

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330913122>

Amedeo Modigliani Drunken Bohemian or Contagious Consumptive

Book · February 2019

CITATIONS

0

READS

2,929

1 author:



[Henri Colt](#)

University of California, Irvine

289 PUBLICATIONS 8,341 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Amedeo Modigliani

Drunken Bohemian or Contagious Consumptive



Henri Colt MD

Acknowledgments:

I want to thank Dr. Silvia Quadrelli for her invitation to write this essay originally published in the *Revista Americana de la Medicina Respiratoria* (2014). I am also grateful to September Williams, Elyse Roberts, and Pierre Colt for providing insight and recommendations.

All Modigliani and other artist's artwork are to the best of my knowledge, in the public domain in the United States.

Modigliani art downloaded from: <http://modiglianiproject.org/home.html>, and <http://www.secretmodigliani.com/index.html>, Wikimedia and from <http://chez-edmea.blogspot.com/2010/08/amedeo-modigliani.html> (accessed August 21, 2014)

All other images accessed August 21, 2014.

Henri Colt MD, FCCP, FAWM
Professor Emeritus, University of California, Irvine
422 Glenneyre St., Suite A
Laguna Beach, CA, 92651 USA
email: Henricolt@gmail.com
WGA # 1756471
Copyright© 2014

Our life histories are undeniably affected by changes imposed on us by age and disease, and thus, by the trajectory of medicine which itself is enmeshed in the social order of our times. Each has an effect on our identities, which lingers regardless of our will. In this essay, I illustrate how Amedeo Modigliani's art and illness not only coexisted, but were tragically interwoven in the web of his life. My goal is to describe several aspects of his work and lesser known elements related to the disease that killed him when he was only 35. For Modigliani, as for others, understanding this interplay between art, life, and illness provides insight to the creative spirit where beauty and truth are found.

*

"What is true in a man's life is not what he does, but the legend which grows around him....You must never destroy legends. Through them we are given an inkling of the true physiognomy of a man." [1]

Oscar Wilde

When Modigliani's mother gave him Oscar Wilde's poem, *The ballad of Reading Gaol*, she may have had the premonition that her son would lead a tumultuous, self-destructive life similar to that of the writer in the City of Lights.¹ Wilde, who probably died from complications of syphilitic meningitis, was a victim of fame and public scrutiny. Modigliani, suffering from advanced tuberculosis, another shamefully contagious and socially ostracizing infectious disease, constructed a respected presence among many artists of his generation. Committing himself not to any

¹ Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was an Irish playwright, poet, novelist and essayist who was tried for gross indecency and condemned to two years hard labor at Reading prison, outside London. Two years after leaving prison, he died in Paris, a ruined and broken man.

particular artistic movement, but to the growing perfection of a stylistic approach to portraiture that transformed his subjects into what now can only be called Modiglianis, he assured himself and his work a place in history.

During the thirteen years before his death at the age of thirty-five, legends about Modigliani flourished. They embellished what was described as a drunken, womanizing, bohemian trajectory marked by poverty and disease. On the evening of January 20, 1920, the destitute Italian-Jewish artist reportedly staggered from the Café de la Rotonde where he had been drinking with friends. Coughing up blood and delirious, he returned to the 4th floor apartment he shared with his lover, twenty-one year old Jeanne Hébuterne, who was eight months pregnant with their second child. Two days later, a Chilean painter named Manuel Ortiz de Zárat, found him nearly unconscious in the woman's arms.

*

"Today, as before, any man entering the arts, without other means of existence than art itself, will be forced to travel a Bohemian path."

Henry Murger

Modigliani's death from tuberculous meningitis marked the beginning of the end of a bohemian life style romanticized by Henry Murger's poetic novella, *Scenes of a Bohemian Life* [2].² Written for the theater in 1849, this work became famous through the *La bohème* operas of Ruggeri Leoncavallo and Giacomo Puccini.³ Bohemian life in Paris had flourished since

² Henry Murger (1822-1861) was a French poet and novelist.

³ Italian composers Ruggeri Leoncavallo (1897), and Giacomo Puccini (1896) are also known for their operas *Pagliacci* and *Tosca* respectively

the mid-eighteenth century. The cabarets of Montmartre were breeding grounds for painters, musicians, poets, and novelists who freely lived passionate and often destructive lives in open revolt against the conservatism and luxury of a growing middle class. Paul Verlaine spearheaded a new form of poetry that had its roots in Romanticism. The young Arthur Rimbaud, a coming-of-age bohemian par excellence, described himself as an antisocial, violent vagabond refusing ordinary life [3].⁴ Writing in the early 20th century, novelist Francis Carco described bohemian life as a perpetual dispersion, with artists drinking their way into oblivion or fame while producing legends of themselves [4].

A portrayal of bohemian life in Montmartre, however, is incomplete without a depiction of the contrasting lifestyle of *La Belle Époque*. Between 1870 and the First World War, this gilded age of peace, prosperity and flourishing arts, was an era for the rich and famous [5]. Members of a growing bourgeoisie would dine at the Folies Bergères and the Moulin Rouge, visit the 1889 World's Fair, and purchase prestigious items in the salons of Haute Couture. Champagne became the centerpiece of a growing consumer market for luxury goods. Crowds would marvel at the curvilinear art nouveau forms of the new Paris Metro.⁵ Gathered in concert halls, they

could hear music by Stravinsky, Ravel, Saint-Saens and Debussy, or gaze in awe at moving picture sequences.⁶ They immersed themselves in modernistic writings by Proust, Zola, and Colette. They strolled along Baron Haussmann's grand boulevards in the shadows of a glorious Opera Garnier; elegantly clad, leisurely pedestrians were surrounded by fancy horse drawn carriages, rumbling automobiles, and bicycles with their modern, removable pneumatic Michelin tires. The Parisian literary critic and physician, Sainte Beuve,⁷ used the word *flâner*, to describe "the very art of doing nothing." Charles Baudelaire⁸ said that one who strolls was a *flâneur*: "The crowd is his element," he wrote, "as the air is that of birds and water of fishes ... For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite" [6].

These were also incredible times of cross-fertilization in the arts, sciences, and literature. Despite poor living conditions, lack of hygiene, and the threat of communicable diseases such as syphilis and tuberculosis, painters, writers and musicians flocked to Paris in search of fame, fortune, intellectual stimulation and themselves. Knowledge spillover, that process by which the sharing of ideas inspires innovation,

⁴ Rimbaud wrote the poem *ma vie de bohème* at the age of 16 (1870). He died from bone cancer at the age of thirty-seven in a Marseille hospital (1891). Verlaine succumbed to the effects of drugs and alcohol at the age of fifty-two (1896). Their scandalous homosexual relationship marked Paris and London in the 1870s.

⁵ France had become a republic in 1875, and the 'Marseillaise' was its national anthem. Education was introduced in public primary schools and religious instruction was excluded from state schools. Divorce, which had been illegal since Napoleon, was reinstituted under the Third Republic in 1884. The Eiffel tower was completed in 1889. By 1914, France

had become the second largest colonial power in the world, and the largest in Africa.

⁶ The Lumière brothers projected their first motion picture film in 1896.

⁷ Charles-Augustin Sainte Beuve (1804-1869) would gain notoriety as the presumed lover of Victor Hugo's wife Adèle. He argued that one must understand an artist's life in order to more fully understand an artist's work.

⁸ The French poet Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) added, "To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world."

resulted in a multitude of artistic, technological, political and social changes that defined the first half of the twentieth century. The period of decadence that marked a nineteenth century stained by the Dreyfus affair, the Oscar Wilde trial, a Panama Canal scandal, and the abuse of factory workers resulting from increased industrialization, had come to a close.

Connected by the number 12 North-South Metro, two neighborhoods became home to cafés and artist studios that were watering holes for the new avant-garde. On the left bank of the Seine, painter Jules Pascin entertained European intellectuals in Montparnasse, while from Montmartre on the right, Picasso⁹ and friends promoted art that would revolutionize the concept of aesthetics.¹⁰

Montmartre (mountain of the martyr), is a hill 150 meters high in the northern part of Paris. Its name comes from the martyrdom of Saint Dionysius (Saint Denis), who, as the Bishop of Paris, was decapitated there in

⁹ Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) was a Spanish artist who resided in France for most of his adult life. He was one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century. Known as a founder of Cubism, his art was ever changing; classical, surrealist, abstract, minimalist, geometric, and almost always socially relevant. Among his last works was his *self-portrait facing death* series of sketches from July, 1972, one year before his death from heart disease at age 90.

¹⁰ Picasso and friends from France and abroad were headquartered in a building at the top of the stairs by 13 Rue Ravignan, near what is now Place Emile Goudeau in Montmartre. The building was named Le Bateau-Lavoir by writer Max Jacob, because it was shaped like the wash basin laundresses used on the banks of the Seine, and, like a boat, shook eerily during rain storms. In Montparnasse, groups were sometimes named according to the cafés they frequented. For example, headquartered at the Café du Dome, across the street from the Café de La Rotonde near the corner of Boulevard Raspail and Boulevard Montparnasse, “Les Domiers” included men like Wilhelm Uhde, a German art dealer and one of the first collectors of Picasso and Braque.

250 AD. In the early 1900s, the area was outside city limits and free of city taxes. With its open wastelands and numerous small vineyards, some of which still exist, it had become an area for inexpensive eateries and cabarets such as the Moulin Rouge, Le Chat Noir, and Le Lapin Agile. The village’s shacks, rundown wooden homes, and makeshift gardens had been untouched by the Haussmann’s plans of urbanization and reconstruction (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Montmartre 1907

Montparnasse was a new urban zone on the left bank of the Seine, just twenty minutes from the Eiffel Tower. The name comes from Mount Parnassus, home to the nine muses of Greek mythology. It takes about two hours to walk the 8 km or so from the intersection of the boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse to the white onion dome of the Basilique du Sacré Coeur in Montmartre. After real estate investors bought up vacant land around the hilltop village, rising prices drove poets, painters, avant-garde politicians and philosophers to Montparnasse.¹¹ In the years leading up to and after the Great War, everyone gathered for warmth, toilet facilities, conversation, and camaraderie at its cafés. At La Rotonde (Figure 2), for example, owner Victor Libion, let impoverished painters work and

¹¹ The neighborhood was to become the artistic and intellectual hub of Paris by the roaring 1920s, also known as *Les Années Folles*.

drink at his tables, collecting drawings and other tokens as payment for their libations.¹²



Figure 2: Café de la La Rotonde

Not far away, at 3 Rue Campagne-Premier, was a modest cremerie that served secondarily as a restaurant. Amidst rows of wooden tables surrounded by backless benches, Rosalie Tobia, an older woman who modeled once for Bouguereau,¹³ fed wine and pasta to impoverished artists like Moise Kisling, Chaim Soutine, and a frequently intoxicated, occasionally raucous yet charming, aristocratic young Italian named Amedeo Modigliani.¹⁴

¹² The large Montparnasse-Bienvenu subway station (its name was changed from Montparnasse to Avenue du Maine in 1910, then again in 1933 in honor of Fulgence Bienvenu, the principal architect of the Paris Metro) is 500 meters from Le Dôme. Around the corner from La Rotonde is the Rue Vavin, a small neighborhood street which connects the Blvd de Montparnasse with the Jardin du Luxembourg, where the grounds of a seventeenth century palace were transformed into a park. The Metro Vavin (named after statesman Alexis Vavin) is only 20 meters from le Café de La Rotonde. Steps away, at the corner of Boulevard Raspail and Boulevard Montparnasse (now called Place Pablo Picasso), stands Rodin's famous bronze statue of Balzac. It was placed there in 1939.

¹³ William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905) was a French traditionalist painter whose work was highly respected before the Impressionists and avant-garde movements forever changed the public's perception of art.

¹⁴ Moise Kisling (1891-1953) and Chaim Soutine (1893-1943) were two other Jewish painters living in Paris at the time. Both became famous modernists; Kisling for his portraits and landscapes, Soutine for

*

"After the first glass, you see things as you wish they were. After the second, you see things as they are not. Finally, you see things as they really are, and that is the most horrible thing in the world."

Oscar Wilde [7]

Amedeo (from the Latin "to love God") arrived in Paris in the fall of 1906. Ambitious, handsome, and charismatic, the twenty-two year old avoided the more expensive yet prestigious neighborhoods like the Latin Quarter, and settled in Montmartre. With a small inheritance and money from his mother, he took up residence in a chic hotel, but rapidly squandered his savings and moved into a wooden shed with a corrugated roof in the wasteland between the Rue Caulaincourt and the Moulin de la Galette. In this rustic area called the Maquis, along the north flank of a hill called La Butte, animals grazed in marshlands among flowers and cheaply constructed shacks. The site had once been a construction area for workers preparing the Paris exhibition of 1900. Now, it was a haven for petty thieves and marginalized members of society yearning to avoid the bustle of a changing urban environment. It was also home to a new breed of artists. Writers and musicians such as Apollinaire and Erik Satie haunted its cafés, while Picasso and Braque held court from their ramshackled building called Le Bateau-Lavoir, just below the Place du Tertre (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Le Bateau-Lavoir

his still life paintings of slaughtered carcasses and other images of death.

Modigliani was a veritable street artist. He sketched constantly, but he also drank absinthe (Figure 4).¹⁵ With an alcohol content as high as ninety percent, the sweet, tasting emerald green liquor known as *la fée verte* (the green fairy), was popular since the 1870s [8]. Absinthe's bitter, licorice-like taste and reported effects of "euphoria without drunkenness" were caused by mixing wormwood, a plant used for medicinal purposes since 3000 B.C., with alcohol.¹⁶ The oil extracted from wormwood contains the narcotic thujone, which was known to cause nervous problems and insanity.



Figure 4: Modigliani 1908

Modigliani was known for his excellent draftsmanship, but stories of his excesses flourished. The young Italian bourgeois was rapidly becoming a rebellious bohemian. He

¹⁵ Absinthe was poured into a glass of cracked ice, over which was suspended a lump of sugar on a perforated spoon. Cold water was dripped over the sugar into the glass until the sugar was almost fully dissolved, and the drink took on a pleasant milky green color. Absinthe was inexpensive and its anise-like fragrance so exquisite it could be enjoyed by men and women alike. Oscar Wilde drank absinthe until he died, destitute and alone, on November 30, 1900.

