

“The Scientist-Diplomat”: Henrique da Rocha Lima and German–Brazilian Relations, 1919–1927

by André Felipe Cândido da Silva

Abstract. – This paper addresses the Brazilian physician Henrique da Rocha Lima’s (1879–1956) activism in favour of German–Brazilian scientific relations from 1919 to 1927. From 1909 to 1927 Rocha Lima worked at the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases in Hamburg, where he engaged in the most prolific phase of his scientific career. In Hamburg he achieved international standing and was successfully integrated into the German academic community, thus making it possible for him to promote intellectual exchange between Germany and Brazil. As a member of both these academic and social environments, he had the skills necessary to synchronize the interests of German cultural diplomacy, intensified after the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, with the demands of the Brazilian scientific community, which was acquiring increased specialization and professionalization. This role brought him into close contact with German diplomatic circles, which were seeking to harness scientific relations to the benefit of foreign cultural policy. Rocha Lima’s activity as a “scientist-diplomat” was thus motivated by institutional, political and individual motivations on both sides of the Atlantic. Through this dense web of relationships and personal and institutional reputations, scientific perspectives and agendas, economic exchanges and political agreements (and disagreements) were framed.

Introduction

Brazilian physician Henrique da Rocha Lima (1879–1956) was the leading promoter of scientific relations between Brazil and Germany in the first half of the twentieth century.¹ He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of Rio

¹ This work has been supported by the Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa de Estado de São Paulo (Fapesp). It is also part of my PhD thesis in History of Science, defended in 2011 at the

de Janeiro in 1901, and in this same year he left for Berlin, where he studied microbiology and anatomical pathology. From 1903 to 1909, Rocha Lima contributed to the scientific development of the Federal Serum Therapy Institute, founded by Brazilian sanitarian Oswaldo Cruz in 1900 (renamed after him in 1908).² Back in Germany from 1906 to 1908, Rocha Lima continued his studies in anatomical pathology with the German pathologist Hermann Dürck, who in 1909 invited him to take up the post of assistant professor at the Institute of Pathology at the University of Jena. He accepted, but ended up staying just eight months there, because shortly after being appointed he was invited to work as a researcher at the renowned Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases in Hamburg.³ He held this position from September 1909 to 1927, researching the pathology of tropical diseases, such as yellow fever, Carrión's disease (Bartonellosis), Chagas disease (American trypanosomiasis) and blastomycosis. He gained an international reputation after identifying the etiological agent of typhus fever (*Rickettsia prowazeki*) in 1916, when epidemics of this disease ravaged regions already devastated by the war.⁴ The importance of Rocha Lima's research in microbiology, pathology and tropical medicine, as well as the dense web of social and professional contacts he wove among scientists from Germany, Brazil and other countries, assured him great projection at the time and paved the way for his promotion of intellectual exchanges between Brazil and Germany.

Casa de Oswaldo Cruz, Rio de Janeiro. The thesis looks into the scientific career of Henrique da Rocha Lima from 1901, when he first visited Germany, to 1956, the year of his death. I specifically focus on his engagement in favor of German–Brazilian relations as the most constant feature of his extensive professional career, which coincided with fundamental changes in the profile of scientific activity in Brazil. André Felipe Cândido da Silva, *A trajetória científica de Henrique da Rocha Lima e as relações Brasil–Alemanha, 1901–1956* (thesis, Rio de Janeiro 2011).

² Originally designed to produce serum and a vaccine for bubonic plague, the Serum Therapy Institute was soon transformed into a more wide-ranging institution dedicated to research on diseases prevailing in Brazil, thus becoming the most important biomedical research institution in the country. See Jaime Larry Benchimol, *Manguinhos do sonho à vida: a ciência na Belle Époque* (Rio de Janeiro 1990).

³ Rocha Lima received an invitation to work at the “Hamburger Tropeninstitut” from protozoologist Stanislas von Prowazek. Prowazek spent six months at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute in 1908 doing research with a chemist from the Hamburg institute, Gustav Giemsa, and young researchers from the institute. See Benchimol, *Manguinhos do sonho à vida* (note 2).

⁴ About typhus fever in World War I see Paul Weindling, “The First World War and the Campaign against Lice: comparing British and German Sanitary Measures”: Wolfgang Eckart/Christoph Gradmann (eds.), *Die Medizin und der Erste Weltkrieg* (Pfaffenweiler 1996), p. 141–172; Silvia Berger, *Bakterien in Krieg und Frieden: eine Geschichte der medizinischen Bakteriologie in Deutschland, 1890–1933* (Göttingen 2009), part III: Krieg, p. 171–290; and Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1), chapter 3.

This article will analyse precisely what Rocha Lima's role was in promoting these relations from 1919, when cultural diplomacy took on greater importance in German foreign policy, to 1927, when he decided to return definitively to Brazil, where he lived until his death in 1956.⁵ It will be shown how Rocha Lima structured his scientific career at a time of crisis in German science, what factors led him to cooperate so closely with diplomatic circles, and what strategies he set into action in order to promote relations between Germany and Brazil. I argue that he sought to align the interests and requirements of the Brazilian medical community with those of German cultural diplomacy, in which the Hamburg institute was a prominent player, as a means of circumventing the crisis of legitimacy imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, as demonstrated by Stefan Wulf.⁶

Rocha Lima, the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases in Hamburg, and German Science after World War I

“The continuation of the war disguised as peace” was how Rocha Lima described the Treaty of Versailles in a letter to his Brazilian colleague, Arthur Neiva, in July 1923. For Rocha Lima, Versailles was the expression of the “oppressors’ wish to annihilate and dispossess the losers so that they should not be able to rise again”.⁷ By manifesting his resentment about Versailles, Rocha Lima joined the vast majority of his German colleagues. Physicians working in tropical medicine were particularly critical of the terms of the treaty because by stripping Germany of its colonies, it deprived these researchers of their main source of legitimacy: public health in the colonies. The continued existence of the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases was in jeopardy. Besides the crisis of legitimacy, the Hamburg institute was subject to the same economic constraints as all other German scientific institutions at the time.⁸ Besides, in international terms, German science was boycotted by Entente scientists. German researchers were forbidden to take part in the International Research Council, founded in 1919, and the use of the German language in international publications and conferences

⁵ About Rocha Lima's scientific career, see Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1); Márcia M. Rebouças, *Henrique da Rocha Lima: o consolidador do Instituto Biológico* (São Paulo 2009).

⁶ Stefan Wulf, *Das Hamburger Tropeninstitut 1919 bis 1945: auswärtige Kulturpolitik und Kolonialrevisionismus nach Versailles* (Berlin/Hamburg 1994), p. 5–7.

⁷ Letter from Rocha Lima to Arthur Neiva on July 22nd, 1923. Arthur Neiva Archive, CPDOC-FGV Rio de Janeiro, ANc 1910.07.28.

⁸ Wulf, *Das Hamburger Tropeninstitut* (note 6), p. 5–7.

was banned. To counteract this isolation, Germans sought to re-establish contact with foreign colleagues. In a country ruined by the war and severely limited by the terms of the treaty, the conception of science as *Machtersatz* (compensation in power) started to gain ground: using science in lieu of the military and political power annihilated by the war.⁹ This idea of science bolstered initiatives such as the creation, in 1920, of the *Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft* (Emergency Association of German Science).¹⁰ It also legitimated the close cooperation of German researchers with the Weimar Republic's foreign cultural diplomats, whose aim was to recoup the prestige of German culture and science abroad, to circumvent the international isolation of German science, and to create new ways of promoting industry and commerce. Cultural diplomacy was one of the few domains that were not restricted by the treaty. In 1920, a cultural division was set up inside the recently reorganized German Foreign Office. The new section was put in charge of supervising international scientific interchange, transnational scientific cooperation, international scientific meetings and publications, and interchange among German scholars abroad as well as visiting scholars to Germany. Its creation shows that German diplomats considered cultural relations, which encompassed the sciences as well as the arts, as an important subgroup of the Weimar Republic's foreign policy.¹¹

For Bernhard Nocht, director of the Institute for Tropical and Maritime Diseases, cultural diplomacy was a way to circumvent the dual crises of legitimacy and economic constraint suffered by the institution. Due to the close historical ties between Hamburg and Latin America, this region figured as an important target for the cultural policy supported by this Hanseatic city.¹² Latin America was still available for foreign economic investments, and there German capital would not run up against the import barriers

⁹ Paul Forman, "Scientific Internationalism and the Weimar Physicists: The Ideology and its Manipulation in Germany after World War I": *Isis* 64 (1973), p. 151–180; Jochen Kirchhoff, *Die Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft/ Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, 1920–1934: Schwerpunktlegungen der Forschungspolitik der Weimarer Republik* (doctoral thesis, Munich 2003), p. 56; Brocke, "Bernhard von, Friedrich Schmidt-Ott. Wissenschaft als Machtersatz. Preussische Deutsche Wissenschaftspolitik zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur": *Dahlemer Archivgespräche* 12 (2006), p. 153–188.

