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Bachelor of Arts in Art History
Minor in Art and Design/Classical Studies

Corpus Hypercubus: Salvador Dalí's Surrealist Crucifixion

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Abstract

In the latter period of his career, Dalí departed from some of the surrealist paradigms and imagery of the interwar period, and the politics that increasingly determined the group's direction and identity. Instead, this new era is characterized by his theory and artistic application of "Nuclear Mysticism" (the relating of quantum physics to the conscious mind), Christian imagery, and engagement with the exemplum of Old Masters. This is especially present in his oil painting from 1954 *Corpus Hypercubus (Crucifixion)*. Here, Christ's cross is replaced with a polyhedron net of a tesseract, while Gala poses as Mary Magdalene within an ambiguous landscape. After exploring the implications of Dali's post-war creative practice and activities, and his explicit references through primary source-led visual analysis; this thesis will ultimately explore how Dalí locates iconic images of religious figures into the Surreal subconscious. Ultimately reworking his own Surrealist paradigms into the aim for a "New Renaissance", reveals a strategic and forceful synthesis of theories and references that are nonetheless complimentary to his earlier practice.

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Introduction

In the latter period of his career, Salvador Dalí departed from some of the Surrealist paradigms and imagery of the interwar period, and the politics that increasingly determined the group's direction and identity. Instead, this new era was characterized by his theory and artistic application of "Nuclear Mysticism" – the relating of quantum physics to the experience of consciousness, and actual and perceived reality, often connected to the attempt to relate science to religious experience – Christian imagery, and engagement with the exemplum of Renaissance art. This is especially salient in his oil painting from 1954 *Corpus Hypercubus (Crucifixion)* 1). Here, Christ's cross is replaced with a polyhedron net of a tesseract, while Gala poses as the Madonna within an ambiguous landscape.

This thesis seeks to first contextualize this work in Dalí's post-war direction, within a literature review, to identify major themes in interpretation, and possible causes for the neglect of such works. The lit review involves his mathematical and scientific engagement, the art-historical roots and debates of the synthesis of fields, his religious references along Renaissance and Baroque artistic exemplars; and his post-war persona construction. Further, through visually analyzing the painting in chapter two, reinforced with primary source evidence of Dalí's post-war practice, and commentary during its production, this thesis identifies new questions, as this work has not been visually analyzed by scholars. The third chapter integrates this information in relation to his earlier Surrealist practices, to explore how Dalí locates iconic images of religious figures into Surrealism, intertwining the mystical realm with the unconscious in a theoretically forceful manner.

Chapter 1: A Literature Review of Issues in the Late Works of Dalí

Corpus Hypercubus as a work on its own appears understudied in literature, often categorized in general readings of Dalí's post-war practice. To contextualize the work and engage with various readings a more interdisciplinary approach in this literature review is necessary; one that also draws from other works of the artist in proximity or reference to it, historical context, his theoretical claims during its conception, and three main categories of literature. Firstly, mathematical and scientific influence in the work, as proven by direct contact with figures of the field, the work's continuous use as a case study in the field, and arguments for art historical engagement with emerging theories reveals a substantial engagement with certain concepts applied in this work. Secondly, art historical readings of Dalí's complex engagement with Baroque and Catholic Themes reveal a continuity in his engagement with the like, beginning from early Surrealist years, and including connection to his own identity. Lastly, developing out of the question of artistic persona, the literature that addresses the political controversy and questioning of the genuinity of his post-war practice. Ultimately, the literature addresses fields of science/mathematics, Baroque/Catholic art history, formation of artistic persona, and of political motivations behind *Corpus Hypercubus* and its context in attempt to gage interpretation of the artist's individualistic change in practice, and provocative drawing together contradictory elements into is art.

Mathematical and Scientific Engagement

The first theme of the literature on *Corpus Hypercubus (Crucifixion)* is that which refers to mathematical and scientific influence in Dalí's later works, in the phase *Nuclear Mysticism*¹. The first section of this thesis chapter will observe the work used as a case study for visualizing mathematical and scientific theories, as well as in context of a wider application of such fields in his later works and experimentation, to attest for a considerable understanding of such concepts, and how they can be integrated into the realm of art.

A record of proceedings from “The international annual Bridges conference exploring Mathematical Connections in Art, Music, Architecture, Education and Culture” in 2014², where Professor of geometric mathematics Thomas Banchoff discusses the meetings and exchanges between himself and Dalí that began in 1975 and spanned for several years, reveals the explicit interaction with mathematical and scientific concepts that Dalí sought in the execution of his later works. Banchoff, notably studying the mathematical concepts of objects beyond third dimensional space, expresses early fascination with seeing the *The Crucifixion[Corpus Hypercubus]*³ painting which featured what he would later recognise as an unfolded model of a hypercube (figure 2), a subject in his later studies of higher dimensions, ultimately bringing him into contact with Dalí and beginning a series of exchanges. Dalí's eager consultation with Banchoff on new mathematical theories, attests for his commitment to a credible application of

¹ Nuclear Mysticism is defined as the artists' practice from 1940-1983 that merges theories of physics and molecular biology to reveal the mysteries of religion, the term coined by the artist to describe his new phase of work and separate him from his Surrealist past. –see ‘Mystical Manifesto’ in the second chapter”
<https://archive.theDalí.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=S64;type=801#:~:text=Dal%C3%AD%20Nuclear%20Mystical%20%26%20Late%20Work,new%20phase%20of%20his%20work>.

² Banchoff, Thomas F. “Salvador Dalí and the Fourth Dimension.” *Proceedings of Bridges 2014: Mathematics, Music, Art, Architecture, Culture*. <https://archive.bridgesmathart.org/2014/bridges2014-1.html>

³ p.2 “Salvador Dalí's Crucifixion is impressive” Banchoff recalls noting in 1955, years prior to him embarking is academic focus on the fourth dimension

them both as visual manifestations in his work through viewing techniques and anecdotes, but also through developing a consistent theory of the merging of art and science.

Further collaboration is described through Dalí's desire to view various models, and to use them in finding new ways of painting, such as the stereoscopic paintings began after his execution of *Corpus Hypercubus*, in which he consulted Banchoff on viewing techniques, his recreation of Banchoff's unfolded hypercube into a metal replica on rotating view in his *Dalí Theatre-Museum* in Figueres⁴ (figure 3), and the element of Rene Thom's theory-which Banchoff notes Dalí has ample knowledge of- the *Catastrophe Theory*, particularly that element which "studies the singularities of projections of objects into planes and spheres"⁵ inspiring images of Dalí's final works.

The *Corpus Hypercubus* – as well as Dalí's theories behind his later works-continue to be used as legitimate case studies of the applications of fourth dimension theory, by Banchoff himself whose 2019 lecture at Aalto University Mathematics and Arts Colloquium⁶, uses *Corpus Hypercubus* in detail to illustrate the fourth dimension, while tracing what must have been Dalí's contacts with the hypercube from. This includes Ramon Llull's picture of a polyhedron net from his *Ars Magna*, and the Llullian architect Juan de Herrera, and an image of two crosses put together in the *Treatise on Perspective* by the use of artists in 1750. This section however will not analyze Dalí's primary influences, but rather Banchoff's inclusion of his own tracing of the image throughout history, in addition to his use of *Corpus Hypercubus* as a legitimate theoretical feat, invokes further consideration of the merging of the fields.

⁴ The *Dalí Theatre-Museum* in Figueres was inaugurated 1974, it was founded by Dalí, from the former Municipal Theatre of Figueres, which Dalí designed into a museum that allows visitors to explore his artistic corpus and ideas, its site even calls it "the world's largest Surrealist Object" <https://www.salvador-Dalí.org/en/museums/Dalí-theatre-museum-in-figueres/historia/>

⁵ P.8 Banchoff, Thomas F. "Salvador Dalí and the Fourth Dimension." *Proceedings of Bridges 2014: Mathematics, Music, Art, Architecture, Culture*. <https://archive.bridgesmathart.org/2014/bridges2014-1.html>

⁶ Aalto University. *Meeting Salvador Dalí in the Fourth Dimension - Thomas Banchoff*, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gpt9VxbrBIw>.

In correlation with the interaction between fields outlined in Banchoff records and lecture on his mathematical findings and collaboration with Dalí, the journal article “Algunos Aspectos Matemáticos de La Obra de Salvador Dalí⁷” by David Blázquez-Sanz and Luis Fernando Jiménez Buitrago presents the work as a case study for the University’s faculty of science publication on the topic of the fourth dimension visualization. From explicitly referencing the “Bridges Proceedings” with Professor Banchoff, the authors similarly outline Dalí’s influences from Ramon Llull, and Juan de Herreras’s *Treatise on Cubic Forms*⁸, before describing the concept of the hypercube itself.⁹ The authors take note of the painting as an example of *Nuclear Mysticism* and Dalí’s explicit references,¹⁰ followed by diagrams and explanations of four dimensional forms through projections— a concept explained in detail in professor Banchoff’s studies— which become clear visually in the composition of *Corpus Hypercubus*. Although not an art-historical source of literature, the use of confirmed references to mathematics outlined reinforces the artistic experimentation in using mathematics as in objects, in composition, and also as a source of inspiration.¹¹

An expansion on this category of literature pertaining to *Corpus Hypercubus* which synthesizes the analysis of scientific references, along with art historiography, is that of art

⁷ Blázquez-Sanz, David, and Luis Fernando Jiménez Buitrago. “Algunos Aspectos Matemáticos de La Obra de Salvador Dalí.” *Revista de La Facultad de Ciencias* 5 (1):38. 2016
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315595761_Algunos_aspectos_matematicos_de_la_obra_de_Salvador_Da
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⁸ p.42 Blázquez-Sanz, David, and Luis Fernando Jiménez Buitrago. “Algunos Aspectos Matemáticos de La Obra de Salvador Dalí.” *Revista de La Facultad de Ciencias* 5 (1):38. 2016
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315595761_Algunos_aspectos_matematicos_de_la_obra_de_Salvador_Da
lí

⁹ pp.44-46 –although the hypercube itself will be analyzed in the second chapter combined with visual analysis of the work only, to avoid diverting into excessive mathematical theory in this literature review.

¹⁰ p.46 quoting Dalí “I painted a hypercubic cross in which the body of Christ metaphysically becomes the ninth cube, following the precepts of the discourse on the cubic shape of Juan Herrera, builder of El Escorial, inspired by Ramon Llull.”

¹¹ p.58 Blázquez-Sanz, David, and Luis Fernando Jiménez Buitrago. “Algunos Aspectos Matemáticos de La Obra de Salvador Dalí.” *Revista de La Facultad de Ciencias* 5 (1):38. 2016
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315595761_Algunos_aspectos_matematicos_de_la_obra_de_Salvador_Da
lí

historian Daniel López del Rincón in his journal article “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí,¹²” where he cites the various relationships and organized meetings with figures of the mathematics and science fields as proof of higher engagement with concepts, including the fourth dimension in *Corpus Hypercubus* being beyond anecdotal.¹³ Beyond the acknowledgment of this work as an example of such a collaboration, the paper addresses a proposition of a DNA Period of his later works from around 1957-1980’s, as opposed to the typically accepted categorisations of: Surrealism (1922-1939), Nuclear/Atomic (1940-1957), Microphysical (1958-1960), DNA (1963-1975), Holographic/Stereoscopic (1971-1978), and Catastrophe Theory (1980’s).¹⁴ The author interprets and promotes the idea of Dalí’s incorporation of such concepts as sincere and credible, due to the maintained relationships with figures in the field, such as the “Random Process” congress organized with scientists at the *Dalí Theatre-Museum*, well into his late career in 1985.¹⁵ This maintained relationship with the mathematical and scientific field echoes the case-study use of the work *Corpus Hypercubus* throughout the literature featured in this section. The author explains that Dalí’s use of science in an artistic and theatrical manner particularly is for the means of unveiling mysteries of creation, especially associating DNA with immortality, quoting the artist’s assertion to James D. Watson that “DNA proves the existence of God.”¹⁶

¹² López del Rincón, Daniel. “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí.” *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

¹³ p.4 López del Rincón, Daniel. “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí.” *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

¹⁴ P.1-2 López del Rincón, Daniel. “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí.” *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

¹⁵ p.4 López del Rincón, Daniel. “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí.” *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

¹⁶ Pp.5-6 López del Rincón, Daniel. “La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí.” *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

Art Historical Applications of Scientific and Mathematical Theory in Context

Daniel López del Rincón in addition cites art historian Gavin Parkinson's proposition that Dalí's relationship to science, especially physics, responds to artistic reasons and derives not directly from a line initiated by Romanticism and continued by Symbolism, but rather reflecting the importance gained in Paris, France in 1919, of physics theories, especially those of Albert Einstein.¹⁷ This proposes an art-historical justification behind the coherence in experimentation with scientific concepts in art.

Gavin Parkinson's book, *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science*¹⁸ focuses particularly on the notion that not only the origins of Surreal movement, but also of Dalí's early works within the group, have always engaged with emerging scientific theories. Einsteinian theory and relativity imagery adopted by Breton in pre-manifesto writing of 1926¹⁹ attests for this. Parkinson argues "just as the origin of Breton's theory of the poetic marvelous is found adjacent to relativity in his 1921 text on Ernst, so, too, the theory and practice of Dalí's principle 'method' of paranoia-criticism [...] dates from the time during which he was gaining inspiration from Einsteinian theory."²⁰ Manifested visually, according to Parkinson's visual analysis, in the elongated Surrealistic images of his early works.²¹ The text also illustrates an early debate on the correct application of science within Surrealism, using the writings of Caillois – who departed from the group in the early 1930s – based on disagreement with the Surrealists "preservation of 'poetic' mystery for its own sake, when, in his view, research into the irrational required a

¹⁷ p.5 López del Rincón, Daniel. "La Biología Molecular En La Trayectoria Artística de Salvador Dalí." *Archivo Español de Arte* 89 (December): 395.2016 <https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2016.26>.

¹⁸ Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

¹⁹ pp.178-9 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

²⁰ p.183 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

²¹ Pp.183-5 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

rigorous ‘scientific’ methodology.”²² Another discrepancy between Surrealist treatment is present at the onset of Nuclear Physics as subject matter, where Dalí – already facing political controversy with the group – insists that Surrealism should progress towards a new type of materialistic religion, contrary to Breton’s warning against the creation of a new ‘religion of science’ among the movement.²³ Ultimately, the debates illustrate the methodological and theoretical issues in the merging of the fields, and association with Surrealism as a unified artistic practice, rather than an individual practice, as Dalí’s. Finally the drastic conflict of post-war Dalí and the Surrealists is evident in Dalí’s 1958 exhibition at M. Knoedler & Co. Gallery in New York titled “Antimatter Archangels and Celestial Visions” simultaneous to the Surrealists’ Paris “Expose the Physicists, Empty the Laboratories” critical of the development of weapons in the hands of governments using such science.²⁴

The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean geometry is the central subject to art historian Linda Dalrymple Henderson’s article²⁵ exploring the presence of these concepts in modern art as a whole, as well as Dalí’s work. Firstly, Henderson traces the use of mathematical concepts such as that of the fourth dimension in the wider context of the history of art, implying Dalí’s use of it in works such as *Corpus Hypercubus* as part of a line of developments and experimentation in modern art –similarly to Parkinson’s argument– albeit expanding beyond Surrealism itself.

