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HISPANIC CULTURE AND CONTRIBUTIONS IN DENTISTRY

First Row of Exhibit Case:

Cuba

The dental profession in Cuba has historically been at the forefront of advances in both the evolution of the profession and the culture. To begin with, on August 26, 1552 Juan Gomez became the first person authorized to extract teeth and molars, far in advance of any kind of licensure in other countries. The pages shown here discuss the mid-1800s, a time in Cuba when the broader society experienced a pronounced phobia of persons of color. Because the dental profession in Cuba had early on allowed persons of color to practice professionally, when there was a repressive government the backlash fell against “dentistas y mulatos o negros.” There was a well-known uprising against the government, known as the Ladder Conspiracy or “Conspiración de la Escalera.” Now, there is debate about whether this conspiracy ever existed, but at the time, it was believed to have been led by the poet Plácido (shown here) who was tried and hung with ten other men on June 28, 1844, while hundreds others were imprisoned or bound and whipped, including the dentists Rufino de los Reyes, Antonio Abad, Francisco Piar, Carlos Blackey, Andrés José Dodge and Pedro Pompe.

Shown: Mena, Cesar A. *Historia de la odontología en Cuba. v. 1. Periodo Colonial (1942-1898)*, p. 118-119. Call number: RK34.C8 M53

See also:

AfroCubaWeb: Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés – Plácido:

<<http://www.afrocubaweb.com/eugenegodfried/placidoenglish.htm>>

Landín, Félix Companioni. Aniversario 99 de la escuela de Cirugía dental de La Habana.

Rev Cubana Estomatol 2000 37(1): <http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?pid=S0034-75072000000100005&script=sci_arttext&tlng=es>

Guatemala & México

The music here was written in 1945 in honor of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Dental Society of Guatemala (la Sociedad Dental de Guatemala), and was dedicated to the Mexican Dental Association (Asociación Dental Mexicana). The Asociación Dental Mexicana (ADM) was itself founded by Yuri Kuttler in 1941, and was one of the first, if not the first Latin American dental associations.

Shown: Lainfiesta, Max. Himnos de la Sociedad Dental de Guatemala. *ADM, revista de la Asociación Dental Mexicana* 1945 2:196-197.

See also:

Alvarez de Lille, J. Yury Kuttler: autor intelectual y fundador de la Asociación Dental Mexicana. *Rev ADM*. 1984 Jan-Apr;41(1-2):13-5.

Análisis de 35 años de la Asociación Dental Mexicana. *ADM*. 1976 May-Jun;33(3):10-5.

Análisis de 35 años de la Asociación Dental Mexicana. Segunda parte. *ADM*. 1976 Jul-Aug;33(4):13-5.

Análisis de 35 años de la Asociación Dental Mexicana. *ADM*. 1976 Sep-Oct;33(5):16-23.

Asociación Dental Mexicana (ADM): <<http://www.adm.org.mx/>>

Sociedad Dental de Guatemala : <<http://www.eurodentall.com/sd/>>

Brazil/Brasil

There are not very many countries in which a dentist is considered a national hero, Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, shown here in this painting, was better known as “Tooth Puller” or Tiradentes. He is honored with a holiday in his memory, and a Brazilian city named after him. With a name like “Tooth Puller” it might seem that his importance to history is as a dentist, but what he is most famous for is his role in the emancipation of Brazil. His holiday is April 21st, the day on which he was executed in 1792.

Shown: Cunha, Ernesto Salles. *História da odontologia no Brasil, 1500-1900*. Rio, Editora Científica, 1952, p. 59-61. Call number: RK 34 .B8 C97 1952

See also:

Cidades Históricas Brasileiras: Biografias: Joaquim José da Silva Xavier – Tiradentes: <http://www.cidadeshistoricas.art.br/hac/bio_tir_p.htm>

About.com: South America for Visitors: Tiradentes - Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, Dentist turned national hero! By Bonnie Hamre: <<http://gosouthamerica.about.com/cs/braz/about1/a/Tiradentes.htm>>

South and Latin America

Dental mutilations are a traditional part of the art and culture of Mexico and South America. The work done is still studied for the remarkable innovations made in the area of the dental adhesives and cements used to secure the ornaments, as well as the sophisticated skill required to perform the work on healthy teeth. Here we have books by two of the foremost researchers in this topic — Javier Romero and Samuel Fastlicht. The Romero book contains the most comprehensive cataloging known of the classification, frequency, and distribution of these techniques.

