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Dürer's *Melencolia I*: Melancholy and the Undecidable

1. "Almost everything has been said about Dürer's melancholy-engraving, as is evidenced by the state of research, only it has been full of contradictions".¹ More than that, until now these contradictions have not been solved in a satisfactory manner. Despite the efforts undertaken by some generations of investigators *Melencolia I* remains an enigma: no one has succeeded in arranging the figures and objects depicted there into a coherent whole. Therefore, although the interpreters persist in their endeavors, it is, I think, worth while asking if the hitherto suffered failures do not signalize some deeper but so far unnoticed problem, the problem that makes the solution of the riddle of Dürer's engraving simply impossible.

In an attempt to bring this problem to light let us begin with a brief analysis of the literature of the subject. It is striking for the reader that all those researchers focus on the iconography of *Melencolia I* both in the period following the 1923 publication by Panofsky and Saxl of their first study on this engraving (which is obvious) and much earlier.² The artistic structure of the work is rarely the object of analysis, giving way to considerations of the sense of its individual fragments and of its

general message.³ This direction of studies undoubtedly results from the reading imposed by the work itself — it was Dürer who made his figures and objects mean something. On one of his sketches for *Melencolia I* we find the following note: "Schlüssel betewt gewalt, pewtell betewt reichum" (The key signifies power, the purse riches).⁴ At the same time, though, it was just Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl who wrote: "[In this famous engraving] the basic idea is translated in its entirety into pictorial terms, without thereby losing its universality and without leaving any doubt as to the allegorical significance of the figure, which is nevertheless entirely concrete. Here, and here alone can the visible representation completely answer to the invisible notion; here and here alone, the legend (which at this stage of development begins to be superfluous) says to us neither «this is meant to represent the black bile», nor «this is a typical example of the melancholy temperament», but «melancholy is like this»".⁵ In the light of the above words Dürer's work may be perceived as self-sufficient and interpreted without reference to any legend. One has only to look at it to be able to say "melancholy is like this". However, if this is so, why

should one demand additional meanings from the figures shown therein? Are such demands not at variance with the perceived "entire translation of the basic idea into the pictorial terms"?

One might ask many such questions. If the objects in the engraving are to mean something, why is the manner of showing them far from unequivocal? Let us mention the most frequently enumerated ambiguities: wherefrom and whereto does the ladder lead? What is the architectural structure against which it is propped — a tower or a wall? Is the structure finished or unfinished? Where is the winged figure seated — in an interior or in the open? What time of the day is it — day or night —, what source illuminates the figure in the foreground and what is the luminous body in the sky in the background (a comet, Saturn)? And, consequently, is the rainbow solar or lunar?⁶

The above cited contradictions and ambiguities are of too serious a nature to be passed over in silence. Besides, for the most part they do not result from the mistakes made by the researchers but are inherent in Dürer's engraving *itself*. This was already noticed by Martin Büchsel and Peter-Klaus Schuster. The latter made the history of the effect (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) of *Melencolia I* a starting-point for his interpretation. "Whence", he asked, "should one derive a new explanation?" And he answered: "Eben von dieser Widersprüchlichkeit!" This is because in Dürer's time the very idea of melancholy was full of contradictions, hence the engraving and, consequently, its interpretation bring out these contradictions.⁷

Unfortunately, also Schuster's book fails to solve the signalized problems in a satisfactory manner. While remaining on the level of iconographic investigations, he tries once again to explain all ambiguities of Dürer's work by referring — for all his methodological innovations — to "Panofsky's method". However, the author misses thereby the specific features of the artistic structure of the engraving which are responsible for the tensions between allegory and self-representation and between iconographical subject and unclear artistic mode of representation.

In order to go beyond the hitherto adopted mode of interpreting *Melencolia I* it is necessary to read the composition of the engraving and the principles that govern it. Iconographic analyses need to be complemented through the consideration of the artistic strategies used by Dürer. Only then can one understand wherein lie the above-indicated contradictions of this world-famous oeuvre.

2. *Melencolia I* (B. 74; 1514) [Fig. 1] is a copper engraving measuring 24 by 18,6 cm. It represents on the right (as viewed by the beholder) a seated winged female figure. She has sat down on a stone slab against the background of a rising architectural structure arbitrarily cut off by the upper edge of the

picture. She rests her head in a wreath of water parsley and watercress⁸ on her left hand, while the right one, holding a pair of compasses, has rested on a book lying in her lap. She has turned her eyes into the distance, somewhere beyond the left edge of the picture. She is wearing a floor-length dress and has a bunch of keys and a purse fastened to her belt.

To the left of the winged woman, against the background of the side wall of the architectural structure, a small putto is seated on a millstone with a cloth thrown on it, busy writing on a small slate. On the walls above the woman and putto can be seen an even balance (above the putto) and an hourglass half-filled with sand, a magic square, and a bell (above the woman). A cornice runs along the upper part of the architectural structure, right below the top edge of the engraving.

The left side of the picture is clearly divided into two planes separated by a low wall whose width is identical with that of the side wall of the above-mentioned structure, and which abuts on that structure. This is a two-step wall. On the lower step stands a huge stone polyhedron and on the upper one a small pot (in which a fire is burning and something is boiling in a trihedral vessel). Beside the polyhedron lies a hammer and beneath it a curled dog asleep; in front of the dog and at the same time at the winged woman's feet lie a censer, a sphere, and numerous carpenter's tools.

One cannot see what is just behind the wall. The indeterminate character of the situation is additionally enhanced by a ladder one part of which vanishes behind the wall, while the other is propped against the architectural structure on the right side of the picture in such a way, however, that their junction is above the upper edge of the engraving. Therefore, we do not know wherefrom and whereto the ladder leads; nor do we know its length or the ground on which it stands.

The landscape spreading beyond the wall suggests the elevated position of the foreground, since the sea visible in the distance and above all the ships as well as houses and trees on the shore are very small in relation to the woman and putto. The upper part of that view is filled with the sky with a glowing celestial body and a rainbow, between which is flying a dragonbat with an open mouth.⁹ Its wings are inscribed with the word MELENCOLIA I.

