

ABSTRACT: BETWEEN ART AND SCIENCE: HERMENEUTIC FUNDAMENTALS OF HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINE.

Homeopathic medicine is a socially validated practice, progressively incorporated into the institutional health care scheme, including the public health system. However, the issue of the fundamentals of this therapeutic, of its scientific validation, remains outstanding. In the sense of responding to this demand for validation, there is a need for research methodologies that allow for accurate investigations, suitable for the concepts of health, illness and therapeutics that are intrinsic to the homeopathic rational. This paper is based on the notion that homeopathic theory is originally guided by a vitalism of hermeneutical character, that is, it assumes that the positivity of phenomena with which it deals, is always dependent on the comprehensive totality (vital totality), specific to each individual situation and accessible only by means of the patients' narratives. The study's purpose was to understand the relations between these vitalist concepts and the place of comprehensive-interpretative procedures in the propedeutics and therapeutics proposed by the homeopathic medicine that may point out to alternatives to establish its validation bases. This is a qualitative research, based on the documentary analysis of homeopathy canonic texts, especially the work of Hahnemann, and in-depth interviews with homeopaths that combine clinic activity and education in the area (opinion makers). The methodology was instructed by Philosophic Hermeneutics and by Historic Epistemology, and the layer subjacent to the discourse (written and spoken) effected in a non-formal manner, searching for the free identification and interpretation of the narrative axes and core meanings that were deemed significant. The discussion was basically focused on the recovery of the major historical movements related to the development of the vitalist paradigm in homeopathy, the comparison of this development with the adoption of semiologic procedures of comprehensive-interpretative character and the implications of this "vitalism of the word" to the contemporary homeopathic concepts. The paper points out to the positivity and productivity of the work on language and narratives in the domain of a homeopathy understood as "medicine of the subject", and suggests deeper studies in the hermeneutical-philosophical direction as an alternative for the concept densification and for the improvement of validation processes of knowledge and practice of homeopathy.