



OTTO WUCHERER AND VITAL BRAZIL: THE BEGINING OF RESEARCH ON OPHIDISM IN BRAZIL.

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Abstract

Otto E.H. Wucherer (1820-1873) is the precursor of Brazilian Helminthology and founder of the Tropicalist School of Bahia/TSB (1865) and *Gazeta Médica da Bahia/GMB* (1866). Vital Brazil (1865-1950) is known as a precursor of toxinology in the Americas, due to the discovery of the specificity of antiophidic sera (1902) and foundation of the Butantan Institute (1899) and Vital Brazil Institute (1919). Otto Wucherer pioneering related to zoology, clinical and treatment of snakebite in Brazil, before the discovery of antivenom serum (1894), by Phisalix, Bertrand and Calmette and its specificity by Vital Brazil. Wucherer and Vital Brazil lived in different times and places, which contributed to his forgetfulness regarding Brazilian historiography on this subject. However, Vital Brazil never ceased to revere him, taking it as an example and inspiration, as can be seen in several published articles, including his classic work "The Defense against Ophidism" (1911). Wucherer and Vital Brazil were doctors and naturalists, scientific collections creators of snakes, unfortunately destroyed by fire (1905 and 2010 respectively); their studies were questioned and denied by those who held the domain of medical and scientific knowledge; their research built new paradigms for the treatment of snakebite; formed groups and institutional spaces; created new methods of production of knowledge; They innovated in scientific dissemination, creating scientific journals, and great science communicators. Despite differences in historical period and localities in which they lived, they turned obstacles into benefits for the community and the sciences. They had in common a peculiar intellectual and existential adventure on which probably we'll never know for sure what strengthened and enabled them to achieve such freedom and courage to face adverse hegemonic groups and so hostile environments. Today we enjoyed both designed with his research on the snakebite, each in their own way and in due time, contributing to the global tropical medicine.