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## ***Notes on Dalí as Catalan Cultural Agent*** **Carmen García De La Rasilla**

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# NOTES ON DALÍ AS CATALAN CULTURAL AGENT<sup>1</sup>

CARMEN GARCÍA DE LA RASILLA

## ABSTRACT

Was Salvador Dalí a legitimate and effective agent in the spread of Catalan culture? This article approaches the artist's idiosyncratic, contentious and "politically incorrect" Catalanism and examines how he translated certain major Catalan cultural and philosophical components of his work into the cosmopolitan aesthetics of modernity and surrealism.

## INTRODUCTION

The title of this essay may raise a few eyebrows. Dalí was certainly not a Catalan nationalist and he saw no conflict between his Catalanism<sup>1</sup> and his Spanishness.<sup>2</sup> His popular image as a half-mad surrealist, a money-hungry and mercenary artist who lived comfortably in Franco's Spain does not support the notion of Dalí as a Catalan agent in the world, and yet he was perhaps one of the most efficient propagators of Catalan culture in the international arena. As the most famous and popular of the surrealists, and with a widely known literary and pictorial work deeply rooted in Catalonia, Dalí has become the most representative agent of Catalan culture in the world, responsible according to Santos Torroella, for having universalized and transformed the name of Catalonia from complacent localism into an authentic myth in contemporary painting (108).

Dalí cultivated a public Catalan image. On many public occasions he presented himself wearing the typical Catalan headdress, the *barretina*, as well as the traditional peasant regional shoes, the *espadrilles*. His friends in New York, Carles Fontserè, the composer Leonard Balada, the sculptor Xavier Corberó, the journalist Jaume Miravittles

1. Although Dalí's Catalanism was an expression of his cultural and atavistic attachment to his native land, and lacked a political component, he nevertheless exhibited a sense of profound loyalty to Catalonia in many personal gestures. In 1954, when the president of the Generalitat in his exile of Saint Martin-le-Beau, Josep Tarradellas, was having economic difficulties, Dalí came to his help by facilitating the sale of one of his pictures (Carol and Playà 180-181).

2. In one of his meetings with Jordi Pujol, Dalí commented that he would rather have a Communist Spain than a dismembered Spain (Carol and Playà 380).

and the musician Xavier Cugat agreed that there was no one who better represented the Catalan ethos on Fifth Avenue than Salvador Dalí (Carol; Playà 100). This type of operatic *mise en scène*, far from being a mere façade or simple histrionics, reflected Dalí's genuine and creative identification with the costumes and culture of his native soil. Independently of his political points of view in relation to Catalonia, the fact is that Dalí's unique Catalanism represented not only a crucial component of his flamboyant autobiographical operetta, but also a creative factor that fertilized his work with ideas, leitmotifs and images deeply rooted in Catalan traditions, folktales, myths and symbols.<sup>3</sup> Dalí learned how to communicate the universal in Catalan terms by connecting his native traditions, philosophy, folklore and landscape with the language of psychoanalysis, Surrealism and modernity. Nevertheless, the Dalí-Catalonia connection has not been the subject of protracted scholarly attention, although it deserves at least a book-length study. However, besides the artist's determination to escape definition, one of the major obstacles in a scholarly approach to this topic derives from the difficulties to define what constitutes Catalanism, a slippery concept, affected sometimes by contradiction and paradox, as leading scholars such as Josep Ferrater i Mora and Vicens Vives have recognized. Nonetheless, we could understand the idea and practice of Catalanism in a somewhat looser vein, as a mode of thinking and feeling based upon the modern adaptation of traditions and usages or even as Josep Carner-Ribalta mystically puts it as "a secular religion, a spontaneous sense of devotion without rigid tenets or dogma ... [and as] the solidarity of all Catalans, independently of any party or ideological affiliation" (181-82). Within this perspective, Dalí's Catalanism, appears more verifiable, since the artist thought, felt, expressed himself, lived and created in Catalan, imbued with a sense of colossal pride in his cultural roots which he always considered the cradle of his personality and work. The following pages briefly examine some of the most salient aspects of this subject, especially how the artist employed his polemic "perverse polymorphous"<sup>4</sup> sense of Catalanism as an instrument within

3. "A good deal of Dalí looks like anarchic personal invention when, in fact, it is quite deeply-rooted in social imagery. When the French Surrealists were horrified and offended by Dalí's fixation on turds, for instance, they were reckoning without the enormous role that shit (human and animal) plays in the folk-culture that surrounded Dalí as child. Only in Catalonia are pottery or plastic figures called *caganers* (excreters, whether peasants, priests, angels or contemporary heroes) sold as necessary accompaniments to every Christmas crib. To treat Dalí as a Spaniard is to misunderstand him" (Hughes, "Homage to Catalonia" 2).

4. In his *Secret Life* Dalí adopted a wide range of Freudian symptoms to portrait himself as an "anarchistic polymorphous perverse" (4), in reference to a sexuality characterized by a disordered libido and by multiple perversions (Rycroft 135). In my



the mechanics of his surrealist work, and as a cultural medium to present and/or represent himself and his ideas.<sup>5</sup>

### DALÍ'S CONTENTIOUS CATALANISM

The fact that Salvador Dalí's Catalanism, like so many aspects in his life and work, was surrounded by controversy and scandal should not surprise us. Dalí was single-mindedly determined to stand out among his contemporaries, and went out of his way to be shocking and controversial (García de la Rasilla, "Dalí & the Mechanics of Scandal"). One can hardly avoid confronting the polemical and in many cases provocative content of some of his ideas and pronouncements concerning his native land and culture. Nevertheless, Dalí's Catalanism might be best understood within his postmodern sense of identity as a concept characterized by inclusiveness (and not exclusiveness)<sup>6</sup> hence his non-conflictive simultaneous identification with both Spain and Catalonia, and with the local and the universal. Dalí's life-long concern with character resulted in a plurality of images and interpretations rooted in what the surrealist Max Ernst defined as a "convulsive identity" that often upsets the very principle of identity and essence (19-20). Within this context Dalí's sometimes contradictory and ambiguous Catalanism could easily become annoying, or at the very least, politically inconvenient.

Naturally, after his death in February of 1989, the Catalan press was immediately split into factions for and against Dalí, and on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, the controversy about his Catalanism re-ignited when the *conseller en cap* de la Generalitat, Artur Mas, chose the painter's anniversary as an opportunity for a patriotic celebration (Carol; Playà 83). As Santos Torroella put it, although Dalí's

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appropriation of the expression I extend the concept of polymorphism beyond its sexual boundaries to include issues of identity and of his national self-definition.

