

Manifestation of Surrealism in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Short Story *The Yellow Wallpaper*

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji unsur-unsur surealisme dalam karya sastra, dengan berfokus pada cara pengarang memanfaatkan teknik realis dalam mengeksplorasi realitas alam bawah sadar sehingga menciptakan makna yang kompleks. Studi ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-kualitatif dengan mendeskripsikan data-data seperti dialog, narasi, atau kutipan-kutipan penelitian lalu diolah dalam bentuk penjabaran dan analisis. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori sastra surealis, terutama merujuk pada pemikiran André Breton sebagai tokoh sentral dalam gerakan surealisme yang dipadukan dengan teori psikologi Sigmund Freud. Objek kajiannya adalah cerita pendek berjudul "The Yellow Wallpaper" karya seorang penulis Feminis Amerika Charlotte Perkin Gilman. Cerita Pendek ini dipilih karena menampilkan representasi surealis. Hasil penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa karya tersebut mengandung ciri khas unsur-unsur surealisme seperti pencampuran realitas dan imajinasi, representasi mimpi, mitos, fantasi, simbolisme yang tidak lazim, absurditas dan irasionalitas sebagai elemen naratif utama dalam cerpen. Melalui teknik surealis ini pengarang menyampaikan kritik sosial dan psikologis secara tersirat melalui penggambaran tokoh narator anonim. Dengan demikian, kajian ini menegaskan bahwa surealisme dalam sastra bukan sekadar gaya estetis dan imaginatif melainkan juga sebagai medium eksplorasi kejiwaan dan realitas alternatif.

Kata kunci: surealisme, automatisme, mitos, fantasi, metamorfosis, cerpen *The Yellow-Wallpaper*

ABSTRACT

This study examines the elements of surrealism in literary works, focusing on how authors employ realist techniques to explore subconscious realities and create complex meanings. The research uses a descriptive-qualitative method by describing data such as dialogues, narratives, or quotations, which are then processed through elaboration and analysis. This study applies surrealist literary theory, primarily referring to the ideas of André Breton as a central figure in the surrealist movement, combined with Sigmund Freud's psychological theory. The object of analysis is a short story titled "The Yellow Wallpaper" by American feminist writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman. This short story was selected for its strong surrealist representation. The findings show that the work contains typical characteristics of surrealism, such as the blending of reality and imagination, representations of dreams, myths, fantasy, unusual symbolism, absurdity, and irrationality as the main narrative elements. Through these surrealist techniques, the author conveys implicit social and psychological critiques through the depiction of an anonymous narrator character. Thus, this study affirms that surrealism in literature is not merely an aesthetic and imaginative style, but also serves as a medium for exploring the psyche and alternative realities.

Key words: surrealism, automatism, myth, fantasy, metamorphosis, short story *The Yellow-Wallpaper*

A. INTRODUCTION

The term surrealism or "surréaliste" in French was first used by Guillaume Apollinaire in his work "Super Realism" one of his surrealist drama titles *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* 1917 or better known as the ballet parade. In 1924, Andre Breton wrote *The First Manifesto of Surrealism*, as the results of his experiments on spontaneous writing methods or called "automatism", which was

considered as the beginning of the birth of surrealism. Surrealism officially became a new cultural movement, especially widely used in painting. Even Andre Breton explicitly said that surrealism was a revolutionary movement. This movement gradually spread throughout the world. It is a continuation and development of the art movement called "Dada, or dadaism" which was born during the raging World War I. This is said to be a movement and the name changed from the dadaism movement, as expressed by Waldberg (1999:9) *Le nom de dada en celui de surréalisme*. That's why the root of surrealism cannot be separated from the Dadaism movement in Europe in 1910-1920, that viewed that humans are irrational creatures (Kusumawardhani & Daulay 2021:81)

The impact of WWI caused humans to question their rationality. If Dadaism was a criticism or indirect satire, and was quite provocative to the authorities who were considered to have made negative decisions. Then surrealism was a response to the prolonged mental stress experienced by humans during the war, because they think critically, they ultimately develop an understanding beyond reality. Its tendency to present real images in unreal conditions. For example, the image of a soft, melting wall clock titled *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), one of Salvador Dali's phenomenal paintings, made a significant contribution to the art movement, particularly in the art of painting.

