

Drawing Inspiration from the Magic of the Unconscious in the Surrealist School in the Works of Jamil Jamoudi and Aminollah Rezaei (A Comparative Study)

Bashar Jawad Noumi*

Al-Qasim Green University, Al-Qasim District, Babylon, 51013, Iraq

*Corresponding author, email: bashar.nomy@uoqasim.edu.iq

doi: 10.17977/um065.v6.i2.2026.8

Article history

Submitted: 28 December 2025

Revised: 29 January 2026

Accepted: 30 January 2026

Published: 31 January 2026

Keywords

Iranian art

Iraqi art

Surrealism

Abstract

This paper provides a comparative analysis of the embryonic Surrealism of two well-known figures of the era: Jamil Hamoudi, an Iraqi surrealist artist, and Aminollah Rezaei, an Iranian surrealist artist. The results found that Surrealism in Iraq associated itself with cultural identity and sacred symbolism, unveiling Hamoudi as the merger of geometry, calligraphy, and warm colours, towards reshaping the collective unconscious and reformulating Eastern spirituality in a modernist fashion. While Surrealism itself was an American import, Surrealism in Iran was contained within a frame of clinical satire, with Rezaei using hybrid bodies and anatomical distortions within realism and fantasy to articulate individual identity crises and psychiatric trauma, as well as to journey into socially and politically critical territory. It argues that these artists crystallised their work based on their socio-political contexts, resulting in the emergence of two different Surrealisms in the two countries sacred Surrealism in Iraq as opposed to critical, satirical Surrealism in Iran and by tracing the differences aesthetic, conceptual, and technical between the two artists, the study concludes that it is these differences in cultural, political and psychological contexts that were most responsible for the divergent paths of Surrealism in the two countries.

1. Methodological Framework

1.1. Research Problem

Art is an inner feeling and emotion of man that finds the way of its expression and is conveyed by the artist to the masses, conveying a certain message that is inherited from generation to generation. He views his message as a follow-up to the previous one, to confirm or revise them as he lives by them. In these messages, he chronicles events or visions he has experienced, doing so through his vision and culture. For art to be a participatory expression, it needs to be complementary to the habitat's structure and to include internal characteristics, such as novelties that drive its evolution and development. Art is the product born of a deep, vital, and Perennial Human Need and Passion for the Artist. It is a phrase meant to evoke and be influenced by the culture and experience of its creators. Art is intrinsically connected to the functioning of machines thus, it constitutes both a craft and an artistic discipline. From this perspective, we contend that art is a necessity, possessing a core set of priorities that address the intellectual and cultural pursuits of individuals striving for a better existence. Paintings began to distinguish themselves from reality, with their styles developed in accordance with the aspirations and visions of individuals. They bore the burden of reasoning for visions that appeared irrational. Salvador Dalí realistically exemplifies this. From celebrating the irrational, art transitioned to offering a definitive philosophy for everything deemed unusual or challenging artistic convention. He attributed a distinct methodology to these artistic principles by associating art with dreams and asserting that the realms of visions and reality would converge into a new realm the world of art.

The examination of surrealist art is significant for cultivating an artistic existence in our contemporary era. The research problem was articulated as an effort to identify surrealist conceptual paintings, examining their aesthetics and the techniques employed, the variety of styles and compositions, and the degree of proximity or divergence among artists, including similarities whether deliberate or inadvertent arising from the local environment. The researcher subsequently performed a comparative analytical study to identify similarities and differences among surrealist artists. These two countries, which share several features related to the topics of this research, primarily seek to answer a set of basic questions about how the roots of Surrealism in the Iranian and Iraqi art landscape emerged within a few years. For example, who were the first Surrealists to bring this style of painting to Iran and Iraq? What themes were seen in the first surrealist works in each country? Drawing

on the art and careers of these most influential figures, this work will explore how this art movement became familiar and assimilated into the cultural environments of Iran and Iraq.

1.2. The Importance of the Research

The present study constitutes a significant investigation into the surrealist paintings of artists Jamil Hamoudi and Aminullah Rezaei, as well as an exploration of their personal experiences. It also illuminates the surrealist art movement within Iran and Iraq.

1.3. The Objective of the Research

The present study seeks to identify similarities and differences in the artworks of early artists Jamil Hamoudi from Iraq and Aminullah Rezaei from Iran, delineating their convergences and divergences through a comparative analysis.

1.4. The Limits of the Research

- a. Thematic Limits: A study of the paintings of the surrealist artists Jamil Hamoudi and Aminullah Rezaei.
- b. Spatial Limits: The states of Iraq and Iran.
- c. Temporal Limits: The earliest surrealist art in Iraq and Iran.

1.5. Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, drawing on library resources and pertinent documentary sources. In this context, the researcher aimed to examine the historical and artistic contexts that preceded the development of the Surrealist movement in Iran and Iraq by analysing art-historical sources and biographical accounts of the participating artists.

2. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Introduction

Surrealism emerged in 1922 under André Breton as a revolutionary paradigm that transcended the disillusionment of the Dada movement to address the profound psychological and socio-political upheavals of the twentieth century (Al-Bahloly, 2018). More than a mere aesthetic style, the movement sought to reveal a "higher reality" by reconciling the everyday world with the miraculous hidden behind rational order (Surrealism, 2022). At the heart of this theoretical framework lies psychic automatism, a technique designed to bypass conscious reason and allow the unconscious to emerge directly onto the canvas (Gauthier, 2021). This analytical approach transformed visual art into a theater of symbolism, where artists like Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, and Max Ernst utilized the displacement of commonplace objects and their anthropomorphism into "odd beings" to illustrate impossible, nightmarish landscapes. By linking these subconscious eruptions to their broader cultural context, Surrealism redefined the painting not as a depiction of external reality, but as a transformative tool that exposes the strange and the marvelous through a radical reimagining of the visual field (El Janabi, 2018).

2.1.2. The Concept of Surrealism

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, developed a topographical model of the mind between 1900 and 1905, in which he articulated the mind's structure and functions. Freud employed the iceberg analogy to illustrate the three tiers of the psyche. In 1915, Freud characterised the conscious mind as comprising all mental processes of which an individual is currently aware, comparing it to the summit of a mountain protruding above the water's surface. The preconscious, or proximate unconscious, comprises thoughts and emotions that are not currently in conscious awareness but are readily accessible. This level exists immediately beneath conscious awareness and above the unconscious. The unconscious, by contrast, functions as a "mental waiting room" where impulses and thoughts are held until the appropriate moment arises for them to surface and attract conscious awareness (Freud, 1924).

