

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Echo of Surrealism: Introspecting the Enigma in Selected Poems of David Gascoyne

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ABSTRACT

The research seeks to provide a clear vision of the contribution of David Gascoyne (1916-2001) to British surrealism, the main surrealist elements, and the psychological scope of this movement; more precisely to expose the enigmatic allure of the unconscious. It presents Gascoyne's surrealist phase as a creative breakthrough in poetry. The selected poems from his volume *Man's Life Is This Meat* (1936) will be discussed in this research through the lens of Freud's theories of dreams and the unconscious. This approach helps to unravel the mysterious nature of the poems, which parallels the enigmatic qualities of the dreams. Surrealism, as a trend of the 20th century, arose as a response to the trails of an era stained by war. It beckoned readers to view the world through a dreamy perspective as dreams function outside the constraints of logical thinking and societal norms, allowing for unusual and unconventional combinations of thoughts and emotions. The research focuses on the illogical threads of reality and the surreal tapestry of imagination contrasting with a more traditional or realistic approach.

Keywords: dream, enigmatic, Freud, surrealism, unconscious.

1. Introduction

The problem: The research addresses the need to clarify David Gascoyne's contribution to British surrealism, specifically how his works embody surrealist elements and explore the psychological dimensions of the movement, particularly the unconscious. This study is significant as it enhances the understanding of British surrealism and highlights Gascoyne's role within the movement, offering insights into how poetry engages with the unconscious mind amid the socio-political upheaval of the 20th century.

The research aims to elucidate Gascoyne's contributions, analyze the surrealist elements in his poetry, and explore the psychological aspects of surrealism through Freud's theories, examining the relationship between dreams and Gascoyne's enigmatic poetry. **The limits of the research,** it will focus on Gascoyne's surrealist phase, particularly his volume *Man's Life Is This Meat* (1936), and will not cover other aspects of his work or broader surrealist movements.

The hypothesis suggests that Gascoyne's poetry represents a creative breakthrough that embodies surrealist principles and reveals the complexities of the unconscious, paralleling Freud's conception of the dream experience. **The methodology** includes literary analysis, close readings of selected poems, the application of Freudian theories, and comparative analysis of surrealist elements and psychological themes. **The research procedures** consist of a literature review, establishing a theoretical framework, conducting the analysis, and drawing conclusions.

Results and Conclusions: The analysis reveals that surrealism effectively challenges conventional notions of truth by emphasizing the significance of dreams and the subconscious. Gascoyne's use of automatism and juxtaposition invites readers to question their perceptions of reality, fostering a deeper exploration of the unconscious mind. His poetry, particularly in "The Truth Is Blind" and "Salvador Dalí," illustrates how surreal imagery can evoke complex emotions and disrupt logical thinking. Ultimately, Gascoyne's work highlights surrealism's enduring power

to engage with the profound aspects of human existence, encouraging an exploration of the hidden recesses of the mind.

Surrealism emerged as a transformative force that challenged conventional notions of poetry. It often chooses “to present subjects in graceful distortion, rather than attempt to record life with absolute accuracy” (Taha, 2016, p. 129). Wordsworth's renowned definition of poetry, which hailed it as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility” (Wordsworth, 2003, p. 21), was itself overturned by the advent of Surrealism. Poetry, through the lens of this movement, embarked on a new trajectory; one that encompassed the very essence of chaos, albeit not in the traditional sense. Surrealism ushered in a poetry that delved into the depths of the unconscious, unearthing a profound chaos that lay concealed beneath the veneer of conscious stillness. Poetry from a surrealist perspective is “a perpetual functioning of the psyche, a perpetual flow of irrational thought in the form of images, taking place in every human mind and needing only a certain predisposition and discipline in order to be brought to light in the form of written words”(Raine, 1967, p. 42).

During the interwar period, the horrors faced by humanity challenged the prevailing rational and academic perspectives. Surrealism became a beacon of hope amidst a shattered world, and its message remains relevant today, inspiring people to question and resist intolerable circumstances (Davis, 2006). Gascoyne’s “rage is not just a personal grievance, but a broader criticism of power structures” and artistic confinements (Hassan, 2024, p.25).

André Breton (1896-1966) was a French poet, essayist, and a key figure in promoting and founding the Surrealist movement. He believed that Poetic Surrealism has prioritized restoring authentic dialogue by eliminating social conventions and expectations that hinder genuine communication between individuals (Breton, 1969). Surrealists sought to create art that went beyond the boundaries of aesthetic and ethical values, leading them to explore themes associated with grotesque, hallucinations, and dreams. Thus , Surrealism is “an expression of the

subconscious mind, where formal restraints were required to be sublimated in order to allow connections and associations to flow from a deeper level” (Williams, 1987, p. 36). Employing various techniques, including the juxtaposition of words, this literary device intertwined unexpected combinations of words, evoking a sense of wonder and surprise. Two seemingly contradictory perspectives that, in essence, are engaged in a tense struggle, resulting in a paradoxical fusion (Foster, 1995).

