

## The Lazarette of Jurujuba in the nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro press: “a better place to spread fishing nets than to found such an establishment”

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**Abstract** *In the second half of the nineteenth century, the press expanded and reached a wide range of themes and audiences. It consisted of daily newspapers, which were especially dedicated to the daily life of the city, and scientific-literary magazines, which published texts on a wide range of themes, including literature, biography, science, and education. In the pages of the numerous periodicals that circulated around Rio de Janeiro, both the so-called daily newspapers and the scientific-literary periodicals, there was a great interest in the themes of hygiene, salubrity, the yellow fever epidemic, hygiene, and the performance of doctors. Among these sanitation measures, adopted on January 1, 1851, under the guidance of Francisco de Paula Cândido, president of the Junta de Higiene Pública (Public Hygiene Board), a lazarette for about 30 sick people was installed in a rented house on the Caju peninsula, in Saco da Jurujuba, in Niterói, in the province of Rio de Janeiro, and then called Lazareto da Jurujuba (Lazarette of Jurujuba). The present study thus sought to analyze the content of articles and announcements about the sanitary conditions and measures in Rio de Janeiro, especially concerning the creation of the Lazareto da Jurujuba (Lazarette of Jurujuba), published in daily newspapers, and in the non-specialized press.*

**Key words** *History of health-Brazil, Periodical press-Brazil, Lazarette of Jurujuba*

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## Introduction

In nineteenth-century Brazil, there was an important development of the press, with the publication of a variety of periodicals and newspapers in mass circulation, along with daily-life tabloids and scientific-literary magazines. The expansion of periodicals, as well as of typographies, took place particularly after the decree of March 2, 1821, which canceled the previous censorship required for the printing of any materials up to that date. In the new publications, such as the daily-life tabloids, which were printed in Rio de Janeiro and dedicated to daily matters of the town, one can see a major interest in themes of hygiene, the yellow fever epidemics, the new hygiene measures, and the medical concepts.

The aim the present study was to analyze the content of the articles and notifications on the sanitary conditions of Rio de Janeiro, such as the creation of such institutions as the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), published in daily newspapers like the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, *Correio Mercantil*, *O Correio da Tarde*, and *Jornal do Commercio*.

### The yellow fever epidemic and the Lazarette of Jurujuba Hospital

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Brazil was facing serious problems with sanitation, beginning with the yellow fever epidemic, in 1849, in the city of Salvador, Bahia, which ended up reaching every port in the North of Brazil and finally arrived in Rio de Janeiro. Robert Christian Berthold Avé Lallemand (1812-1884), doctor of the Infirmary for Foreigners at the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro's Holy House of Mercy), in December 1849, commented that the symptoms of two patients called his attention, two sailors had just arrived from Bahia on the vessel Navarre, who presented "a yellowish color in the eyes and skin, strong vomiting of dark liquids, hiccups, and urine suppression"<sup>1</sup> (p. 2). That was communicated to the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro's Holy House of Mercy) and to the *Academia Imperial de Medicina* (Imperial Medical Academy), and was considered by the academic, Jose Pereira do Rego (1816-1892), as evidence that cases of yellow fever did in fact exist.

The cases of yellow fever in the city of Rio de Janeiro initially broke out in locations near the port and the beaches; however, they quickly spread, reaching the countryside of the prov-

ince. Faced with this predicament, the Imperial Government, on February 05, 1850, created the *Comissão Central de Saúde Pública* (Central Commission of Public Health), made up of such people as Cândido Borges Monteiro (1812-1872), Antônio Felix Martins (1812-1892), José Pereira Rego (1816-1892), Luís Vicente de Simoni (1792-1881), and José Francisco Xavier Sigaud (1796-1856). According to Rego, in 1850, the yellow fever epidemic had spread across Rio de Janeiro, affecting 90,658 people, causing 4,160 deaths<sup>2</sup> (p. 159) and reaching other villages in the province, including Niterói, Magé, Itaboraí, Mangaratiba, Macaé, and São João da Barra<sup>2</sup> (p. 41).