²² p.187 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

²³ p.201 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

²⁴ p.214 Parkinson, Gavin. *Surrealism, Art, and Modern Science : Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2008

²⁵ Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

In summary, she argues the fourth dimension was concerned in “nearly every movement”²⁶ from 1900-1930. Though by the 1920s, displaced largely by Einsteinian Relativity Theory, it continued to be of concern to the French Surrealists— continued by Breton and the Surrealists into the 1930s and 1940s along with non-Euclidean geometry.²⁷ Though the author does not cite Dalí’s contact with such groups at this point, the acknowledgement of such experimentation in the wider scope of Surrealism, before Dalí’s own *Nuclear Mysticism* suggests his post-war practice as influenced and developed out of a much larger tradition that reaches into his early works and environment. The author describes the fourth dimension and non-Euclidean geometry as “[signifying] a new freedom from the tyranny of established laws” and a “symbol of liberation for artists”²⁸ due to the acknowledgment of relativity and “alternative kinds of space.”²⁹

Such concepts were used on one hand as “an important impetus to create a totally abstract art”³⁰ yet on the other hand identified with gravity, antigravity, spirals, and the “platonic realm of Synthetic Cubism,” and the “tactility of ‘significant form’ ”³¹ by artists that did not totally reject visual experience. In congruence with the various modern movements’ seeking to unleash art by exploring new language, experimentation, and a variety of interpretations while accommodating “differing proportions of geometry and mysticism as well as space and time.”³² Especially in

²⁶ P.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

²⁷ p.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

²⁸ p.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

²⁹ p.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³⁰ p.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³¹ p.205 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³² p.206 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

terms of Surrealism, the author emphasizes its interest in “deep space,” that the new geometries reflected Breton’s “arguments for a new ‘Surreality’, ” when combined with Eistentinian theory, adding a temporal element to the fourth dimension, rather than replacing it, as well as a “distrust for the exterior world” inherited by the symbolists.³³ In addition to Freud’s theory of the unconscious mind, the author outlines that Breton’s thinking largely reflects the ideas of the geometries, and he was “actively interested in spiritualism and mysticism as means of communication with the unconscious”³⁴ to the extent of such theories being used in Surrealism’s attack on reason and logic in 1966.³⁵

Arriving at Dalí, early works such as *Persistence of Memory* (1931) are related to his engagement with the same theories. Although the author cites Dalí as one of the very few artists who continued this interest in the “traditional fourth dimension of space” into the 1950s, and 1960s, including his *Corpus Hypercubus* which “in his mind [...] was the culmination of Lulio's manipulation of two-dimensional forms and the three-dimensional researches Herrera presented in his manuscript treatise ‘Discurso de la Figura Cubic.’”³⁶

Needless to say, this study contradicts Dalí’s portrayal of an entirely new and individualistic artistic persona and practice combined with religion/tradition as an explicit break from his past work and Surrealistic applications (though it does not address the later religious realm, nor the manner in which political associations were at odds with his particular practice

³³ P.206 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³⁴ p.206 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³⁵ p.206 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

³⁶ p.208 Henderson, Linda Dalrymple. "The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art: Conclusion." *Leonardo* 17, no. 3 (1984) <https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5547945261>

juxtaposed with the greater Surrealist movement, to be observed in the final section of this chapter).

Henderson's article situates Dalí as both in dialogue with roots stemming from various modern art movements of the twentieth century, while also acknowledging his divergent treatment and reinterpretation of such theories late into his career.

Similarly to Henderson's approach, as well as Parkinson's argument of Surrealist roots, expert in modern and contemporary art, Michael R. Taylor, in his article, "God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí's Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting,"³⁷ presents an outline of a larger *Nuclear Art Movement*, where Dalí's work can be contextualized with art-historical roots and his contemporaries. As seen in Henderson's article, Dalí's use of mathematics and physics, and engagement with emerging theories was not done in isolation and had been a part of Surrealist interest since the movement's conception. Though Dalí claims his newfound interest in applying nuclear physics and molecular chemistry in response to the atomic bomb and bombing on Hiroshima, calling himself "the first painter of the atomic age" in 1951,³⁸ this article stands to contest that using historical evidence and activities of his contemporaries and controversies.

While Dalí's use of nuclear science is optimistic; the explosion and changes in matter as allegory for spiritual transformation³⁹ and his taking on a role of a 'mystic' of the likes of Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross "who could use his ecstatic mystical reveries to

³⁷ Taylor, Michael R. "God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí's Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting" in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

³⁸ p.1 Taylor, Michael R. "God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí's Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting" in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

³⁹ p.3 Taylor, Michael R. "God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí's Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting" in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

imaginatively interpret the latest scientific advances.”⁴⁰ Taylor contrasts this with a parallel movement of *Nuclear Mysticism* such as that founded in Milan by Enrico Baj and his peers in the 1950s, taking a drastically apocalyptic view.⁴¹ This parallel movement by his contemporaries and its opposing treatment of such theories greatly problematizes—such as the previous article does—the common study in literature of this era of Dalí’s work as individualistic and in isolation. Not only this, but as Taylor outlines the various legal controversy Dalí faced by his claims of being the first Nuclear painter, by Baj,⁴² who argues for many of his own Nuclear paintings created in the 1950s, before Dalí’s presentation of himself as an overtly nuclear painter, though Taylor points out his false assumption that at the time, he had not yet painted any nuclear works, and of Dalí’s *Mystical Manifesto* of 1951.⁴³

Ultimately Taylor does not argue for the pretense of finding the true founder of what is considered Nuclear Painting, although his location of Dalí’s later works along with his contemporaries and historical evidence, like Henderson’s article, serves to simultaneously trace the origins and development of such experimentations in art, but also to question Dalí’s statements claiming ultimate individualistic approach as in part, worthy of analysis as an attempt to present a certain artistic persona—a concept that will follow in further literature.

The article, “Salvador Dalí. Le Mysticisme Nucléaire : Un Moment de Synthèse Entre Science et Religion”⁴⁴ argues for a continuity present in Dalí’s works, regardless of his

⁴⁰ p.4 Taylor, Michael R. “God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí’s Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting” in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

⁴¹ P.4 Taylor, Michael R. “God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí’s Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting” in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

⁴² Pp.5-6 Taylor, Michael R. “God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí’s Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting” in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

⁴³ p.8 Taylor, Michael R. “God and the Atom: Salvador Dalí’s Mystical Manifesto and the Contested Origins of Nuclear Painting” in *The Dalí. Avant-garde Studies Issue 2*, Fall 2016

⁴⁴ Corsini, Marina. “Salvador Dalí. Le Mysticisme Nucléaire : Un Moment de Synthèse Entre Science et Religion,” January.2020

announcement of becoming ‘classic’ circa 1947, such as the following; use of *Paranoiac Critical Method*, references to Old Masters, interest in contemporary events, and the use of his wife Gala as model both visually and conceptually.⁴⁵ The *Paranoiac Critical* approach, coined in Dalí’s 1930 Surrealist years, is related by the author to his ‘new’ Nuclear Works as well, because the method allows him to understand hidden forces and laws.⁴⁶ Pertaining to *Corpus Hypercubus*, the author interprets that Dalí recognises the hypercube-invented by American architect and theories of the fourth dimension Claude Bragdon, a concept used to view time and space as either absolute or distinct dimensions that are yet interdependent, resulting in an image where Christ is no longer corpuscular or atomic, but immersed in the chronotope, which could be conceived as this metaphysical unifying factor of space and time.⁴⁷ This reading also reinforces the notion that ultimately there is continuity with Dalí’s Surrealist practice past, and experimentation with science in art history.

A major retrospective exhibition of Dalí’s works was held at The Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2005, which featured a symposium on his post-1940 works titled *The Dalí Renaissance* that is prefaced by scholar Michael R. Taylor in its accompanying publication.⁴⁸ The symposium

https://www.academia.edu/42805965/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD_Le_mysticisme_nucl%C3%A9aire_un_moment_de_synth%C3%A8se_entre_sciences_et_religion.

⁴⁵ p.2 Corsini, Marina. “Salvador Dalí. Le Mysticisme Nucléaire : Un Moment de Synthèse Entre Science et Religion,” January.2020

https://www.academia.edu/42805965/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD_Le_mysticisme_nucl%C3%A9aire_un_moment_de_synth%C3%A8se_entre_sciences_et_religion.

⁴⁶ p.3 Corsini, Marina. “Salvador Dalí. Le Mysticisme Nucléaire : Un Moment de Synthèse Entre Science et Religion,” January.2020

https://www.academia.edu/42805965/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD_Le_mysticisme_nucl%C3%A9aire_un_moment_de_synth%C3%A8se_entre_sciences_et_religion.

⁴⁷ p.4 Corsini, Marina. “Salvador Dalí. Le Mysticisme Nucléaire : Un Moment de Synthèse Entre Science et Religion,” January.2020

https://www.academia.edu/42805965/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD_Le_mysticisme_nucl%C3%A9aire_un_moment_de_synth%C3%A8se_entre_sciences_et_religion.

⁴⁸ Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

aims to reconsider the legacy of his post-war production “which had previously been overlooked or unfairly dismissed as commercial kitsch.”⁴⁹

The author evaluates the motivators in Dalí’s change of practice. These include a war-induced fear of the imminent collapse of Western civilization, resulting in an aim for regeneration and renewal as an artist.⁵⁰ A deeper appreciation for the art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque encouraged by his visits between 1937-8, with especially an interest in artists Raphael, Piero di Cosimo, Piero della Francesca, Palladio, Bramante, Leonardo da Vinci.⁵¹ His meeting with Freud July 19, 1938 and Freud’s quote on classic art better revealing the unconscious.⁵² The Atomic Bomb explosion in Hiroshima, August 1945, leading him to seek Nuclear Physics applied to painting, as is described by Parkinson.⁵³ Finally, as described in an interview Dalí reveals that a combination of the post-war political situation, latest advances in science and technology, led him to embrace Renaissance painting stating “there comes a time when you have to stop experimenting and begin to realize. Constant experimentation is sterility. Surrealist experiment no less than any other kind.”⁵⁴

Using these events, Taylor argues that:

It would be a mistake to regard Dalí’s renewed interest in the Catholic faith as a reactionary move away from earlier interests in modern art. His embrace of spirituality and his related efforts to reinvigorate modern painting through the techniques and religious imagery of the Italian Renaissance were inextricably linked with his understanding of recent scientific discoveries, most notably atomic energy and particle physics.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Pp.1-2 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵⁰ P.4 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵¹ P.5 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵² P.5 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵³ P.6 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵⁴ P.7 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

⁵⁵ P.8 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Therefore, as the other authors in this section prove both a legitimate engagement with various contemporary events and theories present in art history and in the scientific field, Taylor further emphasizes that it is a mistake to consider the work commercial kitsch. On *Corpus Hypercubus*, he quotes Dalí: “the first painting whose conception is genuinely based on cubist elements unfolding in the fourth dimension.”⁵⁶ In addition, its scale reflects the scale of works of Dalí’s contemporaries such as Pollock and Rothko, and the author theorizes that the reason behind his lack of commissions, despite making religious art of such a scale, is for the possible controversy that would have come along with his image, rather than of the paintings themselves on a conceptual level. This controversy and artistic persona, as a factor in the questioning of Dalí’s post-war sincerity Taylor further investigates in the preface of this retrospective, as will be explored in the last section of this chapter.

Renaissance, Baroque and Religion

Another major theme in literature, utilizes art historical context to trace Dalí’s references to the Spanish Baroque, and to Christinity in his post-war era to ‘become classic.’ The artists track continuity in an attempt to find his original sources and their relation to his Surrealist past, to argue for legitimacy intellectually and in practice despite the entanglements with a manipulated post-war artistic persona, and a stern self proclaimed 'break' from the art and artistic identity of his past.

⁵⁶ P.9 Taylor Michael R. 2008. *The Dalí Renaissance New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940 : An International Symposium*. Philadelphia PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Jonathan Wallis, and his article, "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí."⁵⁷ proposes an insight into the legitimacy debate of the honesty and intention behind Dalí's era of mysticism, by outlining the direct and substantial engagement with such content and theories. Firstly, the encounter with the works of sixteenth-century Spanish mystic and Saint John of the Cross, whose ideas were probably introduced to him by a French Carmelite Monk, the author proposes heavily influenced the artists more than what is usually stated.⁵⁸ Apart from the drawing of the Crucified Christ by the saint done in ecstasy (figure 4) which is frequently cited as influence for his work *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* (figure 5), the author relates the idea of Spanish artist-mystic, personal mythical prophecy (through Dalí's alternative claim that the composition came to him in a dream) to Dalí's own claims and artistic identity formation during its conception. Further, Wallis relates the Saint's texts such as a diagram of an ascent to Mount Carmel in his *The Dark Night of the Soul* as a probable source of the composition of elements in Dalí's *Assumpta Corpuscularia Lapislazulina* albeit 'transformed' through his *Paranoiac-Critical* mysticism in his role of modern mystic updating it with new scientific theories.⁵⁹ The author relates biographical elements of Saint John's life to Dalí's such as the loss of a brother, jailing due to 'inciting opposition', being thrown away by his carmelite brothers (and Dalí's Surrealist group), and a return to earlier religious piety with the guidance of the nun Saint Teresa of Avila (with Dalí's return to classicism with Gala as a model of the Madonna) which Wallis insists must have been

⁵⁷ Wallis, Jonathan. "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí." *The Dalí Renaissance: New Perspectives on His Life and Art after 1940*. An International Symposium. Ed. Michael R. Taylor. Philadelphia, 2008

⁵⁸ p.38 Wallis, Jonathan. "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí." *The Dalí Renaissance: New Perspectives on His Life and Art after 1940*. An International Symposium. Ed. Michael R. Taylor. Philadelphia, 2008

⁵⁹ p.41 Wallis, Jonathan. "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí." *The Dalí Renaissance: New Perspectives on His Life and Art after 1940*. An International Symposium. Ed. Michael R. Taylor. Philadelphia, 2008

realized by the artists himself when finding inspiration in his work and persona. Further, the assertion of the monk who exposed Dalí to him, that ‘Saint John also expressed himself in the language of Surrealism’ is cited as evidence of the close interaction that Dalí had. Saint John’s texts pertaining to the transformations of the soul towards God are also linked by Wallis to Dalí’s own artistic journey that must have been intentional; Saint John’s first, active, night relating to sensual aspects of the soul, and Dalí’s sacrilegious and sensual Surrealist years; and Saint John’s second, passive, night, of purification to Dalí’s new mystical self.⁶⁰ Wallis takes this parallel even further and relates the presence of night in Dalí’s Crucifixion depictions of the 1950s as related to such a theme,⁶¹ ultimately including *Corpus Hypercubus* in this reading, as it is suspended in ambiguous night. Dalí’s statement on *Corpus Hypercubus* and the process of painting it as a journey towards purification, is also used by the author to reinforce this parallel, seeing the work as not just an artistic and theoretical experimentation but also a active part of the mystical persona and ‘journey’ Dalí was constructing. Finally, Wallis also relates this era to Dalí associating with Christ himself, more so the “idea of the Christ Child as the reborn Dalí” in his works, led by the Madonna-Gala-a theme worth considering.

William Jeffett’s chapter on “Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez⁶²” addresses the conventional religious images/themes and inspirations from artists of the Spanish Baroque, which he combines with the pictorial language of Surrealism. The probable contact with many works of the Spanish Golden Age is justified through the publications that

⁶⁰ P.44-45 Wallis, Jonathan. "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí." *The Dalí Renaissance: New Perspectives on His Life and Art after 1940*. An International Symposium. Ed. Michael R. Taylor. Philadelphia, 2008

⁶¹ P.45 Wallis, Jonathan. "Holy Toledo! Saint John of the Cross, Paranoiac-Critical Mysticism, and the Life and Work of Saint Dalí." *The Dalí Renaissance: New Perspectives on His Life and Art after 1940*. An International Symposium. Ed. Michael R. Taylor. Philadelphia, 2008

⁶² Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

would have been available at Madrid's Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando which Dalí attended and various Spanish collections, and in his student days his articles on Old Masters painting on El Greco and Velásquez, "reveal an enthusiastic reading of Baroque painting and its social context within counter-reformation spirituality, as well as the more secular political life of the Madrid Court."⁶³

Dalí's reassessment of the Baroque is also contextualized by the author within a paralleled occurrence of modern thought especially in Spain's literary avant garde,⁶⁴ rather than in isolation or break in his practice, as well as finding connection between Surrealism's embrace of El Greco, Murillo, Ribera and Velásquez, Zurbarán, as representation of an "antimodern critique of modern art and its formalism."⁶⁵

The author argues that Dalí's fascination with the baroque predated Surrealism, using evidence of his still lives, his early education, his self-identification with the image of St. Sebastian, interest in Spanish Catholicism, and particularly the Christ of Velásquez .