This movement adopted Freud's psychological theory approach. The emergence of psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud is considered a form of achievement of the creative side of humans, proving that humans are not only composed of rationality. At that time the discussion of science was focusing on the potential of human subconscious development (Lingis, 2017). Andre Breton, the initiator of surrealism, had a background in medical science becoming involved in literature and art. The surrealist writers are those who are "dreaming" when writing their works. The characteristics of surrealist stories often display many things that are strange, odd, absurd and irrational. Freud believed that people tend to be sufferers of sexual deviations rather than just sufferers of neurosis. Healing from this is easier for people who have artistic talent. They realize it through exploration of the world of dreams, imaginations, fantasies, and free associations through exploration of the subconscious.

The Yellow Wallpaper (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, written before the formal advent of surrealism. Presenting a psychological and symbolic depth that aligns closely with surrealist ideals. The story follows a woman's descent into madness, told through fragmented blur the line between reality and delusion. The narrator's hallucinations, distorted perception of the wallpaper and the oppressive societal context create a surreal atmosphere that resonates with psychoanalytic exploration. *This work* for many literary critics is considered as a record of experiences of the author's mental condition.

Many studies on *The Yellow Wallpaper*, have mostly focused on feminist literary criticism, psychoanalysis, and historical analysis. For example, the seminal work by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 1979) interprets the story as a symbol of female resistance against patriarchal structures and its impact on female oppression. Meanwhile, Elaine Hedges (1973) further contextualizes it within autobiographical and medical frameworks, emphasizing its relevance in the discourse of women's mental health. These studies highlight the feminist and psychological dimensions of the text, positioning it as a foundational work in feminist literature. However, the intersection of *The Yellow Wallpaper* and surrealism remains under-researched. While broader discussions about surrealist themes in early feminist writings exist, few scholars have applied surrealist literary theory explicitly to Gilman's story. This study

fills that gap by incorporating André Breton's *Manifestoes of Surrealism* and Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* as theoretical frameworks. By identifying surrealist features such as hallucination, dream logic, irrational symbolism, and the blurring of reality and imagination. This research expands the interpretative landscape of *The Yellow Wallpaper* and can be read as a precursor to surrealist literature.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of Surrealism can be interpreted as strangeness, or things that are beyond reason, contrary to common sense, but always display elements of surprise and uniqueness. The term surrealism in French *surréalisme* which means *sur*: above, and *realism*: an understanding that tries to depict something as it really is, some also say that surrealism means super realism, or things above reality (logic). By Andre Breton, declared in his *Surrealism Manifesto*, which tries to eliminate the boundaries between rational and irrational. Breton explains that:

Surrealism, noun, masc, pure phychic automaticism but which is intended to express, either verbally or in writing the trunk function of thought. Thought dictated in the absence of all control exerted by reason and outside all aesthetic or moral occupation. (Arnason, 1998:306)

The term automatism technique or automatic writing, views that an author lets his imagination flow freely without thinking about anything that can hinder the imagination. From this free association, it then becomes its own aesthetic value for literary works. This is related to and originates from dreams, hallucinations, fantasies, sexual desires by combining automation and free association. So that it forms a juxtaposition without thinking about control and common sense. In other words, there is an element of freedom as wide as possible without having to consider all the rules that hinder this freedom.

Furthermore, Andre Breton (1979:36) emphasizes that Surrealism depends on the belief in a higher reality resulting from a certain form of previous association that was ignored, a very strong dream playing a pull on thought. This is an act of absolute surrealism. A depiction of the contradiction between the concept of dreams and reality that shows real objects in impossible situations, such as dreams and the human subconscious. Besides, there are several elements of Surrealism. 1) Myth is a revelation from the human soul, or story of someone who is then believed to exist. Everyone has fears in themselves, which they believe in. In surrealism, they need to play the emergence of these myths. In mythology, the artistic value of surrealist works increases. 2) Dreams are the best way to express one's subconscious. With dreams, things that are not real or real can appear or be born and realized with a more visible form of work. 3) Metamorphosis. The next element of surrealism is metamorphosis. Metamorphosis uses automatic techniques, drawing, frottage (rubbing), decalomania, fumage, *cadavre exquis*, and its development techniques. This contains principles in it, namely incongruous combination, (oddy guide) and the principle of metamorphosis. The techniques used in incongruous combinations are collage, montage, assemblage.

