

Analysis of the Role of the Unconscious in Surrealism and its Comparison with Symbolism in Expressing the Concept of Imagination in Ibn Arabi's Mystical Revelations

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Symbolism and Surrealism, as two artistic and literary movements, aim to discover hidden and spiritual realities through the deep layers of the human mind and imagination. Symbolism, which emerged as a reaction against Naturalism and Positivism, believes in a reality beyond the perceptible world that is depicted through symbols, dreams, and imagination. Meanwhile, Surrealism, deeply influenced by Freud's psychoanalytic theories, emphasizes the unconscious and dreams, seeking hidden truths through unusual perceptions and mental imagery. In this context, the thoughts of Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, especially in the realm of sleep, dreams, and the world of imagination, establish a profound connection between Islamic mysticism and these two movements. Ibn Arabi considers dreams as a means of accessing spiritual worlds and embodying meanings in symbols, a view that aligns with the approach of Symbolists and Surrealists in uncovering hidden realities. This article examines the comparative concepts of dreams and imagination in Symbolism and Surrealism and compares them with Ibn Arabi's mystical revelations in the discovery of symbolic secrets. The results of this study show that both movements utilize the capacities of the unconscious and symbolism to uncover a reality beyond apparent truths. However, Ibn Arabi employs divine revelation and symbols to understand the ultimate truth, while Surrealism focuses on mental complexities and the inner world. This comparative analysis contributes to a new understanding of the interactions between meaning and the unconscious in these two intellectual currents and highlights the central role of Ibn Arabi in advancing discussions related to hidden and internal realities in the expression of the symbols of art and literature.

Keywords: Symbolism, Surrealism, Imagination, Symbol, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi.

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1. Introduction

In the history of art and literature, Symbolism and Surrealism are considered two fundamental and influential movements aimed at discovering and explaining hidden and spiritual realities through an in-depth examination of the layers of the human mind and imagination. These two schools, with their unique approaches, seek to find a truth beyond the tangible and

observable world, thus opening new horizons for human understanding of the world and existence. Symbolism, emphasizing symbolism and imagery, attempts to convey deep human emotions and feelings in a spiritual and indirect way. In contrast, Surrealism, influenced by psychoanalytic theories, explores the unconscious and the world of dreams, thereby achieving new freedoms in artistic and literary expression. These two schools, each



in their way, invite us to contemplate deep human experiences and the hidden mysteries within, playing an influential role in expanding the boundaries of art and literature (Belsey, 1996).

Symbolism, as a counter-movement to Naturalism and Positivism, believes that the real world can only be explained through symbols, dreams, and imagination. In this school, there are truths that can only be accessed through deep thought and meaningful connection with symbols and signs. The emphasis on symbolism drives Symbolists to seek the manifestation of spiritual and divine dimensions in their works. Through imagery and symbolic language, this movement attempts to depict deep human emotions and feelings in a tangible and impactful way, thus conveying human inner and spiritual experiences to the world. This approach transforms Symbolism into a powerful tool for exploring the depths of human existence, distinguishing it from other artistic movements (Adonis).

On the other hand, Surrealism, significantly influenced by Freud's psychoanalytic theories, places special emphasis on the unconscious and dreams. Surrealists, by breaking the boundaries of reality, seek to explore the world of imagination and the unconscious, and this approach grants them new freedoms in artistic and literary expression. This school delves into unusual images and perceptions beyond tangible reality, aiming to depict untold stories and deep inner human emotions. Surrealism strives to bring psychological and emotional experiences to the surface by breaking traditional thought frameworks and creating astonishing images, thereby opening a window into the complex and multifaceted world of the unconscious mind. This approach drives Surrealist artists to explore the depths of the human psyche and prompts them to seek new meanings in understanding reality and human experience (Shamisa, 2010).

In this context, the thoughts of Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, the great Islamic philosopher and mystic, play a central and decisive role. In his works, Ibn Arabi considers sleep and dreams as important tools for accessing spiritual realms and embodying deep meanings. Ibn Arabi believes that dreams and sleep can act as gateways to deeper truths that are beyond rational understanding. This view not only helps to better understand the dimensions of the human unconscious but also serves as a bridge between Symbolism and Surrealism, leading to a deeper

understanding of hidden and spiritual realities. Thus, Ibn Arabi's ideas allow us to take a fresh look at the intersection of art, literature, and mysticism and to examine the deeper connections between these two schools (Palacios, 1965).

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative study of the role of the unconscious in the Surrealist and Symbolist schools and its connection with the mystical revelations of Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. This research will deeply analyze how these two schools utilize the concepts of the unconscious and imagination. Specifically, the following key questions will be addressed:

Can Ibn Arabi's perspective be used as a framework to explain Symbolist and Surrealist concepts?

What similarities and differences exist in the approaches of these schools and Ibn Arabi's thoughts?

The results of this research can contribute to a better understanding of the interactions between art, literature, and mysticism and shed light on new dimensions of how hidden and spiritual realities are expressed in these intellectual elements. This analysis can serve as a foundation for developing new theories in art and literature and provide fresh perspectives for understanding and interpreting artistic and literary works. Therefore, this article examines the importance of imagination and the unconscious in understanding and expressing deep and spiritual realities, leading to the question of whether these analyses can be used to advance new theories in art and literature.

This article is organized into four main sections: the first section analyzes the background of Symbolism; the second section explores and evaluates the concept of Surrealism and imagination; the third section examines Surrealism and the concept of imagination in Ibn Arabi's philosophy; and the fourth section analyzes and evaluates the symbolic concepts in Ibn Arabi's thought and Surrealism. Finally, the article concludes with an analysis of the role of the unconscious in Surrealism and its comparison with Symbolism in expressing the concept of imagination in Ibn Arabi's mystical revelations.

2. The Background of the Symbolism Movement in Symbolism

The Symbolism movement, as an artistic and literary movement, emerged in France in the late 19th century

and rapidly spread to other parts of Europe. This movement sought not only to establish a deeper connection with the inner world and spiritual experiences of humans but also, as a response to Naturalism and Positivism, emphasized that there are deeper truths that can only be understood through symbols, imagination, and dreams. To better understand Symbolism, it is essential to consider its historical and cultural context. The 19th century in Europe witnessed profound social, political, and economic changes. With the emergence of science and technology, especially as a result of the Industrial Revolution, many artists and writers distanced themselves from traditional values. In this context, Naturalism and Positivism emphasized objective and observable realities. However, in contrast, Symbolism sought to showcase deeper dimensions of human existence. As a result, symbols and imagery were employed as tools to convey deeper meanings and complex emotions (Chittick & Sullivan, 2010).

Each symbol could carry multiple meanings, and this diversity of meaning added depth and richness to the expression of the Symbolists. They believed that art and literature should, instead of describing objective realities, depict human emotions and experiences. In other words, they emphasized the expression of emotions and their reflection in deep inner instances—emotions that may not be visible in the tangible and everyday world. In this school, symbols and images were used as tools for conveying complex concepts and emotions. For instance, colors, objects, and natural elements could convey specific emotions. For Symbolists, each color and shape could represent deeper meanings; for example, blue might symbolize calm and silence, or red could symbolize love and excitement. This skillful use of symbols gave Symbolist works a unique depth and appeal, inviting readers to reflect on the hidden and subtle meanings they conveyed. Overall, Symbolism, with its emphasis on emotions and inner experiences, aimed to discover and manifest deeper human truths, creating a bridge between the tangible and spiritual worlds. This movement not only enriched literature and art but also allowed audiences to come closer to their inner worlds and recognize their experiences through symbols and images. Symbolism, in particular, addressed spiritual and supernatural realms, incorporating the belief that art and literature could

serve as tools for attaining spiritual manifestations and deeper truths (Shamisa, 2010).

