

Title: INFECTIOUS DISEASES REGISTERED AT SANTA CASA DE MISERICORDIA IN SALVADOR, BAHIA, BRAZIL (1861 a 1864)

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Abstract

At the second half of XIX century, the Charity Hospital (maintained by the Santa Casa de Misericórdia) was the only health service institution for sick people in Salvador city, till the construction of the Real Sociedade Portuguesa de Beneficência Hospital (1878). Their records can be, thus for, considered as health indicators for Salvador population at that time. Aiming to give a contribution to the characterization of infectious disease of that period, records from the period between 1861 and 1864 were analyzed. Data obtained from Clinical Record Books as well as entrance and discharge patient Books were transferred to Excel 2013 workbooks and analyzed according to the following variables: illness (given name, etiology, evolution, medical and popular vocabulary, month and year of occurrence, patient (gender, ethnical origin, social condition, place of birth). Historical context was also analyzed. There were a total of 1648 registers, indicating 44 different types of illnesses, sorted according to biological origin (bacterial, viral, parasites and nutrition deficiency), 611 (37.1%) had bacteria and 77 (10.7%) viral etiology. Among the 19 bacterial infections almost 50% were diagnosed as tuberculosis, almost 40% corresponded to four of the Sexually Transmitted Diseases (syphilis, cancrroid, lymphogranuloma venereum and gonorrhoea), among which syphilis was the most frequent 23.2%. Bacterial infectious were also more fatal, up to 15.7%, most of them 13.5% had tuberculosis as the cause of death. Only 6 viral infections were identified, 26.3% had no etiological identification, due to the lack of knowledge available at that time. Some viral diseases such as smallpox and measles were easier to identify due to well known symptoms since ancient times. Patients originated from 15 different countries, most of them from Portugal, Africa (slaves) and England. Health status at the second half of XIX century is characterized by very little public health knowledge as well as growing investigation initiatives on infectious diseases etiological agents, mainly due to tropical specialist medical doctors from Bahia (Otto Wucherer, Silva Lima and John Patterson), influenced by microbiological discoveries due to Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch, introducing important changes to health management in Bahia and in Brazil.

Key Words: Infectious Diseases, History, Salvador, Santa Casa de Misericórdia da Bahia.