History of homeopathy and social history of medicine: the story of a successful marriage

Silvia Waisse Priven

Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

ABSTRACT

The Institute for the History of Medicine (IGM) was established in 1980 by the Robert Bosch Foundation, in Stuttgart, Germany, on the basis of a collection of documents and other small objects belonging to Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. However, since its very inception, its directors considered that the history of homeopathy also had a role to play in the larger picture of the history of medicine. On the other hand, the history of homeopathy was not restricted to the account of the development of ideas and careers of practitioners, but it would benefit significantly by approaching it from the perspective of social history, including the study of institutions, patients' views, lay supporting societies and publications. This paper presents a review of this project as assessed by an analysis of recent publications that, taken as a whole, reflect the historiographical contribution of researchers at IGM.

Keywords: History of medicine; History of homeopathy; Social history of medicine; Research institutes; Publications.

Introduction: The Story of a Document Collection [1]

After Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, passed away in 1843, his personal and professional documents remained with his widow, Mélanie d'Hervilly who in turn passed them to her adoptee and her spouse Carl von Bönninghausen (1826-1902). Richard Haehl obtained them from her, constituting the basis for his classic work *Samuel Hahnemann: sein Leben und Schaffen*. A few years before the latter's death in 1932, this collection – the largest and most significant one for the history of homeopathy - was acquired by German industrialist Robert Bosch (1868-1942).

Bosch originally intended to place the collection in a museum specifically built to host it, however, the outbreak of World War II hindered this project. In order to protect the collection from air bombs, a large part of it was stored during WW II in a salt-mine and the rest at the building of Hippokrates publishing company, which was also owned by Robert Bosch. Although the latter would later be hit by firebombs, the collection as a whole – including Hahnemann's manuscripts and small objects (Figure 1) survived the war to be lodged after 1945 at the Robert Bosch Hospital (RBK).

Scientific research based on this collection began only in 1956, when a physician from the RBK, Heinz Henne (1928-1978) was additionally appointed as director of the homeopathic archive until 1978. The need to replace him after his death, triggered the idea of establishing an independent research institute, on the grounds that the history of homeopathy would benefit by entering the wider framework of history of medicine as a whole and on the other hand, intensive work in the history of medicine would be a significant contribution to the health-care activities developed by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Figure 1: The first pharmacy of Samuel Hahnemann [2]. “Courtesy of the Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation”.

In this way, the Institute for History of Medicine (IGM - Institut für Geschichte der Medizin der Robert Bosch Stiftung) was founded in 1980 and in the following year it occupied its current location, in the former house of Margarete, Robert Bosch's second wife. (Figure 2)

Figure 2: The institute for the history of medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation Hahnemann [2]. “Courtesy of the Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation”.

The archive hosts not only Hahnemann's documents, but also Clemens von Bönninghausen's and Pierre Schmidt's among others and a collection of about 5549 letters written to Hahnemann (plus 352 letters addressed to Mélanie) by his patients, composing in this way the largest and most significant archive documenting the earliest history of homeopathy. (Figure 3)

Figure 3: Two case journals of Samuel Hahnemann [2]. “Courtesy of the Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation”.

Besides research, activities at IGM include seminars, maintenance of a small, but valuable museum of memorabilia of the history of homeopathy and publications. The aim of the present paper is to review IGM publications in terms of their contribution to the historical understanding of homeopathy.

Mapping review

The first stage of this review consists in an analysis of the historiographical model underlying the program of research and publication at IGM. Sources for this stage were publications by the director of IGM, Robert Jütte and deputy director Martin Dinges.

The next stage consists in listing all publications produced or sponsored by IGM and its researchers from 1991 to 2008. Materials were accessed through the IGM online catalog [3] as well as by direct archive work. These materials were classified by collection and by subject, in order to establish whether production is consistent with the historiographical approach.

Finally, a description of the aims and structure of publications was made to verify the contribution of research at or funded by IGM to the history of medicine.