This movement, with the premise that tangible and objective realities cannot reveal all dimensions of human existence, pursued deeper and supernatural meanings. Symbolists believed that art could serve as a bridge between the material and spiritual worlds. In their view, art not only represents external realities but also aids in the discovery of hidden and profound truths. This approach makes Symbolist works appear as manifestations of realities beyond the tangible world. Dreaming and imagination play an essential role in Symbolist works. Symbolists believed that dreams could create gateways to the unconscious and spiritual experiences. These dreams, with their complex images and symbols, depict the inner world of humans and enable the audience to reach the depth of their emotions and experiences. This perspective is especially evident in the poems and writings of Symbolists, where language and imagery are employed in ways that invite the reader on an inner and spiritual journey (Richards, 2003).

This movement, with its focus on spiritual and supernatural realms, incorporates the belief that art and literature can be tools for attaining spiritual manifestations and deeper truths. This movement, based on the premise that tangible and objective realities cannot reveal all dimensions of human existence, pursued deeper and supernatural meanings. Symbolists believed that art could serve as a bridge between the material and spiritual worlds. In their view, art not only represents external realities but also aids in the discovery of hidden and profound truths. This approach makes Symbolist works appear as manifestations of realities beyond the tangible world. Dreaming and imagination play an essential role in Symbolist works. Symbolists believed that dreams could create gateways to the unconscious and spiritual experiences. These dreams, with their complex images and symbols, depict the inner world of humans and enable the audience to reach the depth of their emotions and experiences. They created a certain complexity and multilayered meaning in their use of words, where the resulting imagery carried specific connotations, allowing various interpretations to emerge in the reader's mind. This permitted the reader to establish a deep connection with the world of words and involve their personal experiences in understanding the work. In the view of

the Symbolists, the material and real world alone is incapable of expressing the profound truths of humanity. They believed that through symbols, metaphors, and imaginative imagery, a deeper understanding of reality could be achieved (Amoli, 1996; Ashtiani, 1982).

This process not only aids in the discovery of personal feelings and experiences but also enables the reader to establish a deeper connection with themselves and the world around them. This artistic and literary approach leaves a deep impression on the audience. Symbolist works can penetrate directly into the reader's unconscious, prompting them to contemplate their emotions, dreams, and spiritual experiences. In this regard, Symbolists aimed to create an atmosphere that invited the reader to a deeper understanding of themselves and the world.

Symbolist works are known for their complexity and multilayered expression of words and phrases. This feature ensures that the imagery derived from them carries a specific connotation and transfers various interpretations to the reader's mind. As a result, the reader can establish a deeper connection with the world of words and involve their personal experiences in understanding the work. In the view of the Symbolists, the material and real world alone is incapable of expressing the profound truths of humanity. They believed that through symbols, metaphors, and imaginative imagery, a deeper understanding of reality could be achieved. This process not only aids in the discovery of personal feelings and experiences but also enables the reader to establish a deeper connection with themselves and the world around them. This artistic and literary approach leaves a deep impression on the audience. Symbolist works can penetrate directly into the reader's unconscious, prompting them to contemplate their emotions, dreams, and spiritual experiences. In this regard, Symbolists aimed to create an atmosphere that invited the reader to a deeper understanding of themselves and the world. These features demonstrate that Symbolism, as an artistic and literary movement, has a unique ability to stimulate deep human thought and emotions, leading the audience toward an inner and spiritual journey.

Symbolism had a significant impact on art, literature, and philosophy in the 20th century. This movement not only deeply influenced poets and writers such as Stevenson and Verlaine but also had an impact on artistic

movements like Surrealism and Expressionism. Given its emphasis on emotions and inner experiences, Symbolism played a crucial role in shaping psychoanalysis and theories related to the unconscious. In summary, Symbolism, with its focus on symbols, emotions, and feelings, seeks to discover and manifest deeper human truths. This movement not only addressed personal and inner experiences but also acted as a bridge between humans and concepts of the supernatural world. This is why Symbolism is recognized as one of the most influential movements in the history of art and literature (Ashtiani, 1991; Dad, 2004).

Ultimately, as Symbolism relies on the power of symbols, it allows artists and writers to transcend the limitations of objective reality and express their inner and spiritual worlds in a complex and profound manner. This approach has not only transformed the world of literature and art but also had a profound impact on our understanding of human and spiritual experiences. Symbolism reminds us that beyond tangible realities, deeper truths exist, which can be discovered through art and literature. Symbolism, as an artistic and literary movement, specifically emerged in reaction to Naturalism and the philosophy of Positivism. Naturalism and Positivism focused on objective and tangible realities and sought to represent life and humanity through truth-writing and realism. These approaches aimed for a precise and scientific description of nature and society, believing that a deeper understanding of life could be achieved through careful observation and analysis (Dad, 2004).

In contrast, Symbolists, in particular, believed that objective realities alone could not express all dimensions of human existence. They emphasized that deeper truths exist within the inner world of humans that can only be accessed through symbols, images, and imagination. Symbolism sought to discover a new and hidden reality that, according to the Symbolists, could only be understood by escaping the constraints of realistic and objective frameworks. This view of art and literature led Symbolists toward the use of symbols and metaphors. They believed that symbols could depict the complex feelings, experiences, and thoughts of humans in a deeper and more meaningful way than simple, direct descriptions. For them, each symbol could carry multiple meanings, allowing the audience to access the depth of their emotions and experiences (Ibn Abi Jumhur, 1983;

Ibn Arabi). For example, in Symbolist works, colors, objects, and images were used not only as aesthetic elements but also as tools for expressing deeper spiritual meanings. Therefore, Symbolism not only granted artists and writers more freedom in expressing their feelings and ideas but also allowed the audience to connect more deeply with the work and involve their personal experiences in understanding it.

3. Exploring the Concept of Surrealism and Imagination

Surrealism, as a literary and artistic movement, clearly refers to a psychological approach to literature. In fact, this movement can be considered a combination of literature and psychological issues. The term "Surrealism" was first coined by Guillaume Apollinaire. In the French language, the word "sur" means "on" or "above," and "real" refers to the real and is fundamentally related to objects and realities. In other words, Surrealism refers to the concept of "super-reality," a reality hidden in our unconscious, which only manifests in illusions, dreams, and artistic creations. Surrealism, particularly as a product of the growth of new psychoanalysis in the 20th century, philosophically and artistically focuses on the unknown and invisible world. However, one should not assume that Surrealism is limited only to the discussion of "super-reality"; rather, this movement is a mixture of reality and super-reality. Surrealist writers see reality with the "physical eye," but they interpret and understand it with the "inner eye" through their Surrealist perspective (Belsey, 1996).

