

ATTILA HAJDÚ

*University of Szeged*

## **Visions of Narcissus from the Late Imperial Period Remarks on the Statue of Narcissus from Callistratus' *Ekphraseis***

*In his longest ekphrasis (5), Callistratus (fl. probably in 4<sup>th</sup> century AD) uses enargeia and phantasia to depict vividly Narcissus' marble sculpture and to evoke the tragic fate of the young boy. Based on the surviving works of art, it is well-known that the representations of Narcissus were widespread in the Roman world from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Therefore, there is no reason to assume that it would have been a difficult task for Callistratus to take inspiration from the statues of Narcissus exhibited in the horti of Roman villas, public parks and baths, or from the large number of wall-paintings and mosaics depicting the young mythological figure. In my paper, I will explore the crucial elements originating from both the Graeco-Roman visual culture and literature that may have influenced this description.<sup>1</sup>*

**Keywords:** Callistratus, Narcissus, ekphrasis, Graeco-Roman visual culture and literature, Second Sophistic, Late Imperial Age

Callistratus lived, as some scholars suggest, in the era of the rise of Christianity, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and he was a lecturer in one of the Roman Empire's rhetorical schools. Due to the lack of contemporary testimonies, this has become a scientific consensus among philologists after carefully putting Callistratus' only known work, *Ekphraseis*, under literary historical and linguistical scrutiny.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The present paper has been prepared with the support of the scholarship of The Hungarian Academy of Arts (HAA).

<sup>2</sup> There has been a number of attempts to delineate the period, from 4<sup>th</sup> century BC up to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, when Callistratus lived and worked. Among the numerous theories, one assumes that Callistratus lived right after Philostratus the Younger; therefore, he could work around the turn of the 3–4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, see: FAIRBANKS (1931: 369)

Having read the *Descriptions*, it is obvious that Callistratus belonged to the Second Sophistic movement,<sup>3</sup> and he propagated the classical Athenian rhetoric tradition as a citizen of the multicultural Roman Empire.<sup>4</sup> His work includes fourteen descriptions of works of art: these are mostly marble and bronze statues from the Late Classical and Hellenistic age; however, the criteria behind Callistratus' *selectio* have not been revealed yet.<sup>5</sup> These are the following: a Satyr, a Bacchante, Eros, an Indian, Narcissus, Kairos (Opportunity), Orpheus, Dionysus, Memnon, Paeon, a Youth (*ēitheos*), a Centaur, Medea, and the *eikōn* depicting the mad Athamas.

---

and BOULOGNE (2007: 11–12). ANTONIO CORSO placed the author in the cultural milieu of Athens during the Severan period. About Callistratus' relation to Athens, see: Callistr. *Stat.* 11.; CORSO (2001: 17–23). BERNERT (1940: 317) identified Callistratus as the contemporary of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD sophist, Themistius. According to the theory of ALTEKAMP (1988: 82; 95), Callistratus “took photographs” of the artefacts in question in Constantinople, which eventually became the material of his collection of descriptions. On the question of dating Callistratus, see BÄBLER-NESELRATH (2006: 2–5).

On the language of Callistratus, see: ALTEKAMP (1988: 82). The tone of the work is pathetic, and it reflects the profound influence and phrasing of Homer, and particularly, the tragedy-writers of classical Athens. Due to the using of odd tropes, *hapax legomena*, and abstract concepts, the translation of the text has been proven to be quite difficult. At first glimpse, the sentences of the text seem to be too complicated, owing to, on the one hand, the numerous participle constructions, and to the repeatedly used conjunction καὶ.

<sup>3</sup> On the Second Sophist movement, see: BOWERSOCK (1969); ANDERSON (2009); ELSNER (1998: 169–199) offers a particularly comprehensive and important summary.

<sup>4</sup> At the end of the fifth description, the use of ὦ νέοι vocative case unanimously implies the milieu of the school. Subsequently, Callistratus might used these texts for didactic purposes: Callistr. *Stat.* 5, 5, 9–10: τοῦτον θαυμάσας, ὦ νέοι, τὸν Νάρκισσον καὶ εἰς ὑμᾶς παρήγαγον εἰς Μουσῶν ἀπλοτυπωσάμενος. [ἔχει δὲ ὀλόγος, ὡς καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν εἶχεν.]

<sup>5</sup> On the Callistratean selection, see: BÄBLER-NESELRATH (2006: 9–10); Altekamp (1988: 95–97). The author does not provide an introduction on his methods (*prooimion*) (cf. Philostr. *Im.* 1. *proem.*; Philostr. *Jun. Im.* 861–863); For this reason, it is also conceivable that the survived text of Callistratus is only fragmentary. The last piece of the *Ekphraseis* could substantiate this claim: from the world of sculpture, it leads the reader, namely by the only *eikōn* depicting Athamas, to the field of painting or bas-relief. This also could raise questions regarding the fragmentariness of the text, SCHENKL-REICH (1902: XLVII).

By combining the classical philological and art historical methodology, a new reading of one piece of this Late Imperial Greek text is offered here. The aim of this paper is to shed light on the visual culture of the Late Imperial period through the text of Callistratus, and to explore its attitude towards Greek art. In the following, first the author is introduced, and then the findings regarding the *Ekphraseis* are briefly summarized.

Callistratus, unequivocally, followed the example of the two Philostrati in dedicating its entire work to the description of works of art. This also indicates that art description had grown into a literary genre on its own in the Late Imperial age.<sup>6</sup>

Researchers in the last two centuries have been mainly engaged with the *de facto* identification of the described artefacts and their reconstruction.<sup>7</sup> However, in the last decades, the focus has moved to the investigation of the rhetorical-literary genre textual construction and to the literary embeddedness of these descriptions. From this point of view, Callistratus handling visual art objects as mere sources of literary analogies and/or literary exercises; and therefore it constitutes a mere pretext to construct eximious and elegant text around works of art.<sup>8</sup>

Subsequently, it is not Callistratus' aim to offer an objective analysis of the statues or the reconstruction of their original context;<sup>9</sup> but instead,

---

<sup>6</sup> According to POLLITT (1974: 87, n. 2) the *ekphrasis* as a rhetorical exercise had not been used for describing any works of art until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Nicolaus of Myra had involved sculptures and paintings into the possible themes of *ekphrasis* in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Δεῖ δέ, ἤνικα ἂν ἐκφράζωμεν καὶ μάλιστα ἀγάλματα τυχόν ἢ εἰκόνας ἢ εἴ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον, πειρᾶσθαι λογισμοὺς προστιθέναι τοῦ τοιοῦδε ἢ τοιοῦδε παρὰ τοῦ γραφέως ἢ πλάστου σχήματος, οἷον τυχόν ἢ ὅτι ὀργιζόμενον ἔγραψε διὰ τήνδε τὴν αἰτίαν ἢ ἠδόμενον, ἢ ἄλλο τι πάθος ἐροῦμεν συμβαῖνον τῇ περὶ τοῦ ἐκφραζομένου ἱστορίᾳ· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων δὲ ὁμοίως πλεῖστα οἱ λογισμοὶ συντελοῦσιν εἰς ἐνάργειαν. Nicol. Prog. 69.

<sup>7</sup> HEYNE (1801) was the first who attached a specific work of art to the descriptions. In the extensive *praefatio* of the Teubner edition of 1902, the texts were confronted with archaeological artefacts by SCHENKL-REICH (1902: IV-LIII). Lately, BÄBLER-NESELRATH (2006: 15) proved that six descriptions could be identified or affiliated with the surviving artefacts (a Satyr, a Bacchante, Eros, Kairos, Dionysus, Memnon).

<sup>8</sup> For more on this, see POLLITT's "literary analogists" concept: POLLITT (1974: 10).

<sup>9</sup> cf. POLLITT (1974: 9).

by enumerating both the Stoic aesthetic notion of *phantasia*<sup>10</sup> and *enargeia*,<sup>11</sup> he invites his readers to take an imagined tour in a space dominated by the Muses. The audience truly believes by the mental display of the statues that the described sculptures are not inanimate objects, but they are almost living gods and mythological creatures.

