

LOVESICKNESS, MELANCHOLY, AND NOSTALGIA

His slep, his mete, his drynke is hym biraft,
That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft.
Hise eyen holwe and grisly to biholde,
His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde;
And solitarie he was and evere alone
And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghte nat be stent.
So feble eek were hise spiritz, and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man koude knowe
His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.
And in his geere for al the world he ferde
Nat oonly lik the loveris maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour malencolik
Biforen in his celle fantastic ...

(*Canterbury Tales*: "The Knight's Tale," vv. 503-18)

One who loves in excess, or whose love is unrequited, falls ill. The symptoms are those described by Chaucer in the verses quoted above. As in Arcite's case, the unhappy lover runs the risk of descending into madness, which in turn may lead to death.

The melancholic can expect the same prognosis. If left untreated the lover languishes, loses appetite, is beset by fever and finally, having fallen prey to delirium, dies.

One also must be wary of nostalgia, which consists of a "melancholy caused by the intense desire to see our loved ones again, and by the tedium of living among foreigners whom we love not, and who lack the affection towards us that we felt within our families" (Albrecht von Haller, *Dictionnaires des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers*, 1751-65).

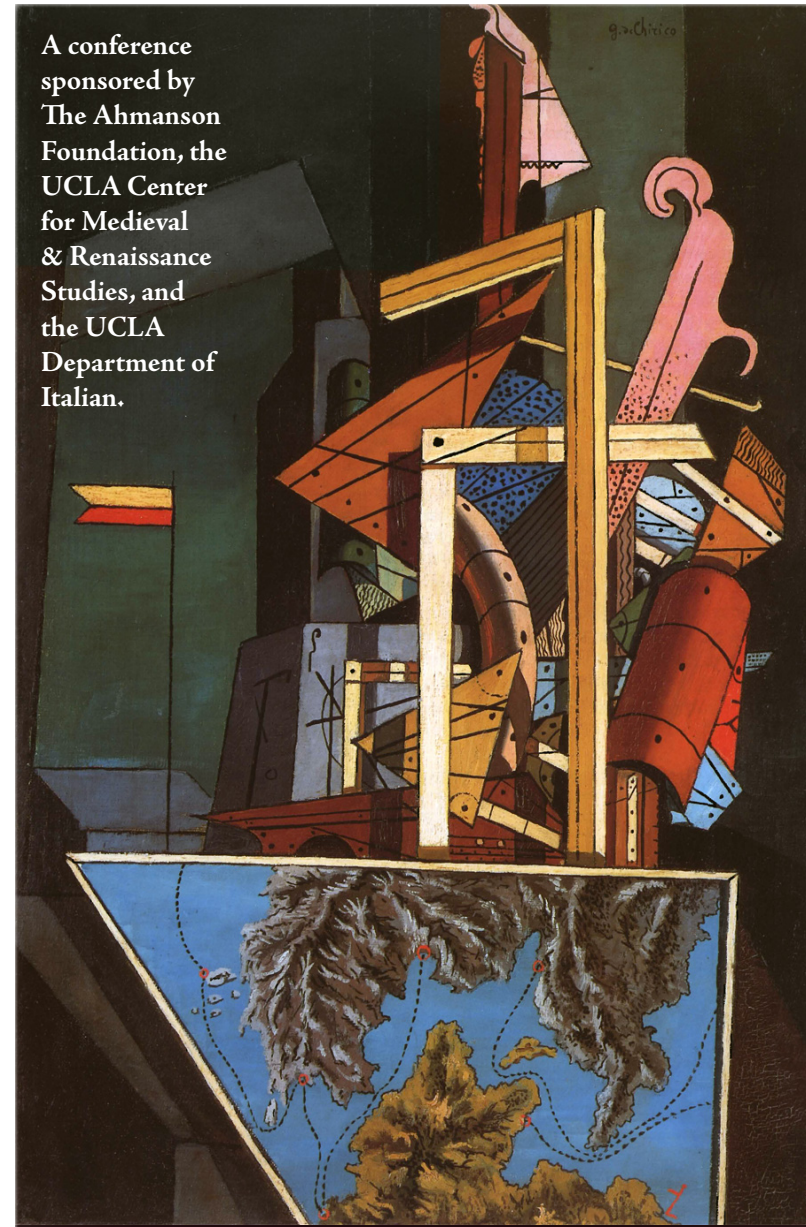
Therefore lovesickness, melancholy, and nostalgia share many traits in common. Indeed, through the course of history these ideas have often overlapped, and this ambiguity persists today, given that in everyday speech these terms are almost interchangeable. Literature plays a unique role in this process of distortion and reassignment of meaning. In the case of these three ideas in particular, men of letters have shown an indefatigable propensity to explore their boundaries, to bring their reciprocal relationships to light and, most importantly, to ponder their relevance in the creation of a work of art.

