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MELANCHOLY AS A THEME IN GIORGIO DE CHIRICO'S EARLY METAPHYSICAL PAINTINGS (1910-1915)

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Melancholy as a Theme in Giorgio de Chirico's Early Metaphysical Paintings (1910-1915)

Giorgio de Chirico'nun Erken Dönem Metafizik Resimlerinde Bir Tema Olarak Melankoli (1910-1915)

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I will examine how melancholia, which has been characterized in different ways throughout the ages, was handled as a theme in the pre-1915 metaphysical paintings of Greek-born Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, in particular, the origins of the iconographic elements he used in the works of this period. I will discuss them within the framework of his personal life history, chronic illnesses, and the effect of two important names who had influenced his art both visually and intellectually, Arnold Böcklin and Friedrich Nietzsche.

De Chirico described himself as a melancholic, and we see the huge impact of melancholy on his art. The visual grammar of the artist's metaphysical paintings is quite unique. Thanks to this visual metaphysical language, we can see that he created both melancholic and enigmatic atmosphere in his works. In order to create this atmosphere, he used many iconographic elements. As a result of the examinations, we see that the source of these iconographic elements is sometimes his own personal history, sometimes the influence of Böcklin but mostly Nietzsche. In addition to his admiration and passion for Nietzsche, de Chirico also saw himself as the substitute for him and his bond with Nietzsche accompanied him throughout his life. So we can say that de Chirico's depictions of melancholy have a peerless place in the history of art. However, we should add that it is very difficult to interpret the works of the painter without knowing the factors that constitute the personal history, artistic and philosophical background of the artist.

Keywords: Giorgio de Chirico, Melancholy, Metaphysical Painting, Enigma, Ariadne

ÖZET

Bu tezde çağlar boyunca farklı şekillerde nitelendirilmiş melankolinin bir tema olarak Yunanistan doğumlu, İtalyan ressam Giorgio de Chirico'nun 1915 öncesi metafizik resimler olarak adlandırılan eserlerinde nasıl ele alındığı incelenecektir. Özellikle bu dönem içerisinde yapmış olduğu eserlerde kullandığı ikonografik ögelerin altında yatan nedenler değerlendirilecektir. Bu ögeler, Giorgio de Chirico'nun kişisel hayat öyküsünün yanısıra geçirdiği kronik hastalıklar ve ayrıca sanatını hem görsel hem de entellektüel açıdan etkilemiş olan önemli iki isim Arnold Böcklin ve Friedrich Nietzsche çerçevesinde ele alınacaktır.

Kendisini melankolik olarak betimleyen de Chirico'nun ürettiği eserlerde melankolik etkinin oldukça baskın olduğu görülmektedir. Ressamın bu çalışmada incelenen metafizik resimlerinin görsel grameri ise oldukça benzersizdir. Oluşturduğu bu görsel metafizik dil sayesinde eserlerine hem melankolik hem de muammalı bir atmosfer kattığı görülmüştür. Bu ögelerin altında kimi zaman kendi kişisel tarihinden izler bulunurken, bazen Böcklin ve büyük ölçüde de Nietzsche etkisi hissedilmektedir. De Chirico'nun Nietzsche'ye olan hayranlığı ve tutkusunun yanısıra, kendisini Nietzsche'nin tezahürü olarak gördüğü de karşımıza çıkmaktadır ve kurduğu bu bağ ömrü boyunca ressama eşlik etmiştir. Bu bilgiler ışığında, de Chirico'nun melankoli betimlemelerinin sanat tarihinde benzersiz bir yere sahip olduğunu görülmektedir. Lakin ressamın kişişel tarihi, sanatsal ve felsefi altyapısını oluşturan etmenlerin bilinmeden eserlerini yorumlamanın oldukça zor olduğu da ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Giorgio de Chirico, Melankoli, Metafizik Resim, Muamma, Ariadne

INTRODUCTION

Although melancholy has had different meanings throughout history, it is also a seductive research topic in the history of art by being associated with talent and genius, as Aristotle expressed in *Problemata*. Therefore, throughout the history of art, the theme 'melancholy' has been discussed many times from different angles by artists. The journey of melancholy embodies itself in art. Sometimes it is handled as the subject matter itself, sometimes visual elements, like ruins, open wounds, torn bodies, diseases, death, mythological characters, are associated with melancholy. Melancholy sometimes appears as the mood of the figure in the painting, and sometimes it is the effect of the painting on the viewer. According to art historian Michael Ann Holly; 'There is not just one way in which melancholy shadows art historical research, but many.'[1] The main subject of this thesis is the Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, who created one of these ways with his melancholy-themed unique oeuvre. The reflection of melancholy in de Chirico's aesthetic production composes the framework of this research.

De Chirico internalized 'melancholy' as a constitutive element of his artistic production. In most of his works, melancholy is represented by the figure of Ariadne or the architectural construction surrounded by lights and shadows. The symbols of antiquity and modernity coexist on the same canvas. The painter's memories, visual sources, and philosophical tendencies are responsible for the production of his poetics that leads the viewer to contemplation. The metaphors created by the artist, like eerie and deserted piazzas, solitude figures, long shadows, towers, statues, and the presence of modernity, represented by trains, or industrial clocks, carry a melancholic atmosphere. Within the framework, I ask the following questions: What is the role of melancholy in the artistic production of Giorgio de Chirico? Was the theme 'melancholy' of his artistic production an outcome of his illness or the relationship with his parents or the loss of his father or his nomadic way of life, homesickness, or the influence of the romantic poetics of Böcklin or the philosophy of Nietzsche, or all of them? This thesis mainly focuses on the pre-

[1] Michael Ann Holly, *The Melancholy Art* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), XXI.

1915 works, most of which have titles that involve melancholy. There are also other paintings that do not include melancholy in the titles but show the melancholic state and have his melancholy iconography. Therefore, in this thesis, the trace of the theme 'melancholy' will be examined through his early (pre-1915) metaphysical works, as well as the source of his other so called metaphysical paintings.

According to Riccardo Dottori, in order to interpret the art of de Chirico, we need to understand the relationship between his personal history and the basic motifs of his paintings, such as melancholy.[2] Thus I have tried to trace the melancholy theme in line with his personal life and his lifetime influencers, Arnold Böcklin and Friedrich Nietzsche, to investigate the theme in his early metaphysical paintings.

In Chapter 1, I will take a close look at the changing meanings of melancholy from ancient times to the modern age. Then I will examine how melancholy has been presented visually throughout the history of art. Albrecht Dürer's depiction of melancholy is a cornerstone therefore I will begin to explain the famous engraving *Melencholia I*, and then have a look at the other artworks of Renaissance, Baroque, and Romanticism periods. I will review the works of Caspar David Friedrich, who is an important German Romantic painter, because German Romanticism has a great influence on de Chirico's art. As de Chirico himself stated in his own words, he struggled with melancholy during his lifetime, I will discuss whether melancholy as an aesthetic emotion, can be the source of creativity in general and de Chirico's creativity in particular.

In Chapter 2, I will examine melancholy as a theme in de Chirico's early metaphysical paintings. In order to reveal the relationship between melancholy and his art, in line with Dottori's suggestion, first I will take a brief look at his life story. Then, I will discuss the connection between melancholy and the metaphysical art he created. Here, we will see that Böcklin and Nietzsche, who inspired him throughout his life, were influential on his metaphysical art. According to de

[2] Riccardo Dottori, ''Dream, Presage and The Disquieting in De Chirico's Metaphsyical Art,'' *Metaphysical Art* 14/16 (2016): 301.

Chirico, Böcklin was the most profound painter of all times. Böcklin's use of mythological characters and his ability to create a kind of eternal present inspired him and de Chirico cherished Böcklin's romantic-melancholic poetics. Böcklin-inspired Odysseus figures also appear as one of the main figures of his metaphysical works. Ariadne is another mythological figure that she can be regarded as the backbone of his metaphysical art. Ariadne tempted Nietzsche so much, as well as de Chirico. He made several paintings called 'Ariadne Series.' De Chirico opposed the understanding of art of his time, just as Nietzsche did in relation to philosophy of his time. For instance, he used noon-time light, and shadows as enigmatic motifs which can be interpreted as a critique of the Enlightenment idea that everything can be known through reason.

To sum up, considering de Chirico's personal experiences, life story, artistic and philosophical tendencies, I have examined the theme of melancholy in his pre-1915 metaphysical paintings.

CHAPTER 1

MELANCHOLY

1.1. THE FLOATING MEANINGS OF MELANCHOLY: FROM BLACK BILE TO DEPRESSION

The interpretation of melancholy has always been a subject of debate throughout history. Is it an experience, a disease, a way of existence, or a characteristic feature? While melancholy was glorified in some periods, it was considered a great sin or madness in other periods. It has also been described as a disease, as well as a prerequisite for talent and genius. Therefore, it has always been an attractive subject of cultural, medical, and philosophical studies.

The term 'melancholy' originates from the word 'melancholia', which comes from the ancient Greek word 'μέλαινα χολή' or 'melaina chole', means 'black bile.' The black bile is one of the main liquids of the ancient theory of four humours. It is a medical theory based on the balance of the four liquids of the body: blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm. According to the theory good health means well-balanced humours and unbalanced humours bring various illnesses, which effect both body and mind. It was believed that the overabundance of black bile was causing sadness and prolonged fear.[3]

The first figures in the melancholy literature are the melancholic heroes of Homer's epics. Although the word 'melancholy' is not used in these epics, the behaviours, temperaments, and attitudes of the heroes can be described as 'melancholic'; like Bellerophontes and Aias.[4] Bellerophontes is the grandson of Sysphos, who is punished by the Gods and condemned to live alone. He wanders

[3] Alec Ian Fraser, "History of the English Word Melancholy", *Lingua Frankly* 3 (February 2017). https://doi.org/10.6017/lf.v3i0.9266.
[4] Serol Teber, *Melankoli: Normal bir anomali* (İstanbul: Say, 2001), 79-80.

grief-stricken over the Aleian Plain: 'But when even Bellerophon came to be hated of all the gods, then verily he wandered alone over the Aleian plain, devouring his own soul, and shunning the paths of men…'[5] The abandonment into an intense solitude and the grief he experienced, can be seen as a melancholic state of Bellerophontes. Another melancholic hero, Aias, is described as a very courageous hero in *the Iliad*. He shows success in the Trojan War, therefore he thinks that he has deserved the legendary sword of Achilleus but the sword is handed to Odysseus. Because of an optical illusion created by Athena, he is ridiculed and humiliated.[6] The degrading treatment of the goddess drives him suicide with his own sword. Aias smiles at the point of death, and hence the smile of him is known as a symbol of melancholy throughout history.[7] Regarding the first melancholic narratives mentioned above, melancholy is associated with 'loss.' Bellerophontes loses the Gods, whereas Aias loses his pride and honour. At the beginning of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud would raise this issue again.

Although we encounter descriptions of melancholy in Babylon, Ancient Egypt, Hebrew, and Chinese civilizations, the first comprehensive medical research on melancholy was conducted by Hippocrates (460-375 BC). He defined melancholy as the darkening of the black bile secretion and the darkening of the soul because of some changes in the brain, so for the first time, he established a relationship between mental illness and the biochemistry of the brain.[8] According to Hippocrates, the brain is the source of being happy, cheerful, playful, sad, painful, or unhappy. Again, with the brain, we become enthusiastic, delusional, fearful, anxious, sleepless, forgetful, and mistaken. The brain does not function normally when it is hot or cold, dry or black bile, which is not normal, in which case people can become crazy or delusional.[9]

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[5] Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. A. T. Murray (London: William Heinemann Ltd. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), 277.
[6] Azra Erhat, *Mitoloji Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: Remzi, 1996), 17-18.
[7] Teber, *Melankoli*, 86.
[8] Olcay Yazıcı and Sibel Çakır, "Duygudurum Bozuklukları," in *Psikiyatri*, ed. Işın B. Kulaksızoğlu, Raşit Tükel, Alp Üçok, İlhan Yargıç and Olcay Yazıcı (İstanbul: İÜ Tıp Fakültesi Yayınları, 2009), 106.
[9] Teber, *Melankoli*, 99-100.

Hippocrates accepted the theory of four humours (blood, phlegm, yellow bile, black bile), which had been described before him.

Humour	*Season*	*Qualities*
Blood	Spring	Warm and Moist
Yellow Bile	Summer	Warm and Dry
Black Bile	Autumn	Cold and Dry
Phlegm	Winter	Cold and Moist [10]

He developed the theory, referring body liquids that relate to emotions: sanguine (blood), phlegmatic (phlegm), choleric (yellow bile), and melancholic (black bile). According to him, the body is like nature and tries to re-establish the balance that has been distorted.[11]

Galenos (129-200 AD) also accepted Hippocrates' 'balance theory' and likewise saw 'black bile' as the cause of melancholy. To restore balance, he prepared diet lists and recommended listening to music.[12] According to him, 'Melancholic Humour' is different from the type of black bile that thickens and chills the blood.[13] He stated that melancholic fluid is also present in healthy people and there are three main types. Black bile is one of the essential humours and the other two have a potential to be harmful. Each of them has its own physical properties.[14]

In ancient times, melancholy took attention not only from medicine but also from philosophy. Aristoteles (384-322 BC) drew a correspondence between genius/talent and melancholy in the first line of chapter 30 of the book titled *Problemata*.[15] He questioned why all the extraordinary men in philosophy, politics, and art are suffering from 'black bile' and he dignified the melancholic state.

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[10] Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (Nendeln/Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1979), 10.
[11] M. Cemil Uğurlu, ''Hipokrat,'' *Ankara Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Mecmuası* C.50 S.2 (1997), 73. https://doi.org/10.1501/Tipfak_0000000470
[12] Teber, *Melankoli*, 137-138.
[13] Keith Andrew Stewart, ″What factors influence Galen's development of a theory of black bile for his explanation of health and disease in the body? ″ (PhD diss. University of Exeter, 2016), 16.
[14] Ibid, 185.
[15] *Problemata* (Προβλήματα) is considered to be a pseudo-Aristotelian book.

> Why is it that all those who have become eminent in philosophy or politics or poetry or the arts are clearly melancholics, and some of them to such an extent as to be affected by diseases caused by black bile?[16]

Aristoteles also defined Empedocles, Plato, and Socrates as melancholics and mentioned that they were like this by their own nature. He also said that people who drank too much wine could turn into a 'black bile' situation temporarily for a short time, in other words, he described the melancholic nature of some people with the analogy of wine. Some people are born with melancholic nature, and some can only have this nature with the help of wine.[17]

> To sum up: The action of black bile being variable, melancholies are variable, for the black bile becomes very hot very cold. And as it determines the character (for heat and cold are the factors in our bodies most important for determining our character): like wine introduced in a larger or smaller quantity into the body, it makes us persons of such and such a character. And both wine and bile contain air. Since it is possible for this variable mixture to be well tempered and well-adjusted in a certain respect _ that is to say, to be now in a warmer and then again a colder condition, or vice versa, just as required, owing to its tendency to extremes _ therefore all melancholy persons are out of the ordinary, not owing to illness, but from their natural constitution.[18]

Aristoteles thought that 'black bile' has given a certain quality to our personality. As a result of his affirmation of melancholy and associating it with genius, melancholy acquires a different attribution: It has become a prerequisite for genius or talent. Cicero made an ironic comment on this situation: 'Since I am not in a melancholic state, there is no way that I could be considered as an important person'.[19]

In the medieval period, Aristoteles' approach to melancholy has completely changed. All mental illnesses were associated with demonic possession, and scientific progress in this period could only be achieved by the translation and development of Ancient Greek texts by Islamic scholars.[20] Thus, the glorified 'melancholy of antiquity' turned into a diametrically opposite conception. It had

[16] Aristoteles, *Problemata* XXX.1 953a10-14, as cited in Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 18.
[17] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 19-20.
[18] Ibid, 28-29.
[19] As cited in Teber, *Melankoli*, 10. (translated by me)
[20] Yazıcı and Çakır, "Duygudurum Bozuklukları,'' 106.

been cursed and named as a rebellion against the divine order because of causing inability to serve God with a state of lethargy. At noontime, the devil tries to seduce the hermits and leads them into temptation. To avoid sinning, they live in seclusion. Struggling with the demon and being isolated and solitude has driven them to melancholy. During the Middle Ages, melancholy was named *acedia*[21] which was considered one of the seven deadly sins: Pride, greed, lust, sloth (acedia), gluttony, envy, and wrath.[22] *Acedia* grew out the *taedium vitae* (a state of extreme ennui) of ancient times, which affected both body and mind. Such that, to escape the *taedium vitae*, the Romans could even choose to commit suicide, and this was one of the plausible reasons for suicide.[23] *Acedia* of the 'Desert Fathers,' who were isolated and lived like hermits, was described as having a spiritual illness. Contrary to this, St. Jerome thought that *acedia* was a psychical illness, which needs 'Hippocratic treatments.' John Cassian, another desert father, named *acedia/acedi* as the 'midday or noonday demon' and described it: When the heat and the tiredness are most intense, *acedi* manifests itself in restlessness, solitude, and lethargy.[24]

The representation of melancholy, which was considered an extraordinary quality in ancient times, has also changed in art. Melancholic people were represented as sleepy, lethargic, with a very low level of knowledge and intelligence in the works of art of the Middle Ages.[25] Sometimes it was believed that melancholy sufferers have supernatural powers, and they were even associated with devils and werewolves, and as a result, they were tortured and killed.[26] The French physician Jean de Nynauld, wrote in the book *De la lycanthropie, transformation et extase des sorciers* (*On Lycanthropy: Transformation and Ecstasy of Witches*), published in Paris in 1615, that demon has always tried to turn people away from God's way and to imitate God's sublime works to gain prestige. He added that the imitation of

[21] Acedia is used to describe people who are lazy, dissocial, lethargic, do not like to work, and whose life energy is depleted.
[22] Teber, *Melankoli*, 144.
[23] Jacky Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy* (Great Britain: Oldcastle Books, 2008), 91.
[24] Ibid, 92.
[25] Teber, *Melankoli*, 154-155.
[26] Ibid, 19.

God's sublime work is not possible, and it can only be an illusion that can only be effective on those who are slaves of demon and sometimes whose faith is weakened by the scepticism.[27] According to Nynauld, *lycanthropy*[28] is a melancholic disease and this melancholic state confuses the senses of the people who suffer from this disease. Therefore, the sick ones believe that they have turned into a wolf because of this confusion.[29] This stance is important in terms of understanding the perspective of the period.

Melancholy has also been associated with the planet Saturn, the bats, and insomnia in the medieval world, and the melancholics are also called the 'The Children of Saturn' or 'Saturnine.' Kronos, the son of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaia (Earth), takes the name 'Saturn' in Roman mythology. Kronos castrates his father and enables the second-generation gods to come to power. He has remained in power until he is defeated by his son Zeus. The association of the myth of Kronos/Saturn with melancholy can be explained by evoking death and inviting melancholy.[30] On the other hand, it was believed that planet Saturn contained bat blood and the planet had been affiliated with night owls.[31] In this context, the German artist Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Melencolia I* (Picture 1) set a good example. On the upper left of the engraving, a bat-like figure bears the text 'Melencolia'.

In order to understand the view of the Islamic World to melancholy, it is important to understand the thought of the famous physician, philosopher, and astronomer Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980 - 1037). He embraced the Greek theory and mentioned four primary fluids or humours theory in his famous book *Canon of Medicine*. His primary fluids/humours are blood, phlegm, bile (yellow), black bile,

[27] Jean de Nynauld, ''Kurtadamlık Üzerine,'' *Cogito* 51 (2007)*:* 155
[28] Lycanthropy (from Greek *lykos,* "wolf"; *anthropos,* "man"), mental disorder in which the patient believes that he is a wolf or some other nonhuman animal. https://www.britannica.com/science/lycanthropy Last access November 5, 2021.
[29] Nynauld, ''Kurtadamlık Üzerine,'' 157.
[30] Emel Gürel, and Canan Muter, ''Psikomitolojik Terimler: Psikoloji Literatüründe Mitolojinin Kullanılması,'' *Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, cilt 7 (2007): 550.
[31] Teber, *Melankoli,* 37.

or *sauda* (means in Arabic 'black, blackness').[32] According to Ibn Sina, melancholy is caused by either an internal (inside the brain) or an external (outside of the brain) reason. The internal problem is due to the harmful effect of dry-cold temperament or a substance. This coldness in temperament is against human nature because it is moist. If melancholy is caused by a substance, it has turned into *sauda,* which is the most common one. The 'saudawi temperament' causes fear, grief, and anxiety and leads people to melancholy.[33] He explained the signs of melancholy as follows:

> The first signs of melancholy are bad judgment, fear without cause, quick anger, delight in solitude, shaking, vertigo, inner clamor, tingling, especially in the abdomen. When, moreover, fear is confirmed, as well as badness of judgment, there are anxiety, abandonment of conversation and craving for coitus due to a multitude of flatulence; and the appearance of fear of things which do or do not exist; and a greatness of fear of things which are not customarily feared. But these appearances certainly are indefinite.[34]

The humanist thought of the Renaissance partly changed the perspective about melancholy, but the repression of *the Inquisition* was still ongoing. During this period, Plato's texts were started to be translated and this movement triggered *Neo-Platonism* in Italy. Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), who played a major role in the development of this movement, interpreted Plato's philosophy with the spirit of the Renaissance. He pointed the Aristotelian link between the melancholic state and the brilliant, genius people in his book *Three books on Life*. Distinctly he also developed an astrological explanation about the relationship of genius and melancholy.[35] According to Ficino, there are three reasons causing melancholy: Celestial, natural, and human causes.

- Celestial cause: It depends on Mercury and Saturn. Mercury is very dry and leads to work and Saturn is cold and leads discoveries that can be attributed to melancholy.

[32] Jennifer Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2002), 76.
[33] Ebu Ali İbn Sina, ''Melankolinin Teşhis ve Tedavisi,'',*Cogito* 51 (2007)*:* 24.
[34] As cited in Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 77.
[35] Ibid, 87.

- Natural cause: In order to dig up further information, man must turn into his inside. This can only be possible by standing at the centre of the man himself. This is very similar to standing in the centre of the earth, while the centre of the world is like black bile.
- Human cause: It originates from the body. The mind gets dry because of the frequent agitation of the brain. Dryness causes descending humidity, and this causes descending temperature. Thus, the brain becomes cold and dry which leads to a melancholic state.[36]

According to Ficino, contemplation also causes melancholy. He writes: 'Contemplation itself, in its turn, by a continual recollection and compression, as it were, brings on a nature like black bile.'[37] Therefore, he claims that the most sufferers from black bile are the philosophers:

> (…) But of all learned people, those especially are oppressed by black bile, who, being sedulously devoted to the study of philosophy, recall their mind from the body and corporeal things and apply it to incorporeal things. The cause is, first, that the more difficult the work, the greater concentration of mind it requires; and second, that the more they apply their mind to incorporeal truth, the more they are compelled to disjoin it from the body. Hence their body is often rendered as if it were half-alive and often melancholic.[38]

He also adds that besides philosophers, also 'the priests of the Muses' suffer from black bile and all the sufferers prone to 'divine madness.'