There were growing concerns with the population and the ships that arrived at the port, considering the possibility that they could be sources of diseases like the yellow fever. The *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba) was founded precisely in that scenario, aimed at providing medical care to the sailors, the travelers, and all who arrived at the port and the city, who might be sick or were suspected of having some type of disease.

During that period, debates were ongoing concerning the etiology and causality of diseases, epidemic outbreaks, and the necessary measures to combat them. Such epidemics as yellow fever also boosted the creation of institutions and hospital, such as the lazarette, as well as the remodeling and inspection of the ports<sup>3</sup> (p. 164).

Hygiene in the first half of the nineteenth century, according to Luiz Otávio Ferreira<sup>4</sup>, was related "to the neo-hippocratism, an environmentalist concept of medicine based on the hypothesis that there was an intrinsic relationship between diseases, the environment, and society". The public hygiene problems at the time were debated according to this perspective, and controversies arose among the medical concepts related to nature, to the causes of diseases and to the ways to combat them. On one hand, there was the anti-contagionist concept, that of the strand of infection, highlighting the effect of atmospheric constitution and topography of the city, of the customs and habits in a contaminating environment, and of the miasms, whereas the contagionist concept argued that transmission happened by direct contact, and that the best way to prevent the spreading of disease was through the practice of quarantine, isolation, and the control of the ports.

Odair Franco<sup>5</sup>, in his book about the yellow fever in Brazil, identified the following individuals as defenders of the anti-contagionist concept,

José Francisco da Silva Lima (1826-1910), from the *Escola Tropicalista Baiana* (Tropicalist School of Bahia), author of “The yellow fever imported through the *Guiscardo* vapor. Transmission of the disease to one person in this city” (1869); and João Vicente Torres Homem (1837-1887), opposer of medical sciences at the *Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro Medical College) and author of “Clinical study on fevers in Rio de Janeiro” (1877).

Among the contagionists, one can refer to: José Martins da Cruz Jobim (1802-1878), professor at *Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro Medical College) and author of “Discourse about the diseases that most often afflict the poor class in Rio de Janeiro” (1835); Manoel de Valladão Pimentel (1802-1882), director of the public infirmary of the *Hospício de Nossa Senhora do Livramento* (Nossa Senhora do Livramento Hospice) and author of “Report and observations by Dr. Manoel de Valladão Pimentel about the treatment of yellow fever at the major infirmary entrusted to his direction during that epidemic in this Court” (1851); José Pereira Rego (1816-1892), from the *Junta de Higiene Pública* (Public Hygiene Board), with the book “History and description of the yellow fever epidemic which ravaged Rio de Janeiro in 1850” (1851).

José Pereira Rego, in his study about yellow fever in Rio de Janeiro, presenting himself as “a man of science” (p. 2), provided a detailed discussion of the underlying causes of the 1850 epidemic, the issues of contagion and transmissibility of yellow fever, and the quarantine measures. He distinguished between the contagious disease and the disease by infection:

*Contagious diseases are those that are spread from one individual to another by a fixed or volatile virus, susceptible of being disseminated through the air; and infectious disease as that which depends on local causes and does not extend its influence beyond the locations where it appears, and which is a result of a miasm, substance unknown to this date* (p. 53)<sup>2</sup>.

Among the theoretical references, he cited the defenders of contagion, such as Chrisholm, Blanc, Thiebaul de Berneaud, and José Furio, and authors which refuted the contagion idea, such as Dévéze, Leblond, Fergusson, and Lefort (p. 52)<sup>2</sup>.

For the doctor, the debate surrounding contagion had not reached important results for science, because *there are very strong reasons to doubt contagion, and other no less powerful reasons clearly and evidently show its appearance in places where it had not existed before, taken by ex-*

*tremely small sources of infection* (p. 51)<sup>2</sup>. He also commented on the lack of definition towards the character of some diseases:

*[...] experience has shown that certain diseases, recognized as contagious, sometimes appear with this feature and sometimes do not. In addition to this, we know if the miasm or these unknown substances defined by that name are not susceptible to undergoing modifications in their essential nature, according to climatic circumstances and others to which it has bene submitted and that may alter its manner of affecting our physical body?* (p. 67)<sup>2</sup>.