¹⁶ The ingestion of wormwood can cause absinthism, a syndrome characterized by digestive disorders, thirst, restlessness, vertigo, trembling of the limbs, numbness of the extremities, loss of intellect, delirium, paralysis, and death. Cognitive enhancement may be related to nicotinic and muscarinic cholinergic receptor activity.

was seen staggering drunkenly from place to place with Montmartre native and fellow artist, Maurice Utrillo. He bartered sketches for a glass of wine or a meal. He gave drawings to friends and acquaintances who did not keep them, traded paintings for rent, and had a tendency, unless restrained, to remove his clothes when drunk. His use of hashish,¹⁷ wine, and absinthe¹⁸ became the source of a legend that included stories of ill-tempered outbursts, brawls, and countless female companions. By indulging in drugs and alcohol, living beyond his means, and refusing to work at nothing except his art, the twenty-two year artist's descent into poverty was inevitable. His friends began calling him 'Modi', a play on the French word *maudit*, which means accursed.

It hadn't always been this way.

*

"He behaves like a spoiled child, but he does not lack intelligence. ... Perhaps an artist?"

Eugenia Garsin

Amedeo Clement Modigliani, nicknamed Dedo, was born on July 12, 1884, in the

¹⁷ Hashish pills were inexpensive and available in Parisian pharmacies since the 1840s. They were often prescribed as analgesics and cough suppressants. Opium was smoked in homes and coffee houses. It was legal until the 1912 Hague Opium Convention, which established international restrictions limiting opiate use to "legitimate medical purposes". It would not be until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles seven years later, however, that restrictions were implemented on a global scale.

¹⁸ In 1906, alcoholism, especially acute absinthism, was a major health concern in France. Advertisements extolled the qualities of the intoxicating drink, and many writers and artists argued its virtues as well as dangers. Among others, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Maupassant, Sarah Bernhardt, Apollinaire, Verlaine, and Picasso revered absinthe's effects on mind and body.

cosmopolitan Tuscan seaport of Livorno [9].¹⁹ He was the youngest of four children, who included Emmanuele, thirteen years his senior and a future Socialist deputy, Margherita, who would become the adoptive aunt of Modigliani's daughter, and Umberto, an engineer who studied at Paris's famous *Ecole des Mines*. His parents were Sephardic Jews, a heritage of which he was proud; "Modigliani, painter and Jew," he would often say by way of introduction. His father, Flaminio Modigliani, was a businessman with a history of financial difficulties and bankruptcies that prompted prolonged absences from the family home.

Dedo was raised by his mother, Eugenia Garsin, and by his maternal grandfather Isaac (Modigliani's maternal grandmother died from tuberculosis), a well read, aristocratic gentleman who suffered from neurosis. Modigliani's maternal uncle and probable namesake was Amedeo Garsin. Although he lived in France, this resourceful and well educated man had a positive influence on the young boy. He regularly sent money to help with household expenses and travel. He would also pay for Modigliani's schooling in Venice in later years.

The Garsin family was well learned and proud. Needing to keep up appearances as well as earn money, Eugenia and her sisters, assisted by the older siblings, began a home school program for Dedo and other children from the neighborhood. Amedeo learned Latin and was exposed to art, philosophy and literature at a very young age. He became fluent in French. In 1895, however, he suffered from severe pleurisy, an inflammation of the lining of the inside of

the chest wall that is often accompanied by a collection of fluid inside the chest cavity. Consistent with medical standards of the time, he was treated conservatively with prolonged bed rest. His chest was taped to limit respiratory movements and painful chest expansion.

Three years later, typhoid fever almost took his life. Although he had been drawing continuously since childhood, it was during one of his typhoid-induced febrile episodes that he supposedly told his mother that he wanted to become an artist.²⁰ She promised that she would take him to Italy's most famous museums [10]. He was fourteen years old.

By April 1899, Dedo had fully recovered. His mother wrote in her diary that he abandoned his studies in order to devote his energies to drawing and painting. He enrolled in a small class with a local artist by the name of Guglielmo Micheli, a follower of the Macchiaioli school. The Macchiaioli (from the word *macchia*, which means stain or blot), were Florentine and Neopolitan painters who used small patches of color as building blocks for painting in a combination of bright pastel and dark colors. Precursors to French Impressionist and future Modernist movements, the Macchiaoli created a movement that ran against the neoclassical and romantic styles of the time. Giovanni Fattori,²¹ one of the more recognized members of the group, occasionally came to Micheli's studio to work with some of the students (Figure 5).

¹⁹ Livorno was relatively unique in Italy because it had attracted Jews from the Levant and from Spain. Its local dialect was a blend of Catalan, Spanish, Portuguese, Roman-Jewish vocabulary, and vernacular Italian.

²⁰ According to one of Modigliani's biographers, Meryl Secrest, only one self portrait from Modigliani's childhood is recognized as authentic. Most other early works attributed to him are under question.

²¹ Giovanni Fattori ((1825-1908) is considered one of Livorno's most famous artists, but he died poor and disenchanted with life in 1908. His first wife died from tuberculosis in 1867. Modigliani would study with Fattori in Florence in 1902.



Figure 5: Giovanni Fattori, *Rotonda Palmieri* 1886

Young Modigliani was described as an introverted child who displayed emotional outbursts and frequent displays of anger. He was well read, and able to recite long passages from his favorite authors: Baudelaire, D'Annunzio, and Nietzsche. He admired the work of Macchiaioli artists, focused on improving his technique, and visited museums to copy works from the Italian Renaissance.

Within a year of joining Micheli's studio, two of Amedeo's fellow students contracted tuberculosis and died. Dedo had a recurrent bout of pleurisy that summer, and in September, 1900, his sister wrote that "he suffered a violent hemorrhage followed by a fever, and the doctor's diagnosis held out no hope." Coughing up blood was a fearful sign of advanced disease. Physicians likely told Modigliani's family that he had consumption; the contagious, incurable, and ultimately fatal disease called Tuberculosis.²² Should he survive, convalescence would require rest, a healthy diet, and a change in climate [11].

*

"Le crachat, c'est donc lui l'ennemi"
Deputé Lionel Amodru

²² Many famous persons contracted tuberculosis; American writers Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), Percy Shelly (1792-1822), John Keats (1795-1821), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1949), Emily (1818-1848) and Charlotte Bronte (1816-1855), Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), and Anton Chekhov (1860-1904).

To understand the impact of tuberculosis on a boy and his family in the late nineteenth century, some background about the disease is warranted. Tuberculosis has been called *Phthisis* (Latin, from the Greek word *phthinein*, meaning dwindling, or wasting away) and *Consumption* (contrary to rapidly fatal epidemic diseases such as smallpox or the Bubonic plague, tuberculosis slowly consumes its victims). The disease has been with humanity since early civilization. Responsible for the "White Plague" of the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, it infected nearly 100 percent of the population and is felt to have been responsible for up to 25% of all deaths. The recent discovery of *Mycobacterium complex* (using molecular DNA techniques) in the 17,000 year old skeletal remains of an extinct bison from Trap Cave, Wyoming, suggests that bovids were vectors that transported the primordial organism [12].

Mycobacterium Tuberculosis bacillus (MTB) is a large, nonmotile rod-shaped bacterium. It is the etiologic agent for tuberculosis in humans (Figure 6).²³

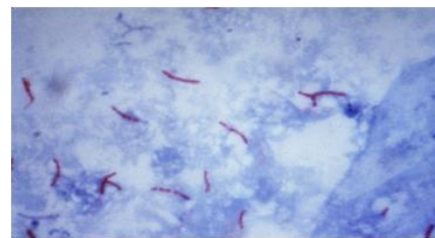


Figure 6: Acid fast bacilli of MT

MTB was identified in the 9,000 year old skeletal remains from a woman and child at the Atli-Yam archeological site [13].²⁴ The disease is biologically different from other infectious diseases because the infecting organism is not spread preferentially

²³ Humans are the only reservoirs for MTB.

²⁴ Ten miles off the coast from Haifa, Israel, the Atli-Yam site is from 6900-6300 BC.

through the bloodstream.²⁵ Instead, it takes up residence in tissues, where it forms a caseous necrosis that protects it from attack.²⁶

Active tuberculosis is contagious and can be found in small microscopic droplets spread through the air by coughing, laughing, sneezing, talking, or singing.²⁷ Its presenting symptoms are cough, weight loss, fever, chest pain, loss of appetite, and night sweats. Once inhaled, the organisms usually cause a lung infection that can be fatal. They can also lie dormant and not cause symptoms for many years. Disease latency means the person is infected but not infectious (i.e. contagious). Reactivation (i.e. the disease becomes active), which occurs in five to ten percent of infected individuals over a lifetime, affects the lungs or other organs.

Tuberculosis was, and still is a feared and often deadly disease. Today, one third of the world's population is infected with MTB, and 8 million people develop the disease each year. An attack rate of at least 5 percent is reported among infected individuals. While medical treatment is usually successful in controlling the disease, the emergence of multiple drug resistance has prompted concerns in the global health communities [14, 15].

²⁵ In order to detect MTB in sputum, more than 10,000 organisms per ml of sputum are needed to visualize the bacilli with a 100X microscope objective.

²⁶ Dead proteinaceous tissues have a soft, white, cheese-like appearance.

²⁷ TB is at historic lows in North American and Europe, but remains prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. The reality is that its overall incidence continues to rise, even if its global incidence percentage wise is in decline (the increase in numbers of cases is offset by an even greater increase in population growth). The World Health Organization's Stop TB Partnership was therefore initiated in 2001.

Years ago, consumptives would live out their days with dire expectations. At first considered a random killer of individuals in the flower of their youth, MTB has since been shown to affect persons of any social class, gender, age group or profession. Frequently romanticized, its victims were described as having a gaunt, ghost-like appearance with a feverish glitter in their eyes, rosy cheeks, and a pale almost transparent color to their skin. Hemoptysis, or the spitting of blood, was a sign of eminent death. Shamed, shunned, and sequestered, there was no hope for a cure.

The earliest written record of consumption dates from the Assyrian empire in 600 BC. In around 400 BC, Hippocrates proposed a hereditary predisposition to the illness in patients who were tall, thin, and pale, providing an opinion that would be shared by much of the medical community for centuries to come. Even the inventor of the stethoscope, French Professor René Laennec, believed for a time that tuberculosis arose from internal causes and constitutional predisposition, including sorrowful passions (*passions tristes*) and occasional causes (*causes occasionelles*) such as unhealthy sexual activity [16].²⁸

In 1546, however, the Italian physician Girolamo Fracastoro²⁹ wrote that phthisis was contagious and not necessarily from a hereditary predisposition. He argued that patients warranted isolation measures

²⁸ In the second edition of his masterpiece *Traité de l'auscultation médiate*, published just before his own death from tuberculosis, Laennec (1781-1826) notes that "phthisis has long been thought contagious, and it is still thought to be so by the common people, by magistrates, and by some doctors in certain countries, especially in the southern parts of Europe. In France, at least, it does not seem to be."

²⁹ Girolamo Fracastoro (1483-1553) was also famous for his poignant Latin poem *Syphylis sive Morbus Galicus* and his displays of sympathy for anyone who might have contracted the disease.

similar to those recommended for patients with the plague. Physician groups in Italy and other European countries decreed that tubercular patients, called “lungers” in the United States, were dangerous. Consequently, thousands of thin, pale-skinned, coughing, feverish patients with known or suspected consumption were isolated in their homes or grouped in hospital wards to await the grim, white ghost of death [17].

The general public was seized by fear of the disease. Fines were levied against anyone, including physicians, who broke isolation policies. Diseased individuals were cared for by loved ones and good friends, many of which would contract the illness. People with signs of tuberculosis were refused lodging or asked to vacate properties [18]. Tavern keepers could not rent out rooms if they were suspected to have harbored a consumptive; ceilings and walls needed to be whitewashed, and sometimes, doors, window settings, and personal belongings were burned.³⁰ Examples of the emotional, physical and psychological strains resulting from such practices are described in works by nineteenth century travelers such as consumptive poets John Keats and Percy Shelly, as well as by

Alphonse de Lamartine, whose wife died from tuberculosis, and in George Sand’s letters about composer Frederic Chopin.³¹ Chopin’s pulmonary symptoms were suggestive of tuberculosis, prompting Sand and others to assume he had the disease [19]. The community in Majorca, Spain shunned him, and forced him to leave. In one letter, he wrote, “These two weeks, I was sick as a dog, I got a chill despite the temperature of 70, amidst roses, oranges, palms and fig trees. Of the three most famous doctors on the island, one sniffed at what I spewed up, the other tapped at the place from where I spewed it, the third poked and listened while I spewed. The first said that I was dead, the second that I was dying and the third that I would die.”

Attitudes began to change in the middle of the 19th century. The French physician, Jean-Antoine Villemin³² proved without a doubt that tuberculosis was a transmissible, infectious disease in 1865, but its origin remained a mystery until the evening of March 24, 1882 when a German physician and microbiologist named Robert Koch³³ announced to the Berlin Physiological Society that he had identified the tubercle bacillus [20].³⁴ At the time, tuberculosis was thought to be responsible for one of every seven deaths in Europe. Microbiologic

³⁰ In almost every way, the history of HIV infection in the 1980s and 1990s recalls the tuberculosis scourge of the 19th and early 20th century. Both were diseases of uncertain etiology, with an eventual ability for diagnosis without effective treatment, and an expectation of death after diagnosis. They were both accompanied by devastating societal misunderstanding, individual and social discrimination, and fear of contagion. Patients harbored shame, a fear of intimacy and sexual contact, and need for secrecy. Both diseases prompted health care policies that encouraged isolation, creation of disease-specific wards in some public and private hospitals. Furthermore, both had deleterious effects on young, productive working people (the flower of youth), and were responsible for emotional and spiritual afflictions that had significant social and political repercussions.

³¹ Chopin (1810-1849) may actually have had cystic fibrosis or another pulmonary disorder such as Alpha-1 Antitrypsin deficiency. Tuberculosis was never proven, even after autopsy.

