



FIGHTING LEPROSY IN THE 20TH-CENTURY AFRICA KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND NETWORKS

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Abstract

When the legendary doctor Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) was granted the 1952-Nobel Peace Prize, he claimed that most of the money attached to that tremendous distinction would serve for the care of Lepers of his hospital of Lambarene. He indeed set up a Community village for these unfortunates close to his hospital. The path that led to such an announcement and achievement remained under-researched and the way in which Leprosy was handled at the Albert Schweitzer's hospital remains poorly known. Archival material for this paper includes hospital records, correspondence, and photographs. This study attempts to address the process by which Dr. Schweitzer came to symbolize the fight against Leprosy in Africa. It implies knowledge he developed on the disease in terms of diagnostic and therapeutics through time. It deals with attitudes and practices that underwent significant change due to the personality of Schweitzer as well as networks he could mobilise over the world.