3. Renaissance pictures aimed at creating on a flat surface the illusion of a three-dimensional space. Painters achieved this by using the system of focused perspective, invented in the 15th century in Florence. Also Dürer knew the principles of this "science" in practice; besides, he analysed them in their theoretical aspect.¹⁰

The Renaissance perspective system assumed the existence of the horizon line on a level with the spectator's eye and



1) Albrecht Dürer, "Melencolia I", 1514, Cracow, Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

the convergence at a single point of all lines receding from the viewer. In *Melencolia I* this point is situated on the borderline between the sea and the sky, precisely below the dragon-bat, and in such a way that the line drawn through it perpendicularly to the horizon cuts into two halves both the animal's wings and the sphere lying in the lower part of the picture.

Although the artificial perspective was drawn by Dürer faultlessly, its presence in the analysed engraving is not obvious to the viewer at first glance. In order to ascertain this one only needs to compare *Melencolia I* with the engraving *Saint Jerome in His Cell*, executed in the same year (B. 60) [Fig. 2].¹¹ In the latter work, the box-like interior of the *studiolo* illustrates with an outright didactic insistence the system of the convergence of lines at one point. This end has subordinated not only architectural elements such as the joists of the ceiling or window sills (by nature subjected to geometrical rigour) but also the cushions and books on the bench together with the *cartellino* bearing Dürer's signature, placed on the floor. Likewise the table at which the saint is sitting emphasizes the order of the composition following the rules of perspective.¹² The whole gives the impression of being influenced by a magnetic field passing through the cell and arranging all the objects along the lines of force.

In *Melencolia I* the objects do not submit to the "magnetism" of linear perspective. The uniformity of the potential field of force has been disrupted above all by the polyhedron. This massive and tangibly material block obstructs a free gaze into the distance, that *Durchsehung* (*prospettiva*), as Dürer used to call perspective.¹³ The eye is arrested by the sharp edges of the heavy object, while the sides of the polyhedron, running in all directions, focus the viewer's attention, then to make him follow their different courses. Thus the lower side makes him look at the dog, whereas the right one turns his attention toward the ladder. It is only the small triangular upper side of the block that forms a kind of platform for the eye, enabling the beholder to look into the distance. However, it rather emphasizes the horizontal extent of the sea than helps to reconstruct the course of the lines going to the vanishing point.

Looking at *Saint Jerome in His Cell* we can say that the engraving demonstrates the optical principle of vision. This is because the artificial perspective solely imitated the *perspectiva communis*, that is, the way in which a man sees the world around him. Furthermore, it has been well known since the time of Euclid that beams of light follow straight and parallel lines.¹⁴ "It is proved by the science of perspective", wrote in the 14th century Peter of Limoges in his *Liber de oculo morali*, "that if one is deprived of direct rays or lines of sight, one cannot be sure of the quantity or size of the object one sees; on the other hand one can make out its size very well if one does see it along direct lines of sight".¹⁵

This "seeing along direct lines of sight" need not necessarily be interpreted exclusively in physical terms. In the above-mentioned treatise optical considerations serve as a starting point for moral reflections. "Similarly", the author continued, "we can recognize a sin and realize its relative quantity from a man who looks at sin directly and with the eye of reason.... The sinner, however, when he commits sin does not recognize the exact degree of error of his sin, and does not look at it by direct line of sight but rather by an oblique and broken line of sight".¹⁶

If we now look at *Saint Jerome in His Cell*, we will surely not make a mistake by saying that the obvious subordination of the engraving to the rules of perspective is neither a mere display of Dürer's artistic skill nor a simple illustration of optical rules applied to painting but that it functions as a specific metaphor. It shows a bright and clear picture, a space defined precisely and lucidly, this thereby denoting the spiritual purity and perfection of the old man shown at work.¹⁷

This mode of expressing perfection is in fact legible in the entire composition. In the first place, Dürer executed a model picture — a specific quintessence of a Renaissance painting. In addition to the demonstration of the principles of linear perspective, we should point to the composition of the picture. As Panofsky aptly observed: "the beholder finds himself placed quite close to the threshold of the study proper on one of the steps which lead up to it. Unnoticed by the busy Saint, and not intruding upon his privacy we yet share his living space and feel like unseen friendly visitors rather than distant observers".¹⁸ The beholder looks into the cell — and through a clearly determined "frame" at that, formed by a pillar on the left side, a ceiling beam, and a lion lying at the bottom, behind the step. Did Dürer realize in this peculiar way Alberti's well-known instruction relating to the mode of creating a perfect painting? "First of all" — let us recall the Florentin's words — "on the surface on which I am going to paint, I draw a rectangle of whatever size I want, which I regard as *an open window* through which the subject to be painted is seen".¹⁹

Secondly, the perfection illustrated in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* finds expression in the visualization of the structural essence of the architecture depicted therein. The pillar and beam in the foreground form not only the Albertian "window" but also, according to the views of Vitruvius and his modern continuators, constitute the basic module of a building. Their depiction in the engraving gives the impression of *firmitas*: of the consistency and durability of the structure inside which St. Jerome is represented.²⁰

Thirdly, perfection is usually linked with order. The order perceptible in Dürer's work results above all from the already mentioned attuning of the objects shown in the picture to the *a priori* abstract structure of focused perspective. Owing to their



2) Albrecht Dürer, "Saint Jerome in His Cell", 1514, Cracow, Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

harmony, as William Heckscher wrote after Jean Paul, "jedes Ding an seinem Ort ist".²¹

Recapitulating the hitherto presented observations, we can say that in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* Dürer showed a saintly man, this being additionally determined not only by a nimbus round the old man's head but also by the order maintained in the cell. This order is not solely of intrapictorial nature, since the Albertian window along with the legibility of the perspective network and its magnetizing role are the visualized principles of artistic expression.