André Breton, one of the prominent figures of this movement, published the Manifesto of Surrealism in 1924. According to this manifesto, Surrealism is defined as a form of mental automatism, where thoughts are expressed freely and without the constraints of reason. Automatic writing, meaning spontaneous writing, is done quickly and without interruption, disregarding aspects of writing mechanics such as punctuation. Automatic writing is one of the most direct and unmediated techniques used in Surrealism to express inner and unconscious truths. In Surrealist sources, there is a guideline for this technique that offers a simple but effective approach: "Sit at a desk, with a pen and paper in hand, and set your mind in a free and unconstrained frame. Start writing. Continue writing without thinking about what words are coming from

your pen. Write as fast as you can. If for any reason you stop writing, leave that line and immediately start from the next one. Choose the first letter of the new sentence at random; for example, choose the letter "T" and begin the new sentence with that letter. Although in pure automatic writing nothing is necessarily grammatically correct, these unexpected materials can later be used in revised works." (Belsey, 1996; Chittick & Sullivan, 2010) The fundamental importance of this method lies in free association, liberated from any pre-planned structure, leading to the creation of an authentic and spontaneous text. This technique frees the writer from the constraints of the conscious and rational mind, allowing access to deeper layers of the unconscious. In fact, automatic writing acts as a bridge between the inner world and external reality, breaking conventional linguistic and mental structures to bring hidden and deeper truths to the surface. This technique, like many Surrealist tools, serves as a means of exploring and revealing the unknown dimensions of human existence, dimensions that are not typically accessible through ordinary writing. Thus, automatic writing is not just a tool for writing but also a method for delving into the unconscious and expressing truths that can only be revealed in the shadow of absolute mental and imaginative freedom. Surrealism uses tools such as automatic writing, dream interpretation, trance narratives, poetry, and paintings influenced by random events, paradoxical and dreamlike images, and the expression of semi-conscious perceptions to achieve a specific goal: to change our understanding of the world and ultimately change the world itself. From the perspective of Surrealists, these tools not only invite us to reconsider the world around us and our minds but also pave the way for liberation from the constraints of reason and logic. Surrealism, with the belief that only imagination can save art and society from decline, shows us how breaking the frameworks of reality can lead to a fresh understanding of the world and ourselves. In this view, language is not a bearer of truth but a deceptive tool confined within the boundaries of human rationality and awareness (Gilani, 2003; Richards, 2003). Therefore, the truths we encounter are always somehow intertwined with deception. Surrealists believe that everyday language is dominated by reason and cannot convey deeper, unconscious truths. For this reason,

imagination and dreams are considered essential tools for understanding and changing the world.

Ultimately, through the creation of paradoxical and irrational images, Surrealism reminds us that life and truth are more complex and multilayered than they appear, and only by freeing ourselves from conscious limitations can we achieve a deeper understanding of them. For Surrealists, language is a source of inspiration, not merely a medium for expressing it. Due to its enchanting nature, language cannot simply serve as a medium for transmitting meaning or inspiration; rather, it is like a river flowing from the unconscious mind. In this artistic method, the artist looks into psychological depths beyond the surface of language and attempts to move beyond its superficial layers.

Molavi (Rumi) also looked at this depth and directed his attention to the world beyond language. By stating, "Language is the outer door," he points out that merely engaging with words and the external appearance of language prevents us from entering the inner and spiritual world. He encourages his audience to move beyond the circle of this door (language) and break it to reach the soul and inner essence:

"Language is at the outer door, what are you doing inside?"

Break the door and head toward the soul, set your course toward the inner world."

This reference to the importance of moving beyond the surface of language and entering the deepest layers of the soul emphasizes the very concepts Surrealists also sought—attaining hidden and unknown truths that lie beneath the superficial layers of language and everyday reality. Dream-thinking and imagination in the works of Ibn Arabi is one of the prominent features that harmonizes well with the Symbolist style. Ibn Arabi, in his mystical and religious reflections, sees the world as a sign of God's presence but believes that God is not directly revealed in these signs. This means that beings and the senses are symbols of a heavenly and eternal truth that can only be understood and comprehended through symbols and signs.

Symbolists also view the world as a mystery that can be discovered through imagination and symbolism. They were widely influenced by metaphysical and idealistic philosophies, even drawing from Platonic ideals to clearly depict that hidden and unseen truth. However, these efforts in Symbolism became more individual and

personal (Ibn Abi Jumhur, 1983; Ibn Arabi, 1970, 1987; Khalifa).

The language of Symbolists, like the language of dreams, is complex and ambiguous, as is the case in Ibn Arabi's language. Symbolists were aware of this ambiguity, and they sometimes admitted that the deeper meaning of their works was beyond their understanding or was essentially shrouded in ambiguity. From this movement, another movement called Surrealism emerged, which paid special attention to the inner world, dreams, and mental images. Like Symbolism, Surrealism seeks to uncover hidden truths beyond objective and tangible realities, but this discovery is pursued more through the unconscious and dream-thinking. Surrealism represents a type of free thinking, liberated from rational constraints. Followers of this movement placed great importance on dreams and believed that dreams and reality should be combined to achieve the "higher truth." Their beliefs are rooted in certain Platonic theories that emphasize inspiration and ecstasy. Surrealists did not consider imagination to be artificial; instead, they viewed it as an internal and spontaneous state that naturally arises from the unconscious. They adhered to principles such as dreams, madness, wonder, and the extraordinary. Objects in Surrealist works represent strange and bizarre images from the mind, embodying things that do not exist in the real world, almost as if the objects themselves are imagined and illusionary. In this view, mystery and the unseen world hold special significance for Surrealists. Images play a key role for Surrealists; the more distant and unrelated the elements of an image appear, the more original and impactful the image is. These images are the product of mental freedom and liberation from ordinary logic, rooted in the unconscious, just like some of the images we see in our dreams. Surrealist writing takes two distinct forms: in terms of form and writing style, and in terms of meaning, which has a deep connection to mysterious and inner realms. In fact, they are more focused on words and language, with the ultimate goal of super-reality being the embodiment of matter and its image. In contrast, mystics emphasize meaning rather than words, as in mysticism, the spirit dominates the body, and the essence of inner truth is more important than its external embodiment (Ashtiani, 1982, 1991).

Surrealists base their writing on the free association of meanings, thoughts, images, and states of trance and

dreams, but unlike mystics, these associations are more focused on words and material imagery than on spiritual and mystical experiences. As a result, Surrealism allows us to travel into the depths of the unconscious mind and human emotions, transcending the limited boundaries of objective realities. This approach, especially in Surrealist works, leads to the creation of astonishing and unusual images that challenge the audience and invite deep reflection on meaning and truth. This process, as an artistic and literary movement, searches for truths hidden in illusions and dreams, thus contributing to the creation of a new world rich in human emotions and experiences. This approach led some critics to label them as enemies of reason and logic. André Breton, one of the pioneers of this movement, explicitly stated, "Clarity is the greatest enemy of revelation," and this expression highlights the Surrealists' emphasis on the hidden and intangible dimensions of reality. Surrealists also paid attention to some of Plato's ideas, particularly his theory that the cause of poetry is not the poet but inspiration and ecstasy. This view allowed them to regard imagination as a natural and spontaneous process, free from the control of reason. Surrealists sought to create a space where they could accurately depict human emotions and experiences and, through this, achieve a deeper revelation and hidden reality. This deep understanding of imagination and dreams allowed them to create artistic and literary works that invited the audience to profound contemplation and thought. This perspective can be astonishingly linked to the ideas of Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, the great Islamic philosopher and mystic, as he emphasized the concept of imagination and visions as tools for accessing spiritual and supernatural truths in his works. He believed that imagination not only serves as a tool for expressing profound meanings but can also act as a bridge between the material and spiritual worlds. In this regard, imagination helps humans achieve a better understanding of themselves and the world around them.