Freud categorised the mind into three levels: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. He underscored that unconscious processes fundamentally regulate all of these levels. The unconscious comprises the majority of the human mind, serving as the repository for desires, impulses, wrath, and repressed love. Freud thoroughly examined and analysed this aspect. According to this perspective, the artist is a distinctive figure, as his unconscious realm is engaged during the creative process, rendering his work a symbolic and indicative reflection of repressed and unfulfilled desires. Freud, in his publication *The Interpretation of Dreams*, described

this intimate connection between the unconscious and artistic creation: "Every dream consists of symbols that convey in a symbolic language not the immediately evident reality, but rather through intermediaries and interpretations a concealed reality, a profound truth that is not intended to be disclosed." Freud differentiated between two levels of dream content: the first, known as "manifest content," comprises what appears to us during the dream and which we may recall upon awakening; the second, termed "latent content," requires uncovering through meticulous and systematic analysis of the manifest content, as well as by interrogating the dreamer and interpreting the symbols within the dream.

Freud believed that there was a close and inextricable relationship between dreams and art, as he wrote: "The artist retells his dreams, or creates a dream in his waking life, just as a dream is constructed in sleep." The emergence of the surrealist movement coincided with the introduction of Sigmund Freud's theories (Freud, 1924). On the topics of "the unconscious, dreams, and repression," theories that influenced influential philosophers and artists such as André Breton and Louis Aragon, both of whom were psychiatrists.

Accordingly, Surrealism has been characterised as follows:

Surrealism is an examination of the psychological and spiritual unconscious and an endeavour to articulate, through words, writing, or imagery, a dynamic mental state. It is a technique designed to facilitate the uninhibited expression of the stream of consciousness, grounded in a truth superior to superficial reality, unveiled through symbolic associations, the influence of dreams, or spontaneous, aimless mental activity.

This artistic movement challenged conventional human psychology, exploring alternative ways to address fundamental existential issues. Lucy Smith (2005) argues that Surrealism relies on shattering accepted reality to reshape it, enabling humans to overcome their crises.

Bigziby points out: (1996) Quoted from the Breton statement 1924, to say:

I am convinced that these two polarities, dream and reality, will converge in the future to establish a form of absolute truth, which I term 'superreality.' Breton's personal definition of Surrealism highlighted its dedication to rectifying the understanding of reality. He utilised a variety of methods, including automatic writing, dream analysis, trance-like narratives, poetry, and paintings, which produced episodic effects and surreal, paradoxical imagery, all aimed at a single essential objective: to alter our perception of the world and, consequently, effect real change (Biggsby, 1996).

Breton (1936) wrote in his book *What is Surrealism?* Today, more than ever, the liberation of thought, which constitutes the primary aim of Surrealism, necessitates according to Surrealists the liberation of humankind; and this entails that we must vigorously oppose the bonds of despair. Consequently, contemporary Surrealists place greater hope than ever in the proletarian revolution as the means for human emancipation (Burton, 1936: 48–49).

In this artistic perspective and approach, the artist's focus is not primarily on depicting reality. As the name of this movement suggests, its objective is to establish a world that surpasses the confines of reality. This artistic discipline originated in the twentieth century and, as previously noted, is intrinsically connected to psychoanalysis. Some surrealist artists, including André Breton, were also psychoanalysts, while others incorporated Freud's theory of the liberation of the individual unconscious into their artistic work. Truth does not hold a central position within this creative approach, as the creator aims to embody their own mental visions and imaginings. Therefore, it can be asserted that this school represents the upheaval and disorder characteristic of the twentieth century. Hence, Surrealism may be regarded as a revolutionary artistic and social movement that challenges conventional foundations, embodying an aspiration to transform daily life by unveiling the marvellous, coincidental, and objective aspects underlying the apparent order of reality.

Surrealism's perspective on art and beauty fundamentally relies on contemporary aesthetics. According to this concept, humans are influenced by their environment, which produces mental images and reflections. Based on these reflections, the imagination generates novel, often uncanny or unfamiliar photos. Artists who exhibit a high degree of sensitivity to their environment are not only more profoundly influenced than their peers but also possess a more profound imaginative capacity and an enhanced ability to articulate and manifest these images. Therefore, what is depicted in their artworks is simply the manifestation of these imagined images and internal emotions. Consequently, art is not inherently connected to reality, particularly truth, but is instead a creation of artistic emotion and imagination (Edgar, 2008).

Halimi (2004) in his definition of Surrealism, Surrealism is derived from the term *Sur*, meaning 'above' or 'superior,' combined with *realism*, which signifies 'reality,' indicating a state beyond reality. Some individuals have interpreted it as 'illusionism.' In other words, Surrealism is regarded as the manifestation of a 'private' emotion or concept expressed without prior intellectual foundation, mental association, bias, moral judgment,

or adherence to established principles of art or aesthetics. Thus, Surrealism constitutes a form of mental activity aimed at conveying the genuine progression of thought through language, writing, or any other expressive medium. It is a mode of thought distinguished by its independence from the authority of reason, tradition, and strict adherence to the principles of beauty and moral philosophy."

Seyed Hosseini (1974) "The surrealist artist ventures beyond the tangible world into a realm of illusions and spirits, perceiving where the human mind diminishes in influence the profoundest emotions of existence, and subsequently creating his artwork from that experience. Therefore, in any context where the power of imagination is unrestricted and uninhibited, a higher truth is revealed. André Breton further contends that the essence of Surrealism resides in our awareness of the existence of an underlying reality concealed behind the surface of appearances."

Rusper (1965) says Technically, Surrealism did not establish its own distinct style; any technique could be employed within this movement. The fundamental distinction between Surrealism and preceding artistic movements resides in the emancipation of painting from the dominance of consciousness, reason, will, and self-awareness. The artist's obligation is to delve swiftly into the recesses of his inner self, uncover what resides there in the absence of rational influence, and articulate it with unwavering confidence and without trepidation. Therefore, the creations of Surrealist artists, which appear unusual to us, are distinguished by a broad spectrum of options and an increased potential for the manifestation of "what is." The artist can transform illusions, delusions, desires, and concealed thoughts into the material of their artwork. From a conventional standpoint, poetry, hallucinations, and words uttered under the influence of alcohol are not regarded as realistic; however, upon closer inspection, they often reveal greater truth than "researched" language, as they originate from the depths of the inner self beyond the confines of reason or logical deliberation. Breton, in articulating the concept of surrealist artwork,

says, as Le Mari (1972) and others quote "A surreal image embodies the highest degree of liberty and requires the longest time to render into conventional language. Whether it entails a significant apparent contradiction, exhibits a peculiar flaw in one of its elements, appears initially promising yet ultimately reveals weakness, or seeks an absurd formal justification, whether it depicts a fantastical nature or faithfully reflects fundamental physical properties in a thoroughly naturalistic manner, or even evokes laughter."

For the surrealist artist, the "inner world" holds greater significance than the "outer world" because the diverse states of the human mind such as dreams, nightmares, visions, and fantasies offer compelling visual structures. Therefore, rather than depicting conventional, realistic scenes (self-awareness), the surrealist artist effectively employs images derived from the "world of imagination" (the unconscious) to convey his mental and psychological states and to structure them into an artistic composition (Rahspar, 1965).