³² Jean Antoine Villemin (1827-1892) was a French army surgeon who demonstrated the transmissibility of tuberculosis from animal to animal, and also from man to animal by injecting rabbits with caseous material and fluid from a man who had died from tuberculosis. The rabbits went on to form tubercles in their lungs and other organs.

³³ Robert Koch (1843-1910) also isolated *Bacillus anthracis*, and *cholera vibrio* using a new technology called a microscope. He received the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine in 1905.

³⁴ After decades of research, Louis Pasteur initiated the germ theory of disease in the 1870s and 1880s.

diagnosis was aided by Paul Erlich's³⁵ discovery of the acid-fast nature of the bacillus that same year.³⁶ Clinical suspicions of diagnosis based on symptoms and findings from chest inspection, percussion³⁷ and auscultation³⁸ could be correlated with radiographic findings after the discovery of x-rays by Wilhelm Roentgen in 1895 (Figure 7) [21].



Figure 7: *Laennec's auscultation* (by Theobald Chartran)

³⁵ Paul Erlich (1854-1915) was one of the early founders of immunology. This German physician and self-taught chemist was eventually offered a position in Robert Koch's Institute for Infectious Diseases. In 1908, he received the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine. In 1910, he discovered Salvarsan, an effective treatment for syphilis. He is often called the "father of chemotherapy."

³⁶ MTB is classified as acid-fast bacteria because it will retain certain dyes (the Ziehl-Neelsen stain will cause the acid-fast organisms to appear pink).

³⁷ Chest inspection and percussion were well accepted elements of the standard physical examination since Auenbrugger and Corvisart (1755-1821). Leopold Auenbrugger (1722-1809) was an Austrian physician who "invented" chest auscultation, publishing his findings in a book called *Inventum Novum* in 1761. It was not until after the book's French translation by Jean-Nicolas Corvisart (Napoleon's principal physician) in 1808 that the diagnostic technique gained widespread acceptance.

³⁸ Auscultation using a stethoscope was mainstream practice since its introduction by French physician René Laennec in 1816. He died from tuberculosis (1781-1826). The Laennec instrument was a short straight tube that came apart into two short segments that could be held in a coat pocket. British and other European physicians improved upon this initial idea, suggesting that both ears might be used in auscultation. The first binaural instrument was designed by Dr. George Philip Camman of New York in 1855 using an ebony chest plate and two separate ivory-tipped hearing pieces that fit into the examiner's ears.

The advances in diagnosis laid the foundation for preventive strategies and exploration of new therapeutic measures. In France, where the peak of tuberculosis-related mortality occurred around 1890, spittle had become the enemy [22]. "Le crachat, c'est donc lui l'ennemi" wrote French Deputy Lionel Amodru, quoting Professor Louis Landouzy of the Paris Faculty of Medicine.³⁹ Sputum was now proven to contain the bacillus. All measures for limiting and eliminating exposure could now be justified (Figure 8).



Figure 8: French public health poster (1916)

Attention was turned to the streets of Paris, where poor hygiene and slum-housing were almost everywhere except around grand boulevards and the more prominent neighborhoods.⁴⁰ It is "above all, unsanitary housing, lacking air and sunlight that is the great auxiliary of tuberculosis," Amodru announced to the nation. But there was also another problem at the forefront of the times. Absinthe production had increased so much that it was less expensive than wine. From 1876 to 1900, the nation's annual consumption soared from 1,000,000 liters to 21,000,000 liters (Figure 9).

³⁹ "Spittle is the enemy."

⁴⁰ For example, although mass production of toothbrushes had been present in Europe since the 1840s, usually using pig bristle (nylon was not introduced until its invention by DuPont in 1938), it was only in the early 1900s that a mixture of hydrogen peroxide and baking soda became used as toothpaste.



Figure 9: Absinthe with spoon

Alcoholic beverages of all kinds were sold in *buvettes* (drink-stands); at street corners, vegetable shops, and tobacco stores as well as in the numerous restaurants, cafés, and cabarets. If tuberculosis was a national peril, it was accompanied by that other blight on the Third Republic, alcoholism [17].⁴¹ The subsequent War on Tuberculosis, therefore, would require social welfare reform, legislation to increase the capacity and obligations of municipal health departments, and a means to address the effects of alcoholism and population density on the spread of disease (Figure 10).

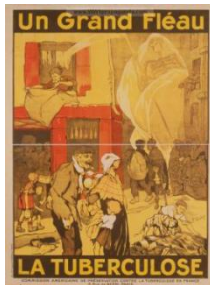


Figure 10: Public health poster by F. Galais (1917).

⁴¹ The Third Republic represents France's government from 1870 to 1940. The government was constituted by a chamber of deputies, a senate, and a President who was head of state. The Republic was marked by several scandals (Boulangier, the Panama scandal, the Dreyfus affair), marked colonialism in Africa and Indochina, the legal separation of Church and State, increased commercialization, increased availability of jobs for women, the costly victory in World War I (more than 1.5 million Frenchmen were killed), and a flourishing period for the arts. The Third Republic fell when France was defeated by Nazi Germany in 1940.

The government's aggressive attempts to reverse these social ills must be considered in the political and social context of the early twentieth century.⁴² Birth rates in France were down, victims of tuberculosis were in their most productive workforce years (between the ages of twenty-five and forty), industrialization was on the rise, and the degree of urbanization marked by overcrowding and unsanitary housing was appalling. The country was still suffering from the humiliation and economic consequences of the Franco-Prussian war, as well from the modern threat of its increasingly powerful German neighbor to the east.

Furthermore, members of the bourgeoisie were fearful. They considered tuberculosis a sign of the social and moral decay of a growing working class that threatened political stability.⁴³ While the 1905 Paris International Congress on Tuberculosis had a major impact on European attitudes towards the disease, it also provided a fulcrum for the Socialist movement to improve the conditions of the working class. For example, Désiré Verhaeghe, a physician working in Calmette's laboratory, published statistics demonstrating increased prevalence of physical hardships and malnutrition in patients with tuberculosis. In an article written for a Socialist newspaper, he dismissed many of the congress's conclusions regarding contagion and disparaged the widespread bacillophobia that had seized the French capital. He argued

⁴² In France, the widespread establishment of municipal dispensaries would not occur until 1916 (under the law Leon Bourgeois), and sanatoriums in 1919 (under the law of Andre Honnorat).

⁴³ Social unrest would eventually lead to general strikes that resulted in the legalization of labor unions, improved working conditions, implementation of an eight hour work day (May, 1906), and the Charter of Amiens declaring autonomy of the workers movement from political parties.

that tuberculosis was the scourge of the working class, and that truly effective action against the disease required the end of all forms of exploitation, i.e. shorter work days and better wages.

*

*I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.*

John Keats⁴⁴

Social reform was the last thing on Modigliani's mind. His was a creative, artistic teenage spirit. In 1900, however, back in the Tuscan seaport of Livorno, he was fighting for his life against the disease that would kill him nineteen years later.

The sixteen year old was bedridden, feverish, pale, and fatigued. He complained of pain when he breathed, and had little appetite. He suffered from a nagging cough. The doctor probably suspected tuberculosis at his first visit because he would have been told about Dedo's bout of pleurisy five years earlier. When the young man coughed up blood a few months later, the diagnosis became certain. The doctor must have shared his concerns with Modigliani's family, leading Dedo's sister to exclaim "the doctor's diagnosis held no hope."

Perhaps the physician noted decreased chest expansion, dullness to percussion,

⁴⁴ John Keats (1795-1821) was an Englishman who had trained to be a physician, but left medicine at the age of 22 to become a poet. His mother and brother both died from tuberculosis. He had already manifested the first symptoms of the disease when he wrote *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* in 1819. He succumbed to pulmonary tuberculosis in Rome on February 21, 1821, at the age of 25. The epitaph on his gravestone at the Protestant cemetery reads, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

poor breath sounds and a pleural rub consistent with pleurisy (Figure 11).

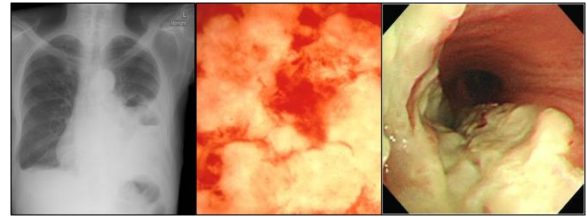


Figure 11: Tuberculous left pleural effusion, pleural inflammation, and caseous necrosis in the airways.

Inflammation of the pleural lining with or without an associated collection of fluid inside the chest cavity can occur at any time during the course of pulmonary tuberculosis, but usually happens within a year after primary infection. Chest pain and fever usually precede the fluid collection by several weeks. While the disease is often self-limiting, it can be followed by pulmonary tuberculosis in about 65 percent of cases, usually within five years of the pleural disease. Sometimes, the fluid goes unnoticed, especially when it results from cell-mediated immunity and a hypersensitivity response after seeding of the pleural space with micro-organisms [23].

Primary pleural infection occurs less frequently than pulmonary infection, but is the most frequent site of extrapulmonary disease. Invasion of the pleural space by a large number of organisms signals tuberculous empyema, but this is even less common than tuberculous pleurisy, and is usually associated with bronchopleural fistula and parenchymal lung disease. Both pleurisy and pulmonary tuberculosis can be accompanied by scar tissue formation and a retraction of part of the lung, as well as by formation of adhesions that prevent or inhibit complete lung expansion (trapped lung syndrome). Any form of tuberculosis-related pleural or lung disease can leave patients with a persistent chest deformity and reduced chest expansion.

While the tuberculous etiology of Modigliani's pleurisy might have been confirmed by the presence of a lymphocyte predominant exudate or bacteria in the pleural fluid after thoracentesis⁴⁵, there is no mention of pleural procedures in family diaries. This is pertinent because Carlo Forlanini, a professor at the University of Pavia 300 kilometers to the north, was developing a technique of induced (or artificial) pneumothorax since 1882 [24]. In 1895, he reported improved symptoms in a patient with tuberculosis after intentionally collapsing the patient's lung by introducing a fixed amount of air into the pleural cavity. Based on his success, and on previous reports of improved survival in patients with a spontaneously collapsed lung, Forlanini believed that artificial pneumothorax put the diseased lung at rest, promoted healing, improved blood oxygenation, and benefited cardiopulmonary function by lowering the level of the diaphragm.⁴⁶

By collaborating with his younger brother Enrico, an engineer and inventor of the hydrofoil, Forlanini pursued studies of aerotherapy. They ultimately created a device that would control the amount of air artificially introduced into the hemithorax. His reports were poorly received by his colleagues, however, so the practice of artificial pneumothorax was not adopted by Italian physicians. It is unlikely, therefore, that Dedo ever underwent such a procedure. A statement made years later by older

brother Emmanuele; that Dedo had only "one and a half lungs", becomes all the more interesting⁴⁷. Modigliani probably developed adhesions or permanent loss of aeration that prevented the complete use of one of his lungs.

Faced with a young patient with potentially fatal consumption, Amedeo's doctor would have recommended prolonged rest as well as opium or other narcotics for pain relief, cough suppression, and sedation (Figure 12).⁴⁸ Laudanum and Paregoric (the alcoholic and camphorated tincture of opium), might have been offered because they were used to treat everything from stomach cramps to fever.⁴⁹



Figure 12: Heroin and Paregoric were legal

Coming from the opium poppy plant, opium was believed to help combat inflammation and render patients more apt

⁴⁵ Thoracentesis (removal of pleural fluid using a small needle) was introduced by the American physician Henry Bowditch (1808-1892) in 1852.

⁴⁶ Carlo Forlanini (1847-1918). The Italian physician's first case was actually performed in 1888, but he did not report his results until seven years later in the Italian journal *Gazzetta Medica di Torino*. He waited until 1906 to report a series of 25 cases in the German journal *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*. It would not be until 1912 that artificial pneumothorax would be widely practiced in the United States and Europe.

⁴⁷ Thoracoscopic pleurolysis, a technique by which adhesions are severed using electrocautery, would not be described until after Hans-Christian Jacobaeus (1879-1937) explored the pleural cavity (thorakoscopy) using a cystoscope attached to an electric lamp for viewing in 1910. It became a mainstay of tuberculosis treatment in the 1920s.

⁴⁸ Cocaine was also popular, touted by no other than Sigmund Freud. Le Vin Mariani, created by French chemist Angelo Mariani (1838-1914) was made of Bordeaux wine and coca leaves from Peru. It contained 7 mg of cocaine per bottle. The wine was legal and authorized in France until 1910.

⁴⁹ In the United States, paregoric could be purchased without a medical prescription until 1970.

to heal since the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁰ It could be purchased in any pharmacy without a doctor's prescription [25].

The German pharmacist Friedrich Sertürner had isolated morphine from opium in 1804.⁵¹ The drug was heralded as a milestone by the medical community because of its reliability and long-lasting effects. An alkaloid constituent of opium called codeine was isolated by French chemist Pierre Robiquet in 1832.⁵² In 1898, Heinrich Dreser, of the Bayer Pharmaceutical Company, advocated using a new cough suppressant made from adding two acetyl groups to the morphine molecule.⁵³ This "heroic" drug called Heroin® was four times stronger than morphine and presumed to be safer than codeine. The company sent flyers and free samples to physicians throughout Europe and the United States. By 1899, Bayer was producing more than a ton of Heroin® per year, and exporting to 23 countries. In one early study, G. Strube of the Medical University Clinic of Berlin gave oral doses of 5 and 10 mg of Heroin® to fifty phthisis patients, effectively relieving their coughs and producing sleep. He noted no unpleasant reactions, except that patients continued taking the drug after he stopped prescribing it [26].

Despite the absence of a cure for tuberculosis, many affected persons

survived, and only some progressed to the morbid phase marked by hemoptysis and death. Galen (200 AD), who had described tubercles (nodules) and scrofula (enlargement of lymph nodes of the neck), said treatment was challenging because the lung was always moving as part of the breathing process. He suggested rest, opium, and wiping the patient's feet with butter. If they had scrofula, they could be touched by a king or queen (the touching cure for scrofula actually dates to Clovis in 496 AD). Sea travel was proposed by British physician, Scot Ebenezer Gilchrist in 1769, and even horseback riding was believed to be beneficial. The British poet, John Keats was foolishly told that starvation and lying still in a dark room with closed windows would delay galloping consumption (Figure 13).