His perception of beauty is not derived from the embodiment of the ideal or the perfection of proportions, but from the principle which transforms the inanimate material into a living substance. Exquisiteness, the unappeasable desire for naturalism, vividness and the responses to art given by *phantasia* – these constitute the quintessence of the *Ekphraseis* of Callistratus. Thus, he rather offers a series of subjective descriptions. It is very likely that his text was not only influenced by the Hellenistic art critic,<sup>12</sup> but also by the aesthetic of Neoplatonism.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, whilst these literary visions, or “poems” written in prose, conceived by the rhetor, comply with the aspects of articulation of eloquent style and bolted language, they might also reflect the taste of the world of visual art surrounding Callistratus. By the borrowed images from the “visual language”, these descriptions are used to synthesize something new, an imaginary work of art. The aim of my research is to explore these visual imagines flashing in the text with the help of survived artefacts.

Therefore, it is suggested that the value of these “verbal” transcriptions are equivalent to the survived Graeco-Roman artefacts themselves<sup>14</sup> since they could enrich our knowledge regarding the reception of Greek art during the Late Imperial period. Moreover, the descriptions

---

<sup>10</sup> For *phantasiai* (*visiones*), see: Arist. *de An.* 428A; Ov. *Trist.* 3, 411–413; Quint. *Inst.* 6, 2, 29–30, Phil. V. A. 6, 19. More on this topic, see: BENEDIKTSON (2000: 162–188); POLLITT (1974: 52–55); SCHWEITZER (1925).

<sup>11</sup> A *locus classicus* for *enargeia* (*illustratio, evidentia*): Quint. *Inst.* 6, 2, 26–36. Arist. *Rh.* 3, 11, 2.

<sup>12</sup> POLLITT (1974: 28–33); for more on the concept of “popular criticism”, see POLLITT (1974: 63–66).

<sup>13</sup> BOULOGNE (2007: 36–37) compares the *Ekphraseis* of Callistratus with Ἐννεάδες of Plotinus.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ELSNER (1998: 246).

could also shed light on the cultural conventions which shaped Callistratus' mind on Greek art and on the questions of representation.

In this paper, special attention is given to the longest *ekphrasis* of Callistratus which is dedicated to a marble sculpture of Narcissus. First, the particular *ekphrasis* is provided here in Greek:

ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΡΚΙΣΣΟΥ ΑΓΑΛΜΑ<sup>15</sup>

(1) Ἄλσος ἦν καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ κρήνη πάγκαλος ἐκ μάλα καθαροῦ τε καὶ διαυγοῦς ὕδατος, εἰστήκει δὲ ἐπ' αὐτῇ Νάρκισσος ἐκ λίθου πεποιημένος. παῖς ἦν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἠίθεος, ἠλικιώτης Ἐρώτων, ἀστραπὴν οἶον ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ σώματος ἀπολάμπων κάλλους. ἦν δὲ τοιόνδε τὸ σχῆμα· κόμαις ἐπιχρῦσοις ἤστραπτεν κατὰ μὲν τὸ μέτωπον τῆς τριχὸς ἐλισσομένης εἰς κύκλον, κατὰ δὲ τὸν ἀρχένα κεχυμένης εἰς νῶτα, ἔβλεπε δὲ οὐκ ἀκράτως γαῦρον οὐδὲ ἰλαρὸν καθαρῶς· ἐπιπεφύκει γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ὄμμασιν ἐκ τῆς τέχνης καὶ λύπη, ἵνα μετὰ τοῦ Ναρκίσσου καὶ τὴν τύχην ἢ εἰκῶν μιμῆται.

(2) ἔσταλτο δὲ ὥσπερ οἱ Ἐρωτες, οἷς καὶ τῆς ὥρας τὴν ἀκμὴν προσεῖκαστο. σχῆμα δὲ ἦν τὸ κοσμοῦν τοιόνδε· πέπλος λευκανθῆς ὁμόχρως τῷ σώματι τοῦ λίθου περιθέων εἰς κύκλον, κατὰ τὸν δεξιὸν ὤμον περονηθεὶς ὑπὲρ γόνυ καταβαίνων ἐπαύετο μόνην ἀπὸ τοῦ πορπήματος ἐλευθερῶν τὴν χεῖρα. οὕτω δὲ ἦν ἀπαλὸς καὶ πρὸς πέπλου γεγονῶς μίμησιν, ὡς καὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος διαλάμπειν χροᾶν τῆς ἐν τῇ περιβολῇ λευκότητος τὴν ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐγὴν ἐξιέναι συγχωρούσης.

(3) ἔσθη δὲ καθάπερ κατόπτρῳ τῇ πηγῇ χρώμενος καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν περιχέων τοῦ προσώπου τὸ εἶδος, ἢ δὲ τοὺς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ δεχομένη χαρακτῆρας τὴν αὐτὴν εἰδωλοποιίαν ἤνυεν, ὡς δοκεῖν ἀλλήλαις ἀντιφιλοτιμεῖσθαι τὰς φύσεις. ἢ μὲν γὰρ λίθος ὅλη πρὸς ἐκεῖνον μετηλλάττετο τὸν ὄντως παῖδα, ἢ δὲ πηγὴ πρὸς τὰ ἐν τῇ λίθῳ μηχανήματα τῆς τέχνης ἀντηγωνίζετο ἐν ἀσωμάτῳ σχήματι τὴν ἐκ σώματος ἀπεργαζομένη τοῦ παραδείγματος ὁμοιότητα καὶ τῷ ἐκ τῆς εἰκόνας κατερχομένῳ σκιάσματι, οἶον τινὰ σάρκα τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος φύσιν περιθεῖσα.

(4) οὕτω δὲ ἦν ζωτικὸν καὶ ἔμπνουν τὸ καθ' ὕδατων σχῆμα, ὡς αὐτὸν εἶναι δοξάσαι τὸν Νάρκισσον, ὃν ἐπὶ πηγὴν ἐλθόντα τῆς

<sup>15</sup> The Ancient Greek text is taken from the following critical edition: SCHENKL–REICH (1902: 53–55).

μορφῆς αὐτῷ καθ' ὑδάτων ὀφθείσης παρὰ Νύμφαις τελευτῆσαι λέγουσιν ἐρασθέντα τῷ εἰδώλῳ συμμῖξαι καὶ νῦν ἐν λειμῶσι φαντάζεσθαι ἐν ἡριναῖς ὥραις ἀνθοῦντα. εἶδες δ' ἂν ὡς εἷς ὢν ὁ λίθος τὴν χροάν καὶ ὀμμάτων κατασκευὴν ἤρμοζε καὶ ἠθῶν ἱστορίαν ἔσωζεν καὶ αἰσθήσεις ἐνεδεικνυτο καὶ πάθη ἐμήνυεν καὶ πρὸς τριχώματος ἐξουσίαν ἠκολούθει εἰς τὴν τριχὸς καμπὴν λυόμενος.

(5) τὸ δὲ οὐδὲ λόγῳ ῥητὸν λίθος εἰς ὑγρότητα κεχαλασμένος καὶ ἐναντίον σῶμα τῇ οὐσίᾳ παρεχόμενος· στερεωτέρας γὰρ τετυχηκῶς φύσεως τρυφερότητος ἀπέστελλεν αἴσθησιν εἰς ἀραιὸν τινα σώματος ὄγκον διαχεόμενος. μετεχειρίζετο δὲ καὶ σύριγγα, ἧς νομίῳις θεοῖς ἐκεῖνος ἀπήρχετο καὶ τὴν ἐρημίαν κατήχει τοῖς μέλεσιν, εἶποτε μουσικοῖς ψαλτηρίοις προσομιλῆσαι ποθήσειεν. τοῦτον θαυμάσας, ὦ νέοι, τὸν Νάρκισσον καὶ εἰς ὑμᾶς παρήγαγον εἰς Μουσῶν αὐλήν ἀποτυπωσάμενος. [ἔχει δὲ ὁ λόγος, ὡς καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν εἶχεν.]