¹⁰ For more on the creation of the *Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft* after World War I, see Kirchhoff, *Die Notgemeinschaft* (note 9).

¹¹ Susan Solomon, *Doing Medicine Together: Germany and Russia between the Wars* (Toronto 2006), p. 8. About German cultural diplomacy in the Weimar Republic see Kurt Düwell, *Deutschlands auswärtige Kulturpolitik: 1918–1932 – Grundlinien und Dokumente* (Cologne 1976).

¹² Jens Urban, *Die lateinamerikanischen Studierenden an der Universität Hamburg 1919–1970* (Hamburg 2005)

imposed in the USA and some European countries.¹³ Besides, Latin America's scientific circles had not adhered to the boycott of German science, which had enjoyed widespread respect since the early twentieth century, especially in medical fields. It was for this reason that so many medical students and practitioners, including Rocha Lima, had gone to Germany to complete their studies. Many Latin American physicians came from the local elites and belonged (or would belong) to the ruling classes.

Bernhard Nocht believed that medicine was one of the most efficient tools of cultural diplomacy because it was not obviously cultural propaganda and it would foster amongst the local population a sense of gratitude for the doctors and health workers, as well as, by extension, for their country of origin. In a speech to traders from Hamburg, Nocht declared that “through medical practices and scientific interchange German science will again earn the prestige it deserves”. In reference to his country's coat of arms, he added that if German science was able to “spread its wings again”, it would open up new routes for its trade and industry.¹⁴ Together with the director of the Eppendorf Hospital, Ludolph Brauer, Nocht created the *Revista Médica de Hamburgo* (literally “Hamburg Medical Journal”) in 1920, which would publish Germany's latest medical advancements in Spanish and, to a lesser extent, Portuguese.¹⁵ Doctors from Latin America were recruited in order to promote the *Revista* in local medical circles.¹⁶

Rocha Lima and German–Brazilian Relations after World War I

As a Brazilian, Rocha Lima could provide a natural link between German medicine and cultural diplomacy and his homeland. He was on the editorial

¹³ Stefan H. Rinke, *Der letzte freie Kontinent: Deutsche Lateinamerikapolitik im Zeichen transnationaler Beziehungen, 1918–1933* (Stuttgart 1996). About scientific relations between the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Medicine of Hamburg and Latin America, see Felix Brahm, *Die Lateinamerika-Beziehungen des Hamburger Tropeninstituts 1900–1945* (Hamburg 2002).

¹⁴ Historical Archives of the Bernhard Nocht Institut für Tropenmedizin. “Für das Hamburger Institut für Schiffs- und Tropenkrankheiten” Vertrauliche Denkschrift, 863. BNI 352 8/9 Prof. Nocht 1900–1930, Korrespondenz V 1920–1921.

¹⁵ Actually, it was the resumption of the project initiated by Ludolph Brauer in 1914. Only one issue of the publication came out (in July 1914), since the outbreak of the war interrupted Brauer's plans. For more on this subject, see Magali Romero Sá/André Felipe Cândido da Silva, “La Revista Médica de Hamburgo y la Revista Médica Germano-Ibero-Americana: diseminación de la medicina germánica en España y América Latina 1920–1933”: *Asclepio – Revista de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia* LXII (2010), p. 7–34.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

team of the *Revista Médica de Hamburgo* and was keen to get other Brazilians involved. He invited Brazilian colleagues to write articles for the journal in Portuguese and also reviewed works published in Brazilian journals.¹⁷

Rocha Lima's integration into the German academic community was sealed with his appointment as a *Privatdozent* at the University of Hamburg, founded in 1919. From this position he could act as a "spokesman" of German cultural diplomacy for Latin American audiences, especially in Brazil. Yet, if on one hand Rocha Lima furthered the aims and interests of Bernhard Nocht, the Hamburg institute and Germany's *Kulturpolitik*, on the other he sought to exploit the circumstances in favour of his own professional career and scientific agenda. The juxtaposition of his individual interests with the political and institutional imperatives of post-World War I Germany is the key to understanding Rocha Lima's engagement in promoting German-Brazilian relations. In correspondence with the aforementioned Arthur Neiva, he repeatedly alludes to the importance of being comfortable, not only physically and materially, but also "morally" to practice science in circumstances favourable to this activity, in which intellectual work would be fostered and valued.¹⁸ As such, he decided to accept Neiva's invitation to take over the running of the Butantã Institute in 1920, an institution similar to the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, located in São Paulo and working mainly in the production of serums and vaccines.¹⁹ Before taking any sort of decision, he had to carefully assess the conditions of his future post. After all, he had achieved the "highest position ever for a foreigner in Germany", as he acknowledged in a letter to Neiva.²⁰ It would be hard to leave behind such a position "achieved in ten years of hard work", adding that

"neither the depletion of resources, nor the huge struggle, nor the subsequent internal convulsions, nor the merciless oppression of the victors with their drive for purity and thirst for revenge have managed to shake the scientific environment in which I live so well".²¹

¹⁷ Rocha Lima's mediation of Brazilian participation in the *Revista Médica de Hamburgo* is confirmed by the decrease in the number of articles and reviews in Portuguese after 1927, when he returned to Brazil, resigning from the editorial board of the journal. *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ See on this respect Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1).

¹⁹ The Butantã Institute was created in 1900, at the same time as the Serum Therapy Institute in Rio de Janeiro, with the same original aim of producing serums and vaccines for bubonic plague. Butantã became a specialized centre in the production and research of serums for poisonous animals, especially snakes. For more on the Butantã Institute, see Jaime Larry Benchimol/Luiz Antônio Teixeira, *Cobras, lagartos e outros bichos: uma história comparada dos Institutos Oswaldo Cruz e Butantã* (Rio de Janeiro 1993).

²⁰ Letter from Rocha Lima to Arthur Neiva, November 6th, 1919. Arthur Neiva Archive, CPDOc-FGV, Rio de Janeiro. ANc 1910.07.28.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

Rocha Lima's caution was not unfounded. Rivalries and political intrigues kept him from taking over the leadership of the Butantã Institute. Though he may have returned to Brazil for personal reasons, he took the opportunity "to restore relations between German science and Brazilian scientists, cut off by the war, and to prepare new relations", as he stated in a report to the Hamburg authorities.²² It is worth pointing out that this report was written years later, when Rocha Lima was more intensively engaged in German cultural diplomacy and more convinced of the strategic importance of this engagement, as will be shown here. According to Rocha Lima, upon his arrival in Rio de Janeiro in April 1920, he found his country quite receptive to Germany, even though "there were still signs of heightened feelings because of the war", as he pointed out in the report.²³ Although Brazil had sided with the Entente during the war, it had promptly restored diplomatic relations with Germany. In August 1920 Georg Plehn assumed the post of German ambassador to Brazil.²⁴

The diplomatic missions were still vacant when a German neurosurgeon, Fedor Krause, arrived in Brazil to operate on the daughter of a Brazilian physician, Modesto Guimarães. Although Rocha Lima considered the motive of Krause's visit "degrading", he sought to take advantage of it to benefit German cultural diplomacy. He accompanied Krause throughout almost his entire stay, introduced him to Brazilian colleagues, wrote his speeches and letters, and translated the talks he was invited to give into Portuguese.²⁵

Krause visited Rio de Janeiro's medical and law schools and medical associations, was honoured by the local German community and received by military representatives and even by the Brazilian president, Epitácio Pessoa. Pro-German physicians also followed Krause during his visit.²⁶ After Rio de Janeiro, Krause visited medical institutions in São Paulo, and in late August he took a ship to Buenos Aires. Indeed, most of the invitations extended to German scientists to visit South America during the 1920s

²² Henrique da Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reisen von Professor Rocha Lima nach Brasilien 1920 und 1922". Rocha Lima's papers, Memorial Centre of the Biological Institute at São Paulo (hereinafter MCBISP).

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ *Relatório do Ministério das Relações Exteriores 1919–1920* (Rio de Janeiro 1920).

²⁵ Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reisen" (note 22).