> So far, let it suffice that we have shown why the priests of the Muses either are from the beginning or are made by study into melancholies, owing to causes first celestial, second natural, and third human. This Aristotle confirms in his book of *Problems,* saying that all those who are renowned in whatever faculty you please have been melancholies. In this he has confirmed that Platonic notion expressed in the book *De scientia,* that most intelligent people are prone to excitability and madness. Democritus too says no one can ever be intellectually outstanding except those who are deeply excited by some sort of madness. My author Plato in the *Phaedrus* seems to approve this, saying that without madness one knocks at the doors of poetry in vain. Even if he perhaps intends divine madness to be understood here, nevertheless, according to the physicians, madness of this kind is never incited in anyone else but melancholies.[39]

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[36] Marsilio Ficino, ''Alimlerin Melankolik Olmalarının Nedenleri ve Bu Hale Nasıl Geldikleri,'' *Cogito* 51 (2007): 146-147.
[37] As cited in Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 90.
[38] As cited in Ibid, 90.
[39] As cited in Ibid, 91.

As we can see, Ficino continues the Aristotelian tradition and expands the 'melancholic genius' framework.

The Neo-Platonic movement in Germany came to the forefront with Agrippa von Nettesheim. Agrippa is a physician, legist, a thinker interested in secret doctrines, and the author of the book *De Occulta Philosophia* (*Occult Philosophy*), published in 1533, which influenced German humanists. Neo-Platonism and Ancient Greek philosophy are blended in the book. Although he is a physician, his mystical side is more prominent. Agrippa claimed that there was a connection between Saturn and other celestial events and melancholy. He adopted Aristoteles' doctrine of melancholy and believed that melancholic people are artistic, creative, talented.[40]

Robert Burton is considered as one of the experts on melancholy with the help of his book, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, published in 1621. He derived humour theory from Hippocrates and Galenos. Another important source was the work of French physician Andre Du Laurens (1560-1609), *Discourse de la Melancholie*. Burton shared the thought of Laurens about melancholy, as 'a kind of dotage without any fever.'[41] *The Anatomy of Melancholy* reveals Burton's own struggle against sadness, despair, and disheartened mood.[42]

> *Melancholy,* the subject of our present Discourse, is either in Disposition, or Habite. In Disposition, is that transitory *Melancholy,* which goes & comes upon every small occasion of sorrow, need, sickness, trouble, feare, griefe, passion, or perturbation of the Minde, any manner of care, discontent, or thought, which causeth anguish, dulnesse, heavinesse and vexation of the spirits, any wayes opposite to pleasure, mirth, joy, delight, causing frowardnesse in us, or a dislike. In which Æquivocall and improper sense, we call him Melancholy, that is dull, sad, sowre, lumpish, ill disposed, solitary, any way moved, or displeased. And from these Melancholy Dispositions, no man living is free, no *Stoicke*, none so wise, none so happy, none so patient, so generous, so godly, so divine, that can vindicate himselfe, so well composed, but more or less some time or other, he feeles the smart of it. Melancholy in this sence is the Character of Mortalitie. *Man that is borne of a woman, is of short continuance, and full of trouble…*[43]

[40] Teber, *Melankoli*, 166-167.
[41] As cited in from Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 130.
[42] Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 130.
[43] As cited in Ibid, 130.

Burton managed to describe all forms of melancholy such as head melancholy, hypochondriacal melancholy, religious melancholy, love melancholy, and 'Maids, Nuns, and Widows' Melancholy'.[44] As we see from the titles of his book, he distinguished the melancholy of man and women with a misogynist point of view. He claimed that the melancholy of women was originated from the vicious vapour of the menstrual blood.[45] Apart from these, his assertion about the cause of melancholy is idleness. Idleness causes unbalanced body humours, which effects the soul. Man must remain in constant motion, like nature to keep a well balance and healthy spirit. The concept of idleness used by Burton can also be seen as a continuation of the medieval concept of *acedia*.[46]

In the *Age of Enlightenment*, the medieval understanding of sin is questioned, and the religion-based thinking changed partly and placed to a rational base. The Enlightenment period is less susceptible to the perceptive of melancholy. Despite all the developments, the industrial revolution, technological progress, and urbanization, disappointments arose. In such an environment, the melancholic feeling gained momentum again with the emergence of Romanticism. Although it was the product of the eighteenth century, it effected the whole artistic production of the nineteenth century.[47] Romanticism reinvigorated Aristotelian tradition, which has reshaped Western art and thought. The conception of 'melancholic genius' was dominant and important to the Romantics, who are characterized by melancholics or depressed moods. Melancholy was seen as the trigger of the artistic impulse, and a helpful tool in comprehending deep emotions that would contribute to creativity.[48] From the romantic point of view, melancholy is not a disease, or a pathological disorder but it is a possibility; a way of coping with life.[49]

[44] Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy*, 27.
[45] Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 130.
[46] Tomoki Sakakibara, "Robert Burton and Idleness in the Anatomy of Melancholy," ***東京大学大学院総合文化研究科言語情報科学専攻***, 98. https://doi.org/10.15083/00076919.
[47] Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art Volume Three* (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), 167.
[48] Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy*, 38.
[49] Dörthe Binkert, *Melankoli Kadındır*, trans. İlknur İgan (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1995), 10-11.

As we have seen, melancholy has been evaluated under various concepts, related to genius, talent, sin, acedia, idleness, ennui, madness, depression, etc. throughout the ages. In the modern era, those who do not comply with 'rational norms' have exchanged their ancient 'talented-genius' or medieval 'sinful-evil-demoniac' identity with the state of 'psychiatric patients' and melancholy is seen as a harmful emotional state that threatens the mind and it must be treated. Therefore, melancholics become to be defined as the object of 'psychiatry' that has begun to take its place in science.[50]

1.2. MELANCHOLY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS: FREUD'S MELANCHOLY

Karl Abraham, a German psychoanalyst published an article named 'Notes on the Psycho-Analytical Investigation and Treatment of Manic-Depressive Insanity and Allied Condition' (1911) and claims that the libidinal investment returns to the ego after it is removed from the object and at the same time the object is taken into the ego.[51] The article 'Mourning and Melancholy', published by Sigmund Freud (1865-1939) in 1917, was influenced by Abraham's article. Freud focuses on the common and distinctive features of mourning and melancholia and especially the theme 'loss.' The phenomenon of loss is referred to a beloved and lost object like an ideal, loved one, country, or freedom.

In the article 'Mourning and Melancholy' Freud argues that mourning is not a pathological process that needs to be treated. Interfering the process can cause harm and just a certain period must pass. At the end of a very slow and painful process, libido leaves the object. Thereby, the mourning is completed, and the ego becomes liberated again.[52] He says: '…. melancholia too may be the reaction to the

[50] Teber, *Melankoli*, 215.
[51] Giorgio Agamben, ''Kayıp Nesne,'' *Cogito* 51 (2007): 258.
[52] Sigmund Freud, ''Mourning and Melancholia (1917),'' in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XIV (1914-1916), trans. and ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), 243-245.

loss of a loved object.'[53] The loss of interest with the outside world, loss of capacity to love, restriction of activities, and the painful profound sadness are common in mourning and melancholia, but Freudian notion of melancholy also includes self-condemnation, humiliation, and a decrease in self-esteem, unlike the mourning process. These feelings are accompanied by the expectation of punishment.[54] Regarding the mourning period, the feeling of 'loss' is a conscious state, whereas the loss of the loved object in melancholia is associated with the unconsciousness.[55] In the mourning period, the world is empty and worthless whereas in melancholy it is the ego itself.[56] This is a loss of ego. Freud writes: '(..) it is merely that he has a keener eye for the truth than other people who are not melancholic.'[57] Here we see that he refers to the Aristotelian theory of melancholy and makes a positive affirmation.

Freud explains mourning and melancholy within the framework of libido. He says that a regression (the withdrawal of the libido from the lost object) occurs at the end of the mourning process so that the libido can be attached to a new one. In melancholy, this is not possible, even if the object-cathexis ends. The libido cannot invest in another object, and it is withdrawn into the ego. The loss of the object also turns into the loss of the ego. This is a situation leading to narcissistic identification.[58] Therefore, melancholia derives some of its characteristics from mourning, others from narcissism.[59] If the love for the object, although the object itself is lost, takes shelter in narcissistic identification, hate steps in and humiliates the identified object, causes pain and derives sadistic satisfaction.[60] Freud argues that the suicidal tendency in melancholic patients can be only explained by *sadism* because self-torturing is very enjoyable in melancholy.[61] He also discusses the

[53] Ibid, 245.
[54] Ibid, 244.
[55] Ibid, 245.
[56] Ibid, 246.
[57] Ibid, 246.
[58] Ibid, 249.
[59] Ibid, 250.
[60] Ibid, 251.
[61] Ibid, 252.

relationship between mania and melancholy in the article. He says that mania, which appears as discharging energy that has not been released for a long time, is derived from melancholy, which is opposite in its symptoms, but also adds that it is not valid in every melancholic situation.[62]

With this article, Freud became a leading scientist in the studies of mourning in psychology. He does not use the word 'depression' instead he prefers to use the concept of 'melancholy.' He includes melancholy in psychoanalytic studies and tries to analyse the melancholic mechanism through the language of the libido. The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben draws attention to the similarities between Freud's analysis of melancholy and the ancient melancholy narrative and says that we rediscover the patristic description of *Acedia* and the black-bile temperament theory in Freud's article:

> The distance that separates psychoanalysis from the last sixteenth century offshoots of humoral medicine coincides with the birth and the development of modern psychiatric science, which classifies melancholia among the grave forms of mental disease. Therefore it is not without some surprise that we rediscover in the Freudian analysis of the mechanism of melancholia – translated naturally into the language of libido – two elements that appeared traditionally in the patristic descriptions of *acedia* and in the phenomenology of the black-biled temperament, and whose persistence in the Freudian text testifies to the extraordinary stability over time of the melancholy constellation: the withdrawal from the object and the withdrawal into itself of the contemplative tendency.[63]

Although Freud considers melancholy as a pathological disposition, his quote from Hamlet; 'Use every man after his desert, and who shall scape whipping'[64] can be read as melancholics have a sharper vision than non-melancholics with the result of the withdrawal into itself. This can be seen as an affirmation of creativity. The relationship, he establishes between melancholy and 'the oral / cannibalistic phase of libidinal development', can be related to the psychiatry applied in the 18th and 19th centuries, evaluating cannibalism cases as variations of melancholy, which is

[62] Ibid, 253.
[63] Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 19.
[64] Freud, ''Mourning and Melancholia,'' 246.

reminiscent of the myth of Kronos, the god who devours his children and which comes from the ancient tradition and is associated with melancholy[65] (Picture 2). In sum, we can say that Freud built his own melancholy narrative through the language of libido, bearing traces of the previous melancholy narratives.

1.3. MELANCHOLIC IMAGES IN PICTORIAL ART BEFORE DE CHIRICO

The concept of melancholy is a broad concept that has taken place from antiquity to the present and has been used in different meanings throughout history. It has been a cultural concept, reflecting the characteristic features of human perception of the outside world.[66] The theme 'melancholy', which has been expressed and interpreted from different perspectives from ancient times to the present, is reflected in the works of artists, therefore, it has an indisputable place in pictorial art. Along with the changing definitions of melancholy, the expressions of melancholy in the history of art have also varied.

The theme was handled differently by the artists. In some paintings, 'melancholy' itself is the subject, while in others, it is expressed through components such as mythological or religious stories, literary texts, death, ruins, and human helplessness in the face of nature. Sometimes it reflects the mood of the figure in the painting, and sometimes because of the effect, it passes on the audience. As art historian Jean Clair asserts that an ideal museum, an ideal picture gallery of melancholy, would include the works 'from Albrecht Dürer to Edvard Munch, from Domenico Fetti to Giorgio de Chirico', and a sculpture museum of melancholy which would include works from 'ancient steles with their grief-stricken mourners, hands tucked under arm-pits, down to Rodin's *Thinker*, sunk in his black thoughts'.[67] Therefore, in order to comprehend the depictions of the

[65] Agamben, *Stanzas*, 21.
[66] Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, vii.
[67] Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy*, 141.

melancholy from past to Giorgio de Chirico, I will take a short tour of the 'melancholy museum'.

Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Melencholia I*, dated 1514, which subjected the theme 'melancholy' itself, has an important place in the history of art. Dürer had used many symbols, not only traditional melancholy motifs, and images (resting the head or cheek on the hand, drooping head, black face) but also new ones (geometrical symbols). Resting the head on the hand, which is the main symbol, has always been the sign of melancholy. The motif dates back thousands of years, even to the relief on Egyptian sarcophagi. This old gesture shows grief in age-old depictions, but it may also mean fatigue or creative thought.[68] For example, the bronze statue of Aias (Ajax), an early Augustan, Roman statue, depicts the unfortunate hero with the famous gesture, his head on the right hand (Picture 3). To give another example, a soldier who died in the Corinthian War (431-404 BC) is again depicted with this gesture on the funerary stele. This classical (canonical) gesture, which is most common in the iconography of melancholy, will be a typical indicator for all 'homo melancholicus.'[69]

Other melancholy motifs, the clenched fist and black face, of the Dürer's angel is associated with the increase of black bile. Even the clenched fist does not take part in the pictorial representations of melancholy before him, he intended to express the spasmodic tension of the melancholic angel with using a clenched fist.[70] In a medieval illustration, the clenched fist was the sign of certain delusions[71] but in Dürer's version the clenched fist also supports the head, like holding 'a great treasure, or the whole world' in the hand.[72] Although the lady carries a purse and keys, which symbolizes money, worldly possession and power, she seems to be uninterested in all this. Her gaze is not only looking upward, but also special effect

[68] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 286-287.
[69] Hélène Prigent, *Melankoli: Bunalımın Başkalaşımları*, Çev: Orçun Türkay (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009), 19.
[70] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 289.
[71] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 318.
[72] Ibid, 319.

of hard thinking, and her eyes are shining from a 'black face,' and this reminds us of the Aristotelian melancholy narrative.

Dürer depicted the melancholic lady with wings which would be referred to the wings of the God Saturn. In the book *Saturn and Melancholy* of Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, it is explained that the winged Saturn compositions was known to the pre-Renaissance period only from literature.[73] Dürer's seated, winged, and geometrically involved lady influenced the latter depictions such as Lucas Cranach The Elder's *An Allegory of Melancholy* (1528) (Picture 4), Hans Sebald Beham's *Melancholia* (1539) (Picture 5), and Jost Amman's *Melancholia* (1589) (Picture 6). There is also Jupiter's magic square embedded behind the angel, which is associated with the writings of Agrippa, Ficino, and other white magic teachers to heal melancholy. Jupiter's joyfulness was considered to counteract the sadness, grief, and melancholy but for Dürer's engraving it is obvious that Saturn wins the cosmic conflict between Saturn and Jupiter.[74] According to Panofsky et al. there is also another healing element; 'wreath', which is considered the symbol of creativeness in literature. The leaves of the two plants, water parsley (*Ranunculus aquaticus*) and watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*), which have a very watery nature, was used against the dryness of melancholy temperament.[75] Another figure of the engraving is the writing 'putto', who is considered a contrast figure of the melancholy lady or melancholy itself. The busy putto is in action and is in a situation opposite to the inactive woman. As Panofsky et al. state: 'The putto may well be an example of activity without thought, just as Melenconia herself is an example of though without activity.'[76] Contrary to the mobility of the putto, the dog, with its inactivity, is on the side of melancholy. Since the time of Aristoteles, the dog has always been associated with melancholy because among other animals, dogs are considered as more gifted and sensitive

[73] Ibid, 196.
[74] Ibid, 326-327.
[75] Ibid, 325.
[76] Ibid, 343.

ones.[77] As Panofsky et al. state the relationship of three mentioned figure: 'The conscious sorrow of a human being wrestling with problems is enhanced both by the unconscious suffering of the sleeping dog and by the happy unself-consciousness of the busy child.'[78]

The bat-like creature depends on the textual creation. To exemplify, in the book of K. Ramler's *Shorter Mythology*, and Horopollo's *Mysteries of the Egyptian Alphabet*, the bats are seen as the symbol of melancholy.[79] According to Agrippa and Ficino, the bats are characterized by 'vigilantia,'[80] which is the main symptom of the harmful and destructive black bile secretion. It is known that Dürer had a copy of the book of Horopollo,[81] and his connection with Agrippa is mentioned in the book *Saturn and Melancholy*. It is claimed that Dürer, who reached the first manuscripts of Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*, was influenced by Agrippa, and reflected this in his works.[82] The authors describe the link between them as follows: 'There is no work of art which corresponds more nearly to Agrippa's notion of melancholy than Dürer's engraving, and there is no text with which Dürer's engraving accords more nearly than Agrippa's chapters on melancholy.'[83] Besides, as it is mentioned before, the bats were thought to be related to planet Saturn, which is thought to contain bat blood.[84] It may be the reason why Dürer had chosen the bat motif in a depiction of melancholy.

Dürer's interest in geometry, the fifth of the 'Liberal Arts', is known. When he died, besides lots of artwork, including drawings, paintings, engravings, and woodcuts, he left three printed books on geometry.[85] In the engraving the tools, and the geometric shapes that refer to Saturn, and Dürer's skills in geometry and measurement, all have been transformed in an atmosphere of melancholy, and

[77] Ibid, 323.
[78] Ibid, 321.
[79] Ibid, 322-323.
[80] Vigilantia = Vigilance
[81] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, 323.
[82] Ibid, 351.
[83] Ibid, 360.
[84] Teber, *Melankoli*, 37.
[85] Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955), 10.

underlines the artistic genius. Panofsky also sees the link between geometry and melancholy as follows:

> The former Geometries had been abstract personifications of a noble science, devoid of human emotions and quite incapable of suffering. Dürer imagined a being endowed with the intellectual power and technical accomplishments of an "Art," yet despairing under the cloud of a "black humor." He depicted a Geometry gone melancholy or, to put it the other way, a Melancholy gifted with all that is implied in the word geometry-in short, a "Melancholia artificialis" or Artist's Melancholy.[86]

The first and main stop in melancholy museum is Dürer's *Melenconia I*, because this engraving is the cornerstone in the visual representation of melancholy. Dürer's lady, which had become a representative motif of melancholy, would transform into *Ariadne* in Giorgio de Chirico paintings in the future.

The representation of melancholy has turned into another lady in Baroque period. Considering the personification of melancholy as Mary Magdalene, Artemisia Gentileschi's[87] (1593-1656) painting *Mary Magdalene as Melancholy* (c. 1622-1625) (Picture 7) is one of the first artwork that comes to mind. She depicted Mary Magdalene with the melancholy gesture and had transformed her to melancholy itself. The gesture and facial expression of Mary describe her pain and grief. The Italian and French Baroque painters, Domenico Fetti (1589-1623), and Georges de La Tour (1593-1652) also depicted melancholy through Mary Magdalene with their unique styles. In Fetti's *The Repentant St. Mary Magdalene* (1617-1621) (Picture 8), we see Mary with the melancholic gesture, resting her head on the right hand and with the other she holds a skull, which is a common symbol in *Vanitas*[88] De La Tour also used this pattern in his paintings *The Repentant Magdalen* (c. 1635-1640), and *Magdalene with the Smoking Flame* (c. 1640)

[86] Ibid, 162.

[87] Gentileschi was the first woman to attend Accademia di Arte del Disegno and she had usually painted female figures from mythology and the Bible.

[88] Vanitas means 'emptiness' in Latin, a reference to life's transience. *Vanitas* painting was developed in the Netherlands and Flanders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and was a technique of still life painting, in which the objects depicted were imbued with particular symbolic dimensions. These items were *memento mori* – reminders of death – like skulls, fading flowers, rotting fruit, and symbols of time such as hourglasses and clocks. (Footnote is quoted from Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy*, 202.)

(Pictures 9 and 10). In Baroque painting, *Vanitas* emphasizes the theme of death, while emphasizing the emptiness of temporality. Besides, the dark atmosphere given by the candlelight also strengthens the feeling of melancholy. The candle symbolizes human life, which will come to an end quickly like the candle itself. Although this pattern does not change in Fetti's,*Melancholy* (c.1620) (Picture 11), and there are also elements resembling the Dürer's engraving.

In the art works, which are mentioned above, the subject is the melancholy itself, only the figures differ. It is sometimes depicted as an angel, sometimes as a religious figure, sometimes as a literary character, like John Everett Millais' *Ophelia*[89] (Picture 12) and sometimes a theatrical character as Antoine Watteau's Pierrot[90] type (Picture 13). Rather than the figure itself, the figures' emotional/melancholy states are at the forefront. Along with Romanticism, nature landscapes began to be associated with melancholy. The helplessness of man in the face of the power and majesty of nature, the gloom of the helpless man became the indicator of the melancholic theme in the paintings. Instead of highlighting the beauty of the landscape, emphasizing the effect of the landscape on the viewer has become prominent.

Social and political theorist and philosopher Isaiah Berlin explains the characteristics of Romantics in his book *The Roots of Romanticism* as follows:

> Romanticism is the primitive, the untutored, it is youth, life, the exuberant sense of life of the natural man, but it is also pallor, fever, disease, decadence, *the maladie di siècle*, La Belle Same Sans Merci, the Dance of Death, indeed Death itself. (…) It is strange, the exotic, the grotesque, the mysterious, the supernatural, ruins, moonlight, enchanted castles, hunting horns, elves, giants, griffins, falling water, the old mill on the Floss, darkness and the powers of darkness, phantoms, vampires, nameless terror, the irrational, the unutterable. (…) It is the ancient, the historic, it is Gothic

[89] Ophelia is a character in Sheakpeare's Hamlet. In this painting Millais depicts a scene from the tragedy. In this scene, Ophelia, who is in love with Hamlet, loses her mind after Hamlet kills her father and sinks into the water.
The sad image of Ophelia was inextricably linked with her melancholy.