“There was a grove, and in it an exceedingly beautiful spring of very pure clear water, and by this stood a Narcissus made of marble. He was a boy, or rather a youth, of the same age as the Erotes; and he gave out as it were a radiance of lightning from the very beauty of his body. The appearance of the statue was as follows: It was shining with gilded hair, of which the locks encircled the forehead in a curve and hung free down the neck to the back; and its glance did not express unmixed exultation nor yet pure joy; for in the nature of the eyes, art had put an indication of grief, that the image might represent not only both Narcissus but also his fate. He was clothed like the Erotes, and he resembled them also in that he was in the prime of his youth. The garb which adorned him was as follows: a white mantle, of the same colour as the marble of which he was made, encircled him; it was held by a clasp on the right shoulder and reached down nearly to the knees, where it ended, leaving free, from the clasp down, only the hand. Moreover, it was so delicate and imitated a mantle so closely that the colour of the body shone through, the whiteness of the drapery permitting the gleam of the limbs to come out. He stood using the spring as a mirror and pouring into it the beauty of his face, and the spring, receiving the lineaments which came from him, reproduced so perfectly the same image that the two other beings seemed to emulate each other. For whereas the marble was in every part trying to change

the real boy so as to match the one in the water, the spring was struggling to match the skilful efforts of art in the marble, reproducing in an incorporeal medium the likeness of the corporeal model and enveloping the reflection which came from the statue with the substance of water as though it were the substance of flesh. And indeed the form in the water was so instinct with life and breath that it seemed to be Narcissus himself, who, as the story goes, came to the spring, and when his form was seen by him in the water he died among the water-nymphs, because he desired to embrace his own image, and now he appears as a flower in the meadows in the spring-time. You could have seen how the marble, uniform though it was in colour, adapted itself to the expression of his eyes, preserved the record of his character, showed the perception of his senses, indicated his emotions and conformed itself to the abundance of his hair as it relaxed to make the curls of his locks. Indeed, words cannot describe how the marble softened into suppleness and provided a body at variance with its own essence; for though its own nature is very hard, it yielded a sensation of softness, being dissolved into a sort of porous matter. The image was holding a syrinx, the instrument with which Narcissus was wont to offer music to the gods of the flock, and he would make the desert echo with his songs whenever he desired to hold converse with stringed musical instruments. In admiration of his Narcissus, O youths, I have fashioned an image of him and brought it before you also in the halls of the Muses. And the description is such as to agree wit the statue.”<sup>16</sup>

Before analyzing this particular text, a brief introduction to the role of Narcissus in Ancient literature and art is called for. Narcissus is a “late-blooming” flower in the garden of canonized Greek myths.<sup>17</sup> It is diffi-

---

<sup>16</sup> Translation by A. FAIRBANKS. <https://www.theoi.com/Text/Callistratus.html> (2021. 01. 14.)

<sup>17</sup> *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* already mentions the botanical aspects of daffodil (*h. Cer.* 8–18). The flower is in relation to the Underworld: ὃν φύσε δόλον καλυκώπιδι κούρη Γαῖα Διὸς βουλήσι χαρίζομένη πολυδέκτη (“which Earth made to grow at the will of Zeus and to please the Host of Many, to be a **snare** for the bloom-like girl – a marvellous, radiant flower.” Translated by H. G. EVELYN-WHITE); the flower’s smell almost enchants (θαμβήσασ’) Persephone. The origins of the name of the plant can be traced back to the narcotic effects of the daffodil (as *νάρκη* can be translated as

cult to locate the exact time of the emergence of the Narcissus-myth; however, it is believed to be spread from Boeotia to the entire ancient Greek world.<sup>18</sup>

Taking into consideration available literary sources, it is likely that detailed version known today became widely popular only after Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Ov. *Met.* 3, 339–512).<sup>19</sup> The later popularity of the myth in European cultural history – inasmuch as the tragic fate of Narcissus has been constantly re-explored and retold – is indisputably due to Ovid's masterpiece.<sup>20</sup>

---

“numbness”, “enervation”). For more literary examples of the daffodil, see: Euph. Fr. Hist. 94; Paus. 9, 31, 7.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. one of Pausanias' comments regarding Narcissus (Paus. 9, 31,8.) which might reflect the myth's genuine, Boeotian folkloric version: ZIMMERMANN (1994: 11).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. also the fragmentary or short accounts of Parthenius of Nicaea (?) (P.Oxy. LXIX 4711), Conon (FGrH 26, F I 24) and Pausanias (Paus. 9, 31,7–9.). For Parthenius, see: *New light on the Narcissus myth: P.Oxy. LXIX 4711*. <http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/papyri/4711.html>, 2021.01.14; LUPPE (2006: 1–3).

<sup>20</sup> It is likely that the well-known depictions of Narcissus spread due to Ovid in the 1<sup>st</sup> century of the Roman Imperial period, see: VALLADARES (2012: 378–395). The story of the young hunter, presented by Ovid, was infiltrated into almost all branches of Roman art (from paintings, mosaics to sculpture, even to engraved gemstones), and its popularity was unchallenged until the Late Antiquity: RAFN (1992: 708, No. 52). It is beyond doubt that the wall-paintings which survived under the ashes of Vesuvius constitute the most abundant material records. Out of the wall-paintings known today, fifty had been discovered in Pompeii, and most of them are from the age of Vespasianus; and, in consequence, they belong to the so-called fourth Pompeian style. Besides that, this style depicts contemplative figures in the central register of the wall-painting by choice; another fact also reveals the popularity of the theme of Narcissus, namely that the educated viewers were susceptible to the art theoretical aspects of the vision, the reflection. In details, see: RAFN (1992: 703–711); BALENSIEFEN (1990, 140; 237, K 38, Plate 35, 1).

The pages of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (LIMC) provide a substantial amount of reference to Roman copies depicting Narcissus, which were created during the Hadrian–Antonine era, which was formative for the Roman reception of the history of Greek art. One of the characteristic sculptures, which some researchers relate to the sculpture school of Aphrodisias, displays Narcissus as a standing figure with crossed-legs. Both its arms, with clasped hands, are resting on its head; and it turns its wreathed head towards its left shoulder: RAFN (1992: 705, No. 21) (**Figure 5**). This type of sculpture was chosen for the relief of the so-called *strigilis sar-*



At the dawn of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, Philostratus the Elder of Lemnos provided descriptions on paintings, while a century later Callistratus wrote his accounts on sculptures. It is very likely that the verbalized Narcissus painting of Philostratus the Elder had a considerable influence on Callistratus.<sup>21</sup> In accordance with the traditions of the Second Sophistic, both authors were aware of the hidden possibilities in the genre of *descriptio*; therefore, they focused on the questions of visual representation and on the effects triggered by them. They handle Narcissus not as a mythological hero but an explicit work of art.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the key elements of the depictions (transformation, self-absorption) are momentarily shown, they reframe the myth into a subjective reflection concerning contemplation, naturality and sexual desire.<sup>23</sup> In the following, an interpretation of this particular Callistratean text is offered.

Callistratus begins his narration *in medias res* and puts the readers into the middle of a typical *locus amoenus*. This place is also familiar to them: the *alsos*<sup>24</sup> which, on the one hand, belongs to a divine sphere, while on the other hand, it could also be an ideal setting for a secret romantic rendezvous. The first scene is already ambiguous as it is not clear whether the author started to depict the bucolic environment of the sculpture or the description of the sculpture itself.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, Cal-

---

cophagi dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century/beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. For this, in details, see: SICHTERMANN (1986: 239–242).