²⁶ "Professor Krause – Conferência de Ontem na Faculdade de Medicina": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, June 20th, 1920; "Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 1920; "Academia Nacional de Medicina – a conferência do Professor Krause": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, June 27th, 1920.

and 30s came from Argentina, and many of them took the opportunity to visit Brazil, where they made contact with the local intellectual circles.

Krause was keen to capitalize on local admiration for German medical science by offering his personal medical services in the form of consultations or even surgery at exorbitant prices, which prompted protests from Brazilian physicians and authorities. Nevertheless, Rocha Lima judged Krause's visit to have been highly positive, which he attributed mainly to the fact that he gave his talks and speeches in Portuguese.²⁷ The Dutch envoy, who had represented Germany since 1917, when diplomatic relations between Germany and Brazil had been severed, also had a positive impression of Krause's stay. He informed the Foreign Office in Berlin that the German physician had been given a warm reception by the local medical community, press and general public. In his appraisal, the visit had contributed to promote "Germanness" (*Deutschtum*), and had shown "that German knowledge and skills continue to be as esteemed in Brazil as they were before, and German science may have more followers here than is normally recognized". As such, Brazil represented a huge potential territory for German intellectual endeavors.²⁸ Following this visit, a telegram was sent from Berlin to Rio de Janeiro stating that it regarded Krause's warm reception as proof that Brazil held no "reservations against Germany and its descendants".²⁹

Like Krause, Rocha Lima was well received by Brazilian medical associations, where he was acclaimed as a Brazilian who had received the blessing of the Old World and who therefore symbolized the potential of Brazilian science.³⁰ In September 1920 he set sail back to Hamburg on the *Limburgia*, taking a considerable amount of biological material with him – histopathological sections, slides, insects, toxins, serums and microbial cultures. He thus sought to replenish the stocks of research material at the Hamburg institute, which had lost its main "source of study": Germany's colonial possessions.³¹ Two years later, Rocha Lima again visited Brazil, once again impelled by private interests. And just like before, he sought to capitalize on his visit to promote Brazilian–German relations and German cultural diplomacy.

²⁷ Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reisen" (note 22).

²⁸ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (hereinafter PAAA) 78999. Niederländische Gesandtschaft an Auswärtiges Amt, July 19th, 1920.

²⁹ Historical Archive of Itamaraty. Received telegrams, 203/1/08 – 1922–1923.

³⁰ "Academia Nacional de Medicina. O novo membro honorário, professor Rocha Lima": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, June 18th, 1920.

³¹ Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reisen" (note 22).

Rocha Lima and Fritz Munk in the Brazilian Centennial

Rocha Lima visited Brazil in 1922 to oversee the creation of the Brazilian Institute of Microbiology, a private institution that manufactured drugs, serums and vaccines which he founded together with Antônio Parreiras Horta, Arthur Moses and Henrique Aragão. He was accompanied by a German physician, Fritz Munk, who he had become friends with when they were both investigating typhus fever epidemics in Poland during the war. They remained friends until Munk's death in 1951. Through Rocha Lima, Munk met many other Brazilian doctors; he learned Portuguese and became an important reference for Brazilian medical students, doctors and patients who went to Germany to study, do research or receive medical treatment from the 1920s to 40s.³²

Munk and Rocha Lima's visit took place at a time of diplomatic wrangling between France and Germany. Since the early twentieth century, France had developed systematic foreign cultural policies in Latin America through agencies such as "Groupement des Grandes Ecoles et Universités de France pour les Relations avec l'Amérique Latine". In the 1920s, the French intensified their efforts in the continent, and as intellectual exchange took on increasing importance in official policies, it was increasingly coordinated under the auspices of the Foreign Office.³³ One of the leading promoters of this cultural policy was the physician and psychologist Georges Dumas. According to Dumas, the French–Brazilian alliance was fuelled by a shared hatred of Germans, even if Brazil had "never actually harboured any hostility towards Germany or Germanophiles".³⁴

Paris's diplomatic efforts were favoured by the hegemony of French culture among Brazil's intellectual elite, whose members started learning French at an early age. They built on the strength of the French language amongst these local elites and stressed "Latinity" as a common trait that linked French and Latin American countries.³⁵

³² Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1), chapters 4 and 5.

³³ About French cultural diplomacy in Brazil and other Latin American countries, see Patrick Petitjean, "Entre ciência e diplomacia: a organização da influência científica francesa na América Latina, 1900–1940": Amélia Hamburger et al., *A ciência nas relações Brasil–França, 1850–1950* (São Paulo 1996), p. 89–120; Hugo Suppo, "A política cultural da França no Brasil entre 1920 e 1940: o direito e o avesso das missões universitárias": *Revista de História* 142–143 (2000), p. 309–345; Magali Romero Sá/Larissa M. Vianna, "La science médicale entre la France et le Brésil: stratégies d'échange scientifique dans la période de l'entre-deux guerres": *Cahiers des Amériques Latines* 65 (2010), p. 65–88.

³⁴ Cited in Suppo, "A política cultural da França" (note 33), p. 322–323.

³⁵ Sá/Vianna, "La science médicale" (note 33).

Rocha Lima sought to neutralize this powerful cultural policy and displace French influence among Brazilian intellectuals towards Germany. The German language was the biggest obstacle to a greater penetration of German culture in local circles. It was spoken by some doctors interested in keeping up with the latest breakthroughs of German medical science or who had done their training at German or Austrian universities and institutes, and, of course, by the large German Brazilian community which lived primarily in the south of the country. Rocha Lima's strategy was to identify the demands of these groups and recruit them in the promotion of German science and culture. Rocha Lima and Munk's stay in Brazil in 1922 also coincided with the creation, in Rio de Janeiro, of the Franco-Brazilian Institute of High Culture (Instituto Franco-Brasileiro de Alta Cultura). Its objective was to encourage intellectual cooperation between France and Brazil through courses and talks given in both countries.³⁶ 1922 was also the centenary of Brazil's independence, celebrated with a great exhibition in which the participation of the largest possible number of international representatives was encouraged. The festivities were designed "to show the degree of progress achieved by Brazil in all fields of activity",³⁷ attesting to the nation's maturity. Different countries were invited to set up marquees, where they would showcase their commerce and industry. France planned an astonishing participation. Meanwhile, Germany, in the throes of a severe financial crisis and under pressure to pay its war reparations, was unable to attend the exhibition.³⁸

In order to compensate for its absence from the centenary exhibition, Germany was keen to take advantage of a visit Fedor Krause was scheduled to make to Brazil on the invitation of the medical schools of Rio and São Paulo. He took an official document with him, signed by almost every German university and institute, congratulating Brazil on its centenary as an independent nation. Copies of the document were distributed to educational and scientific institutions across Brazil.³⁹ Krause also gave a talk at the Rio de Janeiro Faculty of Medicine, which was attended by Germany's ambassador in Brazil, Georg Plehn. Besides the message from Germany's universities, Krause donated samples of medications produced by German pharmaceutical compa-

³⁶ Ibidem, and Suppo, "A política cultural da França" (note 33).

³⁷ Cited in Eugênio V. Garcia, *Entre América e Europa: a política externa brasileira na década de 1920* (Brasília 2006), p. 109.

³⁸ Germany's absence from the exhibition led to some speculation in the Brazilian press. See "Telegramas do Exterior – Alemanha": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, April 8th, 1922, and "Diversas Notícias": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, April 25th, 1922.

³⁹ "Recepção do Professor Krause – Mensagens das Universidades Alemãs": *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, May 20th, 1922.

nies to Brazilian hospitals.⁴⁰ He also took a letter from the German tropical physician, Claus Schilling, to the director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, Carlos Chagas, urging him to send students interested in “greater training opportunities” to Germany. Schilling mentioned German admiration of Chagas’s “discovery”: American trypanosomiasis, a disease named after him. The war, Schilling went on, may have jeopardized the desire to continue the German–Brazilian intellectual interchange, but it “could not do quash it”.⁴¹

While this time Rocha Lima may not have escorted Krause, he did seek to take full advantage of his and Munk’s visit for the advancement of German cultural diplomacy. Speaking to the local press, eager for “fresh” news from abroad, Rocha Lima criticized what he described as the “revenge” taken by Germany’s opponents and France’s goal of intellectual and political hegemony.⁴² Talking to Brazilian journalists, he and Munk both emphasized the strength with which scientific work continued in Germany, in spite of its economic difficulties, political chaos and the boycott of Entente scientists.⁴³

Like Krause and other foreign guests, Munk was received by medical and scientific institutions and educational establishments. Rocha Lima underscored Munk’s willingness to foster German–Brazilian relations. Both publicly praised the German higher education and research system with the aim to attract Brazilian students. Rocha Lima thought that Brazil should follow the lead of Japan and the USA, which, they claimed, had boosted their scientific development through close ties with Germany. It is reasonable to assume that Rocha Lima’s statements were not merely rhetorical: in light of his affective ties with his homeland, it is quite likely that he really did wish to see Brazil’s progress leveraged through scientific development, and for this he favoured closer ties with the country he believed to be at the forefront of science, where he had forged his professional identity. Imbued with this conviction and a sense of German patriotism, he was resentful of France’s cultural domination, which he described as Brazil’s “intellectual serfdom”.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ “Centenário da Independência – um valioso donativo à Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro”: *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, May 31st, 1922.