He concluded, however, stating that *there is no one who would not affirm that excessive heat combined with a certain degree of humidity [...]; maritime infection; malaria fever emanations, etc., heavily contribute to developing a similar illness...* (p. 85)<sup>2</sup>. For Rego, considering the existence of distinctive concepts, those of the contagionist and those of the anti-contagionist, the measures to prevent and combat such epidemics would be equally distinct, with some people proposing rigorous measures like quarantines and circulation restrictions, and others considering those measures to be unnecessary and prejudicial to commerce.

Doctor Francisco de Paula Cândido (1805-1864) understood that the creation of a lazarette hospital, such as that in Jurujuba, was grounded on the *principle of diseases by infection, and by no means on the hypothesis of contagion, without needing to venture here into the elucidation of this thorny question related to yellow fever* (p. 3)<sup>6</sup>.

The historian Jaime Benchimol, in his study on the yellow fever, highlighted that those hygienist doctors were the first to present a discourse about the living conditions in the city and that they indicated measures of an interventionist nature to improve the “urban order”<sup>7</sup>. In this sense, it was important to observe the conditions of the city, the fact of being located in a swampy plain, surrounded by the sea and the mountains, the heat and the humidity, which could transmit the agents that caused diseases like the yellow fever.

Likewise, Flávio Elder recalled that the hygienist postulates “pushed medicine in the direction of society”<sup>8</sup>, transforming the city into a “social body”, according to the organicist model, with its functional parts.

In this sanitary context, the Imperial Government created, through Decree 598 from December 14, 1850, the *Junta de Higiene Pública* (Public Hygiene Board), with the incumbency of proposing measures of public salubrity<sup>9</sup>, with the par-

ticipation of such doctors as Francisco de Paula Cândido (1805-1864), Joaquim Cândido Soares de Meirelles (1797-1868), and Antônio Felix Martins (1812-1892). Paula Cândido, the president of the board, in 1851, presented the “Brief illustration of the sanitary state of the city of Rio de Janeiro and of the measures that need to be applied”, in which he proposed the creation of a lazarette hospital because *that lazarette is a measure, on one hand in favor of the sick and of those who had not been affected onboard: the first ones. to be treated on land, and the second ones to be protected from the disease by staying away from the source which threatened them. On one hand, there is the benefit of the salubrity of the city and its port, safely pushing away and extinguishing the sources of the infection which threatened them* (p. 3)<sup>6</sup>.

Specific establishments were created, many of which were called “lazarettes”, built for quarantine when epidemics broke out, and for the control of the migratory flux and maritime trade, although not all of them were geared necessarily toward the isolation of morpheic patients. In these lazarettes, passengers from contaminated ports were hosted for a few days, and the people with contagious diseases who arrived from ships in transit were isolated<sup>10</sup>. Besides the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), there was also the creation of the *Lazareto da Ilha do Bom-Jesus* (1850) (Lazarette of Bom Jesus Island), *Lazareto da Ilha de Maricá* (1855) (the Maricá Lazarette), *Lazareto da Várzea* (1855) (the Várzea Lazarette), *Lazareto Flutuante de Jurujuba* (1876) (the Floating Lazarette of Jurujuba), and *Lazareto da Ilha Grande* (1884) (Lazarette of Ilha Grande).

Francisco de Paula Cândido, on January 1, 1851, rented a building in the Jurujuba bay, “between the Cavalão Hill and the place called Charita”, in Niterói, in the province of Rio de Janeiro, in order to create a lazarette there for approximately 30 patients<sup>11</sup>. In that same month, the Ministry of the Empire sent a letter to the president of the *Junta de Higiene Pública* (Public Hygiene Board), checking on the convenience of the creation of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba) and the adoption of quarantines<sup>12</sup>. In a report from 1851, the Ministry of the Empire registered that, on January 20th of that year, the English schooner *Apparition* had arrived at that port, bringing four people sick with yellow fever, and that the ship should be placed in quarantine and the sick should be sent to the provisory lazarette that already existed in Jurujuba (p. 29-30)<sup>13</sup>.