Shown: Romero, Javier. *Mutilaciones dentarias, prehispánicas de México y América en general*. México, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1958. Call number: RK 34 .M6 R664 1958 no. 3.

Shown: Fastlicht, Samuel. *Tooth mutilations and dentistry in pre-Columbian Mexico*; translated by Marynette Heltzen and Ethel Comstock. Berlin ; Chicago : Buch- und Zeitschriften-Verlag "Die Quintessenz", 1976. Call number: RK30 .F253

Venezuela

This book about aboriginal dental practices in the New World is by Foción Febres-Cordero, the foremost dental historian of Venezuela. He is also the author of a number of books about the origins of dental education in Venezuela (including *La enseñanza en Venezuela de la historia de la odontología*, *Historia de la Facultad de Odontología de la Universidad Central de Venezuela*, and *Acerca de la fundación de la Escuela Dental en Venezuela*) as well as general dental histories. According to Febres-Cordero, the first discussions of dental education in Venezuela came in 1852, around the same time that schools of dentistry were first founded in the United States.

Shown: Febres Cordero, Foción. *Ciertas prácticas odontológicas de los aborígenes del nuevo mundo*. [Caracas? : s.n., 1975?] (II Congreso Venezolano de Historia de la Medicina, Caracas, 7 de octubre de 1974) Call number: RK 30 .F289 1974.

Second Row of Exhibit Case:

Spain/España

The journal *La Odontología* was founded by Florestán Aguilar in 1892. Dr. Aguilar was a contemporary of Drs. Jonathan Taft and G.V. Black, as well as also founding the *Real Academia Nacional de Medicina* in Spain. This 1935 special issue was devoted to preserving memory of his many great achievements. On the pages to the left, you see him as the recipient of the Miller Foundation Medal of Honor, named after Willoughby D. Miller, the second dean of the University of Michigan School of Dentistry. The adjacent book shows his research into dental abnormalities of the royal houses of Europe.

Shown: *La Odontología* 1935 :110-111. Call number: RK1 .O258

Shown: Aguilar y Rodriguez, Florestán. *Origen castellano del prognatismo en las dinastías que reinaron en Europa : discurso de recepción*. Madrid : Blass, S.A. Tipográfica, [1933]. Call number: GN 131 .A5 1933

United States

The Hispanic Dental Association is a national dental association in the United States. It was founded in 1990, with the mission “To Optimize the Oral Health of the Hispanic Community.” Here you see a persuasive example of why this is important.

Shown: Artiga-Diaz, Nelson. “A Call to Action, President’s Letter.” *HDA news & reports* n.124 Winter 2000:1. Chicago, Ill. : Hispanic Dental Association. Call number: RK 1 .H663

See also:

Hispanic Dental Association: <<http://www.hdassoc.org/>>

Puerto Rico

Here we see an example of the fine skills in metalworking applied to dental prostheses by artisans in Puerto Rico. The image is of a mandibular plate, but the text discusses fillings and other related uses.

Shown: Vidal, Teodoro. *Los milagros en metal y en cera de Puerto Rico*. San Juan de Puerto Rico : Ediciones Alba, 1974.. Call number: N 7793 .V66 V543 1974

México

This collaborative work by both Dr. Javier Romero and Dr. Samuel Fastlicht is inscribed as a gift of the author “to the Library of the School of Dentistry, University of Michigan.” Dr. Romero worked with the *Museo Nacional de Antropología de Mexico*, while Dr. Fastlicht was a dental surgeon with *La Universidad Nacional de Mexico*. Unlike many of the other works on dental mutilations, which come from audiences focused on anthropology, museums, and dentistry, this book focuses on the artistic and cultural elements of dental mutilations. In today’s society, the artistic and cultural aspects of dental mutilation are still embraced by some elements of the body modification subculture.

Shown: Romero, Javier; Fastlicht, Samuel. *El arte de las mutilaciones dentarias*. (Enciclopedia Mexicana de Arte, 14) México: Ediciones Mexicanas, 1951. Call number: RK 30 .R76

Shown: Tibón, Gutierre . *El mundo secreto de los dientes : simbología, sicología, parasicología, sicoanálisis, mito, arqueología mexicana*. México : Editora Tajín, 1972. Call number: GR 489.3 .T536 1972

See also:

Cardena, Alicia. “Teeth Rule.” (The BME Cultural Corner). *BMEZine*.
<<http://www.bmezine.com/news/cc/20040209.html>>

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