⁴¹ Cited in Magali Romero Sá, *German Medical Science in the Tropics: Max Kuczynski and the Study of Yellow Fever in Brazil* (in press). I thank the author for providing me with a copy of her text before its publication.

⁴² “Na esphera intangível da Sciencia – uma longa palestra noticiosa e crítica do professor Rocha Lima”. Recorte de Jornais. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, and “O sábio professor – Munk em palestra de sciencia e patriotismo”. Recorte de Jornais. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

Munk and Rocha Lima visited medical institutions in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and then embarked for Germany from Santos. Rocha Lima once again took biological material in his baggage, including snakes, insects and microbial cultures.⁴⁵ With part of this material, he developed his research on the fungi that caused skin diseases known as blastomycosis, as a specialization in dermatology at St. Georg Hospital in Hamburg, under the supervision of the renowned dermatologist and venereologist Edward Christian Arning. From 1922 to 1924 he dedicated his efforts to these studies, whose findings he published in medical journals and at scientific meetings.⁴⁶ This period was the height of the economic crisis in Germany, with its runaway inflation, the effects of which the Brazilian researcher was not spared. In a letter to Neiva dated July 1923, he complained he was “earning less than a cook, travelling third class, admiring motor cars always from outside, cutting back his expenses, suffering from hay fever, and without any hope of this situation improving”.⁴⁷ That same year, he married Berlin-born Alice Josephine Johanna Kadelung Margaret, with whom he lived until 1931, when they were divorced.⁴⁸

In 1924, the physician Fernando Simões Barbosa asked for Rocha Lima to appoint a German pathologist and German catholic nurses, who would be at disposal to work in Brazil.⁴⁹ Barbosa had been appointed by the state government of Pernambuco, in north-eastern Brazil, to take part in a commission to oversee the construction of a hospital in Recife, the state capital. He and other commission members wanted this hospital to serve as an example of good healthcare and the training of doctors and nurses, taking

⁴⁵ Rocha Lima, “Bericht über die Reisen” (note 22).

⁴⁶ Henrique da Rocha Lima, “Über die exotischen Hautkrankheiten: Granuloma Venereum, Ulcus Tropicum, Frambösie, Verruga Peruviana, Dermatitis Verrucosa, Blastomykose, Leishmaniose”: *Karlsbader ärztliche Vorträge* (Jena 1923), p. 354–71; idem, “Über Blastomykose, venerisches Granulom und klimatische Bubonen”: *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphiligraphie* 145 (1924), p. 312–326; and idem, “Histopathologie der exotischen Blastomykosen”: *Verhandlungen der Deutschen Pathologischen Gesellschaft* (Würzburg 1925). In 1923, Rocha Lima took part in a dermatology congress held in Munich and an international congress of medicine in Karlsbad, and in 1924 in the annual meeting of the German Pathology Society. Rocha Lima became an authority on this subject, as demonstrated by his participation in a respected handbook on venereal and skin diseases published by Jadassohn. Rocha Lima, “Exotische Blastomykosen”: J. Jadassohn (ed.), *Handbuch der Haut- und Geschlechtskrankheiten*, Bd. XII (Berlin 1932), p. 366–375.

⁴⁷ Letter from Rocha Lima to Arthur Neiva, July 19th, 1923. Arthur Neiva Archive, CPDOc-FGV, Rio de Janeiro. ANc 1910.07.28.

⁴⁸ Marriage Certificate. Hamburger Staatsarchiv (hereinafter StaHH) 332-5 3455 and 672/1923.

⁴⁹ Letter from Fernando Simões Barbosa to Rocha Lima on February 17th, 1924. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

Germany as its model. Most of the apparatus used to equip the hospital was imported from Germany.⁵⁰ Rocha Lima's correspondence does not give any details about the suggestions he made to his Brazilian colleague about how to attract German professionals to the hospital. The fact is that in December 1924, eleven German nurses did arrive in Recife. They took over the administration of the hospital and established an exemplary standard of medical care and training at that time.⁵¹ In 1929, Rocha Lima recommended Barbosa to Munk and his Hamburg colleague Peter Mühlens, saying he had constructed one of the best hospitals in Brazil. This episode involving Simões Barbosa is just one of many that illustrate Rocha Lima's role in mediating German–Brazilian relations in the fields of science, medicine and public health.⁵²

The building of hospitals according to German standards is another aspect of the way Germany interacted with Brazil and other Latin American countries, revealing the importance of medicine to these relationships. For Bernhard Nocht, German hospitals could serve as a neutral tool of cultural propaganda because of their humanitarian nature, boosting not only scientific, but also economic ties while also contributing to the advancement of German medical science, since they could act as a collection point for data on different climatic and geological regions.⁵³

In São Paulo, a German hospital was founded in 1897 to assist the local ethnic German population, but the building was concluded and inaugurated only in 1923.⁵⁴ Its aim was similar to that of a German hospital established in 1927 in Porto Alegre, capital of the state that was home to the largest German Brazilian population. In Rio de Janeiro, the local German colony established its own hospital in 1934, following the model of the Martin Luther Hospital in Berlin, then regarded as having the most modern architecture and facilities. Its director, Fritz Munk, gave technical advice on the building of the Rio hospital and was present at its inauguration.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Fátima Maria da S. Abrão et al., “Influência germânica nos primórdios da enfermagem profissional na cidade do Recife, Pernambuco, 1924–1927”: *Revista de Enfermagem Escola Anna Nery* 14 (2010), p. 275–283.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² Letters from Rocha Lima to Fritz Munk and Peter Mühlens, October 20th, 1929. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁵³ “Die Gründung deutscher Krankenhäuser im Ausland”: Historical Archive Bernhard Nocht Institut für Tropenmedizin.

⁵⁴ About the German Hospital in São Paulo, see Ernst G. Lipkau, *Hospital Alemão de São Paulo Cem anos 1897–1997* (São Paulo 1997).

⁵⁵ About Munk and the German Hospital in Rio de Janeiro, see Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1), p. 657–659.

In addition to supporting scientific interchange, Rocha Lima also referred patients who wished to be treated in Europe to Munk and Mühlens. Thus, Rocha Lima acted as a bridge between the two sides of the Atlantic for doctors, nurses, patients, biological material, and publications. Many individuals went to German institutions to complete their medical training, which was a way of garnering prestige amongst their peers. Meanwhile, German diplomacy sought to exploit these flows to further its *Kulturpolitik*, seeing the individuals involved as possible future “points of support” for the promotion of German science and culture, and thereby its trade and industry.

The Missionary Exhibition and Rocha Lima’s Visit to Genaro Mondaini (1924–1925)

From 1924 to 1925, Rocha Lima was recruited for a task that required his talent as an organizer as well as his diplomatic skills. This time he was needed not in Brazil but in Rome, namely the Vatican. His former teacher, pathologist Hermann Dürck, had invited him to organize the tropical hygiene and medicine section of the Missionary Exhibition, scheduled to take place in Rome in 1925. In a letter, Dürck stressed that the opportunity should be exploited to show that Germans “are not cultureless barbarians, as our friends would have us seen”.⁵⁶ At the exhibition, German science could be promoted, but there could be no explicit official involvement, and the cultural propaganda had not to appear chauvinistic or jingoistic. Dürck added that in Rome, Germany’s expertise in tropical diseases could be showcased, attesting to its potential as a colonizing country.⁵⁷ This was of particular significance in a context in which Germany was claiming the right to regain its former possessions. As such, the diplomatic circles and researchers at the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases in Hamburg acknowledged the importance of the German participation in the exhibition, supporting the activities of Rocha Lima and Dürck in Rome. The German Foreign Office and the Hamburg Senate provided funding.⁵⁸ For his work as organizer of the tropical hygiene and medical section of the Missionary Exhibition, Rocha Lima was awarded the Medal of Honour by Pope Pius XI.