Historiographical approach

IGM approach follows the latest views in the understanding of what history of medicine is: not merely the understanding of theories and practices to heal diseases or preserve health in the course of time, but the inquiry of all questions related to health and disease in their social, intellectual, scientific and economic context. This wider scope of contemporary history of medicine gave rise to new areas of research to be added to the traditional ones [4]: (Table 1)

Table 1. Areas of research in history of medicine (based on [4])

Traditional areas	Newer areas
Chronological history; periodizations	History of ideas and concepts
History of results	Social history
History of institutions	History of medical professionalization
Medical biography	History of “medicalization”
Pathography	History of patients; history of the body
Historical geography	Historical demography
	Historical epidemiology

Social history of medicine deals, in the broadest sense, with the understanding of health and disease within the particular social context of different times and places. This means an understanding of the social structures (groups, states, layers or classes) of past societies, their dimension, situation and meaning as well as the history of social processes. In this way, history of medicine has an interface with political, social and cultural history, and its task can be shortly described as seeking to grasp medicine as a socially conditioned process.

“Medicalization” is the term used to name the process through which medicine evolved from an initial marginal position to the prevailing academic medicine of our times. This aspect is strongly correlated with the emergence of the modern State as well as the professionalization of medical practice and it also includes the issues of the control and regulation of medical activities.

The history of patients, on the other hand, focuses on new meanings for the traditional clinical histories, approaching patients in their own individuality, their personality, ideas on health and disease and their ways to react to the problem of disease and cure within the context of their own cultural and social universe. Correlated areas are history of the body and gender issues.

So, for instance, “alternative” medicine is a concept, and as such a construction, which according to Jütte emerged in the last 200 years in dialectic opposition to the emergence of “official” medicine. However, the way this opposition was conceived of changed significantly along these two centuries, namely: “quackery” as opposed to “proper” medicine – a notion evolving since the foundation of medical faculties in the middle ages; “homeopathy” versus “allopathy”, from the 1810s-50s onwards; “natural medicine” versus “natural-scientific” medicine, notions appearing in the second half of the 19th century”; and more recently, “holistic” versus “technological” medicine [5].

Applying these notions to homeopathy, the historiographical approach at IGM suggests that a thorough understanding of it cannot be achieved when restricted to the doctors’ voices, but must include all other actors as well as the changing stages of the play, namely patients, lay practitioners and institutions. A second line of research stressed at IGM is the construction of national histories of homeopathy, as on the one hand, such an approach underlines the international nature of homeopathy dating from its very inception, and on the other, the different trajectories of homeopathy in different countries can teach important lessons also for the future [6].

In this context, it has been pointed out that historical studies until very recently were mostly performed by homeopathic physicians in order to establish the scientific nature of homeopathy facing the attacks of the

medical establishment. Preservation of this approach, although matches the historiographical perspectives in history of medicine as a whole, under the current historiographical notions can be rated as restrictive and even reductionistic. The application of the wider notion of history of medicine as described above would mean to replace the narrow definition of homeopathy as a medical rationality by a wider field of research comprising every aspect that can be included within the term “homeopathy” in the course of the last 200 years, including political, religious and gender issues [7].

Two particular features are worth to highlight: the program for a history of homeopathy written from the perspective of patients, fully neglected until the 1970s and the proposal for a general periodization for the history of homeopathy derived from the expanded field [8]. Regarding the latter, three main phases can be distinguished: 1) Hahnemann’s own activity; 2) Homeopathy since 1843 (Hahnemann’s death) to the 1960s; 3) Our contemporary times.

The extant body of documents, complemented by Hahnemann’s correspondence with colleagues, printed reports by former patients of their experience and observations by other homeopaths allow researchers to analyze several aspects of Hahnemann’s actual practice, including number of patients, frequency of consultations, demographic aspects, etc. This is the approach taken by all authors of the commentaries to Hahnemann’s case-books as it will be discussed in the third section of this paper.

The second phase in periodization seems problematic at first sight, as it spans over a too large period of time characterized by major events in Western history. The thread guiding this analysis is the evolution of medical professionalization. Although the process of professionalization of medicine was largely complete by ca. 1900, lay-practitioners had the major role in health-care until medical costs became covered by insurance, a relatively late phenomenon. On the other hand, professional homeopathic physicians remained a clear minority, even during the heyday of homeopathy in the United States of America in the 19th century, never surpassing 9% of the total number of physicians.