Surviving material records, unfortunately, are unaware of any Narcissus depiction which resembles the Callistratean description. Albeit, there were attempts at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century to identify this work of art, as the case of the sculpture depicting a young boy found at the Ostian *thermae* shows (*Narcissi statua in museo Vaticano, cui insculptum est Phaedimi nomen*. See the inscription on the tree trunk next to the sculpture: ΦΑΙΔΙΜ / ΜΟΣ). Some scholars tended to regard the sculpture as almost identical, in every aspect, to the one described by Callistratus (SCHENKL–REICH [1902: 53]); however, this hypothesis was refuted by others (FAIRBANKS [1931: 390]).

For Philostratus, see also: BRAGUINKSKAIA–LEONOV (2006: 9–30); SHAFFER (1998: 303–316).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Luc. *Charid.* 24; *Ver. hist.* 2, 17,19; *Dial. mort.* 11, 1,3.

<sup>23</sup> ELSNER (1996: 247–261).

<sup>24</sup> A *locus classiscus* for *alsos*, see: Pl. *Phdr.* 230 b–c. For further examples from literary fiction, see: Longus 1, 1, 4; Ach. *Tat.* 1, 2, 3.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 1, 441ff.

listratus brings immediately a free-standing marble statue of Narcissus into view which is located by the side of a crystal-clear spring.

Behind this setting, one cannot only find a fictional rhetorical exercise but the way Callistratus installed the scene for his description reflects contemporary practice too. The water is an inseparable element of this myth both in literary accounts and in the artistic repertoire of the Imperial period (**Figure 1**). By the side of Narcissus, you can always detect a spring or a calm water surface or the water flowing out of a *hydria* held by Echo/Eros (**Figure 2**) in the pictorial program of frescos at Pompeii and the mosaics from the Imperial age (**Figure 3**). There is even a statue depicting Narcissus whose face as a relief is reflected in the spring water made of marble (**Figure 4**).<sup>26</sup>

As a Roman citizen was wandering around the city, due to the decorative function attached to these artefacts, he could stumble into the portrayal of Narcissus at almost every turn, usually at water-related public locations such as *nymphaea*, baths, wells, and even in the private sphere. The aim of these representations was to recall the tragic fate of Narcissus by the reflection of the work of art in real water.<sup>27</sup>

Once Callistratus spotted the sculpture, his text suggests that he approaches it remotely. His first impressions make him see Narcissus as a child (παῖς); but after some hesitation, he instantly adds that he regards the mythological hero rather as an adolescent, unspoilt young man (ἡίθεος).<sup>28</sup> In the description, Narcissus and the Erotes are the same age (ἡλικιώτης Ἐρώτων).<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, it also resembles the so-

<sup>26</sup> RAFN (1992: 708, No. 55).

<sup>27</sup> BÄBLER–NESSELRATH (2006: 63–64); BALENSIEFEN (1990: 146).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Ov. *Met.* 351ff: *namque ter ad quinos unum Cephisius annum / addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri.*

<sup>29</sup> This could evoke the winged Erotes among the floral and leaf motifs of the Athenian red-figure vases of the 6–5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. The relation of the Erotes to flowers (πολυανθείς: “rich in flowers”) resonates well with the story of Narcissus. For literary parallels, see: GREIFENHAGEN (1957: 7); *Anacreonta* 55, 7: πολυανθέων Ἐρώτων, | ἀφροδίσιόν τ' ἄθυρμα; furthermore, Plato's praise for Eros (*Pl. Smp.* 196a–b): νεώτατος μὲν δὴ ἔστι καὶ ἀπαλώτατος, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ὑγρὸς τὸ εἶδος. οὐ γὰρ ἂν οἶός τ' ἦν πάντη περιπτύσσεσθαι οὐδὲ διὰ πάσης ψυχῆς καὶ εἰσιῶν τὸ πρῶτον λανθάνειν καὶ ἐξιῶν, εἰ σκληρὸς ἦν. συμμέτρου δὲ καὶ ὑγρᾶς ἰδέας μέγα τεκμήριον ἢ εὐσχημοσύνη, ὃ δὴ διαφερόντως ἐκ πάντων ὁμολογουμένως Ἐρῶς ἔχει

called Eros Centocelle type too, which is known from numerous Roman copies (**Figure 6**), and it could be traced back to one of Praxiteles' Eros sculptures.<sup>30</sup> The parallel could be drawn between the torso, being kept in the Classical Antiquities Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, and the Eros of Centocelle (**Figure 7**). The god of love is being portrayed as an athletic, standing adolescent; however, it is also being characterized by child-alike, curvesome forms.<sup>31</sup> It looks to me as if Callistratus had compared Narcissus with this kind of Eros, standing on the line between childhood and adulthood.<sup>32</sup>

As we approach to the statue, the author undertakes to verbalize the golden shining hair of Narcissus and his emotions appearing in his eyes. Here we can witness the embodiment of the practice of Roman art and the fine idiom of the Second Sophistic in one expression. The *technē* could evoke the tragedy of the whole myth into a single image in the same way as in Roman mythological reliefs.<sup>33</sup> This pain also affects the readers: the λύπη [the grief] reflected from the face of the sculpture overshadows the pleasure which was generated by the sight of the athletic appearance of the sculpture.

Then the description of the boy's clothing follows and another *synkrisis* with the Erotes: "He was clothed like the Erotes, and he resembled them also in that he was in the prime of his youth." (Callistr. *Stat.* 5, 2,1: ἔσταλτο δὲ ὥσπερ οἱ Ἑρωτες, οἷς καὶ τῆς ὥρας τὴν ἀκμὴν προσεΐκαστο). The repeated summoning of the Eros projects into the text, on the one hand, the ambivalent power of the god of sexual and love desire, and on the other hand, it refers to the story of Narcissus. In

---

ἀσχημοσύνη γὰρ καὶ Ἑρωτι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀεὶ πόλεμος. χρόας δὲ κάλλος ἢ κατ' ἄνθη δίαίτα τοῦ θεοῦ σημαίνει· ἀνανθεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἀπηνηθηκότι καὶ σώματι καὶ ψυχῇ καὶ ἄλλω ὄψουῶν οὐκ ἐνίξει Ἑρως, οὗ δ' ἂν εὐανθῆς τε καὶ εὐώδης τόπος ἢ ἐνταῦθα δὲ καὶ ἴζει καὶ μένει.

<sup>30</sup> On the Eros of Centocelle sculptures, see also: HERMARY–CASSIMATIS–VOLLKOMMER (1986: 862).

<sup>31</sup> It must be noted regarding this statue that is supplemented with an adult phallus. More on the Eros torso being kept in Budapest, see also: <http://hyperion.szepmuveszeti.hu/hu/targy/1431> (2020. 01. 14).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the third *ekphrasis* of Callistratus which describes the Eros sculpture of Praxiteles.

<sup>33</sup> ELSNER (1998: 122).

literary tradition, e.g. in the accounts of Pausanias or Conon, Eros appears only in a hidden form in relation to Thespieae, the town of Boeotia where Narcissus was born and Eros was the most worshipped deity.<sup>34</sup> By contrast, the art tradition presents the god – with Echo and other nymphs – in a much more important place and regards it as key actor in the visual narrative, which offers various possible interpretations of its function in the scene.<sup>35</sup>

Disguising Narcissus as Eros, Callistratus intends to conflate the two figures: he bestows Eros' complicity to Narcissus, who nourishes now the deceitful flames of love which eventually leads him to his own downfall.<sup>36</sup>

The garment borrowed from the Erotes may be confusing because the *peplos* was related to Athena and exclusively to the feminine sphere in the Archaic and Classical age.<sup>37</sup> It only becomes clear by the further explanation of Callistratus that this might not be a female *peplos*, but rather a *chlamys* or a similar sort of cape:

σχῆμα δὲ ἦν τὸ κοσμοῦν τοιόνδε· πέπλος λευκανθῆς ὁμόχρως τῷ σώματι τοῦ λίθου περιθέων εἰς κύκλον, κατὰ τὸν δεξιὸν ὤμον περονηθεὶς ὑπὲρ γόνυ καταβαίνων ἐπαύετο μόνην ἀπὸ τοῦ πορπήματος ἐλευθερῶν τὴν χεῖρα. (Callist. *Stat.* 5, 2, 2–10)<sup>38</sup>

It looks as if Callistratus had disguised an *alicula chlamys*,<sup>39</sup> the ends of which resemble a wing (*πτερούγες*), in order to visualize the wings of Eros in the appearance of the statue of Narcissus.