The Notice number 38, from January 29, 1851, ordered the maintenance of the services at

the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba) and authorized the necessary accommodations for the staff, with daily payments and bonuses<sup>14</sup>. A house and its surrounding areas were rented, at a place called Areia Grossa (Areia Grossa beach), in Jurujuba.

The sanitary state of the capital of the Empire, the conditions of salubrity in the cities, the epidemic incidence of several diseases – especially yellow fever – and the measures required to combat them, were, at that time, the central themes in the official reports found in the studies conducted by the Imperial Medical Academy, as well as in the daily press of Rio de Janeiro.

The debates over etiology and the fight against diseases were not restricted only to the institutional spaces, like the *Academia Imperial de Medicina* (Imperial Medical Academy), and to the specialized press in periodicals, such as the *Annaes Brasilienses de Medicina*. They also reached the pages of the so-called daily press, in which – as mentioned by Jaime Benchimol, “profane actors interfered passively or actively in the development of the controversies or in their very solution” (p. 60)<sup>15</sup>.

#### **The Lazareto da Jurujuba (Lazarette of Jurujuba) in the pages of the newspapers**

The era of newspapers, in the second half of the nineteenth century, traversed an important moment of expansion, with many new periodicals presenting a great variety of themes and publics, seeking to reach all social groups and encourage reading. They offered well-defined themes, and some were aimed at a select public, the intellectual elite, while others were geared toward a wide range of sectors of society, including workers and children. In those publications, there was a strong interest in literary and scientific themes, as well as in practical and useful things. The expansion of newspapers occurred due to the concerns and interests of the intellectuals, and because of the introduction of technical innovations, photography, efficient printing presses, and new typographies and print shops, as mentioned by Ana Luiza Martins and Tania R. de Luca<sup>16</sup>. The history of daily and specialized press has been the subject of numerous studies of reference, such as those by Nelson Werneck Sodré (1999), Lúcia M. B. Neves (2006), Marco Morel (2003), Tânia M. Bressone da C. Ferreira, Isabel Lustosa (2003), and Marialva Barbosa (2007).

Doctor José Francisco Xavier Sigaud, one of the founders of the Medical Society of Rio de

Janeiro, in his “Plan for a medical newspaper” which he proposed in 1830, highlighted that *periodicals enlighten public opinion, spread education throughout all classes and, in doing so, will reach the most commendable purpose, that of teaching the people, and of reminding them through continuous repetition, and through one lesson a day, their rights and their duties...*” (p. 2)<sup>17</sup>. although Sigaud’s words referred specifically to the creation of a medical journal, we could extend them to the daily newspapers as well.

A contemporary analysis about medical science and scientific periodicals, such as the one presented by Luiz Otávio Ferreira<sup>18</sup>, reminds us that the goal of the scientific periodicals was to “speak to society”, to disclose the practices and values of medicine and health. It is our understanding, however, that the non-specialized periodicals, like the daily newspapers mentioned here, also achieved this goal.

At the time of the Empire, many daily newspapers dedicated several pages to comments on the sanitary conditions of the towns, to communicating the most recently adopted sanitation measures, as well as to express complaints and criticisms. Among the measures at the time was the creation of institutions like the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba).

Among the daily newspapers, there was the *Jornal do Commercio*, a periodical of a commercial nature and with a conservative view, which began to be published on October 1, 1827 in Rio de Janeiro under the direction of the French typographer, Pierre René François Plancher de la Noé (1779-1844). In an article published by this newspaper on January 27, 1851, and signed by the abbreviation “Q”, the role of newspapers, such as the *Diario do Rio de Janeiro*, was praised as a space for the publication of criticisms and complaints concerning sanitary conditions, since newspapers *for some time have continued to propose, daily, several means through which to chase such a great calamity away from us, and yet nothing has been taken advantage of!* (p. 3)<sup>19</sup>.