5. "His Catalanism was as essential to him as Henry Moore's or Stanley Spencer's Englishness was to them. When Dalí thought the bizarre, anthropomorphic rocks of the shoreline of Cap Creus were more significant than any other rocks in the world, and painted them as such, he was not joking. His sense of his own extremity and exception was underwritten by his feeling – indeed, his conviction – that Catalans as such were a special case in Spanish society and history. He felt he had a whole culture behind him with its own poetics" (Hughes).

6. "Dalí promoted a morality of inclusion rather than one grounded in the exclusiveness of what can be identified. Here Dalí's politics do bear some resemblance to those of Bataille. Bataille's and Benjamin's reactions to the politics of capitalism and fascism in the 1930s recognized the role of "catastrophe" and "shock," which ignite heterogeneity and its ruptures of rational projects of control and accumulation by reckless discharge and upheaval" (LaFontaine 137-38).

relationship with Catalonia was not always smooth, but difficult and tempestuous, this fact did not affect his Catalanitat, "*por ser él catalán de cuna y familia*" (Santos 103). Dalí was educated within the Catalanist cultural atmosphere that prevailed in his family's circle of friends in Figueres which included, among others, prominent federalist figures such as the writer and politician Puig Pujades, the journalist Carles Costa, the playwright Ignasi Iglésias, or the poet Gabriel Alomar. But despite his home environment, the young adolescent painter showed greater inclination toward radical anarchist syndicalism and even became an admirer of the Soviet Union (Fanés, "Un Diari" X). This political attitude was not a hindrance to his Catalanist sentiments and expressions. His friend and political comrade, Jaume Miravittles, disclosed in a lecture at the Ateneu of Barcelona in 1938, how he and Dalí had burned the Spanish flag in Figueres, which they regarded as a symbol of oppression,<sup>7</sup> although Dalí later denied it.<sup>8</sup>

But independently of the degree of his political involvement with Catalan nationalism, Dalí's work was marked in the twenties by the strong influence of regional painters (Ramon Pichot, Ricard Canals, Isidre Nonell, Joaquim Mir, Xavier Nogués, Joaquim Sunyer or Josep Obiols), as well as by a pervasive presence of Catalonia in his canvases, represented through the landscape, people, scenes and festivities of the Empordà (Carol; Playà 88-89). We should not forget that Dalí was born at a moment when the literary and political myth of the Empordà began to take shape. The poet Joan Maragall called the region "the window of Catalonia" (178) or "the land of freedom," a phrase later adopted as a motto for the Republican weekly publication *Empordà Federal*. In his earliest paintings Dalí contributed to this growing cultural myth and depicted the colors of a landscape that had already

7. "Para mí, la bandera española era la bandera que siempre había visto al lado de la bandera del absolutismo monárquico, encarnado por la bandera que ellos llamaban nacional, pero que nosotros no reconocíamos como tal, el pintor Dalí y yo subimos al Instituto de Segunda Enseñanza de Figueres y quemamos la bandera española, que en aquel momento, para nosotros era la bandera de la monarquía, del imperialismo y de los germanófilos; de aquellos que querían ahogar en Europa y en el mundo, la ideas de la libertad y de la dignidad ciudadana" (Jaume Miravittles, *Lo que he visto en Madrid*, qtd. in Carol and Playà 87-88).

8. The painter produced a very different version of this event in his autobiography *The Secret Life* (1942), exonerating himself from any participation in the incident, perhaps in an attempt to erase his political background in order to return to Franco's Spain: "This is what had happened: at this time there was developing an important separatist movement connected with certain contemporary political events which had just been announced in the newspapers of the day before, and the students had done nothing less than to burn a Spanish flag! Just as I was heading toward the group to try to find out what was happening ... I was left standing alone with the remnants of the burned and smoking flag at my feet ... I declared repeatedly that my presence here was purely accidental, but no one paid the slightest attention to my protests of innocence" (Dalí, "Secret Life" 124).



been canonized in the Catalan literature and journalism of those days (Guillamet 377).

But Dalí's adherence to avant-garde trends and his rebellious position against tradition and in favor of modernity very soon began to affect his attachment to Catalanism, which in his mind implied a romantic connection to sentimentality and to the past. Beginning in 1928, and coinciding with his approach to the surrealist movement, the painter intensified his provocative declarations and attacks against all that he regarded as old, bourgeois, sclerotic or, in his terms, as "putrefacto" (putrefied), including the political and cultural values of the Catalan establishment. In March of 1928, the *Yellow Manifesto or the Catalan Antiartistic Manifesto*, published by Salvador Dalí, Lluís Montanyà and Sebastià Gasch, set off the first of a series of diatribes against some of the landmarks of Catalan identity. The subscribers denounced "the sentimental influence of the racial commonplaces of Guimerà," "the unhealthy sentimentality served by the Orfeo Català with its worn-out repertoire of popular songs adapted and adulterated by people who are absolutely hopeless in what concerns music," or "the present-day Catalan poetry, made with hackneyed Maragallian clichés, etc. (Dalí, "Yellow Manifesto" 62-63). Two months later in *L'Amic de les Arts*, the artist even proposed the abolition of the *sardana*,<sup>9</sup> an almost sacred symbolic dance for Catalan nationalists. In successive public interventions in Barcelona his anti-Catalan provocations increased. In one occasion, for example, Dalí described the popular and venerated dramatist, Angel Guimerà, who had died a few years before, (and had founded the *Ateneu* where the artist was speaking) as a "great pederast, [and] immense hairy putrefaction" (Dalí, *Secret Life* 321). Dalí demonstrated a similar attitude in texts such as *La femme visible*, where he dismissed outright his native land, friends and family. In his article on "Castilian and Catalan Intellectuals" ("Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution" 7) Dalí rejected in vivid terms not only Catalan politicians, but also Catalonia's landscape, cities and climate. His well-deserved reputation as an anti-Catalanist led to his isolation and alienation from the leading circles of Catalan artists and intellectuals with the exception of his loyal friends J. V. Foix, Jaume Miravittles, Josep Maria de Sagarra and Josep Maria Sert (Carol; Playà 92).

9. "Is it still necessary that I should continue explaining the profanation represented by the *sardana* danced with straw hats, and how, today, that extraordinary dance is one of the most disrespectful modes of immorality that could be handed to our youth? Or is it, gentlemen, that we can still be under the illusion that in the fullness of the twentieth century the *sardana* constitutes a regional curiosity? Let's propose to all those who love civilization: I. To abolish the *Sardana*; II. To wage war, therefore, against everything that is regional, typical, local, etc." (Dalí, "For the Sitges Meeting" 66).