The *chlamys*, the ancient attire of hunters, could be easily applied to the attributes of Narcissus as, Ovid informs us, he himself, similarly to

<sup>34</sup> Paus. 9, 27, 1.; 9, 32, 7; and Conon FGrH 26, F I 24.

<sup>35</sup> RAFN (1992:705–707); On Eros' torch, see: TAYLOR (2008:64–66).

<sup>36</sup> Ov. *Met.* 3, 464.

<sup>37</sup> See also: LEE (2003:118–146).

<sup>38</sup> Based on a translation by A. FAIRBANKS: "The garb which adorned him was as follows: a *peplos*, of the same colour as the marble of which he was made, encircled him; it was held by a clasp on the right shoulder and reached down nearly to the knees, where it ended, leaving free, from the clasp down, only the hand."

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Suid. s. v. Ἄλλικα: χλαμύδα κατὰ Θεσσαλοῦς; ἄλλικα χρυσεῖησιν ἐεργομένην ἐνέτησιν.; YATES (1875: 275–276).

Hippolytus or Adonis, was a hunter ([...] *hunc trepidos agitantem in retia cervos*, Ov. *Met.* 3, 356). Consequently, on wall-paintings and mosaics Narcissus was often depicted with a hunting spear and wearing a *petasos*. Nevertheless, literary sources<sup>40</sup> and visual representations suggest that hunting is neither an unfamiliar activity to the Erotes.

The question justifiably arises what the author attempted to achieve by visualizing Narcissus in female garments. It seems very unlikely that such an erudite rhetor like Callistratus was not familiar with the different types of Greek clothing. On the contrary, portraying the cape of Narcissus as a *peplos* might have been the deliberate intention of the author.<sup>41</sup>

In Greek literature, the *peplos* first appeared in relation to manhood in the tragedy literature of the Classical age. In the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides the adoption of a *peplos* by male characters symbolizes their feminization, and therefore precipitates their death.<sup>42</sup>

Callistratus, who was probably most influenced by Euripides,<sup>43</sup> borrowed the topos of male *peplophoros* from the milieu of classical tragedies to highlight the *anima* of Narcissus and to anticipate already at beginning of the text the boy's inevitable death. The feminine features of Narcissus are also visualized on the wall-paintings in Pompeii (**Figure**

---

<sup>40</sup> Pl. *Smp.* 203d, 5: ἠρηστυῆς δεινός; Xen. *Mem.* 1, 3, 13.; Philostr. *Im.* 1, 6.: Erotes hunting for rabbits.

<sup>41</sup> Nowadays, there is no trace of a bronze sculpture from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, Oechalia (Euboea), depicting Achelous, the river god, wearing a female *peplos* and with a *cornucopia*. Similarly to Narcissus, Achelous belongs to the divine sphere of *alsos*, who was worshiped along with the nymphs in caves near freshwater springs. This is the only known example from the tradition of art where a male figure is a *peplophoros*. For an interpretation of the statuette, see: LEE (2006: 317–325).

<sup>42</sup> In *Oresteia*, Clytemnestra decoyed Agamemnon wearing a *peplos* (A. *Ag.* 1125–1128; Cho. 999–1000; Eum. 633–635). In *The Bacchae* of Euripides, Pentheus put on the *peplos* in order to secretly watch the women of Thebes. However, he was spotted, and subsequently was torn apart by them. (E. *Bacch.* 821–838; 927–938). Hippolytus (E. *Hipp.* 606; 1458) and Hercules in *The Trachiniae* (S. *Tr.* 600 – 613; 674; 756 – 776) and in *Hercules Furens* (E. HF 520; 626–627; 629–630) appear on the scene in a *peplos*. See also D. S. 4, 14, 3, where Hercules receives the *peplos* from Athena.

<sup>43</sup> See the descriptions of no. 8 and 13 in Callistr. *Stat.* These mention Euripides by name. Cf. ALTEKAMP (1988: 106).

8). Ruban Taylor argues that although Narcissus acquires more masculine attributes with time, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD he was depicted almost *androgyn* in appearance: with a pale skin, a wide waist and feminine breasts. The visual language of the early Imperial period emphasizes in this manner the fatal weakness of the young hunter: he becomes effeminate by his inertia and defenseless, and his exaggerated desire is by no means compatible with the persona of a Roman man.<sup>44</sup> The German classical archaeologist, Paul Zanker points out that the character of Narcissus often resembles that of Hermaphroditus (**Figure 9**), and his hand-posture is also similar to the visual representations of Hermaphroditus on engraved gems (**Figure 10**).<sup>45</sup>

In the following *caputs* Callistratus returns to the initial set, and focuses on the position of the sculpture taken from the context of Ovid's text. From this position a fierce competition materializes between the marble and the spring. Joining this *paragonē* himself, Callistratus raises the question whether verbal or visual art could better depict more realistically the figure of Narcissus.

Art makes inanimate objects into living works of art: first, "the marble transformed the real boy into that" (i.e. to be in accordance with the one in the water (Callistr. Stat. 5, 3, 5–6: ἡ μὲν γὰρ λίθος ὅλη πρὸς ἐκεῖνον μετηλλάττετο τὸν ὄντως παῖδα).<sup>46</sup> The surface of the water, however, proves to be a serious rival, and in terms of vividness, the reflection seems to exceed the accomplishments of the marble. It perfectly forms the body in a bodyless medium and seemingly it is able to reflect

---

<sup>44</sup> TAYLOR (2008: 70; 80).

<sup>45</sup> „Wie sehr das Weibliche und die Selbstbefangenheit der frühen Kaiserzeit als Eigenschaften des Narziß vertraut waren, verdeutlicht die Annäherung seiner Gestalt an die des Hermaphroditen. In den pompeianischen Bildprogrammen findet man die beiden "iuvenes formosissimi" als Pendantfiguren. Das allein würde nicht viel besagen wenn nicht die Bildtypen, die mythologischen Requisiten und selbst die Körperformen der beiden Gestalten miteinander vermischt und vertauscht würden.“ ZANKER (1966: 166).

<sup>46</sup> The following extract from a sentence is difficult to understand on purpose: if πρὸς ἐκεῖνον belongs to τὸν ὄντως παῖδα as a *adjectivum praedicativum*, it could also be translated as: "it transformed itself into that, to a real boy."

even the statue in a way that one could think it mirrors a real human being.<sup>47</sup>

Afterwards, Callistratus idles over the figure appearing on the water-surface in order to picture the extent of the bodily nature of the sculpture as far as one could even hear its breath too. “It seemed he is the real Narcissus” (Callistr. *Stat.* 5, 4, 2–3: αὐτὸν εἶναι δοξάσαι τὸν Νάρκισσον) in the water, whose tragic story was revoked at this point: Narcissus “went to the water spring, then having seen its own face, he lost his life among the nymphs, because he had yearned to fall in love with himself; now he appears as a flower in the fields during the spring” (Callistr. *Stat.* 5, 4, 3–6: ὃν ἐπὶ πηγὴν ἐλθόντα τῆς μορφῆς αὐτῷ καθ’ ὑδάτων ὀφθείσης παρὰ Νύμφαις τελευτῆσαι λέγουσιν ἔρασθέντα τῷ εἰδώλῳ συμμῖξαι καὶ νῦν ἐν λειμῶσι φαντάζεσθαι ἐν ἡριναῖς ὥραις ἀνθοῦντα.).

The sculpture then comes to the front as a magnificent work of art: art creates from one and the same block of marble not just the skin, hair and eyes of Narcissus, but also his emotions and his whole *ēthos* too. The performance of the *technē* is beyond words. It is able to make the stone appear like a substance that is already in the process of dissolving, which is related to the mythical fate of Narcissus again.