In this context, the diffusion of homeopathy is also attributed to the clergy, who saw health care as a part of their pastoral role, but chiefly to self-medication by patients, as reflected in the massive number of publications devoted to homeopathic home manuals. In time, the increasing demand for professional assistance could not be met due to the relative lack of professional physicians, leading to further development of techniques for self-diagnosis and self-treatment.

This landscape would have changed after World War II, when doctors increasingly began to dominate the general health-care market, including the homeopathic one. However, this period can be seen as transitional, as professional medical help was restricted to classes that could afford it, whereas poorer classes still resorted chiefly to lay practitioners.

Decline of homeopathy in the later phase of this period is attributed to the growth of scientific medicine, equally influencing professional doctors, lay-practitioners and patients.

The modern history of homeopathy, therefore, would begin in the 1970s within the context of the general social criticism of conventional medicine, including costs, iatrogenic diseases, lack of humanity, higher rate of education of society as a whole, New Age aspirations, etc. leading to a pluralization of the health-care market open not only to individuals but also to national health systems, as illustrated by the examples of the United Kingdom, India and Brazil. Introduction or reintroduction of homeopathy also occurred in the former communist countries, particularly in Romania, where even dictator Ceaușescu opened modest opportunities for homeopathy.

Approaching the history of homeopathy from this perspective evidently paints a very different picture than the one reflecting the evolution of homeopathic theories and medical practice. On the other hand, too few

study cases have been performed until the present time, therefore, judgment on the consistency of this periodization must await until researchers have availability to a significant number of studies.

Publications produced/sponsored by IGM 1991-2008

Total publications arranged by collection are described in Table 2.

Table 2. IGM publications classified by collection

<p>Krankenjournalen: annotated transcriptions of Hahnemann's case books, from 1801 to 1843. D: Hahnemann's German journals; DF: Hahnemann's French journals. Published by KF Haug-Verlag (Heidelberg).</p> <p>Commented volumes accompanying the transcription of Hahnemann's clinical records. Published by KF Haug-Verlag (Heidelberg).</p>	<p>D2 (1801-1802). Ed. Heinz Henne; ann. Arnold Michalowski. (1993)</p> <p>D3 (1802). Ed. Heinz Henne; ann. Arnold Michalowski. (1996)</p> <p>D4 (1802-1803). Ed. Heinz Henne; ann. Arnold Michalowski. (1997)</p> <p>D2-D4 (1801-1803). Comm. Iris von Hörsten. (2004)</p> <p>D5 (1803-1806). Ed. Helene Varady; ann. Arnold Michalowski. (1991)</p> <p>D6 (1806-1807). Transcr. and comm. Johanna Bussmann. (2002)</p> <p>D16 (1817-1818). Transcr. and comm. Ulrich Schuricht. (2004)</p> <p>D22 (1821). Transcr. and comm. Markus Mortsch. (2008)</p> <p>D34 (1830). Transcr. and comm.. Ute Fischbach-Sabel. (1998)</p> <p>D38 (1833-1835). Transcr. and comm. Monika Papsch. (2007)</p> <p>DF 2. Transcr. and transl. Arnold Michalowski. (2003)</p> <p>DF5. Transcr. and transl. Arnold Michalowski. (1992)</p>
<p>Quellen und Studien zur Homöopathieggeschichte: collection of scholarly works on the history of homeopathy. Published by KF Haug-Verlag (Stuttgart).</p>	<p>Vol.1. Heinz Eppenich. Geschichte der deutschen homöopathischen Krankenhäuser. (1995)</p> <p>Vol. 2. Reinhard Hickmann. Das psorische Leiden der Antonie Volkmann: Edition und Kommentar einer Krankengeschichte aus Hahnemanns Krankenjournalen von 1819-1831. (1996)</p> <p>Vol. 3. Martin Stahl. Der Briefwechsel zwischen Samuel Hahnemann und Clemens von Bönninghausen. (1997)</p> <p>Vol. 4. Christian Lucae. Homöopathie an deutschsprachigen Universitäten: Die Bestrebungen zu ihrer Institutionalisierung von 1812 bis 1945. (1998)</p> <p>Vol. 5. Michael Stollberg. Geschichte der Homöopathie in Bayern, 1800-1914. (1999)</p> <p>Vol. 6. Ralf Vigoureaux. Karl Julius Aegidi: Leben und Werk des homöopathischen Arztes. (2000)</p> <p>Vol. 7. Thomas Faltin. Homöopathie in der Klinik: Die Geschichte der Homöopathie am Stuttgarter RBK von 1940-1973. (2002)</p> <p>Vol. 8. Katrin Schreiber. Samuel Hahnemann in Leipzig: Die</p>