Figure 13: Cristobal Rojas *La Miseria* (1886)

Many patients allowed themselves to be bled, consistent with the "four humors" concept of disease still espoused by some medical practitioners.⁵⁴ Others were offered an ever-changing number of herbs and spices. Hospitals resisted admitting patients with advanced disease because they did not want to be known as places to die. Instead, physicians encouraged home care, which was both more practical and less expensive.

⁵⁰ As late as 1957, Eubispasme, a concoction of black pills made from codethyline (an alkaloid extracted from opium) was available in France without a prescription. It was commonly used for treating colds and the flu (known as *La grippe*).

⁵¹ Friedrich Sertürner (1783-1841), Heinrich Dreser (1860-1924).

⁵² The name, "codeine" comes from the Greek word that refers to the head of the poppy plant.

⁵³ Concurrently, The Bayer Company was creating another acetyl derivative, this time using salicylic acid in an effective non-narcotic, non-addictive painkiller alternative called Aspirin®.

⁵⁴ The Hippocratic "four humors" are: Black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood.

By the late 19th century, the still incurable wasting disease had become romanticized by poets, novelists and opera librettists.⁵⁵

The paucity of effective pharmaceutical treatments probably led to recommendations of more conservative treatment methods; good hygiene, opiates for pain control, and travel to warmer climates for rest and relaxation [27]. The first sanatorium was established by a German physician, Hermann Brehmer in the Bavarian alpine village of Göbersdorf.⁵⁶ An “open-air cure” had been advocated since the 1840’s, when British physician, George Bodington, who resisted dark, sun-deprived isolation practices, suggested fresh air, a healthy diet, rest, and carefully supervised exercise. The basis for sanatorium-based care was presented at the 1899 Berlin International Congress on Tuberculosis, but many objections were raised. Sanatoriums were available only for relatively wealthy families, could only be recommended for a small fraction of patients, and death rates were similar to those for patients treated at home [28].⁵⁷

⁵⁵ See Violetta in Verdi’s *La Traviata* (1853), Antonia in Jacques Offenbach’s *Les Contes d’Hoffmann* (1881), and Mimi in Giacomo Puccini’s *La Bohème* (1896). “Amo Mimi, ma ho paura” (I love Mimi, but I am afraid) sings Mimi’s lover, Rodolfo, before abandoning her, probably in fear of infection.

⁵⁶ Sanatorium-based care for weeks, months or years isolated infected and potentially contagious patients from the general public. Highly supervised and disciplined care included supervised diets, prescribed periods of rest and exercise, and a variety of pharmaceutical and nonpharmaceutical treatments for symptom control. Sanatoria and open-air hospitals became popular around the world until the discovery of streptomycin and effective antibiotic treatment of tuberculosis. Many were turned into hospitals or long-term care facilities for patients with other illnesses.

⁵⁷ With the emergence of multidrug resistant tuberculosis, there may be a renewed role for the sanatorium. In South Africa for example, lack of

*

“Consider your son as mine and I shall take care of your necessary expenses.”

Amedeo Garsin

Rather than spend months with Amedeo in a sanatorium in Switzerland or France, Modigliani’s mother fulfilled her promise to show him the museums of Italy. Her brother said he would cover all expenses. For more than six months, mother and son sojourned in Torre del Greco, Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice, the Amalfi coast, and Capri. She nursed her son throughout his convalescence; read to him, and even slept in his room until he recovered. He sketched endlessly and visited countless museums, monuments, and churches. Of Rome, the seventeen year old wrote, “Its feverish delights, its tragic landscape, its beautiful and harmonious forms—all these things are mine through my thought and my work [29].” Clearly his sensitivity allowed him to appreciate beauty in all its forms, but like many young people, he had a premonition of his destiny. “I am myself the plaything of strong forces that are born and die in me [30],” he said. Was this an early sign of depression and anxiety he could not control, or the expression of a need to consume himself in his art?

Not long after his return to Livorno, Dedo contracted scarlet fever. He spent time convalescing in the Austrian Alps before moving to Florence with his friend and fellow artist Oscar Ghiglia, eight years his senior. He studied with Fattori at the Scuola Libera de Nudo, and in 1903 moved to

funds and a paucity of isolation beds have resulted in patients with drug-resistant tuberculosis being systematically discharged into the community when their treatment fails. These patients often live a year or more, infecting family members and caregivers. Sanatorium-based treatment would provide these chronically ill and infectious patients with long-term supportive care and supervised medical treatment.

Venice, where he enrolled in the Instituto of Fine Arts. He became friends with other painters such as Fabio Mauroner⁵⁸, Guido Cadorin, Umberto Brunelleschi, and the soon to be famous Umberto Boccioni.⁵⁹ He painted, read and wrote poetry. Perhaps he became acquainted with the poems of Guido Gorrazaon (1883-1907) and Sergio Corazzini (1886-1916), members of what became known as the Crepuscolarismo (The Twilight School), and whose work focused on the tedium of ordinary life in the melancholic shadow of death. Both were Modigliani's age, and like him, would die young from tuberculosis.

Amedeo was between 5 ft 3 inches and 5 ft 6 inches tall, with a short mass of tangled black hair, a large forehead, and a somewhat muscular build. Photographs show him to have had fine hands and slender fingers. Money from his family allowed him to maintain a wardrobe that matched his good looks and seductive charm. Yet, he lived like an impoverished artist-playboy (Figure 14).



Figure 14: Modigliani in Venice, 1903

⁵⁸ His only known surviving work from this period was a pastel portrait of the artist Fabio Mauroner (c. 1905). The painting disappeared shortly after it was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1930.

⁵⁹ Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), would be the leading theoretician of Futurist art before his untimely death in World War I.

Five letters to his friend Oscar Ghiglia, provide insight to the direction of his life philosophy [31]. In one he wrote, "The man that cannot leave behind everything that is old and rotten is not a man, but a bourgeois ... can't suffering serve to find yourself and to make your dream stronger than your desire. Always let your aesthetic needs prevail over your social obligations."

During the next two years, Modigliani spent less time at the academy and more time conversing about art, spiritualism, philosophy, and literature. After all, he really wanted to be a sculptor, and was painting only for a lack of something better to do [32].⁶⁰ Exhibiting a nocturnal restlessness that would haunt him the rest of his life, he drank alcohol and began using hashish, although probably not abundantly. While he may have been like other young people looking for new experiences, it is also possible that a sense of impending doom contributed to changes in his personality. Tuberculosis was known throughout Europe as the captain of death, and the dire signal of blood on his own lips a few years earlier would not have gone unnoticed. He knew the tragic ends of other consumptive artists who succumbed to the disease. Searching to define his identity, Modigliani was aware of his death sentence, and that life would be short.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Amedeo said this to the Chilean artist Manuel Ortiz de Zárat. Modigliani spent some time in the village of Carrara, only 35 miles to the North of Livorno, with the aim of working in marble. This experiment must have been unsuccessful, as no works from the period have survived.

⁶¹ Many of Modi's friends would also die in misery. Max Jacob died in a German concentration camp. Beatrice Hastings would kill herself, Simon Theroux and Jean Alexandre died in her twenties from tuberculosis. His model and lover Elvira would be killed as a suspected spy. The dealers Paul Guillaume and Leopold Zborowski would die at age 43; the first a suspected murder, the other destitute despite having compiled a priceless art collection. Guillaume's

*

"This astonishes me...I believed I was something more."

Comte de Lautréamont⁶²

Increasing poverty, population displacement from rural settings to larger cities, unemployment, and compulsory military service prompted many Italians to emigrate to the United States and other countries. Modigliani had been exempted from service by the Italian draft board because of his fragile health. He was without work, and had no university degree. With the unexpected death of his uncle, his means of financial support were vanishing. He had no employment history, had no desire to work, and was barely interested even in selling his paintings. He had tried sculpting, although somewhat unsuccessfully. Although he studied the works of Italian Renaissance and Sienese masters (Figure 15), visited the best museums in Italy, and experienced firsthand the most beautiful examples of Italian art, he was getting nowhere.



Figure 15: *Virgin and child* by Sienese master Neroccio de Landi.

collection is now part of the Paris's Museum of the Orangerie permanent exhibit.

⁶² The Comte de Lautréamont's *Les Chants de Maldoror* was a well known, though difficult to find piece of mid-nineteenth century decadent, bohemian literature. Written by Isidore Ducasse using the invented Lautréamont pen name, Maldoror comes from the French words for sickness or evil (mal), gold (or), and horror (horreur). Ducasse died in Paris in 1870 at the age of 24. His death certificate was signed by a hotel manager who served as coroner, with a bellhop serving as witness.

The wonders of Paris had been extolled to him by the Chilean artist Manuel Ortiz de Zárat [33]. Determined to expand his horizons, the twenty-two year man decided to move. Before he left for the French capital, his mother visited Venice to give him money and a fine edition of Oscar Wilde's *The ballad of Reading Gaol*.

It was late fall of 1905 or early 1906, when Modigliani arrived in Paris by train. At first, he lived in a chic section of the 8th arrondissement called La Madeleine, near where the Rue Royal connects the Church of the Madeleine to the Place de la Concorde [34]. The city had maintained its *fin de siècle* splendor and was hailed as a jewel of modern Europe. The Eiffel Tower was the capital's emblem. It was the tallest building in the world, constructed for the 1899 World exposition, across the Seine river from the Musée de Ethnographie du Trocadero.⁶³ In its shadow, 2.7 million inhabitants roamed through one thousand kilometers of small streets, alleys, and boulevards lined with ten thousand lampposts, half a million electric lights and dozens of art nouveau subway entrances. With an increasing number of foreign artists, writers, and intellectuals streaming into a city already famous for its history and physical beauty, Paris was the cultural center of the western world.

He moved to the Hotel du Poirier, then to the Hotel du Tertre in Montmartre, an area more consistent with his lifestyle and growing antibourgeois ambitions. Only a short walk from the burgeoning commerce of the city center, Montmartre was a tangle of shops, shanties, inexpensive restaurants, and cabarets. He befriended other Jewish artists such as Max Jacob, Chaim Soutine,

⁶³ The Musée du Trocadero was the first museum of anthropology in Paris. It was founded in 1878, but closed in 1935 when the Trocadero Palace was demolished to make way for the Palais du Chaillot, and The Musée de l'Homme.

and Moise Kisling. Dwindling economies obliged him to live in cheap café-hotels. He relied on women and acquaintances for meals and a place to work until he found his first studio on rue Coulaincourt.

Despite poverty, Modigliani maintained the attitude of an Italian prince. He enrolled in the Académie Colarosi, a leading art school attended mostly by foreigners who had not been accepted at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Dressed in a brown corduroy jacket, scarlet scarf and black felt hat, he recited verses from Alighieri Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and quoted from the Italian novelist Gabriele d'Annunzio, whose protagonist, Andrea Sperelli exemplified a life style that included sexual promiscuity, a love for aesthetics, and a decadence representative of late nineteenth century Italy⁶⁴. A rare copy of Le Comte de Lautréamont's book, *Les Chants de Maldoror*, was another literary treasure he carried always in his pocket.⁶⁵

He rented a shed built of tile and wood at 7, Place Jean-Baptiste Clement, on the corner of Rue Lepic, adjacent to the dilapidated building at 13 Rue Ravignan called the Bateau-Lavoir, where Picasso and other artists lived. He befriended a German expressionist painter named Ludwig Meidner, with whom he viewed the Paul Gauguin retrospective at the Salon d'Automn. In December, he met fellow Italian painter Gino Severini, who recalled seeing "small figures or still-lives on pieces of cardboard with very delicate colors and a

refinement of taste that surprised me" in Modigliani's studio [35].⁶⁶

By this time, Amedeo had increased his consumption of alcohol and drugs. Perhaps this was the result of his exploratory nature, or of his need to investigate sources for artistic inspiration. Perhaps he was depressed or had some other emotional and psychological pain that led him to substance abuse and alcohol to ward off inner demons. His grandfather suffered from neurosis. His uncle committed suicide. Ten years hence, his aunt Gabriela would also take her own life, and his aunt Laura would be committed to an insane asylum.⁶⁷

Modi certainly had many of the environmental, personality, and educational characteristics shared by victims of substance abuse. He was alone, away from family control, young, unemployed, and sensitive. He had a pronounced sense of introspection as well as a desire to stimulate and explore his creativity. He was enamored by Baudelaire, who embarked on a voyage of self destruction that provided insight into beauty, truth and the divine. Rimbaud and Verlaine, Nietzsche, D'Annunzio, and Lautréamont were his other literary heroes. He too would have wanted to experience mind-altering substances that might help him explore his own creative fantasies as well as transcend the banality and pain of everyday life. "The artist who is really serious about his work must push his intelligence to its maximum creative power," he wrote. Perhaps this statement justified his urge to explore the boundaries

⁶⁴ Gabriele d'Annunzio (1863-1938). An important novel was *Il piacere*, published 1889.

⁶⁵ Le Comte de Lautréamont, whose real name was Isidore Ducasse, was a Uruguayan poet and writer. *Les Chants de Maldoror* is a book about a man who has forsaken god and mankind. This work and Lautréamont's *Poesies*, were to have substantial influence on modern literature and the surrealist movement.

⁶⁶ Modi kept no official records of his work, and most of what he produced that first year in Paris is either undiscovered or destroyed.

⁶⁷ Modigliani's uncle, Amedeo Garsin died suddenly, probably a suicide, in 1905, shortly before Modigliani was to depart to Paris. His aunt Gabriela would take her own life in 1915, and his aunt Laura would be committed to an insane asylum in 1916.

of his creative genius by indulging in drugs and alcohol.

Furthermore, his psychological malaise may have stemmed from his ambivalent nature. He was heir to a double Mediterranean condition, equally comfortable with Christian religious art as with Hebraic symbolism; he was a sculptor at heart, but found himself painting; he was from a middle class family of intellectuals, but felt rebellious against a mediocre bourgeoisie that did not have the courage to live its dreams; and, despite the constraints of social rules and lack of money, he wanted to maintain the appearance of an aristocratic playboy-artist entitled to live according to a different moral code.