Ibn Taymiyyah, in his critique of Ibn Arabi's ideas and imagination-based mysticism, states: "The conditions of this group are demonic and contradict the messages of the prophets. These claims can be seen in Ibn Arabi's works, such as *Futuh al-Makkiyah* and *Fusus al-Hikam*, as well as the writings of others. They praise unbelievers like the people of Noah, Hud, and Pharaoh, while they diminish the status of prophets such as Noah, Abraham,

Moses, and Aaron. They also criticize some of the respected Muslim figures and elders, such as Junayd ibn Muhammad and Sahl ibn Abdullah al-Tustari, while praising individuals like Hallaj and others who are infamous among Muslims for their wrongdoing, as Ibn Arabi speaks of them in his imaginary and demonic revelations." (Ibn Arabi, 1987, 1999)

Ibn Arabi, in his description of imagination, says: "Imagination is a light that resembles none of the other lights, and through it, revelations are understood." He believes that imagination holds truth and is free from falsehood. Imagination perceives what it does through its own light and does not err. He argues that errors come from reason or judgment, not from imagination, because imagination does not judge. Ibn Arabi explains that imagination is perceived through the eye of imagination, not the eye of the senses, although vision is used for both types of perception. The secret lies in the fact that a person, through the eye of imagination, perceives both imaginary and tangible forms simultaneously, while tangible objects cannot be seen simultaneously in different places. Therefore, Ibn Arabi considers the confusion of imagination with sensation one of the most astonishing doubts. Ibn Arabi believes that there is no intermediary between imagination and the Absolute, just as there is no intermediary between imagination and the tangible. Imagination is the point of vision where the Absolute (God) descends toward the human, and the tangible ascends toward it. In other words, imagination is where the Absolute manifests itself to the human and takes form (Ibn Arabi, 2002, 2004).

Thus, it can be said that the connection between Surrealism and Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi's imagination lies in their shared pursuit of exploring the depths of human and spiritual experiences. Both approaches seek to uncover realities beyond the tangible world, with imagination serving as a key tool in this journey. As such, Surrealism and Ibn Arabi's thoughts share deep commonalities in portraying a rich and multidimensional world of human and spiritual emotions and experiences (Ibn Arabi, 1987, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008).

Surrealist writing, like Sufi writing, is often characterized by strangeness, contradiction, ambiguity, and fragmentation, which makes understanding it difficult. Some may consider this style meaningless and futile, but they forget that these features form the essence of both

Sufi and Surrealist writing. This type of writing is not the result of a specific aesthetic theory but emerges from its own nature because it unveils a world that is itself strange, ambiguous, and astonishing. This writing is always accompanied by wandering because it belongs to a world that is itself in a state of bewilderment.

4. Surrealism and the Concept of Imagination in Ibn Arabi's Philosophy

Surrealism is based on the autonomy of the creative instinct and fundamental reliance on the suggestion of the unconscious mind and free association of meanings. The hidden concept within the word *imagination* emerges through automatic writing and the hidden dictation of the inner self, from the depths of the unconscious. The central axis of the experience that Surrealism considers foundational is the passage from the visible to the invisible, a transition that is also clearly observed in mystical experiences. Bayard believes that Surrealism utilizes visual, enchanting, and magical experiences to create an imaginary world where all impossible realms hold a special place. This world is based on a harmony that includes what we do not see as well. He states: "At the same time, it is both actor and spectator. As an actor, it looks into the mirror and sees itself as another actor. (Amoli, 1996; Khalifa)"

Aragon, in his examination of the concept of imagination at the foundation of Surrealism, says: "Imagination is always active, and nothing can guarantee reality for me in such a way that I interpret it based on delirium and dreams, as it does not understand either the precision of logic or the power of emotion." Breton also believes that there is a strong link between dreams and various delirious activities observed in psychiatric clinics. He holds that the emergence of mental illnesses, similar to narrated dreams, provides an opportunity to explore the inner unconscious. Therefore, Surrealism reconsiders the issue of madness and the criteria for diagnosing mental illnesses (Ibn Arabi, 1970).

Surrealists, like mystics, do not accept the limitations of the human condition in expressing concepts of imagination and live in the realm of sleep, unconsciousness, and mental unrest. They utilize the tool of automatic writing to express words within their minds, where the control and supervision of the unconscious mind fades. Surrealists, relying on enduring experiences, strive to move from habitual patterns

toward the unusual and new, transcending intellectual and existential contradictions. They pay attention to transforming life and humanity, but Surrealism also embraces a kind of exploratory self-awareness. According to Bistami, in the realm of mysticism, this self-awareness means liberation and departure from the self; liberation from everything external and distancing oneself from it (Ibn Arabi, 2002).

The goal of Surrealism in expressing the power of imagination is to unleash the unconscious forces hidden within humans and, in a way, return everything that humans desire to them. In fact, imagination can be interpreted as "the only force that acts," because nothing can compel humans to trust reality and construct it based on delirious interpretations. Surrealism seeks to facilitate this imaginative freedom to offer a deeper understanding of human existence and its relationship with invisible and hidden realities. Accordingly, the structural concepts in the realm of imagination and dream-thinking in the works of Ibn Arabi represent one of the prominent features of Symbolism and Surrealism. These two styles function as symbols and codes depicted in the realm of Surrealism (Ibn Arabi, 1970).

Ibn Arabi, in his religious and mystical thinking, views the world as a sign of God, but at the same time, he sees God as being transcendent beyond these signs. This duality in his view of the world and the origin of existence provides a foundation for portraying deeper and more complex concepts of the relationship between humans and the absolute truth (Ibn Arabi, 2004, 2008).

In other words, beings and sensory experiences are reflections of an eternal and heavenly truth that can only be understood through symbols. In the realm of concepts, imagination is not the goal or the desired end in itself; rather, its manifestation in sensory existence is important so that its wisdom can be revealed through sensory perception. This perspective emphasizes that a deeper understanding of realities requires attention to their sensory and symbolic manifestations, as Surrealists also believe that the truth hidden beneath the layers of tangible realities can only be accessed through the revelations of imagination and the unconscious's encoded symbols. Thus, what is created in the realm of imagination and dreams can help us gain a deeper understanding of realities and their hidden meanings.

Ultimately, this process represents an effort to transcend sensory limitations and enter a world rich in hidden

meanings. The world of imagination, from the perspective of a speaker, refers to the transfer of words to reality, which takes shape in the listener's mind based on their understanding of those concepts. Sometimes the imagination of the writer and reader, or the imagination of the speaker and listener, aligns; however, in some cases, this alignment does not occur, and the depiction of concepts is not accurate. This lack of alignment can lead to different and sometimes incorrect interpretations of the intended message. Therefore, effective communication in the realm of imagination requires shared understanding and alignment in the interpretation of concepts. If alignment between two perspectives is achieved, understanding is realized for both parties. In this context, thinking about words and concepts formed in dreams and imagination never errs. However, the interpreter of dreams and imagination may make mistakes in expressing these concepts and convey them in ways that contradict the words. For this reason, no one, not even prophets or saints, possesses complete knowledge of the realm of imagination, except God and His chosen ones. This highlights the complexity and depth of the world of imagination, which is not easily understood or interpreted, requiring deep insight and divine inspiration.

In this regard, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi does not introduce any intermediary to explain the relationship between imagination and the Absolute as two key elements in understanding reality and spirituality. He believes that imagination aids humans in approaching deeper layers of truth, thus establishing a direct connection with the Absolute (God). This view highlights the importance of imagination in spiritual journeys and its role as a bridge between sensory realities and transcendent truths. In this way, imagination acts not only as a creative faculty but also as a bridge between humans and the Absolute Truth. As such, imagination is seen as the meeting point where humans encounter the Absolute. In other words, God can manifest to humans in the realm of imagination and reveal deeper truths through it. This perspective emphasizes the importance of imagination in human spiritual development and its role in understanding transcendent truths (Ibn Arabi, 1999, 2002, 2004).

Through imagination, humans can access divine manifestations and comprehend the Absolute Truth. In this process, there is no intermediary between imagination and the sensory because imagination is

defined as an intrinsic force within humans capable of creating images from meanings and truths. This force not only has the ability to represent things that exist in the real world but can also depict abstract concepts and intangible truths. Imagination, as a bridge between sensory experiences and the spiritual world, is the point where the Absolute descends to humans, and the tangible ascends toward it. In this space, imagination becomes the place where the Absolute (God) manifests and materializes for humans.