In works associated with the surrealist style, the artist does not aim to depict tangible nature, nor is he focused on developing a subject or concept intended to engage the viewer's rational mind. Instead, his objective is to seek a moment through which an absolute or inherent truth may be attained. To accomplish this objective, the artist is compelled to employ objects and assemble them into unconventional, heterogeneous arrangements, producing enigmatic, unfamiliar scenes that communicate through a symbolic, illogical language akin to the visions experienced by an individual immersed in a dream. Surrealist art does not depend on logic or conscious perception but instead draws upon the unconscious as a source of inspiration.

In this context, the artist endeavours to explore forms and uncover the hidden connections among them, aiming to restore the lost significance of objects and the forgotten memories associated with them. Therefore, he delves into the depths of his subconscious, surrendering control of artistic expression to his unconscious forces, thereby circumventing the dominance of the conscious will, which perceives objects solely in terms of their external appearances and functions. He arranges or compiles objects in a particular manner that corresponds to an internally established, pre-conceived concept for him. From the Surrealists' viewpoint, the unconscious serves as the fundamental origin of artistic creativity, compelling the artist to create (Hosseini, 1991).

In Surrealist art, the three traditional unities of time, space, and theme disintegrate. The artist is not confined to a particular era, location, or subject matter. Since the origin of creativity in Surrealist works neither arises from the conscious mind nor from natural reality, the inclusion of unfamiliar and diverse locations, periods, and objects is regarded as customary, even if it appears odd and illusory to the observer. Therefore, the allure of Surrealism lies in its enigmatic, illusory character. From the Surrealist artist's viewpoint, psychological introspection holds greater significance than the exaltation of reason and logic. A work of art is deemed deserving of appreciation when it is produced beyond the influence of the conscious mind. The surrealist realm, however, is characterised by hallucinations, psychological visions, and unconscious fantasies. René Magritte, a leading figure in Surrealism, described his techniques for constructing surrealist landscapes as follows: "Positioning objects in unconventional locations, generating novel entities, transforming the form of familiar objects, modifying their material properties, and employing both imagery and language." In this manner, these

images evoke long-forgotten hallucinations and fantasies hidden within the mind of the sleeping viewer (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2022).

Surrealist painting can be categorised into two primary types: the first, which Salvador Dalí referred to as "hand-drawn dream objects," depends on conventional methods such as realistic photography to portray a disturbed, fantastical, and surreal realm. In these works, imaginary scenes are depicted, juxtaposing disparate objects, dissected components of items synthesised into unusual and innovative phenomena, as well as machines and industrial structures, monstrous creatures, organic-abstract forms, and distorted images of this nature, similar to Dalí's works.



Figure 1. Dali's Works

And also in the works of (Tangi), as in the figure below



Figure 2. Tangi's Works

The second type is founded on artistic innovation, in which lines and coloured shapes are integrated under the influence of internal motivations, eliciting mental imagery (as exemplified in the works of Miró).



Figure 3. Miró's Works

The same principle pertains to the artistic endeavours of Mason. This category of surrealist artists occasionally employs automatic methods utilising techniques such as collage, transfer, etching, printing, and others. The outcome is often an abstract composition that approaches abstraction (Pakbaz, 2004).

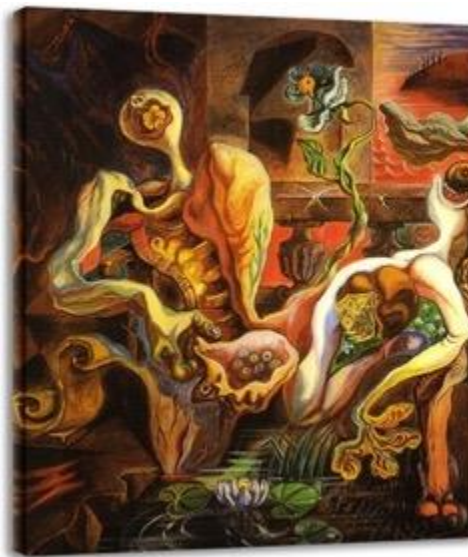


Figure 4. Mason's Works

2.1.3. The World's First Surrealist Painting

Giorgio de Chirico's painting "The Fortune Teller's Reward" is regarded as one of the groundbreaking and unique masterpieces of modern art and is frequently recognised as the world's first Surrealist painting. This artwork portrays a vacant and deserted city plaza, inhabited solely by a solitary statue, evoking a sense of solitude and existential unease. In the background, a train approaches the station, nearly obscured by a brick wall, juxtaposing the mechanised motion with the tranquil stillness in the foreground. An arch encircles several palm trees emerging from behind the same wall, serving as a symbolic element that may allude to uncharted realms or the depths of the human subconscious. The sunset sky, with its muted, sombre hues, casts elongated shadows and sharp contrasts between light and dark, creating an enigmatic, surreal scene typical of Surrealist art. This artwork integrates classical architectural features, contemporary urban environments, and psychological expressions, encouraging the observer to reflect on notions of time, memory, and human identity (Rahspar, 1965).



Figure 5. Giorgio de Chirico, "The Fortune Teller's Reward," 1913, oil on canvas, 135.6 x 180 cm (Philadelphia Museum of Art)

2.1.4. The Surrealist Movement in Iran

According to Tohidbar (2013) the Surrealist movement did not make its way into the Iranian art scene until the 1930s, at which point it steadily began to emerge among young artists as a novel artistic trend distinct from the prevailing styles of that period. This movement acquired a distinctive character within the Iranian context, shaped by the social and cultural transformations experienced by society, particularly following the engagement of Iranian art with Western artistic trends.

Saif (1996) mentioned that although many Iranian artists still have their tendency towards European art movements, schools and trends, there was a clear direction toward Surrealism starting from the 1940s. Thus, Surrealism increasingly functioned as an expressive vehicle that moved beyond the visual plane into the realms of the psyche and fantasy. But as this trend emerged, it also brought obstacles along with it. We do know, though, that in the wake of the Cubist era, which eschewed representation altogether and largely turned its back on coherent narratives, a whirring ball of artistic chaos was left behind, leaving artists bewildered, listless, directionless. Some of these works were marked by the writer distancing themselves from social, economic, and political reality, diving into alien fictional worlds, or simply presenting hallucinations detached from the daily life of an Iranian person. Given this reality, to some artists Surrealism offered the potential to express a broader range of intellectual and spiritual concerns through a new visual language. However, with the passage of time, many of these artists succeeded in reshaping this trend by combining Surrealism with Sufism and Eastern philosophical ideas in a context rooted in Iranian cultural and intellectual life, thereby creating an artistic context with a symbolic quality and an almost philosophical dimension.