This belligerent attitude was the result of his intention to break with his cultural milieu, which coincided with his incorporation to the surrealist movement in Paris and with his union to Gala. The final quarrel with his family took place in 1929 when Dalí painted the silhouette of a well-known image of the Sacred-Heart in which he inscribed the epigraph "sometimes, I spit for pleasure on my mother's picture," (qtd. in Fanés, "Salvador Dalí" 180). The artist's later apologies did not prevent a scandal or affect his father's decision to expel him from home as well as from Figueres and Cadaqués, where the notary public S.R. Dalí had powerful local connections (Fanés, "Salvador Dalí" 178-182). At this point in his artistic and personal development, Dalí considered necessary to sever ties with his origins, both familial and cultural, as well as to engineer a major scandal (García de la Rasilla "Dalí & the Mechanics of Scandal" 48-49). In his inseparable companion and lover, Gala, he had found a nurturing mother figure and the surrealist movement provided a substitute group identity that seemed much more cosmopolitan and universal, and hence more suited to the dimensions and ambitions of his art. He thus lashed out in the most calculatedly offensive fashion against a family, a land and a culture that he regarded as the acme of those provincial bourgeois values which avant-garde artists such as himself had to undermine and debunk (Molas 69).

Despite these avant-garde diatribes, Dalí never actually escaped the influence of his Catalan cultural upbringing. One of his most important works of those years, *The Great Masturbator* (1929) is a surrealist self-portrait based on one of the rocks of Cape Creus, and points to the artist's lingering identification with his native environment. Dalí's vocal anti-Catalanism ceased a few years later, and in 1935 he even acclaimed Catalonia as a surrealist land.<sup>10</sup> His reconciliation with his family after the Spanish Civil War marked a return to his cultural Catalan roots, which he then went on to reformulate as the primary inspiration of his work. This interesting turnabout was, at least in part,

10. "Aixís puc dirvos com a exemples Nostrats que Catalunya es surrealista en l'anarquia

Barcelona es surrealista en les sublimes i demencials architectures conNulsives de gaudi i del modern estil-

Francesc pujols es surrealiste cuan no diu bestieses i molt sobin cuan les diu-

Mossen Cinto fou surrealista en llur flagrant complexa d'edip, agravat de necrofilia, tan maravellosament transparen a la canço de l'emigran

Fortuny fou surrealista en la tecnica

Adolf FarNoli es surrealista gracias a la seva debilitat mental

Ramon Lull fou autenticament surrealiste en els seus escrits [...]

Salvador Dalí es surrealista, especialmen en el seu academisme pervers, i en el seu exivisioNisme irresponsable [...]"

(Dalí, "Importància filosòfica dels rellotgets tous" qtd. in Fanés, "Salvador Dalí" 265).

the result of a series of major events in his life. After being expelled from the surrealist movement and fleeing France at the onset of World War II, Dalí found himself rootless and in need both of group identity and of new leitmotifs for his art (a personal crisis reflected in the plot of *The Secret Life*). These things Catalonia and Spain could readily supply, even when a return to Cadaqués might imply an endorsement of the Franco regime. Although Dalí maintained in America an ambiguously neutral political position during the Spanish conflict, some intellectuals in exile began to see him as the most important cultural representative of Catalonia in the world. For example Masades de Segura (pseudonym of the writer Joan Sales) labeled the painter as "el profeta de Portlligat" because "es [en Portlligat] i no a Viena, on es troba la llum que en Dalí ha portat a les seves pintures. En comptes d'introduir una idea universal a Catalunya, havia escampat una idea catalana per l'univers. No era sols el més pintor dels catalans: era també el més català dels pintors" (xiii-xiv). Another writer, Ferran de Pol, addressed in a different issue of the same magazine Dalí's "supposed anti-Catalanism" to find that "resulta una mica forçat el seu suposat horror a una pàtria que li ha dat el millor de la seva obra, que l'ha fet, que l'ha porjectat, gràcies a la humilitat i bravesa, sobrietat i estructura del seu paisatge, a unes dimensions universals" (vii). Although in the following years Catalan intellectuals continued to express a mixture of admiration and political reservation towards Dalí, the painter's growing support for the Franco regime alienated him again from many of his compatriots, with the exception of his unconditional friends, Pla, Foix and Miravittles. This isolation was only partially broken after Franco's death by the presidents of the Generalitat Josep Tarradellas and Jordi Pujol who sought to recognize his contribution to Catalonia despite or independently of the painter's polemical political positions (Carol; Playà 96-100). In 1982 the Generalitat granted Dalí the institution's Gold Medal as a reward for a body of work with strong Catalan roots, and because, according to Jordi Pujol, "un pueblo que no fuese capaz de honrar a sus hombres más importantes, más brillantes, más universales, sería un pueblo enfermo" (Carol; Playà 101).

Perhaps Dalí felt his Catalanism or Catalanitat as something so universal that he rejected its circumscription to a fairly narrow framework of political conceptions and/or territorial vindications that might hinder its global diffusion. It might be more useful to examine the painter's Catalanism with an open cultural optic and within his conception of Catalan culture as a universal vehicle of artistic and literary expression. Dalí often presented himself as a Catalan surrealist, carrying out his mission of, as Francesc Pujols put it, "painting the reality of fantasy" that befits "the realistic Catalan genius" ("Salvador



Dalí" 93-94). Thus in a written comment to one of the photographic portraits in which he appeared wearing the *barretina*, Dalí declared that "the painter must be as smart as a cook, and must officiate in the proper dress. His dress ought to be a soft substitute for the hard helmet of Pallas Athena," that is, a *barretina*. This headdress should also hide an electronic and cybernetic apparatus whose lenses could allow for the communication of televised information" (qtd. in Descharnes, "Dalí de Gala" frontispiece). This appears to be an allusion to a machine to photograph and film thought, a project that first appears in his autobiography. However, even without the help of this impossible contraption, Dalí succeeded in concretizing and communicating his Catalan mind in words and images that utilize and publicize the more universal aspects of Catalan culture.

#### IN THE CATALAN PHILOSOPHICAL AND POPULAR TRADITION

In his *Unspeakable Confessions* Dalí explained his particular sentiment of the Catalan soul, with which he declared himself completely attuned at a psychological, aesthetical and biological level.<sup>11</sup> In one of the chapters of the book apparently designed to teach the reader "how not to be a Catalan," the artist put forward a radical and almost mystical notion of the Catalan soul or nature as almost a pre-condition of his personal being and existence, adequately expressed in his phrase "to be Dalí one must first be Catalan" ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 136). This categorical statement, that seems to undermine the painter life-long game with his identity and image, is nonetheless a recognition of the origins of his aesthetics of anamorphism and paranoia, and of the polymorphism of his character. "To be Dalí one must first be Catalan" because it is in the Catalan land and thought where the painter learnt the paranoid intelligence of delirium and transmutation that later defined his public personality and his entire work:

11. "I am a Catalan peasant in tune with the soul of my land ... I made myself on these shores, created my persona here, discovered my love, painted my oeuvre, built my house. I am inseparable from this sky, this sea, these rocks: linked forever with Port Lligat -which indeed means 'linked port'- where I defined all of my raw truths and my roots. I am home only here; elsewhere, I am camping out ... I am part of the rhythm of a cosmic pulsation. My mind is in osmosis with the sea, the trees, the insects, the plants, and I assume a real stability that translates itself into my paintings ... This privileged place is where there is the least space between the real and the sublime. My mystical paradise begins at the plains of the Ampurdan, is surrounded by the foothills of the Monts Albères, and comes to meaning in the Gulf of Cadaqués. This country is my permanent inspiration ... Yes, I am a Catalan peasant whose every cell branches on to a parcel of his earth, each spark of spirit to a period in the history of Catalonia, homeland of paranoia" (Dalí, "Unspeakable Confessions" 131-132).