Automatism is another literary technique utilized by Surrealists through which "their language is free from any logical control"(Ismael, 2013, p. 2). They believed that this form of expression established a direct connection with the subconscious of their readers. This technique incorporates Freud's psychoanalytic method of *free association*. *Free association* is a technique where patients express their thoughts without censorship, regardless of their randomness, in order to access their subconscious minds and express feelings that may otherwise remain concealed (Yeganeh, 2009). The Surrealists used automatic writing to create authentic art and bypass conscious thought, allowing their subconscious to guide their creative work. Breton defined this as writing that is "dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern" (Breton, 1969, p. 26). Breton promoted Surrealism as a way to merge consciousness and the unconscious, blending the rational world with the realm of dreams to create an ultimate reality known as surreality (Mühl, 1930).

Surrealism cannot be fully explained without Freud; thus, the analysis of the research combines his ideas. The movement was inspired by Freud's theories of the unconscious in psychic life and the nature of dreams, particularly as outlined in his seminal work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). The surrealists utilized dreams as a model for their poetic endeavors. Freud pointed out that “a dream is a picture – puzzle” (Rivkin& Ryan, 2000, p. 131) when considered as a cohesive composition, could lead people to raise objections and deem the entire picture nonsensical. Nevertheless, if each part is replaced separately, they no longer appear

nonsensical “but may form a poetical phrase of the greatest beauty and significance” (p. 132). The Surrealists heavily relied on Freud's theory of dreams to incorporate dream-like imagery into their poetry. According to Freud, the interpretation of dreams can uncover hidden thoughts and desires that are concealed within the dream itself. This concept provided the Surrealists with a framework to explore the enigmatic and cryptic nature of their poetic works. Freud's suggestion that the sensation of having numerous dreams that are only partially remembered can be deceptive or misleading further encouraged the Surrealists to embrace the elusive qualities of their poetry, using dream-like images to evoke a sense of mystery and subconscious exploration (Grosholz, 1981).

2. Gascoyne's Contribution to British Surrealism

David Gascoyne is a British poet who has emerged as a distinct voice in contemporary literature. For Fuller (1973) “Surrealism arrived at about 1935, imported by an almost one- man firm, the precociously brilliant David Gascoyne” (p. 147). However, Gascoyne's surrealist phase actually commenced as early as 1933 and 1934 through his translations of surrealist poetry by Anglo-French poets. In 1935, Gascoyne returned to Paris to meet Breton and Salvador Dali (1904-89), both of whom left a profound impression on him. During this visit, he gathered materials for his critical book *A Short Survey of Surrealism* (1935), in which he portrayed Breton as a man of strong will. He remarked that it is as challenging to imagine surrealism without Breton as it is to envision psychoanalysis without Freud. This work helped popularize the surrealist movement in England, as Gascoyne provided an overview of the artistic concepts and prominent figures within the French Surrealist movement. In his introduction, he illustrated that surrealism systematically sheds light on "the enormous, illogical world" (Gascoyne, 1970, p. 3). He also mentioned Onirus, the deity who guarded an alternate plane of existence where the normal laws of nature were subverted. In this other realm, stones fell

upwards, the sun shone through the night at will, and even the trees engaged in free discourse with statues that had permanently descended from their pedestals. Gascoyne's introduction framed surrealism as a movement that revealed the profound strangeness and irrationality underlying the ostensibly ordered world (Gascoyne, 1970).

Surrealist poetry aims to “create an angry revolutionary soul to gain liberation” for the spirit and express complex ideas and feelings that may not be easily articulated through traditional narrative forms (Shafiq, 2022, p.390). Gascoyne's second poetry collection, *Man's Life is this Meat*, published in 1936, exemplifies this surrealist approach and represents his sole volume of truly surrealist verse. The themes of fragmentation and destruction within surrealism arise from various interrelated factors: psychological exploration influenced by Freudian theory; historical context marked by world wars; rejection of rationality; exploration of identity; and an understanding that destruction can lead to transformation. These elements combined create a rich tapestry through which surrealists sought to express complex human experiences beyond conventional representation (Waldberg, 1962).

This research analyzes two poems from Gascoyne's second volume *Man's Life Is This Meat* (1935): "The Truth Is Blind" and "Salvador Dalí" (Gascoyne, 1988, pp. 42-55). The analysis explores how Gascoyne employs seemingly nonsensical imagery and surreal elements to evoke the unconscious mind, reflecting Freud's concept of dream symbolism. By interpreting these fragmented images individually, the analysis aims to uncover the underlying anxieties and desires expressed within the poems.

Bohn (1977) describes the essence of surrealist beauty “as the surprising statement or portrayal of truth” (p. 203). Gascoyne's poem “The Truth Is Blind” suggests a world where truth is veiled or concealed, evoking a melancholic tone. The focus is on the use of juxtaposed imagery, which is essential to surrealist poetic theory. The element of juxtaposition is evident from the title,

where "truth" is alongside blindness. This arrangement suggests that those who fail to grasp the truth are blind, rather than the other way around.

The poem opens with a realistic setting, presenting a dark and memorable nighttime scene. The fading light symbolizes the onset of darkness and contemplation, leaving one to wonder what transpired during the day that is now done and over. The subsequent line hints at a recurring pattern of reflection and diversions that fill the speaker's days. The word "Another" suggests that this is a regular occurrence, as if each new day brings more distractions instead of resolutions or progress.

