



BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS AND TROPICAL MEDICINE IN BRAZILIAN-GERMANY RELATIONS: CHAGAS´ DISEASE VACCINE IN 1970S

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Abstract

Scientific exchange in tropical medicine between Brazil and Germany dates from institutionalization of this discipline in both countries. Scientists interacted intensively between the World Wars, especially on the microbiological and tropical medicine. Cooperation was restricted yet in companies, like Bayer and Instituto Behring de Terapêutica Experimental, where Brazilian scientists belonged to the research staff, but have no access to production plants. In January 1942, the Brazilian government confiscated all German companies accused to give financial support to the Nazi-government. In 1950s, Instituto Behring returns to the Brazilian market with technologies that national companies did not dominate. After II World War, the fabrication of blood-derived products became more sophisticated and could be achieved in high scale. The gap of technology was the main cause of Brazilian pharmaceutical companies ruin after 1950s; besides blood-derived products, antibiotics and chemotherapies establish new standards that national firms could not follow. In 1970s, the Instituto Behring was responsible for the whole supply of albumin to Brazilian Blood Banks and Hospitals. Dependence on Germany companies extended to other economics sectors like the chemical and automotive industry. In this context, Instituto Behring and Fundação Oswaldo Cruz tried to ensure collaboration in research and production of a vaccine to Chagas´ disease. A debate followed surrounding the technological gap in Brazil and the consequent need of cooperation, but scientist from Fiocruz stressed the sovereignty of their knowledge production. The aim of this work is to analyze tensions in scientific and technological cooperation through the case study of Chagas´ disease vaccine negotiations in 1970s.