There is still another reason for the young artist's behavior. Tuberculosis is a shameful disease with significant social consequences. Patients often develop chronic chest discomfort and cough. A desire to hide symptoms would be natural. After all, a persistent, nagging cough needs to be suppressed. Alcohol was readily available, inexpensive, socially acceptable, and known to diminish the cough reflex.⁶⁸ Opium and its byproducts were legally used for their antispasmodic, antitussive, sedative, and analgesic properties, as well as recreationally. As a result of the opium trade with China, it was readily available, and frequenting opium dens was a fashionable

68 Antitussives raise the stimulus level at the brain's cough center to diminish the cough reflex. They usually have psychoactive effects. Some syrups (Nyquil, for example) contain as much as 25% alcohol. Even over-the-counter preparations including dextromethorphan and diphenhydramine may cause euphoria, feelings of increased awareness, or sedation. In the United States, it was not until the pure food and drug act of 1906 that pharmaceutical companies were required to provide details regarding the contents of cocaine, opium or cannabis in their products.

pastime for men and women of all classes.⁶⁹ Hashish, made from oils extracted from the cannabis plant, could be smoked, or stylishly served as edible pellets from porcelain dishes [36].⁷⁰

The angst of his own mortality, persistent symptoms, and the burden of searching inward to express himself through art could easily have created a background for depression and decreased self-worth. The young painter and would-be sculptor might have felt compelled to self-medicate, therefore, with drugs, alcohol, and sex. Regardless, his addictions might not only have helped control and camouflage his signs of tuberculosis [37], they might also have alleviated pressures created by his sense of purpose, "... to create my own truth on life, on beauty, and on art."

*

"Modigliani's drawing is supremely elegant. He was our aristocrat."

Jean Cocteau⁷¹ [38]

In late, 1907, the painter Henri Doucet brought Modigliani to 7, Rue du Delta, a house with twelve rooms facing an open meadow fenced off from the street in the

⁶⁹ In the early twentieth century, it was still unbecoming for women to drink alcohol in public places.

⁷⁰ Hashish is composed of trichomes; compressed resin glands from the flowers of the cannabis plant. Its active ingredient is tetrahydrocannabinol. Scientific interest in Hashish resulted from the work of Dr. Jacques-Joseph Moreau (1840s, L'Hopital de Bicetre), known as Moreau de Tours, whose book *On Hashish and Mental Derangement* flew in the face of existing conventional wisdom by suggesting that mental illness resulted from a malfunctioning brain, not from brain damage per se.

⁷¹ Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) was a French novelist, playwright, artist, director, filmmaker and designer, perhaps most known for his novel *Les Enfants Terribles* (1929) and his film interpretation of the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast* (1946).

working district of Montmartre. Doucet had met Modigliani at the Lapin Agile, a hangout for impoverished artists. Modi was being evicted from his studio on the Place Jean-Baptist Clement and had nowhere to go. The house was rented by Dr. Paul Alexandre, a 26 year well-to-do dermatologist who had interned at Lariboisiere Hospital and had a medical practice nearby (Figure 16).



Figure 16: Charcoal sketch of Dr. Paul Alexandre

The doctor was an avid art enthusiast as well as a generous friend and patron. He began collecting Modigliani's work, and would amass more than 400 drawings, 25 paintings and several stone sculptures during the next six years [39, 40].⁷² He exhibited Modigliani's paintings on the delta home's walls, and commissioned Modi for a series of family portraits.

In addition to providing artists with a place to stay, Alexandre and his twenty-one year old brother Jean hosted lively parties they called theatricals. They held hashish sessions where friends could experiment

with the dynamics of drug intoxication. Modigliani introduced Alexandre to his companion, an elegant woman by the name of Maud Abrantes, whom he painted and sketched on several occasions. Maud became pregnant a year later and left for the United States (Modi's role in this is unknown).

Amedeo had settled not far from the Rue Delta, but left many personal belongings and several paintings at the house. His work seemed influenced by other painters. One watercolor, *Head of a woman wearing a hat* (1907) is reminiscent of a Toulouse-Lautrec. The gaunt female figure of his *Sorrowful Nude* (1908) recalls the Madonna by Norwegian painter Edward Munch (1863-1944). *Head of a Girl* (1908) recalls Picasso's Blue Period portraits, as does *The Jewess* (1908), a canvas Modi exhibited along with five other works at the Salon des Indépendants.⁷³ *The Cellist* (1909) has hints of Paul Cezanne (1839-1906) [41], an illustrious post-impressionist who used large patches of color and a technique of filling planar space so that objects are treated "by the cylinder, the cone, the whole placed in perspective so that each side of an object of a plane is directed towards a central point." Modigliani seems to have adopted this methodology in his portraits, combining warm colors with moderately light tones to consistently attract the viewer's eye to the centerpiece of his canvas's two-dimensional world.

⁷² Works from Paul Alexandre's collection are specially numbered and stamped. On July 14, 2014, sixteen drawings from the collection were displayed by antique dealer and art specialist, Richard Nathanson at the Harris Lindsay gallery in London.

⁷³ The Salon des Indépendants was created in 1884 with the objective to allow artists to expose their works to the general public in total freedom and without juries. In 1907, Matisse showed the blue nude, and George Braques showed works that were still inspired from Fauvism. In 1908, more than 6000 works were presented by more than 1000 artists. Modigliani became a member of the Société des Indépendants in 1907.

Modigliani Bohemian or Consumptive

His focus would often be the human face. Modigliani gradually developed a personal, stylistic approach to portraiture that resisted the influences of cubism and artists such as Picasso. Several paintings of Paul Alexandre and his family show an increasingly refined elegance and a firm line. In *The Amazon* (1909), for example, a famous painting of Jean Alexandre's lover, the Baroness Marguerite de Hasse de Villiers, his subject has a chiseled figure with sharp outlines and a riding suit (Figure 17). She refused to purchase the painting, however, because he painted her coat a rich yellow/ochre rather than the original red.



Figure 17: The Amazon (black crayon)

*

"Your real duty is to save your dream."
Amedeo Modigliani

In 1909, Modigliani moved to a studio at 14 Cité Falguière in Montparnasse. Sharing ideas and work space with the Romanian sculptor, Constantin Brancusi, rekindled his desire to work in stone (Figure 18). Ill health, however, prompted a return to Livorno, where he painted *The Beggar*, a piece he brought later back to Paris and sold



Figure 18: Constantin Brancusi
Danaide (1913)

to Paul Alexandre before showing it at the Salon des Independents in 1910 (Figure 19).

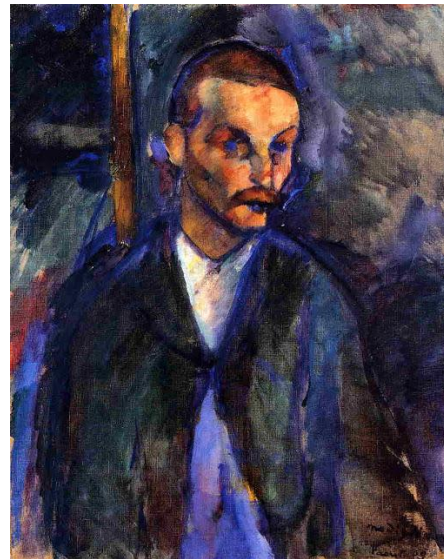


Figure 19: The beggar of Leghorn (1909)

Poor health also prompted a visit from his aunt Laura. She brought him to Normandy, but he quickly returned to his activities in the nation's capital, which included drinking and drugs. "All that was divine in Modigliani only sparkled through a sort of gloom," wrote Russian poet Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966), who was very close to the artist from 1910 to 1911. Perhaps it was the stress of poverty, or disappointment with his life that led him into a downward spiral; perhaps he was feeling alone, disenfranchised, and depressed. He refused to join various art movements of the time, and he had not yet found a dealer to represent him. He was extremely independent, yet sociable, often

joining friends at eateries and other hangouts. His interest in alchemy and spiritualism became prominent, in part influenced by writer and fellow artist Max Jacob. On several occasions between 1909 and 1913, Modigliani added symbols of all sorts onto his work.

As Modigliani devoted more of his time to sculpture, his drawings became reminiscent of Egyptian, Khmer, and African tribal art. He made graphite, crayon, ink, pencil, and watercolor drawings of dozens of caryatids in a variety of poses. The word “caryatid” derives from the Greek word for a woman of Caryae; partly draped figures shown to hold up the roofs of ancient Greek temples. In the early twentieth century, drawings were not viewed by most collectors as works of art on their own, but rather as preliminary pieces for a finished painting or sculpture. Modi’s were not merely preparatory drawings, however, and many appear to be definitive works of art in themselves (Figure 20).

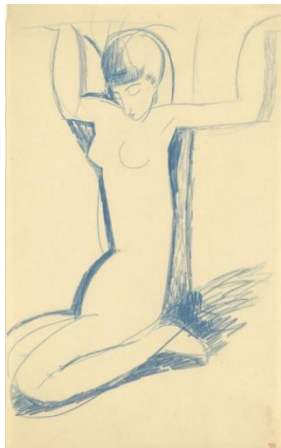


Figure 20: Blue caryatid kneeling

Figures are sketched in profile and full face; kneeling, standing or crouching. They often seem to support some invisible structure outside the confines of the paper. In other figures there is a strong suggestion of Greek archaic art, especially early Cycladic art dating from 2800-2300 B.C. His figures have elegant, elongated forms,

expressionless or absent eyes, and long narrow noses in the center of a symmetrical face. Some wear necklaces, earrings, or headdresses. Others are nude. All have a sculptural character that exudes mystery and feminine sensuality.

Only 28 of Modigliani’s stone sculptures have survived. It is uncertain whether he actually made more. Almost all were carved directly in sandstone or limestone, which is softer than marble, and was mostly quarried from a small eastern French town call Euville, although legend is that he excavated large blocks from nearby construction sites.⁷⁴ They range in size from 60 to 160 centimeters (Figure 21) [42].



Figure 21: Limestone sculpture *Woman's head*. Example of Cycladic art, lower left corner.

Except for a crouching caryatid chiseled in rough stone currently exhibited at New

⁷⁴ Limestone is of calcite origin, usually from deep sea deposits. Sandstone, on the other hand is usually from quartz. The small grains of sediment from sandstone are often visible and can rub off on your hand. Contrary to limestone, sandstone does not effervesce in a weak acidic solution such as vinegar (Limestone does, because of the chemical reaction of calcium carbonate with the acid).

York's Museum of Modern Art, and a few sculptured heads, the pieces have long necks and elongated, oval-shaped faces with straight, arrow-like noses that occupy a central balancing position in the piece.⁷⁵ Modigliani referred to his sculptures as "columns of tenderness", and according to Jacob Epstein, who visited with Modigliani when he was in Paris working on his *Tomb of Oscar Wilde*: "His studio was filled with nine or ten of those long heads which were suggested by African masks, and one figure. They were carved in stone; at night he would place candles on the top of each one and the effect was that of a primitive temple."

Modi envisioned his sculptures in an imaginary "Temple of beauty." Four were exhibited in the Cubist Room alongside works by Kupka, Le Fauconnier and Metzinger at the Salon d'Automn of 1912. The installation was called *Têtes formant un ensemble décoratif*.⁷⁶ Other pieces, along with works by Alexander Archipenko and Fernand Leger, were depicted as Cubist Masters. Referring to Modigliani's work in stone, Paul Alexandre wrote, "Almost all of them are in effect the same statue started over and over again, as he tried to achieve the definitive form—which I believe he never attained" [43].

Sometime between April and June 1913, Modi returned to Livorno for what would be the last time. War was imminent, and because of various alliances, Italy's position for or against the Austro-Germans was not yet clear. The 28 year old had a persistent cough and his friends had seen him spitting blood on more than one occasion. He may

have been hospitalized, as according to witnesses, he arrived in Livorno with a shaved head (it was customary to shave patients' heads for sanitary reasons [44]). He left many of his sculptures with Paul Alexandre, with whom he corresponded frequently, signing one postcard from May 6, 2013, "the resuscitated one."

His family wanted him to stay in Italy, but Amedeo preferred Paris because his work was starting to be appreciated there. Jean Alexandre died from tuberculosis only a few days before Modi's return to the French capital. He was two years the painter's junior, and was studying to become a pharmacist. Paul Alexandre was mobilized at the onset of the war, and would not be released from military service until general demobilization six years later. There is no evidence the doctor and Amedeo communicated any time between his enlistment and Modigliani's death in 1920.

*

"With Modigliani it is, of course, not just a matter of painting, but also of poetry, of literature, of everything. It is about the philosophical meaning of life."

Dr. Paul Alexandre [45]

In 1914, Paris was a city at war. There were curfews and rationings. Many cafés were closed. There were few art shows, but Modigliani accelerated his production and sketched constantly. According to legend, he was again exempted from military service because of poor health. He was drinking abundantly and had a tumultuous two year relationship with a British poetess and writer named Beatrice Hastings. She became a preferred model with whom he would socialize in the cafés of Boulevard Raspail, attend parties hosted by artists and friends,

⁷⁵ Several sculptures were shown in the Cubism room at the Salon des Indépendants in 1911, as well as in a photograph of the Portuguese artist Amedeo Suza Cardoso's (1887-1918) studio.

⁷⁶ Translation from the French: "decorative ensemble".

and picnic in Montparnasse cemetery (Figure 22).⁷⁷



Figure 22: *Beatrice Hastings* (1916)

Like many artists in the area, he frequently went to La Ruche, a three story, circular beehive-like building with almost 100 small artist studios in the Passage Dantzig.⁷⁸ He attended the Académie Ranson at 7 rue Joseph-Bara, and studied alongside other foreigners at the Académie Russe, behind the Gare Montparnasse.

He was friends with a British journalist named Charles Beadle, who would later describe Modi's drunken and drug-induced behaviors [46]. The art dealer Paul Guillaume (1891-1934) began representing him in 1914 (Figure 23).⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Resting place today for Jean-Paul Sartre, Constantin Brancusi, Simone de Beauvoir, Charles Baudelaire, Susan Sontag, and Samuel Becket.

⁷⁸ Including Apollinaire, Rilke, Zadkine, Lipchitz, and Chagall.

