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The Gender Metamorphosis of Narcissus. Salvador Dalí: Metamorphosis of Narcissus

Abstract

This contribution is devoted to an interpretation of the artwork, from a gender point of view, *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* by Salvador Dalí. Dalí's painting is compared with the Narcissus stories to be found in antiquity, particularly in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with his stress on the beauty of a young boy, and the commensurate concepts of seeing and mirroring. The gender associations of narcissism and their changes are well-documented in the history of art (Caravaggio, Edward Burne-Jones) and in different concepts of narcissism (Sigmund Freud, Gaston Bachelard, Lou Andreas-Salomé, Julia Kristeva). The author focuses on the gender aspects of surrealism, keying in especially to the concept of Anima and Animus (Carl Gustav Jung). Dalí's work is analyzed in terms of associating Narcissus not merely with seeing and mirroring but also with touching and metamorphosis, emphasizing his remarkable skill at transgressing gender divisions in his visionary leap towards androgyny.

Key words

Narcissus, Ovid, Caravaggio, Edward Burne-Jones, Salvador Dalí, Gaston Bachelard, Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Lou Andreas-Salomé, Julia Kristeva, Remedios Varo, androgyny, art, beauty, bisexuality, gender, metamorphosis, mirror, surrealism

Introduction

Before starting the process of an interpretation of Salvador Dalí's painting *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*, the aim and method of the paper must be illuminated in order to make its structure, content and style more

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comprehensible. The main aim of this paper is to offer an interpretation of the above mentioned artwork from a gender point of view. For that reason, the first chapter presents a description of the most relevant versions of the Narcissus story, which we have at our disposal from ancient times, because they contain differences that are also significant from a gender perspective. As the best-known version of the Narcissus story (which we most often encounter in the history of European art) is to be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and because Ovid and Dalí share the common motif of metamorphosis, we have based our interpretation of Dalí's artwork as set against the background of this rendition. As Ovid sets up the frequent motifs associated with Narcissus in European art history, that is art, beauty, and mirroring, the next chapter is devoted to the way in which these categories changed their connections to gender in the course of time, as documented by comparing Caravaggio's painting of *Narcissus* with *The Mirror of Venus* by Edward Burne-Jones. However, as the following chapter makes evident, the changes in the gender association of Narcissus occurred not only in art, but also in the realm of theory, especially in the fields of psychoanalysis and philosophy. Here, Sigmund Freud's and Gaston Bachelard's accounts of narcissism are excellent examples. It is interesting to note that psychoanalytically oriented women, such as Lou Andreas-Salomé and Julia Kristeva, stressed different aspects of narcissism than Sigmund Freud – but to explain them is not our target here. The aim of this chapter is to create a reservoir of associations, providing clues for different possible interpretations of the above mentioned painting; that is the reason we do not comment on, explain, nor criticize them. Thus, the first three chapters are meant to serve as material gathered in order to open our imagination and thinking in order to subsequently create our own interpretation, which we offer in the fourth chapter.

Any interpretation is a highly risky endeavor: every artwork opens the space for a number of different possible interpretations.¹ Because we can neither start interpreting from nowhere nor a place of omniscience, each interpretation is partial, and necessarily conditioned by the historical, cultural, intellectual, social (and myriad other) locations of the gendered subject. On the other hand, the very fact that the subject is part of a particular milieu is the condition of his/her capacity to understand the meanings of the world around us, the art-world included. As such, each

¹ U. Eco, R. Rorty, J. Culler, Ch. Brooke-Rose, *Interpretation and Over-interpretation*, ed. S. Collini, Cambridge 1992.

interpretation can be challenged or criticized from different perspectives for being inadequate, insufficient, not complex, deep, coherent, clear, etc. However, a “critique of interpretation” is not an appropriate word here; according to Umberto Eco, we can produce many acceptable interpretations of any particular artwork, and the only difference we can confidently assert is the difference between interpretation and over-interpretation.² That is why we do not compare our interpretation with other interpretations of the same artwork as they are to be found in literature. In accordance with C. G. Jung, we understand each interpretation of symbols, images, and signs contained in works of art as a possible way toward a historical and cultural amplification of their meaning. Jung claims that

[...] the indefinite yet definite mythological theme and the iridescent symbol express the processes of the soul more aptly, more completely, and therefore infinitely more clearly than the clearest definition: for the symbol gives not only a picture of the process but also – what is perhaps more important – the possibility of simultaneously experiencing or re-experiencing the process, whose twilight character can only be understood through a sympathetic approach and never by the brutal attack of clear intellectual definition.³

In this sense, the main value of interpretation is to keep and enrich an artworks’ potential to speak to us. However, this is possible only through our own participation in the process of searching for less obvious and transparent meanings of artworks. Interpretation is not the practice of reasoning but the practice of discovering.⁴ In the course of our interpretation as offered in the fourth chapter, we found Jung’s concept of the *Anima* and *Animus* Archetype, in terms of representing a particular view of psychic androgyny, very helpful; we thus devoted more attention to it in a separate part of the text. Jung’s theoretically and historically located concept of androgyny also proved to be useful when it came to illuminating certain problems women surrealists had to face and tackle in their creative work. The text concludes with an example (Remedios Varo) of precisely how women artists might work to overcome them.

² Ibidem.

³ C. G. Jung, *Psychological Reflections. An Anthology of his writings 1905–1961*, selected and edited by J. Jacobi, London 1986, p. 44.

⁴ N. Davey, “Language and Reason in Philosophical Hermeneutics”, [in:] *Studia humanitas – Ars hermeneutica. Metodologie a theurgie hermeneutické interpretace III*, ed. J. Vorel, Ostrava 2010, pp. 61–84.

Narcissus in Ancient Mythology

There are several versions of the story of Narcissus. The oldest is probably the version found in 2004 by W. B. Henry. According to Henry, it was written by the poet Parthenius of Nicaea around 50 BC.⁵ The most popular version, however, is that from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which was completed around 8 AD. There is also the version written by Conon, living at the same time as Ovid.⁶ The latest ancient version is to be found in Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (around 150 years later).⁷

⁵ [...] god-like [...]

[.....]