However, a shift occurs, revealing a conflict between love and hate. This complexity reflects the intricate nature of human relationships, where love and hate are not opposing forces but rather two sides of the same coin, shaping the interactions and inner lives. The terms "Love" and "Hate" in line 3 symbolize the duality of these feelings; their coexistence reflects the unconscious mind's complexity, where conflicting emotions can exist simultaneously.

According to Freud, within familial dynamics, both boys and girls navigate their attachments to their parents through a lens of rivalry and jealousy. For boys, a burgeoning love for their mothers can transform into hostility toward their fathers, as they perceive the father as a rival for maternal affection. This conflict manifests in a desire to eliminate the father from the equation, showing how love can give rise to destructive emotions. Conversely, girls often develop a deep affection for their fathers, which morphs into jealousy toward their mothers, whom they see as competitors for paternal love. This emotional duality reveals the depth of human experience, highlighting how love can be both a source of warmth and a catalyst for conflict (Ernest, 1957).

The lights fell from the window and the day was done
 Another day of thinking and distractions
 Love wrapped in its wings passed by and coal-black Hate

(Lines, 1-3)

Gascoyne portrays Love as a winged entity passing by, while Hate stands on the edge of a cliff, dropping a stone; “paused on the edge of the cliff and dropped a stone” (line, 4). The "cliff" represents a point of no return, and the "stone" symbolizes the initiation of destructive thoughts. This emphasizes how such potent emotions can obscure one's clarity of truth. When the mind and heart are engaged in a battle between light and dark passions, one's capacity for lucid, objective thinking becomes clouded. Moreover, the poet says "With daggers for its leaves and scarlet hearts" (line, 6) where the imagery of danger and painful emotions is reinforced. This inner turmoil represents real-life emotional conflicts the conscious mind has barred from full awareness. Freud believed dreams are a direct continuation of reality, and in dreams the self seems to experience things in another world or setting (Jones, 1910).

The following lines convey an absence of consciousness, with images emerging in a seemingly illogical manner. This can be interpreted as a reflection of the mysterious and often nonsensical nature of dreams. The abrupt ending with "For flowers" creates anticipation and suggests the possibility of transformation. The rose, frequently symbolizing beauty and love, contrasts with the shifting sands, highlighting the tension between stability and transience. This juxtaposition underscores the delicate balance between permanence and change in life, emphasizing the inevitability of flux and impermanence. The sudden appearance of the bed further reinforces the exploration of the subconscious realm, where rationality holds less power and emotions surge, as described by Gauss (1943): “obeying the suggestions which come... from our conscious depth” (p. 38).

For flowers-then the bed
 Rose clocklike from the ground and spread its sheets
 Across the shifting sands

(Lines, 7-9)

The visual imagery of the poem is enhanced by the use of color: "coal-black" and 'scarlet,' later 'flaming,' and in the last three lines, "blue" and "black". The poem's ability to create visual imagery is strengthened by the specific colors the poet uses, as the color experience is a core aspect of human vision. This interplay between words and color reflects the poet's ability to harness the full expressive potential of the written form, elevating the poem beyond the constraints of language alone. "Coal-black" and "scarlet" create a strong contrast, highlighting the darkness of hate "coal-black" and the intensity of negative emotions. "Scarlet" and "flaming" add another layer of intensity and suggest fiery, destructive quality. Colors represent the difficulty of discerning truth in the face of strong emotions like hate, which makes the truth unseen. "Blue" and "black" in the final section might introduce a sense of coldness or a deeper darkness compared to the fiery "scarlet" earlier. The use of specific colors helps the reader imagine the scene more vividly and understand the emotions the poem conveys (Edeline, 2012).

The poem employs words such as "autumnal," "veiled," "grey mist" which all contribute to a sense of melancholy and mystery. These words evoke a certain mood, a feeling of longing and introspection. The veiled star is a representation of obscured truth. It suggests a longing for something beyond reach, something hidden from view. The star, often associated with guidance and hope, becomes enshrouded in mist, signifying the difficulty in attaining these aspirations. Reading "Autumnal breath of mornings far from here / A star veiled in grey mist" (lines 9-10-11) suggests that the subconscious brings to the waking mind's attention hidden conflicts (The Diagram group, 2009). This juxtaposition highlights the tension between the conscious experience of morning and the deeper, often unacknowledged, emotional undercurrents that the mind grapples with upon waking.

The prose section subtly paves the way for exploring hidden truths; those aspects of human experiences that remain subconsciously concealed beneath surface-level justifications, and to open "the box of never ending drawers which is called man" (Gauss, 1943, p. 39).

Gascoyne weaves atmosphere and suspense together in the prose section through mood, imagery, and tension. He sets a scene filled with anticipation, portraying a man whose existence feels marked by desolation. The sound of a twig snapping serves as a muted, ghostly signal of life. The focus shifts to two boatmen tying off their boat amid dense overgrowth, occupying a "middle position... they are alive but do not enjoy living; they are dead but not in their graves yet; and they want to leave but they do not move" (Hussein, 2020, p. 120).