The presence in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* of the harmony between an imitation of the real world and the depicted system of this imitation, similarly as the explicitly articulated principles of tectonics, permanence and solidity give the impression of the lucidity, logic, "architectural quality", and completeness of Dürer's oeuvre. At the same time the obvious two-stage character of the artist's expression (the mimetic-thematic level and the meta-level of the rules governing the artistic language) permits a more profound interpretation of the observed conception of the engraving. We have already mentioned the relations between the idea of perfection and order. Now it may be added that since the Middle Ages the perfect order has always been linked with God and the state of holiness. It manifested itself in God's mind and in His works, in the latter, however, only insofar as they were free from evil and sin. In order to express this perfect order mediaeval art applied abstract geometrical formulas determining the composition of works of art.²² By giving his engraving a tectonic character revealing the rules of geometrical perspective, Dürer also represented perfect order — the order of the world and the order reigning in the saint's soul.

Nothing of the kind can be said about *Melencolia I*. The above-observed divergence of the course of perspective lines from the composition of the objects shown in the engraving breaks up the potential unity of the picture. In contrast to the *ordinatio* characterizing *Saint Jerome in His Cell*, there reigns here "a chaos of objects. The geometrical block looms bulkily, almost threateningly — it is uncanny because it looks as if it is about to fall. A half-starved dog lies on the ground, together with the sphere and a great many tools... — all untouched, lying around in disorder.... There is no predominant line, no pronounced horizontal or vertical. The objects are juxtaposed harshly and chaotically. The large block looks awkward within the composition. The diagonal of the ladder makes an awkward impression, it creates an *impure harmony* (how calm it seems immediately the ladder is covered up!). The lack of a framework, the chaos of the whole, has an unpleasant effect.

The light is not concentrated but broken up; the main highlights are set very low. The tonal movement shows no decisive contrasts, it goes across the print in chromatic passages".²³

The chaos reigning in *Melencolia I* is much more than a mere negation of order. If in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* "each object is in its place", here no object lies where it should. Nevertheless, this disorder, although evoking the atmosphere of fortuitousness, is in a specific manner organized by the artist. It is intended to make, as Wölfflin wrote, the impression of "impure harmony". This term requires more precision.

"Impure harmony" results, for instance, from the fact that we cannot see the point of junction of the ladder with the architecture, the engraving being thereby perceived as an unclosed work, devoid of a framework. If so, then it means that this impression is underlain by the ambiguity immanent in the work. The ladder is not in its proper place because we do not know where it leads.

The above-mentioned ambiguity is inherent in the entire picture, since the ladder not only leads nowhere but — as has already been noted — also from nowhere because we do not know what is beyond the wall. Nor are we able to define the character of the structure against which the ladder is propped. (In order to bring this last fact into relief it is enough to compare *Melencolia I* with *Madonna at the City Wall* [Fig. 3]²⁴: while both engravings are composed almost identically, the clear-cut line of the city walls in the latter picture leaves no doubt about the purpose of the architecture at the foot of which Mary has sat down). Finally, it is impossible to guess where exactly and at what time of the day the winged figure is seated.

The uncertainty in the mode of rendering reality in the print is accompanied by a specific vagueness of its tectonics. While in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* the pillar ensuring *firmitas* has been depicted in full (from base to capital) just to show its bearing and framing functions in the composition, the architectural structure behind the personification of melancholy remains absolutely undecipherable: it rises into "the unknown", does not bear anything, nor does it frame the composition, as the cornice running along the building does not counterbalance the verticalism of the whole system. The impression is of the instability also given by the polyhedron. Not only because — as Wölfflin observed — "it looks as if it is about to fall" but also because optically it rests against the body of the dog. Thus the massive and angular block seems to rest on the soft and lean body of the animal, relaxed by sleep.

Besides, the "impure harmony" of *Melencolia I* is of peculiarly temporal nature. The sand in the hourglass is trickling down. The polyhedron seems to crush the dog, while the impression of the necessity of a further development of the action is determined by the objects lying in front of the dog. It seems that under the pressure of the block of stone the sphere will soon move and the dog's body will "go asunder" to either side similarly as the tools in front of the *canis dormiens* scatter



3) Albrecht Dürer, "Madonna at the City Wall", 1514, Cracow, Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

in two directions. This perceptible moment of the imminent destruction or crash of the entire inner system of the composition can also be sensed in other parts of the picture. The putto is sitting on a round millstone, which alone seems to suggest *potentialiter* an unpleasant turn of matters for the boy, the more so as the surface of the stone has been cut into dynamic circles, this having been noticed by Martin Büchsel.²⁵ Each movement of the winged boy will additionally set the scales, abutting on his head, in motion. Likewise, in a moment the wing of the personification of melancholy is sure to brush against the hourglass.

Is, however, the disaster inevitable? After all, the dog is in no real danger at all, and the millstone remains firmly in its place. The engraving is rather meant to bring out some irremovable tension, the contrast between the static and the dynamic, between the arrested and the moving, the state excellently seen in the juxtaposition of the sleeping dog and the immobile female figure with the dragon-bat fleeing the luminous phenomenon,²⁶ in the position of the wing of the personification of melancholy, threatening to the hourglass, or in the putto's proximity to the scales.

Thus, the disaster is not sure to occur. It may not happen. The engraving does not suggest any solution to the depicted tension. The expression of the work remains *undecidable*.²⁷ For what is going to prevail in it: movement or stillness? We will not decide whether in the perception of the picture a more important role is played by the apathy of the female figure or by the dynamic flight of the bat. Similarly, the rotary motion latent in the millstone and the painful pressure of the polyhedron on the dog have been fully counterbalanced by the physical stability of the foreground of the picture. In this way the composition seems to suggest the permanent duration of all the chaos of human figures and objects represented therein, with the simultaneous consciousness of the lurking possibility of the destruction of the hitherto existent system of elements. The woman's apathy, the putto's serenity, and the "decomposing" sleep of the dog succeed in weakening any sign of expression, the latent tension thereby eventually turning into *dynamism in immobility*.

