

Pain, anatomy and art Dor, anatomia e arte

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*I*n the Italian Renaissance a number of artists accompanied dissections of human bodies to better understand anatomy and represent all splendors of the body in their drawings and paintings. It is believed that the first artist to dissect human cadavers himself was Antonio Pollaiuolo (1431/32-1498) and that the young Leonardo da Vinci used to observe him during dissections. The result of Pollaiuolo's studies in cadavers can be appreciated in his work *Battle of Naked Men*.



Figure 1. *The Last Judgement*, Michelangelo (1535-1541).



Figure 2. *An Allegory with Venus and Cupid* (c. 1545) Agnolo Bronzino (1503-1572).

Leonardo himself dissected several bodies and he is considered to be the first to illustrate human anatomy, since Galen and Mundinus (c. 1279-1326) did not use illustration in their writings. Mundinus is credited as the "restorer of anatomy" as he used to dissect human bodies in public and wrote the first modern anatomical written text (*Anathomia corporis humani*, 1316), a dissection manual. After Leonardo, a great master in painting and drawing, it became usual to see the association of artists with anatomists during dissection of human bodies in medical schools.

Many classical illustrations of human anatomy were only possible thanks to the collaboration of artists documenting anatomical details. Some anatomists were at the same time well-known painters, with one of the most famous ones being Leonardo. Michelangelo dissected human bodies as well, and he was a good friend of a physician called Realdo Colombo (1516-1559) who

substituted Andreas Vesalius as the Chair of Surgery and Anatomy in the University of Padua.

Using their knowledge in anatomy the artists developed the best way to draw the face and the body in different positions was most probably to give a particular emotion to the subject in the picture. Expression of happiness, sadness and surprise were important in order to transmit emotion to those who contemplate the painting. Negative emotions such as suffering and pain were depicted relatively often (Figures 1 and 2). In the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo painted faces of men with extreme suffering (Figure 2), possibly inspired by some subjects with cluster headache.

In this issue of Headache Medicine we have the privilege to see some of the works of Eulâmpio José da Silva Neto,⁽¹⁾ anatomist and sculptor. His work shows different expressions, and at the same time, unique features, which are frequently observed in our patients with incapacitating headache attacks. The pictures of some of his sculptures are shown in the cover of this issue.

REFERENCE

1. Freitas MFL, Nascimento JJC, Valença MM. Anatomia e arte: união necessária como o corpo e a alma. Headache Medicine. 2016;7(1):6-10