The imagery of "rank tropical vegetation" creates a vivid picture of a lush yet oppressive environment, reflecting the men's internal struggle. While the vegetation teems with life, it also feels suffocating, mirroring their sense of entrapment. The boat tied to a branch symbolizes their inability to escape, anchoring them both physically and metaphorically. The act of turning sharply hints at a moment of decision or realization, heightening the suspense. This uncertainty about whether they will move forward or remain stagnant keeps the reader engaged, echoing the characters' internal dilemmas.

A living man:

The snapping of a dry twig was his only announcement. The two men, who had tied their boat to a branch that grew out over the water's edge, and were now moving up through the rank tropical vegetation, turn sharply (p. 48).

The dream landscape illustrates how external appearances often fail to represent the underlying realities of both internal and external worlds, a concept reminiscent of Freudian thought (Gauss, 1943). The poem prominently features water and fire through repeated images such as "the flaming sun," "endless stream of water and flame," and "the whispering of unseen flames," highlighting the interplay between illusion and truth. This theme resonates with the constant interaction of the four elements: earth, water, fire, and air.

Freud posited that truth resides in dreams, and attempts to escape them only deepen their mystery. Individuals may construct complex systems of censorship political, religious, or social,

to suppress their underlying desires (Grosholz, 1981). This notion emerges in lines describing a man yearning for clarity, yet his vision remains obscured by physical barriers like "legs," "buildings," "the flaming sun," and "heads." His journey through contrasting elements, natural and artificial, mortal and divine, clear and unclear, mirrors the struggle to access deeper truths hidden beneath layers of censorship and obstruction (Hoffman, 1967).

Freud posited that the ability to make judgments and think stems from the earliest experiences. Infants learn to distinguish between sensations that feel good, which are part of the self, and those that feel bad, which are external. This leads to determine that thoughts align with something real in the world. Freud suggested that perceiving the outer world is akin to recognizing something familiar yet often altered. This thought process, according to Freud, is a quick, low-energy motor action that helps assess the desirability of actions. He viewed perception as an active exploration, likening it to tasting the world, a metaphor rooted in human sensory experiences.

The river's source represents an external element, something outside oneself that is observed. The "flaming sun," a powerful external force, symbolizes a source of light and energy beyond the individual. Meanwhile, the "buildings" nestled among the leaves and the "heads" as large "as globes" evoke a blend of internal and external perceptions. This interplay between our internal selves and the external world reflects the complexity of human perception (Ernest, 1957).

He raised his eyes and saw the river's source
Between their legs- he saw; the flaming sun
He saw the buildings in between the leaves
Behind their heads that were as large as globes
(Lines, 13-16)

The speech is "indistinct", like rain or floating feathers, however, messages transcend boundaries and reach their intended recipients. "He heard their voice indistinct as rain / as faint as feathers falling" (lines, 17-18). "And he fell" (line, 19), the physical response to these experiences is falling which symbolizes a rebirth into a new, expanded awareness.

Just a dream-vessel can sail supported by "straw" and propelled by the fragility of silk. This divergence from mundane logic points to the power of the unconscious mind to generate extraordinary visions that transport the readers beyond the boundaries of their waking experience. The eruption of dual elements, "water" and "flame", from portals on the prow serve as a provocative contradiction, mirroring dream work's tendency to blend disparate elements through the play of association (Bohn, 1977).

The boat sailed on
 The masts were made of straw
 The sails were made of finest silken thread
 And out of holes on either side the prow
 Crushed endless stream of water and of flame
 In which the passengers saw curious things:
 (Lines, 24-29)

The lines coalesce into a prose-like form, without any intentional structuring on the part of the poet. This uncontrolled quality arises from a process of unconstrained word play, as described by Gascoyne's characterization of the composition occurring "in haste without hesitation" (Gascoyne, 1988, p. 16). The boatmen then give way to "a conjuror", which produces a sequence of unexpected items from his bag: "a silken thread, a hare, a beagle, a small dogboy", and finally, "a winsome young woman". The act of pulling various elements from his bag illustrates the surrealist technique of combining disparate elements to create new meanings and evoke emotional responses. Freud believed that dreams serve as a conduit for satisfying unmet desires, thus Each item represents a different aspect of desire, illustrating how imagination can manifest these wishes in a tangible form, albeit temporarily; like freedom, companionship, pursuit, and beauty (Ernest, 1957).

The conjuror 'took out of his bag a silken thread, and so projected it upwards that it stuck fast in a certain cloud of air. Out of the same receptacle he pulled a hare, that ran away up along the thread; a little beagle, which when it was slipped at the hare pursued it in full cry; last of all a small dogboy, whom he commanded to follow both hare and hound up the thread. From

another bag that he had he extracted a winsome young woman, at all points well adorned, and instructed her to follow after hound and dogboy (p. 49).

This young woman becomes the central focus of the poem, the astonishment of the witnesses to the woman's vanishing act, which reflects a dynamic interplay between desire and reality, encapsulating Freud's notion of dreams as wish fulfillments. The woman serves as "a charming angle ... embodies ... the early wishes" of the speaker (Segar, 2022, p.401). Her laughter may symbolize a playful, unattainable ideal, representing not just beauty but also a source of joy and fulfillment. Freud often associated women in dreams with the dreamer's aspirations and desires, highlighting their significance in the male psyche. She laughs, "Clapped her hands", and in an instant, she dissolves into "thin air". Nevertheless, fear not, for she reappears on "the other bank", amidst the "restless traffic of the quays". The act of gazing may suggest an expression of longing or admiration, which aligns with Freud's idea that dreams reveal hidden wishes. She occupies a liminal space between visible and invisible, much like the content of nocturnal visions that penetrate the subconscious depths (Grosholz, 1981; Freud, 1913).