Thus the "impure harmony" derives from some undecidability deeply rooted in Dürer's oeuvre. This undecidability is not limited to the expressive plane of the work alone. In addition to "dynamism in immobility" we must indicate the insoluble character of the very composition of *Melencolia I*. We return thereby to the earlier signalized questions. Let us repeat — we will never decide the character of the building rising behind the winged female figure, nor will we ever ascertain whether the ladder is meant to be used by the men constructing the upper stories of the building.²⁸ Nothing will conclusively solve

the question whether the ladder leads — as in Jacob's dream (Gen. 28,12) — to heaven or whether it is an image of the Neoplatonic way to union with God, or again the ladder of virtues leading to divine perfection or a bridge to the supralunar world.²⁹ The absurd framing of the structure precludes its more precise definition; besides, not knowing against what the ladder rests or where it leads, we can speak responsibly about its literal sense alone: the ladder in *Melencolia I* is simply a ladder. This entails interpretative duality — while the appearance and pose of the winged figure (a pensive-looking face of dark complexion, looking into the distance, and the head resting on the hand) suggest her to be the personification of melancholy,³⁰ the keys and purse being defined by Dürer himself as symbolic objects, the architecture and ladder rule out the possibility of attributing an allegorical sense of them.

Thus the undecidability of *Melencolia I*, alongside the obscurity of expression, stems from the illegibility of its structure. While in *Saint Jerome in His Cell*, *firmitas* and the *ordinatio* ensuing from focused perspective, fully determined the form of the engraving, thereby affording a clue to its making out and interpretation, there are no such clues here. Consequently, the spectator incessantly moves about between the allegorical and the literal sense of the picture. In fact this also happens when we refer to the general style of reception of visual arts in Dürer's time. This style resulted from the *episteme* obtaining in the Middle Ages as well as in the Renaissance. Its essence lay in the principle of similitudes, in the Middle Ages finding expression in the fourfold sense of Scripture and in the Renaissance in the operating notions such as convenience (*convenientia*), emulation (*aemulatio*), analogy (*analogia*), or sympathy.³¹ In accordance with this system of explanation, the skull lying on the window sill in *Saint Jerome in His Cell* may be understood as both a relic of human being and the object of a humanist's study or again as a sign of *vanitas*. In a similar way, the light falling into the cell illuminates it but at the same time suggests the state of illumination experienced by Jerome. However, in order to make such a multiplanar explanation possible, the literal meaning and primary function of each of the above-mentioned objects must be clearly defined. "Necessarium erat enim", Richard of St. Victor expounded, "nostrae infirmitati quae summa non nisi per ima, spiritualia non nisi per corporalia valet capere, non ignota per ignotiora, sed *ignota per cognita* noscere".³²

In *Melencolia I* the full cognition of *ignota per cognita* is impossible. The mode of framing the building and of propping the ladder must perforce lead to the interpretation of *ignota per ignotiora*. Here then lies the structural obscurity of the whole work: although we know the meaning of the keys and purse from Dürer himself, though we can find an ample iconographic

tradition for the remaining objects represented in the print, and though we take it for granted that the whole scene refers to melancholy, the above-enumerated elements do not allow us to attempt any coherent recapitulating explanation. As a result, "interpretation... tries to answer in turn the question «what does it mean?», «where does it derive from?», and «what does it owe this meaning to?» — and develops not so much through the coordination of divergent possibilities suggested by successive schemes of interpretation as thanks to the constant switching over of vantage points and systems of reference and to the metatextual expounding of the nature of their divergence. In consequence, similarly as in other cases of such paradoxical constructions obtained by the disturbance or even negation of the hierarchy of semantic levels..., the ambiguity of the text does not yield to coherent description, to satisfactory solution within the assumption of this text".³³

4. Why did undecidability appear in *Melencolia I*? First of all, we must rule out chance. In respect of form the engraving is complete; therefore, there are no grounds for asserting that the author did not "think it through" in any way. On the other hand, though, we can see that the allegorical character of the engraving, assumed by the artist, must remain undecipherable.

There is only one solution to this paradox: Dürer's engraving was constructed on the basis of various systems of representation. Undoubtedly, in *Melencolia I* the artist has applied the rules of classical allegory in which people, animals, plants, and objects form an intellectual puzzle, a specific rebus to puzzle out.³⁴ The sense of the objects shown in such a work is external in relation to them. They refer to abstract ideas, serving to lead the beholder up to the correct solution. The solution of the allegory is tantamount to summing up the meaning of each of its elements. This is why the form of an allegorical work of art should be illustrative. Compositional perfection plays a lesser role in such a picture: objects treated as attributes may lie in total disorder as long as their sense remains legible.

Melencolia I is composed of human figures that are clearly personifications and of objects which refer — as the researchers would have it — either to *artes* (geometry, astronomy)³⁵ or to *opus alchemicum*.³⁶ However, the composition of the picture may also mean something else. Joachim Camerarius wrote (after Melanchton) about Dürer's oeuvre as follows: "In order to show that such minds [melancholic — W. B.] commonly grasp everything and how they are frequently carried away into absurdities, he reared up in front of her [personification of melancholy — W. B.] a ladder into the clouds, while the ascent by means of rungs is as it were impeded by a square block of stone".³⁷ In this way we go beyond an allegory: the significance

is acquired not only by the *logos* inherent in visual signs but also by the signs themselves — by their disposition in the engraving and the scheme of composition. The image of melancholy does not thereby become *external*, notional but *internal*, emotional.³⁸ As we can read in the above-quoted text: "Albrecht Dürer... represents... the *emotions* of a deep and thoughtful mind which are called melancholic".³⁹

The allegorical depiction of melancholy requires the legibility of all composing elements. Should we then suppose that it was an attempt to express directly melancholic emotions that entailed the appearance of the undecidable?