	<p>Entwicklung der Homöopathie zwischen 1811 und 1821 - Förderer, Gegner und Patienten. (2002)</p> <p>Vol. 9. Martin Dinges & Robert Jütte, ed. Samuel Hahnemann und sein Umfeld: Quellen aus der Sammlung der Deutschen Homöopathie-Union. (2005)</p> <p>Vol. 10. Anke Döriges. Die Homöopathenfamilie Dr. Schweikert. (2007)</p> <p>Vol. 11. Jens Busche. Ein homöopatisches Patientennetzwerk im Herzogtum Anhalt-Bernburg: Die Familie von Kersten und ihr Umfeld in den Jahren 1831-1835. (2008)</p> <p>Vol 12. Alexander Erlach. Die Geschichte der Homöopathie in der Schweiz, 1827-1971. (2009)</p>
<p>Medizin, Gesellschaft und Geschichte (MedGG): IGM yearbook, divided in two sections, "Social History of Medicine" and "History of Alternative Medicine", ed. Robert Jütte and published by Franz Steiner Verlag (Stuttgart). From 2001 (new series) onwards.</p>	<p>Vol. 20, 2001.</p> <p>Anne H. von Baal. "J'ai vu une femme publique": Nineteenth-century Ghant sufferers, sexual activity, venereal disease and homeopathy: 179-96.</p> <p>Luise Kunkle. Samuel Hahnemann's "mysteriöse" Q-Potenzen: 213-70.</p> <p>Marion Wettemann. Die Bedeutung der Fragmenta de viribus medicamentorum in Hahnemanns früher Praxis anhand einer Patientengeschichte aus den Krankenjournale: 221-30.</p> <p>Vol. 21, 2002.</p> <p>Bernard Leary. The Homeopathic Patient in 20th century Britain: 125-42.</p> <p>Karl-Rudolf Reichenbach & Christoph Friedrich. Charles-Gaspard Peschier (1782-1853): Ein Wegbereiter der Homöopathie im französischen Sprachraum: 143-72.</p> <p>Ulrike Thoms. Konfliktfall Homöopathie: Die klinischen Versuche zur Prüfung des Wertes der Homöopathie beim Militär und in der Berliner Charité 1820 bis 1840: 173-218.</p> <p>Vol. 22, 2003.</p> <p>Guntram Philipp. Herrhuter Apotheker: Pioniere homöopatischer Arzneimittelherstellung: 89-146.</p> <p>Anne H. von Baal. Being ill in the City: Nineteenth-century Patients in Ghant and their experience with Homoeopathy: 147-75.</p> <p>Robert Frank. Konfliktquellen in homöopatischer Arzt-Patient-Beziehung: 177-210.</p> <p>Motzi Eklöf. "... ein staubiges Spinnennetz am frischen Baum der medizinischen Wissenschaft": Homöopathie in Schweden: 201-32.</p> <p>Vol. 23, 2004.</p> <p>Nena Zidov. An overview of the history of homeopathy in Slovenia in</p>