She laughed to see them gazing after her
 She clapped her hands and vanished in thin air
 To reappear upon the other bank
 Among the restless traffic of the quays
 (Lines, 26-29)

The following enigmatic lines: "Her silhouette against the dusty sky\" \"Her shadow falling on the hunger stones" (lines, 30-31) encapsulate the surrealistic Faustian pursuit of knowledge and challenge the perception of reality; blurring the lines between what is tangible and what is ephemeral as the delicate figure of the woman . A silhouette often represents the outline of that which remains veiled from view, suggesting mystery and the unknown. This aligns with the Faustian theme of seeking knowledge beyond the surface, as Faust himself sought deeper truths about existence. The "hunger stones" evoke a sense of desperation and longing, perhaps

symbolizing the sacrifices made in the pursuit of knowledge or the suffering that accompanies such a quest (Ferentinou, Bauduin, Zamani, 2017).

Gascoyne explores the tension between appearance and reality, moving beyond the limits of consciousness to penetrate the barriers of rationality. He achieves this through juxtaposition, echoing the Surrealist notion that "existence is elsewhere," as espoused by Breton (Bohn, 1977, p. 206). This technique creates a sense of overwhelming irrationality, challenging the reader's understanding of human psychology and the very nature of reality itself (Bohn, 1977).

The pilot's wet cloth covering suggests a life spent outdoors, battling the ravages of nature, while his ragged state implies a fall from previously held privilege. The following lines describe a disturbing scene using ambiguous and non-linear language typical of surrealism. It captures a moment of destruction—devouring her sugar-like head, which symbolizes consuming something sweet and ephemeral. This juxtaposition of fragility and destruction, the consumer and the consumed, the ethereal and the corporeal, creates a profound tension within the poem, highlighting the transience of beauty and the inevitable passage of time.

The woman, once a metonymic representation of grace and allure, is reduced to mere fragments, consumed by the pilot. The witnesses gathered around the point to the chasm at his feet, serving as a visual reminder of the void left behind by this act of consumption (Germain, 1986).

Where sat the pilot dressed in mud- stained rags
He knocked the fragile statue down
And ate her sugar head
And then the witnesses all gathered round
And pointed at the chasm at his feet:
(Lines, 32-36)

The poem maintains its enigmatic and symbolic tone throughout, building suspense until the end. In the last prose section, the rising "smoke" forms a veil that obscures clear vision. The intertwining tones of "blue" and "black" suggest both calm and foreboding, characteristics often

associated with the dreamer. The portrayal of smoke as "an annoyance" indicates its subtle disruption of order and reason.

The juxtaposition of "unseen flames" and "whispering" creates a captivating contrast, seamlessly blending visual and auditory senses in an enigmatic manner. Additionally, the phrase "a sharp taste in the mouth" adds a tangible dimension to the description, intensifying the sensory experience through which individuals perceive and process information from their environment, influenced by "perceptual models and sensory preferences" (Majeed, 2023, p. 141). Perceptual models encompass both visual and auditory elements, while sensory preferences often operate subconsciously. However, individuals can consciously choose to focus on a particular model that involves emotional engagement and awareness of their preferred approach.

The concluding lines effectively capture the essence of surrealism, inviting the reader to explore a realm where the boundaries between the senses dissolve, enabling an abstract interpretation of the world. Surrealism prominently features unexpected imagery that emerges from the subconscious, directly reflecting hidden desires, fears, and the taboo aspects of human existence (Murphy, 2016; Williams, 1981).

Clouds of blue smoke, sometimes mixed with black, were being emitted from the exhaust pipe. The smoke was of sufficient density to be an annoyance to the driver following the vehicle or to pedestrians (p.49).

The whispering of unseen flames
A sharp taste in the mouth
(Lines, 37-38)

Poets often draw inspiration from the realm of dreams, where both poetry and dreams teem with symbolism and imagination. While poetry relies on words, dreams present a complex and multifaceted experience. Encountering these elements in dreams or poetic verses requires a non-literal approach; instead, analysis uncovers deeper meanings, a process enhanced by the

technique of free association. Surrealists regarded dreams as embodiments of poetry, suggesting that poems can hold interpretations beyond a purely Freudian perspective.

Freud's examination of dreams involves two distinct phases: the "manifest content," which pertains to how dreams are recalled, and the "latent content," which encompasses the unconscious thoughts and meanings they convey. In the poem, imagery of darkness, cliffs, a coal-black entity representing hate, scarlet colors, and the bed serve as representations of the manifest content. Meanwhile, the underlying thoughts and latent content revolve around the speaker's anxieties, including missed love, hate, and uncertainty. By adhering to Freud's theory of dreams, these elements collectively highlight the conflict between the conscious mind and unconscious desires (Aspley, 2010; Rivkin & Ryan, 2000).