Suddenly the theoretical commentary ends at this point, and new images are being shown to us. By the introduction of an atypical hunting attribute, the *syrinx*, Callistratus seems to challenge the earlier tradition and transforms Narcissus into a shepherd-boy watching over his herd.

In the iconographic tradition concerning Narcissus, there is only a single case implying this visualization. A *puteal* embossment found Ostia from the Antonine age, which is only known nowadays from a plaster copy, presents a similar set to Callistratus’ description.<sup>48</sup> On this de-

---

<sup>47</sup> Cf. On the manifestation of naturalness on water-surface, see the verbalized description of the sculpture group of Apuleius: Apul. *Met.* 2, 4, 25–31: *et si fontem, qui deae vestigio discurrens in lenem vibratur undam, pronus aspexeris, credes illos ut rure pendentes racemos inter cetera ueritatis nec agitationis officio carere. Inter medias frondes lapidis Actaeon simulacrum curioso optutu in deam [sum] proiectus iam in ceruum ferinus et in saxo simul et in fonte loturam Dianam opperiens visitur.*

<sup>48</sup> RAFN (1992: 708; 711).

piction, driving his flock, Narcissus arrives at the spring brought forth by Echo (**Figure 11**). The boy's melancholic face and the sorrow in his eyes might reflect what Callistratus also expresses. On the other side of the *puteal*, there was Hylas as he was dragged by the nymphs under the water (**Figure 12**). Both of them can be seen as victims of the nymphs, which seemingly could be a possible decoration theme of a well.<sup>49</sup>

Callistratus might have been inspired by the *Eikones* of Philostratus the Elder in this vision of his. In the first book, Philostratus writes about a certain Olympus who played the *aulos*, a flute, and like Narcissus was gazing into the water.<sup>50</sup>

Τίνοι ἀυλεῖς, Ὀλυμπε; τί δὲ ἔργον μουσικῆς ἐν ἐρημίᾳ; οὐ ποιμήν σοι πάρεστιν, οὐκ αἰπόλος οὐδὲ Νύμφαις ἀυλεῖς, αἱ καλῶς ἂν ὑπωρχήσαντο τῷ ἀυλῶ, μαθὼν δὲ οὐκ οἶδα ὅ τι χαίρεις τῷ ἐπὶ τῇ πέτρῳ ὕδατι καὶ βλέπεις ἐπ' αὐτό.<sup>51</sup> (Philostr. *Im.* 1, 21, 1–6)

Regarding the image of Narcissus holding a *syrinx*, Clayton Zimmermann's assumption is worth consideration. According to him, Callistratus, instead of Narcissus, was verbalized mistakenly a certain sculpture of Daphnis, the mythical inventor of bucolic poetry. Zimmermann believes that behind this Callistratean *error* one can identify the statue of Daphnis holding a *syrinx*, a part of the sculpture group being kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples (**Figure 13**).<sup>52</sup> The vitality and downward looking sight of the sculpture and its placement near to water might be responsible for the confusion with Narcissus.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> BÄBLER–NESSELRATH (2006: 63).

<sup>50</sup> ZIMMERMANN (1994: 94).

<sup>51</sup> Translated by A. FAIRBANKS: "For whom are you playing the flute, Olympus? And what need is there of music in a desert place? No shepherd is here with you, nor goatherd, nor yet are you playing for Nymphs, who would dance beautifully to your flute; and I do not understand just why you take delight in the pool of water by the rock and gaze into it."

<sup>52</sup> On the Pan-Daphnis sculpture group, see: HERRMANN (1975: 87–89).

<sup>53</sup> The unclear circumstances of the early death of Daphnis in Theocritus first *eidyllion* may justify the artistic parallel drawn between Daphnis and Narcissus. ZIMMERMANN suggests that Theocritus formulated Daphnis' death by the earlier poetic adaptations of the story of the evanescence of Narcissus. The idyllic site with the running stream



The name of Narcissus also appears among such young boys who were much desired by the gods and nymphs, and whose names were listed by Hyginus in his catalogue about the most beautiful *ephēboi*:

QUI EPHEBI FORMOSISSIMI FUERUNT. Adonis C<i>n<y>rae et Smyrnae filius quem Venus amavit. Endymion Aetoli filius quem Luna amavit. Ganymedes Eri<c>hthonii filius quem Iovis amavit. Hyacinthus Oebali filius quem Apollo amavit. Narcissus Cephisii fluminis filius qui se ipsum amavit. Atlantius Mercurii et Veneris filius qui Hermaphroditus dictus est. H<y>las Theodamantis filius quem Hercules amavit. Chrysippus Pelopis filius quem Theseus ludis rapuit. (Hyg. F. 271)

My impression is that Callistratus when he wrote this description did not just draw inspiration from the literary and visual material related to Narcissus but also from the visual and literary representations of the *ephebi formosissimi* named by Hyginus.<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, in connection with Narcissus, it does not seem unlikely that Callistratus may have taken into account some works of art patterned from Antinous who drowned in the Nile<sup>55</sup> and later was worshiped as a god (**Figure 15**).<sup>56</sup> In a papyrus fragment<sup>57</sup>, dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century – beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, discovered in the Egyptian Tebtunis (near to nowadays Tutun), we can find Antinous among such mythological characters who were *epōnymoi* of plants, trees and flowers. They are also connected by their tragic death; and in this sense, Antinous is being compared to Narcissus in this fragment:

---

(Theoc. *Id.* 1–23), the self-absorption of the main characters and the ἀ ... καλὰ νάρκισσος (Theoc. *Id.* 133) expression are undoubted hints that Theocritus might have worked in the tragic fate of Narcissus into his story about Daphnis. ZIMMERMANN (1994: 94–95), Cf. SEGAL (1974: 1–22).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. with the 37 Roman copies, which depict a fragile *ephēbos*, either Narcissus or Apollo's darling Hyacinthus. Taking into consideration the habitats of the replicas, some researchers suggest that the original statue was erected near a waterside. (Inv. number: Ma 457 [Cp 6441]) (**Figure 14**) Cf. BÄBLER–NESSELRATH (2006: 61–62).

<sup>55</sup> On his death, see: Cass. Dio. 69, 11, 2.; Hist. Aug. *Vita Hadriani*, 14, 5.

<sup>56</sup> VOUT (2005: 80–96).

<sup>57</sup> DELGADO–PORDOMINGO (2008: 167–192).

νύμ[φ]αι Κρ[όκον | ἀπέκτειναν, Ὕλαν ἤρπα[σαν | Νύμφαι,  
Κυπάρισσος κατ[ὰ πε|τρῶν ἔρειψε ἐ[αυ]τόν, Δ[άφνην | φεύγουσαν  
ὑπεδέξατο γῆ· Ν[άρκισσος ὑπερηφανείαι ἐρ[. . . .] | ἐαυτὸν ὡς  
ἄλλον ἀπώλεσ[εν· ἐν | δὲ μόνον τὸ τοῦ Ἀντινόου [ἄνθος, | πάντων  
ἤδ[ι]ον διαφέρον ...<sup>58</sup>

*PMilVogl* I 20 (1937) col. 3, 7–18.

Although the text is quite fragmentary, it illustrates well the cultural importance of Antinous decades after this death.<sup>59</sup> Besides this, it also illuminates that the milieu in which Callistratus worked to make a connection between Narcissus and Antinous. This parallel is strengthened by the example given by the coins portraying the Bithynian adolescent which were issued by the famous sophist, Polemon of Smyrna. The coins were reused later to ornament the cover of a box mirror (**Figure**

<sup>58</sup> Translated by B. ACOSTA-HUGHES: “Nymphs killed Hylas, Cyparissus cast himself down from the rocks, the earth received Daphne in her flight. Narcissus in arrogance [. . .] killed himself as though another. Alone the one bloom of Antinous, sweeter than all others...” ACOSTA-HUGHES (2016).