[90] The pierrot type: AntoineWatteau's imagery of the French clown archetype, Pierrot, illustrates the double-sided character. Known also as the 'Gilles,' Pierrot,in the eighteenth-century paintings by Watteau, became the symbolic melancholic clown. In pantomimes and at fetes, Pierrot, often with white face and red mouth, represented a caricature of a 'happy' face, veiling a sad visage. (Footnote is quoted from Bowring, *A Field Guide to Melancholy*, 62-63)

> cathedrals, mists of antiquity, ancient roots and the old order with its unanalysable qualities, its profound but inexpressible loyalties, the impalpable, the imponderable. Also it is the pursuit of novelty, revolutionary change, concern with the fleeting present, desire to live in the moment, rejection of knowledge, past and future, the pastoral idyll of happy innocence, joy in the passing instant, a sense of timelessness. It is nostalgia, it is reverie, it is intoxicating dreams, it is sweet melancholy and bitter melancholy, solitude, the suffering of exile, the sense of alienation, roaming in remote places, especially the East, and in remote times, especially Middle Ages.[91]

In this context, considering the determinations of Berlin, it is very significant to talk about Caspar David Friedrich, whom Giorgio de Chirico himself and de Chirico's most favourite painter, Arnold Böcklin, admired most. German Romantic painter, Caspar David Friedrich, is one of the leading figures of the Romanticism movement with his nature descriptions and melancholic figures. He strengthened the depictions of lonely people in the face of nature with the use of dramatic light, which he used skilfully, and created a sense of melancholy on the audience. To strengthen the sense of melancholy, he has chosen a single figure in his works. He painted quiet, desolated, and gloomy nature-landscape and usually with a single figure (Pictures 14-17). The figures are often depicted with their back to the viewer looking at nature, with a contemplative way. Choosing to fill the background with mystical and stupendous nature landscapes of these lonely figures, who are buried in their own deep thoughts, Friedrich created a sharp melancholic atmosphere. He also depicted abandoned monasteries, castles, and cemeteries in his paintings. 'Ruins' evokes both transience, death, and nostalgia. Cultural heritage of past times, national origins, things that are irrational, like myths, symbols, dreams, intuitions were the source of romantic painters as well as Friedrich. He had painted especially church ruins and megaliths many times, which sharpen the theme of death and nostalgia in relation with melancholy (Pictures 18-20). Although nostalgia and melancholy have different meanings, nostalgia is one of the main feelings of the melancholic state. Regarding the affinity that Berlin mentioned between nostalgia and melancholy, Friedrich was also fed by the feeling of nostalgia in his works. In

[91] Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, ed. Henry Hardy (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 16-17.

the works of Friedrich, vaguely human figures disappear into the landscape. It questions the fragility and mortality of human life. The solitary figure in *The Monk by the Sea* (1808-10) (Picture 15) sets a good example in this sense. The lonely figure here turns his face to nature and comes to the seaside to contemplate. Although the scenery behind causes anxiety and discomfort to the viewer, the painting as a whole is full of sadness, melancholy, and makes the viewers think. It is also stated that the monk figure in this painting is the source of inspiration for Böcklin's *Island of the Dead* (Picture 21) and influenced de Chirico's solitary and introversive figures. We can say that de Chirico's Odysseus-based figures, influenced by Böcklin and dominated by a strong sense of nostalgia, also bear traces of Friedrich. The aforementioned subject will be examined under the title of 'The Influence of Arnold Böcklin: The Most Profound Painter' in Chapter 2. Consequently, we can say that the romantic heritage supported the poetics of de Chirico and made him one of the children of Saturn. He adopted and internalized melancholy theme as a founding element of his pre-1915 works. He transformed melancholy into a pictorial language that has never been tried before.

1.4. MELANCHOLY AND CREATIVITY: THE AESTHETIC EMOTION OF THE SATURNINE

The idea that melancholy is the source of genius and creativity, which came to the agenda with the question of Aristoteles in the ancient period and later with Neo-platonism, is a discussion point even today. In this sense, it is an undeniable situation that the artworks accompanied by melancholy enable us to take aesthetic pleasure. As Giorgio de Chirico also stated in his own words, he struggled melancholy during his lifetime, but the theme is visually seen especially in his pre-1915 works. Although experiencing melancholy is a subjective concept, it is obvious that the artists who reflect this emotion in their works has used different figures, forms and they created different atmospheres. Apart from other painters, de Chirico handled and reflected melancholy in a very different way. He had used

melancholy, which appears as an aesthetic emotion, and as a constant theme in his art.

Many positive and negative features have been attributed to melancholy, which is quite subjective, complex, and difficult to define, throughout the ages, and its potential to create a unique aesthetic atmosphere can be seen in melancholy-themed works. It has a special character as an aesthetic emotion, which distinguishes it from sadness, grief, hopelessness, or depression. It has primeval and deep-rooted history, and has been a main source of arts, poetry, literature, painting, music, and songs.[92] Emily Brady and Arto Haapala argue in their article 'Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion' that, the dual nature of melancholy is the main factor behind the question of why melancholy is an aesthetic emotion. The double-sided nature – positive and negative aspects – creates an atmosphere which is full of 'contrasts and rhythms of pleasure,'[93] and gives the context an aesthetic dimension. Although melancholy resembles or reminds of sadness, it is essentially 'a more refined emotion,'[94] because it also includes some degree of pleasure. Besides, the relationship between melancholy and timelessness contributes to the imagination to create a melancholic aura. For instance, in the Romantic period, the association between past and present in the scenes leaves an impression of timelessness. De Chirico, for instance, gathered the ancient and modern images in the same scene, played with the shadows and painted misdirected clocks, and as it turned out he aroused the same sense as Romantics: 'Timelessness.' In his paintings, past and present are intertwined, and time seems frozen. In addition, de Chirico's deserted piazzas, and solitary figures, like Caspar David Friedrich's solitary ones, evoke melancholy considering the idea of Brady and Haapala as follows:

> Why do these places invite melancholy? They are places of reflection because they provide the solitude that forms the characteristic backdrop for

[92] Emily Brady, and Arto Haapala, ''Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion,'' *Contemporary Aesthetics*, vol 1 (2003). https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics/vol1/iss1/6/
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

> melancholy. Solitude can be both cause and effect of melancholy; when we spend too much time alone, we may suffer from the loneliness and longing for people that is a feature of melancholy. Or, when we find ourselves in quiet, deserted places we may become melancholic. When we already feel melancholy, we seek solitude, perhaps to fully feel the emotion.[95]

Melancholy can lead people to introversion, reflection, and contemplation. Loneliness is a faithful companion of melancholy and in this sense the solitary figures of either de Chirico's or Friedrich's solitary figures remind melancholy. Friedrich's landscapes with lonely figures, which has their backs to the viewer (Rückenfigure) and de Chirico's figures with an inward-turned gaze relate to the state of introversion. The solitary figures seem to look deeply at themselves, and the time seems like frozen.

Charles Baudelaire, the great French poet of the Romantic era, also considered melancholy as an aesthetic emotion and, he wrote: 'I have found the definition of beauty. It is something of ardor and sadness … of voluptuousness and sadness, - which conveys an idea of melancholy, of lassitude, even of satiation.'[96] In other words, according to the poet, melancholy mediates seeing beauty in life, and ordinary objects, without forgetting the reality of death. It manages to balance and restrain the intensity of opposing emotions, rationalize them, and provide a complete harmony that ultimately gives us a sense of aesthetic pleasure.[97]

In *Black Sun,* Julia Kristeva refers to the romantic and melancholic poet Gerard de Nerval. Nerval used the expression 'Black Sun' in his poem 'El Desdichado':

> I am the Dark One, – the Widower, – the Unconsoled
> The Aquitaine Prince whose Tower is destroyed:
> My only star is dead, – and my constellated lute
> Bears the Black Sun of Melancholia.[98]

[95] Ibid.
[96] Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 232.
[97] Brady, Haapala, ''Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion.''
[98] Gerard de Nerval, ''El Desdichado'' Translated by Camille Chevalier-Karfis, http://raphuspress.weebly.com/black-sun.html Last access November 12, 2021.

According to Kristeva, Nerval symbolized his melancholy with the image of the 'Black Sun', and his art, his poetry was the antidote.[99] She claims that despite the painful aspect of melancholy, it also has an attractive and nurturing side. She means that he nurtured his poetry by using melancholy as an aesthetic feeling. Similarly, Dörthe Binkert writes in her book *Die Melancholie ist Eine Frau* that melancholy is a condition that makes people aware of the changes in the psyche and she adds that if melancholy can be assimilated, it allows for a positive transformation. Even though melancholy has a gloomy and dark character, it leads the sufferers to light, and it is a mediator between grief and comprehension.[100] Also in scientific studies, it is stated that negative emotions, including melancholy, make aesthetic experiences more intense, more diverse, and more memorable.[101] In this context, it can be said that melancholy contributes to the creative process of the artists.

The components of the aesthetics of de Chirico - ancient sculptures, modern images, introversive and solitary figures, deserted piazzas, architecture, shadows, frozen and misguided time – refer to de Chirico's personal mythology, and his influencers both in arts and philosophy. He used mentioned elements to build his own aesthetics of melancholy. In this context, it can be said that with the help of personal tragedies and his main influencers Arnold Böcklin and Friedrich Nietzsche, he built a new visual grammar of melancholy, which he also suffered, as an aesthetic theme. In the second part of the thesis, the factors that create this visual language will be examined.

[99] Julia Kristeva, *Kara Güneş Depresyon ve Melankoli* trans: Nesrin Demiryontan (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2009), 206.
[100] Binkert, *Melankoli Kadındır*, 147.
[101] Winfried Menninghaus, Valentin Wagner, Eugen Wassiliwizky, Ines Schindler, Julian Hanich, Thomas Jacobsen, Stefan Koelsch, ''What Are Aesthetic Emotions?'', *Psychological Review* 126, (2018): 52. doi:10.1037/rev0000135

CHAPTER 2

THE MELANCHOLY AS A THEME IN DE CHIRICO'S EARLY METAPHYSICAL PAINTINGS (1910-1915)

2.1. A BRIEF VIEW OF GIORGIO DE CHIRICO'S LIFE AND THE EMERGE OF *PITTURA METAFISICA*

Giorgio de Chirico, who is considered the forerunner of the surrealism in art history, was born in Volos, Greece in 1888. His mother, Gemma de Chirico, was a Smyrna native of mixed Italian, Greek, and Turkish ancestry.[102] She was a devoted Catholic[103] and a very authoritarian woman, who had lost her first child at a young age, therefore she had locked on her other two children, Giorgio and Andrea, known as Alberto Savinio, but this tendency had turned out to be a very interesting mother-child relationship.[104] De Chirico biographer, Margaret Crosland, underlines several times the authority and controlling of the mother over her sons in her book, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico,* and says that Gemma had seen herself as the only woman in the life of her sons[105], whom she hadn't liked seeing her sons take an interest in other women.[106] There is no doubt that the mother and the sons were so close to each other, but the overprotective manner of the mother had a negative effect on them. It is considered that Giorgio was her favourite as his health had always been bad and because of that he had needed his mother.[107] Giorgio painted his mother many times and their relationship can be seen on the paintings; mother dominates the scene as real life[108] (Picture 22). It is also very interesting that de

[102] Paolo Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period, 1888-1919* trans. Jeffrey Jennings (Boston: Little, Brown, 1997), 10.
[103] Margaret Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico* (London; Chester Springs, PA: Peter Owen, 1999), 15.
[104] Ibid, 33.
[105] Ibid, 62.
[106] Ibid, 98.
[107] Ibid, 98.
[108] Ibid, 74.

Chirico idealized his father in his memoir, but he rarely mentioned about his mother for reasons of either suppression or secrecy.[109] When she died, Giorgio was in New York, but he did not return for the funeral. His brother, Savinio, wrote about his mother in the preface of his book *Casa 'La Vita'*:

> It is there that I shall find my mother again, beyond that reticence that in life prevented her from opening herself to me as she might perhaps have wanted, and me from opening myself to her as I so very desperately wished.[110]

Giorgio's father, Barone Evaristo de Chirico, was a member of an old aristocratic family and was born in Constantinople. He studied mechanical and hydraulic engineering in Florence and Turin.[111] De Chirico described his father as a man of nineteenth century with many personal characteristics and, also a gentleman of olden times, courageous, loyal, hard-working, intelligent, and good-hearted in his memoir. He also mentioned that although his father was a very good engineer, he also interested in music and drawing who encouraged him to draw and employed a young teacher to give him drawing lessons.[112]

The illness of the father affected de Chirico very much. He wrote in his memoir that he had gazed with sadness and nostalgia at his friends' healthy and young fathers.[113] He described one of his last memories with his father as follows:

> My father felt that his end was not far away. One day, towards evening, a fine evening near the end of April, I was going alone a street in Athens with my father. Between me and my father, in spite of the deep affection which linked us, there was a certain aloofness, an apparent coldness or, rather, a kind of reserve which prevented those spontaneous effusions found among people of mediocre birth. We walked in silence and the shadows of evening came down over the city. I was on my father's left; at a certain moment he took hold of me by the shoulders and, I felt the weight of his large arm. I was upset and embarrassed. I tried to understand the reason for this unexpected gesture of affection, and then my father spoke to me: 'My life is ending, but yours is hardly beginning.' We returned home

[109] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 15.
[110] As cited in Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 15.
[111] Ibid, 10-11.
[112] Giorgio de Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, trans. Margaret Crosland (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 15-19.
[113] Ibid, 46.

> without his saying anything more, my father keeping his arm over my shoulder.[114]

Shortly after this incident, his father fell into bed. He told that on this occasion he had begun to feel a strange anxiety. On a very beautiful day in May, he felt an unusual feeling and went home, rushed his father's room and, saw his father peacefully lying like someone who, tired after a long and exhausted journey. He wrote in his memoir that as soon as the people, who come to condolences had left, he had gone to his father's room with a piece of paper and pen, and he had painted his father as he lay in the sleep of kindly death.[115] *The Child's Brain* (Picture 23), he painted in 1914, reflects the effects of that May evening. It is known that the male figure in the painting, is his father, and he is depicted in a very masculine way. The figure's eyes closed, and the pallor of his body reminds of his father's dead body. The fact that his eyes are closed is perhaps a reference to little Giorgio, who does not dare to look into the father's eyes. Despite his deep emotional ties with the father, their relationship was cold and distant.[116] His little brother Savinio evaluated the relationship with his parents in his book *Ascolto il tuo cuore, città* as follows:

> (…) I remember my parents, I looked to them as deities. It never crossed my mind that either of them might have a soul, with its lights and shadows, the black and the white polarities which constitute the drama of human existence (…) We never knew exchanges of feeling, never unburdened ourselves to one another; kisses and caresses were considered immodest, a bit less, so the 'nose kiss' which, before going off to bed, I was permitted to bestow upon my mother's cheek, my father's bald skull.[117]

When his father died, de Chirico was 17, and was studying art at *Athens Polytechnic School* then. The loss gave him a deep shock therefore he failed in all his final exams and shortly after, he had a serious intestinal disorder which he had to struggle for a long time. He described how he suffered from the disease; 'the sultry heat of the Athenian July had made me feel tired, melancholy and discouraged, which

[114] Ibid, 46-47.
[115] Ibid, 47-48.
[116] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 15.
[117] As cited in Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 16-17.

certainly affected my work.'[118] Hereby, it can be said that the first footstep of his melancholy is emerged through his disease with the emotional shock of the death.

In September of 1906, the family left Greece. Before moving to Munich, which de Chirico described 'paradise on earth'[119], they had visited Venice and Milan and had stayed in Florence from the late summer of 1906 to the autumn of 1907.[120] He followed a course approximately for a year at *Accademia di Belle Arti*. While he was studying at *Akademie der Bildenden Künste München*, also known as *Munich Academy*, he met the works of the two important figures of his life: Arnold Böcklin, who is considered as a pioneer of the German Romantic painters and Friedrich Nietzsche. This assignation formed his way of thinking and painting. De Chirico admired the work of Böcklin and he was impressed by the *Stimmung,* as he called 'atmosphere in the moral sense' in Böcklin's paintings.[121] He also noticed 'German romanticism' with its dark and melancholic mood. With the help of his writings of German period, it is obvious that he was fond of the spiritual values of Romantic painting.[122] But besides, he had problems with the Academy. He mentioned that in his Memoir:

> (…) at the Munich Academy I did not see even one who knew how to hold a piece of charcoal or a brush in his hand. The paintings which had the dominating influence at that time was the painting of the Secession, the painting which afterwards set the style of the Salon d'Automne in Paris and spread throughout the world, establishing modern painting.[123]

He even wrote more about this issue and drew a correspondence between *Secession* and Nazism.

> (…) The Secession of Munich was the source, during that first half of the twentieth century, of two events which were excessively harmful for humanity. The second was, as I have already said, infinitely more harmful than the first, since it cost the lives of millions of innocent men and women and caused indescribable physical and moral suffering. These two events were modern painting and Nazism.[124]

[118] As cited in Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 21.
[119] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 53.
[120] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 33.
[121] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 27.
[122] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 35.
[123] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 56-57.
[124] Ibid, 57.

His chronic illness relapsed in Munich therefore he had to spend so much time in bed and he was interested in philosophy and started to read Schopenhauer and then Nietzsche at that time. De Chirico became a devoted admirer of Nietzsche and strongly believed that he was the heir of the philosopher.

In June 1909 his family, mother, and brother, were in Milan, therefore he joined them. He painted his Böcklinian paintings during this time.[125] In March 1910 the family moved Florence where their relatives lived. He stated his health got worse and added that:

> The Böcklin period had passed and I had begun to paint subjects in which I tried to express the strong and mysterious feeling I had discovered in the books of Nietzsche: the melancholy of beautiful autumn days, afternoons in Italian cities. It was the prelude to the squares of Italy painted a little later in Paris and then in Milan, in Florence and in Rome.[126]

While de Chirico, at the age of 21, was sitting in Santa Croce Square, Florence, on a sunny afternoon, a mental picture conjured up. He considered this as a revelation and therefore the *Metaphysical Painting* period had begun. *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon* (1910) (Picture 24) was his first metaphysical painting, and it was the precursor of a new art movement. Here's his own words about it:

> One clear autumnal afternoon I was sitting on a bench in the middle of the Piazza Santa Croce in Florence. It was of course not the first time I had seen this square. I had just come out of a long and painful intestinal illness, and I was in a nearly morbid state of sensitivity. The whole world, down to the marble of the buildings and the fountains seemed to me to be convalescent. In the middle of the square rises a statue of Dante draped in a long cloak, holding his works clasped against his body, his laurel-crowned head bent thoughtfully earthward. The statue is in white marble, but time has given it a gray cast, very agreeable to the eye. The autumn sun, warm and unloving, lit the statue and the church facade. Then I had the strange impression that I was looking at all these things for the first time, and the composition of my picture came to my mind's eye. Now each time I look at this painting I again see that moment. Nevertheless, the moment is an enigma to me, for it is inexplicable. And I like also to call the work which sprang from it an enigma.[127]

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[125] ''Biography,'' Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico, https://fondazionedechirico.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/#biografia Last access November 5, 2021.
[126] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 61.
[127] James Thrall Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico* (New York: MOMA, 1955), 34.

Thanks to the *Metaphysical Paintings*, de Chirico was able to construct a unique and quite eccentric aesthetic, and this was completely different from his time. The series lasted for about ten years, from 1909-1919, but it is considered that the first five years are authentic, and the rest is largely repetitive.[128] In his metaphysical paintings he aimed to show the hidden meanings beyond appearances with the help of architectural items with different perspectives, in the desolated, empty and stationary spaces. He also preferred to paint different figures which seem to be unrelated to each other.

In 1911, he went to Paris, where his brother Savinio had already arrived in 1910. Paris, where he developed 'the Italian Piazza theme', had a very important role in de Chirico's life and work. Most of his early metaphysical paintings were created here during the four years'-period. He described the mood of the city in one of his writings:

> (…) Modernity, that great mystery, dwells everywhere in Paris; you find it again at every street corner, coupled with what once was, pregnant with what will be.(…) Like Athens in the days of Pericles, Paris today is the city par excellence of art and the intellect. It is there that any man worthy of the name of artist must exact the recognition of his merit.[129]

In 1912 and 1913 he showed his paintings at *Salon d'Automne* and *Salon des Indépendants*. Picasso and Apollinaire were impressed by his work and Apollinaire, who would become his close friend, wrote a review about the artist's exhibition and defined him as 'the most surprising painter of the young generation.'[130]

With the outbreak of World War I, he returned to Italy and joined the army. He was treated because of a nervous breakdown in 1917, and during his recovery at the military hospital of Ferrara, he met Carlo Carra (1881-1966). He and Carra conducted the metaphysical movement together. Although this movement had a

[128] Ali Artun, ''De Chirico'nun Mimari Evreni'', http://www.e-skop.com/skopbulten/de-chiriconun-mimari-evreni/2923 Last access November 5, 2021.
[129] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 13.
[130] ''Biography,'' Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico.

short life, de Chirico's metaphysical paintings which have been very influential on surreal painters, have the most important place in his career.

De Chirico moved to Rome in 1919 and after 1920 he began to paint in a more traditional style, called his romantic-classical period, but he could not capture the success of his metaphysical paintings.[131] In Rome he met his first wife, a Russian ballerina Raissa Gourevitch Krol. He returned to Paris again in 1925. He worked on the 'Metaphysics of Light and Mediterranean Myth' themes, and painted still-lifes, portraits and bright naturalistic female nudes. His admirer *Surrealists* turned against him because of his recent works. His marriage was over by late 1931 and he moved to Florence with his long-life partner Isabella Far, who became his second wife. He was creating set designs and costumes for the theatres- which he had done before. In 1936, he went to New York where he exhibited his recent works. In 1937 while he was still in New York, he received the news of his mother's death.[132] He mentioned about that in his memoir:

> During my stay there, in July 1936 to be precise, I received the very sad news that my dear mother had died. A few months previously my brother had written that our mother's health was declining, and the feeling that I was at that time so far away from her, with that vast ocean between, made me very sad.[133]

He did not return to Italy till 1938. He began to work on sculptures. His novel *Hebdomeros* was published in 1942. He wrote many critics, articles and in 1945 published his two autobiographies: *Memorie della mia vita* (The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico) and *1918-1925 – Ricordi di Roma*.[134] In 1952, a very bad event occurred, his brother Savinio died. The sudden death of Savino affected him deeply and he wore a black tie for the rest of his life in the memory of his little brother.[135] He hoped to meet his little brother beyond death and time.

> Yes, brother, au revoir. This greeting that you gave me, the last time in this life, in the office of the Teatro Comunale in Florence, echoes

[131] Uşun Tükel, "Chirico, Giorgio de", in *Eczacıbaşı Sanat Ansiklopedisi* cilt 1 (İstanbul: YEM, 1997), 343.
[132] ''Biography,'' Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico.
[133] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 134-135.
[134] ''Biography,'' Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico.
[135] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 126.

> in my mind. You were leaving for the other shore, leaving me alive at the frontier of Time and I do not know what kind of labyrinth the streets constitute, on the other side of your wall. In this adventure of life, as long as I live, I shall continue to work as well as I possibly can and do what I know I should do, and when the hour of my destiny strikes, it is there, very far away, or perhaps very near, it is there, beyond all time and space, it is there, when all anchors have been weighed, it is there in the ideal world, that I shall meet you and say to you, 'Brother, here I am!'[136]

Towards the end of his life, the artist was able to work much more freely. He continued to paint in a new way known as Neo-metaphysical Art, which he re-worked on his previous works of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s with a new sense. He used light with brighter colours and serene atmospheres compared to his melancholic paintings in his early metaphysical period. On 20 November 1978, he died in Rome after a long illness, at 90 years of age and was buried in *San Francesco a Ripa church*, located in the Trastevere quarter of Rome.[137]

2.2. THE MELANCHOLY EFFECT ON THE DE CHIRICO'S EARLY METAPHYSICAL PAINTINGS

2.2.1. Melancholy – Metaphysical Art

It is possible to follow the trace of melancholy throughout de Chirico's life: A tense and oppressive relationship with the mother and father, the obligations imposed by a puritanical education, the authority of the mother, and a chronic illness which had occurred after the loss of the father and lasted for a very long time. All these underlying causes formed the basis of his melancholy, and his melancholy supported his philosophical tendencies and his creativeness, resulted with *Metaphysical Art.* He pondered whether experiences were tangible, or emotions could manifest, and thus developed a new style.