Dalí's engagement with the *Vanitas*-or Still Life- subjects in earlier works⁶⁶ is the first category of subjects Jeffet uses as evidence of Dalí's engagement with the Baroque, as the genre, and more specifically his *Basket of Bread* (1926) as an example, "recalls the attempts by seventeenth-century Spanish painters to represent the palpable materiality of ordinary objects not

⁶³ P.4 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁶⁴ p.1 he cites Dalí's inspirations as Baroque artists of Spain's Golden Age (Alonso Cano, Sánchez Cotán, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera, Diego Velázquez, and Francisco Zurbarán) and Dalí's position in the Baroque identified with writers: progressive literary avant-gardes in Spain (José Bergamín Guillermo Díaz-Plaja, and Ramón Gómez de la Serna) and with parallel philosophical tendencies (Eugenio d'Ors and José Ortega y Gasset).

⁶⁵ p.2 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁶⁶ Jeffet uses the example of "*Basket of Bread*" on page 4, "*Still Life (Pulpo y Scorpa)*" (1922) on page 5, and "*Still Life (Fish with Bread)* (1923-24) on page 5 "*Eggs on a Plate without a Plate*" (1932) on page 5, "*Catalan Bread*" (1932) in page 5,

so much through realism but through the evocation of their sensation presence.”⁶⁷ Jeffett reads spiritual reference in the symbolic use of bread and textile as “body of Christ and the ephemeral nature of material reality”⁶⁸ and draws likeness between Dalí’s still lifes of everyday objects to Velásquez’s early kitchen scenes.⁶⁹ Further, the Baroque concept of *Vanitas*, and the use of skulls and watches as *Memento Mori*, is spotted in various works,⁷⁰ sometimes even merged with Freudian issues of sexuality and death⁷¹. Mortality is further linked to portraiture.⁷² The author’s assertion points to a close engagement between Baroque issues of mortality merged with Freudian tones that is coherent throughout his corpus of works. The concept of *Memento Mori* is reapplied outside of the still-life format as symbolic devices mediated through emerging scientific and mathematical theories in later works.⁷³ Ultimately, Jeffett’s argument of this recurring theme encourages the analysis of mortality and time through the lens of simultaneous Baroque ideas, Freudian ideas, scientific theory, and identity.

Focusing on depictions of martyr Saint Sebastian, and both Dalí and Federico Garcia Lorca’s identification with him as a concept since the 1920s – despite the Saint’s popularity

⁶⁷ P.4 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁶⁸ P.5 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁶⁹ p.5 *Still Life (Pulpo y Scorpa)* (1922) and “*Still Life (Fish with Bread)*” (1923-24) are compared to Velásquez for their painterly quality and simple subject

⁷⁰ p.5 the skull-like form of the stale bread is related to Antonio de Pereda’s “*Vanitas*” (1640-50) in its ambiguous skull-like form, and simultaneously staleness is read as the “precariousness of life” resulting in an encoded *Memento Mori* as well as in “*Catalan Bread*”(1932) where bread suggestive of the eucharist is wedded to a soft watch

⁷¹ p.6, for example, Jeffett suggests this because of the phallic form in “*Catalan Bread*” (1932), and again in “*Fantasies diurnes*” (1932) where the anamorphic visual device derived from the Baroque includes ‘great masturbator’ embedded within the jewel of the anamorphic skull revealing an identification with it psychologically

⁷² p.6, where it is described that *Myself at the Age of Ten When I Was The Grasshopper Child* shows the young Dalí’s head transforming into a skull

⁷³ pp.6-7, *The Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory* (1952-54) is interpreted as *memento mori* through soft watches, distorted “great masturbator” portrait, presented through Heisenberg’s quantum theory; and *Nature Morte Vivante (Still Life-Fast Moving)* (1956) uses geometry of Cotán and Juan van der Hamen y Leon and Heisenberg’s theory stands for spiritual transformation etc

among Baroque artists – Jeffett brings attention to Dalí’s efforts to modernize the Saint in his writings, associating the Saint’s frequent nude depictions to irony, stoic acceptance of pain, and “palpable presence of suffering” and the “corporeality of the human body.”⁷⁴ The combination of bodiliness and spiritual elements can recall Jeffett’s *Vanitas* reading, and easily fit into Surrealistic themes as well, as is done by the next author.

Jeffett’s analyses of Dalí’s religious paintings of Crucifixion and Immaculate Conception, not only reveal explicit Spanish Baroque and Catholic themes, but of probable self-identification to the highest degree. The first *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* is described to recall Spanish Golden-Age depictions of the same subject by artists “who stripped away the narrative anecdote of earlier treatments [...] removing witnesses [...] confronting the viewer with immediacy of Christ’s death.”⁷⁵ The “palpable sense of reality” that Jeffett uses to describe Dalí’s spiritually-encoded Still Lives, is used to describe this work as well; for its dramatic lighting and sculptural treatment.⁷⁶ The atmosphere created is thus compared to traditionalist writer Miguel Unamuno’s poem on *El Cristo de Velázquez* (appendix) and his assertions on its particular expression of Spanish Catholicism.⁷⁷ Due to Dalí’s own accounts of seeing the painting (figure 6) in his childhood⁷⁸ and the proximity of their visual atmospheres, Jeffett suggests Dalí sought to achieve a similar effect in his *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* and later *Corpus*

⁷⁴ P.8 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁷⁵ P.9 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁷⁶ P.9 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁷⁷ Pp.9-10 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁷⁸ p.10 referring to Dalí’s “Unspeakable Confessions”

Hypercubus.⁷⁹ The author also relates influences on the subject from El Greco,⁸⁰ but a more explicit adoption of language from Murillo, Velásquez, and Zurbarán in his own works⁸¹ based on Dalí's own claims, especially his praise of Velásquez and Zurbarán's merge of "realism and mysticism" into "pure reality" or the "absolute visual imperialism" [of Velásquez] implying, according to Jeffett, of a naturalism that promotes faith.⁸²

Corpus Hypercubus is analyzed further for the implications of using Gala, as a model for the Virgin⁸³, a recurring theme in later works such as *The Madonna of Port Lligat* (figure 7) *The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus* (figure 8), but also as Saint Helena in some works.⁸⁴ Jeffett uses the line of reasoning that just as Gala can be cast as the virgin, it can be considered that Dalí can cast himself as Christ, since the view in *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* is above, from the painter's perspective, equivalent to the omniscient perspective of God, and the casting of Dalí as a penitent Monk in the earlier *The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus*, is reversed as Gala is in the penitent role, albeit similar pose in *Corpus Hypercubus*.⁸⁵ Referencing another scholar –Natalia Shiou Yun Fang– whose argument that the blank piece of paper in the place of the traditional I.N.R.I inscription on *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, quotes Velásquez's *Surrender at Breda*, is used as a 'trompe l'oeil calling

⁷⁹ P.10 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, *Corpus Hypercubus*, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁸⁰ p.10, he quotes Dalí in his *Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* where he praises the "spectral aspect of the Christ of El Greco" as reflective of an elevated Mediterranean Catholicism-recalling Unamáo's similar statements on Velásquez's Spanish Catholicism

⁸¹ p.10 he quotes Dalí again

⁸² P.11 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, *Corpus Hypercubus*, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁸³ Some sources also associate her as Mary Magdalene, not the Virgin Mary, in this particular work

⁸⁴ p.11 works such as *Saint Helena of Port Lligat*

⁸⁵ P.11 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, *Corpus Hypercubus*, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

card/cartellino' that represents the artist, reveals an identification of Dalí with both Christ, and with Velásquez .⁸⁶

Jeffett furthers the argument for Dalí's identification with Velásquez in an artistic-persona sense through evidence of deliberate appearance (Dalí's characteristic mustache),⁸⁷ explicit quotations from Velásquez' works,⁸⁸ and statements praising him as the "greatest pictorial genius of all time"⁸⁹ and expressed admiration for the artist throughout his career. Jeffett ultimately suggests that the modeling of himself after the artist suggested he too, wanted to be noble,⁹⁰ suggesting a further study into Dalí's artistic persona and mythology is further to be done.

Miguel Escribano's doctoral thesis, "Dalí's Religious Models: the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation"⁹¹ focuses specifically on the notion that there is a continuous use of religious iconography to represent themes conceptualized through Surrealism and psychoanalysis through Dalí's works. Escribano takes an art historical approach in his thesis to trace the references and inspirations Dalí took from the history of art and how he incorporated them into his Surrealist practice - particularly religious references of the Baroque – the author argues that the theme of self-referential mythology and subjects like the self (as a sexual and

⁸⁶ P.12 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁸⁷ P.16 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁸⁸ p.17 such as in Dalí's *Velázquez Painting the Infanta Margarita with the Lights and Shadows of His Own Glory* of 1958

⁸⁹ P.18 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁹⁰ P.22 Jeffett, William. *Dalí and the Spanish Baroque: From Still Life to Velázquez*. William Jeffett, Corpus Hypercubus, Sánchez Cotán Cano, El Greco, Blas de Ledesma, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera Avant-garde, 1, 2016

⁹¹ Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models: the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex. 2011. 2012

mortal entity) present in psychoanalytical realm, is coherent to Dalí's use of religious subjects and as part of a natural development from earlier Surrealist art; utilizing a position on the Baroque influenced theoretically by various thinkers including his friend Lorca. He contrasts Dalí with other Surrealists on the basis that he entered the group with an academic art education, which would have influenced his stray from automatic process in favor of his own Surrealist practice. Escribano considers the art historical knowledge of Dalí – including various publications which primary sources prove Dalí accessed from an early age – as an archive of images and knowledge he can access and reinterpret with personal associations in Surrealist modes.⁹²

He takes this wide historical lens further yet in condensing theoretically, Dalí's periods in his works that explore the 'self' (in a manner seemingly compromising Surreal psychoanalysis and religious narrative) into self identification with St. Sebastian, St. Jerome, and most significantly with Christ in order to argue for "authenticity of Dalí's motivation and the sturdy theoretical basis of these works."⁹³

Saint Sebastian is analyzed as “represent[ing] the problem of the self as a physiological entity, confronted with the knowledge of mortality”⁹⁴ and related to Dalí's initial reticence to religious subjects as reflective of his “personal incapacity to abandon himself to his emotions.”⁹⁵ Despite no painted representations of the saint by Dalí, leaving only drawings, Escribano uses examples of “indirect portraiture” that reflect the Saint's predicament, of the “vulnerability of the

⁹² P.1-3 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹³ P.205 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹⁴ P.260 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹⁵ P.260 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

sexual and mortal body.”⁹⁶ Dalí’s conception of the Saint, is seen through his dialogue with Federico García Lorca in the 1920s, referring to the Saint as “Blessed Objectivity” (a concept also influenced by Eugeni d’Ors) as “Sebastian’s resilience against the temptation to abandon himself to the senses stands for an aesthetic resilience, so that emotive themes, such as death, sexuality and beauty, that unavoidably underlie all creative expression – as Dalí was reading in Freud and his interpreters – may best be represented dispassionately.”⁹⁷ Referring to traditional examples, Escribano asserts that the wholly human sacrifice of St. Sebastian that differs from that of Christ, may have made the subject so popular as the Saint’s struggle could serve to represent more personal than theological concerns of the artist or patron.”⁹⁸ This is evident through Dalí’s modern reinterpretation of the Saint, using personal and Surrealistic themes.

Saint Jerome, a penitent Saint depicted often meditating on mortality with a skull or crucifix, cultural production, or transcription into a vulgate Bible, is interpreted by Escribano as representing contemplative mind, when used as subject by Dalí, identifying with the artist’s own aim to "give meaningful form to mental representations.”⁹⁹

Finally, Dalí’s depictions of Christ are interpreted in terms of the "transcendence of the problem of mortality and sexuality of the body, through faith in the meaning of one’s life" in close dialogue with psychoanalytical theories of meaningful living, assessed through the lens of

⁹⁶ P.10 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹⁷ P.40 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹⁸ P.25 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

⁹⁹ P.260 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

the Biblical myth of life death and ascension of Christ¹⁰⁰ paralleled with the artist's own life narrative he constructed in this era.

In the representation of Christ in *Corpus Hypercubus*, Escribano uses Dalí's frequent naming of the Spanish Baroque painter Zurbarán in his mystical period as being evident through Gala's quiet contemplation paralleling the artist's ascetic images and iconography of the contemplation of death.¹⁰¹ Where *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* presents an isolated immediacy with Christ's death¹⁰² *Corpus Hypercubus* instead is read by the author as an image in which Gala becomes as much of a protagonist as Christ, as instead of simply Mary, "positioned as contemplative mystic rather than mourner,"¹⁰³ reinforcing these tendencies.

Unamuno's second poem on *The Christ of Velázquez* (appendix) is also cited as reflected in the work, probably accessed by Dalí through Lorca, as a "quietistic and tragic mysticism proper to the contemplation of Christ Crucified"¹⁰⁴ which would have influenced Dalí's reading of Velásquez ' work and added an introspective form of mystic contemplation. The sense of introspection that Unamuno describes in Velásquez' Christ, Escribano seeks in Dalí's hiding of Christ's face in *Corpus Hypercubus*, while displaying his "mortal and sexual body" meant to be examined beyond the surface.¹⁰⁵ Examining the theme of the body further, the author relates the body of *Christ in Christ of Saint John of the Cross* as, like St. Sebastian, one that awaits death

¹⁰⁰ P.260 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰¹ P.229 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰² P.230 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰³ P.230 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰⁴ P.230 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰⁵ P.225 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí's Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

unharméd, with thoughts inwards¹⁰⁶ and that the beauty of the body in works such as *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, may reflect the transcendence beyond tragic condition.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the idealistic body of Christ in both works, aiming for ‘perfection’ reflects Lorca’s promotion of “powerful Christs, [...] without wounds, very pale and heavy”¹⁰⁸ which Dalí would have had discourse on.

The study uses extensive reference to themes of the self that would be found within Surrealist thought, involving psychoanalysis and identity formation combined with art historical references. Where Jeffett’s previous article treats references to the Spanish Baroque as proof of continuity in Dalí’s practice and self approximation to the masters, Escribano’s approach ties Dalí’s use of such themes as more strongly psychoanalytical, based off of the author’s own visual analysis combined with biographical evidence, and a combination of Baroque, and Freudian thought. The focus on the body as a theme that fits both Baroque and Catholic sensibilities as well as Surrealistic, and the narratives of mortality and transcendence, are especially provocative.

David Lomas’s article “Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo”¹⁰⁹ approaches the subject of post-war Dalí – using the example of *Leda Atomica*, an early example of his atomic painting – and references to Leonardo da Vinci’s work and artistic persona. This article engages with Renaissance references, but also with the concept of the Renaissance Man.