In this context, Tohidbar (2013) again prefaces the fact that Iranian artists of the 1940s and 1950s engaged with Surrealism through a different lens than their European contemporaries. They did not necessarily follow the tenets of classical Surrealism as it had been conceived in the West, but they removed it into a new cultural and spiritual setting. A few further pursued this style, but others left it at only one or two quick studies. Aminollah Rezaei is among the most important of these figures, since he was the first surrealist artist in the sphere of painting and/or caricature in Iran, his works having a distinct imprint on the path of this movement of art in the country.

2.1.5. Aminullah Rezaei: The First Surrealist Painter in Iran

One of the most prominent artists in Iranian contemporary art history is Aminullah Rezaei (1315–1383 AH). He proved himself in painting, caricature, and graphics, and was one of the key figures in the development of these fields. Born in Hamadan, he had a keen artistic and literary inclination from childhood, which drew him toward drawing, poetry, music, and calligraphy. He completed his secondary education in his hometown despite his father's strong opposition, as he was desperate to learn painting and music. During this time, he took part in the Bouali Theatre of Hamadan and performed in preliminary musical performances. He went on to play the flute; he had wide-ranging artistic interests.

In 1936, Rezaei moved to Tehran and began working with the prominent art organisation Pars under the guidance of notable artists such as Mohammad Ali Zawah, Mohammad Tajweedi, Buyuk Ahmari, Ali Akbar Sadeghi, and Morteza Momayez. He has witnessed various styles and techniques related to draughtsmanship, Graphics, clichés, engraving and printing, panelling, and filmmaking, which have helped him raise his artistic standards in this creative environment.

His caricatures slowly began to be accepted in major newspapers and magazines, such as Al-Ma'alouma, starting in the 1950s. They were displayed alongside his later oil paintings at the Surrealism Exhibition at the Takht-e Jamshid Gallery, an especially unwieldy collection of works that remains one of the most significant artistic events of the period in Southern Iran. He was awarded a six-year scholarship to France and a sizable cash prize by the government at the first international exhibition in Tehran, before the revolution. Nevertheless, he turned down these prizes, a sign of his autonomy in intellectual and artistic matters. In October 2023, he was awarded an honorary diploma in handicrafts by Handicraft Workshops in Bangalore, India, as part of the Asian cultural exchange program which speaks to his international stature and the interest in his work across the globe (Mojab, 2016).

In the domain of illustrations and caricatures, Rezaei partnered with esteemed institutions and publications, including Sepehr, Amir Kabir, Pedideh, Ataei, Eshraqi, Eqbal, Wazn-e Rooz, and Maalem Panvan. His caricatures were notably featured in the art section of Kayhan newspaper's Thursday Nights, establishing themselves as a significant source of social and artistic critique. Furthermore, he engaged in art criticism alongside Khosrow Golsorkhi, conducting interviews and programs with prominent artists of the era and helping to enhance artistic awareness within society.

Khosrow Golsorkhi stated that Aminullah Rezaei's works manifest across multiple domains, including the preservation of endangered traditions and their reinterpretation through vivid portrayals of poverty and helplessness. Additionally, his works critique the expressions of urban life and, ultimately, challenge the elements that govern human existence, replacing reason and thought with material wealth. Golsorkhi noted that this analysis profoundly encapsulates the themes and underlying messages of Rezaei's social and philosophical writings.

Aminollah Rezaei's works have been exhibited in 26 solo and group exhibitions across Iran, and he remains one of the most innovative and influential artists in contemporary Iranian art (Graphic Magazine, 2020).

2.1.6. The Surrealist Movement in Iraq

Jamil Hamoudi – Entry of the Surrealist School to Iraq. The opening of the Surrealist school in Iraq is first attributed to the artist Jamil Hamoudi, considered one of the pioneers of modern Arab art. The initial elements of the Surrealist art movement in Iraq emerged in the Iraqi visual arts through his artistic activities. Hamoudi tried to balance Islamic features with the idea of Western Surrealism, for example, the form and aesthetic of Arabic calligraphy, thus establishing a new pictorial trend in Iraq. As a product of his engagement with the Hurufiyya movement which highlights the letterforms and meanings of Arabic letters Hamoudi created a distinctive visual vernacular combining religious and Sufi iconography on one end and a modernist approach to painting on the other, imparting a spiritual and philosophical depth to his works.

Iraqi Surrealism's local, spiritual character set it apart from its Western counterparts. Letters were not only units of language but also symbols with metaphysical and spiritual meanings in this movement. Iraqi Surrealism was thus not a simple copy-and-paste of Western models but the sign of a cultural and artistic reproduction that was able to respect the specificity of the Iraqi religious and cultural environment. Thus, this prevailing tendency made Surrealism in Iraq a form of visual tool associated with the artistic and spiritual identity of the society, on one hand, and related to the concerns of the international contemporary art, on the other hand, (its nature of course), which led it to achieve an active and effective presence in the regional and international arena of art (Bocco et al., 2012).

2.1.7. Al-Hurufiyya: A meeting Between Islamic Traditions and Modern Art to Build National Identity

Hurufiyya, in fact, is one of the most important art movements to have emerged in the Islamic world in the latter half of the 20th century. The artist movement took shape in Islamic nations to address the crises of colonialism, modernity, and the quest for national identity as these nations transitioned toward political independence (Mir-Kasimov, 2015).

Hurufiyya artists aspired to use Arabic calligraphy one of the most significant signifiers of beauty and spirituality in Islamic culture within the parameters of contemporary art. They invented a new visual language that reconciled tradition and modernity. Letters in their works are not only a calligraphic decorative element or

writing tools, but become another formative element, semantic symbols and keys to the interpretation of cultural identity (Flood& Necipoglu,2017).

These works were characterised by a duality rooted in traditional Islamic heritage, yet modern in style and technique, expressing an artistic vision that stems from the reality of Islamic culture while engaging with the broader artistic context of other cultures and traditions. This movement was beyond the traditional division between "text" and "image", and letters became a formative material involving elements of both spirituality and aesthetics (Issa et al ., 2016) .

As a side note, the name of the movement Hurufiyya derives from an ancient Persian Sufi movement of the same name, which can be traced to the turn of the 14th to 15th centuries CE. This movement treated letters as Godly secrets and as astronomical symbols. That is why the name adopted by these Hurufiyya artists is more meaningful than merely a name, since it reflects a thorough awareness of this, as letters in Islamic heritage have carried symbolic and metaphysical dimensions (Flood& Necipoglu,2017).

According to art historian Sandra Dagher, this movement is considered the most significant artistic movement in the twentieth-century Arab world for its role in defining a modern Arab visual vernacular grounded in Islamic tradition and represented with an avant-garde contemporary artistic aesthetic that reflects the nation's cultural identity in post-colonial times. In the end, Hurufiyya was not only an artistic tendency but also a wider cultural project, aiming to crystallise a true visual identity that would embody the thoughts and wishes of the Islamic peoples searching for symbolic and cultural autonomy after freeing themselves politically. It thus brought together a renewed Sufi ethos rooted in heritage with a modern understanding of the problems of artistic freedom and national identity (Mavrakis ,2015).