Abdul Karim Gilani believes that the world itself is a form of imagination, stating: "Imagination is the origin of existence and the perfection of the manifestation of the worshiped." He places belief in the Names and Attributes within the realm of imagination and asserts that those who become aware of this truth will realize that existence is nothing but imagination. Both Jili and Ibn Arabi compare human perceptions in this world to the perceptions of a sleeper in a dream. Sheikh Mahmoud Shabestari, in explaining the realms of imagination, says: "You are in a dream, and this vision is imagination...Everything you have seen is but a reflection of Him." (Gilani, 2003).

In Ibn Arabi's writings, the term *imagination* refers to *connected or limited imagination*, a form of imagination that is dependent on human cognitive faculties. This imagination is part of the mind and the individual's power of imagination and is directly related to their perception, feelings, and senses. Connected imagination allows the individual to visualize and reconstruct images derived from their sensory and cognitive experiences. In other words, this imagination is not separate from its possessor, and if it is separated, it ceases to exist. The meanings and truths that are shaped in connected imagination sometimes align with reality and sometimes contradict it (Ibn Arabi, 1970).

The alignment or misalignment of these meanings depends on the illumination of the human soul. When humans attain disconnected imagination or the realm of exemplars—a world in which spiritual truths and abstract concepts appear in visible forms—they can witness these truths clearly and specifically.

Ibn Arabi's cosmology and mystical perspective are based on imagination, and he constructs his thoughts relying on the realm of imagination. Ibn Arabi believes that within humans, there is a perceiving force beyond reason and its judgments, and the field of activity for this

force is the imagination. Imagination always operates in conjunction with sensory forms, as it retains what has a sensory form or is composed of sensory elements and combines it using the power of visualization (Ibn Arabi, 1987, 1999). Thus, a form is created that does not exist in the material world but is tangible and perceptible to the beholder.

Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi believes that the power of imagination and its significance in the realm of Surrealism play an essential role in the creation of words. He emphasizes that humans, through their power of imagination, conceive of the Divine Names as if they were created within them, thereby giving life to and depicting these Names. This process is essentially a form of manifestation of spiritual awareness and deep understanding, in which humans, through their imagination, can form new shapes and meanings of the Divine Names in their minds and bring them to life (Ibn Arabi, 2004, 2008). Thus, imagination not only becomes a tool for understanding and visualizing divine concepts but also enables humans to experience a spiritual and transcendent reality beyond themselves.

This interaction between imagination and truth serves as a path to deeper awareness and a closer connection to the divine meaning. Therefore, in this perspective, imagination acts as a bridge between the spiritual world and material reality, guiding humans toward a deeper understanding of the truth of existence. Ibn Arabi believes that imagination portrays spiritual forms that indicate mystical and non-material manifestations. These forms are not of a material nature and have no connection to the sensory world; rather, they belong to the spiritual world and the realm of exemplars or disconnected imagination. Thus, imagination allows humans to approach intangible truths and establish a deep connection with the spiritual dimensions of existence.

In this context, *spiritual forms* refer to aspects that lie beyond sensory perceptions and the material world, manifesting in spiritual and metaphysical domains. These forms are manifestations of intangible truths that can be understood and experienced through inner faculties such as imagination and intuition. In mystical and theological teachings, these manifestations are seen as reflections of divine and spiritual truths.

In this regard, the *formative faculty*, which is of a sensory nature, creates images according to its will under the

influence of imagination. This faculty draws inspiration from various phenomena and transforms them into original and astonishing forms that do not have objective existence in the external world. For this reason, the formative faculty precedes imagination, receiving from it what it wishes and depicting it. Moreover, imagination is dependent on the senses because it only imagines what is transmitted to it through sensory faculties. Ibn Arabi accepts all stages of imagination as manifestations of truth and assigns it a high value and status. In his view, imagination acts as a bridge between the sensory and intellectual realms and reveals the inner truth of things. In Ibn Arabi's perspective, the power of human imagination is regarded as a heavenly force because in the paradise of the righteous, whatever one wills quickly manifests, and their will is equivalent to creation. This is a reflection of divine power and will, where with the command "Be," things come into existence. In the realm of imagination, human will also manifests as existence (Ibn Arabi, 1987, 1999, 2002). Thus, the power of imagination not only allows humans to visualize their thoughts but also enables them to connect with the world of existence, laying the groundwork for fulfilling their desires and aspirations. Ibn Arabi sees imagination not only as a fundamental element of the mind but as the entirety of existence itself. In the realm of imagination, the senses function actively, but the five senses in imaginative perception differ from the five senses in the physical world. He emphasizes that both the eye of imagination and the eye of the senses are responsible for sight, but their perceptions are distinguishable through different methods.

Ibn Arabi believes that jinn can influence the rational faculties of some people, leading them to specific epistemic illusions that have no basis in reality and arise from the deceptions and games of the imagination. What humans see in dreams is a reflection of the experiences and observations that the imagination records during wakefulness through the senses. In fact, dreams are a reflection of the raw sensory materials gathered throughout the day and manifest in dream images. These images can represent daily realities in new and different ways (Ibn Arabi, 1970, 2008). Therefore, dreams are not only reflections of everyday life but also a sign of the power of imagination and its profound effects on human perceptions and emotions.

In Surrealist concepts, "imagination during wakefulness" is defined as a process in which thoughts and images form in the human mind, stemming from their sensory experiences in the real world. While awake, humans use their five senses—sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste—to perceive and experience their surroundings. These experiences are stored in the mind as sensory data. The human senses receive diverse information from the surrounding environment, from seeing colors and hearing sounds to feeling temperature and smelling odors. This information is processed in the mind and transformed into imaginative images or new concepts. Ibn Arabi also emphasizes that at this stage, imagination serves as a tool guiding humans toward a deeper understanding of truths beyond sensory perception. Thus, imagination during wakefulness acts as a bridge between sensory experiences and the spiritual world, forming new images that enhance human experiences. The images generated by the process of imagination during wakefulness can extend beyond tangible reality, creating a combination of reality and imagination. These imaginations can lead to diverse emotions and influence individual behavior and decision-making. In fact, imagination during wakefulness not only facilitates the creation of new and innovative ideas but also allows individuals to engage in novel plans. Overall, imagination during wakefulness acts as an efficient tool for analyzing and better understanding realities, helping humans reach deeper thoughts about life and their experiences. This process not only expands the individual's awareness of the world but also opens new pathways for understanding and engaging with truth. Ibn Arabi regards the realm of imagination as the widest possible world, where even impossible and contradictory things can be realized. In this view, events and phenomena in the world of imagination are considered imaginary occurrences, and thus they can access a deeper meaning of reality.

In this regard, Surrealism emphasizes the power of imagination and believes that reality is not limited to what is experienced in the sensory world. The realm of imagination can reflect human desires, fears, and emotions. In other words, what cannot be experienced in wakefulness and in the sensory world may exist more strongly in the realm of imagination. Ibn Arabi notes that humans, through the power of imagination, can create things that do not exist in reality and give life to them.

This process not only facilitates the expression of human imaginations and desires but also contributes to the creation of new and diverse experiences in both individual and collective life. Overall, the world of imagination, as an endless space of possibilities and fantasies, provides a realm where humans can manifest and realize their desires, even if those desires are not visible in the tangible world. This perspective on the realm of imagination, aligned with the principles of Surrealism, demonstrates the power of imagination and its role in shaping human experience.