[136] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 221.
[137] ''Biography,'' Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico.

The metaphysical language of de Chirico's art originated from different sources: his personal history especially his childhood, Greek mythology, Greek and Italian architecture, Arnold Böcklin and romanticism and his lifetime influencer Friedrich Nietzsche. In other words, it can be said that his melancholic tendency was the major factor of his metaphysical language. Riccardo Dottori argues that his melancholy was the basis of the metaphysical paintings.

> Metaphysics, the name or title of a discipline belonging to philosophic tradition, is now applied to an expressly conscious way of making art, or to that which we call artistic poetics, or aesthetics. Why this title? How does de Chirico's painting situate itself with respect to what we usually call metaphysics?
> Two fundamental concepts are necessary in order to answer this question: 1) Enigma (embracing that which de Chirico calls "revelation") and 2) Melancholy.
> Together they constitute the principal of his representation, that is, of the artist's way of painting that he calls Metaphysical Painting.[138]

Dottori also claims that Metaphysical Art is not just related to aesthetics, but it is indeed *poiesis* (creative production). He thinks that de Chirico created an authentic world with a new pictorial language which expresses the sad and sweet poetry at the same time.

> (…) it is clear that Metaphysical Art is not simply an aesthetical idea, even if de Chirico speaks of metaphysical aesthetics, but moreover an independently created oeuvre which is produced by employing, not only certain ideas and means of expression, but one's active knowhow. Therefore, it is indeed a question of poetics, which is firstly poiesis, a most personal thing, which is neither a mere question of understanding, nor the manifestation of ideas, but the contact one makes with one's own world in order to create, through one's own language, a completely new world, the world of one's poetry, the sad yet sweet poetry of fatality, regarding the game and enigma of existence.[139]

In his famous self-portrait, painted in 1911 (Picture 25), de Chirico portrayed himself in the same position as the photograph of Nietzsche. He painted himself in a window frame with a classical pose of melancholy. On the frame he wrote 'Et

[138] Riccardo Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable in Giorgio de Chirico's Painting,'' *Metafisica* n. 5/6 (2006): 203.
[139] Riccardo Dottori, ''From Zarathustra's Poetry to the Aesthetics Of Metaphysical Art,'' *Metafisica* n. 7/8 (2008): 138.

quid amabo nisi quod aenigma est?'[140] with capital block letters, highlighting the elements of his poetics of *Metaphical Art*: 'Enigma and Melancholy.' Also, the colour of the virescent sky in the painting, emphasizes the melancholic mood.[141] In his early metaphysical works, all elements are compatible with melancholy, which will be expressed in the following chapters. Above all, it is the feeling of solitude both glorious and depressive, that gives the painting its main melancholic weight.

One may wonder why the artist had chosen a problematic name 'Metaphysical' in order to identify his art although his lifetime influencer Friedrich Nietzsche was against all kind of metaphysical explanations. De Chirico wrote in his essay 'We Metaphysicians' that he had been criticised by many scholars who did not understand what de Chirico intended, and he never thought that the word 'metaphysic' was confusing; for what he understood by it was the very tranquillity and nonsensical beauty of 'matter.'

> The word 'metaphysic' caused a great deal of misunderstandings, especially in unproductive minds which, lacking healthy creative exertion, live by means of plagiarism and cliché and spray their chronic resentment each time they come upon anything that surpasses the reach of their intellectual capacity. (…), and I remember the fight I had in order to make this terrible word accepted, a term that raised suspicion in even the most right-minded people.
>
> I do not see anything disturbing in the word "metaphysic"; it is the very tranquillity and nonsensical beauty of 'matter' that appears 'metaphysical' to me and even more metaphysical are certain objects which for their clarity of colour and the exactness of their measurements appear to me as the antipode of all confusion and indistinctness.[142]

He also stated that there was a great misunderstanding caused by the analysis of the ancient Greek word 'metaphysic' and added that nobody had ever practiced before the way he used in arts.

> An analysis of the word 'metaphysic' can result in another colossal misunderstanding: 'metaphysic' from the Greek *metà ta fυsiká* (after the physical) may lead one to think that things located after that which is physical constitute a kind of nirvanic-like void. This is complete non-sense if one considers that distance does not exist in space and that an inexplicable state of X can be located as much beyond a painted, described

[140] English translation: What shall I love if not the enigma?
[141] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 204.
[142] Giorgio de Chirico, ''We Metaphysicians,'' *Metaphsyical Art* 14/16 (2016): 32.

> or imagined object as it can on this side and especially (and this is precisely what occurs in my art), within the object itself.
>
> No one before me has ever tried to accomplish in art what I have attempted. My work marks an extraordinary stage in the progressive elaboration and the complicated inner-workings of the human arts.[143]

As the artist tells above, he based his opinion on 'non-sense of life,' which is again a Nietzschean idea. Nietzsche's version of 'non-sense of life' points the lack of metaphysical side of the 'visible world.' He had denied metaphysics and thought that metaphysical world was absurd. According to him the apparent world is the only one and the metaphysical side is merely added by a lie. Lucio Giuliodori also touches on the Nietzsche, de Chirico and metaphysics triangle in his article 'The Vision and The Enigma: Nietzsche's Aura in De Chirico's Art.'

> (…) If Nietzsche refused metaphysics in its traditional meaning, so de Chirico did: beyond this world there is no God, there is no truth, there is no sense. Contrariwise, metaphysics, in its new dechirichian meaning, deals with this reality, the meaning of things, if there is one, is immanent to the things themselves, this is why de Chirico's main characters are things: objects, buildings, shadows, squares, mannequins etc.[144]

Thus, he claims that Nietzsche and de Chirico do not conflict on this issue and underlines that de Chirico captures the enigma of reality in his metaphysical art.

De Chirico claimed in his aforementioned essay that art had been liberated by modern philosophers and poets who formed the framework of a new, free, and profound art, and Nietzsche was outstanding among them. He wrote that Nietzsche thought him not only the profound non-sense of life, but also how to transform it into art.[145] His sentence 'the terrible emptiness discovered is the same senseless and tranquil beauty of matter'[146] explains the aesthetic side and the poetics of the Metaphysical Art. He also underlined that it was very hard to explain the

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[143] Ibid, 32.
[144] Lucio Giuliodori, and Elena Notina, ''The Vision and The Enigma: Nietzsche's Aura in De Chirico's Art,'' *Wisdom* (December 2019): 160. https://wisdomperiodical.com/index.php/wisdom/article/view/297/221 Last access December 10, 2021.
[145] De Chirico, ''We Metaphysicians,'' 30.
[146] Ibid, 30.

background of this Metaphysical Art, which surpassed everything that had been tried in art so far in terms of its spiritual power and pictorial structure.[147] According to the authors of *De Chirico*, Maurizio Calvesi and Gioia Mori; 'The non-sense of the world hides a deeper and yet more indecipherable sense, 'metaphysical', which cannot be described, but only revealed by an image that the artist has the power to fix.'[148]

De Chirico did not only attend to paint the objects as symbols which meanings are solid but also tried to give them a system of signs.[149] 'The non-sense' he used to be the lack of absolute meaning, and therefore it can be seen as the relativity of the sign.[150]

> The suspension of logical sense in art is not an invention of us painters. Fair recognition for this discovery goes to Nietzsche, the Pole, even if in poetry it was first used by the Frenchman Rimbaud; in painting this achievement can be ascribed to the undersigned.[151]

He also claimed that he was the first artist to demonstrate the metaphysics of architecture and of Italian cities.[152] He wrote in his essay 'Metaphysical Aesthetics' that the basic principle of metaphysical aesthetics could be found in the construction of cities, in the architectural form of houses, squares, parks, avenues, sea-ports, train stations, etc. He also added that he was influenced by Greeks, who guided him by their aesthetic and philosophic sense.[153] Therefore it explains why he used eerie and deserted piazzas, solitude figures, mythological statues, train stations and trains, arcades extensively.

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[147] Ibid, 31.
[148] Maurizio Calvesi and Gioia Mori, *De Chirico* (As cited in Lucio Giuliodori, and,Elena Notina, ''The Vision And The Enigma: Nietzsche's Aura In De Chirico's Art,'' *Wisdom* (December 2019): 160.)
[149] Takashi Nagao, ''Giorgio de Chirico and the Nonsense of Life: Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Metaphysical Painting,'' *Aesthetics* no: 21 (2018): 71. http://www.bigakukai.jp/aesthetics_online/aesthetics_21/text21/text21_nagaotakashi.pdf Last access November 8, 2021.
[150] Ibid, 71.
[151] De Chirico, ''We Metaphysicians,'' 31.
[152] Ibid, 32.
[153] Giorgio de Chirico, ''Metaphysical Aesthetics,'' *Metaphsyical Art* 14/16 (2016): 40.

In conclusion it can be said that Metaphysical Art deals with the enigmatic side of the visible world, not other 'true' world, or dimensions. De Chirico once wrote 'We metaphysicians have sanctified reality'[154] which he underlined that he sought the enigmatic aspect of reality. Whether we think of metaphysical art as the transmutation of a philosophical tradition as Dottori said or as the art critic, Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco mentioned 'to see something and go beyond it,'[155] there is no doubt that de Chirico had created a new way of thinking in arts.

2.2.2. The Influence of Arnold Böcklin: The Most Profound Painter

Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901) is a Swiss artist, and his paintings can be described as poetical. Between 1871-74, he lived in Munich, where de Chirico also lived, he painted emotional landscapes. Böcklin spent his life in Florence between 1874-85, where de Chirico had his first revelation, he painted mythological subjects and landscapes with the influence of classicism, like *Odysseus and Calypso,* and *The Island of the Dead* (Pictures 26 and 21).[156] He moved to Zurich and lived there between 1885-92. During this time, he was influenced by Symbolism. The theme of 'death' is quite dominant in Böcklin's paintings, like *The Island of the Dead, The Plague* (Picture 27), while he had tragedies in his life, had 14 children and 8 of them died. Böcklin has been taken as a master interpreter of Romantic values. In his works, some dominant romantic elements such as the mystery of death, the silence of the tomb, the violence of war and sex are frequently encountered.[157]

Giorgio de Chirico's discovery of Böcklin can be linked to the musician Max Reger, known as 'the second Bach', who greatly admired Böcklin. Even Reger composed *a Böcklin Suite, Op. 128* for piano. During de Chirico's Munich years, a

[154] De Chirico, ''We Metaphysicians,'' 31.
[155] Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, ''De Chirico in Paris, 1911-1915,'' In *De Chirico,* ed. William Rubin (New York: MOMA, 1982), 11.
[156] Uşun Tükel, "Böcklin, Arnold", *Eczacıbaşı Sanat Ansiklopedisi* cilt 1 (İstanbul: YEM, 1997), 282.
[157] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period,* 37.

book about Böcklin became a very hot issue. Julius Meier-Graefe's book, *der Fall Böcklin (The Case of Böcklin)*, published in 1905, brought up Böcklin's work to the agenda. The book attacked Böcklin and the Romantic values and caused a furor and started a debate between the modern and the traditional.[158] Meier-Graefe defined western painting as technical and stylistic evolution whose traces can be seen throughout 19th century French painting.[159] He was an admirer of Impressionism, which he saw as a normative standard. Thus, he asserted that German painting had to be criticized.[160] Whereas the undisputed great Swiss master of Romanticism evolved the German Romantic spirit from an Italianate vision, de Chirico established a new language of Italian art from a German metaphysical premise.[161] De Chirico commented on the works of Böcklin as follows:

> Böcklin's metaphysical power always springs from the precision and definition of a decided apparition. He never painted a fog; he never traced an imprecise contour; in this his classicism and greatness consist . . . Each of his works evokes that same disconcerting shock of surprise we all feel when we meet an unknown person whom we think we have perhaps seen once before, though we do not know where or when—or when, in a city new to us, we come upon a square, a street, a house, which we mysteriously seem to recognize . . . Böcklin also exploited the tragic aspects of statuary . . . created an entire world of his own, of a surprising lyricism, combining the preternaturalism of the Italian landscape with architectural elements.[162]

The young de Chirico was affected by the 'crisis of idealism' during his time in Munich, and the rigorous education in Munich enabled him to clearly understand this fundamental contrast between 'real and ideal' in which the philosophical, scientific, and artistic features of the 19th century's polarized climate. Although de Chirico's artistic and philosophical tendencies led him to spiritual understanding rather than scientific certainty, he understood that he could overcome this struggle with a revolutionary approach. The academic education did not satisfy him, so that

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[158] Ibid, 36-37.
[159] Spyros Petritakis, ''Arnold Böcklin and Music: A Case Revisited,'' in *Music and Modernism, c. 1849-1950*, ed. Charlotte de Mille (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 56. https://www.academia.edu/42786413/Arnold_B%C3%B6cklin_and_Music_A_Case_Revisited Last access December 12, 2021.
[160] Ibid, 56.
[161] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 16.
[162] As cited in Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 27.

he found his inspiration for his own early career outside the classrooms. He saw Böcklin as a pioneer and spokesperson of a new understanding that could reconcile the classical and the contemporary.[163] His discovery of Böcklin coincided between 1906 and 1907, but the effect of Böcklin spread to his works after 1908. Between 1909 and 1910 (called early Böcklinian period) he painted mythological characters and subjected mythological stories. (Pictures 28 and 29: Battle of Centaurs (1909), The Departure of the Argonauts, (1909-1910)) According to his biography, written on the official web site of de Chirico foundation, the Böcklin-inspired paintings were dated 1909 but from my point of view, his inspiration lasted much longer and, it is not logically possible for one period to suddenly be interrupted and another period to start. Although the influence of Nietzsche is evident in the works of 1910s and later, Böcklin's influence is visible either.

In Munich, de Chirico was also acquainted with the works of Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840), who is known as the greatest German Romantic artist and influenced Arnold Böcklin. According to the complete tradition of Romantic painting the central theme is the solitary figure and the figure's relationship with nature and the world and Friedrich is known also his solitary figures in art history. According to Riccardo Dottori, the introversive figures in the early works of de Chirico, are taken from the iconography of Caspar David Friedrich, the German romantic painter, who inspired Böcklin himself.[164] The tiny human figures of de Chirico and the white ghostly figure in the Böcklin's *Island of the Dead* look like the same as the figures in *Monk by the Sea* indeed. Friedrich's saying, 'Close your bodily eye, so that you see your picture first with your spiritual eye, then bring to the light of day that which you have seen in darkness so that it may react on others from the outside inwards'[165] can be seen in the metaphysical context of de Chirico's painting. Thus, the deep melancholy of German Romantic painting has also permeated de Chirico's art.

[163] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 37-38.
[164] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 205-206.
[165] As cited in Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 26.

De Chirico admired the *Stimmung*, whom he found in Böcklin's paintings, which greatly influenced him. He described Böcklin as 'classic in the purest sense of the word.'[166] He was impressed by the Böcklin's inexplicable inspiration, which was filled with as if divine enthusiasm.[167] As the art historian James Thrall Soby indicates: 'For de Chirico, Böcklin had been a painter whose technique was so exceptional that it made the real appear unreal, the unreal real.'[168] That is to say, de Chirico discerned in Böcklin' paintings, the exceptional ability of combining natural and supernatural elements and the real and the mythical.

The main trace of Böcklin can be seen in de Chirico's art as *Odysseus*.

> When after having left the Munich Academy, I realized that the road I was following was not the one I should follow and I entered upon tortuous paths; some modern artists, especially Max Klinger and Böcklin, captivated me. I thought of those profoundly felt compositions, having a particular mood [Stimmung] which one recognized among a thousand others. But once again I understood that this was not what I sought. I read; a passage from Homer enthralled me - Ulysses on Calypsos island; some descriptions, and the picture rose before me, and then I felt I had finally found something.[169]

If we compare Böcklin's *Odysseus and Calypso*, dated 1882, and de Chirico's *The Enigma of the Oracle* (Picture 30), dated 1910, the influence of the master on de Chirico can be clearly understood. The dark and facing back figure in de Chirico's painting is Odysseus. It is almost exactly the same as the Odysseus figure in Böcklin's. Both painters handled the melancholic stance of Odysseus in the same way. His melancholy, loneliness and sadness seem to overflow from the body of the figure and flow towards the viewer. He lowers his head in despair and stoops. Böcklin's Odysseus sees his own melancholy on the infinity of the sea. Calypso is naked and facing Odysseus, but on the contrary Odysseus is clothed and facing back to Calypso. Calypso is the cause of Odysseus' melancholy, keeping him away from both Ithaca and his beloved wife Penelope, therefore he turns his back.

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[166] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 27.
[167] Ibid 27.
[168] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 25.
[169] As cited in Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 246.

De Chirico biographer and art historian Paolo Baldacci quoted from de Chirico that he characterized his childhood as 'the years of shadow,' which was full of illness and recoveries, frequent earthquakes, epidemics, and moving from one house or city to another, and which threatened his need for 'home,' for refuge and protection.[170] De Chirico might see a resemblance between himself and Odysseus because of the strong wistfulness of 'home'. Therefore, the feeling 'nostalgia' might connect the mythical hero and the artist.

In Ancient Greek *nostos* means 'homecoming' and *algos* means 'pain', therefore *nostalgia* means 'homesickness.'[171] This emotion is dominant in Odysseus because he is separated from his homeland and his wife, and he continues his life with an intense sense of loss. In Böcklin's painting, there are rocks between him and Calypso, Odysseus has closed himself to her and looks out to the vast sea, where he sees his own solitude.[172] Homer described this scene as follows:

> But the great-hearted Odysseus he found not within; for he sat weeping on the shore, as his wont had been, racking his soul with tears and groans and griefs, and he would look over the unresting sea, shedding tears.[173]

There is only one difference, the seated figure of Homer is standing in Böcklin's work, with a strong sense of loss that evokes the memory of what we have lost. The rock between Odysseus and Calypso in the painting is represented as a wall in de Chirico's. Calypso, on the other hand, has turned into a white statue behind a black curtain, which symbolizes veiled mystery. De Chirico's brother Savinio mentioned 'the mystery of curtain' in his memoir:

> In the Greek Church is hidden something that one is not supposed to see (…) In order to enter the Greek Church and behold this 'something' hidden there, Nivasio had recource to new stratagems. (…) At the center of the iconostasis stood an arch masked by a curtain of red percaline. (…)[174]

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[170] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 24.
[171] https://www.etymonline.com/word/nostalgia
[172] Peter Toohey, *Melancholy, Love, and Time: Boundaries of the Self in Ancient Literature* (USA: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 287-288. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bilgi-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3414763.
[173] Homer, *The Odyssey volume I*, trans A. T. Murray (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946), 177.
[174] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 27.

Contrary to the figure of Odysseus, which is depicted as dark in both paintings, both Calypso and the statue are painted in white. De Chirico's Odysseus-inspired dark figure seems like standing on a theatre stage, looking down on the landscape in front. He confronts with his destiny, which is symbolized by the 'oracle' as in the title of the painting. The oracle/sculpture reminds us of the ancient Greek gods.[175]

De Chirico painted many Böcklin-influenced Odysseus figures such as *The Enigma of the Hour* (1910-11) (Picture 31), *The Enigma of the Arrival and the Afternoon* (1911) (Picture 32), *The Melancholy of a Beautiful Day* (1913) (Picture 33). Odysseus appears with another mythological figure, *Ariadne*, in some of his works. (The painter's relationship with *Ariadne* will be discussed further in the chapter 'In the Trace of Ariadne') Leaving aside the influence of Nietzsche, de Chirico's frequent use of the mythical melancholic princess Ariadne in his early metaphysical paintings may also be the effect of Böcklin's use of mythological figures: 'To bring the realm of myth into that of history and the present.'[176] In *The Melancholy of a Beautiful Day*, Ariadne's shadow falls across Odysseus, as if blocking him to go elsewhere like Calypso. This shadow is impenetrable, in just the same way as we cannot drive away the melancholy from our souls.[177] However, Odysseus' way is clear and although he seems to be able to reach the hill where the houses seen ahead, the melancholy of Ariadne and himself blocks his way. Maybe he is his own executioner, just like in Baudelaire's poem...

> I am the wound and the dagger!
> I am the blow and the cheek!
> I am the members and the wheel,
> Victim and executioner!

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[175] Ibid, 79.

[176] Roger Rothman, ''Between Bocklin and Picasso: Giorgio de Chirico in Paris, 1909-1913,'' *Southeastern College Art Conference Review* Volume XV Number 1 (2006): 10. https://www.academia.edu/1557753/Between_Bocklin_and_Picasso_Giorgio_de_Chirico_in_Paris_1909_1913 Last access November 8, 2021.

[177] Robert Leeming, "Ariadne and the Code of Modern Art,'' https://robertleeming.com/2012/02/20/ariadne-and-the-code-of-modern-art-2/ Last access November 5, 2021.

> I'm the vampire of my own heart
> — One of those utter derelicts
> Condemned to eternal laughter,
> But who can no longer smile![178]

In a letter, written to a friend, Fritz Gartz, dated in 1910, de Chirico defined Arnold Böcklin as the most profound painter of all times. In the following sentences of the letter, he drew a parallel between 'the most profound painter' and the 'most profound philosopher,' Böcklin and Nietzsche respectively. De Chirico admired Böcklin's ability of composing myths into a kind of eternal present and endowing the mythological figure with mysterious aspect of contemporary reality. Therefore, de Chirico saw a similarity between Böcklin and Nietzsche. De Chirico cherished the philosophical concept of Nietzsche and Böcklin's romantic-melancholic poetics, featured with solitary figures. He mentioned his admiration for Böcklin in a letter, written to a friend Fritz Gartz as follows:

> Do you know for example what the name of the most profound painter who ever painted on earth is? You probably do not have an opinion on this. I will tell you: his name is Arnold Böcklin, he is the only man who has painted profound paintings.[179]

Riccardo Dottori also confirms that de Chirico ingeniously gathered the Nietzschean tendency and the Böcklinesque iconography in his art in his article 'From Zarathustra's Poetry to the Aesthetics of Metaphysical Art' as follows:

> It is clear how the Nietzschean philosophic theme enters into the paintings *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon* and *The Enigma of the Oracle*. This will be even more the case for the successive paintings, starting with *Enigma of the Hour* and ending with the paintings of the Ariadne series. There is no doubt that Böcklinesque iconography is employed to express the Nietzschean feeling of the autumn afternoon – long shadows, clear air and serene sky – especially when compared to the paintings that would later be called "metaphysical" by Apollinaire.[180]

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[178] Charles Baudelaire, ''The Man Who Tortures Himself'' In *Poems*, trans. William Aggeler (Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive, 2004), 357, https://www.poemhunter.com/i/ebooks/pdf/charles_baudelaire_2004_9.pdf Last access November 8, 2021.