¹⁰⁶ P.225 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰⁷ P.225 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰⁸ P.222 Escribano, Miguel. *Dalí’s Religious Models:/ the Iconography of Martyrdom and its Contemplation*. A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD: Department of Art History and Theory: University of Essex.201. 2012

¹⁰⁹ Lomas, David, “Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo”_pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Dalí's 1948 *50 Secrets of Magic Craftsmanship* is identified by Lomas as a direct reference to Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting*, where the studies for Dalí's *Leda Atomica* (figure 9 –note this work is a precursor for the composition of *The Madonna of Port Lligat*), also reference Leonardo's lost *Leda and the Swan*.¹¹⁰ Lomas attributes Dalí's display of the *Leda Atomica* painting unfinished in order for viewers to see the technique, as a further indicator of his desire to mimic the draftsmanship and skills of Renaissance masters such as Leonardo.¹¹¹ Dalí's desire to "restore painting to its former status" and various articles such as "The Great Masters of Painting" of 1919, not only reveal his attention to Renaissance exemplars but also that the interest existed during and before his Surrealist years as well.¹¹²

Another point of continuous engagement with Renaissance themes that Lomas emphasizes is that of the revered Surrealist text of Freud's psychoanalytic novel "Leonardo da Vinci and A Memory of His Childhood" (1910) concluding that Dalí could be aligned with the double nature of artist and scientist, while also paying attention to Freud's psychoanalytical interpretation of Renaissance art.¹¹³ Further, Lomas argues that Dalí's relationship with Gala as his muse, especially for religious art, reflects Freud's interpretation of Leonardo, using Oedipal themes, and aligning both Leonardo and Dalí as identifying with Christ in their images.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ P.154 Lomas, David, "Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo", pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹¹¹ P.153 Lomas, David, "Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo", pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹¹² Pp.155-6 Lomas, David, "Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo", pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹¹³ P.157 Lomas, David, "Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo", pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹¹⁴ P.160 Lomas, David, "Painting is Dead: Long Live Painting. Notes on Dalí and Leonardo", pp.153-189 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Artistic Persona, Personal Narrative, and their Associated Controversies

Another instance of Dalí identifying with both Christ, and of Velásquez (figure 10) –as has been cited as an exemplar– is in Jeffett’s chapter “Publicity, Popaganda, Provocation: Dalí’s Mustache in the Press” in *Salvador Dalí: The Late Works*,¹¹⁵ He discusses Dalí’s invented public persona with the increasing size of his mustache, which by 1952 “had taken on the proportions of those found in Velásquez portraits of Philip IV.”¹¹⁶ Ultimately, “The transformation of Dalí into pure image, aided by the mustache, is further evident in Francesc Català-Roca’s *Dalí and Hypercube*, where the mustachioed Dalí adopts the pose of Christ.”¹¹⁷ (figure 11)

Professor of Art History and Salvador Dalí scholar Elliott H. King’s article "Winged Fantasy with Lead Feet: The Influence of Llullism and Hiparxiologi on Dalí's Mysticism"¹¹⁸ outlines the artist's politics and interweaves them into the traditional philosophies of Llullism and Catalan Hiparxiologi and cites the given visual evidence in his works. The author argues therefore that there exists a “genuine ideological structure” and aims to relate the foundations of Dalí’s mysticism and later works to –the philosopher, and close friend/ mentor– Francesc Pujols’s ideas and specifically his chronicling of the mystic Ramon Llull’s works which Dalí must have been in contact with. The author sees both sincere understanding and application, as well as continuity and congruence between his practices and activities.

¹¹⁵ Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹¹⁶ P.120 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹¹⁷ P.120 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹¹⁸ King, Elliott H. "Winged Fantasy with Lead Feet: The Influence of Llullism and Hiparxiologi on Dalí's Mysticism." *Persistence and Memory: New Critical Perspectives on Dalí at the Centennial*. Ed. Hank Hine, William Jeffett, and Kelly Reynolds. St. Petersburg, Fla., 2004

In response to Dalí's claims to be 'apolitical to the highest degree and spiritually monarchist' in the midst of expulsion from Surrealism and its Communist party relations, and Dalí's extensive political controversy in Franco's Spain, the author indicates how the stance he claims to 'aristocracy of the spirit' and for the bourgeois to be 'replaced vertically' in an abstract and spiritual sense, relates to the Lullian concept of a religious hierarchy and the ontological ladder illustrated in his *Ars Magna*, accessed through Pujols.¹¹⁹ The author argues Dalí likely already knew of Lull previously and that he may have interacted with such concepts in his Surrealist years of 1930s, echoing Henderson's article of the roots of Dalí's post-war works stemming from experimentations already occurring, albeit in different manners, in his earlier Surrealist circles. King cites Lullism and Pujols interpretation as explicit and direct precedent of Dalí's mystical activities however, reinventing himself as a mystic and successor. Pertaining to *Corpus Hypercubus* in particular, the author adds the assertion that Lullism was a fitting lens, not only for its Catalan roots, but its popularity in the Renaissance aimed to combine Christian beliefs with Jewish Kabbalah, similarly to Dalí's combination of Christian beliefs to modern science. This reading has a heavy focus on the formation of artistic identity that Dalí apparently sought to interweave with his post-war era works and individualistic break from the unified Surrealist group. The realm of artistic persona, inevitably raised suspicion of his genuinity, and political controversies from his contemporaries, and yet in further literature.

William Jeffett's *Dalí Doubled: A New Critical View of Dalí*¹²⁰ dedicates two chapters: "Politics" and "The Artist and the Dictator: Dalí and Franco" to outline of Dalí's shifting political associations in correlation with his artistic practices from left-leaning in his Surrealist

¹¹⁹ P.189 King, Elliott H. "Winged Fantasy with Lead Feet: The Influence of Lullism and Hiparxiologi on Dalí's Mysticism." *Persistence and Memory: New Critical Perspectives on Dalí at the Centennial*. Ed. Hank Hine, William Jeffett, and Kelly Reynolds. St. Petersburg, Fla., 2004

¹²⁰ Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

years – incorporated with the Communist party– to his eventual shift towards expulsion from the group, incorporation of religious themes in art, and complacency under Franco’s fascist regime. Though Dalí is seen as capable of rendering works under differing ideological frames.¹²¹ The assertion that his “public embrace of Catholicism seems to have been directly tied to his desire for approval by Franco”¹²² is a stance that leads much of literature to question the sincerity of Dalí’s post-war practices and artistic theory, causing an understudy of his works independent from Surrealism.

Further, as was seen earlier in this thesis chapter, the artist’s attempt to form an artistic persona and practice – parallel with Golden Age exemplars such as Velázquez – can relate to a desire to become a modern day court painter, when he is hired to create Franco’s official portrait for his representation to the US in 1943.¹²³

The chapter titled “The Artist and the Dictator” further details the artists’ public support of Franco, associating many of his choices especially, such as asking for the Pope’s approval of his *The Madonna of Port Lligat* as an action to increase his standing in Spain.¹²⁴ Primary sources of reactions to the artist are also referred to present discourse on his genuinity, most significantly, collector Reynold Morse’s plea that Dalí’s work be understood in the context of Spain’s history, ultimately arguing that Dalí’s stark change was motivated in order to ensure a

¹²¹ Chapter 7 Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

¹²² P.216 Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

¹²³ P.216 Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

¹²⁴ P.219 Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

welcome place, and ability to continue his vocation, in his home country, much to Dalí's anger of such an accusation.¹²⁵

Ian Gibson's *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*¹²⁶ is a biography intertwined with critical observations directly satirizing the artist's autobiography *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*¹²⁷ written in congruence with Dalí's announcement of his new era, the autobiography seeks to announce and construct the artistic persona and personal mythology that Gibson treats with suspicion and a critical narrative tone, treating his proposed theories and persona as provocative sensationalism, and his later works as lacking theoretical or substantial credibility or genuinity. In the chapter titled "A Renegade Surrealist in Franco's Spain (1948-59)" Dalí's religious works are seen as modes to "integrate into church and state" and to convince the public of his Catholicism in a performative manner.¹²⁸ Further, that his development of *Nuclear Mysticism* is seen as to further convince of this, and of mystic tendencies,¹²⁹ which the author points to disappearing after 1952, thus questionable.¹³⁰

Returning to Taylor's "The Dalí Renaissance,"¹³¹ he explores the criticism of Dalí's postwar practice using primary sources interpreted using historical context stating that "harsh condemnation of the motives behind Dalí's large-scale religious paintings must be understood within the context of postwar American formalist criticism, which viewed the artist's work after 1940 as in a state of inexorable decline."¹³² For example, the critic John Canaday's assertion in

¹²⁵ P.224 Jeffett, William, and Salvador Dalí Museum. *Dalí Doubled : From Surrealism to the Self, a New Critical View of Dalí*. St. Petersburg, Fla.: Dalí Museum. 2010.

¹²⁶ Gibson, Ian. *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. London: Faber.1998

¹²⁷ this will be used as a primary course in the second chapter

¹²⁸ P.451 Gibson, Ian. *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. London: Faber.1998

¹²⁹ P.461 Gibson, Ian. *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. London: Faber.1998

¹³⁰ P.470 Gibson, Ian. *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. London: Faber.1998

¹³¹ Taylor, Michael R. 2008. "The Dalí Renaissance" pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³² p. 10 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. "The Dalí Renaissance" pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

1960 that works such as *Crucifixion* and *Last Supper* are “blatant expressions of morbid eroticism [...] the artist has abused the right of sanctuary to the point of sacrilege.”¹³³

In fact, Taylor observes much of the lasting criticism and overlooking of Dalí’s religious works stem from initial reception. For instance, critic Clement Greenberg, in his 1939 essay “The Avant Garde and Kitsch” separated Dalí from contemporaries such as Picasso, Braque, and Mondrian because their “paintings derived their chief inspiration from the medium they worked in, while Dalí represented the process and concepts of his unconscious, which was opposed to the modernism that Greenberg promoted.”¹³⁴ Greenberg further related Dalí’s break from Surrealism in 1944 to fascism, indebted to Breton’s earlier critique of Dalí of “means he used to put himself forward” and practice of “academicism that calls itself classicism.”¹³⁵ This ultimately leads Taylor to conclude that the hostile critical response to Dalí’s post-war works, beginning with 1941 occurred with the Surrealist campaign to discredit him, citing also an exhibition of Dalí and Miro at the MoMA, where Dalí is deliberately represented as the opposition of the modern painter, where his Surrealist years are downplayed and innuendos about fascism emphasized to suggest that Dalí was supportive of fascist politics – which Taylor calls a “false notion.”¹³⁶ The critic Nicolas Calas, close to Breton, had also presented Dalí as especially corrupted and “ideologically changed” towards being “Franco’s stooge.”¹³⁷

Taylor quotes Robert Lubar that attributes Dalí’s construction and promotion of a new artistic persona as a response to the wide array of accusations against him by critics and

¹³³ P.10 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³⁴ P.10 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³⁵ P.10 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³⁶ p.11 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³⁷ p.11 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Surrealists, causing him to “position himself as modernism's counter-muse, its ethical conscience and redeemer” while using his paranoiac-critical method to challenge formalism.¹³⁸

Various attacks on modern art such as in *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, and many articles on the defects of modern painting in the following decades that criticized reductive formalism, lead Taylor to argue that Dalí was inspired by the memoirs of de Chirico; whom he admired since he was a student, and probably saw as a kindred spirit, since de Chirico too, returned to “classical modes” in his metaphysical painting.¹³⁹ Taylor’s observation reveals another engagement with his contemporaries in Dalí’s critique of modern art.

Another element of historical context that Taylor uses to explain the reception of post-war Dalí is that his work of the 1950s was probably seen as a low point because it “coincided with the heyday of Abstract Expressionism; Nuclear Mysticism and Anti-Matter seemed irrelevant and eccentric to critics.”¹⁴⁰ The relation of Dalí’s religious works to reevaluated Surreal elements was further denied and demoted as when Duchamp included the Nuclear Mystical *Sistine Madonna* in a 1960 exhibition, but the Surrealist group openly condemned it through an article titled “We Don’t Ear it that Way,” that separated themselves from Dalí and accused him of insincerity, religious bigotry, and fascism.¹⁴¹ Breton’s 1949 criticism of Dalí as “Avida Dolares” and greediness for his vast commissions and commercialist tendencies, is

¹³⁸ p.11 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹³⁹ p.12 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹⁴⁰ P.14 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹⁴¹ P.15 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

further defended by Dalí; “as a Renaissance man...I feel no separation between myself as an artist and the mass of the people.”¹⁴²

Taylor acknowledges Dalí’s legacy as the missing link between Surrealism and Pop Art, who “served as a powerful catalyst for subsequent generations of American and European artists seeking an alternative to the dominant of Abstract Expressionism.”¹⁴³ Taylor argues that more research is needed into – another neglected area – which is Dalí’s post-war controversies. Since, most innuendos of fascism, appear directly circulated by Breton and the Surrealist group, discrediting him – much earlier than Dalí publicly spoke sympathetically of Franco.¹⁴⁴

The scarce literature that addresses the contemporary context of Dalí’s reception leads to neglected study of the conceptual basis of his works (and possible ‘performance art’ of his public image), and his influence in modern art.

This analysis urges a further investigation that fairly evaluates his Surrealist theories, and post-war practice, his constructed artistic persona, and the historical context behind the theories he engages with, as well as his reception.

¹⁴² P.30 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹⁴³ P.23 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹⁴⁴ pp.10-11 Taylor, Michael R. 2008. “The Dalí Renaissance” pp.1-36 in *The Dalí Renaissance : New Perspectives on His Life and Art After 1940*. Philadelphia Museum of Art Series. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Conclusion

As seen throughout this extensive literature review, Salvador Dalí's post-war works are worthy of legitimate study in their extensive art historical references, experimentation with contemporary theories, commentary on modern art, and relation to his fabricated public persona. Utilizing *Corpus Hypercubus*, as a case study, the next chapter will engage with primary sources to investigate the conceptual content of the painting, and how it reflects the artist's post-war persona and practice. Seeking correspondence between these elements reveals an experimentation in the realm of Surrealism.

Chapter 2: A Visual Analysis of Salvador Dalí's *Corpus Hypercubus* aided by Primary Sources

Corpus Hypercubus represents an idealized crucifixion where the woundless Christ hovers before a levitating unfolded hypercube-which replaces the traditional cross. The Madonna kneels in weighty gold and white robes, raised on a low pedestal on the bottom left corner, and seen in back profile looking up at Christ. The setting is an ambiguous nightscape with a seascape and rocky horizon in the distance rendered in one point perspective, aided by the checkered tile floor in the foreground where the figures stand. Its photographic-like realism is intensified by theatrical chiaroscuro, contrasting the dark olive-toned landscape, with the bright golden-ochre and white figures of Christ and the Madonna that appear to glow.

When aided by primary sources on the *Corpus Hypercubus*, and corresponding *Nuclear Mysticism*, the painting's content and context involves the following: Crucifixion; Gala as a muse, and Madonna; Port Lligat as a spiritual landscape; science and mathematics as inspirations for technique (and the hypercubic cross); Renaissance and Baroque exemplars and technique; and finally a synthesis that critiques modern art, by constructing himself as the "New Renaissance."

Crucifixion

In his *Mystical Manifesto*¹⁴⁵, Dalí includes etchings in which he experiments with various compositions (some of which are reproduced on the MoMA website¹⁴⁶) to achieve the unconventional perspective of the crucifixion from above (figure 12) for his *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* (1951). Though this work predates *Corpus Hypercubus* in depictions of the Crucifixion, it debuts the direction of his Post-War works treatment of the subject. In addition, the series of etchings coincide with his *Mystical Manifesto*'s opening lines, to have “become a mystic” –similar to Saint John of the Cross– and have “learn(ed) how to draw.”¹⁴⁷

In a watercolor and gouache collage study from 1950 (figure 13) which, Dalí explains the composition of the work in relation to atomic science and mysticism that parallel the counter-reformation Spanish mystic Saint John of the Cross;

In 1950 I had a cosmic dream in which I saw in color this image, which in my dream represents the nucleus of the atom. This nucleus afterwards took on a metaphysical meaning. I consider it to be the very unity of the Universe, Christ.

When thanks to Father Bruno (Carmelite), I saw the Christ drawn by St John of the Cross, I worked out geometrically a triangle and a circle which aesthetically summarized all my previous experiments and inscribed my Christ in this triangle.