⁵⁶ Letter from Hermann Dürck to Rocha Lima, December 20th, 1923. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁵⁷ Letters from Hermann Dürck to Rocha Lima, January 1st, 1924, October 27th, 1924, and October 29th, 1924. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁵⁸ Henrique da Rocha Lima, “Bericht über die Tätigkeiten bei der Missionsausstellung in Rom 1925”, Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP, and Wulf, *Das Hamburger Tropeninstitut* (note 6), p. 71.

Amid the preparations for the Missionary Exhibition, Rocha Lima was appointed by the German Foreign Office to make contact with an Italian professor, Genaro Mondaini, who was a leading member of the Italian Colonial Institute. Mondaini had been assigned to act as reporter of the following meeting of the International Colonial Institute in Brussels. At this meeting, the mandate system implanted by the League of Nations in Germany's former possessions would be discussed. Rocha Lima's mission was to enquire into Mondaini's position concerning the colonial issue and try to influence him in favour of Germany, giving him publications on this subject. Rocha Lima's overtures should in no way reveal the involvement of the German state; rather, they should be seen as the spontaneous contact between two private colonial institutes – the Hamburg Colonial Institute and its counterpart in Italy.⁵⁹

Rocha Lima was to visit Mondaini in December 1924. In his report to the Foreign Office, he wrote that the Italian professor was not opposed to German interests, and it would thus be possible to deal with him “skilfully and objectively”. Even so, he did not consider it appropriate to send him any propaganda publications; the most efficient and promising propaganda strategy in Italy would be via the press.⁶⁰

1925 was also the year of the First International Congress on Malaria in Rome. Along with other Germans, researchers from the Hamburg institute attended the meeting, including Rocha Lima. Nocht took part as Germany's official delegate.⁶¹ The boycott of German science was beginning to ease, following the “spirit of Locarno”, under which Germany's reintegration into the international scene became a possibility. However, scientists often harboured greater reservations about reconciliation than their governments.⁶²

Rocha Lima, Carlos Chagas and Miguel Couto's Visit to Germany, 1925–1926

Taking advantage of his relationship with the Foreign Office (in light of the Missionary Exhibition) and also his visit to Mondaini, Rocha Lima wrote to

⁵⁹ Letter from German Foreign Office to Rocha Lima on August 30th, 1924, and October 23rd, 1924. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁶⁰ Henrique da Rocha Lima, “Bericht von Professor Dr. H. da Rocha Lima, Hamburg, über den Besuch bei Professor Genaro Mondaini, Rom”. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁶¹ “Primero Congreso Internacional para el estudio del paludismo”: *Revista Médica de Hamburgo* VII, 1 (1926), p. 25–28.

⁶² See more on this subject in Brigitte Schroeder-Gudenus, *Les scientifiques et la paix: la communauté scientifique internationale pendant les années vingt* (Montreal 1978).

Germany about Carlos Chagas's intention to visit Germany.⁶³ In a letter to the director of the Cultural Section, he offered to communicate Germany's invitation to Chagas, who had already been on official visits to the USA, France and Belgium. Besides having discovered the American trypanosomiasis named after him, Chagas had also been the director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, the largest biomedical research institution in Latin America, since 1917. It was there that Rocha Lima had begun his scientific career before going to Germany.⁶⁴ Like his predecessor Oswaldo Cruz, internationally acclaimed in the early twentieth century for his successful yellow fever campaign in Rio de Janeiro, Chagas had directed the federal health office since 1920. In 1923, he was also appointed a member of the League of Nations Health Organization, cementing his national and international prestige.⁶⁵

"For motives of cultural diplomacy", Rocha Lima warned the German Foreign Office, the honours offered to Chagas in Germany should surpass those he had received in any other country.⁶⁶ Inquiring after Chagas's visit, the German mission in Rio de Janeiro suggested that an additional invitation be issued for Miguel Couto, a professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Rio de Janeiro, director of the Brazilian Academy of Medicine and one of the main figures in the local medical community. Under instructions from the Foreign Office, Fritz Munk provided official invitations for both Brazilian physicians.⁶⁷

Rocha Lima prepared Chagas's and Couto's itineraries, with the help of Munk when it came to their activities in Berlin. Chagas's visit took place in October 1925 and Couto's in March 1926. The German Foreign Office covered all the costs of Chagas's trip, which included a visit to Bayer in Leverkusen and receptions by medical and political leaders in Hamburg and Berlin, where he received the same treatment as a head of state.⁶⁸

⁶³ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, October 9th, 1924. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁶⁴ Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1), p. 64–66.

⁶⁵ For more on Carlos Chagas's career see Carlos Chagas Filho, *Meu pai* (Rio de Janeiro 1993); Simone Kropf, *Doença de Chagas, doença do Brasil: ciência, saúde e nação, 1909–1962* (Rio de Janeiro 2009). About Chagas's work at the League of Nations Health Organization, see Vivian S. Cunha, *Centro Internacional de Leprologia: ciência, saúde e cooperação internacional no Brasil do entre-guerras, 1923–1939* (Rio de Janeiro 2011).

⁶⁶ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, October 9th, 1924. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁶⁷ PAAA 64689 – Letter from the German Foreign Office to Fritz Munk, November 7th, 1924, and from the Berlin Medical Society to the German Foreign Office on January 29th, 1925.

⁶⁸ Henrique da Rocha Lima, "Besuch des Professors Chagas nach Deutschland": Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

In a letter to the Cultural Division of the Foreign Office Rocha Lima emphasized Chagas's gratitude, stressing that the warm reception had awakened in him and his family "great enthusiasm for Germany".⁶⁹ However, Rocha Lima also complained that the visit had received very little publicity: no telegraphic reports had been sent to Brazilian newspapers, despite his personal efforts to do so (personally writing reports to be released to the press by Germany's diplomatic representatives in Brazil). Rocha Lima argued that the telegraph was the most efficient means of cultural propaganda, since it was the main source of information to Brazil from abroad.⁷⁰

Miguel Couto arrived in Germany in March 1926. Rocha Lima underlined his high standing to the German diplomats, referring to Couto as "the most important Brazilian alive". He requested more "astute" use of the telegraph this time, thus counterbalancing the "limited and biased" selection of news on Germany in the Brazilian press.⁷¹

As had been the case with Chagas's trip, Rocha Lima and Munk planned Couto's itinerary with the cooperation of diplomats in Berlin. Representatives of medical institutions from Hamburg and Berlin received the Brazilian physician, who visited the main centres of medical research, training and assistance in the two cities. In the German capital he was received by President Hindenburg and was guest of honour at a dinner offered by the Foreign Office in the luxurious Kaiserhof Hotel, attended by the leading lights of Germany's medical and scientific community.⁷² Rocha Lima wrote the telegrams himself, in which he described Couto's activities and the honours he received from the Germans. The German legation then distributed them to the Brazilian press.⁷³

The strategy worked well: when Couto returned to Rio in April 1926 on the luxury liner *Cap Polonio*, he was received by a large crowd who followed him back to his home. For Rocha Lima, the positive impact of the trip was proof that the warm reception of foreign scientists and good press

⁶⁹ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, November 15th, 1925. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁷⁰ Letters from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, November 23rd, 1925 and February 10th, 1926. Letter from Rocha Lima to Bernhard Nocht, January 27th, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁷¹ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, February 10th, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁷² PAAA 64689. Einladungsliste, February 19th, 1926.

