

Leonardo da Vinci “Design of Lady with Graves’ disease” (1452–1519)

Enio Martino · Paolo Vitti

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Leonardo di Ser Piero da Vinci well known as Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) was one of the greatest artists of the world operating as painter, sculptor, engineer and writer. He was also great in the art of drawing.

In this design, located at Louvre Museum in Paris, is drawn a young lady with diffuse goiter and Graves’ ophthalmopathy, characterized by the bilateral proptosis, stare and palpebral edema. Probably, this is the first representation of a woman with toxic diffuse goiter with ophthalmopathy in the figurative arts.

The interpretation of Basedow-Graves’ disease in this design has been done by Guglielmo Bilancioni, professor of Otolaryngology at the Universities of Pisa and Rome, expert of Medicine’s History, who published a paper titled “Le figurazioni della glandola tiroide in Leonardo da Vinci: le prime iconografie del gozzo cretinico ed esoftalmico—Archivio di Storia della Scienza, Rome—Vol. 4 n.1—1923”.



Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519). Design of a young lady toxic diffuse goiter and ophthalmopathy. Louvre Museum—Paris (France)

Enio Martino, MD, PhD
Paolo Vitti, MD, PhD
University of Pisa

Conflict of interest The author declares no conflict of interest.

E. Martino (✉) · P. Vitti
University of Pisa, Pisa, Italy
e-mail: enio.martino@med.unipi.it