He had a cruel heart, and hated all of them,

Till he conceived a love for his own form:

He wailed, seeing his face, delightful as a dream,

Within a spring; he wept for his beauty.

Then the boy shed his blood and gave it to the earth

[...] to bear

Parthenius of Nicaea, [online] <http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/news/narcissus.html> [accessed: 8.10.2015].

⁶ "Ameinias was a very determined but fragile youth. When he was cruelly spurned by Narkissos, he took his sword and killed himself by the door, calling on the goddess Nemesis to avenge him. As a result, when Narkissos saw the beauty of his form reflected in a stream, he fell deeply in love with himself. In despair, and believing that he had rightly earned this curse for the humiliation of Ameinias, he slew himself. From his blood sprang the flower." Conon, *Narrations 24*, trans. Atsma, Greek mythographer C1st B.C. to C1st A.D., [online] <http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Narkissos.html> [accessed: 8.10.2015].

⁷ "In the territory of the Thespians is a place called Donakon (Reed-bed). Here is the spring of Narkissos. They say that Narkissos looked into this water, and not understanding that he saw his own reflection, unconsciously fell in love with himself, and died of love at the spring. But it is utter stupidity to imagine that a man old enough to fall in love was incapable of distinguishing a man from a man's reflection.

There is another story about Narkissos, less popular indeed than the other, but not without some support. It is said that Narkissos had a twin sister; they were exactly alike in appearance, their hair was the same, they wore similar clothes, and went hunting together. The story goes on that Narkissos fell in love with his sister, and when the girl died, would go to the spring, knowing that it was his reflection that he saw, but in spite of this knowledge finding some relief for his love in imagining that he saw, not his own reflection, but the likeness of his sister." Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, Classical Library Volumes, Cambridge, London 1918, [online] <http://www.theoi.com/Text/Pausanias1A.html> [accessed: 8.10.2015].

Narcissus is also mentioned in other texts, which have survived since antiquity.⁸

Nevertheless, Ovid's story of Narcissus is the most elaborate and famous one. According to Ovid, Narcissus was a son of the river-god Kephisos and the fountain-nymph Liriope. He was celebrated for his beauty, and attracted many admirers, boys and girls, but in his arrogance he spurned them all. Two of them are mentioned in particular – the nymph Echo and the boy Ameinias. Ameinias, after he was rejected by Narcissus, called to the Gods "If he should love, deny him what he loves!"⁹ This plea was heard by Nemesis, who granted her assent. Narcissus then fell in love with his own image reflected in a pool. Gazing endlessly at his own reflection, Narcissus finally understood that what he most loved was his own image. Suffering immensely from this unrequited love, he slowly pined away and was transformed into a narcissus flower.¹⁰

When comparing these versions from the gender perspective, we might be surprised that Echo is not present in all of them. She appears in only two versions – Ovid and Pausanias. In Ovid's story, Echo is a nymph who does not have the capacity to speak by herself, only to repeat the last words said by others, especially by Narcissus. This was the consequence of her curse by Hera. When she was rejected by Narcissus, Echo faded away in her despair and her bones were transformed into stones; the only thing that remained was her voice.¹¹ Pausanias describes Echo (in his second version of the story) as a twin of Narcissus.¹²

⁸ All versions are available at <http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Narkissos.html> [accessed: 8.10.2015].

⁹ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, [online] <http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Narkissos.html> [accessed: 8.10.2015].

¹⁰ See: idem, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. D. Melville, Oxford (USA) 2009.

¹¹ We can parallel the phenomenon of mirroring the face of Narcissus on the water's surface with that of repeating the words of others, in the case of Echo. See also M. Germ, "Dal's Metamorphosis of Narcissus – a Break with the Classical Tradition or Ovid's Story Retold in an Ingenious Way?", *Cuad. Art. Gr.*, 2012, 43, pp. 133–144. Though, because Echo can repeat only the last words of Narcissus, it sometimes changes their meaning. Echo's repeating with a difference was elaborated by P. Petek in her *Echo and Narcissus: Echolocating the Spectator in the Age of Audience Research*, Cambridge 2008.

¹² Here, the link of Narcissus and androgyny is evident, as Echo is understood as the twin sister of Narcissus, his Alter-Ego or feminine side, necessary for him to become a whole human being. As we will explain later, this aspect also occurs in the modern version of psychic androgyny in C. G. Jung's theory.

Narcissus, Art, Beauty, Mirror and Gender

The narcissist motif of beauty and mirroring is closely connected with the problem of art, especially visual art. Leon Battista Alberti, the Renaissance theorist of art, wrote:

I used to tell my friends that the inventor of painting, according to the poets, was Narcissus, who was turned into a flower; for, as painting is the flower of all the arts, so the tale of Narcissus fits our purpose perfectly. What is painting but the act of embracing, by means of art, the surface of the pool?¹³

We can find the motif of mirroring and beauty in its Ovidian sense in many works throughout the history of European art, associated with a man as well as with a woman. Changes in gender associations of these categories can be documented by a comparison of the painting *Narcissus* by Caravaggio with *The Mirror of Venus* by Edward Burne-Jones.

Both artists stress the mirroring effects of a water surface. However, in Burne-Jones' painting, the motif of beauty is transformed from a young boy (Antiquity and Renaissance) to a woman (Pre-Raphaelites). In the mirror of a small pond, kneeling women see their beauty reflecting the beauty of Venus (the woman next to Venus directs her eyes towards her). Venus differs from the others as she is standing and she is not looking for her own beauty; she is neither looking at the mirror of the water, nor at the eyes of the other women. She is not even looking for her beauty in the eyes of the viewer; according to the Pre-Raphaelites, her beauty is eternal. Metaphorically speaking, she is the mirror for the beauty of others – all the portrayed women look similar to her. It does not matter where women are looking; wherever they look they find the image of beauty, equated with the eternal beauty of art and woman everywhere, as it multiplies itself in the process of mirroring.

Interpretations of Narcissus in European History

The motif of Narcissus contains rich potential for different interpretations. We can find theoretical exploitations of Narcissus in psychology, especially psychoanalysis, and psychiatry – here 'narcissism' functions as a term referring to an officially accepted type of personal psychiatric disorder.