[179] Giorgio de Chirico, ''Letters by Giorgio De Chirico, Gemma De Chirico and Alberto De Chirico to Fritz Gartz, Milan-Florence, 1908-1911,'' *Metafisica* n. 7/8 (2008): 561-562. https://fondazionedechirico.org/en/publications/ Last access November 8, 2021.

[180] Dottori, ''From Zarathustra's Poetry,'' 122.

Although de Chirico mentioned not so much about his influencer Böcklin in his memoir, and according to some authors the effect of Böcklin is not apparent on the early metaphysical works (after 1910) of de Chirico, from my standpoint he imbued the *Stimmung* of the most profound painter with his encounter with the most profound of all poets, Nietzsche, and he created really profound work of art: Metaphysical Art.

2.2.3. The Influence of Friedrich Nietzche: The Most Profound of All Poets

2.2.3.1. The Discovery of Nietzsche

Between 1909 and 1910 de Chirico suffered from a depressive disorder which was thought to be psychosomatic. During this period, he took his time off reading than painting, and thereby he met Nietzsche, who profoundly affected his work. During these readings, he felt strong, mysterious, and enigmatic emotions and he tried to reflect these emotions into his paintings. In a manuscript of 1912, he wrote:

> Then during a trip, I made to Rome in October, after having read the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, I became aware that there is a host of strange, unknown and solitary things which can be translated into painting. I meditated a long time. Then I began to have my first revelations.[181]

As mentioned above, in the letter, written to Fritz Gartz, dated in 1910, de Chirico defined Nietzsche as the most profound poet of all times and mentioned that he was the only man who understood him.

> (…) Now, do you know who the most profound poet is? You will probably say right away Dante, or Goethe or yet others. – This is totally misunderstood. – the most profound poet is Friedrich Nietzsche.
> – When I told you my paintings are profound, you must have thought they were gigantic compositions, with many naked figures, trying to overcome something, like those painted by Michelangelo, the stupidest of all painters.
> No, my dear friend, it is completely another matter – profoundness as I understand it, and as Nietzsche intended it, is elsewhere than where it has

[181] As cited in Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 77.

> been searched for until now. – My paintings are small (the biggest is 50 x 70 cm, but each of them is an enigma, each contains a poem, an atmosphere (Stimmung) and a promise that you cannot find in other paintings.
> It brings me immense joy to have painted them – when I exhibit them, possibly in Munich this spring, it will be a revelation for the whole world. I am studying a lot, particularly literature and philosophy and I even intend to write books in the future (now I will whisper something in your ear: I am the only man who has understood Nietzsche – all of my paintings demonstrate this.)[182]

It can be said that probably de Chirico was especially influenced by the quotations as follows from *The Birth of Tragedy*:

> The beautiful appearance of the world of dreams, in whose creation each man is a complete artist, is the precondition of all plastic art, and also, in fact, as we shall see, an important part of poetry. We enjoy the form with an immediate understanding; every shape speaks to us; nothing is indifferent and unnecessary. For all the most intense life of this dream reality, we nevertheless have the thoroughly unpleasant sense of their illusory quality: that, at least, is my experience. For the frequency, indeed normality, of this response, I could point to many witnesses and the utterances of poets. Even the philosophical man has the presentiment that under this reality in which we live and have our being lies hidden a second, totally different reality and that thus the former is an illusion.[183]

And further: '… and how, through the Apollonian effects of dream, his own state now reveals itself to him, that is, his unity with the innermost basis of the world, in a metaphorical dream picture.'[184] These readings had shaped the context of his paintings, which can be called as Nietzschean counter-reality based on dreams, desolation, reverie and incantation.[185]

Just as Nietzsche's philosophy was an opposition to his era, de Chirico followed him with his art. He opposed 'modern painting' and did not accept it as a painting style.

> It's because people today are, or want to be, on the side of what is called modern painting, and since modern painting is a kind of painting that is

[182] De Chirico, ''Letters'', 562.
[183] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*: *Out of the Spirit of Music*, trans. Ian Johnston (British Columbia Canada: Vancouver Island University, 2008), 11-12, https://holybooks-lichtenbergpress.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Nietzsche-The-Birth-of-Tragedy.pdf.
[184] Ibid, 14.
[185] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 27.

> not painting, then of course anyone doing real painting disorients them and they are ready to sentence him to death…[186]

Reading Nietzsche was not a revolutionary act at that time, but according to Paolo Baldacci, the biographer of de Chirico, he had grasped the main idea of Nietzsche while his contemporaries had understood him incorrectly.[187]

2.2.3.2. In the Trace of Ariadne

> I come at last to that heroical love, which is proper to men and women, is a frequent cause of melancholy, and deserves much rather to be called burning lust, than by such an honourable title.
> Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*

Ariadne is the daughter of Cretan king, Minos. As soon as the Athenian hero, Theseus arrives Crete to kill the beast (half bull half man) Minotauros, which is imprisoned in a labyrinth, Ariadne falls in love with him at first sight. She offers help Theseus; in return he promises to marry her. She gives a ball of yarn and ties the end of the yarn to the door of the labyrinth, so that he doesn't get lost in the labyrinth. Theseus catches Minotauros asleep and kills him with his bare hands and easily finds his way out with the help of Ariadne's yarn. They sail together to Athens, but on the way, they stop by the island of Naxos. Theseus does not keep his promise and leaves her on the island while she is sleeping. When she wakes up, she notices that she is left there to die. She falls into despair, but the fairies herald a new love for her. Good-hearted and sweet Dionysus finds her on the island, admires her courage and loyalty, and marries her.[188] This mythical and poetic love story seduced Nietzsche. He saw Ariadne's sadness in himself. He mentioned Ariadne in *Ecce Homo*:

> Such things have never been written, never been felt, never been suffered: only a God, only Dionysus suffers in this way. The reply to such a dithyramb on the sun's solitude in light would be Ariadne . . .. Who knows,

[186] Giorgio de Chirico, ''Interview with de Chirico,'' interview by Jean José Marchand, *Metaphysical Art* no: 11/13 (2013): 296. https://fondazionedechirico.org/en/publications/ Last access November 8, 2021.
[187] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 77.
[188] Edith Hamilton, *Mitologya*, çev. Ü. Tamer (İstanbul: Varlık, 1968), 103-107.

> but I, who Ariadne is! To all such riddles no one heretofore had ever found an answer; I doubt even whether any one had ever seen a riddle here.[189]

Nietzsche admired the philosophy of the presocratic period because he saw a deep connection between the presocratic philosophy and tragedy. He defined the origin of Greek Tragedy, which is based on the Dionysus-Apollo dichotomy, as a yarn (Ariadne's help) in order to find a path through the labyrinth.

> We must now seek assistance from all the artistic principles laid out above, in order to find our way correctly through the labyrinth, a descriptive term we have to use to designate the origin of Greek Tragedy.[190]

In Greek mythology both Apollo, the god of sun and light, and Dionysus, the god of wine, are the sons of Zeus. While Apollo expresses balance, moderation, rational thinking, logic and order, Dionysus is a symbol of change, exuberance, ecstasy, irrationality, chaos, and drunkenness. But the Ancient Greeks did not see Apollo and Dionysus as two rivals or opposites, they considered that the gods were all in balance.

Ariadne is the common figure between two gods; Apollo and Dionysus (Theseus is known as an Apollonian hero). The lover of Theseus/Apollo and Dionysus is the main symbol in de Chirico's paintings. De Chirico depicted Ariadne always in melancholic way in contrast with the great master Titian's Ariadne in the painting *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1523-24) (Picture 34). Titian focused on the happy ending of the story; Ariadne is with her new love Dionysus surrounded by cheerful figures.[191] De Chirico focused on the moment only when she found out that she was abandoned. The depiction of Ariadne in his paintings reminds us the definition of love in *Zarahustra*: 'I fear you near, I love you far; your flight allures me, your seeking secures me: - I suffer, but for you, what would I not gladly bear!'[192] The depiction of Ariadne in de Chirico's paintings could be seen in a Nietzschean sense,

[189] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Vol. 17: Ecce Homo," in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Oscar Levy, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), 112.
[190] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 26.
[191] Michael R. Taylor, *Giorgio de Chirico and The Myth of Ariadne* (London: Merrell, 2002), 67.
[192] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarahustra* ed. Bill Chapko trans. Thomas Common (2010), 177, https://nationalvanguard.org/books/Thus-Spoke-Zarathustra-by-F.-Nietzsche.pdf.

that is characterized by an essential lack,[193] and therefore painted as highlighting her melancholy.

It is also known that Nietzsche had fallen in love with Cosima Wagner, whose nickname was Ariadne. Nietzsche wrote a letter to her in January 1889: 'Ariadne, I love you – Dionysus.'[194] We know that de Chirico had read a lot about Nietzsche's life therefore he must be aware of the forbidden love of Nietzsche and their nicknames. The philosopher personalized the myth (he signed the letter as Dionysus) and, he wrote in an early draft of the chapter on *Zarahustra* for *Ecce Homo* that 'there are cases where what is needed is an Ariadne's thread leading into the labyrinth.'[195] Most of us avoid the labyrinth because of security, confidence and courage issues, but Nietzsche encourages us that even at the risk of ruining our minds, we continue with Ariadne's rope until we reach the deepest part of our soul, and its silent discourse.[196] This is actually a call to melancholy. Even if it blows our minds, he recommends wandering in the labyrinth of the soul, in the dark corridors. Unfortunately, we do not have an Ariadne to give us a clue to get us out of that labyrinth. However, the process of creation requires getting lost in those dark corridors.

The beloved figure Ariadne tempted Nietzsche so much that he planned to write 'a perfect book' which would be include the dialogues between Ariadne, Theseus, and Dionysus. The book, revealing the affinity of Nietzsche to Ariadne, was never published. In this unpublished book Ariadne gets all over with Theseus who, jealously wants to her get back again, in contrast with Dionysus, the God, has no feeling of jealousy. In a dialogue between Dionysus and Ariadne, Dionysus says that Ariadne was the 'labyrinth' herself in which Theseus had lost his way, because there is no thread anymore. The experience of abandonment enlightens Ariadne to

[193] Dori Gilinski, ''Et quid amabo nişi quod aenigma est: The Influence of Friedrich Nietzsche on Giorgio de Chirico,'' 10. https://www.academia.edu/21644574/The_Influence_of_Friedrich_Nietzsches_Metaphysics_on_Giorgio_de_Chiricos_Art Last access November 8, 2021.
[194] Taylor, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 81-82.
[195] As cited in Taylor, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 82.
[196] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 139.

embrace her fears and hatred ones and therefore, she becomes a powerful figure for Nietzsche.[197] In Nietzsche's poem 'Ariadne's Lament' we see the footsteps of the dialogue mentioned above:

> Dionysus:
> Be clever, Ariadne! ...
> You have little ears; you have my ears:
> Put a clever word in them! —
> Must one not first hate oneself, in order to love oneself? ...
> I am your labyrinth ...[198]

De Chirico embraced the legacy of his most favourite philosopher. The riddles and the enigmas of the myth affected de Chirico as his influencer. He transferred this fascination successfully to his paintings therefore the Ariadne series had been born. In fact, we can easily summarize Nietzsche's influence in de Chirico's art in one word: Ariadne. De Chirico's melancholic figure, Ariadne, is depicted in a moment between sleep and wakefulness, when she realizes that she has just been abandoned by Theseus. It carries the 'the shadow of despair', as Julia Kristeva said: '… we shall see the shadow cast on the fragile self, hardly dissociated from the other, precisely by the loss of that essential other. The shadow of despair.'[199]

Ariadne is the symbol of loss and abandonment, and the melancholic princess is the cultural heritage of his homeland, therefore she is connected to the past of de Chirico. According to Kristeva: 'The melancholic's past never passes.'[200] This sentence may give us a clue about why de Chirico had used the figure 'Ariadne' as the representative of loss. Maurice Blanchot sees that writing is a product of dread: 'whatever [the writer] wants to say, it is nothing. The world, things, knowledge, are for him only reference points across the void.'[201] When I read this statement, I thought that all the motifs, figures and of course mainly

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[197] Taylor, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 82-83.
[198] Friedrich Nietzsche, ''Ariadne's Lament,'' http://www.thenietzschechannel.com/works-pub/dd/dd.htm. Last access November 8, 2021.
[199] Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun Depression and Melancholia* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Colombia University Press, 1989), 5.
[200] Julia Kristeva, ''On The Melancholic Imaginary,'' *New Formations* N:3 (Winter 1987): 11. http://banmarchive.org.uk/collections/newformations/03_05.pdf Last access December 4, 2021.
[201] As cited in Holly, *The Melancholy Art*, XIX.

Ariadne are the reference points of de Chirico in order to represent the void, the ineffable inside him. Considering his life story; loss of little sister and father, his homeland, the nomadic way of life, he had a great sense of emptiness that cannot be expressed and explained. Precisely for this reason, painting is the best tool to express this emptiness, feelings, and melancholy.

'The Ariadne Series' which was named by the art historian James Thrall Soby, includes 8 paintings, which were made in Paris between 1912-13 and he mentioned that de Chirico made a plaster model of Ariadne, which has traditional gesture, based on a Roman copy of a lost Hellenistic statute in Vatican Museum.[202] His prior 'Ariadne work,' *Melanconia* (1912) (Picture 35), titled in Latin, has a special place among the other Ariadne paintings. The princess of the labyrinth depicted in the pose of melancholy although the other depictions have a gesture of one arm thrown over her head signifying her drowsiness.[203] She lies down on a pedestal, including an inscription on the base with capital letters, *Melanconia*. She is facing with her own shadow, looking her inner self which reminds us the advice of Nietzsche; wandering and getting lost in the labyrinth of the soul. The dark corridors, windows, and the arcades of the building behind Ariadne can be also associated with labyrinth. But the impressive part of the painting is something else; another shadow, which we cannot see whose it is. According to Riccardo Dottori, the hidden human figure is the painter himself. He depicted himself with the help of the shadow, and the other two little figures are the artist's mother and brother.[204] Dottori indicated the painter's melancholic situation as follows:

> Who is this invisible spectator? It is the painter himself, Giorgio de Chirico, who in 1912 is wandering about in an Italian piazza while his mother and brother (the small figures in the background) wait for him in Paris. He is alone and overcome by melancholy, which is condensed in the classical statue in front of him. Is this an outer mirror to his inner soul? And is this piazza actually the mirror of his painter soul, ruminating on Böcklin and the torment of the painter, to a point where his external self is none other than a shadow of his inner self?[205]

[202] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 55 and 61.
[203] Taylor, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 19.
[204] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 208-209.
[205] Ibid, 209.

In another painting, *The Melancholy of a Beautiful Day* (1912-13) (Picture 33), Ariadne's pose and the direction of the shadows are different comparing with *Melanconia.* The abandoned princess is depicted in a traditional way. (One arm thrown over the head with a slumberous mood) There is an Odysseus-based figure from *The Enigma of the Oracle* (1910) (Picture 30). He depicted the figure with a lowered head and gazing within himself and reminding us again melancholy.

> Everything that is to be seen is seen within, as his melancholy, which is materializing in this moment. Or better, he looks within himself in order to set the revelation which will be made into a representation. Soon, it will be night and he will be nothing but a mute shadow, witness to the spectacle of his own melancholy. Yet within this solitude – which is the solitude described to us by Nietzsche that regards the inner state of the soul, the discussion with oneself –, the wonderful colours of an autumn sunset manage to create a space continuously pulled between illusion and the construction of reality, taking one outside the painting to where the musicality of colour and the continuous recurrence of signs and marks reign, in the purest sense of modern art.[206]

The depiction of the melancholic lady in the painting *The Joys and Enigmas of a Strange Hour* (1913) (Picture 36) is again reminiscent of the Ariadne sculpture in Vatican. The title includes 'enigma' but there is no Ariadne painting including 'enigma' in the title. According to Dottori, 'enigma' was consciously used, because 'enigma' is associated with Ariadne or to melancholy and this remind us the self-portrait of 1911: 'What shall I love if not the enigma?'[207] The tower with an attached wall and the train makes us conflict about whether we are inside or outside the station because the buttresses are outside instead of being hidden on the inside.[208] The train refers to his childhood memories, especially his father, who was a railway engineer. The trains also represent voyage, departures, and arrivals. He travelled enormously in his lifetime therefore this can be also attached to his own history. It is possible that Ariadne is symbolizing 'voyage', which means wandering in the

[206] Ibid, 209.
[207] Ibid, 209.
[208] Ibid, 209.

deepest parts of the soul and having the risk of getting lost. The enigma can be hidden behind the duality; inside-outside and departure-arrival.[209]

The other paintings of the series nearly have the same characteristics. *The Soothsayer's Recompense* (1913) (Picture 37) can be separated from others, as the painting has two palm trees, suggesting a Mediterranean background. This scene refers to his childhood spent in Greece like a sailing boat appears in *Ariadne* (1913) (Picture 38). The sailing boat painted repeatedly, and it has been considered that the sailing boat is representing the ship of Argonauts. The myth of Argonauts was the favourite story of the little de Chiricos, Giorgio and his brother Savinio. They lived in Thessalian shores like the mythical heroes. The name 'Argonauts' comes from their ship called 'Argo.' Orpheus, who is the protector of the Argonauts and who is associated with Dionysus, saved them more than once during their voyage in search of 'Golden Fleece.'[210] As we see, the ship has a special meaning for de Chirico, and both refer to his childhood and Nietzsche. Like Orpheus helped the Argonauts, Nietzsche helped and saved de Chirico during his voyage. In the background of the painting there is a white tower with flying flags and a little train with a white smoke. The white tower may be the image of the *White Tower Thessaloniki*, another childhood reference. Ariadne statue is like she is sleeping in the sun on the Island of Naxos, referring her melancholic mood. The tower image is recurrent and appears in *Lassitude of the Infinite* (1913) (Picture 39), *The Silent Statue* (1913) (Picture 40), *Ariadne's Afternoon* (1913) (Picture 41).

The beloved Ariadne of course has the leading role in de Chirico's *Ariadne Series* but arcades, piazza, the light of the noon and the shadows are common in these paintings. In some of them we see the trains, towers, the Argo ship and the Odysseus-like figures. As mentioned above, all these images point out the effect of both Nietzsche and de Chirico's personal mythology. As Dottori said: 'Thus, Ariadne as melancholy, is a generator of anguish.'[211]

[209] Ibid, 210.
[210] Fagiolo dell'Arco, ''De Chirico in Paris,'' 27.
[211] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 210.

2.2.3.3. Enigma

Art is magic freed from the lie of seeming true.

Theodor W. Adorno

I have briefly mentioned the emerge of the metaphysical paintings in Chapter 2.1. Since it is directly related to enigma, I will try to elaborate on this topic in this section.

The *Metaphysical Paintings* are also called as *Enigmatic Paintings*, which began with the revelation. According to de Chirico, the revelation was an enigma and he believed that metaphysics and enigma were identical. The first pictures of the metaphysical series are dedicated to an enigma: *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon* (1910) (Picture 24), *The Enigma of the Oracle* (1910) (Picture 30), *Self-Portrait* (1911) (Picture 25), *The Enigma of the Hour* (1912) (Picture 31), *The Joys and Enigmas of a Strange Hour* (1913) (Picture 36), *The Enigma of Fatality* (1914) (Picture 42), *The Enigma of a Day* (1914) (Picture 43). The Enigmatic Paintings are also known as *Nietzschean Enigmas*.

Enigma has an extremely important function to understand de Chirico's understanding of *Metaphysical Painting*. As Margaret Crosland quoted from de Chirico:

> The language that the things of this world sometimes speak; the seasons of the year and the hours of the day. The epochs of history too: prehistory, and the revolutions in thought throughout the ages, modern times…One must picture everything in the world as an enigma.[212]

His self- portrait, dated 1911, is special in this sense. He wrote at the bottom of the painting *Et quid amabo nisi quod ænigma est? (What shall I love if not the enigma?).* He posed himself like the famous photograph of his mentor, Nietzsche, with the famous melancholic pose, resting the head on the hand. The painting indicates that the young painter identified himself with Nietzsche. The art historian Magdalena Holzhey mentions the matter: 'The pose he strikes in his self-portrait of

[212] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 31.

1911 is a direct citation of Nietzsche's own portrait photograph. De Chirico saw Nietzsche not only as a guideline but also as a figure of identification.'[213]

The inscription, *Et quid amabo nisi quod ænigma est*, reveals both his melancholy and his bound with Nietzsche. It can be considered as a manifestation of the painter that he is the successor of the philosopher in the field of arts. This painting can be affiliated to *Melanconia* (1912) (Picture 35). Both paintings have an inscription, revealing the mood and spiritual position of the painter. Because the inscriptions, 'Melanconia' on the pedestal of Ariadne statue and likewise 'Et quid amabo nisi quod aenigma est?' at the bottom of his self-portrait, we can comprehend that he faced his first labyrinths: 'knowledge combined with melancholy and the enigma.'[214] De Chirico's melancholy is 'the desire to go beyond appearance and the immediate look of things.'[215] The Italian art critic, Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, also associated de Chirico's melancholy with enigmas in his essay 'De Chirico in Paris, 1911-1915':

> Melancholy: De Chirico's first self-portrait (a program for his whole life) presents,alongside the famous line "What shall I love if not the enigma?", an obvious theme: melancholy. The artist rests his cheek on his hand in the old gesture of Dürer and of all those "born under Saturn." This theme is in Nietzsche as well and emerges once again from the pessimism of Schopenhauer. (De Chirico's melancholy, associated with enigmas, is related besides to the myth of Oedipus and the Sphinx.) In the pages of Zarathustra is the extraordinary "Song of Melancholy" in which Zarathustra's "adversary par excellence" comes to light:
>
> > 'But already he assails and subdues me, this spirit of melancholy, this demon of twilight...The day is fading, now it is becoming evening for all things, even the best things; so hear and see, you higher men, what a demon this spirit of twilight melancholy is.'
>
> It is clear that this Stimmung lies at the source of all of de Chirico's reflections on twilight associated with melancholy (besides, did not Nietzsche have himself photographed in this old pose?).[216]

The word 'enigma' is originated from the Greek words *ainissesthai* means 'to speak allusively, darkly,' and from *ainos* means 'fable,' which de Chirico surely knew the

[213] Magdalena Holzhey, *De Chirico* (Köln: Taschen), 8. (As cited in Giuliodori, and Notina, ''The Vision,'' 157.)
[214] Fagiolo dell'Arco, ''De Chirico in Paris,'' 32.
[215] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 204.
[216] Fagiolo dell'Arco, ''De Chirico in Paris,'' 30.

meaning. Enigmas are a kind of experience like dreaming. It cannot be spoken, or it cannot be described and revealed, which art can only born with it. Through revelation, the elements can reveal their true essence. He thought that the enigma was there between the real and the unreal, and it is related to their mysterious relationship.[217] In one of his manuscripts, written between 1911-1915, he wrote: 'When Nietzsche talks of how Zarahustra was conceived and says: "I was surprised by Zarahustra", in this participle – surprised, is contained the whole enigma of sudden revelation.'[218] And further:

> […] but now a new air has inundated my soul, a new song has reached my ears and the whole world appears totally changed – the autumn afternoon has arrived, the long shadows, the clear air, the serene sky, in a word: Zarathustra has arrived, do you understand? Do you understand the enigma these words hold, the great cantor has arrived, he who speaks of eternal return, he whose song has the sound of eternity? It is with a new magnifying glass that I now examine the other great men and many seem terribly small and coarse and some even smell bad – Michelangelo is too coarse –. I have thought these problems over for a long time and can no longer be mistaken. It is only with Nietzsche that I can say I have begun a real life.[219]

In order to represent enigma, de Chirico used a recurring theme: A Böcklinesque Odysseus figure. The figure is always depicted looking within himself. In *The Enigma of the Oracle* (1910) (Picture 30), two scenes of the painting have a tension which gives the enigmatic aura. On the left side, opening to a view of a bright Mediterranean landscape with a clear sky, the Odysseus-based figure looks within himself, on the contrary the white statue/God that appears behind the black curtain creates an atmosphere of malaise. This painting reminds the passage from *The Birth of Tragedy*: 'When we make a determined attempt to look directly at the sun and turn away blinded, we have dark coloured specks in front of our eyes, like a remedy, as it were.'[220] According to Riccardo Dottori: 'The tragic serenity of the Mediterranean world that we find represented in this painting seems to be the clearest transcription of the Nietzschean text'[221] and he adds that for Nietzsche, the

[217] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 40.
[218] Ibid, 40.
[219] As cited in Dottori, ''From Zarathustra's Poetry,'' 122.
[220] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.
[221] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 205.