An answer to this question should be sought in analysis of the phenomenon of melancholy itself. Modern psychiatrists have no doubt that the depression characterizing melancholy resembles the state of undecidability. "In depression", wrote Antoni Kępiński, "sadness come over a man without any perceptible reason. As if somebody pressed a switch, suddenly everything dies out, the world loses its color... In darkness everything becomes chaotic, petty matters assume gigantic proportions, the man gropes about, not knowing what to choose, what to decide on, since on account of a change in color normal proportions have undergone transformation. He stops helpless in the face of the surrounding reality".⁴⁰

A historian has no right to extrapolate mechanically the views of his own time into the past. Therefore, while speaking about melancholy he must, above all, remember that from the time of Hippocrates it used to be regarded either as a mental disease or as one of the four human temperaments.⁴¹ Furthermore, he must not forget that in the Renaissance the melancholic complexion was ascribed to men of genius.⁴² It is in this last way that the allegorical sense of Dürer's engraving was interpreted again and again, this being proved by the above-quoted contemporary text of Camerarius.⁴³ Nonetheless, treated seriously, melancholy was always understood as a state characterized by or threatening the occurrence of symptoms of a breakdown, sometimes alternating with maniacal fits (this, too, being somewhat hinted at by Camerarius). Let us also adduce the authority of Hippocrates, who in his *Epidemics* enumerated somnolence, lack of appetite, states of depression and fits of anger as characteristic of melancholy.⁴⁴ Let us additionally recall that the idea of black bile, the somatic source of melancholy, sprang on the one hand from the conviction of the darkening of the center of human organism (*phrenes*), leading to depression or insanity, and on the other from the symbolic affinity with the poisonous waters of the Styx, the dark river.⁴⁵ Finally, let us note that the *locus classicus* of the "genius" theory of melancholy, *Problem XXX, 1* from the *Problemata Physica* by Pseudo-Aristotle (Theophrastus), begins with the question asked in a great sur-

prise, how it is that the people gifted with rare talents are at the same time melancholic, thus the creatures endowed with the worst of the four temperaments. And, although in reply to this it is said that such persons are normal, we ought to bear in mind that the black bile responsible for the gift of genius may lead — through excessive heating or cooling — to dangerous situations: depressions (due to cooling) or mania (due to heating).⁴⁶

The duality of *melancholia generosa* became manifest at the fullest in the person and oeuvre of the Renaissance reviver of the tradition of *Problem XXX, 1* — Marsilio Ficino. In a letter to Giovanni Cavalcanti he wrote about his melancholy temperament: “Because of that excessive timidity, which you occasionally charge me with, I complain of my melancholy temperament, for to me it seems a very bitter thing, and one that I can only ease and sweeten a little by much lute-playing”. “Quid igitur faciam?”, he next asked. And he replied: “I will try to find a way away out, and either I will say that melancholy, if you must have it so, does not come from Saturn; or else, if it necessarily comes from him, then I will agree with Aristotle, who described it as a unique and divine gift”.⁴⁷

Thus the acceptance of the fact of being one of the chosen does not come easily. The saturnine temperament, although associated with extraordinary talents and affording a man the possibility of communion with a transcendental world (through *furor divinus*), nevertheless constantly threatens states of anxiety and depression. It was with difficulty that the Florentine philosopher accepted the two gifts of Saturn, his decision having something of a challenge to fate. At the same time, in Volume I of his main work describing melancholy, *De vita triplici*, he advises how to avoid the states of spiritual collapse, this part bearing a significant title, *De studiosorum sanitate tuenda, sive eorum, qui literis operam navant, bona valetudine conservanda*.⁴⁸

As a matter of fact, Ficino does not stop at this. Similarly as Heinrich von Laufenberg in his *Regimen sanitatis*, he states that not only the melancholy temperament may be the cause of prodigious intellectual powers but, inversely, intensive mental work may end in fits of melancholy humour.⁴⁹ This last form of melancholy may be of dual nature. On the one hand, excessive fatigue or even a mental disease may come upon an overworked scholar, and on the other, studies may lead to the limits of knowledge and to the shaking of one’s belief in the perfection of the universe. “What, however, beauty is — this I do not know”, Dürer wrote about 1513,⁵⁰ confirming by these words the melancholy moods afflicting him, as Melanchton recorded.⁵¹ The moods which may have originated from the consciousness of the limits of human cognition, from the inability to find answer to numerous questions.⁵²

Melancholy is thus a state of undecidability. The state occurs as a mental disease, imprisoning the afflicted man in a circle of matters insolvable for him, or as a passing indisposition brought about by his character or spiritual mood. In all cases its effect is invariably the same — depression accompanied by fear, an inner state akin to silence, and a highly specific perception of the world as undergoing diffusion, a process of losing sense.⁵³ The surrounding reality ceases to be a book speaking to a man. Phenomena and objects “disperse”, returning to pure materiality. In melancholy “nothing speaks, all weighs”.⁵⁴

As we know, the objects scattered in *Melencolia I* are only objects, and the structural ambiguity of the engraving rules out the possibility of using them to make up an unequivocal allegorical composition. Unlike *Saint Jerome in His Cell*, where everything is in its proper place, suggesting the metaphysico-theological order of the world, the here-discussed composition is governed by “dynamism in immobility”, a state in which “nothing speaks, all weighs”. This state may be defined even more emphatically by the word *hétéroclite*. The sense of the term is explained by Michel Foucault as follows: “[This word] should be taken in its most literal, etymological sense: in such a state, things are «laid», «placed», «arranged» in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a place of residence for them, to define a *common locus* beneath them all.... Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they destroy «syntax» in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct the sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things... to «hold together».... Heterotopias... desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source”.⁵⁵

The objects and figures shown in *Melencolia I* have been immobilized in their physical materiality. They remain in disorder which enhances their abnormal displacement (*heterotopia*), a displacement that may potentially continue down to a disaster. The allegorical sense of the picture has been stopped by the loss of syntax or, more precisely, by the active losing of syntax — dynamism in immobility. The sense seems to “ooze out” of Dürer’s engraving: a polyhedron pressing upon a dog, scattered (and, in a way, still scattering) tools, illegibility of architecture, and a ladder “leading into the clouds”, suggest a diffusion of the content. In this way the engraving expresses “emotions of a mind called melancholic”. And since the essence of these emotions is the undecidable — this also had to be depicted by the artist.

