptually, to create dynamic and interactive works that involve machinery and movement. Bourgeois and Sun Yuan & Peng Yu use red to reflect on their personal and social experiences, while Toidze and Kapoor use red to make an aesthetic statement. They convey different meanings and intentions with their use of red colour, depending on the context and the perspective of the viewer.

In general, red may initially bring negative feelings to people, but as modern society becomes more complex, the development of transportation and cultural exchange makes the meaning of red more difficult to determine in everyone's heart. The psychological and different signals that red brings to people depend on the culture and the things associated with it. Red cannot be determined by a single meaning, but through psychological research, we know that generally, dark colours bring negative feelings to people. The study of artists found that the meaning of red is difficult to define, but it is certain that red can cause intense emotional reactions. In this article, through the study of different cultures, it was found that the meaning of red is difficult to define because of the different cultural differences, which further reflects the multiple meanings of red. In this article, four different artists were studied to discuss why they use red and what red means in their works. This study helps me to further think and better match and choose colours in the future use of colours, and also helps me to have a deeper understanding of some artistic works in the future.

Bibliography

[1] Pablo Picasso - colours, like features, follow the changes... - brainy quote. Available at: https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/pablo_picasso_138525 (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[2] Pierre-Auguste Renoir quote: 'I want a red to be sonorous, to sound like a bell. if it doesn't turn out that way, I add more Reds and other colours unt...' (no date) Quotefancy. [Online] Available at: <https://quotefancy.com/quote/1574253/Pierre-Auguste-Renoir-I-want-a-red-to-be-sonorous-to-sound-like-a-bell-If-it-doesn-t-turn> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[3] HUNT, L. (2004) "The Imagery of Radicalism." Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution, 1st ed., Orlando: University of California Press.

[4] Mantell, M. (2023) Color psychology: How colour affects your emotions and why, Science of People. [Online] Available at: <https://www.scienceofpeople.com/color-psychology/> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[5] Jakeman, E. (2022) Let's talk about the colour red, ARTdiscount. [Online] Available at: <https://artdiscount.co.uk/blogs/artdiscount/let-s-talk-about-the-colour-red> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[6] Naz, k. And Helen, E, E. (2004) Relationship between colour and emotion: A study of college students. [Online]. Available at: https://scholar.googleusercontent.com/scholar?q=cache:418Ds7Xik5wJ:scholar.google.com/+Color+and+Emotion&hl=zh-CN&as_sdt=0.5&as_vis=1 (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[7] Choungourian, A. (1968). Colour preference and cultural variation. Perceptual & Motor Skills, 26, 1203-1206. [Online]. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.2466/pms.1968.26.3c.1203> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[8] Saito, M. (1996). Comparative studies on colour preference in Japan and other Asian regions, with special emphasis on the preference for white. Colour Research and Application, 21 (1), 35-49. [Online]. Available at: [https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/\(SICI\)1520-6378\(199602\)21:1%3C35::AID-COL4%3E3.0.CO;2-6](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/(SICI)1520-6378(199602)21:1%3C35::AID-COL4%3E3.0.CO;2-6) (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[9] Pan, X. (2018) Pan Xianghui: Messianism: Orthodox factors and their transformation in Soviet political communication, Independent Chinese pen association. [Online] Available at: <https://www.chinesepen.org/blog/archives/115828> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[10] Li, H. (2023) The reflection and translation of Chinese and English cultural differences in colour taking red as an example. [Online] Available at: <https://www.hanspub.org/journal/PaperInformation.aspx?paperID=60475> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[11] Cohen, A. (2020) Sun Yuan & Peng Yu, boundary-pushing artists, masters of provocative art, Artsy. Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-boundary-pushing-artists-sun-yuan-peng-yu-masters-provocative-art> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[12] Louise, B. (1994) Red Room (Parents) (detail). [Online] Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/louise-bourgeois-red-room-parents-detail> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[13] Irakli, M, T. (1941) The Motherland Is Calling. [Online] Available at: <https://catalogue.swanngalleries.com/Lots/auction-lot/IRAKLI-M-TOIDZE-%5BTHE-MOTHERLAND-IS-CALLING%5D-1941-40x28-inche?saleno=1975&lotNo=100&refNo=527348> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[14] Sun, Y & Peng, Y. (2016) Can't Help Myself. [Online] Available at: <https://ocula.com/magazine/features/tales-of-our-time-at-the-guggenheim-new-york/> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[15] Anish, K. (2008-2009) Shooting into the Corner. [Online] Available at: <https://anish Kapoor.com/139/shooting-into-the-corner> (Accessed: 22 November 2023).

[16] Pastoureau, M. and Gladding, J. (2017) *Red: The history of a colour*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