¹³ L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, Book II, trans. C. Grayson. London 1991, p. 61.



Fig. 1. Caravaggio, *Narcissus*, 1597–1599
Galleria Nazionale D'Arte Antica, Rome, Italy



Fig. 2. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Mirror of Venus*, 1898
Museum Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal



Fig. 3. Salvador Dalí, *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*, 1937
Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom



Fig. 4. Remedios Varo, *Exploration of the Source of the Orinoco River*, 1959
Source: pintura.aut.org

This term is also used to describe the overall character of contemporary Western culture, particularly American culture,¹⁴ or to describe postmodern culture.¹⁵

In the area of psychoanalysis, narcissism appeared as a scientific category in Sigmund Freud's paper *On Narcissism: An Introduction* (1914).¹⁶ Freud distinguished primary and secondary narcissism. Primary narcissism in the form of loving oneself is described as a first and normal stage in the sexual development of all human beings; we can connect it with the concept of innate bisexuality, as Freud elaborated earlier.¹⁷ Secondary narcissism arises in pathological states such as schizophrenia; in these cases a person's libido withdraws from objects in the world and produces megalomania. The secondary narcissism of the mentally ill is, as Freud suggests, a magnified, extreme manifestation of one's primary narcissism. Freud, however, also articulates a third meaning of narcissism – that is the so-called narcissist selection of an object. Here the issue of gender comes into play, as Freud claims that man and woman differ in their attitude toward the selection of the love object. He writes:

Women, especially if they grow up with good looks, develop a certain self-contentment, which compensates them for the social restrictions that are imposed upon them in their choice of object. Strictly speaking, it is only themselves that such women love with an intensity comparable to that of the man's love for them. [...] The importance of this type of woman for the erotic life of mankind is to be rated very highly. Such women have the greatest fascination for men, not only for aesthetic reasons, since as a rule they are the most beautiful, but also because of a combination of interesting psychological factors.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ch. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism. American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, New York 1991.

¹⁵ J. Tyl, *Narcissmus jako psychologie postmoderní kultury* [Narcissism as Psychology of Postmodern Culture], [online] <http://www.iapsa.cz> [accessed: 7.09.2015].

¹⁶ Some predecessors of Freud also used the term narcissism, such as Paul Näcke and Havelock Ellis.

¹⁷ See: S. Freud, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, trans. by A. A. Brill, New York and Washington 1920 (EBook), [online] <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14969/14969-h/14969-h.htm> [accessed: 7.09.2015]. In this text, first published in 1905, S. Freud developed the concept of so-called innate bisexuality. He claims that we all have "the original predisposition to bisexuality, which in the course of development has changed to monosexuality" (ibidem, p. 9).

¹⁸ Idem, *On Narcissism. An Introduction*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914–1916): *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, trans. from

Freud here (similarly to Ovid) connects narcissism with beauty; however, in the case of Freud, it is the beauty of a woman (like Burne-Jones), not a young boy. Concerning the connection to the concept of bisexuality, Freud is close to Ovid in claiming that Narcissus attracted both boys and girls; however, he ignored them all.

Psychoanalytically oriented women have sometimes interpreted narcissism differently. For example, Lou Andreas-Salomé in her article *The Dual Orientation of Narcissism* understood narcissism as “a part of our self-love which accompanies all phases.”¹⁹ She also stresses the dual, ambivalent orientation of narcissism, consisting of two desires: “the desire for individuality, and the contrary movement toward conjunction and fusion.”²⁰ According to Viola Parente-Čapková, Andreas-Salomé changed the evaluation of passivity and desire for the fusion characteristic of the primary phase of a person’s development. According to Parente-Čapková, she “advocated ‘an unconscious’ with a positive dimension which offered the possibility of ‘regression’ to a primal undifferentiation without pathology, to ‘woman,’ whom she defined as ‘a regressive without a neurosis,’ remaining ‘interested in the moments when the narcissistic undifferentiation was recovered in artistic creativity.’”²¹ Thus, Andreas-Salomé challenged Freud’s close connection of narcissism with self-love, illness, and woman, stressing rather its ambiguity, normality and gender neutrality.

In the 20th century, the notion of mirroring connected with Narcissus was even elevated to the level of philosophy and used as a symbol of the world. In this transformation, the capacity of water to mirror the world plays a very important role. The lake can be symbolically understood as an “eye” of the landscape, in which the surrounding nature reflects and sees itself, therefore doubling itself. Gaston Bachelard plays on this ability

the German under the General Editorship of J. Strachey, in collaboration with A. Freud, assisted by A. Strachey, A. Tyson, London 2001, pp. 88–89. Freud also compared women to children and animals, writing: “For it seems very evident that another person’s narcissism has a great attraction for those who have renounced part of their own narcissism and are in search of object-love. The charm of a child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-contentment and inaccessibility, just as does the charm of certain animals which seem not to concern themselves about us, such as cats and the large beasts of prey.” (ibidem, p. 89).

¹⁹ L. Andreas-Salomé, “The Dual Orientation of Narcissism”, *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 1962, No. 31, p. 3.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 4.

²¹ Ibidem.

of a water surface to double itself in his understanding of narcissism as a general trait of the world:

But in nature itself, it seems that *powers of vision* are active. Between *contemplated nature* and *contemplative nature*, there are close and reciprocal relations. *Imaginary nature* affects the unity of *natura naturans* and of *natura naturata*. [...] The cosmos, then, is in some way clearly touched by narcissism. The world wants to see itself.²²

He also develops Jung's thoughts about *Anima* and *Animus*, transforming Pausanias' account of the story for this purpose:

Narcissus, then, goes to the secret fountain in the depths of the woods. Only there does he feel that he is *naturally* doubled. He stretches out his arms, thrusts his hands down toward his own image, speaks to his own voice. Echo is not a distant nymph. She lives in the basin of the fountain. Echo is always with Narcissus. She is he. She has his voice. She has his face. He does not hear her in a loud shout. He hears her in a murmur, like the murmur of his seductive seducer's voice. In the presence of water, Narcissus receives the revelation of his identity and of his duality; of his double powers, virile and feminine; and, above all, the revelation of his reality and his ideality.²³

In contrast to Freud, understanding narcissism in the context of bisexuality, Bachelard understands it – similarly to C. G. Jung – in the context of psychic androgyny.²⁴

While Bachelard underlines the capacity of water to mirror, Julia Kristeva stresses the aboriginal emptiness and death drive as a primary source of narcissism. Narcissus tried to overcome this emptiness by looking into water; all ancient stories end with Narcissus's death. She writes:

²² G. Bachelard, *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter*, trans. from the French E. R. Farrell, Dallas 1994, pp. 27–28.