5. This fact does not conclusively explain the intrinsic contradiction in Dürer’s engraving. After all, there exists works of art in which the allegorical and emotional modes of express-



4) Salvator Rosa, "Democritus in Meditation", c. 1662, Warsaw, University Library.

ing melancholy create together a consonant accord. These are the pictures of the Baroque epoch. In them, however, for instance, in *Democritus in Meditation* by Salvator Rosa (c. 1662) [Fig. 4],⁵⁶ the centrifugal, diffusive composition has been attuned to the vision of the world as a complex of beings aiming at putrefaction, death, and ruin. The melancholy feelings expressed by means of formal devices had their thematic

counterpart in the formation of a scenery in dismal places, full of animal bones and destroyed vestiges of human existence (*loci terribili*), this leading directly to the allegory of *vanitas*.⁵⁷ The above works may also be said to depict undecidability; nevertheless, it is qualitatively different from that perceived in *Melencolia I*. It is based on the tension between general decay and a man's meditation on *vanitas vanitatum*. In this way the lucid and legible allegory of transitoriness, underpinned by the dreamy composition of the work, has been contrasted with a creative element — human thought. Thus the undecidable takes place within the uniformly programmed picture. Its essence is the question of what will prevail — constructive thought or decaying matter?

In Dürer's engraving the diffusive composition has no counterpart in the world perceived as vanity. On the contrary, the world of *Melencolia I* is the world of human activity. The problem is that this activity, expressed in an allegorical language, has been subjected to diffusion imposed by the rules of composition. The creative element has thereby been stopped in its tracks by dynamism in immobility and by heterotopia. The constructive movement (allegory) has been coupled with the decaying one (work of depression).

There may be only one explanation of this paradoxical situation: the engraving of the Nuremberg master shows the moment at which a genius with a melancholy temperament has been chilled by the state of depression. Activity has been at once replaced by *stupor*, *ordinatio* is turning into inertia, and the sense of the universe becomes problematic. The mood of imperturbability emanating from *Saint Jerome in His Cell* has been transformed into a painful tension, into the anticipation of what will happen next. Will it be the continuation of a breakdown? Or a disaster? Or a fit of mania? Or, perhaps, a return to the state of activity? This is not decided by the engraving, which leaves us tête-à-tête with suffering — sometimes caused by *melancholia geneorsa*, the divine gift of Saturn — with suffering which like a shadow accompanies men of genius and creativity.

No one except Dürer has succeeded in creating a work of art that would be founded on the contradiction between the allegorical mode of depicting melancholy and an attempt to translate melancholy emotions into the language of artistic forms. This fact, however, accounts for the singularity and unique qualities of *Melencolia I*. This fact should be held responsible for as immense popularity of the engraving among artists of the centuries to come. The inner tension of the Nuremberg master's oeuvre challenged to various interpretations, stimulated to further creativity and to constructive discussion. Owing to this fact engraving may be called, after Peter-Klaus Schuster, "the image of the images".⁵⁸

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¹ P.-K. Schuster, *Melencolia I. Dürers Denkbild*, Berlin, 1991, p. 84.

² E. Panofsky, F. Saxl, *Dürers Melencolia I. Eine quellen- und typengeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Leipzig, 1923 ("Studien der Bibliothek Warburg", 2). The first thorough iconographic study was written by K. Giehlow, "Dürers Stich «Melencolia I» und der maximilianische Humanistenkreis", *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst*, 1903, pp. 29-41 and 1904, pp. 6-18, 57-58. On the early history of studies on the engraving see Schuster, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-34.

³ Significantly enough, remarks on the form of engraving and on its ensuing expression came mainly from non-art historians. See: U. Horstmann, *Der lange Schatten der Melancholie. Versuch über ein angeschwärmtes Gefühl*, Essen, 1985, pp. 31-33; L. F. Földényi, *Melancholie*, trans. N. Táhy, München, 1988, pp. 142-143. See also notes 7 and 23.

⁴ R. Klibansky, E. Panofsky, F. Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy. Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art*, London, 1964, p. 284 and fig. 8; Schuster, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁵ Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

⁶ Here I relinquish the enumeration of specific elaborations asking such questions on account of their multitude. The state of research is given precisely by Schuster, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-83. See also notes 28 and 29. It is also worth pointing to a list of questions — similar to the present one — put to Lucas Cranach the Elder's *Melancholy* (the Colmar version) by Yves Hersant in "Mélancolie rouge", *Question de couleurs. IX^{es} rencontres psychoanalytiques d'Aix-en-Provence (1990)*, Paris, 1991.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 84. The importance of structural ambiguities in *Melencolia I* is brought forward by the above-mentioned Martin Büchsel in the last part of his paper, "Die gescheiterte «Melancholia generosa». Melencolia, I", *Städel-Jahrbuch* N.F. 9 (1983), pp. 109-110.

⁸ Identification after: Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

⁹ Identification after: R. W. Horst, "Dürers «Melencolia I». Ein Beitrag zum Melancholia-Problem", *Wandlungen christlicher Kunst im Mittelalter*, Baden-Baden, 1953 ("Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christliche Archäologie", 2), pp. 418-418; Schuster, *Melencolia I...*, p. 17.

¹⁰ On the theory of perspective in Dürer see: E. Panofsky, *Dürers Kunsttheorie, vornehmlich in ihrem Verhältnis zur Kunsttheorie der Italiener*, Berlin, 1915, pp. 8-26; J. Białostocki, "Vernunft und Ingenium in Dürers kunsttheoretischem Denken", *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 25 (1971), pp. 107-114; M. Kemp, *The Science of Art. Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*, New Haven-London, 1990, pp. 53-64.

¹¹ By comparing the two works in this and further passages of the paper we do not solve the controversies relating to the possibility that the two engravings belong to a common series in respect of content. In both cases we only attack importance to the modes of organizing artistic expression, this being independent of the common content of both works, programmed beforehand. The first to compare *Melencolia I*, *St. Jerome in His Cell* and *Knight, Death and Devil* (B. 98, 1513) in respect of iconography was P. Weber, *Beiträge zu Dürers Weltanschauung*, Straßburg, 1900. This view was taken up and extended by E. Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton, 1955, p. 151. Recently, on the basis of close analysis of Dürer's *Diary of his Journey to the Netherlands*, the view of this community has been rejected by R. Grigg, "Studies on Dürer's Diary of his Journey to

the Netherlands: The Distribution of the *Melencolia I*", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 49 (1986), pp. 398-408.