<sup>59</sup> On the afterlife of Antinous, see also the following rhyming *enkōmion* fragment which could have been written in the Diocletian era. VOUT (2009: 100–102).

P. Oxy. 63, 4352, fr. 5. II 1–9:

εὔρε δὲ τερπομένη ζωάγριαν Ἀντιν[όοιο,  
θήρης μνημοσύνην, νίκης θάλος, .[  
αἰδέομαι, Νάρκισσε, τείν σκιοειδέα μ[ορφήν,  
δακρυχέω δ' Ὑάκινθον ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον  
σὴν δὲ κατο[ι]κτείρω θηραγρεσίην, α[  
λειμών δ' Ἀντινόοιο καὶ ἡμερο[  
οὐ πηγῆν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ...[  
τῶ δὲ μετ' Ἀντίνοον Νύμφαι σ[τέ]φρον ἄνθει π[λοχμούς,  
εἶσε [τι] ῥυομένω θαλερῆν θηρ[ήτο]ρος αἰχμῆ[ν].

Translated by C. VOUT: “Rejoicing, she found the ransom for the life of Antinous, memory of the hunt, palm of victory.... I stand in awe of your shadowy form, Narcissus, and I weep for Hyacinthus and the cruel discus. I also have compassion for your hunting of wold beasts but the flowers of Antinous and the longing... Not running water, not the destructive discus, not... The nymphs began to garland their hair with the flower named after Antinous, which protects the sturdy spear of the hunter.”

On the question of authorship and the interpretation of the fragment see: PICCARDI (2002: 55–60).

16).<sup>60</sup> It seems very probable that the depiction of Antinous' physical charm served as an artistic reminder to the box's owner about the dangers of extravagant beauty.

All in all, the question arises justifiably how Callistratus, who championed the cultivation of the classical, even idealized Greek past, could fulfil the guiding principles of the Second Sophistic movement in a story such as of Narcissus, which does not have any classical precedents. In my opinion, Callistratus could cope with this task by involving the elements of the literary and art tradition of the Classical Age (may it be the literary and art tradition of the Erotes of the 5<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, or the literary topos of the male *peplophoros* borrowed from the Athenian tragedies) to the Hellenistic portray of Narcissus. In doing so, Callistratus turns his Narcissus into an eclectic – both Classical and Hellenistic at the same time –, therefore unmistakably Roman statue.

## Bibliography

- ACOSTA-HUGHES 2016 B. ACOSTA-HUGHES: *The Breast of Antinous. The Male Body as Erotic Object in Hellenistic Image and Text*. *Aitia* [Online] 6 (2016).  
<http://journals.openedition.org/aitia/1631>
- ALTEKAMP 1988 S. ALTEKAMP: *Zu den Statuenbeschreibungen des Kallistratos*. *Boreas* 11 (1988) 77–154.
- ANDERSON 2009 G. ANDERSON: *Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire*. London 2009.
- BALENSIEFEN 1990 L. BALENSIEFEN: *Die Bedeutung Des Spiegelbildes als Ikonographisches Motiv in Der Antiken Kunst*. Tübingen 1990.
- BÄBLER–NESSELRATH 2006  
B. BÄBLER – H.-G. NESSELRATH: *Ars et Verba: die Kunstbeschreibungen des Kallistratos*. München 2006.
- BENEDIKTSON 2000 D. T. BENEDIKTSON: *Literature and the Visual Arts in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Norman 2000.
- BERNERT 1940 E. BERNERT: *Kallistratos*. In: *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie Der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft (Supplementband VII: Adobogiona–Triakadieis)*. Stuttgart 1940, 317–318.
- BOULOGNE 2007 J. BOULOGNE: *Introduction*. In: J. Boulogne – J.-G. Blyweert – P. Guyon, *Callistrate: Quatorze visions: statues et bas-relief*. Villeneuve-d'Ascq 2008, 11–40.
- BOWERSOCK 1969 G. W. BOWERSOCK: *Greek sophists in the Roman Empire*. Oxford 1969.

---

<sup>60</sup> HEATH (2006: 63–74).

## BRAGUINSKAIA–LEONOV 2006

V. BRAGUINSKAIA – D. LEONOV: *La composition des« Images »de Philostrate L'Ancien*. In: M. Costantini – F. Graziani – S. Rolet (éds.): *Le Défi De L'art, Philostrate, Callistrate Et L'image Sophistique*. Rennes 2006, 9–30.

## CORSO 2001

A. CORSO: *Attitudes to the Visual Arts of Classical Greece in Late Antiquity*. *Eulimene* 2 (2001) 17–23.

## DELGADO–PORDOMINGO 2008

J. A. F. DELGADO – F. PORDOMINGO: *PMilVogl I 20: bocetos de "progymnásmata"*. *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 167 (2008) 167–192.

## ELSNER 1996

J. ELSNER: *Naturalism and the Erotics of the Gaze: Intimations of Narcissus*. In: N. Kampen – B. A. Bergmann: *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*. Cambridge 1996, 247–261.

## ELSNER 1998

J. ELSNER: *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire AD 100-450*. Oxford 1998.

## FAIRBANKS 1931

A. FAIRBANKS: *Introduction*. In: A. Fairbanks (trans.): *Elder Philostratus, Younger Philostratus, Callistratus* (Loeb Classical Library Volume 256). London 1931, 369–373.

GREIFENHAGEN 1957 A. GREIFENHAGEN: *Griechische Eroten*. Berlin 1957.

## HERMARY–CASSIMATIS–VOLLKOMMER 1986

A. HERMARY–H. CASSIMATIS–R. VOLLKOMMER: *Eros*. In: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)* [vol. III, 1]. Zürich 1986, 850–942.

## HEATH 2006

S. HEATH: *A Box Mirror Made from Two Antinous Medallions of Smyrna*. *American Journal of Numismatics* 18 (2006) 63–74.

## HERRMANN 1975

A. HERRMANN: *Two Hellenistic Groups and Their Forerunners*. *Antike Kunst* 18 (1975) 85–92.

## HEYNE 1801

C. G. HEYNE: *Callistrati statuarum Illustratio c. 1-extr*. Gottingae 1801.

## LEE 2003)

M. M. LEE: *The Ancient Greek Peplos and the 'Dorian Question'*. In: A. A. Donohue – M. D. Fullerton (eds.): *Ancient Art and Its Historiography*. Cambridge 2003, 118–146.

## LEE 2006

M. M. LEE: *Acheloös Peplophoros: A lost statuette of a river-god in feminine dress*. *Hesperia* 75 (2006) 317–325.

## LUPPE 2006

W. LUPPE: *Die Narkissos-Sage in P.Oxy. LXIX 4711*. *Archiv Für Papyrusforschung und Verwandte Gebiete* 52 (2006) 1–3.

## PICCARDI 2002

G. D. PICCARDI: *Antinoo, Antinoupolis e Diocleziano (P. Oxy. 4352 Fr. 5 II)*. *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 139 (2002) 55–60.