To be a Catalan today is to have the greatest opportunity for the future ... The Catalan philosopher Raymond Lully, an alchemist and metaphysician who wrote *The Twelve Principles of Philosophy*, mystic and martyr—he was stoned to death at eighty at Bougie (Algeria) by Arabs—inspires me. Like him, I believe in the transmutation of bodies. I am sure that our capacity for delirium will one day lead the Catalan people to the highest glories through the powers of paranoiac imagination.

According to another Catalan, Francisco Pujols, there is an angel in us who sees the light of day only after a long series of mutations ... Catalan thought will dazzle the world. It reaches the sources of the depths. And I give it the power of coming to awareness ...

Paradoxically, I channeled my delirium through reason, as in art I found my expression through classicism. I turn my contradictions into a veritable coherence. I can truly say I do not know when I begin simulating or when I tell the truth, but I do know when and where delirium ends. ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 147-48)

It is not a coincidence that Dalí's monument to Francesc Pujols, one of the most relevant Catalan intellectuals of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, precedes the entrance to the Dalinian universe, represented at his Theatre-Museum of Figueres (Girona), and on its dedicatory marker one can read Pujols' own words: "El pensament català rebrota sempre i sobreviu als seus il·lusos enterradors" ("Catalan thought always springs forth anew, outliving its naïve gravediggers"). Salvador Dalí who would declare that "his genius is inseparable from his Catalan land, nature and soul," ("su genio es indisociable de la patria, la naturaleza y el alma catalanas") ("Las pasiones según Dalí" 30), regarded Pujols as a spiritual and nationalist mentor, and paid him special public tribute and homage. The artist even edited a book on Pujols (*Pujols per Dalí*), where besides his panegyric on the philosopher, several of Pujols' articles were published.

Like Pujols, Dalí made his universality an outgrowth of his Catalan nature: "I am human genius, the more universal for being Catalan" ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 136), almost duplicating the famous dictum of Michel de Montaigne, "to be universal one has to be ultra-local." However, and despite his radical and even mystical conception of Catalan identity, he saw no conflict between his feeling of *Catalanitat* and his sense of belonging to a wider Spanish and Iberian kinship.<sup>12</sup> Dalí's notion of *Catalanitat* lacked any contentious opposition or confrontation with Spanish nationality or culture, mainly because his Catalan identity was based not on a political or ideological construction,

12. "The two most fortunate things that can happen to a painter are, first, to be Spanish and, second, to be named Dalí. Those two fortunate things have happened to me" (Dalí, "50 Secrets" 9).



but on a conception of his land that connected the ultra-local with the universal: "The point is not for Spain to become European, but rather that all of my country take inspiration from the Catalan soul; that Catalonia "Geronimize" itself; that Gerona start to reflect "Figuerasism"; as Cadaqués becomes one cell within Figueras. Then all of Europe will be Spanish. I believe only in ultra-localism" ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 139).

The artist took pains to link himself with the long pedigree of Catalonian intellectuality. With the self-promoting audacity that characterized his public persona, Dalí did not hesitate to proclaim that "Catalonia can boast of three great geniuses: namely, Raymond de Sebonde, author of *Natural Theology*; Gaudí, the father of Mediterranean Gothic; and Salvador Dalí, inventor of the new Paranoiac Critical mysticism and savior, as his very name indicates, of modern painting" ("Mystical Manifesto"). However, and no matter how disproportionate one may find this judgment, Dalí was not alone in this evaluation: Francesc Pujols also regarded the artist as the savior who had come to resurrect the realist and Classicist style dead and condemned elsewhere in Europe ("Salvador Dalí" 93-96). In 1941 Dalí declared that "his destiny [was] TO BECOME CLASSIC!" ("The Last Scandal of Salvador Dalí" 337.) Later in his autobiography, *The Secret Life*, he explained that Classicism "meant integration, synthesis, cosmogony, faith," and proclaimed a Neo-Classicism "arising out of the fatigue and the nausea over 'isms'" (354). Here again Dalí adopted Pujols' ideas, more or less in totum and used them as a vehicle for his return to Catalan tradition. Echoing many of Pujols' ideas about the Catalan character and Catalonia's universal scientific and philosophical mission contained in his *Concepte General de la Ciència Catalana* (1918), Dalí would become a Catalan cultural agent in the world, an international ambassador,<sup>13</sup> or in Pujols' terms, another Catalan "Columbus of painting" able to transmit to America a knowledge of his native land ("Salvador Dalí" 96).

In his idiosyncratic and unorthodox way of thinking, Francesc Pujols regarded Catalan art as a series of scientific documents and materials emerging from the observation and analysis of the natural world and leading to what he considered the major goal of Catalan science: to link reason and reality.<sup>14</sup> Following Pujols, Dalí turned many of his paintings into visual scientific and psychoanalytic

13. "With Pujols writing in 1944, 'The ideal Catalan will be realized the day that America has knowledge of Catalunya,' and Dalí professing his ambition to become the 'archetype of the Catalanian predicted by Pujols,' it seems the artist may have regarded himself as a Catalan heir to Lullist verticality and thus, in Pujols' spirit, its international ambassador" (King, "Winged Fantasy" 5).

14. "L'art català ... es podria molt ben comparar a una col·lecció de documents i materials científics, fills i resultat de l'observació, l'anàlisi i l'estudi del natural, que són



testimonies. The Freudian universe, Einstein's theory of relativity, Heisenberg's quantum physics and Watson and Cricks' structure of DNA, were only a few of the scientific concepts which defy visual representation but that Dalí nevertheless tried to grasp and interpret pictorially. In addition, Pujols' defense of "l'aplicació triomfal i positiva de la raó a la realitat" (*Concepte General* 426), finds its counterpart in Dalí's exploration and representation of "the reason of the unreason," expressed through his "paranoiac critical method" of systematization of delirium, where (unlike surrealist automatism) the basis of creativity would be the critical interpretation of reality aiming at "the conquest of the irrational."<sup>15</sup> As Pujols pointed out in his essay on Dalí, the artist demonstrated his realist Catalan genius by giving full life to the reality of fantasy: "Ningún creador realista convencido da la impresión de realidad pintada que dan las fantasías de Dalí, que en vez de alas tienen pies de plomo y en vez de volar tocan de pies al suelo" ("No realist creator provides the impression of painted reality that is found in Dalí's fantasies, which instead of wings have leaden feet, and instead of flying are rooted to the ground") (*Salvador Dalí* 94).