His *Mystical Manifesto* explicitly cites his engagement with St. John of the Cross as well, connecting the scientific “unity of the universe having been confirmed” as clear as the Saint’s ‘aesthetic’ which he refers to as “the highest form of poetic revelation of militant Spanish mysticism which Dalí is updating.”¹⁴⁸ This statement places the Saint’s practice –who is said to have drawn his vision of Christ’s crucifixion from above – as a precedent for Dalí’s mystical

¹⁴⁵ Dalí, Salvador. *Mystical Manifesto*. 1951 in: *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/illustratedbooks/139162>

¹⁴⁷ Dalí, Salvador. *Mystical Manifesto*. 1951 in: *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*

¹⁴⁸ Dalí, Salvador. *Mystical Manifesto*. 1951 in: *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*

painting, specifically this crucifixion that derives from ‘dream’, to drawing, to painting to bring together the elements of science and mysticism into a coherent whole.

As described by Eric Bou, in his text *Dalíccionario: objetos, mitos y símbolos de Salvador Dalí*¹⁴⁹ which compiles examples from Dalí’s works and primary sources of recurring images and themes in an encyclopedic manner, the Crucifixion is connected to the notion of a woundless Christ, and the cubic forms inspired by Juan de Herrera, builder of El Escorial inspired by Ramon Lulle.¹⁵⁰

In his *Mystical Manifesto*, Dalí includes a form of production for his ‘next’ Christ painting along with the etchings, stating;

I want my next Christ to be a painting containing more beauty and joy than anything that will have been painted up to the present. I want to paint a Christ that will be the absolute contrary in every respect to the materialist and savagely antimystical Christ of Grünewald!”¹⁵¹

A comparative visual inquiry into Grünewald’s central panel of the *Isenheim Altarpiece* (figure 14) featuring the Crucifixion, and Dalí’s treatment of the subject both in *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, and *Corpus Hypercubus*, reveals his development of the subject. What is particular about the piece is that Christ is depicted with plague-like sores, a metaphorical representation that he shares with the plague sufferers, which were treated in the specialized monastery of St. Anthony for which it was commissioned. It is not certain whether Dalí explicitly acknowledges the context of the artwork, nonetheless it is apparent that representation of human and earthly traits and the suffering of Christ in a way that reveals the mortal aspect, is not the representation Dalí desires in his idealistic visualization. The other witnesses, and the allegorical sacrificial lamb, are also traditional elements that Dalí does not include.

¹⁴⁹ Bou, Enric. 2004. *Dalíccionario: objetos, mitos y símbolos de Salvador Dalí*. Barcelona: Tusquets Ed.

¹⁵⁰ The implications of a Hypercube cross will be revisited in detail in a further section on science as technique.

¹⁵¹ Dalí, Salvador. *Mystical Manifesto*. 1951 in: *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*

In contrast, as observed in the literature review, Dalí aligns himself with the works of Velásquez frequently; his autobiography also weaves the *Crucified Christ* painting of Velásquez into his childhood memories¹⁵². A study by Dalí shows a drawing made after Velásquez 's *Christ* (figure 15), eliminating the cross which is further evidence of his engagement with it in his own conception.

Velásquez places the *Crucified Christ* in isolation, in an ambiguous dark space, the Cross takes up the entire length and width of the composition, the body painted in a contrasting bright paleness appears pushed in direct display and focus, right in the center, the drastic contrasts symmetrical representation at the forefront to urge a solemn meditation. It was executed by Velásquez along with various nudes, and this work too, in dimension and display of Christ's body can be classified as a nude study. The classical contrapposto pose is adapted by the crucified body.

Velásquez 's treatment of the subject is apparent as a precursor of Dalí's engagement. Firstly, for Dalí's corporal focus, especially in *Corpus Hypercubus* in particular, (but also in the fact that the Christ of Saint John was painted after a stunt-man live model), in *Corpus Hypercubus*, Dalí also uses Christ's pose to form a cross shape, rather than hanging a limp body on a crucifixion with nails, and in addition, hiding the face of Christ, where his body is in clear view to expose the woundless Christ. Further, a study for *Corpus Hypercubus* at the Vatican Museums, shows the same Christ depiction, albeit eliminating a cross entirely, and inserting an equestrian figure in the background. (figure 16)

Gala as muse and Madonna

¹⁵² Dalí Salvador and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

The witness to the Crucifixion in *Corpus Hypercubus* is the Madonna posed by Gala, considering not only Dalí's frequent citation of her as muse, but of some of his earliest *Nuclear Mysticism* works –two versions of *The Madonna of Port Lligat*, the first of 1949, and the second version of 1950¹⁵³ as comparative materials. The first, inspired by Piero della Francesca's *Montefeltro Altarpiece*, was eventually approved by Pope Pius XII, reinforcing Dalí's claimed conversion¹⁵⁴. The second appears even more explicitly to be a portrait of Gala. (figure 17)

In *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, he describes Gala as the epitome “whose image is comparable to the serene perfections of the renaissance.”¹⁵⁵ He further calls himself “Gala's pupil,” and among the things he credits her teaching are the “principle of proportion”, as though a mentor in his art. The statement “she was the Angel of Equilibrium, the precursor of my classicism”¹⁵⁶ illustrates her as a muse of classicism and an idealized, spiritual being. Where she stands in place of a Renaissance Madonna in the *Madonna of Port Lligat* pair, and an unofficial announcement of Dalí's post-war direction, she is likewise his muse in the contemplation of the Crucifixion, and growing faith in *Corpus Hypercubus*. Dalí tells her, during their phase of living in Port Lligat, growing closer, that “It is mostly with your blood Gala, that I paint my pictures” [...] “since then I have always signed her name with mine in signing my work”¹⁵⁷ connecting his

¹⁵³ pp.26-27 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale

¹⁵⁴ pp.26-27 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹⁵⁵ pp.4 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹⁵⁶ p.317 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

¹⁵⁷ p.301 Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. *Salvador Dalí : The Late Work*. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

own psychic and creative experience with his muse, an action that begs further investigation into the implications of her presence in works of nuclear mysticism.

Port Lligat as Spiritual Landscape

This aspect is made more evident when considering the intertwining of Gala with Port Lligat itself –as a symbolic Mediterranean landscape but also as a spiritual landscape. The two elements are also present in *Corpus Hypercubus*. Dalí constructs a narrative of gradual conversion to Catholicism, as though having experiences a spiritual awakening through humble hermit-like practices and meditation, (a trope common in the stories of saints and mystics):

Port Lligat-a life of asceticism, of isolation. It was there I learned to impoverish myself, to limit and file down my thinking [...] At the end of two months at Port Lligat I saw rising day after day before my mind the perennial solidity of the architectural constructions of Catholicism. And as we remained alone - Gala and I -, the landscape of our souls.¹⁵⁸

Where the two *Madonna of Port Lligat* paintings reveal the proposed beginnings of this awakening, led through his muse, Gala, and the isolation in Port Lligat, *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, and *Corpus Hypercubus*, too feature the landscape as a setting for crucifixion visions. In particular, *Corpus Hypercubus*, with its ambiguous nightscape, and solemn and solitary tone, increases the ascetic theme, as has been discussed in the previous section of Crucifixion.

Science and Geometry, and the Hypercubic Cross as Technique

It is not only through the allegorical use of Port Lligat as a spiritual landscape of his personal life narrative, that creates the spiritual meditation present in *Corpus Hypercubus*, but

¹⁵⁸ P.302. Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

the way in which Dalí's technique in rendering the composition utilizes scientific theories merged with visual experimentation to create the vision-like images.

Port Lligat is seen in the distant horizon, and while aided by the checkered-tile floor under the figures of Madonna/Gala and Christ, forms a one point perspective, and the sense of vast space. However, this simple vision of space rendered as if seen by the human eye, is disrupted by another geometric experiment that takes on the significance of the work: the hypercubic cross. This ultimately creates the sense of levitation, a recurring theme in Dalí's *Corpus* .

According to Bou's encyclopedic collection, Levitation is interpreted as a way to illustrate the atomic representation of reality.¹⁵⁹ Considering Bou's assertion, it can be argued that Christ levitating before the hypercubic cross rather than being nailed and wounded to a cross, conceptually represents the defeating constraints of mortality-being idealized and transcendental through atomic theory.

Returning to comparative material, *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, also utilizes an experiment with two perspectives, Christ who is shown in a highly foreshortened perspective from very high above, and Port Lligat that is seen as if in eyes view, or a single point perspective. Therefore, this similarity in both representations of Crucifixion, along with the ascetic description of Port Lligat in terms of his personal narrative, reflect Port Lligat as the "real" earthly setting that simultaneously contains spiritual experiences, painted in the form of visions that are simultaneously a part of the landscape, but also removed from reality. The notion of this landscape as also particularly Mediterranean, can tie to the theme in literature of a "Spanish Catholicism," as well as the notion of a classical landscape. Simultaneously, Dalí's description of his inner change while living there is represented in his claims that the rocky

¹⁵⁹ Bou, Enric. 2004. *Dalícionario: objetos, mitos y símbolos de Salvador Dalí*. Barcelona: Tusquets Ed.

passage began to reflect the "morphological esthetics of soft and hard,"¹⁶⁰ as in the architect Gaudí's "Mediterranean Gothic." Therefore, the setting is presented as a source of inspiration but also transformation, a physical transformation of nature/reality but also of Dalí's faith.

An understanding of hypercube theory is crucial to realizing the synthesis Dalí aims to create both visually and conceptually. As explained by Thomas Banchoff, one of Dalí's previously cited scientific collaborators:

the analogous figure [of the hypercube] in three-dimensional space is an unfolded hypercube [...] no one from our space can fully appreciate the process that puts this hypercube together. Analogous to the previous case, if some faraway light in four-dimensional space caused the folding cubes to cast shadows in our space, we could watch as each of the six cubes became a shadowy rectangular box that gradually flattens out to one of the faces of the original cube.¹⁶¹

Dalí uses the unfolded hypercube within a roughly single-point perspective image that is meant to suggest three-dimensional space in its format (considering the traditional use of a horizon line, and perspective aided by the checkered floor). This suggests the presence of a fourth-dimensional form in a three-dimensional space, as Banchoff describes. In addition, Dalí's description, "a hypercubic cross in which the body of Christ becomes metaphysically the ninth cube,"¹⁶² is evident in the projection of the 'cube' that would have been in front, but is replaced by the presence of the hovering Christ, projected from the cubic scheme. The use of chiaroscuro, thus becomes not just a classicizing way of painting, but a representation of the ambiguous light from a dimension that only exists in theory.

¹⁶⁰ Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

¹⁶¹ Banchoff, Thomas F. "Salvador Dalí and the Fourth Dimension." Proceedings of Bridges 2014: Mathematics, Music, Art, Architecture, Culture. <https://archive.bridgesmathart.org/2014/bridges2014-1.html>

¹⁶² Banchoff, Thomas F. "Salvador Dalí and the Fourth Dimension." Proceedings of Bridges 2014: Mathematics, Music, Art, Architecture, Culture. <https://archive.bridgesmathart.org/2014/bridges2014-1.html>

The simultaneous representation of dimensions – one of the known verifiable world, and the other a theoretical one, where spirituality is visualized – is reinforced further through Dalí's hyperrealistic painting technique. This also lends itself to Renaissance and Baroque influences, as will be seen in the next section.

His 1941 autobiography reveals a further connection between the hyper realistic manner of painting which he prioritizes, and its significance in terms of subject matter. Through the Surrealistic anecdote of 'dream' or 'near sleep' Dalí claims, through the viewing and experience of his own eye in that state, to have discovered that the eye is a "veritable soft photographic apparatus, not of the objective world but of my hard thought and thought in general" and that it would be possible, and his utmost goal to collaborate with men of science towards, "the objective visualization of virtual images of thought."¹⁶³

Ultimately, Dalí proposes a "verifiable" scientific nature to his religious image, which uses science as method in both the interpretation of religion, and in artistic representation. The fourth dimension ultimately becomes the setting for spiritual content such as the meditation on the Cross, abbreviated into the third dimension of reality –the setting of Port Lligat.

To return to a comparison with *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, Dalí's reference to Saint John's practice of drawing his miraculous vision of Christ, and Dalí's inspiration being furthered by his "dream" of the painting, deals with the concept of materializing a vision, one aided by the tool of science as posited in Dalí's *Nuclear Mysticism*.

This coincides with Dalí's "new paranoiac-critical mysticism" as he calls it in the *Mystical Manifesto* –referring to a reevaluation of his past Surrealistic *paranoiac-critical method*

¹⁶³ p.392 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

– as will be further analyzed in chapter three – that relies on a ‘metaphysical spirituality’ based in the progress of quantum physics. He lays out its main principles as follows:

Form is a reaction of matter under inquisitorial coercion “on all sides” of “hard” and unrelenting space.
Beauty is always the ultimate spasm of a long and rigorous inquisitorial process.
Liberty is formlessness.¹⁶⁴

He claims himself to be a mystic, aesthetically engaging with the principles laid out by metaphysicians on matter, to resolve the “golden sections of the soul of our time.”¹⁶⁵ The interpretation of this as a form of a new Renaissance will conclude this analysis, after an investigation into his use of art history, and modern art critique in relation to his method.

Renaissance (and Baroque) as Exemplar and Technique

Dalí’s hyper realistic approach to representing a spiritual image, also engages with the Renaissance notion of *disegno*, which, along with reflecting the exemplars of Renaissance art that Dalí cites further, also provides a rational and intellectual approach to painting.

In *Corpus Hypercubus*, the use of dramatic chiaroscuro is not only to achieve scientific and photographic hyperrealism, but perhaps engages with Renaissance and Baroque uses of the camera obscura to achieve greater mimesis, revealing the dual implications of Dalí’s methodological references. As has been seen in the literature review on Dalí’s late works, there is copious evidence of his engagement with past art historical exemplars in pursuit of traditionalism, an argument to which this thesis will amply return.

Apart from weaving himself into a line of Catalanian “geniuses” Raymond de Sebonde (of philosophy/medicine/theology, author of *Natural Theology*), Gaudí (architect of ‘Mediterranean Gothic’), Dalí makes several references to Renaissance artists to weave his

¹⁶⁴ p.3-4 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

¹⁶⁵ Mystical manifesto in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

forthcoming practice and identity as an artist engaging with and continuing their work, in anticipation of a new Renaissance. These include Bramante (particularly his Tempietto in Rome), and the monastery of El Escorial in Spain which Dalí ultimately justifies through the notion of “ecstasy.” He also cites fifteenth century mathematician and friar Luca Paccioli [collaborator with Leonardo da Vinci, just as Dalí deliberately engages with his contemporary scientists], and ancient Roman architect Vitruvius [for his importance and wide-spread revival of his texts during the Renaissance] as in harmony aesthetically with his contemporary scientists' findings on the ‘unity of the universe’, making them timeless, and the notion of perfection and beauty peaking with such figures as Raphael. It can be argued that Catholicism, according to Dalí’s interpretation of the achievements of the Renaissance, is also a ‘method’ that aids him in the quest to become classic, and to ‘further’ modern art. He states: “Oh, nostalgia for the Renaissance, the sole period that had been able to meet the challenge of the cupola of the sky by raising cupolas of architecture painted with the unique splendor of the Catholic faith.”¹⁶⁶

The notion of *ecstasy* is used by Dalí to update the paranoiac-critical method: it can now involve mysticism, and justify the timeless reference to Renaissance masters, while ultimately criticizing modern art in terms of its academicism. In this manner, the experience of ecstasy is also technique, and a mode of judgment for modern art. He calls ecstasy the “incorruptible mold” whereas academism is in opposition, “corruptible” in his *Mystical Manifesto*. He aligns academism with artists making pre-renaissance references – “plagiarisms” of “prehistoric caves, of Cretan art, Romanesque frescoes, African art” where “ultra academic [...] bureaucratic formulas” can be applied. Therefore, the mystics’ St. Teresa of Avila (related to St. John of the Cross practice) notion of mystical ecstasy is seen by Dalí as a practice the modern mystical artist

¹⁶⁶ p.302 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover.

must follow to create, which can be interpreted as his update on the general practice of paranoiac-criticism: “The mystical artist must form for himself, aesthetically, through the fierce daily self-inquisition of a “mystical rev-erie” that is the most rigorous, architectonic” making an image that is “immaculately corpuscular”, using a “Renaissance way of painting” “from nature” as opposed to the modern artists painting from a place of “skepticism” and “materialism” which creates non-figurative work.¹⁶⁷

The notion of ecstasy is also referenced in relation to the Spanish poet and philosopher Unamuno (1864-1936), particularly in his interpretation of Castille as “in which the flesh of the soul cannot help but rise up into the sky.”¹⁶⁸ This reference is most significant, as has been established in the literature review, since it draws parallels between Dalí’s idealistic and ascetic Christ images, with another Unamuno poem on the Christ of Velásquez – a Spanish Baroque artist which Dalí repeatedly emulates, praises, and cites in his autobiography and early artistic writings as has been observed in the first chapter.