²³ Ibidem, pp. 22–23. Bachelard develops the characteristics of *Anima* and *Animus* further: *Anima* represents the process of dreaming and *Animus* the set of dreams. In the end, Bachelard elaborates a very complicated conception of the system of the mutual dialectical relations of the real and the idealized *Animus* and *Anima*.

²⁴ The difference between bisexuality and androgyny can be seen as paralleling sex/gender division (taking into account its ambiguity). However, we understand bisexuality as the sexual orientation of a human being towards both sexes, while androgyny in its modern sense (not as Plato describes it in *The Symposium*) means the psychic level of personality as it is able to combine masculinity and femininity as gender characteristics (it applies to heterosexually, homosexually or bisexually oriented human beings).

"The mythical Narcissus would heroically lean over that emptiness to seek in the maternal watery element the possibility of representing the self of the other – someone to love."²⁵ Kristeva describes narcissism as follows:

Always already there, the forming presence that none the less satisfies none of my auto-erotic needs draws me into the imaginary exchange, the specular seduction. He or I – who is the agent? Or even, is it he or is it she? The immanence of its transcendence, as well as the instability of our borders before the setting of my image as 'my own,' turn the murky source (*eine neuen psychische Aktion*) from which narcissism will flow, into a dynamics of confusion and delight. Secrets of our loves.²⁶

Salvador Dalí: *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*

The motif of Narcissus has inspired many European artists throughout history. In modern times, Narcissus became the most emblematic figure of Decadent art. He was "explored as a prototype of endless self-analysis and aestheticized androgyny."²⁷ As Parente-Čapková notes, many women artists "twisted the figure of Narcissus (or its female version Narcissa) and Medusa into empowering symbols, or used them to explore the question of gender."²⁸

Let us move from the turn of the 19th and 20th century and from the contexts of decadence and symbolism to the 1930s and 1940s into the context of surrealism. At that time, though Freud's works about narcissism were already available, we cannot claim that the surrealists read them from primary sources.²⁹ Almost at the same time, Carl Gustav Jung developed his

²⁵ J. Kristeva, "Freud and Love: Treatment and Its Discontents", trans. L. S. Roudiez, [in:] *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Moi Toril, Oxford 1990, p. 257.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 258.

²⁷ V. Parente-Čapková, "Narcissuses, Medusas, Ophelias. Water Imagery and Femininity in the Texts by Two Decadent Women Writers", [in:] *Water and Women in Past, Present and Future*, ed. Z. Kalnická, Philadelphia 2007, p. 198.

²⁸ For more about the use of the narcissist motif in the works of Decadent women writers, especially from the gender perspective, see: ibidem.

²⁹ However, Salvador Dalí personally met Freud in 1938 in London and brought him to see the painting *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*. Freud later remarked: "Until today I had tended to think that the surrealists, who would appear to have chosen me as their patron saint, were completely mad. But this wild-eyed young Spaniard, with his undoubted technical mastery, prompted me to a different opinion. Indeed, it would be most interesting to explore analytically the growth of a work like this" (C. R. M. Maurell, "Dalí and the Myth of Narcissus", *El Punt*, 25 December 2005, [online] www.salvador-dali.org [accessed: 8.09.2015]).

analytical psychology, as well as his theory of archetypes and of psychical androgyny. In the process of interpreting Salvador Dalí's painting *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*, we do not use the context of bisexuality but concentrate rather on the discourse of androgyny, which we found more appropriate to illuminate the meaning of Dalí's *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*.

Although *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* is mainly known as a painting, in fact it is a book consisting of three parts: a short theoretical account of his own artistic paranoiac-critical method; a poem; and the painting.³⁰ Dalí claimed that this ensemble of three parts mentioned above was the first complex surrealist work ever and "the first poem and the first painting obtained entirely through the integral application of the paranoiac-critical method."³¹

x x x

Man returns to the vegetable state
by fatigue-laden sleep
and the gods
by the transparent hypnosis of their passions.
Narcissus, you are so immobile
one would think you were asleep.
If it were question of Hercules rough and brown,
one would say: he sleeps like a boar
in the posture
of an herculean oak.
But you, Narcissus,
made of perfumed bloomings of transparent
adolescence,
you sleep like a water flower.

³⁰ The book was simultaneously published in 1937 in French: *Métamorphose de Narcisse: Poème paranoïaque* (Paris, Éditions surréalistes), and English: *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* (trans. F. Scarpe, Julien Levy Gallery, New York) on the occasion of Dalí's exhibition in Tate Gallery in London.

³¹ Ibidem, pages not marked. In this book, Dalí describes the paranoiac-critical method as follows: "If one looks for some time, from a slight distance and with a certain 'distant fixedness,' at the hypnotically immobile figure of Narcissus, it gradually disappears until at last it is completely invisible. The metamorphosis of the myth takes place at the precise moment, for the image of Narcissus is suddenly transformed into the image of a hand which rises out of his own reflection." Dalí developed the paranoiac-critical method in the early 1930's; it was designed to help an artist tap into his unconscious through a self-induced paranoid state. Using this method, Dalí related objects that were otherwise unrelated. He did this through the use of optical illusions and by juxtaposing images with the aim at forcing one to abandon any preconceived notions of reality.

Now the great mystery draws near,
the great metamorphosis is about to occur.

Narcissus, in his immobility, absorbed by his reflection
with the digestive slowness of carnivorous plants,
becomes invisible.