## POLLITT 1974

J. J. POLLITT: *The Ancient View of Greek Art: Criticism, History, and Terminology*. New Haven 1974.

- RAFN 1992 B. RAFN: *Narkissos*. In: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)* [vol. VI, 1]. Zürich 1992, 703–711.
- SCHENKL–REICH 1902 K. SCHENKL – A. REISCH: *Praefatio*. In: *Imagines et Callistrati Descriptiones*. Lipsiae 1902, IV–LIII.
- SCHWEITZER 1925 B. SCHWEITZER: *Der bildende Künstler und der Begriff des Künstlerischen in der Antike: Mīmēsis und Phantasia; eine Studie*. Halle 1925.
- SEGAL 1974 C. SEGAL: «*Since Daphnis Dies*»: *The Meaning of Theocritus' First Idyll*. *Museum Helveticum* 31 (1974) 1–22.
- SICHTERMANN 1986 H. SICHTERMANN: *Narkissos auf römischen Sarkophagen*. In: E. Bohr – W. Martini – K. Schauenburg (eds.): *Studien Zur Mythologie Und Vasenmalerei: Konrad Schauenburg Zum 65. Geburtstag Am 16. April 1986*. Mainz am Rhein 1986, 239–242.
- SHAFFER 1998 D. SHAFFER: *Ekphrasis and the Rhetoric of Viewing in Philostratus's Imaginary Museum*. *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 31 (1998) 303–316.
- TAYLOR 2008 R. M. TAYLOR: *The Moral Mirror of Roman Art*. Cambridge 2014.
- VALLADARES 2012 H. VALLADARES, *Fallax Imago: Ovid's Narcissus and the seduction of mimesis in Roman wall painting*. *Word & Image* 27 (2011) 378–395.
- VOUT 2005 C. VOUT: *Antinous, Archaeology and History*. *The Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005) 80–96.
- VOUT 2009 C. VOUT: *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome*. Cambridge 2009.
- YATES 1875 J. YATES: *Chlamys*. In: W. Smith (ed.): *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. London 1875, 275–276.
- ZANKER 1966 P. ZANKER: *Iste Ego Sum: Der Naive Und Der Bewusste Narziss*. Bonn 1966.
- ZIMMERMANN 1994 C. ZIMMERMAN: *The Pastoral Narcissus: A Study of the First Idyll of Theocritus*. Lanham MD 1994.

## Illustrations



Figure 1.  
Wall painting from Pompeii  
V 4, 11 (i) (Domus Lucretii Frontonis).  
RAFN (1992: 704, No. 1).

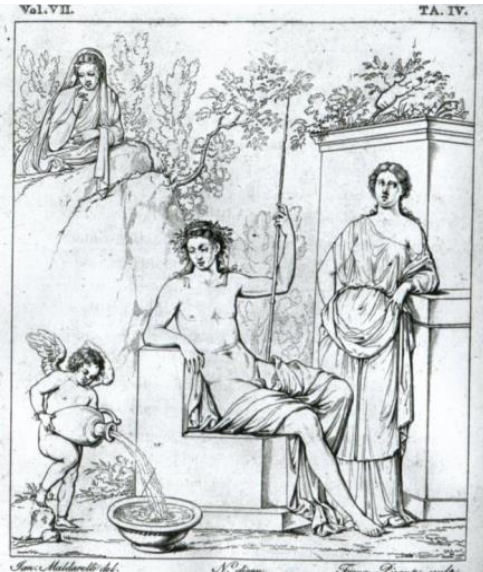


Figure 2.  
Pompeii. W.218. Room 20, drawing of wall painting.  
<https://pompeiipictures.org/R6/6%2009%2006%20east%20part%204.htm>



Figure 3.  
Mosaics from Antioch, House of Narcissus  
Baltimore, Walters Art Gall. 38.710.  
RAFN (1992: 704, No. 9).



Figure 4.  
Marble statuette  
Vatican, Mus. Chiaramonti 6 5 5.  
BALENSIEFEN (1990: Plate 39, No. 1, 2).



Figure 5.  
Marble statue  
Paris, Louvre MA 4 3 5.  
RAFN (1992: 705, No. 21).

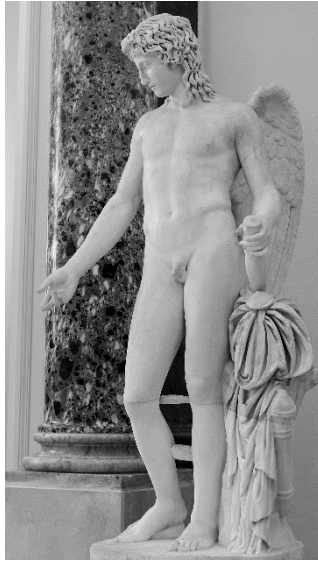


Figure 6.  
Marble statue  
Naples, National Archaeological  
Museum, Inv. 6353.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eros\\_type\\_Centocelle\\_MAN\\_Napoli\\_Inv6353\\_n03.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eros_type_Centocelle_MAN_Napoli_Inv6353_n03.jpg)

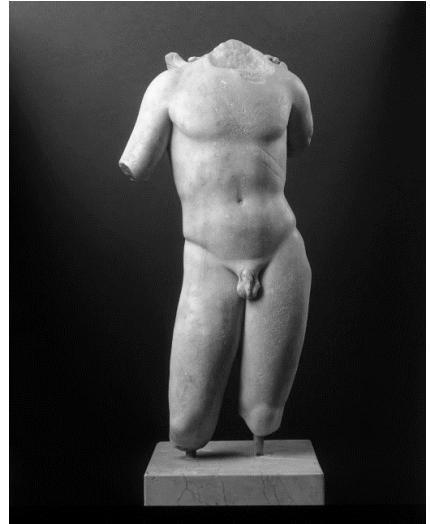


Figure 7.  
Marble torso  
Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, Classical  
Antiquities Collection, Inv. 4127.



Figure 8.  
Wall painting from Pompeii  
Naples, National Archaeological Museum. Inv. 9380.  
RAFN (1992: 707, No. 48).



Figure 9.  
Wall painting from Pompeii  
House of M. Epidi Sabini, IX.1.22.  
Naples, National Archaeological Museum  
Inv. 27875.



Figure 10.  
Carnelian ringstone  
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 1615.  
RAFN (1992: 708, No. 58.)



Figure 11.  
Roman puteal (well head) (original lost)  
Copenhagen, Thorvaldsens Museum Inv. L298.  
RAFN (1992: 711, No. 53).



Figure 12.  
Roman puteal (well head) (original lost)  
Copenhagen, Thorvaldsens Museum Inv. L298.  
RAFN (1992: 711, No. 53).  
<https://thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/en/collections/work/L298/details>



Figure 13.  
Marble statue, Brussels, Cinquantenaire Museum.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Daphnis,\\_Roman\\_copy\\_from\\_a\\_group\\_from\\_the\\_2nd\\_century\\_AD,\\_Cinquantenaire\\_Museum,\\_Brussels.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Daphnis,_Roman_copy_from_a_group_from_the_2nd_century_AD,_Cinquantenaire_Museum,_Brussels.jpg)



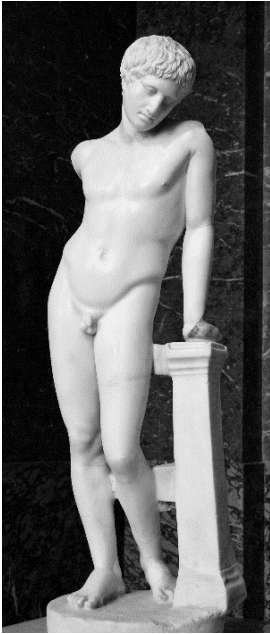


Figure 14.  
Marble statue  
Paris, Louvre, Inv. Ma 456 (Cp  
6441).  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/  
wiki/File:Ephebe\\_Narcissus\\_  
Louvre\\_Ma456.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ephebe_Narcissus_Louvre_Ma456.jpg)

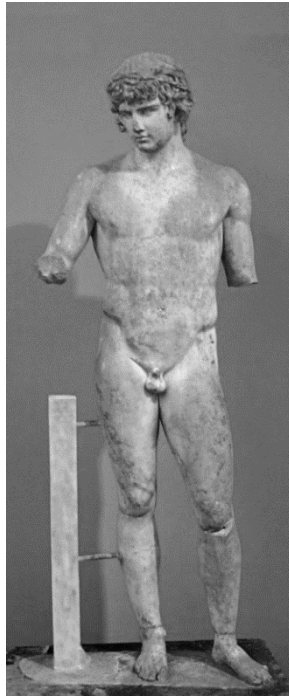


Figure 15.  
Marble Statue  
Delphi, Archeological Museum  
Inv. 1718.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/  
wiki/File:Antinoos,\\_AM\\_of  
\\_Delphi,\\_201430.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antinoos,_AM_of_Delphi,_201430.jpg)



Figure 16.  
A Box mirror made from  
Antinous Medallions.  
HEATH (2006: Plate 6.)