Thus, to interpret a work using the Surrealism technique, there are various characteristics that can be indicated in a work. The characteristics of surrealism are first, presenting images of real objects in unreal conditions. Second, imagery like in a dream. Third, having high contrast,

that means: there is a large form side by side with a small form. Fourth, Playing the role of an image that exists in a dream and that exists in the real world. And fifth, impressing like a fantasy but still holding on to references in the real world.

C. METHOD

This research uses qualitative research methods for investigating and comprehending the meaning of phenomena within a literary work through detailed textual analysis. The focus of this research is to explore how surrealist elements are manifested in the short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Inductively growing from specifics to broad themes, data analysis, data interpretation, and emergent questions and processes are all part of the research process (Creswell 4). In this research, the data are taken from the short story entitled "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Perkins Gilman. The data is in the form of words, dialogues, phrases, sentences or images of surrealism. The data collection in this research follows some steps: 1) Reading the whole story carefully. 2) Identifying related dialogs and narrations of the text. To assist this research, the library research was done using a few books and other sources. 3) Taking notes of the information gleaned from the narration, dialogue, or quotation related to Surrealism. The analyzing data of the research is done through: collecting data from the details acquired through the narrator's narration, conversation, or representation in accordance with the requirements.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures of the research follows some steps: First, Close reading of the entire short story to understand its narrative structure and character development. Second, Identification of relevant dialogues, narration, and quotations that reflect surrealist elements, such as dreams, myths, metamorphosis, bizarre symbolism, absurdity, and irrationality. Third, Library research was also conducted to support the analysis using books, articles, and relevant theoretical sources. Fourth, Data analysis was carried out using surrealist literary theory, particularly drawing from André Breton's Surrealist Manifesto and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, to investigate the relationship between imagination, the unconscious mind, and narrative structure. This study is interpretive in nature, where the researcher analyzes and interprets symbolic representations in the story using the selected theoretical framework.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the short story *The Yellow Wallpaper*, the author presents the characterization of the main character in a unique way, by presenting metaphors and narratives that contain surprises, which are unexpected by the reader. Throughout the story in this work, the main female character never mentioned her name, so she is an anonymous narrator. The only information obtained by the reader is at the beginning introduction of the story, namely "John and myself", "John is a physician and a husband", which indicates that the unnamed narrator is the wife of a doctor. Through the main character, the researcher can explore the manifestation of surrealist elements in the story as follows:

1) Myth

Myth is a revelation from the human soul, is a revelation of the soul or story of someone whose existence is then believed. Everyone has fears in themselves about what they believe. In using surrealism, it is necessary to play the emergence of these myths.

John and I stayed in an old house inherited from the family in the summer, a large colonial-style house inherited from the family. I think the house is haunted and gives a romantic atmosphere but that's too much. I can confidently say that there is something strange about the house. Besides, why is the house left alone and not rented for a long time?... John really likes things that are against him, he does not believe in things that smell mystical like superstition, he always brings up and openly mocks all conversations that involve things that are unreasonable. (Gilman, 1995:1).

The legacy of the old house is seen as a Mythological Symbol that reflects the narrator's belief in supernatural forces or invisible energies connected to the colonial-style residence they inhabit. This belief embodies a myth in the Jungian sense, a collective symbol that arises from the cultural subconscious, where old houses are frequently linked to memories, lingering spirits, and historical trauma. The notion that the house is “haunted” reinforces the common myth that deserted locations harbor mystical beings or spiritual forces. “John does not believe in anything that seems mystical or superstitious.” John symbolizes patriarchal rationalism, which dismisses all non-logical forms of belief. In contrast, the narrator embodies intuition and an openness to mythological symbolism, which is more receptive to the unseen energies and subconscious emotions. The phrase “gives a romantic atmosphere” indicates the existence of a mythological or sacred quality within a physical location. The term “romantic” encompasses more than just visual beauty, it also refers to an awareness of transcendental environments as found in various gothic and surrealist literary pieces. The structure transcends being merely a building and has transformed into a mythological space. This is why this narrative can be a depiction of myth as an expression of the soul, and beliefs.

