



ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION IN MINAS GERAIS: TRANSNATIONAL ELEMENTS OF ACTING (1916-1954)

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Abstract

This work aims to study the insertion of North-American scientific philanthropy in Minas Gerais (Brazil) between 1916 and 1954 from the non-official cooperation between the Escola de Medicina de Belo Horizonte (Belo Horizonte Medical School) and the Rockefeller Foundation. For so, we will analyze the financing of hookworm disease (ancylostomiasis) combat activities since 1916, and the consolidation of the clinical practice laboratory, in order to show that the experimental medicine had a fundamental role in medical formation during the first half of the XXth century. The North-American attempt to train skilled labor to act in public health constituted a complex endeavor that involved the accommodation of political, scientific, and professional interests. Although the model of medical teaching in the first years of the Escola de Medicina de Belo Horizonte points to the influence of the German model of scientificity in its curricular structure – guided to the practical teaching –, the lack of scientific recognition in national level, and of qualified professors to assume the chairs propitiated the cooperation with the Rockefeller Foundation. Such partnership consisted, until 1954, in giving scholarships to train physicians in the United States, in order to move the axis of influence of the production of knowledge in Brazil from Europe to the United States. Thus, this project tries to analyze the transnational elements in the formation of young Minas Gerais' doctors in the area of public health that, like other doctors, received grants to study in the United States and returned to Brazil to act in the Escola de Medicina de Minas Gerasis itself and in the sanitary administration of Minas Gerais.