3. Dreams as windows to the soul

Below the surface of every individual's awareness resides a realm of the human mind known as the unconscious, many scholars believe that dreams significantly influence our thoughts. The concept of dreams among primitive peoples and their impact on views of the universe and the soul fascinates researchers. Similarly, people in classical antiquity saw dreams as connected to the supernatural and believed they could predict the future. They believed that dreams were sent to the dreamer as warnings or to reveal future events. Contemporary dream analysis involves delving into the psychological underpinnings of dreams to uncover their significance and meaning (The Diagram group, 2009). Freud defined the dream "as the psychic activity of the sleeper, inasmuch as he is asleep" (Freud, 1913, p. 14). Surrealism draws from the omnipotence of dreams that lie hidden behind a rational facade.

Gascoyne writes a poem originally titled "In Defense of Humanism" which was later changed to "Salvador Dalí". The poem avoids directly describing the imagery in Dalí's famous artworks. Instead, it aims to create a parallel "personal mythology" (Gascoyne, 1988, p. 16) that

mirrors Dalí's expression of bizarre dreamscapes. Gascoyne explores the divergent paths in modern art after World War I, drawing parallels to Dalí's departure from traditional artistic norms. Similarly, Gascoyne's lines challenge conventional perceptions of love and peril.

The poem evokes a sense of unease and mystery, drawing the reader into a dreamlike realm that highlights the surrealistic qualities inherent in the work. Freud's "cipher method" (Freud, 1913, p. 20) of dream interpretation treats dreams as secret codes where each symbol represents a specific meaning. Instead of analyzing the dream as a whole, this method focuses on deciphering individual elements of the dream content, as if each part requires its own unique interpretation (Freud, 1913).

"The precipice", a steep and dangerous place, is "black with lovers" conveys a potent blend of romance and risk. By situating the lovers' presence in such a precarious position, Gascoyne hints at the fine line between love and potential harm, underscoring the fragility of human emotions. The face of the precipice itself serves as a symbol, representing a boundary between reality and the subconscious. This liminal space becomes a gathering point for lovers, suggesting a convergence of hidden desires and untamed emotions. In this realm of heightened emotions and uncertainty, the truest form of feeling, love, is depicted as existing in the shadows of the unconscious, hesitant to reveal itself due to societal norms or personal inhibitions. The sun resembles a "bag of nails" alluding to the power of a dream in which the sun is transformed to be a source of pain, it is no more a typical symbol for life or warmth as "the linguistic means of the words could be different from actual sense" (Ismael, 2022, p. 4). The springs hiding "among their hair" create a dreamlike and hallucinatory scene (Aspley, 2010).

The face of the precipice is a black with lovers;
The sun above them is a bag of nails, the spring's
First rivers hide among their hair

(Lines, 1-3)

Surrealist works encompass a multitude of allusions, including references to mythological, literary, pictorial, personal, biblical and historical elements. In his 1924 manifesto, Breton showed that surrealist images combine abstract and concrete elements, creating a hallucinatory experience that defies conventional physical properties. He also asserted that words should not have a single predetermined meaning from the dictionary; instead, they should interact and create new possibilities for interpretation (Breton, 1969). The image of Goliath, a Biblical warrior known for his strength, plunging his hand into the poisoned well, evokes a powerful metaphorical signifier the super ego's attempt to confront and restrain the unruly destructive nature of the id. The poisoned well, on the other hand, represents the depths of the unconscious mind, where primal instincts and desires reside. In Tyson's words "the unconscious is the storehouse of those painful experiences and emotions, those wounds, fears, guilty desires, and unresolved conflict" (Tyson, 2015, p. 12).

The images of the speaker's body growing from Goliath's head signifies the speaker's journey of growth and development through childhood experiences "Goliath plunges his hand into the poisoned well"/ And bows his head and feels my feet walk through his brain" (Lines, 4-5). It represents the emergence of the ego, the sense of self, from the influence of the super ego, embodied by Goliath. The ego, in psychological terms, is the mediator between the id, the primal desires and instincts, and the super ego, the internalized moral and societal values. As the speaker's body grows from Goliath's head, it symbolizes the formation of their individual identity, shaped by their experiences. This growth is intertwined with the destruction of innocence, which is a natural consequence of the maturation process (Tyson, 2015).

Innocence, like a delicate butterfly, that chased away by the harsh realities of life, leaving the speaker with a deeper understanding of the world. The vanishing of experiences like smoke further emphasizes the transient nature of childhood and the fleeting nature of memories. Childhood experiences, once vibrant and vivid, dissipate like smoke, leaving only fragments and

impressions behind. This evokes nostalgia and a bittersweet realization that one cannot reclaim the innocence and wonder of youth. Gascoyne's deliberate mentioning of children in his poem serves as a vehicle to assert Freudian ideas about the profound impact of childhood experiences on future behavior. Children, in their innocence and vulnerability, often represent the unfiltered and unadulterated aspects of the psyche (Freud, 1913).

