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DOSSIER

**CONTROLLING FEMALE CANCER IN SOUTH AMERICA. POLICIES,
PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, AND HEALTH STRATEGIES IN THE
TWENTIETH AND TWENTIETH-FIRST CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT: The Aristides Maltez Hospital in Salvador (Bahia) was inaugurated in 1952. The hospital was a philanthropic institution of the Bahian League Against Cancer. The Aristides Maltez Hospital specialised in cancer treatment, especially cervical cancer, and became a reference centre for the control of cancer in north-eastern Brazil. This article follows the creation and consolidation of the hospital

as a treatment, research, and training centre, evaluating its role in discussions and action networks on cervical cancer in the mid-20th century. The institution has been a space of transition in the use of diagnostic tools and the organisation of campaigns to control cancer in municipalities of the hinterland.

Technology and disciplinary fields: cytotechnicians and implementation of the Pap test in Brazil

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ABSTRACT: The implementation of the Pap test as a primary technology in the control of cervical cancer in Brazil was the result of choices, agreements and disputes among certain professional groups, including physicians from various specialisations, pharmacists, biologists, biomedical scientists and cytotechnologists. The first part of the paper describes the process of formulating Brazil's first screening campaigns using the Pap smear, and the subsequent emergence of the profession of cytotechnology, whose practitioners interpret this test. Second, based on questions raised by international historiography in the field of science and technology, we explore in detail how the adoption of the Pap smear transpired within the Brazilian context, focussing on the debates among the various professional groups with an interest in the suitability of the test and on the relationships between the public and private healthcare sectors. We show that the professional career of cytotechnologists and the way in which the Pap smear has been implemented as a central technology for cervical cancer screening in Brazil have been shaped by the conflicting views of this technology held by different disciplines as well as by the relationship between these disciplines and labour market dynamics.

Controlling female cancer in Argentina. Divergent initiatives and the road to fragmentation

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ABSTRACT: This article analyses the organisation of cancer control in Argentina, focussing on the initiatives, institutions and models that targeted female or gynaecological cancers. It identifies and examines the main factors in the process of preparing a national policy to control the disease, drawing on a series of actors and instruments such as the state, healthcare professionals, institutions, services, and the use of technology (notably diagnostic tools) for detection of the disease.

It traces developments in the organisation, highlighting its transformation from a centralised to a decentralised model of service provision. Using the concept of «path-dependence», the article examines the continuities and changes in the organisation of female cancer, critically signalling the moment in which a path was taken that led to the consolidation of «fragmentation» within the health system. It also argues that Argentinean doctors first sought to create the foundational structures of cancer organisation in the field of cancer diagnosis. The article contends that the path-dependence analytical approach helps us to understand the importance of historical analysis in identifying the factors that have led to a lack of service coordination. These include the persistent strains between national/provincial states, which hampered the development of comprehensive programmes and have continued to encumber efforts to prepare cancer policies up to the present day.

Viva Mulher: Constructing a cervical cancer control program in Brazil

Marco Antonio Porto and Paula Arantes Botelho Briglia Habib 101

1.—Introduction. 2.—Early initiatives. 3.—Pilot project. 4.—First campaign or first intensification phase. 5.—Consolidation phase. 6.—Second campaign or second intensification phase. 7.—Conclusion.

ABSTRACT: Brazil accumulated knowledge and experience through a number of isolated initiatives that began in the 1960s and culminated in the late 1990s with implementation of the first nationwide public health measure designed to coordinate actions by health organisations and personnel from federal, state and municipal administrations against a chronic degenerative disease. The main goal of this article is to analyse the process of construction of this public policy for cancer control in Brazil, more specifically, the organisation of screening for cervical cancer in the form of the Viva Mulher program. Our analytical approach relies on elements from the history of public policy and from the history of institutions, combining the use of documental sources, scientific literature, and interviews with managers involved in the programme. Our analysis endeavours to reveal how and to what extent this national process incorporated the experiences of local projects and responded to pressure from the social movement and to the country's political environment. It further shows how the new context shaped by changes in the organisation of the Brazilian health system, influenced this process.

