



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

*International Journal of Current Research*  
Vol. 10, Issue, 01, pp. 64285-64286, January, 2018

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL  
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### SHORT COMMUNICATION: MEDICINE IN PORTUGAL FROM 12<sup>TH</sup> TO 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

\*Paulo Nuno Martins

Interuniversity Center for History of Science and Technology, New University of Lisbon,  
Campus of Caparica, Building VII, Floor 2, 2829-516 Caparica, Portugal

#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Article History:

Received 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017  
Received in revised form  
16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017  
Accepted 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2017  
Published online 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2018

##### Key words:

Santa Cruz Monastery,  
Estudo Geral, Hospital of Todos-os-Santos,  
brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da  
Mericórdia, University of Coimbra.

#### ABSTRACT

The teaching of medicine in Portugal began in Monastery of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, through the teaching of members of religious orders. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the medical education started to be carried out in Lisbon, in Estudo Geral, until the construction of the Hospital of Todos-os-Santos in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Almost at the same time, it was created the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Mericórdia. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the theoretical teaching (medicine) was carried out at the University of Coimbra, while practical teaching (surgery) was carried out at the Hospital of Todos-os-Santos, in Lisbon.

Copyright © 2018, Paulo Nuno Martins. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Paulo Nuno Martins. 2017. "Short Communication: Medicine in Portugal from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century", *International Journal of Current Research*, 10(1): 64285-64286.

## INTRODUCTION

The Portuguese medieval medicine has been little studied because literature on this specific subject is scanty (e.g. António (2010)). However, this period was very important for the emergence of Portuguese modern medicine. During the Medieval Ages, the teaching of medicine in Portugal followed the teachings of the Greek-Roman medicine (Hippocrates and Galen) complemented by the knowledge of Arabic medicine (Avicenna and Rasis). The most famous Portuguese physician of this time was Pedro Hispano. However, between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century, due to the expulsion of Jewish medical community by the Inquisition (e.g. Alfredo (2000)) and the temporary loss of national independence temporary (1580-1640), the teaching and practice of medicine in Portugal did not always have the desired quality.

## METHODS

In this short communication about the History of Medicine in Portugal from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century, I collected and analyzed the main scientific books and technical articles, in this area of study, that there are available in academic libraries.

I tried to make a useful synthesis addressed to the reader who intends to have an idea on this topic, maintaining the scientific rigor in my research. Thus, I selected the 14 most important items about this theme, based on the "impact factor" of the article and the "reference" books on this topic.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, I will present the results of my investigation about the History of Medicine in Portugal from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century, describing and discussing the most relevant facts of my research. When the foundation of the "Condado Portucalense" (1095-1139) was established, the teaching and the practice of medicine in Portugal took place in Monasteries and Convents, under the guidance of the religious orders (e.g. Maximiano (1991)). At the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, during the reign of D. Sancho I (1154-1211), the prior of the Monastery of Santa Cruz sent D. Mendo Dias to the University of Paris in order to study Theology and Medicine. When he returned to Portugal, he became the first scholar of Medicine in Portugal, in the Monastery of Santa Cruz, in Coimbra. Thus, this Monastery is considered the cradle of the teaching and practice of Medicine in Portugal (e.g. Augusto (1929)).

\*Corresponding author: Paulo Martins

However, during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the number of physicians in Portugal were not sufficient for the existing patients and therefore, in the reign of D. Dinis (1261-1325), it was created the Estudo Geral at Lisbon, in 1288. This medical Institution was the first Portuguese College accepted by the Pope Nicholas IV (e.g. Rómulo (1996)). This University after changing several times to Coimbra, it turned out to be located in Lisbon, near Sé (Lisbon). In the reign of D. Manuel I, the space and financial conditions of the Estudo Geral was improved by this Portuguese king. The Estudo Geral, such as other European Universities of Medicine, conferred the licentiate's degree in Medicine (e.g. José (1997)). The organization, duration and practice of the Estudo Geral medical course was improved in the reign of D. João I (1357-1433). The bachelor's degree lasted for three years, while the licentiate's degree was awarded with another four years of study. However, until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the teaching of medicine in Portugal was based on listening of Greek-Roman and Arabic medical texts. So, in the reign of D. João II (1455-1495), the "Véspera" chair was created to complement "Prima" chair (only theory) in the teaching of medicine.