The children chasing butterflies turn round and see him there
 With his hand in the well and my body growing from his head
 And are afraid. They drop their nets and walk like smoke
 (Lines, 6-8)

The poetic language evokes a neo-romantic aesthetic, imbuing the natural environment with a mythical and mystical quality. Supernatural imagery, such as references to a "basilisk" and descriptions of mirrors as a "strong-bow of salt" and a "cutlass of memory," aligns with the neo-romantic trend of infusing the ordinary with enchantment and poetic resonance. The "mirrors" guide the children through their challenges while reflecting an inner desire for the unreal or for death. This aspect illustrates the surrealist view that reality is not fixed but a blend of conflicting elements.

The mirror serves as a metaphor for the surrealist worldview, challenging traditional notions of logic and singular truth by embracing the coexistence of opposing forces, the blending of the conscious and unconscious, and the fluidity of identity and perception (Sheringham, 1986). Dali reinforces this surrealist perspective, stating that it felt "as if my head had been a real motion picture projector by virtue of which everything that occurred within me was simultaneously seen externally by my own eyes" (Dali, 1942, p. 46). This quote underscores Dali's belief in the interplay between the internal and external, blurring the boundaries between the individual and the world, which mirrors the poem's exploration of reality's fluid and multifaceted nature.

The poet depicts a mysterious, dangerous, and otherworldly landscape where children are lost in the shadows of the catacombs, struggling to find their way. The phrase “And the children, lost in the shadow of the catacombs,” evokes places associated with death and the unconscious mind. Coupled with smoke, this imagery symbolizes confusion, obscured realities, and the presence of death or endings. The children’s call for help implies a desperate need for guidance or salvation. Tyson (2015) concludes that dreaming about children “always reveals something about our feelings toward ourselves or toward the child that is still within us and that is probably still wounded in some way” (p. 19).

Gascoyne's childhood unfolded in a haunting landscape filled with mystery and danger, significantly impacted by the absence of his father. This absence forced him to navigate life within a women-led community, akin to lost souls wandering through catacombs as he sought his path (Fraser, 2012). The poem's language imparts a mythical quality to the setting. The term "basilisk," often depicted as a serpent or dragon-like creature with lethal powers, evokes a sense of the supernatural. Its gaze symbolizes not only physical death but also moral corruption and spiritual decline. The cliff's ominous qualities, compared to the basilisk's deadly gaze, resonate with new apocalyptic movements in art and literature (Wood, 2018).

Consequently, "children" symbolizes innocence and purity, representing the untainted state of humanity in youth. In contrast, the "shadow of the catacombs" evokes a sense of darkness and death, the images encapsulate the journey from innocence to experience, illustrating "man's purity in childhood, his loss of it through sin, and after a long period of struggle, sorrow, and repentance during which all selfishness is cleansed from his nature"(Mohammad & Sharif, 2019, p. 80).

The smooth plain with its mirrors listen to the cliff
 Like a basilisk eating flowers.
 And the children, lost in the shadow of the catacombs,

(Lines, 9-11)

While perplexing on the surface, the poem presents a surreal parallel to internal psychic landscapes. The imagery of mirrors and maps connotes tools of rational perception repurposed to intriguing ends. The mirrors are described using evocative imagery, suggesting their ability to provide clarity and guidance in the confusing environment. As Freud posits, “it might be described as the cipher method, since it treats the dream as a kind of secret code in which every sign is translated into another sign of known meaning, according to an established key”(Freud, 1913, p. 20). The mirrors, described in unsettling terms, become symbols of both truth and disorientation, hinting at the underlying tensions in this precarious, apocalyptic-tinged landscape. The mirrors thus become tools that reveal not only external realities but also internal conflicts (O’Riley, 2022).

Call to the mirrors for help:
Strong-bow of salt, cutlass of memory,
Write on my map the name of every river
(Lines. 12-14)

The following perplexing poetry excerpts through a Freudian framework revolve around a world where banners, animals, butterflies, and plants come to life in a chaotic and vivid manner. Within these lines, the poet paints a surreal landscape where heraldic animals navigate through the suffocating depths of planets, and butterflies metamorphose, bursting free from their confining skins to sprout elongated tongues akin to plants.

Gascoyne creates a dream-like world where the laws of reality are suspended, placing ordinary objects in puzzling surroundings and making them behave contrary to common sense. The rhymes offer glimpses into the dreamer's unconscious desires, struggles, and transformative processes. The flock of banners fighting their way through the telescoped forest suggests a struggle or conflict within the dreamer's psyche. These banners may symbolize different facets of the dreamer's identity or desires vying for dominance (Claybourne, 2009).

The flight of the banners, like birds drawn toward the sound of roasting meat, carries a primal and instinctual quality, representing the dreamer's unconscious yearning for fulfillment. It is clear that the subconscious guides the writing process, resulting in a spontaneous and dreamlike expression that challenges traditional notions of logic and coherence. According to Karlinsky (1967), "if the bizarre and unusual placed in believable or prosaic surroundings make a romantically fantastic impression, the effect of the prosaic and the believable placed within bizarre or incongruous contexts is ... likely to be surrealistic" (p. 607).

