



ENDEMIC AND EPIDEMIC DISEASES IN LOURENÇO MARQUES IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY: FORMS OF CONTROL VERSUS URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

In the early 20th century, Lourenço Marques appeared as a promising metropolis in southern Africa being the connection to the Transvaal identified as the main responsible for the development and growth of the port and the city. Therein mingled people of all backgrounds and crafts, residents or passing, making imperative to implement structures, particularly in the field of health and public works, to respond to the needs arising from this population outbreak.

The difficulties in implementing the Health Services in the 19th century had shown the main consequences of this growth, leading to reforms and proposals of specific measures that often, slow to be implemented, proved to be inadequate or inappropriate to tropical conditions.

Endemic and epidemic diseases found in Lourenço Marques favorable conditions to their proliferation and, early in 1900, different strategies were considered and tested to combat major diseases (malaria, smallpox, “plagues” ...). Strategies which involved investment in more preventive measures (vaccination campaigns, health visits, isolation pavilions ...) and a significant number of public and sanitation works (new hospital facilities, laboratories, drying of wetlands, sewerage system, cleaning and removal of waste ...) but, most times, rather than acting in a prophylactic way, they contribute to relegate diseases to the city’s periphery, accentuating dichotomies and different forms of treatment.

Based on the documentation produced by the Health Services and by the Public Works Services, this presentation intends to address the effectiveness and results of these measures, particularly with regard to the indigenous medical care, in the scope of Tropical Medicine and the implementation of Portuguese colonial system in Mozambique.