Ibn Arabi believes that in their imagination, humans can create things that do not exist in reality, and this ability is possible for everyone. However, mystics, through their determination and will, can bring beings into existence beyond their minds and selves. He specifically refers to the story of Prophet Abraham, explaining that Abraham did not interpret his dream correctly and failed to understand its truth, which is why he attempted to sacrifice his son. In the world of exemplars, what existed and was realized in the physical world was a ram offered as a sacrifice. The form of this sacrifice appeared in Abraham's imagination as his son. This point highlights that imagination and interpretation in the realm of imagination can deeply influence human behavior and decisions, and misunderstanding it can lead to unexpected consequences (Ibn Arabi, 1970, 1999, 2002). This thinking reflects the depth of Ibn Arabi's thought concerning imagination and reality, where imagination can act as a bridge between two different worlds, leading humans to more meaningful and profound experiences. In some dreams, the truths of things are directly revealed to the heart without the mediation of the imagination. These types of dreams do not require interpretation, as there are no symbols involved. Ibn Arabi believes that existence itself is a form of imagination because everything other than God's essence is neither eternal nor everlasting and will ultimately perish (Ibn Arabi, 1987, 2004, 2008). This view reflects a deep understanding of reality and imagination and their relationship with the essence of existence.

Accordingly, imagination is not only a tool for understanding and perceiving truths but also a gateway to a deeper knowledge of the essence of existence. In Ibn Arabi's view, the realm of imagination is a vast and infinite space capable of containing opposites. In a physical being, the coexistence of opposites is impossible

from the perspective of reason and the senses, but the power of imagination easily accepts this coexistence. Imagination can accommodate and depict both types of things—those that have form and those that are formless. Thus, imagination, as a boundless domain, provides a space for the manifestation and embodiment of all realities.

This view aligns with the principles of Surrealism, where imagination and fantasy are recognized as the primary sources for creating new realities beyond existing limitations. Symbolists view the world as a mystery that can be uncovered through imagination, and this imagination is influenced by metaphysical and idealistic philosophies, such as Plato's theory of forms. Their language resembles the language of dreams, filled with ambiguity, an ambiguity that is also clearly evident in Ibn Arabi's works.

The Surrealist movement, which emerged from this thought, focuses on the inner world, illusions, and mental images, linking literature with psychological issues. In its core meaning, Surrealism explores a reality beyond the conscious world, manifesting it in illusions, dreams, and artistic creations. Ibn Arabi, too, believes that imagination and fantasy can be a means for understanding deeper truths and the spiritual world. He introduces imagination as a means to create realities beyond the limitations of the senses, similar to Surrealism's pursuit of discovering the unknown and experiences beyond tangible reality.

In both of these movements, imagination and fantasy are emphasized as gateways to a deeper and more mysterious understanding of humanity and the world. Many religious texts describe prophets as "seers," meaning individuals who, in their dreams, receive divine messages from God. Examples of such prophets include Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Isaiah. In the Quran, the scene of Abraham's dream about sacrificing his son is mentioned, and in the Torah, God often communicates with Abraham through dreams. The most important event of God's covenant with Abraham also takes place through these dreams.

Quranic verses show that revelation to the Prophet Muhammad was also through true dreams, and he is considered to have true visions. Specifically, in verses 1–20 of Surah Najm (Surah 53), the revelation is clearly described as a visual event, and Muhammad's words about the signs of God are based on these visions. This

point highlights the role of dreams and visions in relation to divine revelation and spiritual experiences.

In ancient times, "dreams" referred to events seen during sleep that carried messages for the future and were related to the destiny of individuals and societies. Surah Yusuf is one of the primary sources that mention various types of dreams. In this surah, personal dreams, such as the dreams of Joseph's two prison companions, are mentioned—one carrying a message of death and the other a message of salvation. Additionally, the ruler's dream points to an important event affecting all the people of Egypt.

In the same surah, dreams that lack a significant or serious message are referred to as "Adghath Ahlam" (confused dreams). "Adghath" is the plural of "Daght," meaning a mix of things or the combination of disparate elements. This term is used for chaotic scenes or for a poorly washed cloth with stains remaining. It appears that "Adghath" in this verse refers to a confused mind that combines messages from the unseen with psychological events and symbols accumulated in the unconscious. This mixture can create strange and bizarre images, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the dreamer and the interpreter to discern the main message of the dream. Additionally, "Ahlam" refers to residues imprinted on the canvas of imagination.

In an artistic system, the element of imagination miraculously brings together distant phenomena and brings them closer. In this process, the final image displays the coherence among scattered phenomena and the harmony between various objects. Aristotle links imagination to sensation, stating: "The image of the perceived object disappears from common sense, and the imaginative image remains." This interpretation of imagination and its relation to sensory perception was passed on to Muslim philosophers as well. Al-Farabi, as a prominent representative of Islamic thought, believes that the impression of sensations is similar to the impression of a ring's engraving on wax. Similarly, perception corresponds to the imprint, and preserving the image of sensations is the responsibility of imagination.

Avicenna (Ibn Sina) explains the relationship between imagination and sensation, stating: "Sometimes an object is perceived when it is observed, and when it is absent, it becomes imaginative and represented internally." In Ibn Arabi's thought, imagination as a cognitive tool not only

allows humans to engage in visualization but also sees it as a vast and infinite realm where the coexistence of opposites is possible. This concept allows us to approach the complex and multilayered realities that exist in the universe. Surrealism also emphasizes that imagination and dreams can lead to the discovery of hidden truths and a deeper understanding of human existence. Surrealists, focusing on images and mental illusions, establish new connections between reality and imagination (Amoli, 1996).

Both movements, relying on the element of imagination, provide a means for humans to attain a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them and to create new and innovative images. Therefore, imagination draws its material from tangible reality but operates beyond sensory limitations. This element not only inspires the creation of new relationships in artistic imagery but also stimulates the imagination of the audience, prompting them to recall the mental images stored in their memory.

In Ibn Arabi's thought, imagination, as an infinite and creative domain, provides the potential for the manifestation of deep themes and spiritual experiences. On the other hand, Surrealism emphasizes the power of imagination and dreams and seeks to discover a reality beyond ordinary consciousness. Additionally, Symbolism deals with language and images that carry deeper meanings and maintain a close connection with imagination. In this regard, imagination serves as a bridge between reality and concepts, playing a crucial role in shaping artistic and spiritual experiences.

Words in Quranic imagery take on an imaginative form, representing states that "lie beyond hidden meanings," such that the power of imagination remains in the pleasure of contemplation. This imagination and the shadow of words return to the realm of unconscious awareness and relate to the stored images in memory that have accompanied words throughout their long history. This connection refers to the context in which words are placed, conveying deeper meanings. In this context, Ibn Arabi emphasizes the power of imagination and visualization and believes that imagination can help reveal deep meanings and spiritual experiences. He believes that the world of imagination allows us to transcend the boundaries of the tangible and access spiritual experiences.

On the other hand, Surrealism also emphasizes the importance of imagination and dreams and strives to discover a reality beyond the conscious world. In this regard, Surrealism focuses on the creativity of imagination and its power in depicting the untold and hidden dimensions of life.

5. Symbolic Concepts in Ibn Arabi's Thought and the Surrealist School

Ibn Arabi, by utilizing symbolic language and metaphorical concepts, seeks to convey divine and transcendental truths in an indirect and symbolic manner. He views the world as a symbolic and metaphorical text, which can only be understood through careful interpretation and analysis. Each phenomenon reflects a deeper reality that is concealed beneath its apparent layers and can only be accessed through decoding and interpretation.