⁷⁹ Paul Guillaume would become known for his promotions of African tribal art. After his death in 1934, his wife expanded his collection, eventually donating his 20th century paintings to the Musée de l'Orangerie where they are on display today.



Figure 23: Modigliani in dark coat and round felt tip hat. Paul Guillaume is at far left.

Guillaume also represented Picasso and Brancusi. Despite the paucity of opportunities in war torn Europe, he found Modigliani a new studio in Montmartre, and arranged several shows of the artist's work. One was at the Whitechapel Gallery in London; another at the 1916 exhibition of fashion designer Germaine Bongard. Two sculptures were displayed with Brancusi's in an Exhibition of Sculpture held at the Modern Gallery in New York. Modigliani's work was applauded in leading art publications such as *Magazine 291*, and in a book called *African Negro Art: Its influence on modern art*. In an exhibit at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich, his paintings were shown with those of Dadaists Jean Arp and Wassili Kadinski.

Modigliani's stature was confirmed when his paintings were shown alongside those of other greats of the contemporary art scene in what may have been the most important art exhibition of the time; The Salon d'Antin's L'Art Moderne en France, in July 1916 [47].⁸⁰ Here, Picasso exhibited his famous *Les Femmes d'Alger* (O.J. version O) (Figure 24).⁸¹

⁸⁰ Including de Chirico, Derain, Kees van Dongen, Kisling, Raoul Dufy, and Marie Vassilieff.

⁸¹ "*Les Femmes d'Alger*" was so new that Gertrud Stein called it a cataclysm. It had been completed in 1907. Many believe it to be the defining painting of Modern art. Modigliani's frequent inclusion in exhibits showing the works by Picasso, Matisse and other

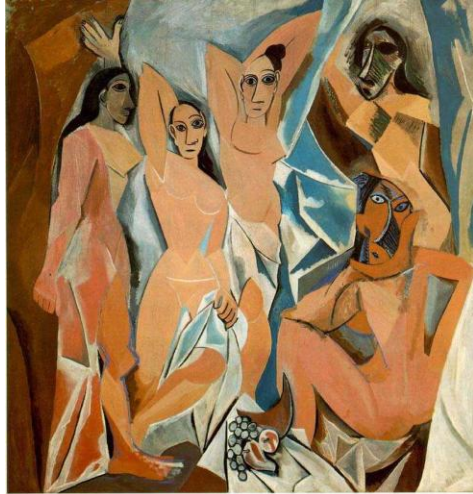


Figure 24: Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* (1935)

Despite Modi's success, however, he was usually inebriated. Wandering the boulevards of Montparnasse and Montmartre he would offer sketches to people in exchange for a drink. By the end of 1916, he had separated from Beatrice Hastings,⁸² and ended a liaison with a Canadian consumptive named Simone Thiroux,⁸³ with whom he had a child he refused to acknowledge.

There is no doubt that Modi's technique allowed him to concentrate entirely on what he wanted to extract from the personality of his subjects. He painted constantly; some say he completed a new painting every six days. His portraits were of lovers,

leaders of the avant-garde speak to his increasing stature, which runs contrary to the myth that he was a starving artist who remained virtually unknown until after his death.

⁸² Beatrice Hastings was the pen name of Emily Haigh, a British writer and critic married to A.R. Orage, editor of a well known paper called *The New Age*. In addition to Modigliani, her lovers included the artist Max Jacob, writer Katherine Mansfield, novelist Charles Beadle, and writer/painter Wyndham Lewis. She committed suicide in 1943.

⁸³ Simone Thiroux (1892-1921) died from tuberculosis. Despite several attempts, she never was able to convince Modigliani to recognize the child, a son named Serge Gerard, as his.

girlfriends, and colleagues such as Picasso, Kisling, Cocteau, Soutine, Leon Bakst, Lipchitz, Guillaume, as well as of anonymous persons and models (Figures 25, 26, and 27).⁸⁴



Figure 25: *Chaim Soutine*, (1915)



Figure 26: *Max Jacob* (1916)



Figure 27: *Leopold Zborowski* (1919)

⁸⁴ Modigliani's life was marked by a number of amorous adventures. In order of appearance in his life, his major liaisons were with Maud Abrantes, Nina Hemnett, Elvira, also known as la Quique (Marseillais slang for a man's sex organ, or perhaps short for la chica or the chick), Beatrice Hastings, Simone Thiroux, and Jeanne Hébuterne. He may have had an amorous relationship with Ana Ahkmatova and Luna Czechowska. There is no evidence that he showed any concerns about spreading his disease to others, or about impregnating his lovers.

Paintings named *The Seated woman*, *Man with a hat*, *Adrienne*, and *Elvira*, were done within a consistent framework of shapes, shadows, and layers. Using a palette of warm, rich colors reminiscent of the Italian Renaissance masters, he used vibrant, living backgrounds and large plaques of color to provide a support for his model placed sculpturally at the forefront of the canvas. Often outlined in black, his subject consumes the viewer's attention. There was nothing simplistic or caricature-like in his paintings. His brushwork was elaborate.⁸⁵ Each painting was extremely organized, and his use of golden measures was almost constant.⁸⁶

In many of the later portraits (1916-1919), our gaze is drawn to the subject's face, where resides an air of melancholy or contemplation. Some are distinguished by their angularity; others, by the repetition of a dominant geometric shape. Flowing curves form arms and torsos, intermixed with prominent lines that create an almost chiseled appearance unless we are led to areas governed by softer, more harmonious contours (Figure 28). The eyes are almost always asymmetrical. In some, they are dark, closed or covered in black cross-hatchings. In others, they are painted a soft, light blue-gray. "With one eye you look out at the world," Modigliani said by way of an explanation [48], "with the other you look in

at yourself." Perhaps the artist is asking us to look elsewhere for the essence of his models. To contemplate a "reality behind their eyes" [49], we must examine his subjects in their entirety; slender, swan-like necks, an elongated nose as an axis for the face... when their heads are tilted, does it mean they are listening for something? For what are they listening? To what is Modigliani bidding us to listen?

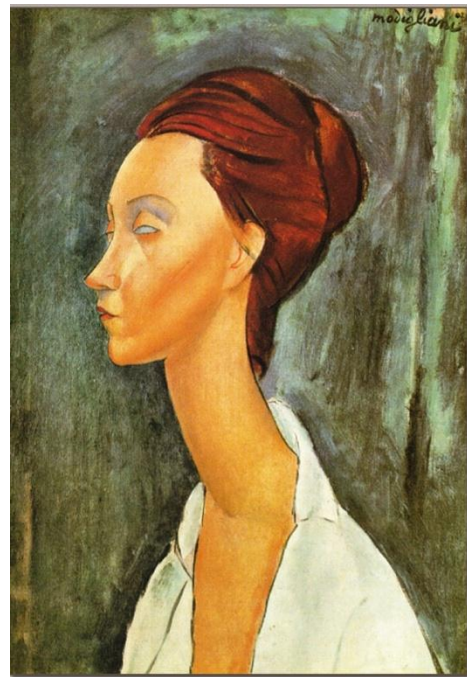


Figure 28: *Lunia Czechowska* (1919)

Although similar in shape, form, and construct to his portraits of adults, it is from his paintings of children that I feel radiates the most profound sensibility. Many were done in 1918, during his fourteen month sojourn in the South of France, after he knew he would become a father. I sense a sadness emanating from the painter's heart. He had been chronically ill since childhood. He lived in a foreign city without the mother who had devoted herself to nursing him to health. He was submerged in the depths of alcohol addiction, could barely survive financially, and was devoured by a need to

⁸⁵ The organized construction, complex layering, and consistent brush strokes used by Modigliani were discovered using modern techniques to detect forgeries. These include pigment analysis, radiography, ultraviolet fluorescence, electron microscopy, infrared reflectography, gas chromatography, and mass spectrometry.

⁸⁶ As a student of Renaissance masters, he most surely was aware of the golden ratio used to establish beauty and balance. The Cubists too were aware of this rule, and even held an exhibit called, "The Golden Ratio exhibition of 1912".

independently explore beauty in his own, unique way.⁸⁷

There is no joy in any of these portraits of children; each engenders melancholy, and emits a tenderness that invites consolation. In my favorite, *Marie*, the girl's black hair is pulled back except for a few tussles falling over her forehead (Figure 29).⁸⁸



Figure 29: *Marie* (1919)

Its color matches the darkness of her sweater. A knitted scarf is wrapped around her covered, swan-like neck. Warm facial tones and a light-colored hair ribbon contrast with her dark clothes to make her stand out on a vibrant, fence-like layered, vertical background. She is coquette, with an oval face and a turned-up nose. Her barely tilted head is turned slightly to the right to expose

⁸⁷ By 1910, most physicians were admitting that addiction was more than a moral vice. It could cross all social, gender, racial, and economic classes, and be described in physical as well as psychological terms. Many acknowledged that its origins were often iatrogenic. By World War I, addiction and its treatment had become a field for medical specialization.

⁸⁸ 1918, aka as *Marie, daughter of the people*. Oil on canvas, 62 x 50 cm. Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel, Switzerland. Ceroni catalogue no. 253.

a single earring. She does not smile, but her pursed, crimson lips beckon deeper examination, so much they stand out against the apricot skin-toned colors of her face. Her jaw is set determinedly, and her flushed cheeks are prominent. The eyes are asymmetrical and without pupils. One is hazy gray, whereas the other is partially closed, dark and squinting. She appears wistful, yet confused; annoyed perhaps, yet indomitable, as if she were challenging us to guess what she is thinking.

The painter's finances were actually better than they had ever been. "I'm working and if I am sometimes worried, at least I am not as short of money as I was before," he wrote to his mother. Soon he would tell her he no longer needed an allowance [50]. By 1917, he had met a nineteen year art student by the name of Jeanne Hébuterne (Figure 30) [51].



Figure 30: Jeanne Hébuterne, age 19.

She was nicknamed coconut (noix de coco) because of her pale complexion and reddish brown hair. She studied at the Académie Colarossi, where Modigliani often went to practice life drawings. Her conservative, Catholic parents did not approve of the liaison, and she continued to live at home. Modi's new manager was an ambitious young Polish art dealer named Leopold Zborowsky, who also represented Utrillo and Soutine. The dealer provided

Amedeo with a comfortable apartment in which to prepare a series of nudes that were exhibited in a one man show at the Galerie Berthe Weill. A sketch of the naked Jeanne was used on the cover of the exhibit's catalogue (Figure 31). The show was interrupted by police requesting that a painting of a woman with pubic hair be removed.

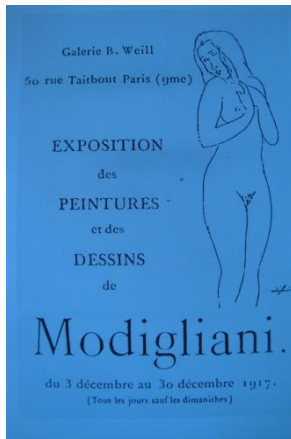


Figure 31: Exhibit catalogue.

Between 1916 and 1919, Modigliani painted more than two dozen nudes; some partially clad, others fully exposed in sitting and reclining positions. While a few may have been inspired by the erotism of works by Ingres, Boucher, Gorgione, Titian, Cabanel, and Manet, all are uniquely and consistently identifiable as Modigliani [52].⁸⁹ These paintings are seductive without being vulgar. In some, there is a feigned modesty. In others, there is an almost carnal and provocative nakedness.⁹⁰ Their commonality is a warm, glowing sensuality

⁸⁹ Modigliani's Reclining Nude from the back (Nu Couche de dos, oil on canvas, Ceroni no. 203, 1917 of the Barnes Collection), reminds one of Boucher's The Dark-Haired Odalisque (1745?) in the Musée du Louvre.

⁹⁰ Modigliani derobes the Madonna (Ceroni no.127), or prompts the viewer to linger in the presence of what might be a postcoital repose (Ceroni no.198), always enticing a gaze toward the model's private parts.

that calls our gaze to linger (Figure 32). With the women's apricot skin tones and inviting eyes, even when they are closed in a facsimile of sleep, Modigliani transcends what historian Werner Schmalenbach called "the objective beauty of the female body" [53].

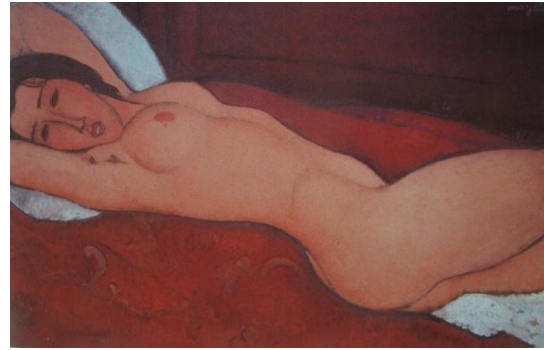


Figure 32: *Reclining nude* (1918)

*

"And all men kill the thing they love."

Oscar Wilde

In 1918, Modi's life seemed anything but accursed. He was painting. His art was recognized. He had a love connection with a younger woman who was also an artist, and he was going to be a father. Paris, however, was being threatened. Air-raids and shells from Germany's "Big Bertha" cannons terrorized the city. That spring, more than half a million French citizens abandoned the capital and fled south. Later that spring, Modi accompanied his pregnant girlfriend and her mother to Cagnes-sur-Mer, a small town on the French Riviera. He lived in Nice for a time with Russian cubist artist Leopold Survage, and also at 13 Rue de France, one block inland from the beach. He struggled to find models, but did many sketches and several paintings of children and young people. His art was flourishing,

and Zborowski was working diligently to find buyers.

On November 29, 1918, Jeanne gave birth to a daughter at the St. Roch Maternity Hospital.⁹¹ According to biographers, and for reasons that are still unclear, Modigliani never bothered to go to city hall, and neglected to officially acknowledge the child. The couple lived for a time with friends of Zborowski; the painter Anders Osterlind and his wife Rachel, in their villa on the Chemin des Collettes in Cannes. A portrait of Rachel, who was terminally ill with tuberculosis, shows a pale, slender faced woman with dark hair posing reflectively with her hand against her right cheek (Figure 33). The portrait is among the few in which Amedeo painted the eyes with pupils.