⁷³ PAAA 64689. Telegrams to the Foreign Office, February 1926. Letter from German Legation (Rio de Janeiro) to the Foreign Office, April 7th, 1926.

coverage were a more effective cultural diplomacy strategy than strictly diplomatic mechanisms.⁷⁴

Rocha Lima's Trip to Brazil, 1926

Rocha Lima witnessed Miguel Couto's triumphal reception in Rio de Janeiro's port first-hand, since he accompanied his former teacher on his voyage back to Brazil. Unlike his visits to Germany in 1920 and 1922, this one was official: while in Germany, Carlos Chagas had invited Rocha Lima to do research and give lectures at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute. In a letter to Bernhard Nocht, Chagas thanked him for the warm reception he had received in Hamburg and suggested they set up an interchange between the Oswaldo Cruz Institute and the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases. The idea was that Rocha Lima would serve as the link between the two institutions.⁷⁵ Nocht asked the Hamburg Senate to concede a six-month leave of absence for Rocha Lima's sojourn and also requested that the Brazilian pathologist and his Hamburg colleagues involved in the scientific interchange with the Oswaldo Cruz Institute continue to receive their regular salaries.⁷⁶

Before leaving for Brazil, Rocha Lima accompanied Miguel Couto on a visit to Paris. From there, they went to Lisbon, since Rocha Lima had received an invitation from the University of Coimbra's German Institute to give some talks there. The Foreign Office provided Rocha Lima with propaganda material for the Portuguese visit, whose impact he considered to be highly positive and a great opportunity "to say many things about Germany in my native tongue".⁷⁷

As soon as Rocha Lima arrived in Brazil, the local press asked for his comments about the political and economic situation in Germany. His arrival coincided with a delicate and tense moment in Brazilian–German diplomatic relations: in March 1926, the Brazilian delegation in Geneva had voted against Germany's entry to the League of Nations, setting back the Locarno negotiations, which in any case were marked by mutual suspi-

⁷⁴ Henrique da Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reise von Prof. H. da Rocha Lima nach Brasilien 1926". Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁷⁵ StAHH CI VII. Lit Qb 8b. Vol. 15. Fasc. 27b. Letter from Carlos Chagas to Bernhard Nocht, January 4th, 1926.

⁷⁶ StAHH CI VII. Lit Qb 8b. Vol. 15. Fasc. 27b. Letter from Bernhard Nocht on January 22nd, 1926, and from the President of the Hamburg Health Office on February 27th, 1926.

⁷⁷ Rocha Lima, *Bericht über die Reise* (note 74).

cion and mistrust.⁷⁸ In Europe, and especially Germany, public opinion condemned Brazil's attitude. According to a daily newspaper, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, it had acted under pressure from France and its allies.⁷⁹

Rocha Lima took into his own hands the task of smoothing out this diplomatic crisis, and before he went to Brazil he published an article explaining what he saw as the motives behind Brazil's decision in Geneva. He asked the Foreign Office for help in publishing it in the German press,⁸⁰ but only managed to get some space for a reduced version of the text in the little-known *Deutsche-Übersee Zeitung*, from the same publisher as the renowned *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*. In his article, Rocha Lima justified his country's action as being driven by Brazil's ambition to take part in international affairs in such a way that it was not restricted to what Europe expected of it, which was that it should take a passive supporting role in international politics.⁸¹

In the Brazilian press, split between those in favour and against the attitude taken in Geneva, Rocha Lima presented the German point of view on the diplomatic incident. He stressed that Germany's opposition to Brazil's entry to the League of Nations had not been motivated by any sort of hostility, but had only to do with European policy issues.⁸² Rocha Lima's attempts to smooth over the mutual misunderstandings drew the attention of Felix Pacheco, the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who invited him to a dinner at Itamaraty Palace, seat of the Brazilian diplomatic corps.⁸³ Rocha Lima also presented the local press with an image of a Germany that had finally overcome its political and economic turmoil. In his travel report, he emphasized that this was designed to "counteract anti-German propaganda".⁸⁴

During the five months he stayed in Rio, Rocha Lima did research and lectured at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute. He claimed in private correspondence that Chagas's absence from the institution's directorship to work in federal public health administration activities had converted his laboratory

⁷⁸ On the diplomatic crisis between Brazil and Germany in 1926, see Eugênio Vargas Garcia, *O Brasil e a Liga das Nações, 1919–1926* (Porto Alegre/Brasília 2000).

⁷⁹ *Berliner Tageblatt* (Clipping), Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP. Rocha Lima wrote to the influential editor of the Berlin Daily News, Theodor Wolff, contesting his arguments in criticizing the Brazilian attitude in Geneva. Letter from Rocha Lima to Theodor Wolff, March 23rd, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁸⁰ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office, March 24th, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁸¹ Henrique da Rocha Lima, "Deutschland und Brasilien": *Deutsche Übersee-Zeitung*, April 4th, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, CMIBSP.

⁸² *O Jornal*, Rio de Janeiro, May 9th, 1926 (Clipping). Rocha Lima's papers. MCBISP.

⁸³ Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reise" (note 74), p. 11.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*.

into “the hub of the institute’s scientific life”.⁸⁵ For Chagas, Rocha Lima’s presence in his institute could make it easier to send young researchers to Germany. Indeed, this is precisely what happened to a chemist, Nicanor Botafogo Gonçalves, who in 1927 went to Germany to complete his studies in plant chemistry, with the support of Rocha Lima.⁸⁶

During this period in Brazil, Rocha Lima gave lectures at other medical institutions, such as the National Academy of Medicine, the Brazilian Society of Medicine and at Rio de Janeiro’s Medical School. He addressed his specialty themes, including the etiology of typhus fever and the pathology of Carrión’s disease and yellow fever.⁸⁷ Related to the latter, he undertook autopsies to confirm the diagnosis of cases from Brazil’s hinterlands. This confirmation dampened the optimism of the Rockefeller Foundation, which had been fighting the disease in Brazil since 1923 and had recently claimed that yellow fever would soon be eradicated there. The diagnosis strengthened the claims of Brazilian physicians who insisted that there was indeed yellow fever in Brazil’s inland regions, countering the opinion of the Rockefeller’s officials, for whom the disease only occurred in the large coastal ports where the increased circulation of people was responsible for maintaining its epidemiological cycle.⁸⁸

As an “ambassador of German science” in the Brazilian capital, Rocha Lima was designated to receive the Meteor oceanographic expedition. In June 1926, the ship, *Meteor*, called at Rio de Janeiro port. The expedition’s aim was to map out the floor of the Atlantic Ocean using echo sounding equipment for the first time and to survey the marine life and its characteristics.⁸⁹ The expedition members were received by Germany’s representative in Brazil, Georg Plehn, and by the Brazilian president. Rocha Lima greeted them warmly in a speech given at a ceremonial reception at the Brazilian Institute of Science. In his discourse, he underscored the need for “true proximity between the German and Brazilian intellectual worlds”.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Ibidem.

⁸⁶ Letter from Rocha Lima to Nicanor Botafogo Gonçalves, March 29th, 1927 and Nicanor B. Gonçalves to Rocha Lima, April 1st, 1927. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁸⁷ “Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia – A sessão de ontem, dedicada ao professor Rocha Lima”: *O Jornal*, Rio de Janeiro, July 7th, 1926.

⁸⁸ For more on this subject see Jaime L. Benchimol, *Febre amarela, a doença e a vacina: uma história inacabada* (Rio de Janeiro 2001); and Ilana Löwy, *Vírus, mosquito e modernidade: a febre amarela no Brasil entre ciência e política* (Rio de Janeiro 2006), p. 123–195.

⁸⁹ About the Meteor expedition see F. Spiess, *Die Meteor-Fahrt: Forschungen und Erlebnisse der Deutschen Atlantischen Expedition 1925–1927* (Berlin 1928); and Kirchhoff, *Die Notgemeinschaft* (note 9), p. 137–148.

⁹⁰ Henrique da Rocha Lima, “Eine Begrüßungsrede über die Deutsch-Brasilianischen geistigen Beziehungen, gehalten vor dem Instituto de Sciencias gelegentlich der zu Ehren der Gelehrten der ‘Meteor’ veranstalteten Feier am 22. Juni 1926”. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

The Brazilian Institute of Science was founded by biologist Gustav Hasselmann in 1925 to serve as a platform for researchers who maintained close ties with German science. Its goal was to promote German–Brazilian scientific relations and thus counteract what it saw as the excessively pro-French tendencies of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences, created in 1916.⁹¹ The German diplomats in Rio de Janeiro and Berlin welcomed the new institute.⁹² Rocha Lima was made an honorary member of the new scientific society. In his acceptance speech, he described what he considered to be the ideal features of the intellectual exchange, which should contribute to “improving our basic education and thus our scientific capability, meaning our ability to make scientific progress and not just import the results of scientific development from the great centres of culture”.⁹³ On this occasion, Rocha Lima’s discourse was directed to a Brazilian audience, and also corresponded to his expectations as a Brazilian scientist, fashioning his professional identity in reference to a European scientific centre, which he placed in the foreground.