The *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), soon after its creation, became a recurring theme in the press, with articles covering the issue of its location, its environmental conditions, and that hygiene precepts that the establishment would follow

Considerations of that nature can be seen in the *Diario do Rio de Janeiro*, the first informative newspaper, founded by the Portuguese immigrant, Zeferino Vito de Meirelles, on June 01, 1821, which published local news, advertising,

complaints, sales, etc.<sup>20</sup> In its edition from January 14, 1851, it published one of the first inquiries concerning the creation of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba):

*We have just been informed that a small farm has been contracted in Jurujuba, with the purpose of establishing a lazarette. We were shattered when we heard which farm was chosen! [...] We are not going to get into the issue of Jurujuba being a convenient location, but how can they choose a place without water? [...] and the commission chose a farm without a house! Gentlemen, no more patronage in matters of public interest: enough disappointments!* (p. 2)<sup>21</sup>.

Other articles criticized the procedures and interest manifested in the purchase of real estate for the installation of the lazarette, as we can see in that published on January 20, 1851, and signed by the pseudonym “Microscope”:

*Is Jurujuba the most appropriate place for the lazarette? At what point is this deal? What is being bought, for a good amount of money, is a farm without water and with a single house? Is not the pest a serious matter in face of which all other business should cease? Isn't this the time to put public interest above the unlawful private interests?* (p. 2)<sup>22</sup>.

In the first months of 1851, several articles were published about the lazarette, among which we selected those from the *Diario do Rio de Janeiro*, signed using the pseudonyms “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”), “Microscópio” (“Microscope”), and “Moço da Jurujuba” (“Lad from Jurujuba”). Although we could speculate that behind these pseudonyms these three characters were doctors, we do not have any precise reference indicating their names and professions.

In his first letter published in the *Diario do Rio de Janeiro* on January 22, 1851, “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) questioned the chosen location and the way that the decision was made concerning the installation of the lazarette in Jurujuba:

*Old Jurujubians will never cease to protest against the insane project of establishing a lazarette on Caju island, on this illustrious continent, the most improper, inadequate, and horrible place in the entire region of Jurujuba, where there is no water to drink or to do laundry [...] if that authority, who was consulted by the person paced in charge by the government, not having his own interest as a motivation, should make him realize and look for places more well-adapted for the foundation of a lazarette* (p. 2)<sup>23</sup>.

In other letters, “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) dialogued with “Sr. Microscópio”

(“Mr. Microscope”) and the “Moço da Jurujuba” (“Lad from Jurujuba”). The two first ones questioned several aspects related to the installation of the lazarette, while the “Moço da Jurujuba” (“Lad from Jurujuba”) defended the installation in that location. “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) said in a letter from January 24, 1851:

*The “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) is not going to respond to the “Moço da Jurujuba” (“Lad from Jurujuba”), except for the part concerning him, which is about the location of the island; continent or whatever name that thing deserved, its convenience, proportions and advantages for the placement of the lazarette [...]. “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) has tried and intends to take the issue to the Minister of the Empire and to the general public, inviting him to see with his own eyes the provisional lazarette and verify by himself that the location is not the most terrible one (p. 3)<sup>24</sup>.*

In another article, still in January 1851, “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”), dialoguing with the “Moço de Cajú” (“Lad from Cajú”), to whom the first one referred as “boy” stated that his objective was to express his discontent with the choice of that place, considering it to be the worst in the Jurujuba region, especially due to the lack of clean water<sup>25</sup>.

Also, in that same January, “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) presented the terms of the representation that had been made for the residents of Jurujuba concerning the inappropriateness of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba):

*To the Public. The Caju Hill, inappropriately denominated island, is located on the continent of Jurujuba on the half that is by the S. Francisco Bay [...] the temperature of the air is hot during the daytime, due to the reverberation of the sea and to the enormous boulder of the peak close to it. Drinkable water, there is none (p. 2)<sup>26</sup>.*

In that same newspaper, on January 15, 1851, this enigmatic character reiterated his discontent, saying that, as a native from Jurujuba, he was horrified with the pretension of establishing a lazarette (lazarette) there, since that location was *better for hanging fishing nets than for creating such an establishment, which according to the principles of hygiene, must be at a fresh and well-aired space, etc., etc.* (p. 2)<sup>27</sup>.

The “Moço Jurujubiano” (“Young Jurujubian”), in February 1851, referred to the “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”) as someone who, due to age or lack of justice, was blinded by interests and passions, but for being “mathematical”, was on the side of reason. He defended, howev-

er, the Hygiene Commission, responsible for the choice of the Cajú Island for the lazarette, as made up of the most reputable people<sup>28</sup>.