The affirmation of the myth continues in this story, namely when the narrator tells that some of the furniture has been damaged, “besides, this house has not been inhabited for years. all of that slowly hurts me, I'm afraid but I don't care. There's something strange about this house - I can feel it” (Gilman, 1995:2). The depiction of the myth is further supported by the narrative explained by the narrator, who says that “in one of the windows in the room I could look out into a shady and mysterious garden with wildflowers, bushes, and large trees”. (Gilman, 1995:3).

The narrator has really built up her own belief and confidence in everything and anything related to the myth of the house, for example gardens or other objects that also look mysterious, wild flowers surrounding the fence, weeds and other wild plants that form scary bushes and large trees that further add to the impression of a spooky and haunted aura for the old house. and the elements of nature that are left neglected in this house are considered mystical and related to myths.

Furthermore, there is a narrative that emphasizes the myth of the old house “the floor is rough, bumpy and cracked. “The plaster is scattered in every corner of the room. And the bed looks very bad, as if this bed had been there during the war” (Gilman 1995:). From the narrative about the spooky room with old, shabby, cracked and damaged furniture, and a bed that is rotten because it has not been used for a long time, where these things increasingly clearly show the oddity of the house that makes it more real mysterious and haunted. In addition, there is also a belief that wartime relics are usually believed to be haunted. When the narrator narrates again: “Night soon came and the creature of the night I woke up and ran to help her get out”. The

narrator reveals symbolism, meaning, and universal views of events such as mysterious figures that usually appear more often in the middle of the night. And this is called a myth that can be considered a true story or is real and sacred.

2) Dreams, imagination, hallucinations, and fantasies

Sigmund Freud argued that even hidden desires can emerge through dreams. In his book entitled *Interpretation of Dream (1914)*, Freud explained that dreams are a bridge between the real world and hidden (repressed) feelings/desires. Through dreams, it can be a bridge to fulfill desires from what cannot be realized in the real world. Dreams are a somatic process during sleep that functions to keep the mind from tension.

Psychologically, people who experience hallucinations are basically caused by mental problems that the person can experience through the five senses of human beings. For example, someone who seems to see, hear or feel something excessively and consider something as real. As one example that is often experienced by many people, when someone suddenly hears a voice or sees something, object or shadow but other people do not. The disclosure in this narrative shows the mystery of the unconscious faced by the character then meets the discourse of psychoanalysis. This displays how the author involves the unconscious, namely imagination by realizing it in the form of illustration of the wallpaper that looks clearer, and real.

If a doctor of high standing, and her own husband, where to assure her friends and relatives that there was really nothing the matter with her except a temporary nervous depression--a hysterical tendency--what was to be done? Unfortunately, it was ruinous to my character, but I didn't care--there was something odd about this house--I could feel it (Gilman 1995: 2).

Gilman inserts surrealism in this narration through the free association technique. This narrative excerpt explains that the narrator experiences symptoms of postpartum depression, which makes her more prone to feeling hysterical and hallucinating. Hallucinations as part of the psychological influence then trigger the narrator's psychological influence which drives her to hallucinate by caring about the atmosphere of the old house and then believing it that there is something strange behind the house. Hallucinations are characterized by the involvement of the five human senses in it, such as the sense of taste, so that the narrator seems to feel the presence of another creature occupying the house. Therefore, the urge of her imagination makes her feel the abstract strangeness as if it seems to be real, felt by its presence but not experienced by others. The strangeness felt in this house is what increasingly affects the narrator's psychology and leads her to create a fantasy for herself.

Every day she was always haunted by fear of the terrible things she had recently faced. She saw a woman's figure coming out of a corner of a wall covered in yellow wallpaper, which then crawled and went out into the garden in her yard. She wanted to complain about it to John, but she was worried that it would only increase the belief of John and his extended family that she was really crazy. No one ever knew that she was always awake at night with gripping horror. This incident really disturbed her mind and physical health which was getting worse every day. (Gilman, 1995: 7)

As previously mentioned, hallucinations occur due to the influence of a person's mental problems. The narrator has excessive anxiety and fear as a result of the stimulus of what was previously observed at the beginning of renting the house, for example the condition of the old

house and the surrounding conditions which were told with a frightening nuance, thus triggering excessive fear for the narrator and then manifested into her hallucinations through visualization or sense of sight. She then seemed to see a woman's figure coming out of the wallpaper, by crawling into the wider yard. Furthermore, the hallucination is built into a fantasy that creates events in the imagination, which are excessive for the narrator. The influence of the hallucination is further seen in the quote above, where "a woman's figure came out of the yellow wallpaper, then crept towards the garden in her yard"

But in one part of the pattern that did not fade-I could see a strange, shapeless figure that piqued my curiosity, and it seemed to be hiding behind the funny and striking pattern. (Gilman, 1995: 8).