	<p>the 19th century: 136-59.</p> <p>Marcia Kóczián & Livia Kölnei. Geschichte der Homöopathie in Ungarn 1820-1871: 201-18.</p> <p>Fernando D. Francois Flores. History of homeopathic medicine in Mexico, 1848-2001: 219-41.</p> <p>Vol. 24, 2005.</p> <p>Lyn Brierly-Jones. Taming the beast: how homoeopaths and allopaths handled error in the last quarter of the 19th century in Britain and America: 181-206.</p> <p>Dhrub K. Singh. Choleraic times and Mahendra Lal Sarkar: the quest of homoeopathy as “cultivation of science” in 19th century India: 207-42.</p> <p>Guntram Philipp. Ein unerfüllt gebliebener Wunsch Hahnemanns nach einer homöopatischen Pharmakopee: 243-68.</p> <p>Vol. 25, 2006.</p> <p>Marion Ruisinger & Fritz Dross. Zur Geschichte der Homöopathie in Franken: 181-227.</p> <p>Alexander Kotok. Medical heresy struggles for the right “Otherness”: homeopathy in the USSR: 229-87.</p> <p>Vol. 26, 2007.</p> <p>Felix S. von Reischwitz. The “globulisation” of the hospital ward: a case study of the London Homoeopathic Hospital 1849-1867: 131-65.</p> <p>Motzi Eklöf. The homeopathic hospital that never was: attempts in the Swedish Riksdag (1853 to 1863) to establish a homeopathic hospital and the issue of theory versus empiricism in medicine: 167-22.</p> <p>Nena Zidov. Homöopatische Behandlung von hautieren in Slowenien: Baronin Maria Wambolt und die Behandlung von Schweinen: 207-22.</p> <p>Vol. 27, 2008.</p> <p>Ubiratan C. Adler, Maristela S. Adler & Ana E. Padula. Hahnemann’s late prescriptions: 161-72.</p> <p>Josef M. Schmidt. Merging with the University of California: history of the Homeopathic College and Hahnemann Hospital in San Francisco: 173-204.</p>
<p>MedGG-Beihefte: supplementary individual volumes, published by Franz Steiner Verlag (Stuttgart).</p>	<p>None is so far devoted to homeopathy.</p>

Non classified in collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fritz D. Schroers. Lexikon deutschsprachiger Homöopathen. Stuttgart: Karl F. Haug Verlag; 2006; • Sigrid Heinze, ed. Homöopathie 1796-1996: Eine Heilkunde und ihre Geschichte. Katalog zur Ausstellung Deutsches Hygiene Museum, 17.5 bis 20.10.1996. Berlin: Ed. Lit. Europe; 1996. • IGM. Verzeichnis der Veröffentlichungen und Tagungen. Stuttgart: IGM; 2005. • Rima Handley. Eine homöopathische Liebesgeschichte: Samuel und Mélanie Hahnemann. Munich: CH Beck Verlag; 2006. (Transl. from English). Preface by R. Jütte. • Rudolf Tischner. Das Werden der Homöopathie: Geschichte der Homöopathie von Altertum bis zur neunsten Zeit. Stuttgart: Sonntag; 2000 (2nd ed.) Appendix by R. Jütte. • Robert Jütte. Samuel Hahnemann: Begründer der Homöopathie. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag; 2005. • Robert Jütte. Die Fünfzig-Tausenden Potenzen in der Homöopathie: Von den Anfängern bis zur Gegenwart. Gütersloh: Arcana Arzneimittleherstellung Dr Sewerin; 2007. English translation: Stuttgart: IGM; 2008. • G. Risse, R. Jütte & J. Woodward, ed. Culture, knowledge and healing: historical perspectives of homeopathic medicine in Europe and North America. Sheffield: European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications; 1998. • M. Dinges, ed. Patients in the history of homeopathy. Sheffield: European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications; 2002.
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These publications can be sorted in the categories described in Table 3.

Classifying publications in sources for intellectual and social history of medicine, 21 correspond to the former and 46 to the latter, excluding materials related to the history and activities of IGM. However, this apparent quantitative trend favoring social history of medicine must be counter-balanced by the qualitative high weight of the transcription of Hahnemann's case-journals. Similarly, the series of publications on the history of LM potencies give a thorough account of this, one of the most puzzling episodes in the history of homeopathy.

In any case, distribution of publications covers all relevant fields to construct the history of a medical rationality: general historical context; geographical distribution; medical biography; institutionalization; the patients' perspective; edition of original documents and historical analyses grounded on them.

Table 3. Categories of publications

Category	Number of publications
History of homeopathy in regional context	22
History of homeopathy from the perspective of patients	07
Documents for intellectual history of homeopathy	14
Institutionalization of homeopathy	07
Biography	06
History of LM potencies	04
Miscellanea	08

Note: Total may differ from total number of publications as some belong to more than one category.

Analysis of aims, structure and contents of publications

Due to the variety of genres and extent of publications, for this paper one particular group of publications was selected: the transcription, analysis and commentaries on Hahnemann's casebooks, as they open a window to the actual way social history interacts with the other fields of history of medicine and the way documents are approached in this field of research.