Rocha Lima was also invited to take part in the Juliano Moreira Foundation, created in 1926. Moreira is considered the father of modern Brazilian psychiatry, having framed his conceptions in line with the theories of German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin in the early 1900s. The Juliano Moreira Foundation was for both psychiatrists and neurologists, and its aim was to promote research in these fields of medicine in collaboration with scientific institutions, medical schools and psychiatric hospitals. Most of its members were strongly pro-German, and Rocha Lima’s appointment as the foundation’s honorary president had to do with a practical and specific concern: the group wished to attract a German pathologist to Brazil to offer a course on the anatomical pathology of the nervous system.⁹⁴ Rocha Lima was the best suited individual to choose a candidate and negotiate travel and work conditions in Brazil. In 1928, he accompanied the Hamburg neuropathologist Alfons Jakob on a two-month course in Rio de Janeiro. On this occasion, Rocha Lima decided to return definitively to his homeland, settling in São Paulo, but not before drawing the attention of diplomats in Berlin to his performance as “scientist-diplomat” firmly engaged in foreign cultural policy.

⁹¹ “Atas de fundação do Instituto Brasileiro de Ciências”: *Boletim do Instituto Brasileiro de Ciências* I (1925), p. 23–26.

⁹² PAAA 64898. Letter from the German Legation to the Foreign Office, April 15th, 1926. Reich Central Office for Science Reporting to the Foreign Office, June 18th, 1926.

⁹³ Henrique da Rocha Lima, “Discurso no Instituto Brasileiro de Ciências”. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

⁹⁴ Rocha Lima, “Bericht über die Reise” (note 74).

Rocha Lima's Travel Report, or How to Organize Efficient Cultural Policy in Brazil

Rocha Lima had a very pleasant stay in Brazil in 1926, as he stated in his private correspondence. The deference shown by friends, colleagues, political and intellectual authorities left him particularly satisfied, but his professional engagements forced him to return to Germany.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, his work in favour of German cultural diplomacy had its advantages, not least the opportunity to make regular visits to Brazil. The Foreign Office seemed to be the ideal patron for scientific activities, providing travel funding and fostering bilateral cooperation projects. Thus, Rocha Lima sought to project his role in the promotion of German–Brazilian relations by making himself the default point of contact in any sort of interchange between the two countries. With this in mind, he prepared an in-depth, detailed report on his five-month stay in Brazil which he sent to the Foreign Office and the Hamburg authorities, presenting his considerations and suggestions on how to achieve a more effective cultural diplomacy that was sensible to local determinants.⁹⁶

The first point in the report was the cooperation between the Oswaldo Cruz Institute and the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Medicine in Hamburg. The social, political and scientific importance of the Rio de Janeiro institution justified its role as the main lynchpin for German cultural policy. Rocha Lima offered himself as the link between the two institutions. The Oswaldo Cruz Institute would provide research materials, while the Hamburg institute would send researchers “who would act in a productive and stimulating way in the German spirit of research, education and working methods”.⁹⁷ The Brazilian institution would thus serve as a hub of German cultural influence, displacing French hegemony in Brazilian intellectual circles.

For Rocha Lima, Brazilian scholars and institutions involved in intellectual relations with Germany should enjoy a good reputation within the local scientific community. In this respect he expressed reservations about the Brazilian Institute of Science and its chairman, Gustavo Hasselmann, considering the institution a “passing event” and its chairman as having a “second-rate position in the scientific world, where his peculiar behaviour and lack of self-criticism gives rise to jokes about his undertakings”. Despite his German family name, it was Rocha Lima's view that Has-

⁹⁵ Letters from Rocha Lima to Martin Mayer, July 25th, 1926, and to Fritz Munk, October 26th, 1926. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

⁹⁶ Rocha Lima, “Bericht über die Reise” (note 74).

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

selmann had “neither in his temperament nor in his demeanour the slightest point in common with Germany, whose language he barely understands and whose ideology is completely foreign to him”.⁹⁸ It would be better to keep him away from the more “serious” ventures of German cultural policy and focus more on pro-German physicians, who would be “Germany’s most loyal and trustworthy friends”, despite the fact that most of them did not have German surnames.⁹⁹

According to Rocha Lima, mere sympathy for Germany would not be enough to assure a similar vantage point in cultural diplomacy to that enjoyed by France and Italy in Brazil. The difficulties of the German language, “Germany’s exclusive interest in its colonies” and the “unfortunate war” further restricted Brazil’s proximity to the German world.¹⁰⁰ Germans should put aside their “racial prejudice and nationalistic pride” and seek to win over the Brazilian educated classes. They should not assume that German science was “indispensable and suitable” for Brazilians, but should instead identify local interests, without underestimating local capabilities.¹⁰¹ German visitors should prepare their lectures in Portuguese or Spanish if possible, presenting new issues with a high level of science. These visits should be “profound, extensive and serious contacts with the country and people” and not mere tourism. Rocha Lima also suggested the creation of a German institute in Brazil similar to its counterpart in Coimbra.¹⁰²

Rocha Lima criticized the priority given in Germany’s foreign cultural policy agenda to the promotion of Germanness (*Deutschtum*), in which ethnic Germans and their descendants abroad would take the role as “the driving force of Germany’s rise as a new world power and as surrogates for the tools for political power that had been lost”.¹⁰³ Rocha Lima called attention to the fact that the main supporters of cultural diplomacy were not individuals of German descent. Germans and their descendants in Brazil had no influence in local politics, he warned. On the contrary, they advocated isolation and resisted assimilation into local social and cultural spheres. Even during World War I, few individuals bearing German surnames had publicly spoken out in favour of Germany.¹⁰⁴ In Rocha Lima’s view, Germans should take advantage of the incipience of Brazil’s development, which meant it was still open to

⁹⁸ Ibidem, p. 20.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, p. 20–21.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 23.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 23.

¹⁰² Ibidem, p. 25.

¹⁰³ Stefan Rinke, “Auslandsdeutsche no Brasil (1918–1933): nova emigração e mudança de identidades”: *Espaço Plural IX* (2008), p. 39–48, here: p. 40.

¹⁰⁴ Rocha Lima, “Bericht über die Reise” (note 74), p. 21–22.

German cultural influence. Brazil's cultural tradition rested on more eclectic foundations than Argentina's, where the "people imitate French cultural habits like parrots", as Rocha Lima wrote in a letter to Berlin.¹⁰⁵

In early 1927 Rocha Lima sent his travel report to the Foreign Office, after having submitted it to his friend, Fritz Munk, for a critical reading.¹⁰⁶ The director of the Cultural Division of the Foreign Office, Otto Soehring, stated that he had read the report "with great interest".¹⁰⁷ In April 1927, Germany's representative in Rio, Hubert Knipping, also sent a copy of the report to Berlin. In a letter attached to the report he wrote that he was already familiar with Rocha Lima's main ideas through conversations with him in the Brazilian capital. Knipping suggested that diplomats from Berlin should contact Rocha Lima, since most of his proposals were "practical and feasible" and showed that he was very well versed in cultural diplomacy. He praised Rocha Lima's comments and suggestions, which, in his view, combined "a clear talent for human observation, frequent among educated Brazilians, with objectivity and deep understanding of the circumstances, acquired over long years of scientific work in Germany".¹⁰⁸ However, Knipping stressed that it would be very hard to find scholars in Germany who met all the requirements mandated by Rocha Lima. While Knipping found Rocha Lima's arguments about the inappropriateness of a cultural policy geared towards the Brazilian German community instructive, he interpreted the "sarcastic and detailed" comments about Gustavo Hasselmann as a sign of personal rivalry. According to the diplomat, Hasselmann provided useful support for the German diplomats in Rio.¹⁰⁹

Rocha Lima concluded his report by attributing its presentation to the authorities as "the moral obligation to share with others the experiences and impressions that I have gathered, perhaps from a point of view different from most Germans".¹¹⁰ However, the correspondence with Munk reveals Rocha Lima's intention to gain financial support from the Foreign Office in order to maintain a private secretary, who he was then paying from his own pocket. Even if he did not receive the funding, he nonetheless hoped that the Foreign Office would put pressure on the Hamburg authorities so that

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Rocha Lima to the German Foreign Office March 8th, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from Rocha Lima to Fritz Munk, March 5th, 1927. Letter from Fritz Munk to Rocha Lima March 14th, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹⁰⁷ Letter from the Foreign Office to Rocha Lima, March 31st, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹⁰⁸ PAAA 61171 German Legation (Rio de Janeiro) to the Foreign Office, April, 13th, 1927.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁰ Rocha Lima, "Bericht über die Reise" (note 74), p. 26.

he could continue receiving his salary during his January 1928 stay in Brazil in order to prepare Alfons Jakob's course.¹¹¹ In a letter to Bernhard Nocht, Rocha Lima complains of being overloaded with multiple responsibilities. Besides his scientific work at the Hamburg institute, "which has grown to such an extent that the whole institute could easily be kept busy with it", there were still "the diverse functions related to foreign cultural policy, some of which [were] purely diplomatic at this moment". He told Nocht that he could no longer pay for his assistant out of his own pocket.¹¹²