The narrator states that she sees "a strange, shapeless figure" that appears to be hiding behind the pattern of the wallpaper. This image is not a real object, but rather the result of a disturbed perception. This reflects a hallucination, a sensory experience that occurs without external stimulus, often stemming from psychological distress or mental illness. As Freud's statement (1914) in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, that both dreams and hallucinations are forms of manifestation of repressed subconscious urges. The concept of "strange and shapeless images" can be interpreted as a symbolic representation of the narrator's fears, anger, or hidden desires, which are related to feelings of isolation and loss of identity of a woman. The concept of dream is also seen in this quote. "The unfading wallpaper pattern" can mean a transitional space between the real world and the dream world, when the narrator's perception seems to start to blur. As in André Breton's surrealist aesthetics, dreams can be considered a bridge or gateway to inner truth. The narrator seems to find a strange figure behind the wall picture, but the real fact is that he is experiencing a mixture of dreams and reality, this is a characteristic of surrealist works.

This expression emphasizes that the wallpaper in it shows a strange and frightening expression, but logically this painting is an inanimate object. This personifies an inanimate object that seems to show an expression like a human who has five senses and limbs such as legs and hands by crawling and hiding. The narrator herself admits that she has never seen such an expression before. It looks more like something absurd/odd and unreasonable and creates a fantasy in her mind.

Meanwhile, the form of fantasy in this quote is narrated through "the presence of a foreign figure behind the pattern" as an impact of the narrator being physically and emotionally isolated, as a result he creates an imaginative narrative to give meaning to his understanding. The "shapeless" figure symbolizes the uncertainty of identity, both in himself and from the external social environment that oppresses him. In the framework of Freud's psychoanalysis, this issue can mean self-projection, when the narrator seems to feel his own condition trapped and hidden behind the pattern of the wall picture.

On this wallpaper there was another pattern in a different vein, a pattern that was really disgusting, because you could only see it in a certain light, and even then it was not clear. But in one part of the pattern that did not fade – I could see a strange, shapeless and curious figure, which seemed to be hiding behind the funny and striking pattern. The wallpaper also inhabited my mind. I lay on the big immovable bed – it was nailed to the floor, and traced the pattern. Tracing the pattern was as good as exercise. I guarantee it. (Gilman, 1995: 9).

This shows a visual hallucination experienced by an anonymous narrator. When she sees certain patterns that only appear under light. This is a phenomenon that displays sensory perception disorders, as part of the psychological disorder of postpartum syndrome. The figure of "Strange, shapeless and curious figure" hidden behind the pattern is a projection of fear and deep psychological problem of the narrator.

In the next part, the narrator is really immersed in her hallucinations about the wall picture, where she hallucinates that there is a woman standing behind the wall picture. *"I don't know for sure what's behind the picture. But I'm starting to believe that it's a woman"*. The narrator's imagination displays its oddity by identifying the existence of an imaginary female figure trapped in the pattern of the wallpaper and having the same fate as them.

3) **Metamorphosis**

In the context of surrealism, the term "metamorphosis" refers to an unnatural change or transformation, a process whereby common items/objects take on other ludicrous, symbolic, or unrealistic forms that frequently represent the subconscious. Metamorphosis is utilized to illustrate an unsaid inner reality through narrative or visual metaphors in surrealist literature and art.

The series of stains on the wallpaper make it look like a broken neck and form two eyes that stare at you upside down. I'm really sick of that paper. The paper spreads its patterns and forms eyes everywhere. (Gilman, 1995:12).