¹² Panofsky, *The Life...*, p. 155; Kemp, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61 and pl. 106. For sources of the spatial concept of the work see: *Albrecht Dürer 1471-1971* [Catalogue of the exhibition in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg 1971], München, 1971, Cat. 271 and 273; W. Liebwein, *Studiolo. Die Entstehung eines Raumtypes und seine Entwicklung bis um 1600*, Berlin, 1977, p. 55.

¹³ *Dürers schriftlicher Nachlass*, ed. H. Rupprich, vol. 2, Berlin, 1966, p. 373; E. Panofsky, "Perspektive als symbolische Form", *Aufsätze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft*, ed. H. Oberer, E. Verheyen, Berlin, 1964, p. 99.

¹⁴ Panofsky, *Dürers Kunsttheorie...*, pp. 14-26.

¹⁵ Quoted after M. Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, Oxford, 1991, p. 105.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ H. Böhme, *Albrecht Dürer: Melencolia I. Im Labyrinth der Deutung*, Frankfurt/M., 1988, pp. 25-26: "Ordnung des Raumes = Ordnung des Geistes"; Panofsky, *The Life...*, p. 155; Büchsel, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹⁸ Panofsky, *The Life...*, p. 155.

¹⁹ L. B. Alberti, *On Painting and Sculpture*, ed. and trans. C. Grayson, London, 1972, p. 55 (underlined in the text by W. B.). In this part of my analysis, I follow the conception of Italian Renaissance painting presented by S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing. Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, London, 1989, pp. 41-49.

²⁰ I present such an understanding of *firmitas* more extensively in my article "Dom — przybytek — «nastrój dawności». O kilku kamienicach Teodora Talowskiego", *Klejnoty i sekrety Krakowa. Teksty z antropologii miasta*, ed. R. Godula, Cracow, 1994, pp. 220-222. It is worth adding that Dürer himself was in some measure interested in the theory of architecture, especially in the problem of column, "seule" (Book III of *Underweysung der Messung*). On this subject see: M. Łodyńska-Kosińska, "Albrecht Dürer a teoria architektury", *Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki* 14 (1969), pp. 3-27.

²¹ W. S. Heckscher, "*Melancholia* (1541). An Essay in the Rhetoric of Description by Joachim Camerarius", in *Joachim Camerarius (1500-1574). Beiträge zur Geschichte des Humanismus im Zeitalter der Reformation*, ed. F. Baron, Munich, 1978 ("Humanistische Bibliothek: Abhandlungen, Texte, Skripten, Rheie I: Abhandlungen", 24), note 45 on p. 91.

²² See some valuable remarks on this subject by M. H. Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing", *Gesta* XXII/2 (1983), pp. 99-120.

²³ H. Wölfflin, *The Art of Albrecht Dürer*, trans. A. & H. Grieve, New York, 1971, pp. 200, 204 (underlined in the text by W. B.).

²⁴ *Madonna at the City Wall*, 1514, engraving, B. 40.; Wölfflin, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

²⁵ Büchsel, *op. cit.*, p. 110. The mood reigning in *Melencolia I* was defined as "eine Art Ruhe vor dem Sturm" and "eine falsche Idylle" by U. Horstmann, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

²⁶ This contrast was noted by Büchsel, *op. cit.*, p. 110. See also: M. Préaud, *Mélancolies*, Paris, 1982, pp. 6-9.

²⁷ For the notion of the term "undecidable" see: J. Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. B. Johnson, Chicago, 1981, p. 219.

²⁸ Böhme, *op. cit.*, p. 31; K. Hoffmann, "Dürers *Melencolia*", in *Kunst als Bedeutungsträger. Gedenkschrift Günter Bandmann*, ed. W. Busch, R. Hausherr, E. Trier, Berlin, 1978, pp. 262-264.

²⁹ Horst, *op. cit.*, p. 428; P.-K. Schuster, "Das Bild der Bilder. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte von Dürers Melancholiekupferstich", *Idea. Jahr-*

buch der Hamburger Kunsthalle 1 (1982), p. 79; *idem*, *Melencolia I...*, p. 161; Büchsel, *op. cit.*, p. 100; D. Pingree, "A New Look at «Melencolia I»", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980), p. 257.

³⁰ Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-289; Z. Kruszelnicki, "Z dziejów postaci «frasobliwej» w sztuce", *Teka Komisji Historii Sztuki* 2 (1961), p. 57; Préaud, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Heckscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

³¹ M. Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London-New York, 1988, pp. 17-25; B. Smalley, "Stephen Langton and the Four Senses of Scripture", *Speculum* 6 (1931), pp. 60-76; F. Ohly, "Vom geistigen Sinn des Wortes im Mittelalter", *Schriften zur mittelalterlichen Bedeutungsforschung*, Darmstadt, 1983, pp. 1-31.

³² Richardus a Sancto Victore, *In Apocalypsim Joannis*, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. CXCVI, cols. 687-688; quoted after Caviness, *op. cit.*, note 91 on p. 120. On *spiritualia sub metaphoris corporalium*, see: E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origin and Character*, New York, 1971, vol. 1, chapter V and L. Kalinowski, "Malarstwo wczesnoniderlandzkie. Między gotykem a renesansem", *Niderlandyzm w sztuce* (in print).

³³ R. Nycz, "Teoria interpretacji: problem pluralizmu", *Tekstowy świat. Poststrukturalizm a wiedza o literaturze*, Warszawa, 1993, p. 114.

³⁴ H.-G. Gadamer, "Symbol und Allegorie", *Archivo di Filosofia* 2-3 (1958), pp. 23-28. On the allegory in Dürer, see: J. Białostocki, "Myth and Allegory in Dürer's Etchings and Engravings", *The Message of Images: Studies in the History of Art*, Vienna, 1988, pp. 132-138.

³⁵ Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-317 (*typus geometriae*); Schuster, *Melencolia I...*, p. 123-147 (*typus astronomiae*); Pingree, *op. cit.*, p. 257 (*quadrivium*).