The issue of disrespect to the precepts of hygiene in the choice of a place for the lazarette continued to motivate the “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”), who called the consuls residing at the Court to *visit the lazarette, and when you find it poorly located and without the hygiene requirements, make your findings reach the government* (p. 2)<sup>29</sup>.

He also requested that the Minister of the Empire make a visit the lazarette to know first-hand the inadequate conditions which gave that place the significance of a *receptacle for death, and the miserable ones, instead of gaining health there, will lose whatever they have left* (p. 3)<sup>30</sup>.

Other writers focused their considerations on the performance of the Board of Public Health, as we can see in the letter from February 5, 1851, in the *Diario do Rio de Janeiro*, signed under the pseudonym, “O Imparcial” (“The Impartial”), who demanded that the president of the *Junta de Higiene Pública* (Public Hygiene Board) should pay a visit to the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba) to *finish once and for all the argument, of whether or not a lazarette should or should be not set up there. That somewhere the lazarette will be set up, that is a matter of public necessity [...] we do have, and in it is vested the greatest faith in its honorability and science, and of the illustrious colleagues of the board* (p. 3)<sup>31</sup>.

Under the pseudonym, “O Irmão da Cruz” (“Brother of the Cross”), another article in the *Jornal do Commercio*, on January 24, 1851, commented that, although many had thought that the idea of a lazarette in Jurujuba had been just a rumor, the lazarette is already installed at a *miserable pigsty where there is no air to be found nor water, nor shelter from the sun!!* (p. 2)<sup>32</sup>.

The newspaper *O Correio da Tarde*, a daily newspaper, literary and commercial with a monarchistic bias, printed at I. P. da Costa’s *Typographia Americana* and which began to be published on January 30, 1848, published in its edition from February 6, 1851, that it had sent the request by meand of the inhabitants of Jurujuba to the *Junta de Higiene Pública* (Public Hygiene Board), so that it would investigate if the location proposed by the request was more adequate than the one where the provisional lazarette had been installed (p. 1)<sup>33</sup>.

The newspaper *Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, which began to circulate in 1848, owned by Francisco José dos Santos Rodrigues and Company, in its edition from Feb-

ruary 28, 1851, published a letter signed by “O Neutro” (“*The Neutral*”), which criticized the “O Velho Jurujubano” (“Old Jurujubian”), characterized by someone full of “anger and jealousy” and “decrepit”, stating that he considered the place proposed for the lazarette in Jurubatuba to be adequate (p. 2)<sup>34</sup>.

On the other hand, the articles manifested a certain disbelief concerning the results that could come from all those letters published in the newspapers, suspecting that they would not be considered by the authorities: *But what is the use of so many writings? What is the point of indicating what is more appropriate to prevent such a disaster!* (p. 3)<sup>19</sup>.

#### **From lazareto (lazarette) to maritime hospital**

The *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), in the nineteenth century, went through changes in its structure and purpose, which were also mentioned in the newspapers. Soon after its installation, doctor Joaquim Cândido Soares de Meirelles, in a letter published by the *Correio Mercantil* in the January 9, 1853 edition, questioned its continuation as a lazarette, considering it useless, prejudicial, inefficient, and against all logic. He based his arguments, not in terms of the problems with the location, but rather on the issue of yellow fever, questioning the sources of infection and the acclimatization of the disease. He considered the maintenance of the lazarette useless because *sequestering the sick from the commercial ships has no result, neither can it result in any benefit to the population, since the cause of the disease is in the atmosphere, and considering that it is common to all who are immersed in it, everyone will necessarily suffer the disease if they are not familiarized with its causes, if they are not acclimated to it. [...] It is a matter of wisdom by the nations, to adopt the measures dictated by prudence; it is part of medical science to clarify the nations as to the nature of the illnesses that afflicts them* (p. 2)<sup>35</sup>.