Thus, while using the notion of ecstasy to justify the call for continuation in artistic practice, Dalí calls to “begin at the beginning”¹⁶⁹ when describing his journey in art making and engagement with academies in *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. He argues that otherwise if he would “rush in and start snatching and gluttonously peeling the images which seem most captivating at first sight, you will find that these images, not having a solid basis, not possessing a tradition, will be mere copies [...] plagiarism, and not 'invention,' 'novelty'.”¹⁷⁰ Dalí evidently

¹⁶⁷ Mystical manifesto in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶⁸ Mystical manifesto in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶⁹ p.171 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷⁰ p.171 t Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

seeks to develop a method that considers mystical ecstasy and reevaluation, and continuation of traditional art.

He connects this to the Catalan writer/philosopher/art critic Eugenio d'Ors in a footnote, agreeing with the assertion that "everything that is not tradition is plagiarism" he uses the anecdote of Raphael incorporating the tradition of his master, Perugino, being 'given' thus basis, becoming a 'master' and inventing on the basis of those guides. As a direct opposite of Raphael, Picasso is, for Dalí "damned to plagiarism, for having fought, broken and smashed tradition [...] having reinvented everything, he is tyrannized by everything". He concludes that "the more one tries to revolutionize, the more one does the same thing" encompasses his direction in art.

Dalí inserts criticism of the academy of fine arts he attended as a student, where he recalled asking his professor for technical advice on painting, whereas his professor would respond to find his own way, that there are no laws. Dalí in retrospect criticized this technique and of the academies saying "how many revolutions [...] would be needed to bring people back to the supreme reactionary truth that 'rigor' is the prime condition of every hierarchy, and constraint the very mold of form."¹⁷¹ He placed himself as seen as a 'reactionary' and 'enemy of progress and of liberty' by the students, constructing a parallel with his later relationship with the Surrealists.

A further engagement with academism and technique is evident in his 1948 book *50 Secrets of Magic Craftsmanship*, which experiments with the art-historical concept and language of a treatise on art making, albeit utilizing his own engagement with different artists. It includes a chart in which he ranks artists including: Leonardo da Vinci, Meissonier, Ingres, Velásquez , Bouguereau, Dalí [himself], Picasso, Raphael, Manet, Vermeer de Delft, Mondrian; on the basis

¹⁷¹ p.161 t Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

of technique, inspiration, color, theme, genius, composition, originality, mystery, and authenticity. (figure 19) The chart also responds to Roger de Piles' chart in his *La Balance des Peintres* from 1708 in which he ranks artists based on composition, drawing, color, and expression; and both charts give Raphael very high scores. Overall, Dalí proposes a debate in aesthetics through the ranking of these artists, and to further his own criticism of modern art's experiments, lacking continuity and dominating in formalism, in favor of what he defines as less academic artists.

Dalí criticizes the efforts of modern art, due to a lack of technique; “inescapably there must be a return to tradition in painting and in everything [...] No one knew how to draw anymore, or how to paint, or how to write. Everything was on the same level, everything was becoming uniform as it became internationalized. The formless and the ugly became the supreme goddess of laziness.”¹⁷² This assertion reveals Dalí's attempts to return painting to its former status.

Dalí's *Diary of a Genius*¹⁷³ published 1963, includes the process of painting *Corpus Hypercubus*, told in a prolonged narrative. This prolonged narrative describes slow painting of each body part, meditated upon, as if a spiritual journey. Dalí refers to practicing the “testicles on the torso of Phidias” in between the process, which gives him both confidence in painting the body of Christ, but also “awaiting purification” so that he may be ‘worthy’ of the next step [cite example]. His struggles with smudges the paints, due to too much amber mixed with turpentine, an artistic experimentation, also parallels the romantic image of the likes of Leonardo da Vinci, whose quest for experimentation caused errors and unfinished works. He also intertwined his

¹⁷² p.285 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷³ Dalí, Salvador *Diary of a Genius*. 1963. in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

own ailment he experienced during the process, in his motivation to complete the image, as though it were physical suffering necessary to complete a sacred task.

Critique of Modern Art, and Dalí's Construction of the Self as the "New Renaissance"

The lack of rigor through the push for revolutionary innovation that Dalí sees in modern art, extends to his critique of the modern world, and ultimately his response to it as an artist, when he states "postwar europe was about to croak of the anarchy of 'isms'; of the absence of political, esthetic, ideological and moral rigor [...] of skepticism, arbitrariness, drabness, lack of form, lack of synthesis, lack of cosmogony [...] lack of faith."¹⁷⁴ While *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* constructs a narrative of Dalí's life and artistic practice, it too constructs an image of the modern world as another "Medieval Period" that comes before a new Renaissance that would encompass Dalí's arguments for Nuclear Mysticism;

as a consequence of the communist and fascist revolutions, and from the poverty and collapse of collectivist doctrines would arise a medieval period [...] of these imminent Middle Ages I wanted to be the first, with full understanding of the laws of the life and death of esthetics, to be able to utter the word 'renaissance'¹⁷⁵

To further this, Dalí redefined himself to align with the narrative, and strengthen the theoretical implications of his new works, as seen in *Corpus Hypercubus* throughout this visual analysis.

The third section of *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* focuses on doing precisely this, when Dalí reinvents himself as leaving Surrealism (in the sense of the unified movement, and his past works), behind:

My Surrealist glory was worthless. I must incorporate Surrealism in tradition. My imagination must become classic again. I had before me a work to accomplish for which the rest of my life would not suffice.

¹⁷⁴ P.351 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷⁵ P.361 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

Gala made me believe in this mission [...] to render the experience of my life 'classic' to endow it with a form, a cosmogony, a synthesis, an architecture of eternity.¹⁷⁶

In a passage such as this, Dalí's method relies on a basis of tradition, and faith used in conjunction with his Surrealism, as a mode of achieving timelessness in art. This "timelessness" reflects the classicism revived by Renaissance artists for example, albeit updated with the developments of the modern age – atomic science. Classicism is ultimately what Dalí interprets as a means of achieving this because it "meant integration, synthesis, cosmogony, faith- instead of fragmentation, experimentation, skepticism."¹⁷⁷ Despite his distinct departure from what he calls "eccentricities of his Surrealist past not to be replicated", Dalí states in his third-person narrative and critique of his own art, and art in general:

Dalí does not renounce anything [...] because it was reality and because the very lack of tradition of that period [the revolutionary post-war period he criticizes] is in itself a tradition to be integrated into the period that will follow [...] Cosmogony is neither Reaction nor Revolution – Cosmogony is Renaissance, hierarchized and exclusive knowledge of everything.¹⁷⁸

He speaks of his upcoming lecture in Barcelona in which he plans to express these concepts, though defending it as "not a case of the periodic imitative and discouraged 'return to tradition' [...] on the contrary it was the combative affirmation of my whole experience in the spirit of synthesis of the "Conquest of the Irrational" and the affirmation of the esthetic faith to which Gala had just restored me."¹⁷⁹

It is evident Dalí sets out to construct the art and the image of the Renaissance man of his own time, acknowledging his present, and his Surrealist practice, whilst criticizing academicism, and much of modern art, to engage with the modern art world in a manner that is allegedly

¹⁷⁶ P.350 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷⁷ 354 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷⁸ p.387-9 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁷⁹ P.354 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

timeless. His inclusion of a quote from Sigmund Freud, towards the end of the book, where he states “In classic painting I look for the subconscious, in a Surrealist painting, for the conscious”¹⁸⁰ is further used to justify, on aesthetic and conceptual basis, the use of classicism merged with Surrealism, and more fundamentally even, of religion merged with science.

The closing statement of his autobiography reads like a manifesto for his post-war practice, and call for a new Renaissance:

The individual sciences of our epoch have become specialised in these three eternal vital constants - the sexual instinct, the sense of death, and the space-time anguish. After their analysis, after the experimental speculation, it again becomes necessary to sublimate them. The sexual instinct must be sublimated in esthetics; the sense of death in love; and the space-time anguish in metaphysics and religion. Enough of denying; one must affirm. Enough of trying to cure; one must sublimate! Enough of disintegration; one must integrate, integrate, integrate. Instead of automatism, style; instead of nihilism, technique; instead of skepticism, faith; instead of promiscuity, rigor; instead of collectivism and uniformisation -- individualism, differentiation, and hierarchisation; instead of experimentation, tradition. Instead of reaction or revolution – RENAISSANCE.¹⁸¹

After looking at Dalí’s treatment of *Corpus Hypercubus* as a Crucifixion painting, as a portrait of Gala as the Madonna, as a depiction of Port Lligat as a spiritual landscape, as the use of atomic science and geometry as method, in the use of Renaissance and Baroque exemplars as method, but also as exemplars for artists, the work is undoubtedly connected to Dalí’s own construction of artistic persona, his critique of modern art and the modern world as being a “Medieval Period” out of which he will lead a Renaissance, through his traditionalism and synthesis. These observations urge further inquiry into Dalí’s Surrealist method, and how it allows for such experimentation and continuation to be incorporated into *Corpus Hypercubus*, to create metaphysical images.

¹⁸⁰ P.398 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

¹⁸¹ p.398 Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

Chapter 3: Dalí's Surrealist Synthesis

Many authors included in the literature review contribute a further consideration of Dalí's artistic practice after 1940 which has been largely overlooked and dismissed as a decline in practice. That being said, I argue a more overlooked, significant factor to study this subject – and in turn, the painting *Corpus Hypercubus* – is Dalí's assertion that *Nuclear Mysticism* is the “new Paranoiac Critical.”¹⁸² Beyond being a claim to a new artistic persona and arguing for continuation and synthesis in modern art, this is a significant experiment in his artistic theory that can reveal how he effectively represents the theme of crucifixion, both mystically *and* Surrealistically in *Corpus Hypercubus*. A further investigation into his earlier Surrealist practice and theory as comparative material in the light of the literature review, and visual analysis aided by primary sources regarding Nuclear Mysticism, can aid in answering this.

This section will avoid diverting into excessive analysis to the copious amounts of early education, and 1930s Surrealist examples that clearly illustrate Dalí's recurring theme of reevaluating traditional themes in the light of contemporary events and theories, as has been already established by authors Jeffet and Escibano in their study of Baroque, Renaissance, and religious themes. Instead, this point will be justified with the use of Dalí's *The Tragic Myth of Millet's L'Angelus*, a textual and visual (figure 20-21) application of his Surrealist theory of *Paranoia Criticism*, then reevaluated to observe how it can relate to *Corpus Hypercubus*, and Nuclear Mysticism.

¹⁸² Mystical manifesto in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

Developed in the early 1930s, and laid out in his 1933 article “Paranoiac-critical Interpretation of the Obsessive Image of Millet’s *L’Angelus*,”¹⁸³ and *The Conquest of the Irrational* (1935) book, the method was accepted and revered by fellow Surrealist and founder of the movement André Breton (in a lecture given at Brussels June 1934):

An instrument of primary importance [for Surrealism] [...] which has immediately shown itself capable of being applied equally to painting, poetry, the cinema, to the construction of typical Surrealist objects, to fashion, to sculpture, to the history of art and even, if necessary, to all manner of exegesis.¹⁸⁴

This recalls Escribano’s emphasis on Dalí straying from the automatic-process method of Surrealist production, in favor of one that considers personal reinterpretation of archival knowledge and images in his memory. It is evident how this personal dimension adds a versatile nature to his Surrealist practice, expanding it as a form of thought beyond simply a way of painting, which Breton evidently acknowledges.

The “double image”¹⁸⁵ aspect of the method suggests the re-definition of a single images countless to mean several things without being physically changed, this re-interpretative practice Dalí suggests can also re-write art history¹⁸⁶ as he proposes to do in his *Archeological Reminiscence Millet’s L’Angelus* (between 1933-35).

Dalí considers Millet’s *L’Angelus*, (figure 20) a painting with a discreet religious theme, as best encompassing the ‘literal’ image which he can transform and study to illustrate his *Paranoiac-Critical Method*, applying Surrealist theory. The image contains for him an essence that remains even when transforming the image with Surrealist interpretations:

¹⁸³ *Conquest of the Irrational*, Dalí defines his method
“Paranoia: delirium of interpretative association bearing a systemic structure
Paranoiac-Critical activity: spontaneous method of the Irrational knowledge based upon the interpretative-critical associations of delirious phenomena” [15]

¹⁸⁴ In January 1934, Andre Breton (1896-1966) presented a lecture on *Qu’est-ce-que le Surréalisme?*

¹⁸⁵ 18 "representation of an object that is also, without the slight. est physical or anatomical change, the representation of. another entirely different object, the second representation.”

¹⁸⁶ P.18 in Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

the unmoving presence, the expectant encounter. Of two beings in a desolate, crepuscular, and deadly environment . This [...] environment plays [...] the role of the dissecting table in the poetic context [...] not only does life fade away in the horizon, but also a pitch fork plunged into the real and substantial meat that the plowed land had been for man [...] dualism that leads us to finally consider the plowed land [...] as the best served dissecting table¹⁸⁷

The dualism encouraged by the “real” environment, allows Dalí to further reinterpret the figures as Surrealist objects (umbrella male and sewing-machine female) that nonetheless produce the same unconscious effect as the original latent meaning of the image, making it what he calls a *delirious image*, where “all the malaise and enigma of the encounter [of the two figures] would always come.”¹⁸⁸ Dalí’s method allows for images to take on different outward manifestations and characters literally, yet to maintain the essence, content, or meaning of the original, to which the environment displayed works to aid.

Dalí describes each step of his *Paranoiac Critical Method* in which Millet’s *L’Angelus* undergoes transformations before arriving at the final version which he paints. His method uses familiar landscapes, his relationship with Gala, and personal symbolism through Surreal objects.

Dalí describes the *Paranoiac Image* as follows:

Present in it [the *Paranoiac Image* of the *L’Angelus*] would be an evolving systemization, coexisting with the very core of delirious ideas and forming a consubstantial part of them. The delirious idea would appear to be carrying in itself the seeds and structure of the systemization: and from this derives the productive value of this form of mental activity that would be found not only at the very base of the phenomenon of personality.¹⁸⁹

In light of this, it is possible to view Dalí’s later compositions as containing redefined delirious images, and question whether religious and classical figures can indeed classify as so in his personal associations.

¹⁸⁷ p.280 The Tragic Myth of Millet’s *L’Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁸⁸ p.280 The Tragic Myth of Millet’s *L’Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁸⁹ p.280 The Tragic Myth of Millet’s *L’Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

By seeking similarities between the image of Dalí's *L'Angelus* and *Corpus Hypercubus*, it can reveal how he uses religious images similarly to *Paranoiac Images*, an approach similar to Escribano's reading of Dalí's self-identification with religious iconography in his memory.