In the reign of D. Manuel I (1469-1521), the course of medicine went on to require a specialization in Art, necessary for the study and practice of Anatomy, whose jurisdiction was tested by a surgeon. During the Medieval Ages, the hospitals treated sick persons, the shelters treated pilgrims, the gafarias welcomed lepers and the groceries looked after the elderly (e.g. Amélia (2005)). In the 15th century, these institutions were extinguished and incorporated in the Hospital of Todos-os-Santos, also known as the Hospital of the poor because it received all kinds of patients. (e.g. Mário (1954)). This emblematic Hospital of Lisbon, located in "Praça da Figueira", was created by D. João II, in 1492, and was constituted by several floors (e.g. Sebastião and José (1965)): one of the floors was the wards where the physician proceeded to surgery, other floor were for recovering patients operated with several rooms for refectory and pharmacy, and another floor was for patients with incurable diseases. There was also a floor with several rooms for refectory and pharmacy.

D. João II was the king who began the construction of this emblematic Hospital, but it was D. Manuel I who carried out the necessary renovations and expansions that allowed host more patients. In fact, this hospital was conceived to receive until 250 patients, although in the 16<sup>th</sup> century it had more than 3000 patients. This building suffered two fires (1610 and 1750) and it was destroyed by the earthquake of 1755 (e.g. Germano (2013)). Along with the creation of this emblematic Hospital of Lisbon, with a treating function, another hospital was founded in 1498, called brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Mesericórdia (e.g. Manuel (2014)), with a charitable function. The first establishment of the "Mesericórdias" was installed next to Cathedral of Lisbon due to the dedication of Queen D. Leonor (1458-1525) for those depreciated by society (children, poor). During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, D. João III (1502-1557) decided to reform the teaching of Medicine in Portugal in order to raise its standards of quality. Thus, it was decided that the theoretical (medicine) was taught at the University of Coimbra, while the practical education (surgery) took place at the Hospital of Todos-os-Santos (e.g. Salvador (1997)). This separation allowed greater specialization both in theoretical lessons (now with more disciplines about medicine, some of them taught by foreign teachers), but also in practical lessons, now with an examination on surgery (e.g. João (2002)).

## CONCLUSIONS

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the birth of the teaching of medicine in Portugal started at Santa Cruz Monastery (Coimbra). However, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, due to the need of creating a medical course with academic rigour, it occurred the construction of Estudo Geral. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with the creation of Hospital of Todos-os-Santos, the first Hospital of reference for treating all kinds of patients in Portugal, many of the medieval confraternities were extinguished. At the same time, it was created the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Mesericórdia with a charity function. In 16<sup>th</sup> century, there was a bipolarization in in the practice and teaching of medicine in Portugal: the theoretical lessons (medicine) were taught in the University of Coimbra, while the practical lessons (surgery) were taught in Hospital of Todos-os-Santos, in Lisbon (e.g. Armando (1996)).

## REFERENCES

- Alfredo Rasteiro, 2000. *Medicina Judaica Lusitana, século XVI*, Coimbra: Quarteto.
- Amélia Ferraz, 2005. "A História da Medicina Portuguesa. Da fundação ao séc. XVII", *Aula de História da Medicina, Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade do Porto*.
- António Henrique de Oliveira Marques, 2010. *A sociedade Medieval Portuguesa-aspectos da vida quotidiana*, Esfera dos Livros.
- Armando Tavares de Sousa, 1996. *Curso de História da Medicina – das origens ao final do século XVI*, Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- Augusto da Silva Carvalho, 1929. *História da Medicina Portuguesa*, Lisboa.
- Germano de Sousa, 2013. *História da Medicina Portuguesa durante a Expansão*, Círculo de Leitores.
- João Martins e Silva, 2002. "Anotações sobre a história do ensino da Medicina em Lisboa, desde a criação da Universidade Portuguesa até 1911", *Revista da Faculdade de Medicina de Lisboa*, 7: 237-249.
- José Mattoso, 1997. *A Universidade portuguesa e as Universidades Europeias. "In: História da Universidade em Portugal"*, Universidade de Coimbra and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, vol.1, 3-29.
- Manuel Valente Alves, 2014. *História da Medicina em Portugal – Origens, ligações e contextos*, Porto Editora.
- Mário Carmona, 1954. *O Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos da Cidade de Lisboa*, Monografia.
- Maximiano Lemos, 1991. *História da Medicina em Portugal*, Publicações D. Quixote, vol. 1&2.
- Rómulo de Carvalho, 1996. *História do ensino em Portugal*, Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- Salvador Dias Arnaut, 1997. *A Medicina. "In: História da Universidade em Portugal"*, Universidade de Coimbra and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, vol. 1, 285-302.
- Sebastião da Costa Sacadura and José Timóteo Montalvão Machado, 1965. "Andanças do ensino médico na capital (Do Hospital de Todos-os-Santos ao Hospital de Santa Maria)", *O Médico* 697 (1): 285-302.