On the other hand, the Surrealist movement, which emerged in the artistic and literary context of the 20th century, emphasizes the role of imagination, dreams, and the unconscious as the primary sources for experiences beyond conscious reality. In this school, symbols and signs are also essential tools for understanding hidden concepts and presenting unknown truths. Surrealist artists and writers, through complex and seemingly contradictory symbols, attempt to access dimensions of reality that are not perceptible through superficial or sensory observation.

A comparative study between the symbolic elements in Ibn Arabi's thought and the Surrealist school offers a valuable opportunity to highlight the fundamental similarities and differences in their understanding and interpretation of human realities. This exploration not only helps to uncover deeper and hidden aspects of Ibn Arabi's thinking but also, when considering the Surrealist approach to language and imagination, opens a new perspective on a deeper understanding of existential realities. This comparison facilitates an international and cross-cultural dialogue in which both intellectual currents aim to transcend the limitations of rationality and sensory perception to discover hidden truths in different realms.

Examining these two worldviews shows how symbolic language in the hands of Ibn Arabi serves as a tool for explaining divine and transcendental truths, while in Surrealism, the same language is used to depict the

unconscious and hidden human emotions. Nevertheless, both approaches employ symbolic language to move beyond the boundaries of sensory reality and explore deeper truths.

The word "symbol" has multiple meanings across various scientific, philosophical, and mystical domains and is considered one of the key concepts in metaphysical and spiritual thought. A symbol, in its primary sense, is an indirect and veiled representation of a truth or meaning. In the realm of language and literature, a symbol is a meaningful and indirect form of communication, aimed at conveying concepts that are either not easily understood through direct expression or require the unveiling of hidden layers of truth. This concept is a powerful tool for expressing experiences that, due to their profound and complex nature, cannot be directly and clearly conveyed.

In Platonic and Neoplatonic thought, a symbol represents the realm of forms or realities beyond the material world. In this view, symbols serve as representations of metaphysical concepts that are beyond sensory perception and symbolically point to higher realities. In other words, symbols create bridges between the sensory world and the intellectual world, enabling humans to gain a deeper understanding of ultimate truths through them.

Ibn Arabi, in explaining the concepts of divine names, emphasizes the importance of hidden symbols and considers each of these names as representative of one of God's attributes. From his perspective, the hidden meanings in these names act as symbols for understanding the transcendental layers of existence, helping us approach the ultimate truth. He sees the universe as a mysterious book, where every being is a manifestation of divine attributes. By contemplating these signs and symbols, humans can attain a deeper understanding of the essence of truth and the reality of the world. In this sense, decoding symbols becomes a process that allows individuals, through intuitive and profound understanding, to access the hidden layers of reality.

In the Surrealist school as well, the belief is that reality is not limited to the observable world and that there are dimensions beyond human consciousness that must be discovered through symbols and metaphors. Surrealists, through art and literature, seek to represent deeper psychological and unconscious realities. Like Ibn Arabi's

mysticism, they emphasize a reality beyond rationality and attempt to represent it through symbolic language and spiritual symbols.

In both approaches, symbols function as tools for accessing truths that lie beyond sensory and rational experiences. Therefore, the term "symbol" serves as a type of language and communication method used to express hidden and profound meanings. In philosophy, mysticism, and art, a symbol is a means of moving beyond the superficial aspects of phenomena to access their inner and supra-rational layers, in ways that purely intellectual and sensory language cannot achieve.

Alongside Ibn Arabi's thought regarding symbolic concepts and imagination, Symbolism and Surrealism as two major intellectual schools particularly focus on the power of imagination as a symbol of hidden meaning and as a means of expressing transcendental and divine truths. In both intellectual traditions, imagination acts as an important intersection and a bridge between material and spiritual realities, symbolizing a coded connection. Ibn Arabi introduces imagination as a mediator between the unseen world and the observable as a symbolic code, while Surrealism uses imagination as a tool to embody emotions and dreams. They both believe in a secondary reality that can only be accessed through symbolic language and imagination.

In reputable Persian and Arabic dictionaries, the word "symbol" is defined as an indirect reference, a sign, or a marker with hidden meaning. In Arabic, "symbol" (رمز) also means an allusion or something expressed indirectly. In English, the closest equivalents for "symbol" are the words "symbol" and "code." These words in English convey something with a symbolic meaning and represent another idea, particularly in art and literature, where their use can assist in better understanding complex and multilayered realities.

From a linguistic perspective, a symbol is recognized in human communication as a kind of sign or marker that conveys a specific meaning to the audience. In semiotics, a symbol is an indirect form of communication that requires interpretation and decryption. A symbolic language is one in which meanings are not conveyed explicitly but rather through specific signs and symbols. This concept can be analyzed within the framework of Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theories. He divides language into two parts: the "signifier" and the "signified". Within this framework, a symbol acts as a

type of "signifier" that, to understand its "signified," requires interpretation and analysis. In other words, a symbol is recognized as a sign with a hidden meaning that is embedded within it (Ibn Arabi, 2008; Shamisa, 2010).

Symbolic or symbolic literature (Symbolism), by using specific signs and markers, explains meanings beyond the surface of the text or artwork. In this context, symbols are often used to create various layers of meaning and draw the audience's attention to hidden and indirect concepts. For instance, in Persian mystical poetry, words like "wine" or "candle" are symbols that refer to deeper meanings such as divine love or spiritual truth. Additionally, in visual arts, symbols serve as tools for creating hidden and symbolic meanings. Artists use these symbols to express emotions, beliefs, and complex concepts through images or objects, where symbols can be seen as bridges to connect with deep human emotions and thoughts.

In Symbolism, just like in mysticism, the role of the symbol is to convey meanings that cannot be accessed through direct language. Symbols in mystical literature act as intermediaries between the sensory world and the intellectual world, helping the reader access the hidden and inner layers of truth. For example, symbols like "light" in mystical poetry are used as metaphors for divine truth and spiritual illumination, going beyond their literal meaning. These ideas and writings are clearly reflected in the works of Ibn Arabi, highlighting the depth and complexity of symbolic concepts in his thought.

In Islamic mysticism, Ibn Arabi holds a similar view, recognizing the realm of imagination as a mediator between the sensory world and the intellectual world. He believes that through imagination and symbols, humans can access truths that cannot be attained in tangible reality. This concept is also clearly seen in Surrealism, where the boundary between reality and imagination dissolves, and symbols become tools for discovering hidden truths.

In Surrealist and mystical literature, the symbol is also a tool for connecting with transcendental realms. Both schools conclude that the sensory world is only a part of reality and that there are other realms that can only be accessed through imagination and symbols. Thus, Surrealism and mysticism both use symbolism as a means of accessing transcendental and spiritual truths.

Symbolic language and representation in mysticism, especially in the works of Ibn Arabi, are widely accepted and essential. Mystics believe that the truths of existence cannot be fully understood through intellect and the senses alone; they must be grasped through spiritual taste, discovery, and intuition (Ibn Arabi, 2002).

What is acquired through these methods cannot be easily expressed in ordinary language, as common language lacks the capacity to convey boundless truths. Therefore, a symbolic language is needed in which words carry meanings beyond their surface. This language helps to connect with cognitive truths and phenomena that are signs of the higher world. Thus, symbolic language is recognized as an effective tool for gaining a deeper understanding of truth and connecting with higher realms.

Ibn Arabi's language and the mystical school he represents are filled with symbolic words and writings. Figures such as Kamal al-Din Abdul Razzaq Kashani, Sheikh Mahmoud Shabestari, Sa'in al-Din Ali Turka, Sayyid Haydar Amoli, and Abd al-Rahman Jami in Iran have elaborated on the words, terms, and symbolic nature of Ibn Arabi's writings. These efforts can aid in a deeper understanding of the mystical and spiritual meanings in his works and enhance our comprehension of this intricate and profound language (Ibn Turka).