Figure 33: Rachel Osterlind photo and portrait

⁹¹ Jeanne Modigliani (1918-1984) was fourteen months old when she was placed into the care of Modigliani's sister. She was brought up in Italy, but later moved to France she was active in the French Resistance during World War II. She had two daughters, Anne and Laure. She wrote a biography of her father that was published in 1958 (Orion Press), and otherwise enhanced her revenues by authenticating some of Modigliani's work. According to French law, the moral right to authenticate, and therefore potentially financially benefit from an artist's estate is passed on to the heirs.

While Modigliani was in Southern France, nine paintings and fifty drawings were acclaimed alongside works by Picasso, Leger, and Matisse at the Mansard Gallery in London. The British critic, Roger Fry wrote, "The beautiful variety and play of his surfaces is one of the remarkable things about Modigliani's art." Despite dwindling health, Modigliani continued to paint and drink. Many of the twenty or so portraits of Jeanne Hébuterne show her in a variety of poses and often, in various stages of her pregnancy (Figure 34).⁹²



Figure 34: *Jeanne Hébuterne with sweater* (1918)

In some of the paintings, she is wearing a hat. In others, her hair is in plaits, in a bun, or flowing elegantly unbound to her shoulders. Each portrait has a gentle and eloquent roundness. As in most of his other paintings from this period, Jeanne's neck is almost always exaggeratingly long, but her face is soft. Describing them, the French essayist Claude Roy would write "... the light bathing this picture is the light of adoration." [54].

⁹² Jeanne also was an artist. One of her intimate pencil sketches of Modigliani shows him wearing a turned up hat, reading his book in the lamplight (Figure 35).

On May 27, 1919, about six months after the armistice, Modigliani returned to Paris, leaving Jeanne and his daughter behind. Bohemian life as it was known was ending [55]. Europe had been devastated by World War I. Many of the avant-garde artists had been killed, and if not, their sentiments about life had been permanently altered. Marxism had taken on a new meaning marked by the promises of the Russian revolution. In art and literature, a growing Dada movement was expanded upon by the Surrealists led by Andre Breton. If bohemians had made a claim to live life for art's sake, the surrealists declared there was life beyond art, even in the face of modern social, economic and, political issues. Soon, there would be an influx of wealthy expats from abroad. Along with celebrated European and North American artists and thinkers, they would change the way art was perceived in the world.⁹³

In Paris, Amedeo settled first in Port Royal, spending time with a Polish woman

⁹³ The next "Bohemia" would be Chelsea and New York City in the 1960s, when a new kind of music would accompany the pop art movement, a revolution in fashion design, antiwar movements, and a rage of drug addiction and sexual promiscuity. Subsequently, after a time when long hair, drugs, rock music, and antiestablishment practices had become part of ordinary life, there would be a period marked by the decadent 80's, a time when a new generation of Bohemians, among whom the neo-expressionist artist Jean Michel Basquiat (1960-1988) would become an iconoclastic and self-destructive messenger for a demi-monde torn apart by AIDS and self-aggrandizing, money hungry wall street mavens. Basquiat was a creative subway artist, primitive portraitist, and heroin addict. Unkempt and paranoid, he screamed in bold color his critiques of oppression and hypocrisy before dying at the age of 27 from an overdose on 57 Great Jones Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side (Figure 36). Similar to Modigliani, his life, behaviors, and addictions would become legend; prices for his artwork would soar astronomically after his death, and disputes over his estate would linger to this day.

by the name of Lunia Czechowska, a friend of the Zborowskis. Lunia helped find a wet nurse outside Paris for Modigliani's daughter after Jeanne arrived, as she was already pregnant again. By this time, he had seventeen major exhibits to his name, including a one man show and displays of his work in Great Britain, the United States, and Switzerland. He had been managed by two exceptional art dealers who also represented some of the major painters of the early 20th century, and repeatedly showed paintings at the Salon d'Automn (1907, 1912) and Salon des Independents (1908, 1910, 1911). As Kenneth Wayne, curator of the Albright-Knox Art gallery in Buffalo, New York stated in his preface to *Modigliani and the Artists of Montparnasse* [56], "Modigliani was indeed a major figure during his own lifetime. His contemporaries took notice of the fact that he was gifted in three media: painting, sculpture, and drawing...The large number of lifetime exhibitions is an indication of the artist's ambition."



Figure 35: Jeanne Hebuterne's pencil sketch of Modigliani (1918?)



Figure 36: Example of work by modern Bohemia artist Jean-Michel Basquiat (1981)

In June, Jeanne joined Modigliani in his small, two room apartment at 8 rue de la Grande Chaumière, next door to the Académie Colarossi and very close to the corner of Boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse at the Carrefour Vavin, today named Pablo Picasso. They were close to the Jardin du Luxembourg, from where they could walk to the Boulevard Saint Michel, past the Pantheon, down to the banks of the Seine, Ile Saint Louis, and the Notre Dame Cathedral. On July 7, 1919 Amedeo wrote Jeanne a note on which he promised to marry her [57].



Figure 37: Last known photograph of Modigliani (1919)

Modigliani was drinking constantly. His health had taken another turn for the worse, but the thirty-five year old artist was still painting (Figure 37). A drawing called *Woman's Head*, appeared in the autumn issue of *Arts and Letters* (1919). In December, four paintings were exhibited at the 1920 Salon D'Automne. Modi, however, was often seen wandering around Montparnasse. He had lost most if not all of his teeth, and coughed up blood. In a letter to Amedeo's older brother after Modi's death, dealer Leopold Zborowski said that Modigliani had a history of kidney problems that usually resolved spontaneously, and that he had visited his baby daughter outside Paris three weeks before becoming ill.

Perhaps Modigliani was already manifesting the first signs of tubercular meningitis, a usually chronic infection of the meninges, caused when tuberculosis bacteria invade the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord, creating small abscesses called microtubercles.⁹⁴ These can rupture into the brain, spinal substance, or subarachnoid space, provoking a severe inflammatory response. Initial symptoms are vague and include fatigue, irritability, and loss of appetite. These evolve gradually over two to eight weeks, to more obvious signs of illness such as headache, fever, vomiting, confusion, neck stiffness, and seizures. Unless treated immediately, stupor, delirium, coma, and death result [58].

The disease occurs as a complication of acute primary infection, or more frequently as a reactivation of latent infection or complication of an existing lesion. It should be suspected in anyone with suggestive symptoms and a history of tuberculosis disease or exposure. The incidence of tuberculous meningitis usually reflects the incidence of tuberculosis in the community. About 10% of patients with tuberculosis elsewhere develop central nervous system disease. Tuberculous meningitis can be diagnosed on examination of the cerebral spinal fluid (CSF), usually obtained by lumbar puncture, which shows raised protein, moderately low glucose and chloride, and a lymphocyte predominance. Gram stain is negative and acid-fast bacilli are rarely found. Bacilli may be cultured

⁹⁴ The meninges, from the ancient Greek word for membrane, are small membranes surrounding and protecting the central nervous system. In mammals, there are three layers: the dura mater, the arachnoid mater, and the pia mater. The dura mater is attached to the skull. The subarachnoid space is filled with cerebrospinal fluid. This fluid serves as a shock absorber for the brain, circulates nutrients and chemicals removed from the blood, and removes waste products from the brain.

from the CSF but this may take several weeks. CSF adenosine deaminase may be elevated, and raised intracranial pressure is usually noted. Today, we know that CSF staining sensitivities are less than 20%, and that evidence of active tuberculosis is present in less than half the cases. Therefore, computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) findings of tuberculomas, inflammatory exudates, hydrocephalus, and vasculitis help confirm diagnosis.⁹⁵ Because disease progression is not linear, and delays in diagnosis are dangerous, empiric treatment is usually begun without requiring bacteriologic proof.⁹⁶

Modigliani probably spent most of the week of January 14 to January 22 in his apartment. He was extremely ill, and may have seen a doctor daily. Physicians diagnosed a kidney ailment, but more than one report states he was coughing up blood. Bed rest was recommended. Jeanne was with him, but eight months pregnant and of little help. The studio was cold and without running water or central heating. His old friend Manuel Ortiz de Zárat, who lived in the same building, visited him [59]. "I have only a little piece of brain left..." Modigliani told him, "...I know this is the end."⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Today, Tubercular meningitis is usually classified into three stages (stage I: alert and oriented without focal neurological deficits, Stage II: presence of a Glasgow coma score of 14 to 11 and focal deficits, Stage III: coma score of 10 or less with or without focal deficits). Papilloedema may or may not be present on fundoscopic examination. Neck stiffness is the most frequent physical findings in all stages of the disease.

⁹⁶ Modern treatment may last up to a year. Although more than 80% of patients survive, about 25% may have residual brain damage, in part as a result of delays in diagnosis.

⁹⁷ This is in contradiction to reports that claim that Modigliani was found unconscious in the arms of Jeanne Hébuterne, surrounded by bottles of wine and

On January 22, the now unconscious artist was moved to a hospital for indigent patients, not far from Montparnasse (Figure 38).⁹⁸ He died there on Saturday, January 24 at 8:50 pm.



Figure 38: Hôpital de la Charité Hospital where Modigliani died on January 24, 1920.

Physicians must have known something of his medical history, because the cause of death was tuberculous meningitis.⁹⁹ Jeanne Hébuterne flung herself from the fifth floor window of her parent's apartment two days later, killing herself and her unborn child. In Modigliani's studio was an unfinished portrait of a Greek composer with whom he

empty cans of sardines (sardines are an excellent source of energy as they are high in protein, and can be easily chewed by an edentulous person).

⁹⁸ Originally built by Marie de Medicis in 1613, L'Hôpital de la Charité was between the boulevard St. Germain and La rue Jacob. It was absorbed by L'Assistance Publique. In 1927, it was demolished and the Faculté de Medicine de Paris built in its place. Only La Chapelle Saint Wladimir was preserved, with its small amphitheater where Laennec lectured from 1823 to 1826. Drs. Weill-Halle and Turpin administered the first Calmette and Guérin vaccination (BCG) against tuberculosis here to a three month old child in 1921.

⁹⁹ Modigliani was buried January 27 at Père Lachaise cemetery. The funeral was paid for by his brother Emmanuele, and was attended by the who's who of avant-garde artists in Paris at the time. Jeanne Hébuterne was buried without ceremony in the cemetery of Bagneux. It would be several years before the Modigliani family succeeded in having her body moved to Père Lachaise, where she lies with him for eternity.

spent New Year's Eve.¹⁰⁰ The words, "Hic Incipit Vita Nuova," were inscribed on the painting: *Here begins a new life*.¹⁰¹

So too, a new life began for Amedeo Clement Modigliani. Only years after his death, prices soared to record heights. Many forgeries exist, and controversy persists regarding complete catalogues of his major work [60]. In truth, there are probably less than 400 authentic oils, many of which are in private collections. In 2010, a limestone head sold at Sotheby's for \$53 million, and a nude from 1917 sold for almost \$70 million. In February, 2013, a 1919 portrait of Jeanne Hébuterne sold at Christies in London for \$42 million.

The contradictions of the artist's private life are puzzling and not easily explained. As his legend grew, virtually anyone who knew him added a new anecdote. Biographers continue to struggle to find truth in the hundreds of stories that abound around his life, his relationships, and his behaviors. What seems certain is that Modigliani was tormented by his inner demons. Ill health, a foreboding sense of an early death, and the descent into drug addiction and alcoholism explain but do not excuse his often irresponsible actions. Throughout his tumultuous and emotionally disturbed life, the man's artistic style matured and progressed. His sculptural talents are manifest not only in his works in stone, but in the strength and structural solidity of his paintings. Despite his raucous and irreverent drunkenness, most agree he was a cultured and charming man with an aristocratic demeanor. Contagious

consumptive and drunken bohemian both, Amedeo Modigliani continues to spark our imaginations and delight our senses when we stand before one of his masterpieces.

¹⁰⁰ The composer was Mario Varvogli, who went on to teach at the Conservatory of Athens. A political activist, he died in 1967. The portrait is currently in a private collection.

REFERENCES AND FIGURE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

References

1. Ellman Richard. From *Oscar Wilde*, pg 44. Alfred Knopf pub, New York 1987.
2. Murger Henry. *Scenes de la vie de bohème*. 1849 (Translation, "Aujourd'hui comme autrefois, tout homme qui entre dans les arts, sans autre moyen d'existence que l'art lui-même, sera forcé de passer par les sentiers de la Bohème").
3. Rimbaud Arthur. *My Bohemian Life*. Rimbaud, Complete Works, pg 63. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966.
4. Carco Francis (In Jerrold Seigal, *Bohemian Paris: culture, politics, and the boundaries of bourgeois life 1830-1930*. Viking Penguin Inc, New York, 1986.
5. Jullian Philippe. *La Belle Epoque: an essay*. Exhibition catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1982.
6. Baudelaire Charles, "*The Painter of Modern Life*". (Originally published in Le Figaro, in 1863). New York, Da Capo Press, 1964
7. Ellman Richard From *Oscar Wilde*, pg 255. Alfred Knopf pub, New York 1987.
8. Lanier Doris. From, *Absinthe: The Cocaine of the Nineteenth Century*. McFarland & Company, Inc. Jefferson, North Carolina, pub, 1995.
9. Mann Vivian B. From, *Gardens and Ghettos: The art of Jewish life in Italy*. The Jewish Museum, University of California Press, 1990.
10. Secrest Meryl. From, *Modigliani: A life*. Pg 50. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2011.
11. Modigliani Jeanne. From, *Modigliani: man and Myth*. The Orion Press, New York, 1958.
12. Rothschild BM *et al.*, (2001) *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Complex DNA from an Extinct Bison Dated 17,000 years before the Present. Clinical Infectious Diseases vol. 33 page 306.
13. Hershkovitz, I. *et al.*, (2008) Detection and Molecular Characterization of 9000-year-old *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* from a Neolithic Settlement in the Eastern Mediterranean. PLoS ONE 3(10): e3426.
14. Daniel TM. The impact of tuberculosis on civilization. Infect Dis Clin N Am 2004;157-165.
15. Connel DW, Berry M, Cooke G, Kon OM. Update on Tuberculosis: TB in the early 21st century. Eur Respir Rev 2011;120:71-84.
16. Laënnec R. T. H. *Traité de l'auscultation médiate et des maladies des poumons et du cœur*, 2d ed. [1826], facsimile reprint (Paris: Masson, 1927), 2 vols., 1: 647; and 650.
17. Barnes, David S. *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Accessed <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft8t1nb5rp/>
18. Glasscheib HS. From, *The March of Medicine*. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1964.
19. Kubba AK and Young M. The long suffering of Frederic Chopin. Chest 1998;113:210-216.
20. Shampo MA and Rosenow EC. A history of Tuberculosis on stamps. Chest 2009;136:578-582.