ARTICLES

Diego Alcorta and diffusion of medical knowledge in Buenos Aires, 1821-1842

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1.—Introducción: ¿What is *Idéologie*? 2.—Background: the reception of *Idéologie* and the political context in Buenos Aires. 3.—Physiological knowledge at the University of Buenos Aires 4.—Diego Alcorta and the appropriation of physiological language. 5.—Diego Alcorta and the construction of a sensualist, practical and scientific medicine. 6.—Conclusions.

ABSTRACT: The aim of this article is to analyse the medical knowledge that Dr Diego Alcorta derived from the French tradition, especially from the *Idéologie* movement, in the context of the University of Buenos Aires between 1821 and 1842. It analyses the circulation of these teachings alongside those of the Montpellier School, which were adapted and located at the local level, and their gradual impact on academia as an important phenomenon in the incipient formation of the medical profession in Buenos Aires. Alcorta emphasised the importance of observation as a diagnostic and therapeutic method and called for an empirical approach to medical teaching and research, which introduced a specific practical activity, i.e., hospital clinical work. This article also examines the transmission of a physiological «language» and its relevance to subsequent generations, asking what happened to these practical procedures and the dissemination of new physiological knowledge. This complex question is addressed by discussing the PhD theses developed in the Department of Medicine of the University of Buenos Aires during this period, which provide confirmation of the presence of the sensualist and physiological language derived from the teachings of Alcorta and its impact on the practice of medicine.

An approach to the history of scientific documentation in Catalonia. The activity of María Serrallach Juliá (1905-1992) in the Seminary of Chemistry of the University of Barcelona (1937-1984)

Guillermo Olagüe de Ros 147

1.—María Serrallach Juliá (1905-1992), a specialized librarian. 2.—Scientific publications. 3.—Educational activity. 4.—The Seminary of Chemistry (1937-1984). 5.—Colophon.

ABSTRACT: This article contributes a study of Maria Serrallach Juliá (1905-1992), one of the first specialised librarians in Spain. Between 1937 and 1975, she directed the Seminary of Chemistry of the University of Barcelona (initials in Spanish, SQUB), the name given to the space that resulted from the merger of the libraries of the Faculties of Pharmacy and Chemistry of the University. Serrallach turned the SQUB into a modern scientific documentation centre offering services that were practically non-existent in the rest of Spain. The publications and educational activity of Serrallach are also analysed. The history of the SQUB is studied until 1984, when SQUB was transformed into the Library of the Faculties of Physics and Chemistry of the University of Barcelona.

DOCUMENTS

Dietary prescriptions for the elites of the kingdom of Navarre in the 16th century: the cases of Juan Rena and Juan de Alarcón

Fernando Serrano Larráyoz. 169

1.—Introduction. 2.—Dietary prescriptions for *Micer* Juan Rena (ca. 1480-1539). 3.—Dietary prescriptions for Juan de Alarcón († 1551). 4.—Final considerations. Documentary appendix.

ABSTRACT: The aim of this article is to present and analyse four dietary prescriptions from the 16th century prepared for Juan Rena, a cleric of Venetian origin, and his servant Juan de Alarcón, which are kept at the *Archivo General de Navarra*. These documents demonstrate the interest of the patients and physicians in dietetics, understood as a group of health and hygienic measures based on the Galenic *res naturales* and *res non naturales*. These four prescriptions are closely related to the *ad personam* or *consilia* health regimens, which represent a genre of medical literature whose significance in Renaissance Spain has received little attention. The cases studied reveal the high esteem in which the elites held the possession of therapeutic resources adapted to their individual needs, which were compiled and copied for personal use.

INTERVIEW

Shaping biomedical objects across history and philosophy: A conversation with Hans-Jörg Rheinberger

Miguel García-Sancho; Matiana González-Silva and

María Jesús Santesmases 193

ABSTRACT: Historical epistemology, according to the historian of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, is a space through which «to take experimental laboratory work into the realm of philosophy». This key concept, together with the crucial events and challenges of his career, were discussed in a public conversation which took place on the occasion of Rheinberger’s retirement. By making sense of natural phenomena in the laboratory, the act of experimenting shapes the object; it is this shaping which became the core of Rheinberger’s own research across biology and philosophy into history. For his intellectual agenda, a history of the life sciences so constructed became «epistemologically demanding».

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