³⁶ G. F. Hartlaub, "Arcana Artis. Spuren alchemistischer Symbolik in der Kunst des 16. Jahrhunderts", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 6 (1937), pp. 302-324; J. Read, "Dürer's *Melencolia I*: An Alchemical Interpretation", *The Burlington Magazine* 87 (1945), pp. 283-284; M. Calvesi, "A noir. *Melencolia I*", *Storia dell'Arte* 1 (1969), pp. 37-96.

³⁷ J. Camerarius, *Elementa rhetoricae [...]*, Basel, 1541; quoted after: Heckscher, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Camerarius's textbook consists the notes "collecta a J. C.". The description of *Melencolia I* was written by Melanchton, see Heckscher, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

³⁸ On two such modes of expressing melancholy see: G. Milantoni, "Quale Melanconia?", *Artibus et Historiae* 2 (1980), pp. 93-96. In relation to *Melencolia I* this phenomenon was observed in 1905 by Rudolf Kassner, writing in a language typical of the early 20th century: "Von Dürer kann man [...] sagen: Er hat jede Allegorie zu einem Symbol gemacht" (R. Kassner, "Die Moral der Musik", *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1, Pfullingen, 1969, p. 603).

³⁹ Camerarius, *loc. cit.* (underlined in the text by W. B.).

⁴⁰ A. Kępiński, *Melancholia*, Warszawa, 1993, pp. 7-8.

⁴¹ H. Flashar, *Melancholie und Melancholiker in den medizinischen Theorien der Antike*, Berlin, 1966, pp. 22-39; J. Starobinsky, *Geschichte der Melancholiebehandlung von den Anfängen bis 1900*, Basel, 1960 ("Documenta Geigy, Acta Psychosomatica", 4), p. 14; W. Müri, "Melancholie und schwarze Galle", *Antike Medizin*, ed. H. Flashar, Darmstadt, 1971, pp. 178-181.

⁴² Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 241ff; M. A. Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy. The Wisdom of the Essays*, London, 1991, pp. 27-33; W. Schleiner, *Melancholy, Genius and Utopia in the Renaissance*, Wiesbaden, 1991 ("Wolfenbüttler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung", 10), pp. 19-29; S. Swieżawski, *Dzieje filozofii europejskiej XV wieku*, vol. 6: *Człowiek*, Warszawa, 1983, p. 161.

⁴³ Heckscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-48.

⁴⁴ Hippokrates, *Epidemias*, III.17.2; Flashar, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff.

⁴⁵ F. Kudlien, *Der Beginn des medizinischen Denkens bei den Griechen, von Homer bis Hippokrates*, Zurich-Stuttgart, 1967, pp. 77-89; *idem*, "«Schwärzliche» Organe im frühgriechischen Denken", *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 8 (1973), pp. 53-58; Starobinsky, *Geschichte...*, p. 14; *idem*, "L'Encre de la Mélancolie", *Nouvelle Revue Française* 11 (1963), pp. 410-411; G. Bachelard, *L'Eau et les Rêves*, Paris, 1947, pp. 137-139; Müri, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-189.

⁴⁶ Flashar, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65; Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-63; Horstmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18; Th. Rütten, *Demokrit — lachender Philosoph und sanguinischer Melancholiker. Eine pseudo-hippokratische Geschichte*, Leiden-New York, Kopenhagen-Köln, 1992 ("Mnemosyne, Supplementum, 118), pp. 73-80.

⁴⁷ Quoted after: Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 266-267; Földényi, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-118; W. Lepenies, *Melancholie und Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt/M, 1969, pp. 215-218.

⁴⁹ Földényi, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-116; Schuster, *Melencolia I...*, pp. 108-111.

⁵⁰ Rupprich (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 100.

⁵¹ Melanchton wrote about "melancholia generosissima Dureri", see: A. Warburg, "Heidnisch-antike Weissung in Wort und Bild zu Luthers Zeiten", *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, Leipzig, 1932, p. 529; see also: Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 362-363; Böhme, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

⁵² See: Białostocki, *Vernunft...*, pp. 108-109; Schuster, *Melencolia I...*, pp. 222ff.

⁵³ L. Völker, *Muse Melancholie — Therapeutikum Poesie. Studien zum Melancholie-Problem in der deutschen Lyrik von Höltz bis Benn*, Munich, 1978, p. 7; V. Friedrich, *Melancholie als Haltung*, Berlin, 1991, p. 13.

⁵⁴ G. Bader, *Melancholie und Metapher. Eine Skizze*, Tübingen, 1990, p. 62.

⁵⁵ Foucault, *op. cit.*, pp. xvii-xviii.

⁵⁶ R. W. Wallace, "Salvator Rosa's «Democritus» and «L'Umana Fragilità»", *The Art Bulletin* 50 (1968), pp. 22-27; H. Hohl, *Saturn, Melancholie, Genie*, Hamburg, 1992, pp. 42-43; Rütten, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

⁵⁷ H. Watanabe O'Kelley, *Melancholie und die melancholische Landschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Bern, 1978 ("Basler Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur", 54); W. Benjamin, "Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels", *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. I/1, Frankfurt/M, 1974.

⁵⁸ See chapter VII of his book *Melencolia I...* and his article quoted in note 28. For the reception of Dürer's engraving see also: Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *op. cit.*, pp. 376-396; J. Białostocki, *Dürer and his Critics 1500-1971. Chapters in the History of Ideas Including a Collection of Texts*, Baden-Baden, 1986 ("Saecula Spiritualia", 7, ed. D. Wuttke), chapter VII; H. Böhme, "Zur literarischen Wirkungsgeschichte von Albrecht Dürers Kupferstich *Melencolia I*", *Zur Theorie, Geschichte und Wirkung der Literatur. Festschrift Karl Robert Mandelkow zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. J. Schönert, H. Segeberg, Frankfurt/M-Bern-New York, 1988, pp. 84-123; U. Finke, "Dürers «Melancholie» in der französischen und englischen Literatur und Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts", *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 30 (1976), pp. 67-85; W. Hauptman, *The Persistence of Melancholy in Nineteenth Century Art: The Iconography of a Motif*, Ann Arbor, 1975 (The Pennsylvania State University Ph.D.), part I.