There remains of him only
the hallucinatingly white oval of his head,
his head again more tender,
his head, chrysalis of hidden biological designs,
his head held up by the tips of the water's fingers,
at the tips of the fingers
of the insensate hand,
of the terrible hand,
of the excrement-eating hand,
of the mortal hand
of his own reflection.

When that head slits
when that head splits
when that head bursts,
it will be the flower,
the new Narcissus,
Gala —
my narcissus.³²

One of the most important symbols in the Narcissus story, as we have already mentioned when dealing with the philosophical interpretation of narcissism, and one with a multitude of semantic networks, is water.³³ Water occupies quite a large space and carries important messages also in the work (both poem and painting) of Salvador Dalí. The concept of water as one of four basic elements making up the world has its roots in the deep past of humanity; in European culture, it is found in the work of Hesiod and Homer, and it was developed in the works of Greek philosophers from Empedocles to Aristotle.³⁴ In many myths and philosophical

³² Ibidem (last part of the poem). As Dalí considered that the poem and the painting formed a single whole, we will also take the poem into account during our interpretation.

³³ According to Ovid, Narcissus was begotten after the river god Képhisos raped the water nymph Liriopé. He then disappeared, and is not present in myth anymore.

³⁴ In Indian and Chinese culture, water is one of the five elements. See more in: M. Jakubczak, "Earth", [in:] *Aesthetics of the Four Elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air*, ed. K. Wilkoszewska, Ostrava 2001, pp. 15–99.

treatises, water represents the “feminine” element (together with earth), while air and fire are seen as “masculine.” However, water as a natural element can carry many different symbolic and semantic meanings as well as gender and aesthetic associations, depending on what form, shape, cultural context or theoretical framework, in which it appears; there are differences of symbolical meaning between a drop of dew, a flowing river, a hot spring, the waves of the sea or a roaring waterfall.³⁵

In contrast to the story by Ovid, where Narcissus sees his own face in a small fountain hidden in the middle of the forest,³⁶ Salvador Dalí portrays water in the form of a small lake. The surface of the water is still, resembling the surface of an artificial mirror. The mirroring effects of the water’s surface divide the picture into four parts: in the horizontal plane into upper and lower parts, and in the vertical plane into right and left sides. These four parts of the picture “mirror” each other, but not passively. In the seemingly still and reflective water, a dynamic process of metamorphosis is happening. This is the difference between Dalí’s interpretation of the Narcissus story and that of Caravaggio or Burne-Jones. Dalí is closer to the ancient concept of metamorphosis. In Dalí’s painting, the meaning arises in the multiple processes of mutual reflections of the upper and lower parts and the right and left sides of the painting. We can detect the first gender association here: the left side of the picture is colored with a gold tint, possibly associated with the symbol of the sun, while on the right side, a silver tint prevails, possibly alluding to the symbol of the moon. In most mythologies, the sun represents masculinity (the Ancient god Apollo, for example), and the moon represents femininity (the Ancient goddess Artemisia).³⁷ We can find support for this gender association in the text of the poem and the picture itself: Dalí describes (and portrays) the metamorphosis of Narcissus as starting from the left (sunny) side and progressing towards the right (silver) side, where the flower is hatching out of the oval of an egg.

³⁵ For more about the symbolic-aesthetic meanings of water and its connection with femininity see: Z. Kalnická, *Water and Woman. Symbolic-aesthetic Archetype*, Saarbrücken 2010.

³⁶ “There was a fountain silver-clear and bright, which neither shepherds nor the wild she-goats, that range the hills, nor any cattle’s mouth had touched – its waters were unsullied – birds disturbed it not; nor animals, nor boughs that fall so often from the trees” (Ovid, op. cit., [online] <http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Narkissos.html> [accessed: 10.09.2015]).

³⁷ Although the sun is connected with male energy in most cultures, there are some exceptions.

The water space in Dalí's painting functions not only as a medium for multiple mirroring; Dalí also indicates its depth, as Narcissus plunges his hand (and also part of his leg) into the water. In contrast to an artificial mirror, a water mirror always has a certain depth, however shallow it may be. For Dalí, the lake becomes a device by which he maintains a playful tension among the ambivalent relations between depth and surface, visible and invisible. When we look at the painting with a particular type of concentration, as Dalí advises us in his book, following the direction of the metamorphosis, we can "see" how the "real" Narcissus on the left side becomes invisible, letting the right side appear, where a flower emerges from an egg, called by Dalí "my narcissus – Gala." In the poem, Gala is referred to as "narcissus" twice: Narcissus with a capital letter, and narcissus (the flower). However, Gala is called by Dalí "my narcissus," which we can interpret as her appropriation by the artist. Gala's existence is derivative and their relationship asymmetrical – her being depends on the metamorphosis of Narcissus-Dalí who gives her "life." We will return to this problem later when explaining the *Animus-Anima* Archetype in Jung's theory.

Dalí was able to overcome Ovid's account of Narcissus (and Freud's account of narcissism), and to break its connection with beauty and self-love, by downplaying the importance of looking. Dalí's Narcissus does not look at the water surface in order to see his image; we do not see his face. The painting does not follow the myth by showing that Narcissus was seduced by the beauty of the face he saw on the surface of water and subsequently fell in love with an image, which he finally understood as his own. In Dalí's picture, however, the two main protagonists have neither faces nor eyes; what we can find significant is the total absence of looking – with its potentiality to seduce,³⁸ but also to objectify. The tendency to objectify others by looking at them is an important theme for many authors. Some of them also concentrate on the gender aspect of looking; for example, Carolyn Korsmeyer emphasizes the fact that for a long time in the history of European art, artistic images were closely connected with women and beauty as something *being-looked-at*. She finds the structural

³⁸ As Baudrillard claims, the face is the most seductive device because of the eyes: "The seduction of eyes. The most immediate, purest form of seduction, one that bypasses words. Where looks alone join in a sort of duel, an immediate intertwining, unbeknownst to others and their discourses: the discrete charm of a silent and immobile orgasm." J. Baudrillard, *Seduction*, trans. B. Singer, Montréal 2001, p. 77.

relation between the person who actively looks, and the person who is being passively looked at to be strongly gendered.³⁹ In the case of Dalí's painting, the absence of looking opens the path towards overcoming the tendency to objectify others – including gender objectification, which mostly results in a strong division between man and woman. Looking, here, is not only absent within the structure of the painting; there is no look coming from the picture toward the viewer.⁴⁰

It seems that the meaning of Dalí's Narcissus is created through and in relations; unstable borders and relations (see the description by Julia Kristeva) are stabilized and at the same time disrupted in the process of the viewer's interpretation of the symbolical and imaginary structure of the painting (which might differ, depending on whether the viewer is a woman or a man.) We are dragged into the process of metamorphosis, in which the exact point of change is not visible. Metamorphosis is not a "thing;" it is a never-ending process in which each step represents more than it offers at first sight. The question is: what kind of ambivalent relations in their cosmic, human and gender meanings are played out within this seemingly static composition?