2.1.8. Jamil Hamoudi: The First Surrealist Painter in Iraq

Jamil Hamoudi (1924-2003) was a leading figure and one of the most influential pioneers of modern Iraqi art, and a key influence on the contemporary art movement. His oeuvre is defined by the amalgamation of two significant art movements Surrealism and calligraphy that engage with visual language and artistic meaning, albeit from radically different vantage points. Surrealism is a creative and literary movement that began in the early 20th century with the intention of exploring the world of the unconscious, dreams, and the darker sides of the mind. In response to this movement in his early works, Hamoudi sought to portray the inner and subconscious worlds of human beings through free and symbolic forms. But he steered clear of the dark, gloomy suggestiveness of a number of contemporary surrealist works in the West because he thought this kind of work gave off a sense of despair and deprived the viewer of hope. Consequently, he turned to vivid hues and symmetrical patterns to inject a greater sense of positive energy into his pieces (Inati,2003) .

In contemporary Arab art, calligraphy refers to Arabic script as the dominant visual element. This movement seeks to regenerate an Arab cultural and linguistic consciousness through art, aiming to bridge the gap between the calligraphic tradition and modern art languages. Here, words and letters become more than textual signifiers; they function as abstract, pictographic shapes that form new and exciting pictorial environments(Boccoet al.,2012).

Hamoudi offers a novel and distinctive hybrid of both trajectories in his works. The creative process in this city is vital for the constituent activity of the town, as he creates a visual language about Surrealism based on exploring the subconscious and symbols, combined with forms and elements of Arabic calligraphy for a new language with its roots in human cultural identity and rich in content for complex and universal concepts. These Arabic letters go beyond mere writing they are re-symbolised and re-grammatized as new symbols and graphic shapes arranged in surrealist formations. The formal and structural intricacies of Arabic calligraphy catalyse Hamoudi's formulation of mental images and subconscious ideations that express his Iraqi identity and heritage. This conversion creates a chance to connect tradition and modernity, tradition and contemporary, local tradition and global trends in the art (Amirsadeghi& Shabout,2009) .

Arguing that Arabic calligraphy became his holy and representative element, Hamoudi transformed art into a sort of prayer that highlighted the values and symbolism of his society's spirituality. This experimental fusion and the new pictorial language it invented helped shape the context of modern art in Iraq. Also, they gave new generations a way to express their generational ideas within contemporary art without necessarily losing touch with their cultural identity. In this sense, Hamoudi was not only at the helm of the Hurufiyya movement but also served as a bridge between modern Western art and local heritage, fashioning a novel artistic idiom that would resonate deeply within contemporary Iraqi and broader Arab art (Boccoet al.,2012) .

2.2. Previous Studies

In his thesis entitled "A Study of the Surrealist or Superrealistic Perspective in the Works of Iranian Painters (from 1340 to the Present), (Tohidbar , 2013) introduces the surrealist style in the works of Iranian

photographers, introducing the most prominent Iranian artists in this field, and seeking to trace the development of this artistic trend within Iran. Subsequently, Abdul-Mohammad et al., (2020) in a study titled "Schools of Painting and Their Aesthetic Influence on Contemporary Iraqi Art from 1900 to 1980") examined the dynamic relationship between various art schools and the intellectual and cultural shifts experienced by Iraq during that period. They determined that this interaction facilitated the development of a new visual language that merges imagination with contemporary themes and diverges from traditional conventions, equipping the modern artist with the means to intentionally articulate their visions and concerns. They also demonstrated that the diversity of art institutions forms an interconnected network that mutually supports and enhances the development of a new aesthetic consciousness among artists. In the same context, Khardin (2022) addressed the topic of Surrealism in the Arab world, introducing the most prominent surrealist artists from various Arab countries and explaining the features of this artistic movement and its manifestations within the Arab cultural context. Muhammad Zadeh and Talibi (2022) In their study, Surrealism in Contemporary Syrian Painting: The Product of War and Oppression (Case Study: Bassem Dahdouh's Works), they examined the influence of the political and social circumstances in Syria on artists' engagement with Surrealism, elucidating how this expressive mode served as an artistic means of reviewing the stark reality generated by war and oppression.

3. Research Procedures

3.1. Research Community

The researcher examined the existing artworks associated with surrealist art in Iran and Iraq and classified them as photographs based on Arab, foreign, and Persian sources, including books, periodicals, and websites.

3.2. Research Sample

The researcher chose two models as a sample for the study, based on the following justifications: (1) Their incorporation into their references. (2) Their appropriateness for analysis. (3) The models possess aesthetic significance due to their integration of performance and technical designs.

3.3. Research Tool

The researcher utilised the theoretical framework as a valuable analytical tool, aligning with and fulfilling the research objective through a comparative analysis of the research samples.

3.4. Samples

3.4.1. Samples of Aminullah Rezaei's Works



Figure 6. Painting by the Artist Aminullah Rezaei

Surrealist paintings with a critical view, such as this one by Aminullah Rezaei. This character is ultimately a mixture of human and animal to reflect modern man's mental and societal state. Not only that, but it is also wearing human clothes and sunglasses in a culturally and contemporarily appropriate way: In this image, the creature holds its head up, and its face resembles that of an animal. First, its face is what we should see in animals, for instance, a bull's or a pig's head. Such an obvious distinction between animality and civilisation could well shed light on the dual critique of society and human nature.

The most notable feature of this piece is the chain that runs through the monster's nose, holding it. The chain is obviously a symbol of bondage, whether on a personal level or in all its social and political forms in the world. (And as we know, this is one of the main ideas of conceptual art) The ring, which is similar to that used to control domesticated animals, has a clear symbolism: the human man reduced to the form of a creature is a victim of several power mechanisms that transform him into a tool of external (and, allegedly, alien) forces.

Another interesting thing in the image is the sunglasses he's wearing. Through pictorial symbolism, the eye is forever an entrance to the very human personality; thus, if the eyes are covered or masked, this may denote concealment, alienation of the self, or the dissolution of identity. Which, along with the remaining pictorial tools, accentuates the idea of the contemporary human's self-denial and identitylessness.

The heavy psychological weight of the aesthetic of black and white and sharp, contrasting shading lies on the viewer. It serves to not only communicate emotions of oppression, anxiety, and violence, but also achieves a nightmarish quality that immerses the viewer in the depths of the layered unconscious, in line with Freudian psychoanalysis. Therefore, this can be described as a form of "unconscious realism," which takes you from the realm of the imaginary to the realisation of a larger truth about humanity.

