

## Martin Germ

### **Christology of Nicholas of Cusa and Christological Iconography in Self-Portraits of Albrecht Dürer**

The identification with Christ in self-portrayal of Albrecht Dürer is most often based on Dürer's empathy with Christ's passion although in some cases a more complex idea of *christomimesis* can not be excluded. This is most evident in his *Self-Portrait in a Fur-Collared Robe* (1500, Alte Pinakothek, Munich). The article concentrates on the possible influence of Nicholas of Cusa's Christology on the iconography of Dürer's *Self-Portrait of 1500* – a theory much discussed in the last fifty years. The comparative analysis of philosophy of Nicholas of Cusa and Dürer's artistic and written opus brings to light surprisingly close views on beauty, harmony, ideal proportions, and the importance of mathematics in visual arts. Even more important is the common notion of Man and the relationship between Man and God. Cusanus's teachings on Christ mark a new stage in the history of Christian humanism: by describing Christ as "*homo perfectus*" and Man as "*alter Deus*" the Cusan emphasizes a close relationship between Christ and Man, thus paving the way for the revolutionary humanistic notion of Man as (almost) equal to God. The relationship is so intimate that according to the Cusan a man who tries to envisage His true image – *vera icon Christi* – will finally see it as a mirror-reflection of his own face. That is precisely the case in Dürer's *Self-Portrait* in Munich: Dürer depicts himself as Christ because the real image of God is actually a mirror in which the spectator's own features are reflected.