A flock of banners fight their way through the telescoped forest
And fly away like birds towards the sound of roasting meat
Sand falls into the boiling rivers through the telescopes' mouths
(Lines, 15-17)

The surreal scene of boiling rivers and acid drops illustrates the dreamer's unconscious struggle with emotional intensity and transformation. "Heraldic animals" wading through the suffocating atmosphere of planets symbolize the dreamer's quest for recognition and significance in life, with 'the asphyxia' representing feelings of constraint. Butterflies, often associated with hope and renewal, embody freedom and transformation through their life cycle, reflecting personal development and self-awareness. Their graceful flight evokes liberation and the pursuit of desires, which, although fragile, remain beautiful. Additionally, the "long, tongueslike plants" suggest a desire for connection and exploration; the act of seeking nectar from various flowers represents curiosity and the quest for knowledge, indicating an adventurous spirit eager for new experiences. This imagery captures the dreamer's subconscious longing for personal growth and self-expression (Pullin, 2012). Lastly, the plants and suit of mail may symbolize different facets of the dreamer's identity, indicating a subconscious desire to understand or dismantle these aspects (Bressler, 2012).

And forms clear drops of acid with petals of whirling flame
Heraldic animals wade through the asphyxia of planets,
Butterflies burst from their skins and grow long tongues like plants,

The plants play games with a suit of mail like a cloud
(Lines, 18-21)

As the poem unfolds, it adopts a more ominous and tragic tone. The mirrors inscribe Goliath's name on the speaker's forehead, symbolizing a confrontation with identity and the burden of societal expectations. The reference to "Goliath," a biblical giant, evokes feelings of inadequacy and the struggle against overwhelming challenges, aligning with Freud's concept of unconscious conflicts manifesting in dreams. The children, who initially sought help, meet a tragic fate in smoke-filled catacombs, suggesting darkness and the emergence of buried memories or repressed emotions in the dream state. This aligns with Freud's theory that forgotten memories resurface in dreams, particularly affecting children, who symbolize innocence and vulnerability caught in unseen psychological forces. Additionally, the imagery of "lovers floating" conveys both beauty and fragility, reflecting the bittersweet nature of love and illustrating Freud's belief that dreams express repressed desires and emotions in cryptic or symbolic ways (Rivkin & Ryan, 2000).

Mirrors write Goliath's name upon my forehead,
While the children are killed in the smoke of the catacombs,
And Lovers float down from the cliff like rain
(Lines, 22-24)

4. Conclusion

Literary history shows that many poets found inspiration in dreams and the irrational. Surrealism challenges the notion that truth exists only within mundane discourse and realistic depictions of everyday life. Instead, surrealists argue that truth resides in dreams, the subconscious, and the irrational. This movement emerged as a response to the devastation of war, building on negativity to become a dominant trend of the 20th century. Even today, surrealism captivates artists and thinkers by exploring the depths of the unconscious mind and defying conventional reality. Its lasting influence highlights its ability to engage with the profound aspects of human existence that

extend beyond the visible world. Gascoyne explores automatism and the deliberate use of juxtaposition through contextual and theoretical analysis, drawing on various critical perspectives and Freudian ideas, particularly his theory of dreams. In “The Truth Is Blind,” Gascoyne skillfully combines disparate images and ideas, creating a dissonance that challenges conventional logic. This technique disrupts readers' expectations, prompting them to question reality's boundaries and embrace the unexpected.

In “Salvador Dalí,” Gascoyne beautifully displays his ability to create a dream-like atmosphere. He demonstrates that a single, well-placed surreal twist can be more powerful than a collection of random images. By tapping into Freudian theories on dreams, Gascoyne delves into the subconscious realm where desires and fears intertwine. His surreal and ethereal imagery transports readers beyond everyday reality, inviting them to explore their own subconscious landscapes. This poem exemplifies surrealism's power to challenge perceptions and reveal the mind's hidden recesses, while also suggesting that the unexplainable and the imaginary offer endless possibilities.

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صدى السريالية: استبطان اللغز في قصائد مختارة للشاعر ديفيد جاسكوين

الملخص

يسعى هذا البحث إلى تقديم رؤية واضحة لمساهمة ديفيد جاسكوين (1916-2001) في السريالية البريطانية، والعناصر السريالية الرئيسية، والنطاق النفسي لهذه الحركة؛ وبشكل أدق الكشف عن الجاذبية الغامضة للوعي. ويعرض مرحلة السريالية عند جاسكوين باعتبارها طفرة إبداعية في الشعر. يتم تحليل القصائد المختارة من ديوانه "حياة الإنسان هذا اللحم" (1936) من خلال عدسة نظريات فرويد عن الأحلام واللاوعي. تساعد هذه المقاربة على كشف الطبيعة الغامضة للقصائد، والتي توازي الصفات الغامضة للأحلام. نشأت السريالية، بوصفها اتجاه من اتجاهات القرن العشرين، بوصفه رد فعل على آثار حقبة ملطخة بالحرب. وقد دعت القراء إلى رؤية العالم من منظور حالم، إذ تعمل الأحلام خارج قيود التفكير المنطقي والمعايير المجتمعية، مما يسمح بتوليفات غير عادية وغير تقليدية من الأفكار والعواطف. يهدف البحث إلى التركيز على الخيوط غير المنطقية للواقع والنسيج السريالي للخيال المتناقض مع النهج التقليدي أو الواقعي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحلم، الغموض، فرويد، السريالية، اللاوعي