Aminollah Rezaei's work is, in other words, a pictorial representation of the existence of man in the time of modern power, under the impact of psychological and social moderation; Man who wears the glass robes of civilisation outside, but inside is still in a battle with his animality, the immuring of the power structures and the alienation of self. Employing surrealist techniques that create a seemingly fictitious realm but, in essence, echo the reality of life today for the human species, Rezaei tells a story that is shocking, surreal, and also ordinary.

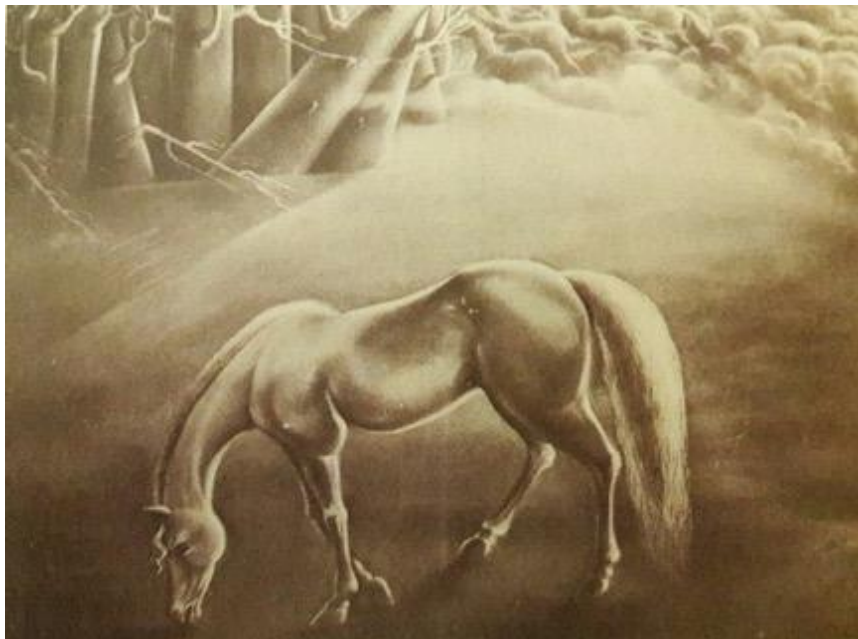


Figure 7. Painting by the Artist Aminullah Rezaei

This painting is among the most important surrealist works by Aminullah Rezaei. With a backstory peppered with abstract nuances, the writer uses symbolic features, inventive cinematic techniques, and a whimsical ambience to provide a poignant commentary on modern consciousness and its parable-like nature. Upon first viewing, the viewer is presented with a tranquil photograph of a grazing horse, head bowed, in a foggy field. Underneath it all, the horse is structurally rendered in a way so unbelievably realistic that it showcases the artist's technical skill. But to make this scene transcend the earthly realm, a human face is hidden within the horse's form and figure, embodied in its curves. Looking a little more carefully, you know that the body of the horse itself is the silhouette of a hidden human face; this is all done through the combination of black lines and black light. This double-image technique is one of the trademarks of surrealist art, blending the limits of illusion and reality, of consciousness and the unconscious. Such practice encourages the viewer to rise above the initial,

shallow view and enter the depths of the meaning hidden behind the visuals. The horse is a universal symbol of instinct, life, energy, and freedom in many cultures. Yet here the horse looks placid, head down, meek, as if it has been assimilated to a human visage that, too, is hiding. This work may be interpreted as a metaphor for the repression of life-force energy within modern man, whose (often cruel) demands of civilisation have captured them & deprived them of the instinctual and natural freedom to express, etc.

The background in the painting has a strong psychological function. You can see a dark jungle, tall trees entwined with daily life; there is a heavy energy of an atmospheric play, illusion, and a sign or symbol. Fog (which surrounds Earth and sky) looks like a shadow that has closed the curtains of the human background. Under the tenets of the nightmare-strewn atmosphere in which her subject matter rests, the line between reality and dreaming, between seeing and the subconscious, dissolves, as Freud ascribed that the hallucinations and pictorial fantasies of the subconscious embodied in a centuries-hindsight glimpse of which the unseen, bottled-again desires of human nature truly are serve as the true stage-set. After all, this painting is a visual manifesto of the self, revealing the human from within. As a result, the technical precision of the directing work, the philosophical envisioning of self, and the appearance of Rezaei as someone who has it all together on the outside but is a psychological prisoner to his mental constraints, buried dreams, and struggle with identity make it memorable. With his painting, he invites us to contemplate the hidden depths of the human mind and to re-evaluate what we believe to be "truth" in and of itself.

3.4.2. Samples of Jamil Hamoudi's Works



Figure 8. Painting by the Artist Jamil Hamoudi

In this major painting of 1997, Jamil Hamoudi uses surrealist forms and the calligraphy tradition to express the word 'Allah' in an abstract, geometric, multilayered manner. Hamoudi defies the traditional objectives of Arabic calligraphy and endows letters with visual significance, so that at first they are hard to recognise as letters. More than just writing the words of a sacred text, this painting attempts to reproduce the experience of an intuitive and psychological confrontation with the divine name "Allah". These letters are not meant to be read but rather seen, felt, and understood in a non-linear, non-verbal way.

The fractured, angular, multidimensional structure of the composition is indicative of analytical cubism; however, it is placed in a distinctly local Middle Eastern and Islamic context. The dynamism of the shapes, the dispersion of colours, and the decentralisation of the composition offer the viewer a contemplative pause to repose and consider what life is. The use of bright colours such as green, blue, yellow, and pink, along with its decorative character, adds an emotional and intuitive aspect to the work of art. Lines are intertwined so that the

mind of the viewer no longer registers solid, tangible lines, and instead begins to transcribe an imaginary geometry that shrouds the mental-spiritual space around the eye, a space in which the word "God" does not resonate in verbal thought structure, but is sensorially felt in the visual realm.

This is where Islamic calligraphic traditions that adhere to the sacred and iconic belief in letters and words blend with the modernist visual language. In that respect, it is the influence of the calligraphic style that has inspired Hamoudi to treat the Arabic letters in his works as vessels of spiritual energy. Yet, unlike traditional calligraphy which maintained the intelligibility of the word here, the sacred word is subsumed into the most abstract of abstractions. In other words, the painting is not an external experience of the holy; rather, it is a subjective experience of the sacred in the mind of the painter and the beholder.

Surrealistically, this painting can be seen as an example of "visual automatic writing," which transcends the legal, legible border between image, sign, and meaning. In contrast to the Euro-colonial tradition of Surrealism, which uses dreams, fantasy, and Freudian suggestion, Jamil Hamoudi brings Surrealism into the Islamic Sufi tradition, where the unconscious is considered a vessel for channelling the divine and the Other. In this light, this work can be regarded as a kind of sacred Surrealist mythopoetics, wherein the holy word is materialised as a subject of revelation and testimony rather than recitation.