In his insightful article on the influences of Catalan philosophy on Dalí's mystical and scientific ideas, Elliott King examines how Dalí's "Nuclear Mysticism" of the fifties derived from Llull's theories on the interdependence of faith and reason. King also analyses how the painter's conception of the DNA double helix structure as a "royal ladder" in the seventies, resembles the biblical Jacob's Ladder, the link between humanity and the angels, and presents clear parallels with Pujols' "hiparxiological"<sup>16</sup> staircase (King, "Winged Fantasy" 190-191). The common denominator is a current in Catalan traditional thought tending to harmonize faith and reason. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Llull tried to find God through logic, and Raymond de Sebonde in his *Natural Theology* (1480) claimed that unaided human reason could demonstrate the existence of God. Dalí in turn sought scientific evidence of God, thus complying with Pujols' conception of the rational mission of Catalan religious thought, which was to demonstrate with scientific

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les condicions que la ciència universal catalana reclama en fer la unió indissoluble de la raó i la realitat concreta coneguda" (Pujols, *Concepte general* 421).

15. "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 objective 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" (Dalí, "The Conquest of the Irrational" 265).

16. This adjective refers to *hiparxiologi*, Pujols' term to denominate "universal science," "derived from the Greek *hiparxis* and *logos* ('the science or study of existence'), which he claimed would systematize Reality and establish Catalunya as the world epicenter of Truth" (King, "Wing Fantasy" 2).

rigor the truth of religion (King, "Dalí Atomicus"). In his *Unspeakable Confessions* Dalí links Lull's concept of the transmutation of bodies with his own capacity for delirium and with the power of paranoiac imagination as the source of double or multiple images in his canvases (147). In a semi-mystical confession, not lacking in self-glorification, Dalí places himself at the top of Pujols' scale of beings:<sup>17</sup> "I am approaching the absolute and I have perfected a whole series of methods for completing myself, from delayed orgasm to ejaculation over the idea of my death. The world will soon see Dalí turned angel!" (148).

Dalí not only absorbed and expressed Pujols' principles, he also embraced the specific Catalan cultural mission he had proposed, specially the communication of concrete aspects of Catalan thought in universal terms as Ramon Llull had much earlier done,<sup>18</sup> as well as the global diffusion of Classicism, which according to Pujols, contained the most sublime manifestations of art ("L'evolució i els principis immutables" 119). Indeed, the artist's desire to universalize Catalan culture led him to link old folk tales and traditions with modernity and to interpret Catalan myths as symbolic keys to Freudian and Surrealist conceptions. His obsession with feces, for example, projected in some of his pictures, (E. G. *The Lugubrious Game*) as the Freudian complex of coprophagia, is connected to the comic figures of the *caganers*, quite popular in Catalonia even today.<sup>19</sup> In his writings and canvases we find key Catalan figures and legends such as Narcís Monturiol, a forerunner of the submarine with whom Dalí identified as fellow Figuerens and searcher of unfathomable profundities, or the myth of the Catalan Columbus (Descharnes, "Dalí de Gala" 68-70), dear to some Catalan nationalists. Other local figures that inhabit some of his major paintings and writings are his friend Alexandre Deulofeu and Lidia of Cadaqués, mythified by Eugeni D'Ors in *La Ben Plantada*, as an example of the paranoiac capacity of the people of the Cada-

17. In his *Pantologia* Pujols examines the ladder of human evolution or the "ladder of life" "that goes from the plant to the angel; passing through the protozoa, the animal and man, and of which he said, in a poetic manner: the plant is an angel who sleeps on earth. The angel is a plant that awakes in the sky" (Alavedra 207).

18. "Perquè Ramon Llull, fundador de la ciència catalana que sempre parla de reis i de corones, no diu una paraula que no sigui universal ni fa una comparació que no sigui una imatge del domini del món, no pot ésser una encarnació més exacta de la missió de la nostra patria" (Pujols, "Concepte general" 437).

19. "It helps, if you want to understand what Dalí was on about, to know a bit of Catalan folklore and to have read some of the work of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Catalan mystic Ramon Llull, and some of the poetry of that fantastically gifted and deeply local priest-writer Jacint Verdaguer, and some of the essays of the province's memory-man Josep Pla -just for starters" (Hughes).



qués.<sup>20</sup> According to popular notions in the region, the Cadaquesens were psychologically affected by the Tramuntana wind,<sup>21</sup> a condition that Dalí thought he may have inherited, and which he certainly used as the basis for his Surrealist paranoiac-critical method of interpretation of reality.<sup>22</sup> Among other local legends illustrated or integrated in his work, (The Christ of the Tramuntana, the Shoemaker of Ordís, the witches of Llers, the boy who raised the skin of the sea, etc.) the painter was quite fond of the tale and game of "*el pare Patufet*," which—according to him—was since olden times the most popular childhood hero of Catalonia ("Secret Life" 31). One day the tiny boy Patufet disappeared, and when his parents asked where he was, he answered: "*A la panxa del bou, on no neva ni plou*." Dalí interpreted the tale in Freudian terms as a symbolic reference to the intra-uterine life, and the game itself as evidence of the human desire to return to the lost maternal paradise, a longing that the painter himself experienced.<sup>23</sup>

20. "During his childhood Dalí must have heard stories of people committing suicide in Cadaqués under the influence of the tramuntana [...] Little wonder, then, that years later, without mentioning any names, he said that the *cadaquesens* were the greatest paranoiacs produced by the Mediterranean" (Gibson 39).

21. "This fierce north wind ... dry and bitterly cold in winter, it roars and blasts its way down through the passes of the Pyrenees (hence tramuntana, 'from across the mountains') ... The tramuntana blows regularly at over 130 kilometers an hour, and has been known to overturn railway carriages and hurl cars into the sea ... The tramuntana can affect the emotions as brutally as it does the sea and countryside ... Anyone a little dotty in these parts, or with a tendency suddenly to flare up, is likely to be labeled *atramuntanat* ('touched by the tramuntana'), ... As for depressives, they can be driven to absolute despair by a prolonged bout of the wind ... It is even alleged that the tramuntana is responsible for suicides, especially in Cadaqués" (Gibson 35-36).

22. "Lidia possessed the most marvelously paranoiac brain aside from my own that I have ever known. She was capable of establishing completely coherent relations between any subject whatsoever and her obsession of the moment with sublime disregard of everything else, and with a choice of detail and a play of wit so subtle and so calculatingly resourceful that it was often difficult not to agree with her on questions which one knew to be utterly absurd" (Dalí, "Secret Life" 265-66).