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Lovesickness, Melancholy, and Nostalgia

March 14-15, 2008



A conference
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*Lovesickness,
Melancholy, and
Nostalgia*

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Friday, March 14, 2008
UCLA, Royce Hall 314

2:30 Coffee, refreshments

3:00 Welcoming Remarks
Brian P. Copenhaver (Director, UCLA Center for
Medieval & Renaissance Studies)
Massimo Ciavolella (UCLA), Conference co-organizer

Session I - Massimo Ciavolella, chair

3:15 **Michael J. B. Allen** (UCLA)
“Melancholy and Old Saturn”

4:00 **Fabio Troncarelli** (University of Viterbo)
“Aegritudo animi. Lovesickness in St. Augustine and Dante”

4:45 Break

Session II - Gianluca Rizzo, chair

5:00 **Joseph F. Nagy** (UCLA)
“Where the Boys Are in Medieval Irish Love Stories”

5:45 **Roberto Fedi** (University of Foreigners, Perugia)
“The Nostalgia before *Nostalgia*?”

6:30 Reception

Saturday, March 15, 2008
UCLA, Royce Hall 314

9:00 Coffee, pastries

Session III - Fabio Troncarelli, chair

9:30 **Natascia Tonelli** (University of Siena)
“The Learned Melancholy of Jacopo Ortis”

10:15 **Gianluca Rizzo** (UCLA)
“Dürer’s Spleen and St. Jerom’s Skull: Identifying *Melancholia II*”

11:00 Break

Session IV - Michael J.B. Allen, chair

11:15 **Rossella Pescatori** (UCLA)
“Dynamics of Desire: Love, Lovesickness, and Melancholy in
Leone Ebreo’s *Dialoghi D’Amore*”

12:00 **Ferruccio Farina** (University of Urbino)
“Lust and Melancholy: Francesca da Rimini and Eleonora Duse
in America between Puritanism and Suffragism”

12:45 Lunch

Session V - Donald Beecher, chair

2:15 **Raffaele Pinto** (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)
“Nostalgia e licanotropia. Alcune rappresentazioni della pulsione
di morte nella letteratura (fra Arnau de Vilanova e
Freud)” (*English text available as handout*)

3:00 **Winfried Schleiner** (University of California, Davis)
“Two Early Modern Illnesses of Women: Green Sickness and
Hysteria”

3:45 Break

Session VI - Winfried Schleiner, chair

4:00 **Donald Beecher** (Carleton University, Ottawa)
“Nostalgic Forces in Sixteenth-Century English Romance”

4:45 **Lisa Ryoko Wakamiya** (Florida State University)
“Nostalgic Imagining in Post-Soviet Narratives”

5:30 Closing Remarks
Gianluca Rizzo (UCLA), Conference co-organizer

GENERAL INFORMATION

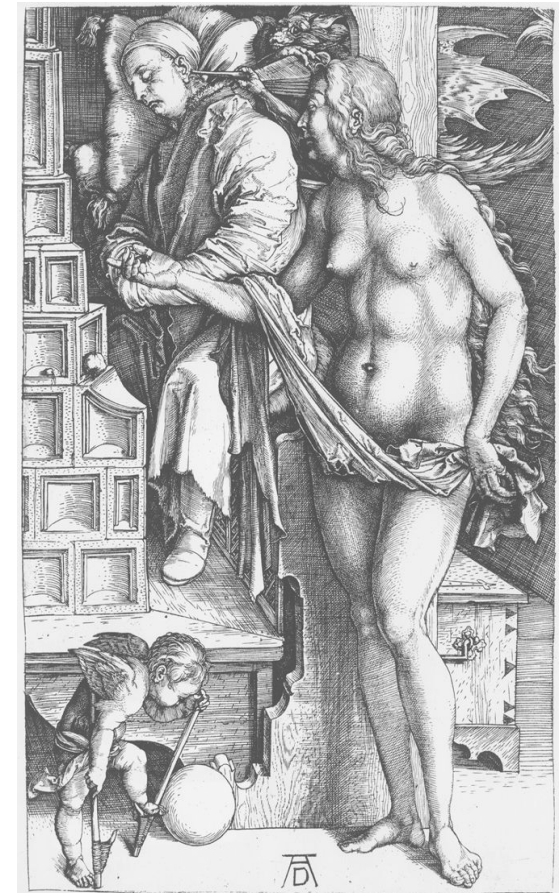
Advance registration is not required. No admission fee. Seating is limited and seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

PARKING

UCLA campus parking permits may be purchased for \$8 each day from any Parking Services kiosk.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Please contact the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at (310) 825-1880, or cmrs@humnet.ucla.edu.



Above: “The Temptation of the Idler (The Dream of the Doctor)” by Albrecht Dürer, circa 1498 from *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol 10.

Cover: “The Melancholy of Departure” by Giorgio di Chirico, 1916. The Tate Gallery, London.