On a visual level, both works use a constant landscape as a setting for a subject. In Dalí's text on Millet's *L'Angelus* he describes the "visual games" he undergoes to transform the work into its outward Surrealist version. Part of the daydream he undergoes involves associations with Port Lligat, thus it is possible he uses familiar settings connected to his life, and personal memories there, and the land as a 'dissecting table' of religious works too. This reinforces my reading of Port Lligat as a setting for the crucifixion and of the Madonna and Child visions, for their ascetic and ideal associations described by Dalí in his autobiography; ultimately these are the setting for a spiritual conversion. Port Lligat thus aids both Dalí's construction of persona, but also in reinterpreting the crucifixion of Christ on a more personal and spiritual level. This biographical element of Port Lligat is not discussed as another 'archival' reference by Escribano, yet it evidently functions as one. Further, it's function as "phenomenologically real" place, is displayed in *Corpus Hypercubus* and *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, as the most logically real element of the works, reinforced by the single-point perspectives of the land which contradicts the levitating (*Corpus Hypercubus*), or separated from above (*Christ of Saint John of the Cross*) Christs. In *Corpus Hypercubus*, the use of a fourth dimensional object (Hypercube), that has been unfolded to exist in the phenomenologically real world (the third dimension represented by the setting of the painting, and the concern of Renaissance mimesis), conceptually furthers the idea that Port Lligat, allows for reinterpretation of a mystical dimension. Where Parkinson attributes Dalí's earlier scientific references such as Einsteinian Relativity of the Surrealists to his former elongated figures; it can be said that fourth-dimension theory allows Dalí to show a

simultaneous evidence of dimensions and meaning, much like the multiple images contained in the delirious image. Where Henderson attributes modern art's experiments with dimensions and non-Euclidean geometry as challenging established laws; Dalí attempts to use the verifiable nature of scientific theory, and artistic realism influenced by tradition, to argue for timelessness and make the spiritual, tangible (as he stated on DNA, "proving the existence of God" quoted by an author).

The dynamic of the figures, within the context of their setting, is also a similarity between the works, particularly of archetypal figures of male and female. In his *Paranoiac-Critical* interpretation, his 'games' on the meditation and transformation of Millet's *L'Angelus* lead Dalí to "associate all [his] pre-crepuscular and crepuscular childhood memories,"¹⁹⁰ using Freudian themes. This strongly connects to Escribano's argument that Dalí self-identifies with his iconographic references, and that the subjects of Christ and Annunciation relate to the simultaneous Freudian, and Religious narrative of birth and death. It also recalls Freud's argument of Leonardo da Vinci's psychological association to the infant Christ in his Madonna and Child images, which Lomas cites as a reference for Dalí. The dynamic of Dalí and Gala, is a constant theme to be reinterpreted through these findings.

In the *L'Angelus* The feminine figure (represented through a praying mantis symbol, and Gala) is the mother archetype, and the male figure is the son archetype. Dalí reads erotic and frightening connotations between their expected collision, also deriving from his associations with Gala.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ p.289 The Tragic Myth of Millet's *L'Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹¹ p.294-5 The Tragic Myth of Millet's *L'Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

It is not a coincidence, therefore, that Gala serves as muse for the Madonna, and it is further probable she not only serves as the aid of his conversion within the ideal setting of Port Lligat, but also of the holy mother image, as Escribano argues. This makes it further possible that Dalí does in fact identify with Christ, and the same feeling of oncoming death that is present in his Surrealist and Freudian contemplation of *L'Angelus* in relation to his relationship with Gala, is present in his contemplation of crucifixion of Christ. This is especially significant when considering Jeffet's analysis of Dalí's interest in Baroque aesthetics of death from before and during Surrealist years, especially of *vanitas* elements used outside of the still-life format. Dalí's assertion that he is able to understand "the laws of the life and death of esthetics"¹⁹² and thus be the first to lead a new Renaissance, is evident after all as it has been treated both in a Freudian framework, and then in a *Nuclear Mystic* framework, that nonetheless does not abandon the former in the creation of a metaphysical piece. Further, in his *Conquest of the Irrational*, he involves illustrations such as one titled *Paranoiac Metamorphosis of Gala's face*. This reveals his interest in transforming the appearance of Gala, his muse, as though a *Paranoiac Image*, (or as an archival psychic reference as in Escribano's text) who can easily stand for figures such as the Madonna as well. As Port Lligat serves to dissect such subjects and bring them towards reality, the transformation of his wife—who is so tied to his identity that he begins to sign their names together—is Dalí's way of conceptualizing the Madonna through familiar means. In this way the transformation of her face approaches the Surrealist uncanny concept, placing religious iconography and experience as too, something of the uncanny.

A part of Dalí's 'method' of his Surrealist years involves engagement with "ecstasy" and unconsciousness. This is evidently revisited in a religious context, not abandoned. On the

¹⁹² P.361 Secret Dalí, Salvador; and Haakon Chevalier. 1993. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*. New York: Dover. Life

L'Angelus, he describes the delirious phenomena "appears in mind all of a sudden" Millet's

L'Angelus transformed and "charged with latent intentionality."¹⁹³ Dalí further claims;

I already knew 'almost everything' about the transformation of this painting; I understood, I saw very clearly 'what it was all about.' The interpretation of *L'Angelus* that was to take shape afterwards [...] was already entirely 'present' and 'clear' in my mind during the initial delirious phenomenon: it was lucidity contained in it¹⁹⁴

This form of conception of his work reflects his description of *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, coming to him in a dream, and his alignment with the visions of mystics that are 'revealed' spiritual images that they have a duty to materialize. *Corpus Hypercubus*, therefore, can be justified as charged with metaphysical meaning regardless of the amount of "transformation" it undergoes, even replacing the cross with the hypercube and incorporating his contemporary science theories, and using Gala's face, cannot remove the latent meaning, but rather update it, and make it more real to him.

An early text addresses 'ecstasy,' albeit does not directly attribute it to its religious meaning, but rather an unconscious one. Dalí states,

The most phenomenally staggering 'vital state' of phantoms and psychic representations. -during ecstasy, with the approach of desire, pleasure, anxiety, all opinion, all judgment (moral, aesthetic, etc.) undergo an astounding change. —every image undergoes, similarly, an astounding change. — it is as if ecstasy opens the way to a world that is as distant from reality as the world of dream is.¹⁹⁵

In his Surrealist years, Dalí interprets ecstasy as the unconscious motivator of *Paranoiac-Critical* transformations. Although at this point he connects it to Surrealism: "Ecstasy is a critical mental state [...] that the incredible, hysterical, modern, Surrealist, and phenomenological current thought desires to render 'continuous' — In search of images likely to make us go into

¹⁹³ p.283 The Tragic Myth of Millet's *L'Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹⁴ The Tragic Myth of Millet's *L'Angelus* in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹⁵The Phenomenon of Ecstasy (1933) in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

ecstasy,"¹⁹⁶ it nonetheless can be interpreted as a continuous method, as has been seen in his references to St. Teresa of Avila and mysticism.

Also reflected in the photo collage by the same name, also from that year, where various female figures seem to imitate the expression of Bernini's *St. Teresa in Ecstasy* albeit in a more secular, and sensual manner (figure 22). It is possible it may have been a reinterpretation of the iconography on a purely visual level, however, when the concept of ecstasy as "method" is elaborated further in *Nuclear Mysticism*, it is acknowledged for its mystical significance. Thus, suggesting continuity and his attention to the similarities between ideas of the unconscious and ideas of mystical experience. Authors note the discourse between Dalí with a monk who suggested that "Saint John also expressed himself in the language of Surrealism " may have inspired Dalí to find the conceptual relationships between his Surrealist and Mystical subjects. Wallis' reading of Dalí associating himself with Saint John of the cross recalls Dalí's *50 Secrets of Magic Craftsmanship*'s description of his journey painting *Corpus Hypercubus*, as well as him mimicking mystical journeys in his construction of a post-war persona.

Dalí's treatment of Christ, particularly of his idealized body in *Corpus Hypercubus*, can not simply be an attempt at Renaissance idealism. Various sources have referred to his early dialog on the figure of Saint Sebastian with the writer Lorca as early as the 1920s. The shared elements between both religious figures are that they use the nude body as an outward manifestation for meaning, and for the stoic, idealized manner they present suffering. This comparison will further reinforce the element of crucifixion, and Christ in the visual analysis, and prove continuity between not only religious iconography, but further treatment of such themes within both Surrealism and Nuclear-Mysticism.

¹⁹⁶ The Phenomenon of Ecstasy (1933) in : Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

In these exchanges, Dalí connects Saint Sebastian's nakedness with irony, due to the idea that "There is another mode still; a mode between inaction and passion [...] a mode of elegance. I am referring to the patience in the exquisite death throes of Saint Sebastian."¹⁹⁷ While he conjures poetic associations with the image of the saint, he asserts that he stands for the 'Aesthetics of objectivity'¹⁹⁸ for how his nature conceals suffering. This connects to Lorca's concept of a Christ without wounds, as has been referred to in the literature, and the idea of 'aesthetics of objectivity' can be applied to the Christ in *Corpus Hypercubus*, that has no wounds, or sign of suffering; a 'hiding' and protection of the body where a spiritual patience is displayed in the ascetic tone, elegance in the idealistic nude body. This can also justify the hyper realistic mode of representation that connects to Dalí's early writings on photography as a mode of objective representation where the true meaning is not distorted by the artist's hand.¹⁹⁹ Both Escribano's reading of Saint Sebastian texts, and Jeffett's reading of Baroque *memento mori* attest to Dalí's *Nuclear Mysticism* expressing both Surrealistic, and spiritual concerns on mortality.

Dalí's assertions in the *Conquest of the Irrational* also reflect much of the tone in his *Mystical Manifesto*, and the engagement with science that has been proved through the first section of the literature review chapter. He states, "we [Surrealists] are not quite artists, nor are we exactly true men of science"²⁰⁰ as has been investigated by authors Parkinson, Henderson, and Taylor who seek historical context for Dalí's engagement with science that predates *Nuclear Mysticism*, and even drive much of Surrealism and modern art movements of the 20th century.

¹⁹⁷ P.20 Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹⁸ P.21 Dalí Salvador and Haim N Finkelstein. 1998. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹⁹ Photography: Pure Creation of the Spirit (1927 *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

²⁰⁰ [264] The Conquest of the Irrational *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

In the text, Dalí further states that

my whole ambition in the pictorial domain is to materialize the images of concrete irrationality with the most imperialistic furor of precision, so that the world of imagination and concrete irrationality may be of the same object clearness, of the same consistency, of the same durability, of the same persuasive, cognoscitive and communicable thickness as that of the external world of phenomenal reality. The important thing is what one wishes to communicate: the concrete irrational subject. The means of pictorial expression are placed at the service of this subject.²⁰¹

In light of this, the scientific and mathematical theories he experiments with both visually and theoretically, can be seen as the “means of pictorial expression” that he uses to express concrete images of religious figures. Dalí ultimately replaces the irrational subject with the mystical subject in his post-war practice, albeit using a very similar line of reason, justified by the versatile nature of his method.

Even in his Surrealist years, he refers to Old Masters and Realist paintings as a means to communicate the irrational subject:

The images of concrete irrationality draw nearer to the phenomenally real, with the corresponding means of expression approaching those of the great realist painting—Velásquez and Vermeer of Delf—in order to paint realistically according to irrational thought, according to the unknown imagination.²⁰²

Realism, both in the traditional sense, and in the updated scientifically-aided sense, are thus means to communicate unconscious meaning, an aim that appears constant in his works. It is evident he practiced realism and his academic understanding of oil painting as early as his Surrealist years.

Just as Dalí asserts that “the history of art is thus particularly to be redone according to the method of *Paranoiac Critical Activity*,”²⁰³ So does he prove the application of this when he coins the term *Nuclear Mysticism*, and his entire post-war persona as the new Renaissance man, as criticism of modern art. His claims of being the first Nuclear painter, and announced break

²⁰¹ P.265 *The Conquest of the Irrational in: The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

²⁰² *My Pictorial Struggle (1935) The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

²⁰³ *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

away from Surrealism (though at times he evidently proclaims himself as Surrealism) despite copious evidence of continuity, is self motivated and constructed, rather than reflecting a drastic change in his art. This is due to his expulsion from the Surrealist group leading to an attempt at an individualist practice, criticism of modern art, and commitment to constructing himself as a Surrealist subject, reevaluated using his own academic background. Dalí's references have always been towards tradition, and the versatile nature of his Surrealist practices allows easy overlapping of *Paranoia Criticism* and *Nuclear Mysticism*, and allows him to blur the lines between his art and his identity as well as artist and 'scientist'. The literature review involved also discussions on the proper applications of science in the arts, which Dalí attempts to solve by using scientific verifiability to convey things that aren't phenomenologically real, in a carefully calculated manner, rather than uninhibited modern experimentation.

Dalí ultimately pursues in all sections of his art, persona, and theory, the modern version of the Renaissance Man that is nonetheless continuous with his entire artistic corpus and character. By updating his *Paranoia Criticism*, to *Nuclear Mysticism*, exploring secular and spiritual meanings of ecstasy, using his academic art background and biographical memories as archival images and frameworks of analysis, and connecting Renaissance/Baroque painting to objective science, the Surreal subconscious can easily merge with religious iconography to create a personal spiritual landscape that he materializes in *Corpus Hypercubus*.

It is perhaps best encompassing to express how Dalí's theoretical and visual experiments; that deal with constant re evaluation and expression of his own art and character, reveals a basis that engages consistently with themes of personal narrative, the unconscious—or spiritual self—, engagement with past and his contemporary artists, as well as current concerns of his external world in fields of arts, science and politics [the 'golden sections' of the time], using his own

quote from *Conquest of the Irrational* : “following this method, paintings apparently as different [...] would represent exactly the same subject [...] would mean exactly the same thing.”²⁰⁴ This prompts the analysis that Dalí’s method’s element of redefinition allows for the Surreal Subconscious to contain a Mystical dimension as well, that ultimately, they can even be the same thing.

²⁰⁴ The Tragic Myth of Millet’s L’Angelus in *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

Conclusions

This thesis has engaged with Dalí's post-war practice and persona as manifested in his 1954 *Corpus Hypercubus*. Initial controversy surrounding the artist, and the lasting assumption that he lacked genuinity and was declining has caused gaps in the literature on his post-war works. After gathering studies on his mathematical and scientific engagement, revealing the continuity and art historical context for the use of science in 20th century art, revealing the Renaissance and Baroque references as continuous in his education and corpus, as well as seeing how his constructed persona pertains to the synthesis of art and science; it is clear there is a genuine and sound theoretical basis for Dalí's post-war *Corpus Hypercubus*. Using this information, the visual analysis revealed the strategic engagement of such ideas, visually, in a language of Surrealism. After comparing this evidence to his Surrealist practice, utmost continuity is revealed, and it is clear *Corpus Hypercubus* merges the spiritual plane into the unconscious, allowing for continuity between Dalí's artistic career, and allowing him to reinterpret his own artistic theories, identity, and art history itself.