Another critic of the lazarette was Dr. J. Ellis, surgeon from the British Royal Navy who was onboard the ship *S. M. Britannica Crescent*, at the port of Rio de Janeiro and who sent a letter to the Minister of the Empire on January 03, 1853, reporting his visit to the lazarette in Jurujuba. In this letter, he presented his observations regarding the inadequacy of the hospital, which had poor ventilation; how some of its rooms were too small, how the hallways were filthy and dirt was spread everywhere, how the temperature was

too high inside the building, how there were not enough medical assistants, and how the treatment was inadequate (modification of saline). J. Ellis concluded saying that the lazarette *was not proper for the treatment of yellow fever patients, nor for the treatment of any other infirmity that afflicts mankind* (p. 2)<sup>36</sup>.

In this same newspaper, a letter was published on January 20, 1853, by Francisco de Paula Cândido, debunking the arguments of the British authorities about the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba):

*Concerning the first argument, that the treatment of the yellow fever patients who come from ships at the lazarette (that means, at a place far from the city) is an erroneous and obsolete doctrine, it seems to me that the information that you received was not exact, and I ought to infer from what you mentioned that such information follows the doctrine of contagion (which by the way is supported to this day by English medical illustrations and others), and the dispersion, the ventilation, etc., was not taken into consideration for the creation of the lazarette, and possibly what inspires aversion is the denomination of the place as a lazarette, and not the problem per se. [...] concerning the second argument, that sailors are affected by yellow fever, not onboard the ships, but rather at the filthy and pestilent houses which receive them [...] the Imperial government is not unaware: it has made an effort to adopt measures that may [...] remediate the problem [...] Concerning the argument: The yellow fever has originated in Rio de Janeiro, where it is located, that is a both a scientific and a sanitary question one, and the issue, whether it is spontaneous or imported, is still under debate. [...] contagion is unquestionable, and the fact that in some circumstances yellow fever is contagious indeed, in other words, it may come from elsewhere and invade a city. Concerning the fourth argument: that the transportation of the sick in small boats exposed to the rigors of the weather is fatal, I must loyally confess that it is something worthy of attention [...]. At this point, however [...] the delay would be more prejudicial than any impression caused by the steamship leased for regular transportation services to the lazarette, and it is thus convenient that it may be employed in order to overcome all the difficulties* (p. 1)<sup>37</sup>.

After this repertoire of criticism and complaints about the lazarette, the Imperial government defined, on January 3, 1853 (Decree number 1,103), the creation of a hospital at the location of the old *Lazarette da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), which would become the Hos-

*pital Marítimo de Santa Isabel* (Maritime Hospital of Santa Isabel), geared toward the treatment of sailors and other people onboard the foreign and domestic vessels who arrive at this port infected by contagious or suspicious diseases<sup>38</sup>.

A long and unsigned article, published the following year by the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, described the transformation which the lazarette had gone through, being transformed into a regular hospital, which would provide to the country a reputation of being advanced:

*In the back of Jurujuba bay, in the area called Areia Grossa, at a location where only a few years ago there was only a gathering of merchants of human flesh, black market traders and conductors of negro slaves, in one of the best houses there available, we can see nowadays the best and most important of the establishments in Rio de Janeiro, since the idea of it is a guarantee for the development of commerce with the world abroad, and it provides safety for the public health of a population of nearly 300,000 souls. Ambition and selfish private interests had, until recently, taken over the place to promote slavery and the nefarious trade [...] Nowadays, thanks to the enlightenment of this century and to the wisdom of the person who had such a sublime idea, that deposit of Africans has turned into a monument to charity, to knowledge and national dignity. From that large warehouse, a regular hospital has been set up: at that site, foundations were created for the reputation that we must have, as a developed people. [...] it is a house of charity and of true medicine, which observes, applies, and takes appreciable advantage – it is a small colony of sick people from every nation, in which there is clean air, well-maintained discipline, and the art of healing is understood in its full range [...] (p. 2)<sup>39</sup>.*