In October 1927, Rocha Lima presented Nocht with his official cooperation programme between the Hamburg institute and the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, which would involve his spending five months in Rio de Janeiro and the rest of the year in Hamburg.¹¹³ Once again, he stressed the role of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute and other Brazilian institutions in providing research material for Hamburg. He also underlined the need to displace the French and growing American influences in Brazil. According to the cooperation programme, Rocha Lima would continue his work from Brazil by sending histological samples. Analyses of less urgent cases could be sent by telegraph. In his proposal to Nocht, Rocha Lima also refers to the "Jakob-Rocha Lima mission", the course on the anatomical pathology of the nervous system that he would develop in collaboration with the neurosurgeon Alfons Jakob.¹¹⁴ Even though Jakob's long stay would require greater dedication than shorter visits and talks, it would serve to "foster the appeal of German culture in the long term, arousing goodwill towards the German nature and also strengthen the difficult stand of Germany's few friends who actively defend German culture".¹¹⁵

Rocha Lima arrived in Rio de Janeiro in December 1927 in preparation for Jakob's course. The German neurosurgeon arrived in March 1928 and stayed in Brazil until August. His lectures were published in medical journals and in the local press and had great repercussion among specialists. They were published as a book in Portuguese, which came out in two editions. Rocha Lima made a positive assessment of the "Jakob mission", seeing proof of this success in the fact that a neurology professor from the Medical Faculty of Rio de Janeiro, Antonio Austregésilo, had decided to go

¹¹¹ Letter from Rocha Lima to Fritz Munk, March 5th, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹¹² Letter from Rocha Lima to Bernhard Nocht, March 12th, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹¹³ Cooperation project presented to Bernhard Nocht, October 28th, 1927. Rocha Lima's papers, MCBISP.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

to Germany with his son. This former Germanophile, explained Rocha Lima to Nocht, had been reconverted to German science after having “sailed in French seas” and shown American inclinations after the war.¹¹⁶

Rocha Lima’s stay in Brazil coincided with the creation, by his colleague Arthur Neiva, of the Biological Institute of Agricultural and Animal Defence in São Paulo. The institute was established to tackle the coffee berry borer, a pest which had been undermining Brazil’s main export industry since 1924.¹¹⁷ Known for his talent as an organizer, Neiva intended to form a more all-encompassing institution which would not only treat and prevent animal and plant diseases, but would also produce new knowledge about them in fields such as plant and animal pathology, chemistry, physiology, bacteriology and immunology. He received support for his project from São Paulo’s big coffee producers, with whom he maintained close ties. In order to put a first-rate team together, Neiva invited Rocha Lima to run the division dedicated to animal diseases. He assured his former colleague favourable work conditions, including autonomy, political and institutional support, and an attractive salary. After carefully weighing up the pros and cons, Rocha Lima decided to give up his “advantageous position” in Hamburg and go back to Brazil, settling in São Paulo, where he lived until his death in 1956.¹¹⁸ Rocha Lima was aware that he had attained the highest position ever for a foreigner in Hamburg, especially considering how close-knit and hierarchical the German academic system was at that time. As worthy as this position might be, there was little chance of his progressing further. Moreover, he was facing some financial difficulties due to some failed investments¹¹⁹ and was also overloaded with work. He had failed to obtain the financial support he needed from the authorities in Berlin or Hamburg to hire a private secretary, despite his “voluntary sacrifice on the altar of German cultural propaganda”.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Letter from Rocha Lima to Bernhard Nocht, September 1st, 1928. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

¹¹⁷ André Felipe Cândido da Silva. *Ciência nos cafezais: a campanha contra a broca-do-café em São Paulo, 1924–1929* (Rio de Janeiro 2006). For more on the history of the Biological Institute in São Paulo, see Maria Alice R. Ribeiro, *História, ciência e tecnologia: 70 anos do Instituto Biológico de São Paulo* (São Paulo 1997).

¹¹⁸ An eloquent testimony to Rocha Lima’s indecision over whether to return to Brazil may be found in his letter to Fritz Munk dated November 30th, 1928. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

¹¹⁹ Rocha Lima invested capital in Antonico Mendes Campos’s textile business. In 1926, Campos filed bankruptcy, leaving Rocha Lima in tight economic straits. See Silva, *A trajetória científica* (note 1), p. 493–494.

¹²⁰ Letter from Rocha Lima to Fritz Munk, November 30th, 1928. Rocha Lima’s papers, MCBISP.

Nonetheless, even after he moved to São Paulo, Rocha Lima continued to foster German–Brazilian relations. The maintenance of ties with former German colleagues and friends during the Third Reich and the promotion of relations with Hitler’s Germany raised suspicions about his political leanings. This discomfiture was further heightened when he was awarded the Order of the German Eagle (*Verdienstorden vom Deutschen Adler*) by the Nazi government in 1938 after a warm reception during a two-month stay in Germany, when he attended the annual Nazi Party festivities in Nuremberg, where he was received like a head of state. 1952 was the year of his last visit to Germany, as it was recovering from the ravages of war. Rocha Lima’s professional identity was thus marked by his association with Germany, which gave him great projection at the time, but also cast a shadow over his name in his own country.

Final Considerations

The limited institutionalization of the international scientific field paved the way for actions by individuals like Rocha Lima, who sought to boost cross-border cooperation by deploying intellectual networks on both sides of the Atlantic. The post-World War I circumstances and his links to Brazil made him the leading promoter of Brazil–Germany relations in the medical and scientific fields. Bernhard Nocht’s successful efforts to make the Institute for Maritime and Tropical Diseases a key player in German cultural diplomacy made Rocha Lima a strategic partner for the re-establishment of scientific and economic exchange with foreign countries, especially in Latin America. According to German historian Stefan Wulf, Rocha Lima was “more committed and loyal than most” to the mission taken on by the Hamburg institute.¹²¹ However, it is important to note that Rocha Lima’s commitment and loyalty to German science and his engagement in German cultural diplomacy was not at all at odds with Brazilian scientific development, which was becoming increasingly professionalized and acquiring new areas of specialization. Rocha Lima sought to identify the demands of Brazil’s scientific community and the channels through which it would be possible to increase Germany’s influence, which was limited by France’s active cultural diplomacy policy and the country’s importance amongst the Brazilian intellectual elites. Indeed, besides France and Germany, the United States – and, to a lesser extent, Italy – were also competing for cultural influence in Brazil. Brazilian scientists were not passive targets of these endeavours,

¹²¹ Wulf, *Das Hamburger Tropeninstitut* (note 6), p. 73.

but rather sought to take advantage of this dispute, which gave them the chance to publish their works in international journals and books, participate in international meetings, study abroad and cooperate with leading educational and research institutions.

By following Rocha Lima's trajectory, it becomes clear how intertwined Brazilian science was with Germany. Medicine was undoubtedly one of the most dynamic aspects of this relationship and is also one of the least studied in historiography. The German–Brazilian exchange had an impact on both societies, and it was down to agents such as Rocha Lima to negotiate the interests on both sides of the Atlantic and interact with sponsors and the general public to make the intellectual exchange feasible. This was not a task free of tensions, dissonances and ambivalences.

Finally, his proximity to diplomatic circles and his engagement in cultural diplomacy gave Rocha Lima enough standing to be able to pursue his own interests. In this sense, the Brazilian pathologist was a “transnational actor”, in that he cooperated with the state and its foreign policy but still maintained his autonomy from the other actors involved in the German–Brazilian scientific exchange. Rocha Lima's engagement as a “scientist-diplomat” points to a complex interplay between international and domestic political agendas, intellectual ambitions with universalist claims and nationalistic feelings, and between individual demands and strategies and collective social processes. As such, Rocha Lima's case explored here represents an opportune illustration of a scientific biography as “history of science by another means”,¹²² since it reveals different and important aspects of scientific activity in the first half of the twentieth century. However, Rocha Lima's was not a typical case for his time: he crossed borders in the opposite direction to most of his peers – from South America, considered as a “periphery”, to a European “centre”. Yet, “periphery” and “centre” are here not fixed categories but relative positions resulting from negotiations involving actors in an arena of complex interactions.

¹²² Mary Jo Nie, “Scientific Biography: history of Science by another means?": *Isis* 97 (2006), p. 322–329.