23. "It was in these artificial ox-belly-grottoes, constructed in the electric tension of stormy days that my Patufet imagination reproduced most of the images corresponding in an unequivocal way to my pre-natal memories. These memory-images that had so determining an influence on the rest of my life would always occur as a consequence of a curious game consisting of the following: I would get down on all fours and in such a way that my knees and hands would touch; I would then let my head droop with its own weight while swinging it in all directions like a pendulum, so as to make all my blood flow into it. I would prolong this exercise until a voluptuous dizziness resulted; then and without having to shut my eyes I would see emerging from the intense darkness (blackier than anything one can see in real darkness) phosphorescent circles in which would be formed the famous fried eggs (without the pan) ... These eggs of fire would finally blend with a very soft and amorphous white paste; it seemed to be pulled in all directions, its extreme ductility adapting itself to all forms seemed to grow with my growing desire to see it ground, folded, refolded, curled up and pressed in the most contradictory directions. This appeared to me the height of delight, and I should have liked everything to be always like that!" (Dalí, "Secret Life" 31-32).



"YES, I AM CAPE CREUS..."

In his autobiography *The Secret Life* (1942), Dalí stated that the geology of the Empordà "with its utter vigor was later to fashion the entire esthetic of the philosophy of the Dalinian landscape" (65), which he defined as a "combination of geological mold and of the mold of civilization [that] exists uniquely on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and not elsewhere" (127). Thus it was only in Cadaqués, the most perfect example of Catalan scenery, according to Dalí, where he could take his "esthetic [summer] courses" (127). This intense sense of the land and of its grounded forces, which Dalí interpreted in mystical and passionate terms as an expression of the ineffable, responds to the legendary Catalan traits of *seny i rauxa*, this is, common sense rooted in the soil and combined with passion and exultation. This formula, shop-worn though it might be, is quite probably behind Dalí's paranoiac-critical method of interpretation of reality and of its combination of madness and logical interpretive control, which he understood as the basis of Catalan character: "The Catalan family is paranoiac, that is to say, delirious and systematic, and the real finally ends up by conforming to the demanding will of this directed madness. Nothing stands in the way of our desires, and reality is there to fulfill them" ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 132).

Contemporary critics such as Sebastià Gasch concurred that "és innegable que de no haver nascut en aquesta terra, la pintura del nostre artista tindria una fesonomia diametralment oposada a la que manifesta" (Gasch 141), while J. V. Foix went even further, affirming that "sense el paisatge del Cap de Creus no hi ha interpretació possible dels temes dalinians més personals" (qtd. in *Vanguardia* 21).

But this atavistic identification with the land was, of course, not exclusive to Dalí, and other Catalan artists such as Antoni Gaudí and Joan Miró also took their cues from Catalan scenery. As is well known, Gaudí found inspiration in the landscape of Monserrat and the geological forms of Cape Creus,<sup>24</sup> and sought to connect his architecture with specific Catalan localities (Bonet 48-49). Like Gaudí and Dalí, Joan Miró's search for a Catalan identity and heritage led him to explore the Catalan collective visual past, the roots of which he located in the Catalan soil, fields, mountains, beaches and light. Working in a political moment when the past could revitalize a nationalist present, poets and

24. "Gaudí often went to Montserrat where as a student he assisted in work on the project for a sanctuary. Struck by this sweep of sandstone with its strange polished relieves, a kind of Wagnerian phantom, whose immeasurable domes and pinnacles rise in the middle of Catalonia, he used their forms and dynamism in some of his constructions" (Descharnes 160).

artists sought the memorial remnants of archaisms and indigenous stories in order to reinvent a unique Catalan voice (Rowell 2). Miró's Catalan idiom was like Dalí's, not provincial or local, but as Margit Rowell puts it: "an international Catalanism, by which he meant a universally meaningful style that nonetheless expressed inherently Catalan values" (6). While Miró transformed the geological, animal and vegetable motifs of the countryside of Tarragona into mythical elements in his paintings, Dalí converted Cape Creus' tortured landscape into the oneiric scenario of many of his works. But as Foix observed, despite the similarities between the cultural nationalism and localism of both artists, there were significant differences too:

Dalí is a phenomenon to be studied within pictorial anthropology; Miró belongs to ethnography and folklore. All the super-realistic painting of Dalí is, still abusing scientific terminology, an open manifestation of archaic plastic geology. No one has been as absorbed by the azoic landscape of the northeast of Catalonia as Dalí. The solid crusts of the Cap de Creus have worked as the leading agent in the consolidation of the pictorial temperament of Dalí. ("No és la primera vegada que remarquem")

As he formulated them, Dalí's aesthetics of paranoia were conditioned by the geology of the Empordà, which constitutes a constant background to his pictures.<sup>25</sup> In his *Unspeakable Confessions* the painter vehemently expressed his complete identification with one of the region's most emblematic places, Cape Creus, at the extreme Northeast of the Iberian Peninsula, where the Pyrenees' mountains descend sharply down to the sea. Its landscape of hard rocks molded by the action of the wind and of the Mediterranean generates spectacular and strange forms and figures, whose mimetic allure inspired Dalí's paranoia:

By mimesis, my paranoia took on the analytic hardness of Cape Creus granite my imagination acquired the power of the metamorphoses by wandering along these perpetually changing shores. My delirium battered on the dreamlike anguishes and mysteries created by the interplay of winds, rocks, and sea. I chose this place as the privileged center of my world, where the most intimate contact arises between the earth that bore me and the being that I am. Yes, I am Cape Creus and each of my rocks is a lighthouse forming the constellation of my internal navigation. [...] And as long as I remain anchored to these rocks in the heart of my Catalonia, the source of my delirium of living, inspired by my Catalan genies, I shall never cease transcending all fatalities. (149-150)

<sup>25</sup>. For the links between Dalí and the Empordà see Josep Playà i Maset, *Dalí de L'Empordà*.



Like the rocks of Cape Creus Dalí, the surrealist performer, is also hard and soft, that is, paradoxically always the same and inalterable, while simultaneously in perpetual change and metamorphosis. In his *Secret Life* Dalí explained how those rocks contributed to his "morphological aesthetics of the soft and the hard" (304), and how their continual evolution had taught him the principle of paranoiac metamorphosis.<sup>26</sup> In addition, he discovered in the deep permanence and constant reshaping of the rocks of Cape Creus his own principle of shape-shifting representation, or in LaFountain's version,<sup>27</sup> his postmodern mutation and subversion of identities and paradigms:

While the fishermen rowed, and one saw these rocks at each monotonous stroke of the oars continually become metamorphosed, 'become uninterruptedly something else,' 'change simulacra,' as though they had been phantasmal quick-change artists of stone, I discovered in this perpetual disguise the profound meaning of that modesty of nature which Heraclitus referred to in his enigmatic phrase, 'Nature lies to conceal herself.' And in this modesty of nature I divined the very principle of irony. Watching the 'stirring' of the forms of those motionless rocks, I meditated on my own rocks, those of my thought.