Apollonian figures characterized with white and bright forms imagined by the artist's soul, arises from that particular power of the spirit that manifests itself in dreams. The meditative figure hovers between the two scenes; the inside, the enclosed space, considered to be a temple, represents the artist's inner self, and the outside, the sunny landscape with a clear sky. These two scenes symbolize the tension between the soul of the artist and the metaphysician. Therefore, the enigma of the oracle is nothing else then than the metaphysical depth of the tragedy of serenity.[222] De Chirico also mentioned this matter in his *Memoir*:

> (...) I submitted one of my self-portraits and two small compositions, one inspired by the Piazza Santa Croce in Florence and containing that exceptional poetry I had discovered in the books of Nietzsche, while the other, entitled *The Enigma of the Oracle*, contained the lyrical quality of Greek prehistory.[223]

In *The Enigma of the Oracle*, the traces of his melancholic mood, his prolonged intestinal illness, but also a spiritual crisis following the reading of the works of Nietzsche, which radically changed his own style, can be seen.[224] Besides he basically used the architectural elements; the Italian piazzas, arcades, sculptures, buildings, towers, train stations and trains and shadows in order to represent 'enigma' which arises from the mysterious relationship between the elements of the scene.[225]

> There is nothing like the enigma of the Arcade— invented by the Romans. A street, an arch: The sun looks different when it bathes a Roman wall in light. In all this there is something more mysteriously plaintive than in French architecture.[226]

According to the master of enigmas, the Greeks grasped the aesthetics of metaphysics, in other words metaphysical architecture, which forms the architectural poetry, and they knew how to construct a city with a philosophical sense:

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[222] Ibid, 205.
[223] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 65.
[224] Dottori, ''Dream, Presage,'' 304.
[225] Artun, ''De Chirico'nun Mimari Evreni.''
[226] De Chirico, As cited in Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 247.

> (…) It is in the city's construction, in the architectural shape of the houses, piazzas, gardens and public passages, the ports and railway stations etc. that the foundations of great metaphysics reside. The Greeks, guided by an aesthetic-philosophic sense, regarded such constructions with a certain scruple: the porticoes, the shaded walkways and terraces raised like theatre stalls in front of Nature's great scenes (Homer, Aeschylus), the tragic serenity.[227]

But this poetics is not just architectural poetry; It deals with the metaphysical dimension of human existence, life, and history, including the future and destiny. The aesthetic elements form our world, life, and civilization. As a result, it can be said that de Chirico's melancholy is the source of architectural poetics.[228] Especially the Italian architecture attracted him: 'I have given a great deal of thought to the metaphysics of Italian architecture, and all my painting of the years 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914 is concerned with this problem.'[229]

De Chirico was fond of Italian cities, especially Turin, where Nietzsche was also in love with. He would certainly have known that Nietzsche had a great time, full of creative months, until his mental collapse there. Turin was a unique city with a rich history and was not so crowded like Rome therefore the city was the favourite of both. De Chirico admired the long arcades, the wide piazzas, and the statutes of Turin, which became the key elements of his work expressing melancholy and enigma.[230]

> This novelty is a strange and profound poetry, infinitely mysterious and solitary, which is based on the *Stimmung*, (I use this very effective German word which could be translated as atmosphere in the moral sense), the *Stimmung*, I repeat, of an autumn afternoon, when the sky is clear and the shadows are longer than in summer, for the sun is beginning to be lower. This extraordinary sensation can be found (but it is necessary, naturally, to have the good fortune to possess my exceptional faculties) in Italian cities and in Mediterranean cities like Genoa or Nice; but the Italian city par excellence where this extraordinary phenomenon appears in Turin.[231]

The Enigma of the Oracle and *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon* (1910) (Picture 24) are the precursor paintings of the Italian piazzas series which he would develop

[227] De Chirico, As cited in Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 207.
[228] Ibid, 208.
[229] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 68.
[230] Crosland, *The Enigma of Giorgio de Chirico*, 36.
[231] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 55.

this theme in Paris. The melancholic feeling that manifests itself also began with these paintings. He managed to translate 'the silent language of melancholy', as Kristeva said, into the pictorial art with the help of revelation. He had also chosen the season 'autumn', which is cold and dry like the four humours theory. According to the theory, the 'black bile' humour characterized by the season 'autumn' which has the qualities of 'cold and dry' and its temperament is 'melancholic.' De Chirico mentioned that he found and loved the *Stimmung* of the autumn afternoons and maybe he was inclined to this *Stimmung* because of his melancholic temperament.

'Shadow' is another enigmatic aspect of de Chirico's paintings. Although shadow is used to give volume and depth in paintings, the shadows of de Chirico are independent of this definition. The shadows may represent the absence of reality or a weakened reality and sometimes we see the shadows without a body which has a disturbing affect, like *Melanconia* 1912 (Picture 35), *The Nostalgia of the Infinite* 1912-13 (Picture 44), *The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street* 1914 (Picture 45). He basically used the long shadows of the statues, buildings and tiny figures. The shadows employ themselves as an object, which represent a conception of solitude. Autumn afternoons are very helpful in order create the shadows as he mentioned above. He also asserted: 'There are many more enigmas in the shadow of a man who walks in the sun than in all the religions of the past, present and future.'[232] In *The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street* (1914), a shadow cast by an unseen presence of a statue. We see a different figure; a girl is running with a hoop, and she is near an empty wagon with opened doors. According to some writers it represents the elder sister Adele, who had died at six. The girl, projecting a tiny shadow, is running to the light/sun, passing by the yellow wagon and the frightening dark arcade and its dark shadowy area, but another shadow, an embodied one, which it is thought to be a shadow of a statue, is present on her way to the sunny area. As James Thrall Soby indicates that, as soon as she reaches the light, she will disappear, for she is herself a shadow.[233] The following words of de Chirico have been influential in this sense:

[232] De Chirico, As cited in Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 245.
[233] Ibid, 72-74.

> One of the strangest and deepest sensations that prehistory has left with us is the sensation of foretelling. It will always exist. It is like an eternal proof of the senselessness of the universe. The first man must have seen auguries everywhere, he must have trembled at each step he took.[234]

The embodied shadow makes the viewer curious about who he is. It may symbolize the 'mystery' which is mentioned in the title of the painting. According to Riccardo Dottori it could be *Phileas Fogg*, the hero of *Around the World in 80 Days* by *Jules Verne* with the own words of de Chirico:

> Who better than he, knew how to capture the metaphysics of a city like London, its houses, its streets, its clubs, piazzas and squares. The spectral atmosphere of a Sunday afternoon in London, the melancholy of a man, a walking phantasm, as Phileas Fogg appears in *Around the World in 80 Days*?[235]

Dottori also writes that in this spectral aspect, things melt away their real consistency and the melancholy that pushes us into this state in which things appear to us in their spectral aspect. But this spectrality, evoked by the melancholy directs to a feeling of the lack of meaning in life, ends up sucking us into a new state of mind. This atmosphere, or *Stimmung*, as de Chirico called, is the key stone of our existence and melancholy or anguish allows us to access the truth of being. That is how de Chirico could reflect his inner drama by his cognition of metaphysical painting: He abandoned the structure of classical representation and established a representation of a new world in which a new meaning emerges. In this world, the icons are not depicted in relation to each other. They all are standing alone in this transformed universe.[236]

In the book *Black Sun*, Julia Kristeva points to the relationship between melancholy and language. The language of a melancholic is the language of the one wandering in the dark corridors of the mind. As we have seen Nietzsche also advices to explore the dark labyrinth of the soul although this leads to melancholy. The language of melancholy is silent and does not make it possible for a person to express herself/himself, because it is ineffable. The sufferer cannot predict how to

[234] As cited in Ibid, 74.
[235] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 211.
[236] Ibid, 211.

deal with the language, and the interlocking words repeat themselves constantly[237] like the recurring figures of de Chirico. He may have used shadows in this sense. As we see in *The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street*, de Chirico used bodiless shadows, which may have been the representative of his 'ineffable' melancholy. Such use of heavy and long shadows can also be attributed to the artist's view of Metaphysical Painting: The hidden meanings beyond appearances. This is what he aimed to do with metaphysical painting, and therefore the shadows may show us temporality while on the other hand it points to eternity. Shadow is a harbinger of being seen. Therefore, I see de Chirico's casting his shadows in our eyes as a founding element of his metaphysical painting. Besides, I strongly believe that he communicated through his language of melancholy, named metaphysical paintings and he constructed his visual language as a discourse, a new different form of language.

Time is another enigmatic element in de Chirico's paintings. His interest in time is associated with his melancholy. Some of his works have a direct link to time with the inclusion of clocks but sometimes the time is shown indirectly, with the shadows, trains, and fountains. Apart from these, the master of enigmas combined the classical elements: the architecture, arcades, statues with modern items like trains. In other words, he gathered past, present, and future in the same scene, and he blended them ingeniously. He mentioned that in his article *Desecrated Reality*:

> (…) One must remember that reality is bound to all the manifestations of time, past, present, and also future. I can even say that it is formed by these three manifestations of time. Thus, reality is a strange phenomenon, which though it is temporal, at the same time and in a certain sense it is enclosed in eternity. To the same degree reality is at one with truth. And then, reality has many different aspects, as diverse are mentalities and as diverse are individuals.[238]

Riccardo Dottori explains de Chirico's thoughts on reality and time based on his writings in his article 'On Philosophy and Painting: Giorgio de Chirico and "Desecrated Reality"':

[237] Kristeva, *Kara Güneş*, 47.
[238] Giorgio de Chirico, ''Desecrated Reality,'' *Metaphsyical Art* 14/16 (2016): 152.

> (…) Eternity is not outside of time; it is not simply the eternity of time, because time does not consist in the simple flowing of an infinite series of instants. Reality is connected to time, but not in the sense that it is simply *in* time, but moreover as it is based on these three temporal manifestations. (…) Of course, de Chirico does not actually say that time is the meaning of reality, but he does say that reality is formed of these temporal manifestations, which, in a certain way is the equivalent to saying that the temporality is a fundamental *dimension* of reality.
> (…) In de Chirico, time as the meaning of existence is the focus of his famous paintings with large clocks on public buildings.[239]

In one of de Chirico's letters, he mentioned that he adopted the thoughts of Heraclitus on 'time':

> The Ephesian teaches us that time does not exist and that on the great curve of eternity the past is the same as the future. This might be what the Romans meant with their image of Janus, the god with two faces; and every night in dream, in the deepest hours of rest, the past and future appear to us as equal, memory blends with prophecy in a mysterious union.[240]

This statement is illuminating how he saw the enigmatic side of time, and this is also strongly connected with his understanding of reality, that inextricably linked to time.

In this sense, *The Delights of the Poet* (1912) (Picture 46) is a very good example. We see all the elements associated with time: clock, fountain, shadows, and train. In the painting, he emphasized time by putting the clock in the centre of the painting. The clock shows two o'clock in the afternoon which is hung at the top of the entrance of the railway station. A white ghostly melancholic figure, with an inward-turned gaze, on the right turns to the west where the sun will set. It is very familiar and reminds us of the white figure in *Island of the Death* (1883) by Arnold Böcklin. Therefore, it can be understood that the figure can also be associated with death. Peter Toohey also mentioned that in his book *Melancholy, Love, and Time*:

> Time, therefore, both through the angle of the sunlight and through the gaze of the wraith, is firmly, if not unexpectedly, linked with death. Time in this picture, on such a reading, is an absolutely linear affair. It has as its end point human death.[241]

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[239] Riccardo Dottori, ''On Philosophy and Painting Giorgio De Chirico and "Desecrated Reality",'' *Metaphysical Art* 11/13 (2013): 54-55.
[240] As cited in Lorenzo Canova, ''The Arrival of The Revenants Giorgio de Chirico and Neometaphysical Art at The Frontiers of Time,'' *Metaphysical Art* 14/16 (2016): 293.
[241] Toohey, *Melancholy, Love, and Time*, 284.

De Chirico wrote about 'death' in a manuscript 'Meditations of a Painter':

> THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH
> The steeple clock marks half past twelve. The sun is high and burning in the sky. It lights houses, palaces, porticoes. Their shadows on the ground describe rectangles, squares, and trapezoids of so soft a black that the burned eye likes to refresh itself in them. What light. How sweet it would be to live down there, near a consoling portico or a foolish tower covered with little multicolored flags, among gentle and intelligent men. Has such an hour ever come? What matter, since we see it go!
> What absence of storms, of owl cries, of tempestuous seas. Here Homer would have found no songs. A hearse has been waiting forever. It is black as hope, and this morning someone maintained that during the night it still waits. Somewhere is a corpse one cannot see. The clock marks twelve thirty-two; the sun is setting; it is time to leave.[242]

Here is another matter that comes up. De Chirico's words 'The sun is high and burning in the sky' bring to mind the concept of *acedia*. In emphasizing the link with noontime, we can say that he may point out *acedia*, which means 'the demon of noontide.' Since acedia is a mental state of melancholy, despondency, lassitude, inertia and, dejection, he may have made a connection with this concept in his paintings.

There is a fountain in front of the station which has a trapezoidal form reminding a sarcophagus, which can be associated with 'death.'[243] The deserted piazza and a fountain which has a coffin-like shape and dark green water, give the atmosphere of anguish, fear and melancholy.[244] According to Peter Toohey, the water what is behind the presence of a fountain connotes de Chirico's melancholy in his early paintings.[245] James T. Soby also mentioned that although the fountain was silent, we could hear the sound and this shows his ability to represent an atmosphere of a disquieting ambiguity.[246]

Trains are also encountered figures in de Chiro's iconography, and they are very important for him because of his father's profession, who had worked for Thessaly railways. Therefore, they can be connected to his childhood memories,

[242] As cited in Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 251.
[243] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 207.
[244] Dottori, ''Dream, Presage,'' 306.
[245] Toohey, *Melancholy, Love, and Time*, 289.
[246] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 49.

but can also be associated with the linearity of time. Gathering the elements of past, present, and future, trains have the function of symbolizing the modernity, temporality, present and future. In this painting the train is going back to the station, coming from west or in other words 'death'. Does it represent an escape from death or time with the help of the motionless and timeless atmosphere which gives the impression of stopping the time? The timeless and motionless atmosphere recalls Nietzsche's 'eternal afternoon/great noontide'.

> "Up!" said he to himself, "you sleeper! you noontide sleeper! Well then, up, you old legs! It is time and more than time; many a good stretch of road is still awaiting you- Now have you slept your fill; for how long a time? A half-eternity! Well then, up now, my old heart! For how long after such a sleep may you - remain awake?"[247]

Besides Ariadne depictions of de Chirico connote 'noontide sleepers.' De Chirico always painted Ariadne as she was sleeping or the moment between awake and sleep. As Nietzsche said, 'a good stretch of road is still waiting for you,' there is a new path waiting for Ariadne also. De Chirico might choose the moment because of that or just to show the anguish of the moment that she had already understood the abandonment.

The clock and the fountain are included also in his famous work *The Enigma of the Hour* (1911) (Picture 31). The Böcklinian white ghostly figure appears on the left with the same stance and there is another figure on the right which looks like Böcklin's *Odysseus.* On the upper side there is another figure which can be barely seen. Human figures turning upon themselves embody the enigma of the life, which is imbued with melancholy.[248]

> Finally, noon arrived. It was solemn. It was melancholy. When the sun arrived at the top of the celestial curve, they inaugurated the new clock on the town's railroad station.
> Everybody was crying. A train passed by frantically whistling away. The cannons thundered.
> Alas it was so beautiful.[249]

[247] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarahustra*, 215.
[248] Dottori, ''On Philosophy,'' 50.
[249] Giorgio de Chirico, ''The Collected Poems of Giorgio de Chirico,'' *Metaphysical Art* 14/16 (2016): 202.

The poem above belongs to de Chirico, and it is like the translation of his visual language into the written language, especially reminds us of this painting. The clock, replaced on the top of the wall of the entrance of the building, which has large and dark arcades, shows 2:55 pm. The time shown by the clock and the time in the picture do not coincide. The shadows are elongated, and the colour of the painting also shows that it is late afternoon. In short, the time and the clock do not fit. Losing the notion of time has been associated with hermits being abandoned by God and, again this reminds the concept of *acedia*. Or maybe he meant to express the difference between wasted time, just like the time one spends waiting at a train station and, the real-time, characterized by turning inwards. Dottori states that:

> In fact, in this painting we find another essential motif with regard to the existential-phenomenological analysis of the question on time, as the awareness of being: the fountain open like a tomb in front of the building with the clock. De Chirico too, envisioned the perspective of death as anticipation to the totality of our future and its ultimate limit in which the totality of our being – the fullness of time – unfolds.[250]

About the connection between time and melancholy, Peter Toohey writes: 'Time and death are linked with melancholy, with a profound boredom, and with loneliness. This is the sense projected by the empty and eerie piazza and its shaded colonnades.'[251]

Although 'time' is discussed together with Nietzschean 'eternal return' concept, Lorenzo Canova, Italian art historian and curator, underlines the fact that de Chirico reflected the concept of 'eternal return' to his works in his neo-metaphysical period, dated between 1968-1978, as follows:

> De Chirico thus sets out on a new journey that will take on a different form, on the route of new neo-metaphysical revelation: the fact is that the artist's serene state of mind, after the melancholy and the feeling of abandonment of his youth (well represented by the statues of Ariadne in his Italian Piazzas), complete the feeling of consolation already present in his works from the 1920s and is illuminated with a more complete internal shine that nevertheless does not diminish the importance of this phase, but instead helps to understand better the entire development of the *Pictor Optimus'* work. A new period begins, one which is conclusive but marked by light

[250] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 206.
[251] Toohey, *Melancholy, Love, and Time*, 285.

> and the concept of return. Time turned back to front brings new splendour along with it.[252]

Nietzsche's 'eternal return' is not a melancholic or pessimistic ethos, on the contrary, it is being able to say, 'yes to the life', it is a life affirmation, as he said in *Gay Science*, section 341:

> *The heaviest weight.* - What if some day or night a demon were to steal into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it you will have to live once again and innumerable times again; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unspeakably small or great in your life must return to you, all in the same succession and sequence - even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned over again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!' Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: 'You are a god, and never have I heard anything more divine.' If this thought gained power over you, as you are it would transform and possibly crush you; the question in each and every thing, 'Do you want this again and innumerable times again?' would lie on your actions as the heaviest weight! Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to long for nothing more fervently* than for this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal?[253]

He explained this more clearly in an in an unpublished note contemporaneous with *The Gay Science*:

> My doctrine teaches: live in such a way that you must desire to live again, this is your duty - you will live again in any case! He for whom striving procures the highest feeling, let him strive; he for whom repose procures the highest feeling, let him rest; he for whom belonging, following, and obeying procures the highest feeling, let him obey. Provided that he becomes aware of what procures the highest feeling, and that he shrinks back from nothing. Eternity depends upon it![254]

For Nietzsche the Eternal Return is a *hohe Stimmung* 'the supreme thought,' but also the supreme feeling, the highest feeling.'[255] It is such a *hohe Stimmung* that cannot be expressed (the ineffable), and yet needs to be communicated. This is why

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[252] Canova, ''The Arrival,'' 278-279.
[253] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 194-195.
[254] As cited in Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 60.
[255] Ibid, 60.

Nietzsche adopted a weird style in *Zarahustra*. That could be the reason why de Chirico thought that Nietzsche was the most profound of all poets. In the pre-1915 metaphysical works, he tried to reflect 'the supreme and the highest feeling' on the canvases and he convinced that he succeeded this in his late works. Therefore, in the 1940s he started to sign his works *Pictor Optimus* (the best painter). Because of the fact that de Chirico achieved to project *hohe Stimmung* in his late works, the concept of 'eternal return' will not take part in this thesis which considers the artist's early works.

2.2.4. İllness

> We rationalize, we dissimilate, we pretend: we pretend that modern medicine is a rational science, all facts, no nonsense, and just what it seems. But we have only to tap its glossy veneer for it to split wide open, and reveal to us its roots and foundations, its old dark heart of metaphysics, mysticism, magic and myth. Medicine is the oldest of the arts, and the oldest of the sciences: would one not expect it to spring from the deepest knowledge and feelings we have?
>
> Oliver Sacks - *Awakenings*

Giorgio de Chirico suffered from various diseases throughout his life. In the very beginning of his memoir, he wrote about his childhood marked with illnesses, with mentioning the loss of his little sister Adele: 'I see again as in twilight scenes associated with long illnesses, like typhus, and wearisome convalescence.'[256] He also told that not only himself but also his parents were ill and the house was full of medicines of all kinds. His father had survived many serious illnesses and his mother had suffered from a nervous breakdown, which he later understood.[257] Therefore we can say that illnesses and recoveries had become a part of their lives.

The first mention of his melancholy in his memoir is the time when the family had moved to a new house again. He was also sick of moving but he also noted that it was very normal in Greece and the moving took place every two years. He wrote that: 'I have been destined throughout my life to move house continually. In the new house, which was a long way from the centre, I continued my

[256] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 14.
[257] Ibid, 30.

melancholy existence. My father was often in the worst state of health.'[258] He also stated that in the new house he had got malaria because of the place of the new house which had pool of stagnant water.[259] During the last illness of his father, de Chirico had an anxiety but above all after the loss of the father, he really suffered from an intestinal disorder which would follow him his lifetime.

