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Autore	Queiroz Marcos de Souza
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Sommario/riassunto	Using methodology originating from social and cultural anthropology, the authors explore the representations and strategies of patients and health workers involved with leprosy and unravel the web of relationships, prejudices and fears that this disease presents. Stigma, depression, denial of the disease, distrust, organic injuries, malaise, everything that appears mixed in the demand of patients and communicants is, in this work, treated from an approach that also includes the structural historical aspects. Anyway: a case study that questions many other cases, since, from leprosy, it talks about the public health practice itself.