"A broken neck and a pair of eyes staring backwards" are the frightening changes that "the spots on the wallpaper" go through. This metamorphosis is a narrator's psychological projection rather than a genuine occurrence. According to this transformation, the narrator no longer perceives the world objectively; instead, he is seeing a subjective reality that has been shaped by psychological strain and hopelessness. Moreover, the depiction of the metamorphosis technique is quite clear from the transformation of the series of stains in the painting is associated with "a broken neck". Besides that the pattern of the picture is also transformed into "several pairs of eyes" that glare at the narrator. The "upturned eyes" and "broken neck" are horrifying features. The eyes that seem to be everywhere are surveillance, such as patriarchy, gender roles, and regulating societal norms. The wallpaper functions as the narrator's projection field, causing the narrator's body to change shape and undoubtedly demonstrating an identity metamorphosis. The description also demonstrates surrealist visual methods like frottage, decalomania, and pareidolia, which involve using imagination to turn smeared or random images into meaningful ones. Gilman employs similar strategies in her story, turning inanimate items into alive, dangerous beings by turning smudges into shattered necks and eyes.

This is further clarified by the next narration, *"I have never seen a still life have so much expression before, and we all know how much expression they have"* (Gilman, 1995:8).

Another similar description of the metamorphosis depiction can be through the fumage technique which is a technique often used in painting by utilizing smoke from candles, gas lamps and cigarettes to form a visual image. The Fumage technique can clarify the visuals of a picture or painting.

Under the moonlight that shines all night. I don't know if it's still the same sign. When the twilight is still reluctant to disappear, With candlelight, lamplight, let alone moonlight, the sign looks like bars. I mean the picture outside it, and the woman behind the picture looks clearer. (Gilman, 1995: 16)

In this narrative, it actually displays the visuals of the picture behind lighting such as candles and lamplight which will further emphasize the appearance behind the wallpaper. Since it looks like a real woman standing behind the bars in the painting. And it could be that the bars are an example of a visual form that occurs in a painting caused by reflections from certain objects and prevents light from directly penetrating an object or media. This technique has similarities to a visualized image when sunlight can penetrate a fairly dark room and then emphasize the shape of the smoke image. Besides the reflection of light that hits the scattered/flying dust sometimes creates new patterns in the painting behind it.

Then in the bright part of the image pattern she is silent. And in the shaded part of the image he holds the window bars while shaking them hard. At the end of the room the patterns come together when the sunlight begins to dim with the direction of the patterns appearing to be centered and immediately alternating regularly. (Gilman, 1995:15)

The use of visual technique described in this quote actually displays sunlight and makes it more like a real object after getting reflections. For example, describing the window bars as references that can look like prison bars, associated with jail behind the reflection of light hitting the object. Thus, it displays the transformation from one object to another or from one model to another. This passage embodies the surrealist concept of metamorphosis through the transformation of ordinary elements light, shadows, and images into symbols of psychological and existential shifts. The changing light sources from moonlight to candlelight and lamplight create a fluid, unstable atmosphere where perception itself is in flux, reflecting the surrealist fascination with the mutable nature of reality and consciousness. The “sign” that appears to shift and take on new forms under varying lights symbolizes the metamorphosis of meaning and identity. The reluctance of twilight to disappear and the ambiguous transformation of the sign into something resembling “bars” suggest a blurring between freedom and imprisonment, a key surrealist theme. This image of bars alludes to confinement, but it emerges not as a static reality, rather as a shifting perception dependent on light and shadow, revealing the instability of the narrator’s mental state. Moreover, the figure of “the woman behind the picture” becoming “clearer” hints at a transformation from obscurity to recognition. This emergence can be read as the narrator’s gradual unveiling of repressed aspects of the self or the unconscious mind, a core idea in surrealism.

E. CONCLUSION

Surrealism study is literary study that involves complex understanding, because it collaborates with the study of the subconscious of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. Through the lens of surrealist literary theory, *The Yellow Wallpaper* reveals an intriguing intersection between the female narrator’s expression and surrealist aesthetics. Although Charlotte Perkins Gilman may not have written within a clearly defined surrealist movement, her story exhibits

key characteristics of surrealism such as sequences of dreams, irrational imagery, psychological distortion, and the blurring of boundaries between reality and imagination. These elements function not only as literary techniques but also as symbolic representations of the narrator's mental deterioration and her rebellion against oppressive social norms. By incorporating André Breton's surrealist principles and Sigmund Freud's theory of the unconscious, this study shows that *The Yellow Wallpaper* portrays the shackles and inner world of a confined woman, reflecting the core aim of surrealism, to demonstrate the unconscious and challenge rational limitations. Ultimately, the story transcends the context of rationality to align with a broader artistic movement that seeks liberation through imagination. This research contributes to psychological and surrealist literary studies by uncovering a strong convergence often overlooked between the two.

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