Let us first compare the left and right sides of the picture. The body of Narcissus portrayed on the left side is more amorphous and smudged than the shapes on the right side, with the fingers in the foreground, with their shapes more clear-cut. The massive body of stones behind Narcissus resembles a dark cave; we can interpret it as the woman's womb from which Narcissus was born. In this case, the water of the lake can be associated with the amniotic fluid. Its darker and warmer colors, and especially the red color coming out of the cave, can represent blood. Narcissus looks as if he were a "body" created by shades and light, not by precise contours. The position in which he is displayed alludes to the position of an embryo in its mother's womb; this can also imply Narcissus' original indeterminacy (including sexual and gender.) As noted before, Narcissus is not looking at himself in the water surface; he is somehow convoluted and oriented inward, which contrasts sharply with his long flowing hair. We cannot tell his sexual/gender identity from his visible traits – we take it for granted because of the myth and the poem. Narcissus plunges his legs and hand into the water. Here, in the feminine elements – under the

³⁹ See more in: C. Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aesthetics. An Introduction*, New York–London 2004.

⁴⁰ We might identify the look toward the viewer with the center of the flower.

water on the left side and the earth on the right – metamorphosis is taking place: the stone hand is coming out of the earth, giving support to the egg from which the new Narcissus (Gala-narcissus-Narcissus) is hatching.⁴¹ At the same time, an egg with a flower (Gala) is placed on something like a pedestal, which can be viewed as supporting Whitney Chadwick's claim that the surrealists were not capable of abandoning the idea of woman as Muse.⁴² On the other hand, we can speculate about equitation of a woman with a flower – as a vegetative state which recalls Aristotle's⁴³ and also Max Scheler's⁴⁴ conception of woman as imperfect or as a mutilated man with a vegetative kind of soul.⁴⁵

Within the space of the canvas there are many more "things" helping to create the meaning of the painting. For example, the segment on the right side (which we reach after drawing a vertical line next to the finger) contains – moving from the bottom upwards – a dog eating something bloody, a human figure on a pedestal portrayed from the back and turning his/her head towards the viewer (making the turn from god to animal?), and on the top of the hill – according to the text of the poem – the head of a god (again with long hair). This god, created from the snow covering the top of the hill, is longing for his image-reflection; this causes him to melt. Two streams of his very essence flow down to join the water of the lakes.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Nevertheless, the process of metamorphosis can continue: the fragile position of the egg balancing on the thumb predicates that we can expect its continuation.

⁴² Chadwick writes that Gala Eluard was the first woman to receive the role of a surrealist Muse. She entered the group through her relationship with Paul Eluard and later became the partner of Salvador Dalí. Dalí himself described her as his Muse: "She teaches me also the reality of everything. She teaches me to dress myself [...] She was the angel of equilibrium, of proportion, who announced my classicism" (D. Ades, *Salvador Dalí*, London 1982, p. 76, quoted by W. Chadwick, *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement*, London 1985, p. 37).

⁴³ Aristotle, "De Generative Animalium", trans. A. Platt, [in:] *The Oxford Translation of Aristotle*, ed. W. D. Ross, Vol. 5, Books I., II., Oxford 1912; idem, "Historia Animalium", trans. D'Arcy W. Thompson, [in:] *The Oxford Translation of Aristotle*, Vol. 4, Book IX, Oxford 1910.

⁴⁴ M. Scheler, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, introduction E. Kelly, trans. M. S. Frings, K. S. Frings, Evanston 2008.

⁴⁵ In his poem, Dalí writes: "Man returns to the vegetable state/ by fatigue-laden sleep," (S. Dalí, op. cit.) which we can interpret as his return to earlier stages of natural development, mostly associated with woman.

⁴⁶ Dalí writes: "On the highest mountain, / the god of the snow, / his dazzling head bent over dizzy space of / reflections, / starts melting with desire / in the vertical cata-

The head of the god “mirrors” the head of Narcissus, both taking the shape of an oval-egg. Might these three figures and their placement remind us of the three levels of our world (underground, earth and sky) and their three inhabitants (animals – not by chance represented by a dog, a mythical guard of the underworld, human beings and god)?

On the right side of Narcissus, on a small area of firm ground in the center of the painting, we can see a group of men and women – people with defined sexual identity.⁴⁷ They are naked, looking at each other as though they obtain their sexual identity from that look to which they somehow theatrically expose themselves. There is also a small pond in the middle of the group; however, the men and women do not look at the water but whirl or dance with some ecstasy around it, most of them touching themselves.

In his painting, Dalí creates a symbolical structure full of nontransparent signs. By suppressing the objectifying power of looking, stressing the importance of touch, and concentrating on the ambiguity of the process of metamorphosis, Dalí was able to challenge historically and culturally accepted meanings and gendered associations of symbols. He places Narcissus on the left side – traditionally feminine, and Gala on the right side – traditionally masculine. He also challenges the relations of death and life: death, associated with Narcissus, is portrayed as more “alive” than life, represented by the more “dead” flower (the cold colors of the fingers resemble a weather-worn cliff face gradually quarried by ants). Dalí’s Narcissus undergoes his metamorphosis into the flower-Gala. We can possibly claim that Dalí was on his way towards androgyny.⁴⁸ This claim might also be supported by the fact that he signed his painting *Metamorphosis*

racts of the thaw / annihilating himself loudly among the excremental / cries of minerals, / or / between the silences of mosses / towards the distant mirror of the lake” (ibidem).