Some scholars have regarded the concepts of synonymy, antonymy, and polysemy as a symbolic language for understanding the names and attributes of God. Among the followers of Ibn Arabi's school, particularly Sheikh Azizuddin Nasafi (d. before 1300 CE), this perspective on symbolic language was intertwined with philosophical and mystical reflections. Azizuddin Nasafi, who was nurtured in the educational school of Saaduddin Hamawi and is considered one of the masters of the Kubrawiyya, cites Sadruddin Qunawi (d. 1274 CE) in his works: "Know, may God bless you in both worlds, that Sheikh Sadruddin Rumi says: 'The attribute of God and the name of God are synonymous, meaning both refer to the same thing.'" In contrast, Sheikh Saaduddin Hamawi (Saaduddin Muhammad bin Mu'ayyad Juyini, a disciple of Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra, d. 1252 CE) holds a different view, asserting: "In the Qur'an and Hadith, the divine names are not synonymous and should not be. A wise person never uses two words with the same meaning; rather, the wise person uses one word, and that word has ten meanings. (Soleimani, 2009)"

It seems that this group of commentators on divine names, while compelled to treat the term "name" as synonymous with "attribute" and to derive God's good attributes from the beautiful names (Asma al-Husna), have gravitated toward explaining the distinctions in the interpretation of divine names. In modern linguistics, pure synonymy within a language is almost rejected. American semanticist Frank Palmer writes on this matter: "True synonymy does not exist among words, and no two words have exactly the same meaning. It is unlikely that in a language, two words with the same meaning can coexist simultaneously."

Ibn Arabi always analyzes the meanings of words in a way that would be understandable to an Arabic speaker, the primary audience of the Qur'an, rather than as specialists in various fields would interpret them. He treats every word in the Qur'an and Hadith with utmost respect and precision, believing that no word is spoken without its exact meaning. For him, neither God nor the Prophet uttered any phrase without conveying its precise meaning. In contemporary Arabic, the term "image" is translated as "sura." The earliest discussion of the concept of "poetic imagery" can be found in *Kitab al-Hayawan* by al-Jahiz (d. 869 CE), the renowned Arab literary figure, who defines poetry using the term "image," stating: "Poetry is a type of weaving and a kind of imagery."

In his prose works, Ibn Arabi does not exhibit much inclination toward sensuous depiction of his mystical experiences, nor does he heavily rely on imagery to express his inner realizations. His language is abstract, filled with non-sensory and inconceivable terminology. He uses names related to meanings (rather than essences) to express his thoughts and ideas. Ibn Arabi is more of an interpreter than an imagist, leaning toward interpretation rather than symbolic representation. Although his prose is abstract and non-imagistic, in his poetry, he uses sensory imagery to create symbols. In particular, in his poetry, he is concerned with interpreting and explaining his symbolic images. In his poetic collection *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*, Ibn Arabi refutes the accusation of meaninglessness and the fantastical nature of his symbols, stating: "These are not delusions, but secrets—secrets of my heart and the heart of anyone who, like me, is knowledgeable. These are descriptions of holiness and the celestial world. Turn your mind away

from the outward and seek the meaning from the inner sense of these words so you may understand."

The idea of interpreting and explaining mystical symbols likely occurred to figures such as Yahya Bakharzi (d. 1336 CE), Fakhrudin Iraqi, Sheikh Mahmoud Shabestari (d. 1340 CE), and Shams Maghrebi (d. 1407 CE), possibly inspired by the works of Ibn Arabi and the necessities of their time. Ibn Arabi deals with a mysterious world, and to convey the truths of that world, he resorts to constructing stories that are entirely incomprehensible to ordinary people. Those who cannot grasp these unique experiences are incapable of understanding the profound meanings and messages they convey (Gilani, 2003).

Ibn Arabi, with an emphasis on symbolism in his works, portrays the inner, mystical world through complex and symbolic narratives. This approach is particularly evident in his works, allowing readers to delve into hidden meanings. In this regard, parallels can be found between the thoughts of Ibn Arabi and the Surrealist school. Surrealism, with its focus on the unconscious and dream imagery, explores the hidden realities within human existence and considers imagination as a fundamental symbol in expressing human experiences. Both approaches seek deep meanings and spiritual experiences, believing that the truth exists beyond what is seen on the surface. In Ibn Arabi's works, imagination and symbolic images not only serve as a means to express inner feelings and experiences but also as tools to approach the truth and understand the unseen realms. Thus, Ibn Arabi's works and Surrealism, while different in origin, converge in their exploration of meaning and truth, with imagination as a key symbol in the deeper understanding of spiritual experiences.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

In analyzing the role of the unconscious in Surrealism and comparing it with Symbolism in expressing the concept of imagination in Ibn Arabi's mystical visions, one can clearly identify both commonalities and fundamental differences. Surrealism, as an artistic and literary movement, seeks hidden and unknown realities in the human unconscious and, through imagination and symbolic imagery, endeavors to express inner emotions and thoughts in an indirect and unpredictable manner. In this movement, imagination is seen as a tool for discovering hidden realities and individual experiences,

with an emphasis on the unconscious, resulting in artistic and literary works that transcend logical and conventional boundaries.

On the other hand, in Ibn Arabi's mystical visions, imagination is considered an important tool for discovering deep and inner truths. Ibn Arabi uses symbolic language and imagery to explain his mystical and religious experiences, employing imagination as a bridge between the unseen world and the observable world. This kind of imagination ultimately leads to the explanation of profound and mystical concepts, allowing the audience to gain insight beyond external appearances.

In comparing these two schools of thought, it can be said that both pursue the depth of existence and truth, but they use different methods to express these truths. Surrealism, relying on the unconscious and imagery drawn from dreams, seeks a free and creative expression of inner realities, while Ibn Arabi, focusing on symbols and spiritual experiences, aims to explain mystical and transcendent concepts.

In summary, while Surrealism and Symbolism both seek to discover hidden realities, Ibn Arabi, through symbolic language and imagination, deeply engages with the concepts of unity and transcendence, establishing a connection between the unseen world and the observable world. Despite their methodological differences, both schools ultimately aim to understand a truth that lies beyond what is visibly present, helping us better comprehend the inner, mysterious world of existence.

Writing, as a means of expressing human existence and its linguistic manifestation, is considered an extension of both spiritual and physical existence. Here, writing itself becomes the subject, and the main question is not about its artistic beauty, but about the richness of its meaning and significance. This form of writing seeks to raise questions about existence and humanity, uncovering the hidden world within and the madness that connects with reality.

Surrealist writing is a journey through ambiguous and complex territory toward an unknown realm, transcending aesthetic theories and emotional expression. This form of writing seeks knowledge and a path to liberation, aiming to elevate humans to a higher state of being. At the same time, it strives to free itself

from social constraints and the limitations imposed by the real world.

The function of Surrealism emphasizes what science is incapable of understanding. Like Surrealism, Ibn Arabi's mysticism and spirituality aim to uncover new secrets within humans and the world, and in this respect, both are intertwined with science. Mysticism developed during a period of growth in rational and transmitted sciences in Islamic society, while Surrealism emerged within the context of the Western scientific revolution. Both movements open horizons for life that science alone cannot unveil.

The final point is that psychological analysis, as a science, has established principles that can provide insightful and accurate interpretations of both mystical and Surrealist texts. This analysis lends scientific legitimacy to mysticism and Surrealism as two significant epistemological sources and views the knowledge gained from them as fundamental evidence in the field of epistemology.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

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In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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