Figure 9. Painting by the Artist Jamil Hamoudi

While this painting uses a more surrealist arrangement of letterforms and abstractions in a way that a natural language cannot occupy space, the referring term "light" (noor) from the corpus is horizontally central, not through it being read literally, but because of its colour contrast that centralises it visually within the corpus. We simply do not see a regular symmetry in the arrangement of the letters and the lines surrounding them it is deliberately asymmetric, dynamic. Such a disconnected creation is reminiscent of the automatic efforts employed in Surrealism to liberate the mind from the limits of self-aware reasoning.

In this canvas, Hamoudi shies away from the "light" with its traditional religious significance and instead forges it as a multidimensional symbol. The colour radiation, or aura, that is diffuse around the world can mean mystical light on one hand and the light of the unconscious on the other. The warm colours bring a deeper emotional tone to this work, with the dark background shadows showing a component of the conscious and the subconscious. That duality is central to the philosophical idea underpinning the work. Letters cease to be conventional symbols and become meaningful visual objects in their own right in this work. The letterforms,

modified to look like curves or broken parts of geometric shapes, are intended to be viewed, rather than read. The novel makes this shift by moving the letter tradition out of its solely devotional domain into a more contemporary, experimental horizon. Similarly, the ambient arc of twists and kinetic tating up of the lines evokes a bright, lively motion-effect-like interaction, paired with the light as an active, efficient mechanism.

This is work that fits in with some of the artistic movements of the 1980s, part of the way of integrating text with image. Contemporary influences of Arabic calligraphy can be seen alongside European Surrealism, and while Hamoudi interprets these influences in a local cultural language, he is building a uniquely personal artistic idiom. Since the title is named after him, it could also be seen as a nod to self-referentiality, one of the aspects of the artist, an intermediary between reality and the subconscious. This painting dissolves the boundaries between writing and image, creating a transdisciplinary space where "light" becomes a physical experience as much as an abstract concept. Hamoudi, in creating an artwork tastefully fusing Eastern and Western symbols and culture, produces a piece that references its heritage while also serving as a global participant and interlocutor in contemporary visual art discourse. This distance from traditional frameworks and reliance on informal epistemology situated this work as an early example of what we can call grounded Surrealism in modern Arab art.



Figure 10. Painting by the Artist Jamil Hamoudi

The visual framework of this painting is based on a surrealist style, using pictorial and lettering elements in a fragmented, chaotic world of dreams. There is no focal point within the visual field with the riderless horse, prostrate body, and woman with wild hair spread in a disjointed, dysphonic array. The phrases "Hussein" and "God is Great" appear illegible, but more as abstract, fractured formations sewn into the canvas in an almost collage fashion. Such deliberate chaos creates an atmosphere of disintegration and insecurity, which is an inherent aspect of the tragic nature of Ashura.

Everything in this artwork is symbolic: A riderless horse conveys loss and absence, the prostrate body symbolises martyrdom, and the bearded woman is a vessel for collective sorrow and mourning. Black and dark red colours are used, reinforcing the sense of sunset, bloodshed, and death, giving the scene a tragic character. The sacred words, however, were not for reading, for visual orientation of sacredness in the midst of violence and death.

Here, Hamoudi goes beyond the usual symbolic framework of calligraphic art, which keeps letters operating within a trance of linguistic functionality, making them a raw visual and plastic matter. Here, "Hussein" and "God is Great" are represented as distorted and broken, addressing the recipient visually rather than linguistically. This method denies a linear reading of the text and prompts the reader to a sensory-

perceptual encounter. The intertwining visual symbolism of letter forms, layered with multiple meanings that tie text and sound, facilitates the Ashura ritual with contemporary visual vocabulary.

Employing surrealist methods (dreamscapes, free association, abstract compositions, and symbols), the painting does not depict Ashura as a simple event in the past or a procession of historical events, but as a reliving of a dark collective trauma embedded in the Shiite collective psyche. Stranger images evoke a more surrealist sensibility the riderless horse, the woman with hair askew and call to mind the work of Salvador Dalí. Even so, in this case, they are brought together and used to represent a religious-historical tragedy. Utilising Surrealism, Hamoudi represents the sacred within the framework of a specific cultural and identity context.

Grounded in that calligraphic heritage, this painting translates the event of Ashura into an image of surrealist expressionism, disconnected from the traditional narrative to become an experience of abstraction in this image, as the narrative itself. In contrast to a linear representation, Hamoudi uses modern art techniques to convey religious and spiritual ideas. Thus, what happened becomes a supra-historical reality that exists in the Shiite unconscious. In light of this, it embodies modern Arab art's unique model of the point of intersection between contemporary art and religious heritage, all of which invite the kinds of symbolic and dimensional openings that transcend time and space.

4. Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

4.1. A Comparative Study of Sacred Surrealism in the Works of Jamil Hamoudi and Satirical Surrealism in the Works of Aminullah Rezaei

4.1.1. Symbolic Abstraction vs. Satirical Formalism Aesthetic Foundations

A leading contemporary artist from Iraq is Jamil Hamoudi. His art, based on the traditions of Islamic calligraphy, develops a new style of sacred Surrealism. His use of Arabic letters in complex geometric formations lends his work a certain abstractness, a fusion of Islamic spirituality and plastic modernity. His paintings are represented in Warm, vibrant colours that embody a significant visual conversation between the past, heritage, and contemporaneity and modernity.

Meanwhile, Aminullah Rezaei, one of the founders of the Surrealism movement in Iran, uses detailed realism and traditional painting techniques to create images that attach animal parts to human bodies or use anatomical parts to exaggerate the mutilation of humans and animals in war. These images, while possessing a photorealistic texture, seem to bear a surreal, satirical significance that denounces the social paradoxes, psychological tensions, and paranoid regimes of Iranian society.

4.1.2. Conceptual Dimension: The Collective Unconscious or the Collective Identity and Psychological Disorder

Jamil Hamoudi explores the idea of the collective unconscious and Arabic cultural memory, as the Arabic letter becomes a decorative element in his work but, more importantly, a deep symbol of identity, spirituality, and historical relevance. He left behind his paintings, which can be described as at least a visual bypass of certain religious scriptures and as a corner of one aspect of Arab and Islamic cultural heritage.

However, concerning Aminullah Rezaei, the direction of his works is somewhat different; the fundamental focus in his stories is the analysis of the human psyche and the tension between the individual identity of today's human and a complex social and political reality. In Khosravi's art, the human/animal hybrids represent the alienated and divided self, which symbolises many aspects of Iranian society in post-colonial or post-modern times. Rather, he sees Surrealism as just another artistic weapon to interrogate personal psychological trauma and a symbolic oppositionality against experienced reality.