Figures

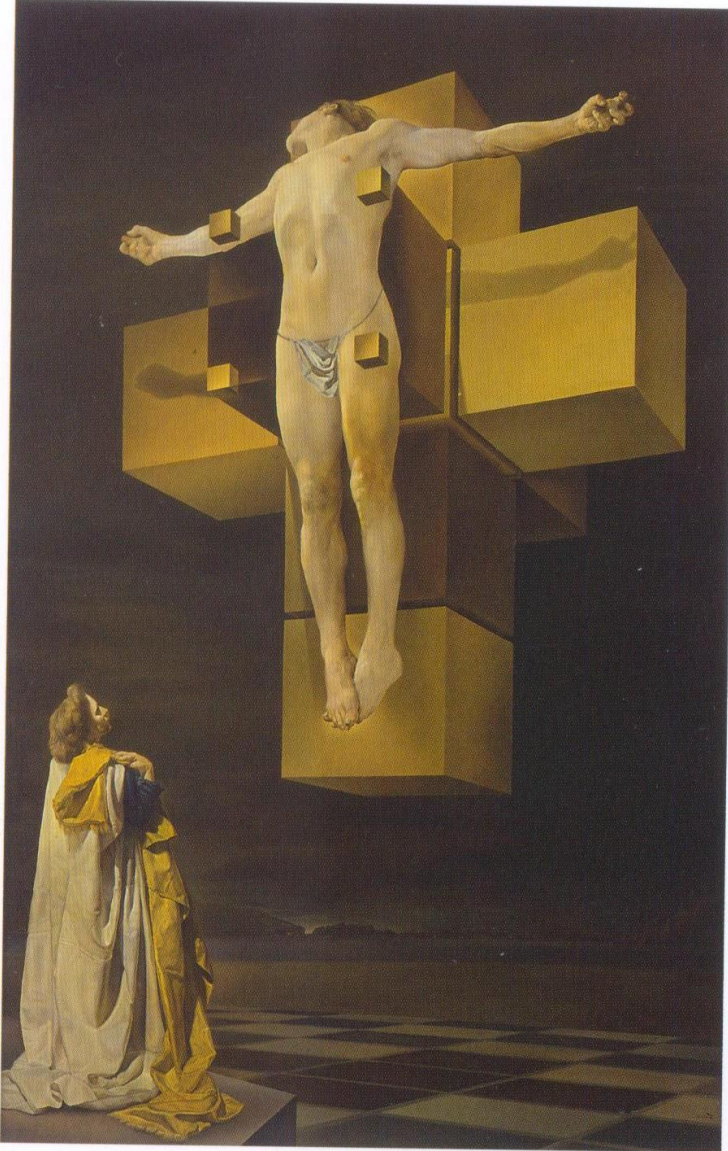


Figure 1 Salvador Dalí, *Corpus Hypercubus*(*Crucifixion*), 1954. Oil on canvas, 194.3 cm × 123.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

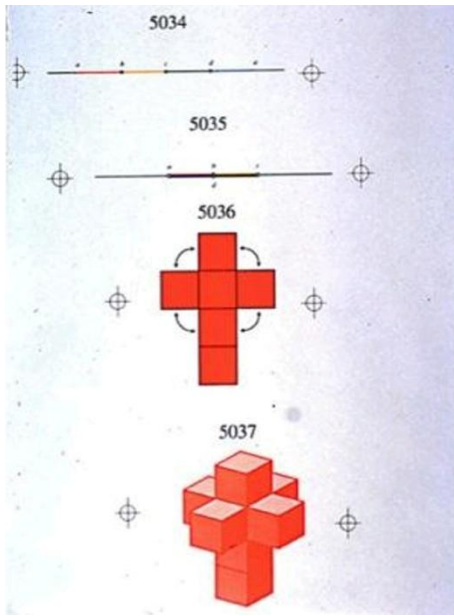


Figure 2 Unfolded Model of a Hypercube Source: *Banchoff article*



Right) *Banchoff at Dalí Museum, Figueres, 2004.*

Figure 3. *Banchoff with Hypercube Model at Theatre Museum Figueres.*

Source: *Banchoff article*



Figure 4 This Drawing is believed by some that it was drawn by Saint John in an experience of Ecstasy. Dalí probably accessed it through a Carmelite monk, cited by sources in the literature review

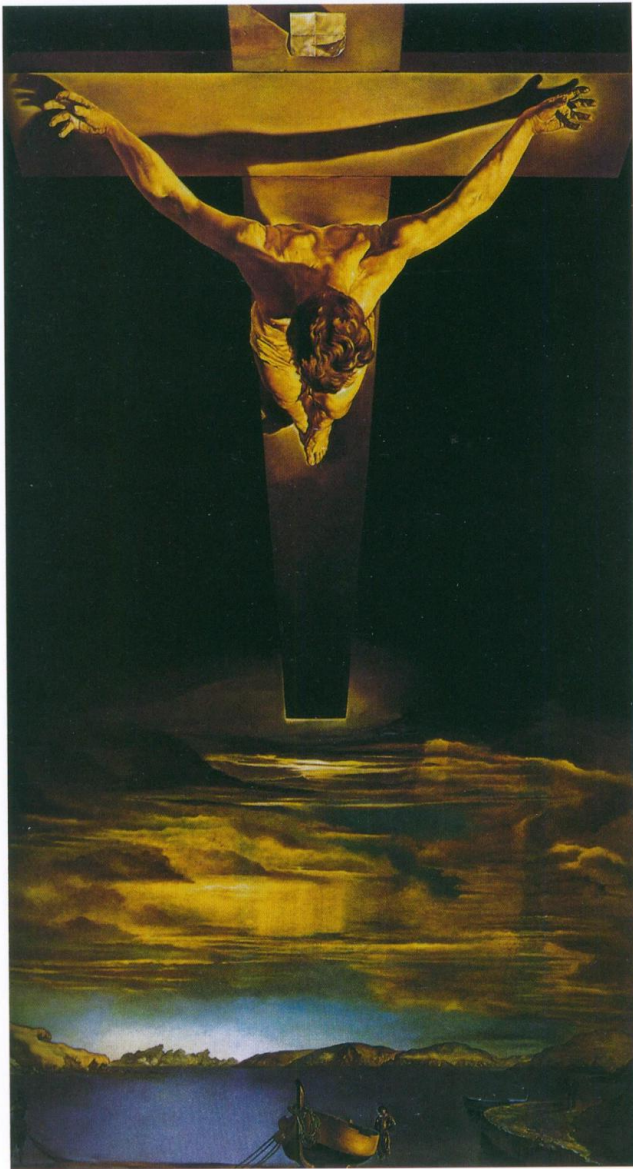


Figure 5 Salvador Dalí, *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* 1951. Oil on canvas, 205 cm × 116 cm. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 6. Diego Velázquez, Christ Crucified. 1632. Oil, 249 × 170 cm. Museo del Prado, Madrid

source:wikiart



Figure 7 Salvador Dalí, *Madonna of Port Lligat* 1950. Oil on canvas, 1.44 m x 96 cm.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 8 Salvador Dalí, *The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus*. 1958-9. Oil on canvas, 16 ½ x 122 inches. Museum, St.Petersburg,Florida.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 9 Salvador Dalí, *Leda Atomica*. 1949. Oil on canvas, 61.1 cm × 45.3 cm. Theatre and Museum Figueres.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

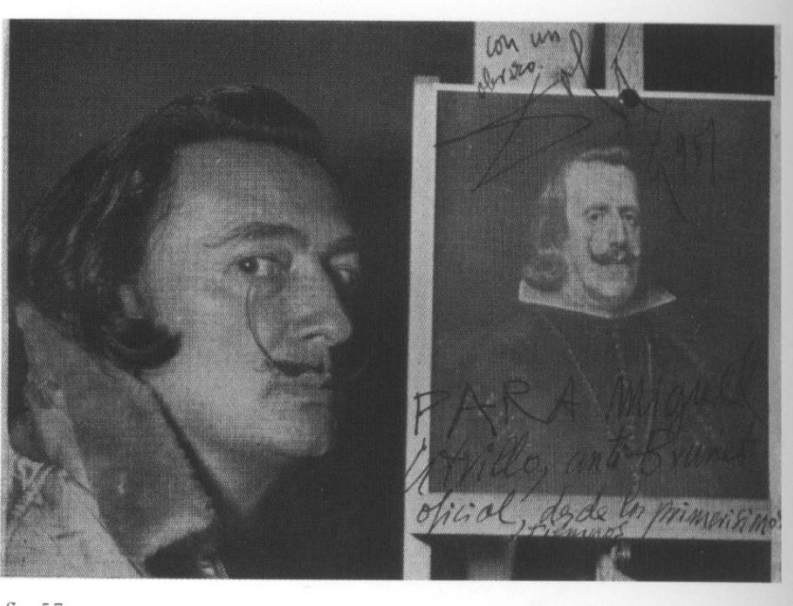


Figure 10

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

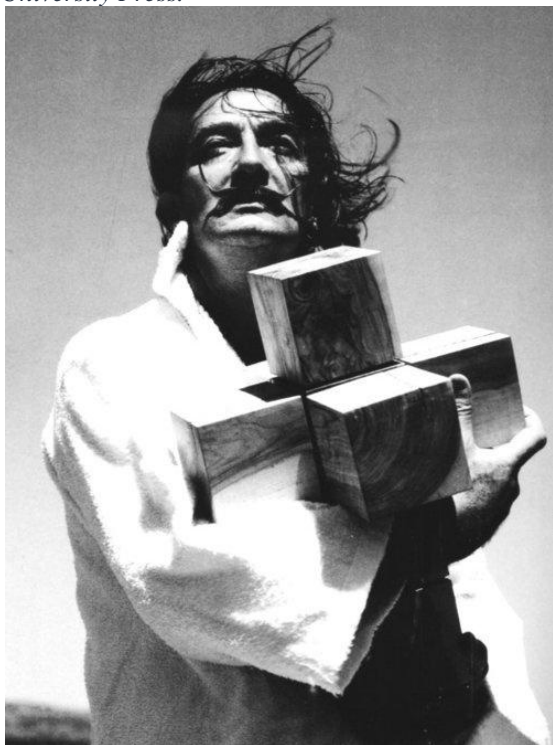


Figure 11 Francesc Català-Roca. Dalí and Hypercube. Photograph. 1954

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 12 Salvador Dalí, Mystical Manifesto, 1951

Source: <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/illustratedbooks/139162>

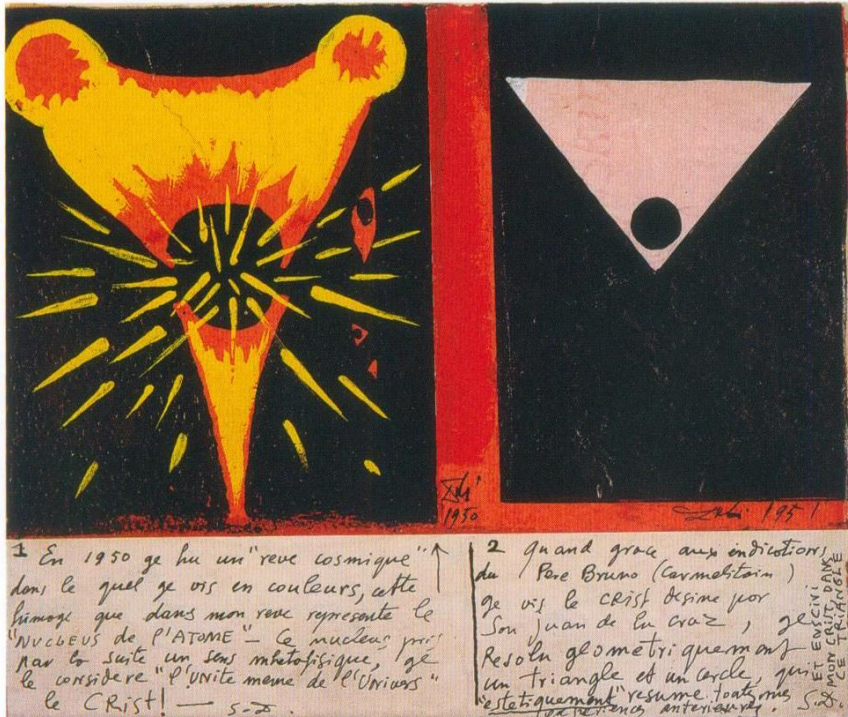


Figure 13

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press

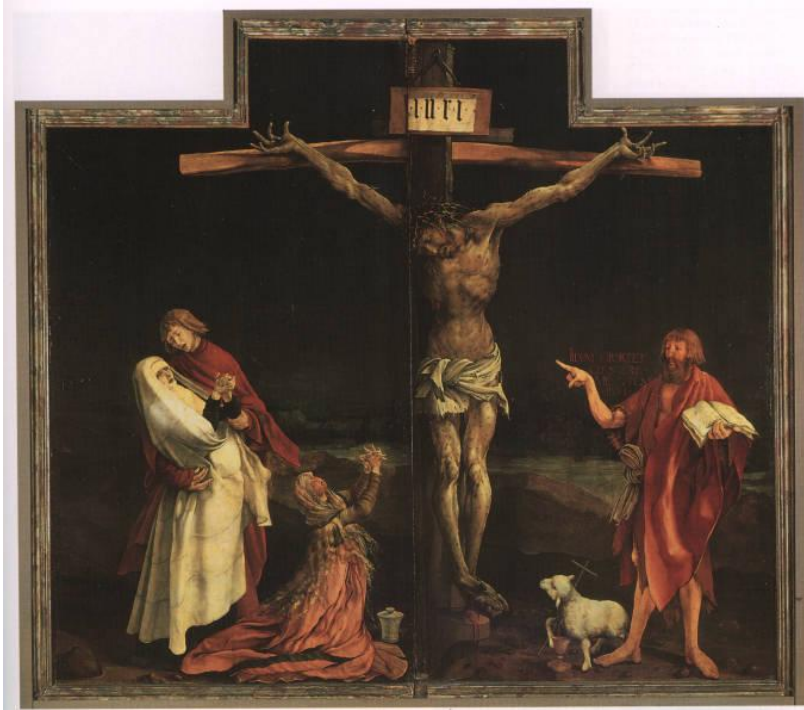


Figure 14. Central Panel. Crucifixion, from Isenheim Altarpiece. Grünewald, Matthias, ca. 1480-1528

Source: <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/Civilization/id/838/>



Figure 15 Salvador Dalí, Sketch after Velasquez. 1950s

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dali : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 16. Salvador Dalí, *Crocifisso (Christ crucified)*, 1954 Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 cm

Source: https://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/collezione-d_arte-contemporanea/sala-25--salvador-dali-e-la-spagna/salvador-dali--crocifisso.html



Figure 15 Salvador, Dalí. *The Madonna of Port Lligat*. 1949. Oil on Canvas 48.9 x 37.5 cm. Marquette University, Wisconsin.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.



Figure 18 Salvador, Dalí. The Madonna of Port Lligat. 1950. Oil on Canvas 144 x 96 cm. Minami Art Museum, Tokyo.

Source: Dalí Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dalí : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press.

Table comparative de valeurs d'après l'œuvre d'art
 GRAFMANSCHIP - inspiration - Couleur - Dessin - génialité - composition - originalité

Artiste	inspiration	Couleur	Dessin	génialité	composition	originalité
Leonardo da Vinci	17	18	15	19	20	18
Mesmerier	5	0	2	3	0	1
Ingres	15	12	22	15	0	6
Velasquez	20	19	20	19	20	20
Bugureau	11	1	1	1	0	0
Dali	12	17	10	17	19	18
PICASSO	9	19	9	18	20	16
RAFAEL	19	19	18	20	20	20
MANET	3	1	6	4	0	20
WERMEER	20	20	20	20	20	19
MONDRIANO	0	0	0	0	1	0

FORTUNI
 Leonardo renaît sans liste - Mesmerier invention Kloppequin - Ingres renaît Rafael
 Velasquez renaît in futur - Bugureau renaît in futur - Dali renaît in futur
 Picasso - renaît in futur - Manet renaît in futur - Vermeer, renaît in futur
 Mondriano renaît in futur - Manet renaît in futur

Figure 19

Source: Dali Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dali : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press



Figure 20 Salvador, Dalí. Archeological Reminiscence Millet's Angelus.1935 Oil on Panel

Source: Dali Salvador Elliott H King David A Brennan William Jeffett Montserrat Aguer Charles Hine and High Museum of Art. 2010. Salvador Dali : The Late Work. Atlanta Ga. New Haven: High Museum of Art ; Yale University Press



Figure 21. Jean- François Millet. L'Angelus. 1857-59. Oil. 56x66cm. Musée d'Orsay

Source: Google Arts and Culture

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