I should have liked them to be like those outside—relativistic, changing at the slightest displacement in the space of the spirit, becoming constantly their own opposite, dissembling, ambivalent, hypocritical, disguised, vague and concrete, without dream, without 'mist of wonder,' measurable, observable, physical, objective, material and hard as granite. (Dalí, "Secret Life" 305)

26. "Indeed if there is anything to which one must compare these rocks, from the point of view of form, it is clouds, a mass of catastrophic petrified cumuli in ruins. All the images capable of being suggested by the complexity of their innumerable irregularities appear successively and by turn as you change your position. This was so objectifiable that the fishermen of the region had since time immemorial baptized each of these imposing conglomerations—the camel, the eagle, the anvil, the monk, the dad woman, the lion's head. But as we moved forward with the characteristic slowness of a row-boat (the sole agreeable means of navigation), all these images became transfigured, and I had no need to remark upon this, for the fishermen themselves called it to my attention. 'Look, Señor Salvador, now instead of a camel one would say it had become a rooster.' What had been the camel's head now formed the comb, and the camel's lower lip, which was already prominent, had lengthened to become the beak. The hump, which before had been in the middle of its back, was now all the way back and formed the rooster's tail. As we came nearer, the tips of the anvil had become rounded, and it was exactly like a woman's two breasts..." (Dalí, "Secret Life" 304-305).

27. "Dalí thus, whether a grasshopper child or the son of William Tell or a substitute for his dead brother, or whatever, never participated in being "present." Hence the repetition of displacement in his works: death, decomposition, efflux, egress, discontinuity, conflict, putrefaction. Yet there is no key here to the essence of Dalí anymore than there is in psychoanalysis or occultated hermeneutics. His identity is a "not present" that neither psychoanalysis nor hermeticism, assuming an original presence, can be nostalgic about or reconstruct. Always different, without place, Dalí, indeed the author, the painter, the I, is neuter, neutral—a plurality, a multiplicity of unnameables that only feign and insinuate their presence via phantom meaning" (LaFountain 140-141).



Within a surrealist context, the representation of the natural landscape was intimately connected to the inner world of consciousness (Capella; Playà 371). Dalí recalled that it was during his walks with his father in Cape Creus when his paranoiac imagination began to grow by observing the morphology of its rocks, as they were transformed and constantly re-cast into successive figures of animals and beings which he later portrayed in his paintings ("The Unspeakable Confessions" 129). Two of his most important canvases, *The Dream* (1937) and the *Great Masturbator*, (1929) are in this fashion directly inspired by the rocks of Cape Creus. *The Dream* is a substantive example of Dalí's surrealist translation of Catalan geology. In the painting, while the image of the dream retains a great similarity to prominent rocky formations on Cape Creus, Dalí makes the Freudian mechanics of the dreaming process intervene by displacing the object from its natural environment, and by altering the physical laws of gravity and texture. As the epitome of the idiosyncratic metamorphoses of dreams, the stone is suspended in space and floats in a mysterious and disquieting atmosphere. A prominent rock that Dalí thought resembled Morpheus, has been altered into a soft and grotesque surrealist symbol of the dream, subjected to the Freudian paradigm as much as to the Catalan soil, which constituted the most tangible geographical and cultural point of support for Dalí's dreams, deliriums and obsessions. Here too Dalí was following Gaudí's lead. Whereas the towers of the Sagrada Família reflect a dream Gaudí had of palm trees in his patio (Pawles 41), Dalí's surrealist canvases project into the world the Catalan landscape of his childhood and youth.

His famous *The Great Masturbator*, actually a self-portrait, was based on another rock of Cape Creus, with which the artist personally identified:

In the center there is the "Great Masturbator," with his huge nose, immense eyelids, a rock of strangeness the fascination of which still has the power of the Sphinx over me. In painting it, I attempted to tame it: I merely extolled its image and made it mythical, and its personage must now be wandering somewhere deep in dream memories since I set it afloat. For the Great Masturbator belongs to me and I alone know how to celebrate the Mass of his paranoiac passion. One has to have heard the north wind come over the mountains to play the organ in his granite portals, caressed his craters, bloodied the tips of needles with one's feet in order to be able to speak to him and be heard. I alone can raise his closed eyelids so as to understand his gaze into eternity. He is my awareness of being, the radar echo of my self. (Dalí, "Unspeakable Confessions" 150)

Again, as in a dream, the rock is transformed into a soft and fluid head, (Dalí's own), which in the bottom right hand corner becomes a

bizarre Art Nouveau decoration. Dalí's identification of Art Nouveau buildings with true "realizations of solidified desires" ("Terrifying & Edible Beauty" 198), and the fact that Gaudí's architectural forms were also inspired by the rock formations of the Costa Brava (Masters 15), explains its presence in a painting that connects desire with the Catalan landscape. Though he worked with surrealist techniques and Freudian symbolism, Dalí anchored his sexual obsessions in his native soil, and in so doing, demonstrated how Catalan geology could function as a metaphor of traditional culture and as pliable raw material for the expression of modern concepts of the human psyche.

### DALÍ'S LIFE IN A CATALAN FOLKTALE

As we have seen, Dalí incorporated into his work Catalan myths and folktales, which he interpreted in surrealist and Freudian terms, connecting Catalan tradition with modernity and with the language of the subconscious mind systematized by psychoanalysis. As a Surrealist in search for the sources of "the absolute," Dalí was aware of the various psychological insights contained in myths and folklore,<sup>28</sup> and was eager to use Catalan mythological themes and popular narratives in his own narcissistic mythopoeic construction. His autobiography *The Secret Life* (1942) contains many of the myths and folktales that Dalí used to fashion the story of his life and to link his roots with modern psychological and cultural concepts.<sup>29</sup> The mythopoeic construction of Dalí's paintings and writings disengages folkloric motifs and themes from their original framework and alters their primitive function, scale and meaning, instilling them with new interpretations valid within a modern Freudian and surrealist context.

In his autobiography, the artist expresses his subconscious world through a highly allusive web of inter-textual myths, many of which are Catalan in origin. For instance, the tale of "The Mannequin with

28. "The subject of myth was particularly pertinent to Surrealism, which aimed both to liberate the individual and change society. Seeking to create a new modern mythology, the poets of the group imitated mythological narratives. In such texts as André Breton's *Nadja* (1928) or Louis Aragon's *Le paysan de Paris* (1924), portents were divined in everyday situations, and places were invested with quasi-magical significance. For such surrealist artists as Dalí, Max Ernst and André Masson, myths, whether classical or newly invented, provided a store of images with which to address profound, and normally repressed, aspects of the human psyche" (Mundy 120).