⁴⁷ We can again here use the poem: “In the heterosexual group, / in that kind date of the year / (but not excessively beloved or mild), / there are / the Hindou / tart, oily, sugared / like an August date, / the Catalan with his brave back / well planted in a sun-tide, / a whitsuntide of flesh inside his brain, / the blond flesh-eating German, / the brown mists / of mathematics / in the dimples / of his cloudy knees, / there is the English woman, / the Russian, / the Swedish women, / the American / and the tall darkling Andalusian, / hardy with glands and olive with anguish” (ibidem).

⁴⁸ When Dalí was a young boy, he even wanted to be a girl. He also created the painting *Dalí at the Age of Six When He Thought He Was a Girl, Lifting the Skin of the Water to See the Dog Sleeping in the Shade of the Sea* (C. Rojas, Salvador Dalí, *Or The Art of Spitting on Your Mother’s Portrait*, Pennsylvania 1993, p. 144).

of *Narcissus* “Salvador Gala Dalí.”⁴⁹ In theory, the concept of psychic androgyny was elaborated by C. G. Jung within his *Animus-Anima* archetype. That’s the reason we will turn our attention to it now.

Animus – Anima Archetype

The archetype of *Anima* and *Animus* appears in Jung’s theory in the context of the concept of individuation, the psychic development of a human being towards a full individuality, a whole.⁵⁰ According to Jung,

Woman is compensated by a masculine element and therefore her unconscious has, so to speak, a masculine imprint. This results in considerable difference between men and women, and accordingly I have called the projection-making factor in women the animus, which means mind or spirit. The animus corresponds to the paternal Logos just as the anima corresponds to maternal Eros.⁵¹

The *Anima* has two aspects – negative, projected into the figure of the *femme fatale*, and positive, enabling man to connect with his unconsciousness. Whereas the *Anima* mostly appears in the form of erotic fantasy, the *Animus* tends to appear in the form of a hidden “conviction.” Similarly to the character of a man’s *Anima*, which is determined primarily by his mother, the character of a woman’s *Animus* is influenced by her father. The *Animus* is also able to show himself negatively as a demon of death, or positively as the bridge that helps woman to participate in creative activity. According to Jung, a human being who truly deals with the obstacles and antithetical tendencies of his/her psyche arrives at the stage of “Self.” “Self” thus becomes a dynamic center of his/her psychical life, able to harmonize inner contradictory (gender) tendencies.

As Emma Jung noticed, calling the *Animus* “spiritual power” carries with it the assumption that women are not able to conduct spiritual and creative activities by themselves; if they did conduct such activities, it would be because of their masculine part, their *Animus*. Lauter and Rupprecht write,

⁴⁹ In this aspect, Dalí is closer to the second Pausanias’ version of the story, and G. Bachelard’s thoughts.

⁵⁰ See more about archetypes in: C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, Princeton 1968.

⁵¹ Quotation taken from *Feminist Archetypal Theory. Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought*, ed. E. Lauter, C. S. Rupprecht, Knoxville 1985, p. 8.

"Emma Jung argued that women cannot afford to be permanently satisfied with this state of affairs where their spiritual values are projected onto men."⁵²

Moreover, Carl Gustav Jung warns that the incorporation of the *Animus* by women can be dangerous, ending in the loss of femininity. This different evaluation of "adding" the masculine part to the feminine, which is seen as dangerous, and of the feminine to the masculine, which is welcomed, influences the participation of women in the arts and also their artistic "self-image."⁵³ Viola Parente-Čapková stresses that for a woman, and especially a woman-artist, the process of "androgynization" is not simple: "[...] if a woman would like to function as an androgynous author and subject, she should first become a man and only then incorporate into herself abstract, metaphorized femininity."⁵⁴ Thus, the process of "adding" feminine traits to a masculine personality was not – at that time – viewed as having the same value as adding masculine traits to a feminine personality.

We can also apply this claim to women artists within the surrealist movement.⁵⁵ The fact that we can find many women within this artistic movement is partly due to the idea of the human being as an integration of all aspects of the soul – thinking, feeling and intuition – which they propagated. The surrealists strongly stressed the unconsciousness as a source of artistic creativity. This idea determined the surrealists' appreciation of femininity, which was traditionally associated with intuition, feelings and closeness to the unconsciousness. However, Whitney Chadwick states that

⁵² Ibidem, p. 63.

⁵³ It is significant that all the analyzed examples of images of *Anima*, as well as *Animus* analyzed by C. G. Jung and his co-authors were created by male artists. See more in: C. G. Jung, M. L. von. Franz, J. L. Henderson, J. Jacobi, A. Jaffé, *Man and His Symbols*, New York 1964.

⁵⁴ V. Parente-Čapková, "Žena o ženě v muži – a v ženě. Některé strategie využívání metaforizovaného žentství v díle dvou dekadentních autorek" [Woman about Woman in Man – and in Woman. Some Strategies of Using Metaphor of Femininity in the Texts by Two Decadent Women Writers], [in:] E. Kalivodová, B. Knotková-Čapková, *Ponořena do Léthé. Sborník věnovaný cyklu přednášek Metafora ženy 2000–2001* [Washed in Léthé. The Collection of Works from the Course Metaphor of Woman 2000–2001], Praha 2003, p. 105.