21. Nuland Sherwin B.. *Doctors: The Biography of Medicine*, pg 226. Vintage Books, New York, 1988.
22. Robin Albert. "On the mortality from tuberculosis in France. Bulletin general de therapeutique, November 23rd, 1919.
23. Berger HW and Mejia E. Tuberculous pleurisy. *Chest* 1973;63:88-92.
24. Sakula A. Carlo Forlanini, inventor of artificial pneumothorax for treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis. *Thorax* 1983;38:326-332.
25. Caciora SVA and Abrudan IO. Sleepless nights: the experience of narcotics in the Parisian artistic environment during the great period of early twentieth century. *Eur J Science and Theology* 2013;9:185-194.
26. Scott Ian. *Heroin: A Hundred-Year Habit. History Today*; 48(6):1998. Accessed July 11, 2014. <http://www.historytoday.com/ian-scott/heroin-hundred-year-habit>
27. Landau Elaine. From, *Tuberculosis.*, A Venture Book; p. 22-23, 1995.
28. Boseley Sarah. The Guardian, Thursday, January 16, 2014).
29. Secrest Meryl. From, *Modigliani: A life*. Pg 69. Alfred A. Knoff, New York, 2011.
30. Secrest Meryl. From, *Modigliani: A life*. Pg 70. Alfred A. Knoff, New York, 2011.
31. P. D'Ancona. "Cinque letter Giovanili di Amedeo Modigliani," L'Arte, fasc, III (Turin, 1930), as reproduced by Ambrogio Ceroni (Milan: Edizioni del Milione, 1958).
32. Douglas Charles. Artist Quarter, Faber and Faber, London 1941.
33. Myers Jeffrey. From, *Modigliani, a life*. Harcourt Press, New York, 2006.
34. Sichel Pierre. From, *Modigliani, a biography*. E. Dutton and Company, New York, 1967.
35. Rose June. Modigliani. From, *The Pure Bohemian*, pg 51, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990.
36. Booth Martin. From, *Cannabis: a history*. Doubleday, Great Britain, Picador USA, 2003.
37. McBride CA, The Modern Treatment of Alcoholism and Drug Narcotism. Bibliolife publication pre 1923.
38. Cocteau Jean. From, *Modigliani*, Paris 1950.
39. Alexandre Noel, From *The Unknown Modigliani*. Harry Abrams Inc, New York. Fonds Mercator, 1993.
40. Nathanson Richard. Harris Lindsey. Accessed August 17, 2014. <http://www.masterdrawingsandsculptureweek.co.uk/exhibitors/richard-nathanson/>
41. Rothwell Lindsay. From, *Modigliani and his models: a student guide*. Sackler Galleries, Royal Academy of Arts. July 8-October 15, 2006.
42. Werner Alfred. From, *Modigliani*. Harry N. Abrams, New York. 1985.
43. Alexandre Noel. From, *The Unknown Modigliani*. Pg 65. Harry Abrams Inc, New York. Fonds Mercator, 1993.
44. Sichel Pierre. From, *Modigliani, a biography*, pg 224. E. Dutton and Company, New York, 1967.
45. Alexandre Noel. From, *The Unknown Modigliani*, pg 60. Harry Abrams Inc, New York. Fonds Mercator, 1993.

46. Sichel Pierre. From, *Modigliani, a biography*, Pg 297. E. Dutton and Company, New York, 1967.
47. Franck Dan. From, *Bohemian Paris: Picasso, Modigliani, Matisse and the birth of modern art*. Grove Press, New York. 1998.
48. Rose June. Modigliani, From, *The Pure Bohemian*, pg 121, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990.
49. Russoli Franco. From, *Modigliani: Drawings and sketches*. Harry N. Abrams Inc, Publishers, New York. 1969.
50. Rose June. From, *Modigliani, The Pure Bohemian*, pg 156, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990.
51. Chaplin Patrice. From, *Into the darkness laughing*. Virago Press, London. 1990.
52. [Fhttp://artmoscow.wordpress.com/2013/07/12/modiglianis-nudes-sex-conscious/ROM](http://artmoscow.wordpress.com/2013/07/12/modiglianis-nudes-sex-conscious/ROM). Accessed August 17, 2014.
53. Schmalenback Werner. From, *Modigliani*, pg 48. Prestel-verlag Press, Munich. 1990.
54. Roy Claude. From, *Modigliani*. Skira-Rizzoli International Publications, Geneva. 1985.
55. Seigel Jerrold. From, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, politics and the boundaries of bourgeois life 1830-1930*. Viking Penguin Press, New York. 1986.
56. Wayne Kenneth. From, *Modigliani and the artists of Montparnasse*. Harry N. Abrams Inc, Publishers. Buffalo, New York. 2002.
57. Modigliani Jeanne. From, *Modigliani: man and Myth*. The Orion Press, pg 96, New York, 1958.
58. Sher K, Abbasi A, Bullo N, Kumar S. Stages of tuberculous meningitis: a clinicoradiologic analysis. J College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan 2013;23:405-408.
59. Rose June. From, *Modigliani, The Pure Bohemian*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990.
60. Ceroni Ambrogio, Milan;Rizzoli, 1970 catalogue of painted works and sculptures.

Modigliani Bohemian or Consumptive

Photo Acknowledgments:

- All Modigliani and other artist's artwork are to the best of my knowledge, in the public domain (in the United States, because of the person's death more than 70 years ago).
- Modigliani art downloaded from: <http://modiglianiprject.org/home.html>, and <http://www.secretmodigliani.com/index.html>, Wikimedia and from <http://chez-edmea.blogspot.com/2010/08/amedeo-modigliani.html> (accessed August 21, 2014)
- All other images accessed August 21, 2014.

Figures and Legends



Figure 1: The Maquis of Montmartre in 1907. From, http://www.paris-unplugged.fr/1890-le-maquis-de-montmartre/580029_340654149354401_1900036573_n/



Figure 2: Café de la Rotonde, Early 1900's Montparnasse. From, <http://joellek.j.o.pic.centerblog.net/fupoveuo.jpg>.



Figure 3: The Bateau-Lavoire, rebuilt, Montmartre 2014 (Colt photo).



Figure 4: Modigliani with long cravat, 1908. Kulver/Martin archive, from *Modigliani: a life*, Jeffrey Myers, pg 114.



Figure 5: Giovanni Fattori (1825-1908), Macchiaioli school, 1886 Rotonda Palmieri. From <http://www.giovanifattori.com/en/giovanifattori/periodo-livornese-1860-1867>.

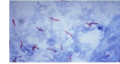


Figure 6: Acid-fast stain of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis (red elongated rods). From, <http://textbookofbacteriology.net/tuberculosis.html>



Figure 7: *Laennec at the Necker Hospital Auscultating a Tuberculosis Patient in Front of His Students* by Theobald Chartran (1849-1907). In the National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Maryland. With his ear to the patient's chest, Laennec holds his stethoscope in his left hand. From, <http://www.royal-painting.com/largeimg/Theobald%20Chartran/51838-Theobald%20Chartran-Rene%20Laennec.jpg>.



Figure 8: French 1916 public health poster "Spitting on the ground endangers lives." From, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/1916-VINTAGE-FRENCH-FRANCE-TUBERCULOSIS-PREVENTION-MEDICINE-ANTI-SPITTING-POSTER-/121169701793>.



Figure 9: Absinthe with spoon: Downloaded From <http://cocktails365.net/2010/06/13/bonus-post-%E2%80%94%94%20absinthe-traditional-presentation/> Accessed August 20, 2014.



Figure 10: Early twentieth century public health poster: "Tuberculosis the great scourge." Lithographie by F. Galais (1917). The grim reaper is floating in the background. From: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/99613502>.



Figure 11: Tuberculosis: Chest radiography showing trapped left lung, thoracoscopic view of inflamed tuberculous lesions on parietal pleural, and bronchoscopic view of caseating necrosis in an inflamed airway (photos courtesy H. Colt).

Modigliani Bohemian or Consumptive



Figure 12: Bottle of Heroin and paregoric.

From http://www.oddee.com/item_96498.aspx and https://c1.staticflickr.com/9/8026/7142960845_d3401385e1_z.jpg.



Figure 13: Cristobal Rojas (1857-1890,) *la Miseria* 1886. The artist himself had tuberculosis (galleria de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela).

From:

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8d/Cristobal_Rojas_37a.JPG.



Figure 14: Modigliani in bowtie and jacket at La Ruche, 1914. From, <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/37/Amedeo-modigliani-at-la-ruche-1914.jpg>.



Figure 15: Sienese master painter Neroccio Di Bartolomeo Di Benedetti De Landi (1447-1500): *The virgin and child between St John the Baptist and St Anthony*. From <http://www.artelon.com/OtherFile/NEROCCIO%20DI%20BARTOLOMEO%20DI%20BENEDETTO%20DE%20LANDI-XX-The%20virgin%20and%20child%20between%20st%20john%20the%20baptist%20and%20st%20anthony.jpg>.



Figure 16: Modigliani, *portrait of Dr. Paul Alexandre*, seated three quarter, charcoal on paper. From, *The Unknown Modigliani*, Alexandre catalogue no. 352.



Figure 17: Pencil drawing, Modigliani, *The Amazon*, black crayon From, *The Unknown Modigliani*, Alexandre Catalogue no. 344.



Figure 18: Constantin Brancusi sculpture, *Danaide tete*. Bronze on limestone, c 1913. From, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/brancusi-danaide-t00296>.



Figure 19: Modigliani, *The beggar of Livorno* 1909, Ceroni catalogue no. 24.



Figure 20: Modigliani, *Kneeling caryatid sitting on her heels, three quarter view to left*, 1911, Blue crayon 43 x 26.5 cms (17 x 10 ½ inches). Probably inspired by the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. From, *The Unknown Modigliani*, Alexandre catalogue no. 52.



Figure 21: Modigliani, *Woman's head*. Limestone sculpture. From, <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/486837> and example of Cycladic art (lower left corner) From http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museum_of_Cycladic_Art_-_Head_of_a_Figurine.jpg



Figure 22: Modigliani, *Beatrice Hastings*, 1916, Ceroni catalogue no. 109.



Figure 23: Photo of Paul Guillaume (left), and Modigliani (in dark coat and wearing classic felt hat, center), next to military officers. From, <http://parlez-vousphotography.quietplacetolive.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/00000.-ModiglianiParisUnknown75.jpg>.



Figure 24: *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*, Pablo Picasso, 1907. Museum of Modern Art, New York. From

Modigliani Bohemian or Consumptive

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/4/4c/Les_Demoiselles_d'Avignon.jpg.



Figure 25: Modigliani; *Chaim Soutine*, 1915, Ceroni catalogue no. 97.



Figure 26: Modigliani, *Max Jacob*, 1916, Ceroni catalogue no. 104.



Figure 27: Modigliani, *Leopold Zborowski* 1919, Ceroni catalogue no. 310.



Figure 28: *Lusia Czechowska* 1919, Ceroni catalogue no. 320.



Figure 29: Modigliani: *Marie* 1918, Ceroni catalogue no. 253.



Figure 30: Photo of Jeanne Hebuterne, age 19. From: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/78/Jeanne-hebuterne-2-at-19-years-Amedeo-modiglian.jpg>.



Figure 31: Photo of exhibition catalogue showing Modigliani's sketch of a naked Jeanne Hebuterne.



Figure 32: Modigliani: *Reclining nude hands on back of head* 1917, Ceroni catalogue no. 199.



Figure 33: Photo of Rachel Osterlind with Modigliani's painting on shelf behind her.



Figure 34: Modigliani: *Jeanne Hebuterne with sweater* 1918, Ceroni catalogue no. 220.



Figure 35: Sketch of Modigliani reportedly by Jeanne Hebuterne (1919). From Pierre Sichel: *Modigliani, a biography*, pg 417, EP Dutton, New York, 1967. (Courtesy Vellecchi Editori).



Figure 36: Jean-Michel Basquiat, 1981. Aniter Reiner Collection. Sold at Christies, May 2014. From <http://res.artnet.com/news-upload/2014/04/Basquiat-Reiner-family-Collection-untitled-1981-2.jpg>.



Figure 37: Modigliani with beard several months before his death, 1919. From, http://c300221.r21.cfl.rackcdn.com/amedeo-modigliani-ritratto-di-bambina-1917-1354918209_b.jpg.



Figure 38: Hôpital de la Charité, Paris, where Modigliani died January 24, 1920. From, <http://www.leplaisirdesdieux.fr/LePlaisirDesDieux/NosAncetresLesInternes/Hopitaux/charite/charite2.jpg>.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



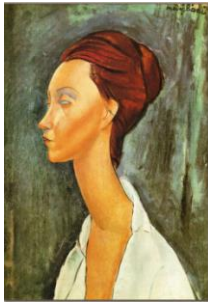
Henri Colt is a writer, adventure traveler, and physician with a profound love for art and the humanities. When he is not chasing impossible dreams, among other things, he lives in a small Southern California village overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Henri Colt M.D.
422 Glenneyre St., Suite A
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
Tel: 619-770-9990
EMAIL: henricolt@gmail.com

Amedeo Modigliani

Drunken Bohemian or Contagious Consumptive

By Henri Colt MD



Slender, swan-like necks, blank and sometimes cross-hatched eyes, an elongated nose as an axis for the face...

...when their heads are tilted, does it mean they are listening for something?



Legends about the Italian painter and sculptor Amedeo Modigliani depict a trajectory marked by poverty when tuberculosis, also known as consumption, was the scourge of bohemian Paris in the early 20th century.



Modigliani's art and illness were tragically interwoven in the web of his life.

This monograph describes the artist's work and the illness that killed him when he was only thirty-five.