That same article reconstructed the context of the creation of the lazarette in 1851, in the epidemic scenario at the time, highlighting that: *our very sweet tranquility was seriously threatened, as well as our communication with the world, jeopardizing our general and holy interests, more thought was given to the foreign nationals coming by sea, exposed due to their diseases being mistreated at every hospital, which, to make matters worse, were less appropriate for such a purpose [...]. The lazarettes that were created, where many doctors proved, as always, their sublime dedication, was not sufficient [...] That was when the old Lazarette of Jurujuba was created, to retrieve sick men of the sea and to treat them (p. 2)<sup>39</sup>.*

After the proclamation of the Republic, a notice from the Ministry of Interior, published on December 14, 1889, determined the closure of the

*Hospital Marítimo de Santa Isabel* (Maritime Hospital of Santa Isabel), as it no longer met its nosocomial needs, and it was reopened in April 1891. The *Hospital Marítimo de Santa Isabel* (Maritime Hospital of Santa Isabel) had its name changed on November 24, 1891, to *Hospital Paula Cândido* (Paula Cândido Hospital), and it was later transformed into a children's preventive medicine hospital, intended to take care of poor and sick children, especially those whose parents had tuberculosis. Its transformation into the *Preventório Paula Cândido* (Paula Cândido Reformatory) was the subject of an article published in the newspaper, *Correio da Manhã*, on April 6, 1934 (p.3),<sup>40</sup> which stated that the hospital, until then geared toward the treatment of the sick with diseases that required compulsory isolation, now received "feeble children" (p. 5)<sup>41</sup>.

Em 1968, the *Preventório Paula Cândido* (Paula Cândido Reformatory) became the Paula Cândido Educational Institute<sup>42</sup>. Later, it became known as the *Casa da Princesa* (House of the Princess) and was turned into a cultural center, which in 2014 turned into a public bilingual school, the Colégio Estadual Joaquim Gomes de Sousa<sup>43</sup>. Its current address is Av. Quintino Bocaiúva, 115, Charitas, Niterói, RJ, Brazil.

## Final considerations

By analyzing the news from nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro, in daily newspapers like the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, *Correio Mercantil*, *O Correio da Tarde*, and *Jornal do Commercio*, it was possible to identify the manifestations of public opinion concerning the sanitary conditions, the epidemics, and the measures adopted in defense of the city's salubrity, such as the creation of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba). As the writer and doctor, Manoel Duarte Moreira de Azevedo, highlighted in 1865, those daily newspapers could be considered the *lighthouse that guides and indoctrinates the people; they are not the dirty and gross satire of the old days, but rather the chronical, the history, the thought, the life of social advancement* (p. 224)<sup>20</sup>.

Letters and articles followed the creation of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazarette of Jurujuba), in 1851, presenting the different arguments in defense of its installation. Many authors spoke out against the place chosen, Jurujuba, considering the environmental conditions, which would be dissonant with the precepts of hygiene defended by medical beliefs at the time.



The concepts regarding the nature and causality of diseases, especially of yellow fever, were arguments mentioned by many of those articles and letters, defending the creation of the lazaretto or criticizing its existence.

The distant location of the lazaretto, its facilities, its small medical team, and the purchase of property for the lazaretto were some of the concerns expressed in those periodicals.

On the other hand, it is interesting to include here another view on the lazaretto, by José Pereira Rego, who recreated in his historical retrospect about epidemics, published in 1872, the establishment of the *Lazareto da Jurujuba* (Lazaretto of Jurujuba), justifying the choice and considering it a “hospital beyond its walls”. The writer stated that,

although the lazaretto had been created with the objective of caring for sailors suffering from yellow fever, and to combat the 1850 epidemic and the accumulation of the sick in the city’s hospitals (which generated “large sources of infection and contagion”), its institution was important in preventing the epidemic from reaching the population on land, in making it possible for the country to re-establish its credit, and in the return of ships to the city port (p. 204)<sup>44</sup>.

In conclusion, we recall here the words of Cândido Soares de Meirelles, published in the *Correio Mercantil*, in 1853: *if it is part of the wisdom of the nations to adopt the measures dictated by prudence, it is the job of medical science to clarify to the nations as to the nature of the diseases they fear* (p. 2)<sup>35</sup>.

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Article submitted 31/01/2022

Approved 25/04/2022

Final version submitted 27/04/2022

Chief editors: Romeu Gomes, Antônio Augusto Moura da Silva