⁵⁵ See more about surrealist women artists, for example in: W. Chadwick, op. cit.; L. Sills, A. Whitman, *Visions: Stories of Women Artists*, Illinois 1993; S. L. Aberth, *Leonora Carrington: Surrealism, Alchemy and Art*, Hampshire and Burlington 2010; S. van Raay, J. Moorhead, T. Arcq, *Surreal Friends: Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo and Kati Horna*, Hampshire and Burlington 2010.

the surrealists on the one hand admired the independence of women, but on the other were not able to stop imagining woman as a Muse, an idea we have already mentioned.⁵⁶ They believed that women have a closer relation with intuition and the unconscious, and therefore were used as a guide in their own creative activity. As a consequence of this view, women lost their individuality and were subsumed under the vision of femininity as such, being seen as useful due to their ability to “add” the above-mentioned aspects to men’s creative cycle. The male surrealists were thus not able to solve the inner conflict between the visions of woman as passive, dependent and defined by her relation to man, and that of an independent and creative being. They supported “her” individuality but were not able to value it entirely, still stressing the beauty and sexuality of women, mostly as dependent upon the appraisal of a man.⁵⁷ This situation was intriguing and complicated for female surrealists as they were confronted with potentially contradicting images of femininity.⁵⁸

When comparing the artworks created by surrealist women-artists with *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* by Salvador Dalí, we found out that many women artists also refused to understand water as a mirror (and to build their identity by mirroring), and stressed, rather, the importance of touch. In theory, the arguments for this turn were put forth, for example, by Luce Irigaray in her *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*. In this book, after examining the text *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, she claims that Zarathustra’s love for the sea is the love of someone, who watches the sea from a distance but does not live in it. “To think of the sea from afar, to eye her from a distance, to use her to fashion his highest reveries, to weave his dreams of her, and spread his sail while remaining safe in port, that is the delirium of the sea lover.”⁵⁹ Luce Irigaray advises, not only to Nietzsche: “So remember the liquid ground,” “Learn to swim,”⁶⁰ and “explore the bottom of

⁵⁶ See more in: W. Chadwick, op. cit.

⁵⁷ It is known that e.g. the surrealist female sculptor Méret Oppenheim was one of the models for the photographer Man Ray. See more in: ibidem.

⁵⁸ Whitney Chadwick writes that although female surrealists were partly supported by their male colleagues, their needs of being accepted as independent and creative artists were not entirely fulfilled. For example, Leonor Fini never joined a surrealist group because she refused to subordinate herself to André Breton. Many female surrealists created their most valuable works after the surrealist movement had peaked and after they had left the group (see more in: ibidem).

⁵⁹ L. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. C. Porter, Ithaca, NY 1985, p. 51.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 37.

the sea.”⁶¹ She criticizes identifying woman with mirror,⁶² and stresses the close connection of women and touch.⁶³ As we can see within the painting created by the surrealist woman-painter Remedios Varo, she was clearly more adventurous than Nietzsche’s great lover of the sea, and she went further than Dalí’s Narcissus, who only plunges his legs and hand into the water. Her painting *Exploration of the Source of the Orinoco River* shows her heroine (herself?) undertaking a journey under the surface of the water, diving into the depths of a river while looking there for the sources of her unconsciousness or culturally undistorted “woman’s identity,” one which is not derived from man’s projection onto woman.⁶⁴

Conclusion

When analyzing the context in which Salvador Dalí created his work *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* (1937), especially Freud’s concept of narcissism and Jung’s description of the archetype of *Animus* and *Anima*, we discovered that during the period in question (the 1930s and 1940s, in the context of surrealism) the idea of androgyny was still influenced by traditional notions and evaluations of masculinity and femininity.⁶⁵ The society and the artistic world in particular, were more likely to be inclined to accept the “feminization” of men-artists than the “masculinization” of women-artists. The latter case was seen as a threat to the basic structure of the patriarchal system. However, in the case of surrealism, the reason behind this attitude might lay rather lay in the fear that women would stop functioning as keepers of unconsciousness, a role which led them to be viewed as the most important and valuable reservoir of creative energy and “soul” for men.

⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 12.

⁶² Irigaray writes: “Her [sea and woman] depth is too great [...] Too restless to be a true mirror” (ibidem, p. 52).

⁶³ She claims: “Woman takes pleasure more from touching than looking” (ibidem, p. 25).

⁶⁴ We can mention other surrealist women artists pursuing the same theme, for example: *The End of the World* by Léonor Fini or *Washed in Léthe* by Edith Rimmington.

⁶⁵ We can parallel it with Plato’s myth about androgynous people in *The Symposium*: after their division into two, homosexual relations among men were valued higher than those among women. See more in Plato, *The Symposium*, trans. and introduction W. Hamilton, London 1951.

Nevertheless, the ambiguity of Dalí's work opens up a space, which leads to many different possible interpretations of his artwork.⁶⁶ This is due to the fact that Dalí suppressed the prevalence of looking as a carrier of meaning and re-evaluated the importance of touch and tactility instead. Narcissus touches water, the thumb touches the egg (the fingers being the most important devices of active touching and transformation of things,) the figures in the middle of the painting touch themselves, as does the figure on the pedestal in the center of the chessboard floor.

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⁶⁶ For example: C. Rojas, op. cit.; M. Germ, op. cit., pp. 133–144; M. Heyd, "Dalí's 'Metamorphosis of Narcissus' Reconsidered", *Artibus et Historiae*, 1984, Vol. 5, No. 10, pp. 121–131; D. Lomas, *Narcissus Reflected: The Myth of Narcissus in Surrealist and Contemporary Art*, Edinburgh 2011. M. C. Rojas interprets the painting as the portrait of Dalí himself, identifying several versions of Dalí-Narcissus in his search for identity (sorceress's apprentice, true Dalí, authentic Dalí and Dalí-god); M. Heyd looks for the alchemical sources combined with the autobiographical sources of both the picture and the poem; D. Lomas in his otherwise in-depth study argues that despite the explicit identification of the narcissus with Gala in the poem, there is no reason to accept it in the study of the painting; M. Germ explains the parallels and differences between Ovid's and Dalí's view of metamorphoses, without mentioning the gender aspects of it: he agrees with Lomas's claim not to take the poem (in the case of Gala-narcissus) into account. In the case of Echo, he only points to the echoing as a case of mirroring. It is evident that these interpretations of Dalí's artwork *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* do not focus on gender aspects. On the other hand, there are works analyzing the gender aspects of Ovid's Narcissus, such as P. Petek (op. cit.) focusing primarily on the significance of myth for film scholarship; P. B. Salzman-Mitchell, *A Web of Fantasies: Gaze, Image, and Gender in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Ohio 2005, examining the interactions between gaze and image in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, from a gender perspective. Nevertheless, they do not interpret Dalí's *Metamorphosis of Narcissus*. This paper aims at filling this gap by offering an interpretation of Dalí's *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* from a gender perspective.

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