> We arrived in Florence. I was very depressed physically because, while staying in Milan, I had had serious intestinal troubles, chronic pains accompanied by much weakness. (…) As a result I did very little work. I did more reading than painting. Above all I read books of philosophy and was overcome with severe crises of black melancholy.
>
> In Florence my health grew worse. Sometimes I painted small canvases. The Böcklin Period had passed and I had begun to paint subjects in which I tried to express the strong and mysterious feeling I had discovered in the books of Nietzsche: the melancholy of beautiful autumn days, afternoons in Italian cities. It was the prelude to the squares of Italy painted a little later in Paris and then in Milan, in Florence and in Rome.[260]

As it can be understood from his sentences, the origin of his melancholy lies at the root of the illnesses both he and his parents suffered from.

> My intestinal troubles, instead of diminishing, increased, and my nervous depression increased to. I was overcome with a violent attack of melancholy and, since I could no longer bear it, I ran away from Vallombrosa like a scalded cat and returned to Florence.[261]

James Thrall Soby also thinks that his illness is associated with melancholy: 'In 1910, suffering from the intestinal disorders which plagued his youth and perhaps had much to do with the melancholy temper of his early art, de Chirico moved to Florence.'[262] But Peter Toohey thinks that: 'It would be dreadfully reductive to attribute to intestinal disorder de Chirico's remarkably clear vision of melancholy, alienation, nostalgia, time, death, and the silence of the gods.'[263]

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[258] Ibid, 33.
[259] Ibid, 33.
[260] Ibid, 60-61.
[261] Ibid, 62.
[262] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 31.
[263] Toohey, *Melancholy, Love, and Time*, 293.

In the summer of 1911, he decided to move Paris, where his brother Savinio lived, from Florence and on the way to Paris they decided to visit Turin. His disease relapsed.

> When we left Turin I felt very ill and had severe stomach pains. During the journey I felt worse, and when the train reached Dijon I begged my mother to stop there for a night, since I had not the strength to go on.[264]

Because of his bad situation he could not paint, therefore, he focused on reading and ultimately, he met his lifetime influencer, Friedrich Nietzsche. In a sense, we can say that he owed his acquaintanceship and understanding of Nietzsche to his illness and long convalescence. Thus, he could bring metaphysical art to life. Turin, where his mentor had a mental breakdown, has a special meaning in this sense. During his stay in Turin, he visited the places where the philosopher had suffered from mental crisis, like King's Statue, the Antonelliana monument, the court tower at Palazzo Carignano. Lucio Giuliodori has an alternative way of thinking about the relationship with de Chirico and his mentor in his article 'The Vision and The Enigma: Nietzsche's Aura in De Chirico's Art': 'Madness attracting De Chirico's concerns, could be also certainly ascribed to his total love for Nietzsche, a philosopher who indeed went crazy.'[265] He also mentions that there are similar affinities between them and they both suffered from a disease, migraine. He asserts that both owe their creativity to their diseases[266] and quoted from the own words of Nietzsche from the philosopher's sister Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche's book, *Die Krankheit Friedrichs Nietzsche*:

> Once, during the continuous torture my brain gave me for three days accompanied by a painful vomit of mucus, I had an exceptional dialectic lucidity and I was able to think in cold blood and in every particular thing for which, in better health, I do not demonstrate a sufficient ability, a sufficient coldness.[267]

[264] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 63.
[265] Giuliodori, and Notina, ''The Vision,'' 162.
[266] Ibid, 11.
[267] As cited in Ibid, 11.

Giuliodori also asserts that the disease of de Chirico was 'migraine aura', which has symptoms of *déja-vù and jamais vu*.[268] He wrote that his migraine experiences are attached to his philosophical concerns. The identification with the philosopher had driven him to produce the same symptoms as Nietzsche's disease.[269] It is also claimed that his abdominal pain was also a result of 'migraine aura.' Compendiously, Giuliodori alleges that his artistic privilege was originated from his migraine aura and identification with Nietzsche.

It is also known that while he was in Italy in 1915, he had gone through a depression and had spent months at a military hospital, in Ferrara. He both experienced somatic and psychological problems throughout his life. Some authors think that there is a strong connection between the diseases and continuous moving houses and cities. De Chirico also mentioned this in his memoir. He told about a friend, Nino Bertoletti, who was a painter and whom de Chirico had great esteem and sympathy. De Chirico envied Bertoletti because he had lived in the same city all his life.

> (…) he leads a well-balanced and regular life: during the more than twenty-five years since I have known him he has only moved twice, while during the same period I have moved house twenty-one times, without counting the more or less prolonged stays I have made in inns, *pensioni*, furnished apartments, furnished rooms and with friends and relatives, without counting changes of city, district, country and even continent. Bertoletti has always lived in the same city, has kept his furniture, books and belongings. Now, I have always wanted a peaceful and well-regulated life, surrounded by my things.[270]

It is obvious that he was tired of the nomadic way of life, and he was missing a permanent settlement. The nomadic lifestyle may one of the origins of his melancholy. According to his memoir, his intestinal disorder generally had relapsed during the trips and moving houses. He mentioned several times he was in the need of 'home' and he might see a correspondence between the mythical hero Odysseus, who has also suffered from homesickness. Therefore, we can say that he reflected

[268] Jamais vu means; to have the impression that the scene one is witnessing never happened. (As cited in Ibid, 13.)
[269] Ibid, 12.
[270] De Chirico, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico*, 20.

his melancholy with drawing Odysseus-based figures, inspired from Arnold Böcklin.

Illnesses had a very important part of de Chirico’s life and effected his works. From some point of views his health problems fed his melancholy and revealed it. For some, his productivity and creativity were a result of these diseases, he suffered from. Either way, the only thing that hasn't changed is the fact that, in his early works, he made truly melancholic, gloomy, creative, and unique paintings.

CONCLUSION

The problematic relationship between the soul and the body has always been the subject of philosophical and scientific/medical debate. With the help of the humoral theory of ancient times, Hippocrates made an explanation of melancholy: The darkening of the black bile secretion and the darkening of the soul because of some changes in the brain. Thus, he underlined that the deterioration of the humour balance can change the mood. Aristoteles transformed melancholy into a new form and discussed it under a new topic: An exceptional character of the melancholic genius. Thereby, he became the father of the idea that reconciles genius and talent with melancholy. Although the medieval concept converted it into a capital sin (acedia), the Renaissance ratified its exceptional character and re-established the idea of 'melancholic genius.' The Enlightenment period devalued this perception and melancholy was seen as an illness and weakness of the individual. Romantics renewed the genius concept and adopted the children of Saturn, those who suffer from melancholy or atrabilious. Giorgio de Chirico was also influenced by German Romanticism, and he built his poetics on this extensive melancholy tradition.

Was de Chirico melancholic, or was melancholy a result of the illnesses and traumas he experienced? Since melancholy is a very subjective experience, it is hard to evaluate the artist's condition. But de Chirico wrote lots of times in his memoir that he suffered from it and described his melancholic temperament. However, the clinical pathology is not the concern of this study, but the sources that fed his melancholy and how he reflected it to his works are important in this context.

What are the iconographic elements of picturing 'melancholy'? Aside from all the melancholy-themed paintings depicted since Dürer's lost gazed angel with a dark face and head resting on the head, a completely different world lies in the melancholic atmosphere created by Giorgio de Chirico. His melancholic gaze is beyond temporality, which looks at the enigmatic aspect of the outside world. One of his main influencers was Arnold Böcklin, who had romantic effects on his works. Thanks to Böcklin, de Chirico became acquainted with the aesthetic side of melancholy. He assimilated combining natural and mythological elements,

tradition, and innovation. He admired the works of Böcklin, and he indicated that the *Stimmung* which he found in the Swiss master's paintings, deeply influenced him. That is why he defined Böcklin as the most profound painter. According to the biography of de Chirico, written on the official website of his foundation, the Böcklinian paintings were dated 1909. In this period, he painted a number of canvases subjected to mythological narratives. Although the Böcklinian period was temporary as alleged, in my opinion, Böcklin's art had continued to be influential on the artist since his Böcklin-inspired Odysseus figures became one of the lyrical motifs which recall melancholy. De Chirico depicted Odysseus as an introversive and contemplating figure. The master pictured it many times in his paintings, and it is considered one of the main motifs of enigmatic and melancholic aspects of his early metaphysical paintings.

During a recovery period (1909-10), de Chirico spared time reading philosophical texts. While reading the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, he felt strong and enigmatic emotions and wanted to reflect these feelings into his canvases. According to him, Nietzsche was the most profound poet of all times and claimed that he was the only man who understood the philosopher. The art historian Paolo Baldacci writes in his book that de Chirico translated Nietzsche into painting.[271] In 1910, while sitting in Santa Croce Square, he had his first 'revelation' and immortalized this moment, his first experience. He wrote that when he looked at the painting, *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon*, he saw that moment again and again, and that moment was still an enigma to him. He also added that it was inexplicable.[272] Julia Kristeva writes as the opening sentence in *Black Sun*: 'For those who are racked by melancholia, writing about it would have meaning only if writing sprang out of that very melancholia.'[273] As it is considered de Chirico was racked by melancholy, painting must have been the only meaningful way for him. Therefore, he tried to reflect the inexplicable moment through his visual metaphysical language. His metaphysical style allowed him to create a unique sense

[271] Baldacci, *De Chirico: The Metaphysical Period*, 287.
[272] Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, 34.
[273] Kristeva, *Black Sun*, 3.

of aesthetics. Therefore, a philosophical term had transformed into a new art form. Riccardo Dottori underlines that Metaphysical Art is a *poiesis* and has a new pictorial language. He thinks that de Chirico expressed sad and sweet poetry at the same time, and this reminds 'the dual nature of melancholy' which is the main reason why melancholy is considered to be an aesthetic emotion as Brady and Haapala mention in their essay. According to them, the aesthetic dimension of melancholy is the positive and negative aspects of itself.[274]

The effect of Nietzsche on de Chirico can be discussed through different metaphors, but in fact, it can even be described only through the recurrent figure 'Ariadne.' Because it is closely linked to Nietzsche's concept of Apollonian-Dionysian duality. De Chirico interpreted the myth by his artistic style in his metaphysical paintings. Ariadne is the common figure between two gods, as Theseus is known as an Apollonian hero, and she can be considered as the lover of both Gods. De Chirico had always painted her as a statue and depicted her melancholic mood. He focused on the tragic moment when she realized that she was abandoned. In my opinion, she may symbolize the threshold of revelation (abandonment and discovery), and she may guide the one who wants to wander in the labyrinth of the soul as Nietzsche advised. She appears as a solitary figure with her melancholic mood, lying in front of large arcades (symbolizing labyrinth), offering help with the rope. Without her, there will be no journey!

In order to interpret the work of de Chirico, 'enigma' is another important factor. In fact, it is adequate to look at his self-portrait *Et quid amabo nisi quod ænigma est?* (1911) to understand this. As the art historian, Magdalena Holzhey mentions that de Chirico saw Nietzsche not only as a guideline but also as a figure of identification.[275] It is obvious how de Chirico considered himself melancholic since he portrayed himself just as Nietzsche's pose (traditional melancholy gesture), emphasizing his passion for enigma. As Dottori says, enigma

[274] Brady, Haapala, ''Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion.''
[275] Holzhey, *De Chirico*, 8. (As cited in Giuliodori, and Notina ''The Vision,'' 157.)

is the mystery of life, which can never be comprehended, and he also links enigma to melancholy: 'Melancholy seems to express a fundamental aspect of philosophy: the contemplation of the world, which places us in front of the enigma.'[276] Rationality, which is an Apollonian aspect, is converted to an enigma in his metaphysical pictorial language. I think he may have wanted to create a new type of art, converting an Apollonian art form into a Dionysian form, by using enigma. In order to represent enigma, de Chirico set up piazzas and carefully placed elements on the scene, on which the whole reflects a sense of order and harmony. He composed architectural elements (piazzas, towers, stations, arcades) and enigmatic motifs (shadows, eerie and empty spaces, solitude figures, time – clocks, fountains). He constructed them in his own style, representing a new meaning. A deserted and eerie world where the time seems to have frozen with the aggregation of the elements from past to present or future (Ancient Greek or Roman architecture, mythological statues to modernity items; clocks, trains, towers)

The melancholy theme in de Chirico's metaphysical paintings is really hard to interpret just by looking at visual representations and his melancholy depictions are incomparable. He combines visual and philosophical sources ingeniously and created an unusual way of representation. I believe that his melancholy has a magnificent impact on his metaphysical art with sharing the idea of Aristoteles. In the light of all this study, de Chirico, who has indisputably the most unique position in the history of visual representation of melancholy, has a different place in the history of art.

[276] Dottori, ''The Metaphysical Parable,'' 204.

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APPENDIX A: THE PAINTINGS

Picture 1: Albrecht Dürer, *Melencolia I*, 1514.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/albrecht-durer/melancholia-1514

Picture 2: Francisco de Goya, *Saturn Devouring His Son*, 1819-23.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/Search/Saturn%20Devouring%20His%20Son

Picture 3: Roman statue, *Aias (Ajax)*, George Ortiz Collection.

https://www.georgeortiz.com/objects/roman/220-ajax/

Picture 4: Lucas Cranach the Elder, *An Allegory of Melancholy*, 1528.

https://lucascranach.org/UK_NGS_NGL003-93

Picture 5: Hans Sebalt Beham, *Melancholia*, 1539.

https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/416563

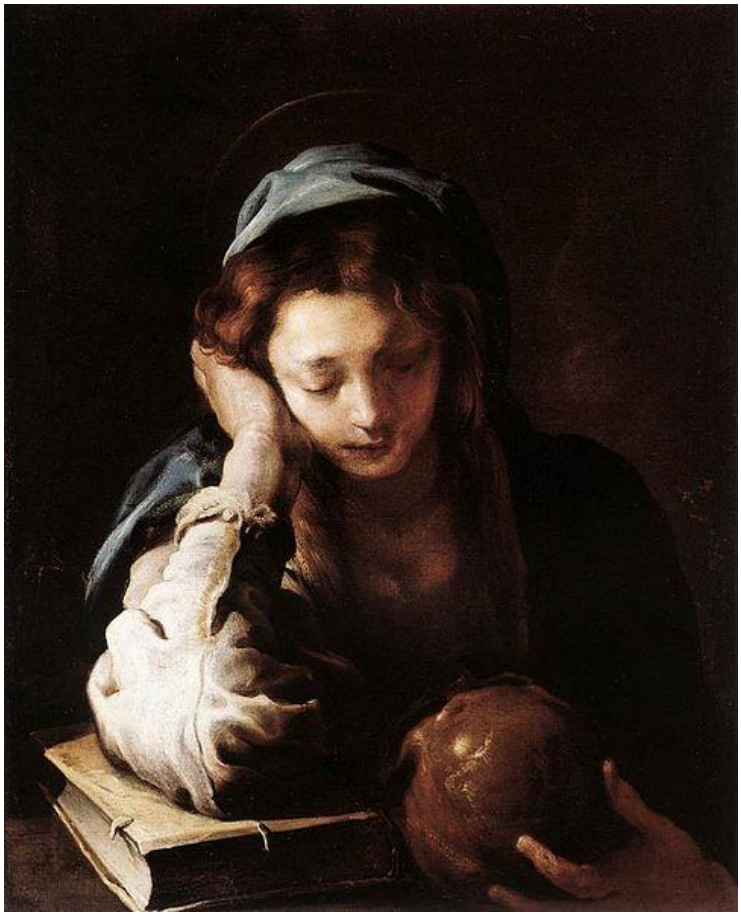
Picture 6: Jost Amman, *Melancholia*, 1589.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jost_Amman_-_Melancholia.jpg

Picture 7: Artemisia Gentileschi, *Mary Magdalene as Melancholy*, 1622-1625.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemisia_Gentileschi_-_Mary_Magalene_as_Melancholy_1621-22.JPG

Picture 8: Domenico Fetti, *The Repentant St. Mary Magdalene*, 1617-21. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domenico_Fetti_-_The_Repentant_St_Mary_Magdalene_-_WGA07851.jpg

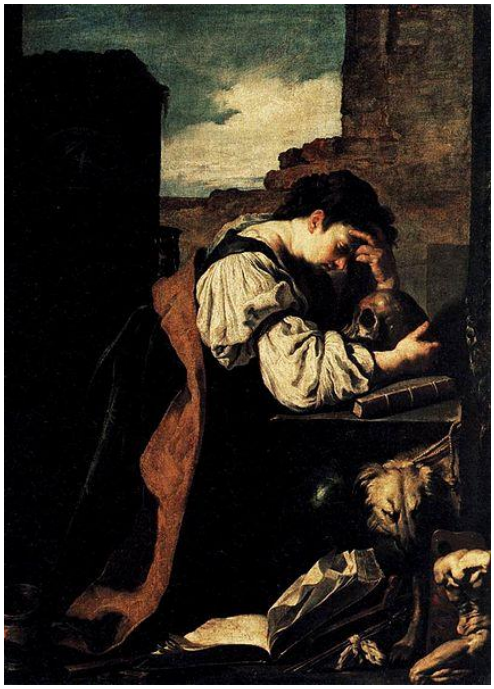


Picture 9: Georges de La Tour, *The Repentant Magdalen*, 1635-40.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Georges_de_La_Tour_-_The_Repentant_Magdalen_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Picture 10: Georges de La Tour, *The Magdalene with the Smoking Flame*, 1640.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magdalene_with_the_Smoking_Flame

Picture 11: Domenico Fetti, *Melancholy*, 1620.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domenico_Fetti_-_Melancholy_-_WGA7853.jpg

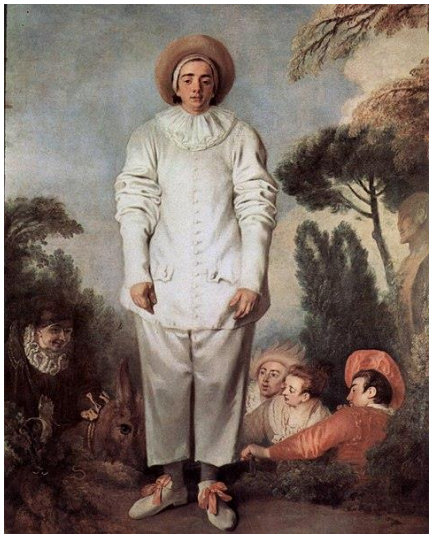


Picture 12: John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*, 1851 – 1852.

https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-ophelia-n01506

Picture 13: Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Pierrot*, 1718.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean-Antoine_Watteau_-_Pierrot,_dit_autrefois_Gilles.jpg



Picture 14: Caspar David Friedrich, *The Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, 1818.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/caspar-david-friedrich/the-wanderer-above-the-sea-of-fog

Picture 15: Caspar David Friedrich, *Monk by the Sea*, 1808-10. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caspar_David_Friedrich_-_Der_M%C3%B6nch_am_Meer_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Picture 16: Caspar David Friedrich, *The Chasseur in the Forest*, 1814. https://www.wikiart.org/en/caspar-david-friedrich/the-chasseur-in-the-forest-1814

Picture 17: Caspar David Friedrich, *Man and Woman Contemplating the Moon*, 1824.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caspar_David_Friedrich_-_Man_and_Woman_Contemplating_the_Moon_-_WGA08271.jpg

Picture 18: Caspar David Friedrich, *Monastery Graveyard In The Snow*, 1818.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/caspar-david-friedrich/monastery-ruins-in-the-snow

Picture 19: Caspar David Friedrich, *The Abbey in the Oakwood*, 1809-10. https://wikioo.org/tr/paintings.php?refarticle=7YXQLQ&titlepainting=The%20Abbey%20in%20the%20Oakwood&artistname=Caspar%20David%20Friedrich

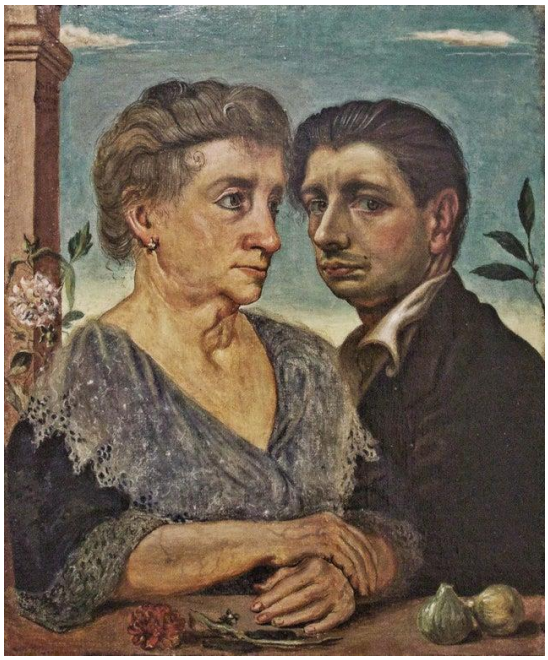
Picture 20: Caspar David Friedrich, *The Ruins of Eldena*, 1825. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caspar_David_Friedrich_The_Ruins_of_Eldena_-_WGA08299.jpg

Picture 21: Arnold Böcklin, *Island of the Dead*, 1880.

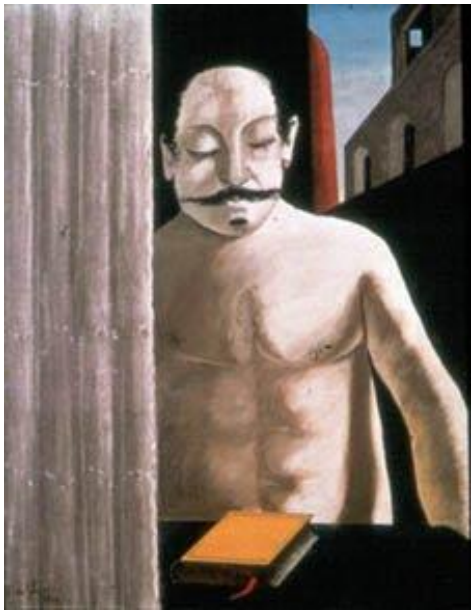
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arnold_Boecklin__Island_of_the_Dead,_Third_Version.JPG

Picture 22: Giorgio de Chirico, *Self-portrait with the Mother*, 1921.

