Art and Science
Hyperkulturemia
Nicolas Leduc
Purpan Medical School
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Overview
- Symptoms
- Epidemiology
- Etiology
- Treatment

On a journey to Firenze...
- My mind reached this emotional turn-point when the heavenly impressions of Art meet passionate feelings.
- As I emerged from Santa Croce, I was seized with a fierce palpitation of the heart. Life was dried up within me, and I walked in fear of falling to the ground.

Stendhal, "Naples and Florence: A Journey from Milan to Reggio."

Symptoms
- Stendhal syndrome
  - tachycardia
  - dizziness
  - confusion
  - hallucination
- Panic attacks?
- Described by G. Magherini, MD, an Italian psychiatrist
- A trigger: artwork in Florence

Epidemiology
- Where?
  - Italy, Paris
- Who?
  - women ++
  - patients in their 40s
  - possible prior psychiatric background
  - educated westerners +++
- When?
  - at the sight of renowned artwork
- Prevalence: a dozen cases a year

Etiology
- Exhaustion
- Decompensation of psychiatric disease
- Panic attack
- Paranoia
- Exaggeration of physiological response

A cultural overload!
Treatment?

- Mild forms
- Severe forms:
  - hospitalization → a dedicated ward in Florence
  - anti-psychotics
  - anti-anxiety agents
  - psychological therapy

Last few words...

- An anecdotal affection...
- … that is not so uncommon:
  - Liztmania
  - Jerusalem syndrome
  - Paris syndrome

Bibliography