4.1.3. Political/Cultural Context and the Social Function of the Artist

Jamil Hamoudi and the transformation of the cultural space in post-war Iraq in the 1950s and 1960s With the newly available, neo Islamic visual language, he mixed local and Islamic to become an original by making a new visual discourse system, a marriage of Art and Art In that regard, his art is also performing a kind of cultural resistance to the effects of historical forgetfulness and Western cultural hegemony.

Conversely, Aminullah Rezaei utilised art as a tool for social critique within a political environment limited in its expressive scope. Levitating the serious to the highest level of consciousness through satire, using surreal imagery as a visual symbol of an artist-critical intellectual, he employs artistic metaphors that destabilise dominant discourses and re-ask questions about reality and identity.

4.1.4. Visual Methods and the Composition of Art Works

Hamoudi's style is closer to Cubist geometric compositions, with Arabic letters in his art that have a 'letterspirit' character. The letters, as well as the colour, balance, and architectural arch and structure of the painting, convey layers of cresting meanings that together imply beauty, history, and Sufi contemplation in highly visceral and psychologically potent configurations. On the other hand, what makes Rezaei different is that he masters classical painting techniques. He draws realistic bodies with incredible anatomical likeness, then creates strange mutations that remove them from the world of realism into the realm of Surrealism. Pragmatism and, secondly, the aesthetics of saturated colours, visual contrasts, and distorted faces to communicate critical and satirical messages.

4.2. Conclusions

The comparison of these two artists highlights two distinct yet complementary trends in Surrealism in the Middle East. While Hamoudi links Surrealism to sanctity and cultural identity through his inspiration from Arabic calligraphy, Rezaei uses Surrealism as a critical tool that expresses the tragedy of contemporary man and his individual and social concerns. The following table illustrates a brief comparison between the most prominent elements of their styles:

Table 1. Brief Comparison among Type of Surrealism ,Artistic Techniques ,Conceptual Dimension , Plastic Structure and Social Role of the Artist

Index	Jamil Hamoudi (Iraq)	Aminullah Rezaei (Iran)
Type of Surrealism	Sacred Surrealism Based on Arabic Calligraphy	Satirical Surrealism blends realism and visual distortion
Artistic Techniques	Geometric Abstraction, Cubism, Arabic Calligraphy	Anatomical realism, physical exaggeration, hybrid human/animal synthesis
Conceptual Dimension	Collective Identity, Cultural Memory, Spirituality	Individual identity, psychological disorder, social critique
Plastic Structure	Balanced Geometric Shapes, Warm Colours, Contemplative Space	Striking imagery, disturbed expressions, stark visual contradictions
Social Role of the Artist	Reformulating Cultural Identity in the Shadow of Modernity and Postcolonialism	A critical artist who uses art to protest against authority and dominant discourses symbolically

4.2.1. Recommendations

Translating foreign sources that dealt with the topics of surrealist art and analysing their intellectual structure.

Author Contributions

The author is solely responsible for all aspects of this manuscript. The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding support was received.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/ or publication of this article.

Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/ or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declaration on AI Use

The author declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

References

Abd Muhammad, H. A., Mubarak, A. H., Mugheer, A. A. R., & Hamzah, T. S. (2020). Painting schools and their aesthetic impact on modern Iraqi art during the period (1900–1980). *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(3), 2234–2255.

- Al-Bahloly, S. (2018). History regained: A modern artist in Baghdad encounters a lost painting tradition. *Muqarnas*, 35(1), 229–272.
- Amirsadeghi, H., Mikdadi, S., & Shabout, N. M. (2009). *New vision: Arab contemporary art in the 21st century*. London, UK: Thames & Hudson.
- Berton, A. (1936). *What is surrealism?* London, UK: Faber and Faber.
- Biggsby, C. E. (1996). *Dada surrealism*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Bocco, R., Bozarslan, H., & Sluglett, P. (2012). *Writing the modern history of Iraq: Historiographical and political challenges*. Singapore: World Scientific.
- Edgar, A., & Sage Wick, P. (2008). *Basic concepts of cultural theory*. London, UK: Routledge.
- El Janabi, A. K. (2018). *“Le désir libertaire”: Le surréalisme arabe à Paris (1973–1975)*. Paris, France: L’Asymétrie.
- Flood, F. B., & Necipoğlu, G. (2017). *A companion to Islamic art and architecture*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Freud, S. (1924). *A general introduction to psychoanalysis* (J. Riviere, Trans.). London, UK: George Allen & Unwin.
- Gauthier, M. (Ed.). (2021). *Farid Belkahlia: Pour une autre modernité*. Paris, France: Centre Pompidou.
- Graphic Magazine*. (n.d.). Issues 63–65.
- Halimi, M. H. (2004). *A perspective on painting methods (renaissance to contemporary art)*. Tehran, Iran: Revival Book Publishing Company. (In Persian)
- Hosseinirad, A. (1991). *From baroque to surrealism*. Tehran, Iran: Barg. (In Persian)
- Inati, S. C. (2003). *Iraq: Its history, people, and politics*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books.
- Issa, R., Cestar, J., & Porter, V. (2016). *Signs of our times: From calligraphy to calligraphiti*. New York, NY: Merrill.
- Kherdeen, R. (2022). Surrealism in the Arab world. In D. A. Stange, F. A. Stange, & J. B. Taylor (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to surrealism* (pp. 165–174). London, UK: Routledge.
- Lee Marie, J., et al. (1972). *From impressionism to abstract art*. New York, NY: Hall Publications.
- Lucy-Smith, E. (2005). *Concepts and approaches in the last art movements of the twentieth century*. London, UK: Thames & Hudson.
- Mavrakis, N. (2015). *The Hurufiyah art movement in Middle Eastern art*. Montreal, Canada: McGill University.
- Mir-Kasimov, O. (2015). *Words of power: Hurufi teachings between Shi’ism and Sufism in medieval Islam*. London, UK: I.B. Tauris & Institute of Ismaili Studies.
- Mohammadzadeh, M., & Talebi, Y. (2022). Surrealism in contemporary Syrian painting: The impact of war and suppression (case study: Works of Bassem Dahdouh). *Palarch’s Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(3), 2947–6494.
- Mojabi, J. (2016). *Ninety years of innovation in Iranian visual art*. Tehran, Iran: Peykar.
- Pakbaz, R. (2004). *Encyclopedia of art: Painting, sculpture, graphic design*. Tehran, Iran: Farhang Moaser. (In Persian)
- Rahspar, A. (1965). *Modern painting (from impressionism to cubism)*. Tehran, Iran: Ziba Printing House. (In Persian)
- Saif, H. (1995, November). Rastakhiz. *Rastakhiz* [Newspaper], p. 14. (In Persian)
- Seyed Hosseini, R. (1974). *Literary schools*. Tehran, Iran: Nil Publications. (In Persian)
- Tohidtabar, Z. (2013). *The survey of surrealism in the works of Iranian illustrators (since 1340)* (Unpublished master’s thesis). Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Tehran, Iran.