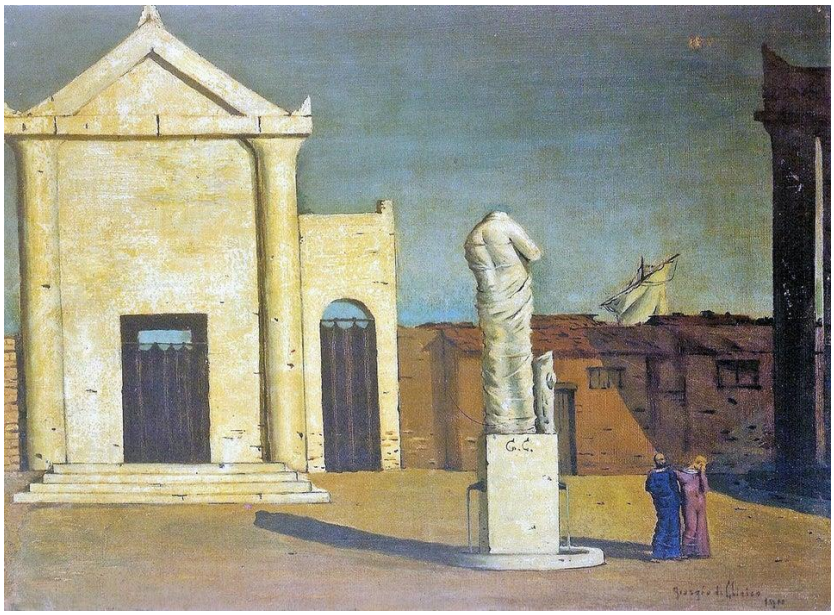
https://www.reddit.com/r/museum/comments/fmxkji/giorgio_de_chirico_autoritratto_con_la_madre_self/



Picture 23: Giorgio de Chirico, *Child's Brain*, 1914.
https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/surrealism-desire-unbound/surrealism-desire-unbound-room-2-childs

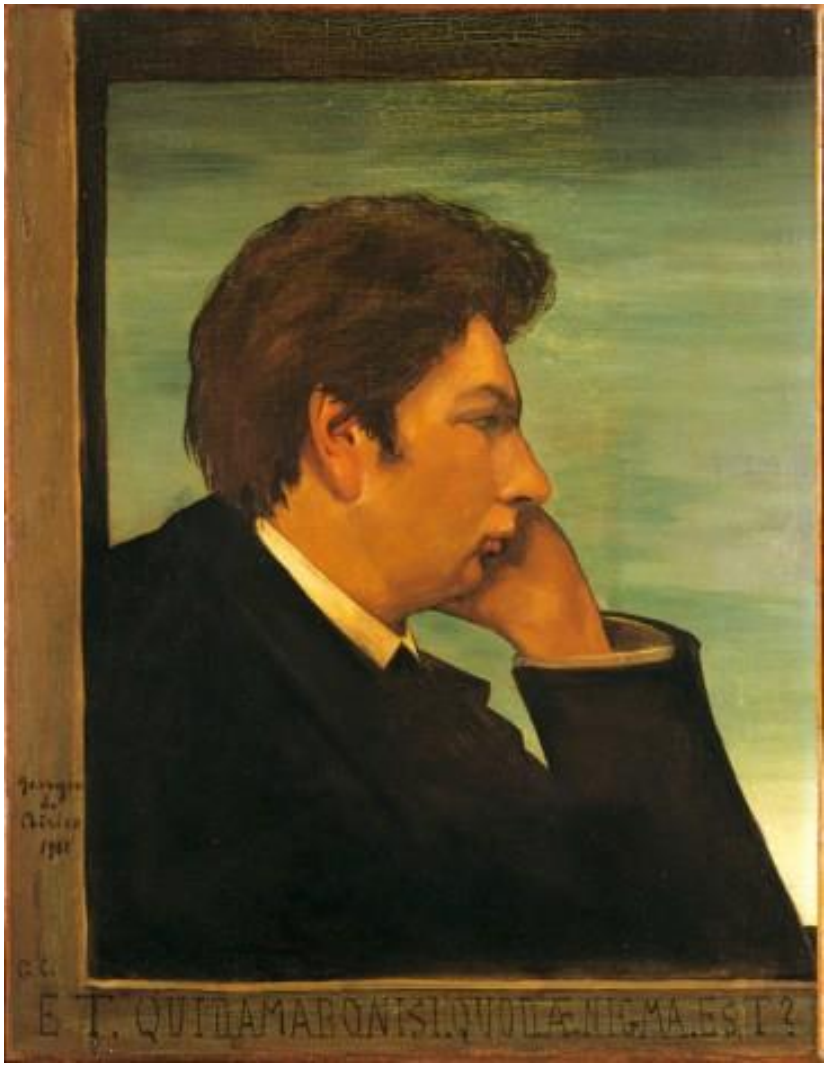


Picture 24: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon*, 1910.
https://www.reddit.com/r/ArtPorn/comments/dgk07m/giorgio_de_chirico_the_enigma_of_an_autumn/



Picture 25: Giorgio de Chirico, *Self Portrait (What shall I love if not the enigma?)*, 1911.

https://www.josieholford.com/what-shall-i-love-if-not-the-enigma/



Picture 26: Arnold Böcklin, *Odysseus and Calypso*, 1882-83.

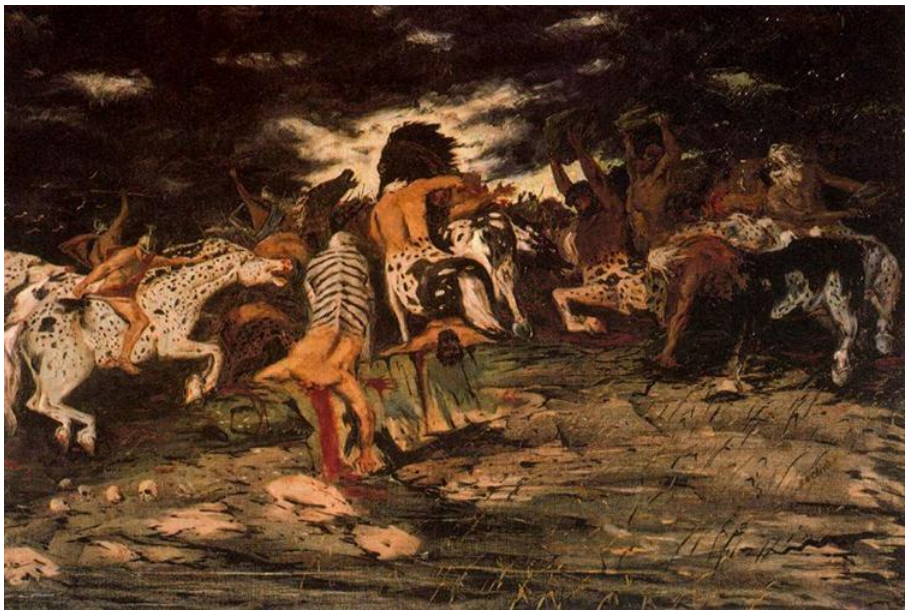
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arnold_B%C3%B6cklin_008.jpg

Picture 27: Arnold Böcklin, *The Plague*, 1898.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/arnold-bocklin/the-plague-1898

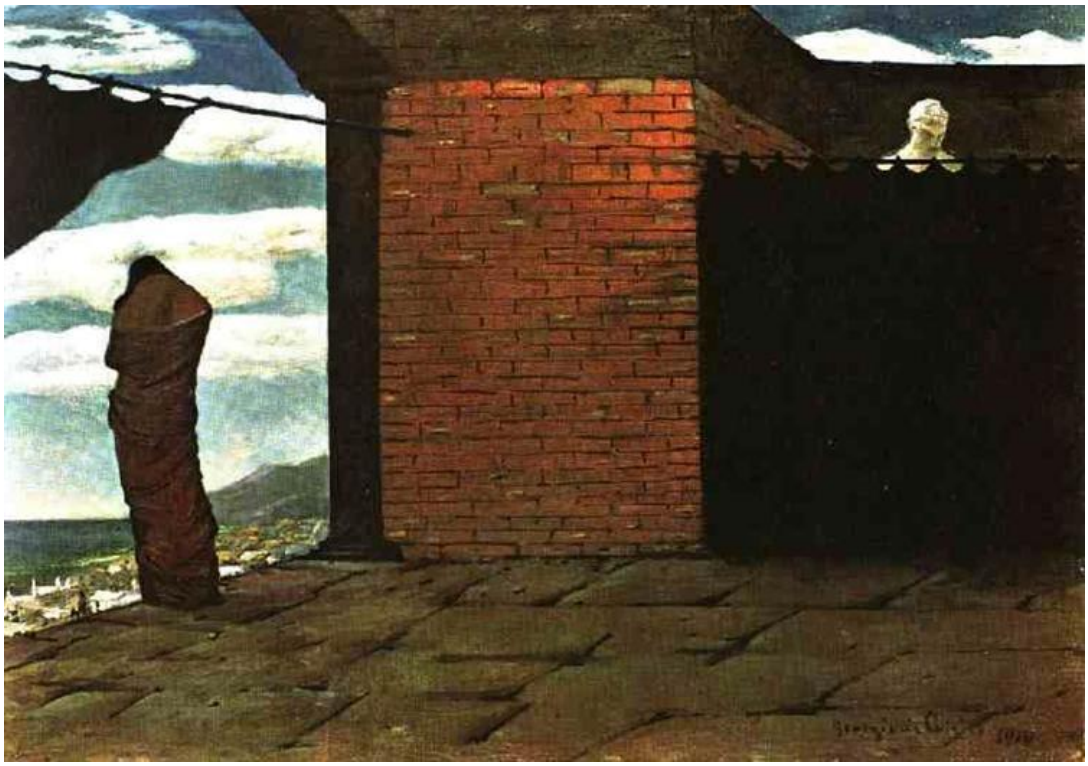
Picture 28: Giorgio de Chirico, *Battle of Centaurs*, 1909.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/the-battle-of-lapiths-and-centaurs



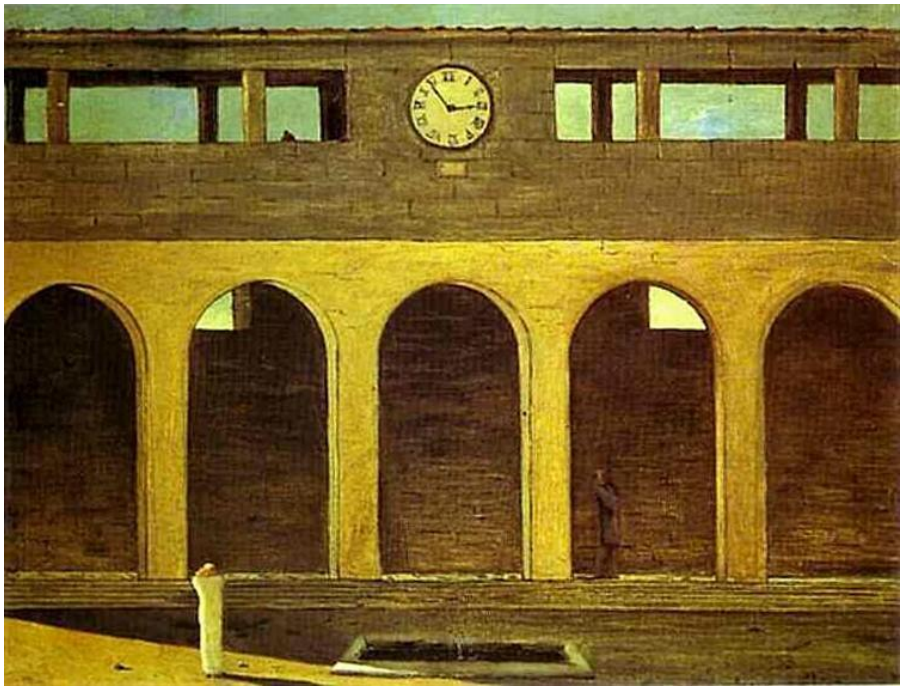
Picture 29: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Departure of the Argonauts*, 1909-10.
https://www.soho-art.com/oil-painting/1281309674/Giorgio-de-Chirico/The-Departure-of-the-Argonauts-1909.html

Picture 30: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of the Oracle*, 1910.
https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/the-enigma-of-the-oracle-1910



Picture 31: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of the Hour*, 1910-11.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/the-enigma-of-the-hour-1911



Picture 32: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of the Arrival and the Afternoon*, 1912.

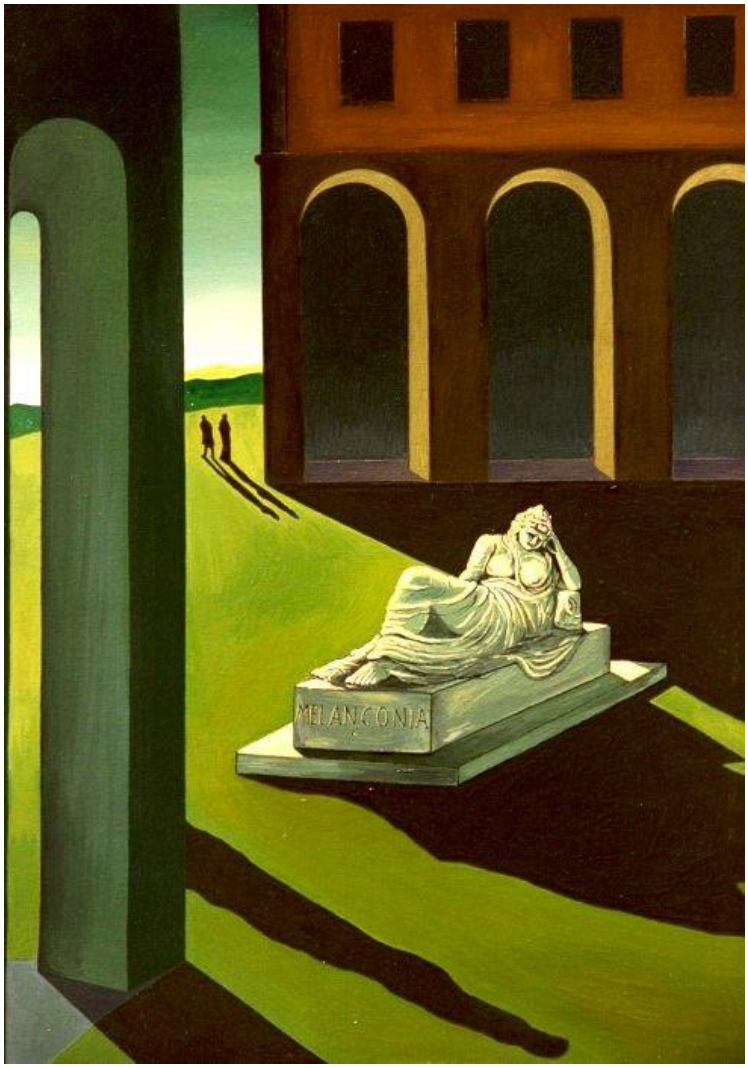
https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/the-enigma-of-the-arrival-and-the-afternoon-1912

Picture 33: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Melancholy of a Beautiful Day*, 1913.
https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/melancholy-of-a-beautiful-day-1913

Picture 34: Titian, *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1523-24.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Titian_Bacchus_and_Ariadne.jpg

Picture 35: Giorgio de Chirico, *Melanconia,* 1912.

https://tr.pinterest.com/pin/485755509787736209/



Picture 36: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Joys and Enigmas of a Strange Hour*, 1913. http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/kuspit/kuspit6-16-06-26.asp

Picture 37: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Soothsayer's Recompense*, 1913. https://artondemand.philamuseum.org/detail/460835/de-chirico-the-soothsayers-recompense-1913

Picture 38: Giorgio de Chirico, *Ariadne*, 1913.

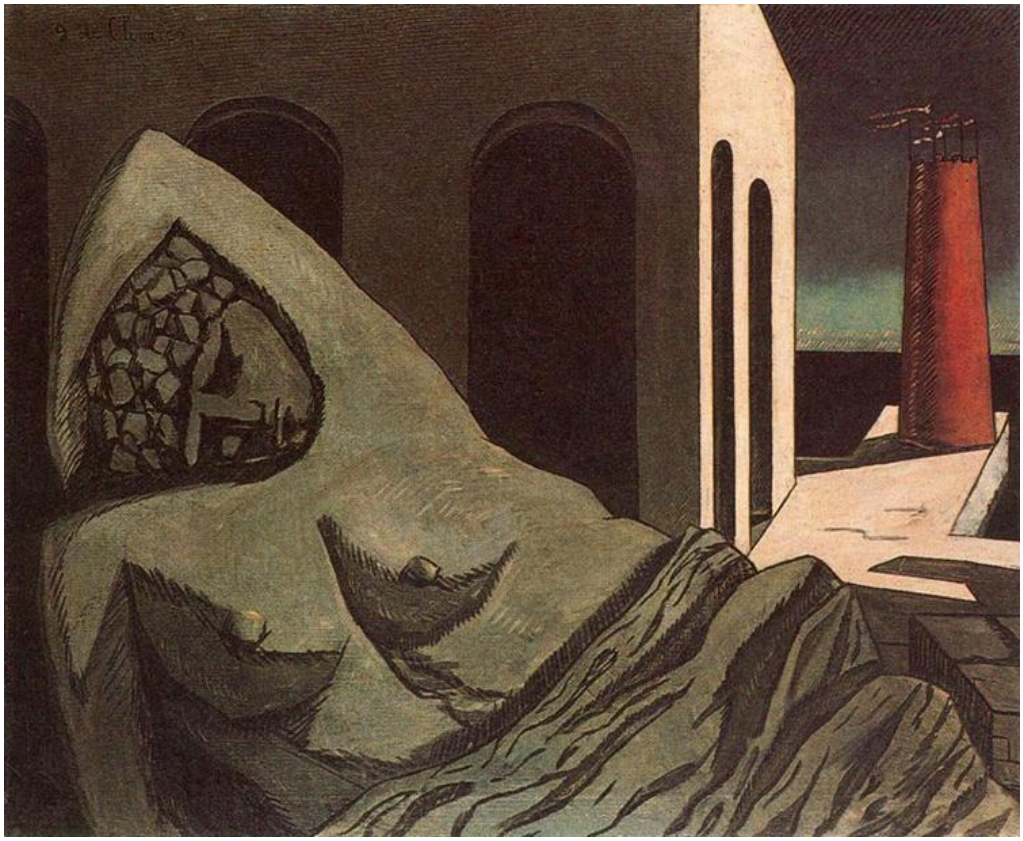
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ariadne_(Giorgio_de_Chirico)

Picture 39: Giorgio de Chirico, *Lassitude of the Infinite*, 1913.

https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/at-the-border/325759/space-unleashed/

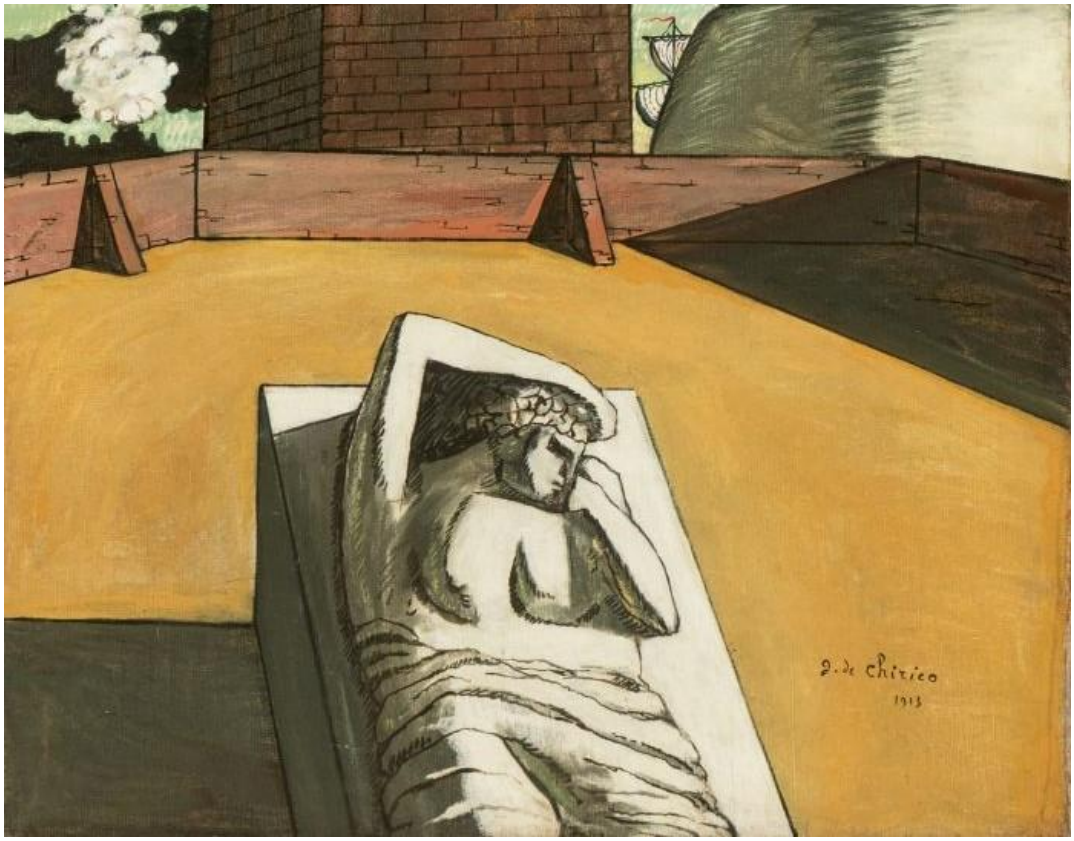
Picture 40: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Silent Statue*, 1913.

https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/ariana-the-silent-statue-1913



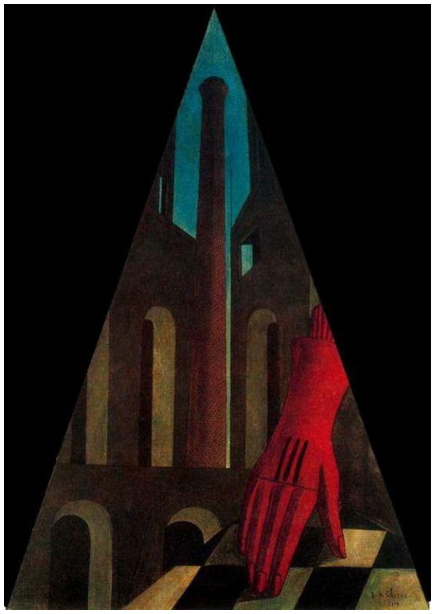
Picture 41: Giorgio de Chirico, *Ariadne's Afternoon*, 1913.

https://fondazionedechirico.org/en/il-pomeriggio-di-arianna-record-in-10-minutes/



Picture 42: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of Fatality*, 1914.

https://tr.pinterest.com/pin/331999803769909670/



Picture 43: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Enigma of a Day*, 1914.

https://www.moma.org/collection/works/80587

Picture 44: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Nostalgia of the Infinite*, 1912-13

https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/the-nostalgia-of-the-infinite-1913

Picture 45: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street*, 1914. https://www.wikiart.org/en/giorgio-de-chirico/mystery-and-melancholy-of-a-street-1914

Picture 46: Giorgio de Chirico, *The Delights of the Poet*, 1912.
https://www.soho-art.com/oil-painting/1281310946/Giorgio-de-Chirico/The-Delights-of-the-Poet-1912.html