29. "Cal llegir tot el llibre, tan ple de noms, d'allusions, de rondalles, de dites catalanes, per a comprendre l'amor que en Dalí sent per Catalunya. És evident que la *Vida Secreta* pot interessar, —i ha interessat—, gent inimmombrable i de les més diverses races i nacions; però, en realitat, solament als Catalans els farà l'efecte de cosa pròpia, de cosa viscuda i sentida" (Ferran de Pol vii).



the Sugar Nose," located at the heart and core of his book, works as a *mise-en-abîme* of the central meaning of his text. In *The Secret Life*, Dalí portrays himself as a neurotic narcissist who must die to give birth to a new man, resurrected by love. In keeping with Freud's theories, Dalí's narcissist eroticism, derived from his earlier identification with his mother, had become within his psyche an obstacle to any other type of affection. This Dalinian "castrating" double, identified with the mother as an ideal ego, would emerge in his mind when threatened by death, that is, by the presence of an alternative double or love object. This sinister narcissistic double acted as a kind of conscience that supervised Dalí's self and prevented it from love.<sup>30</sup> The medieval popular tale of "The Mannequin With the Sugar Nose" provides a Catalan folkloric frame to Dalí's narcissistic complex and is a major factor in its resolution. It thus becomes the keystone of his intricate autobiographical construction. From then on, the neurotic Dalí returns to normality, and the puzzle of his life acquires renewed meaning.

The story, as Dalí tells it, deals with the strange love of a perverse monarch. Every day three beautiful young maidens were taken before his presence to water the royal garden. Every night the king would select one of them as his wife by asking her the same question: "How many sweet-Williams are there in my garden?" to which the girl was supposed to answer with another impossible query such as "how many stars are there in the sky?" This odd exchange was a reflection of the king's incapacity to love and a preview of the strange nuptial ritual that was to follow. The victim was then richly dressed and ordered to lie next to the king, who would simply look at her without touching. Finally at the break of dawn the monarch would cut off the maiden's head, only to go through the same macabre proceedings day after day and night after night. One day a particularly bright and audacious bride decided to put an end to his automatic necrophilia by replacing herself with a beautiful wax mannequin with a sugar nose, and then hiding under the bed. The king was taken in by the ruse, and when he tried to decapitate the mannequin, its sugar nose flew into his

30. "This ideal ego is now the target of the self-love, which was enjoyed in childhood by the actual ego. The subject's narcissism makes its appearance displaced on to this new ideal ego, which, like the infantile ego, finds itself possessed of every perfection that is of value. As always where the libido is concerned, man has here again shown himself incapable of giving up a satisfaction he had once enjoyed. He is not willing to forgo the narcissistic perfection of his childhood; and when, as he grows up, he is disturbed by the admonitions of others and by the awakening of his own critical judgment, so that he can no longer retain that perfection, he seeks to recover it in the new form of an ego ideal. What he projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal" (Freud, "On Narcissism" 94).



mouth. As he tasted it, he began to lament having killed his bride and sang these verses:

Dulcetta en vida,	Sweet in life,
Dulcetta en mor,	Sweet in death,
Si t'agues coneguda	If I had known you
No t'auria mort!	I should not have given you death!
	("Secret Life" 236)

On hearing them, the maiden emerged from her hiding place and explained to the king what she had done. He was, as Dalí puts it, "suddenly and miraculously cured of his criminal aberration, married her, and they lived happily for many long years" ("Secret Life" 136).<sup>31</sup>

This fairy tale, which may at first seem disconnectedly trivial, is in itself as Dalí put it a "surrealist object functioning symbolically,"<sup>32</sup> and offers a pivotal parable that illuminates and in fact solves his psychosexual plight in the autobiography. As he presents himself in his autobiography, his future wife, Gala, like the girl in the tale, would be the only woman able to liquidate this sadistic narcissism. The tale of "The Mannequin with the Sugar Nose" duplicates metaphorically the dynamics of the relationship between Gala and Dalí in *The Secret Life*. It is no coincidence that this folkloric story functions as Dalí's bridge to sanity, as his way to regain a calm and coherence previously lost in a labyrinth of Freudian complexes. Quite significantly, it is in a Catalan children's tale where Dalí finds the means and the strength to return to his original mental equilibrium. Thus the story and its Catalan nature are suggestive of Dalí's autobiographical search for balance and origins, collective and personal, cultural and individual.

Obviously, by connecting Catalan tradition with the tenets of Freudian psychoanalysis and the language of Surrealism, Dalí was once again putting into practice the theories of Pujols, who had argued that Catalan culture could serve as a vehicle to the universal. Pujols would have been happy to learn not only of the shrewd use Dalí had

31. "Thus was realized once more that myth, the leit-motif of my thinking, of my esthetic, and of my life: death and resurrection! The wax manikin with the sugar nose, then is only an "object-being" of delirium, invented by the passion of one of those women who, like the heroine of the tale, like *Gradya*, or like *Gala*, are able, by virtue of the skilful simulacrum of their love, to illuminate moral darkness with the sharp lucidity of "living madmen." For me the great problem of madness and of lucidity was that of the limits between the *Galuchka* of my false memories, who had become chimerical and dead a hundred times through my subconscious pulsions and my desire for utter solitude, and the real *Gala* whose corporeality it was impossible for me to resolve in the pathological aberration of my spirit" (Dalí, "Secret Life" 239-240).

32. "These objects, lending themselves to a minimum of mechanical functioning, are based on phantasms and representations likely to be provoked by the realization of unconscious acts" (Dalí, "Surrealist Objects" 231).

made of a minor piece of Catalonian lore, but also of the dozens of editions and translations of *The Secret Life*, in which many readers first come into contact with Catalonia, through this fairy tale as well as in countless allusions to its landscape, language and customs. There is perhaps no more illustrative manifestation of Dalí's highly personal and local (while universally ambitious) apolitical Catalanism, a controversial stance that has allowed him to transcend national and political boundaries and to communicate to the world through a very cosmopolitan language many of the aesthetic, ideological and folkloric traditions of Catalonia. At the heart of Dalí's notion of Catalanitat stood the paranoid intelligence of delirium and transmutation coming from Lull, Sebonde and Pujols, which in symbiosis with the metamorphic landscape of the Empordà contributed to mold his aesthetics of paranoia. Dalí's intellectual and histrionic polymorphism were essential aspects of his mission as Catalan cultural agent, and facilitated his artistic and literary translation of Catalan culture into the modern languages of psychoanalysis, surrealism and modern science.

CARMEN GARCÍA DE LA RASILLA  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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