The project of transcription of Hahnemann's casebooks was launched by Henne in the 1960s, who edited the first 3 (D2, D3 and D4). It is worth to remember here that Haehl dated D1 as of 1799, but this work is lost. There are currently 11 volumes of Hahnemann's casebooks in print (Table 2). All of them are annotated and/or commented, either in the same work or in a separate volume ("Commentary volumes"). In this section it is discussed the contents of some of them.

Casebooks **D2-D4** were edited by Henne and annotated by Michalowski between 1993 and 1997 and commented by Hörsten on 2004. After transcription, data were organized in the following categories:

1. *Personal data of patients*: name, gender, age, address, profession. Patients were identified when possible, so as to establish eventual later consultations.
2. *Consultations data*: number and duration of consultations/patient; interval between consultations.
3. *Symptoms*: number and list of symptoms recorded by Hahnemann.
4. Names of diseases diagnosed.
5. *Treatment*: number of remedies; changes of remedies between first and second consultation; modes of recording the order of remedies; dilutions employed.

Analysis supplies interesting information regarding Hahnemann's early homeopathic practice. For instance, most patients belonged to the middle and high classes, no patient belonged to the lower class and only one was a noble. This is consistent with the social environment of that time who were not court physicians.

Moreover, Hahnemann required a relative large number of symptoms in order to select remedies and prescribed some significantly more frequently than others, also changing frequently prescriptions between the first and second consultation.

However, it is missing a correlation between data coming from actual practice and Hahnemann's writings at this time. Nevertheless, availability of data will help future researchers.

D6 was transcribed and commented by Bussmann in 2002, i.e. well after the new historiographical approach was set into motion. For this reason, the author took pains to sort out register of patients, needing to overcome serious difficulties as in this case Hahnemann was not systematic. For instance, he would not always identify patients by name and consultations are recorded sequentially rather than by patient.

This volume includes an exposition of the socio-cultural background of Hahnemann's life at this time, as well as his therapeutic considerations. Bussmann compares the remedies Hahnemann prescribed in actual practice with the list of remedies described in his 1805 materia medica (*Fragmenta de viribus medicamentorum...*) as well as analyzes dilutions, intervals between doses and the use of placebo. Symptoms observed in patients but not listed in *Fragmenta* are marked with the initials "NB", which shows – as Bussmann accurately remarks – that Hahnemann collected symptoms from patients to complete the materia medica of remedies.

Chapter 5 is devoted to the discussion of the actual application of the principle of similarity, confirming Varady's findings in casebook D5, i.e. that Hahnemann indeed followed the guidelines he had described in *The Medicine of Experience*, his theoretical and methodological writing also dated 1805.

Therefore, as a whole, casebooks worked out under the prevailing historiographical approach at IGM, go beyond bare statistical data but are correlated with Hahnemann's contemporary medical concepts as well as the particular social historical context. In this way, important information is produced for the understanding of the early phase of homeopathy.

For instance, in **D22** – corresponding to 1822 – Schuricht seeks to find elements of the theory of chronic diseases in Hahnemann's actual practice. However, it is **D16** which brings surprising pieces of information, as e.g. description of physical signs, especially in the case of skin diseases; use of allopathic remedies (against Hahnemann explicit statements about never having used allopathic means after 1798) as well as Mesmerism, magnets, electricity and topic applications of homeopathic remedies; prescription of remedies not listed in his published writings on materia medica, such as *Lamium album* (mentioned in his *Apothekerlexikon*), *Inula helenium* and *Pedicularis sylvestris* – the provings of which are described in an unpublished manuscript (MS IGM G2). All these data are checked against Hahnemann's other writings (corresponding editions of the *Organon*, materia medica, etc); the instance of the materia medica deserves special mention, due to the scholarship and patience required to find the unlisted remedies in other sources.

In this way, a new image of the beginnings of homeopathy emerges, partially confirming, partially contradicting Hahnemann's assertions in his published works, bringing new light on both homeopathy and its relationship with other forms of medicine at the turn of the 19th century. It is only to be regretted that this series has not been translated into other languages, in order to make this information available to a wider homeopathic audience that, no doubt, will benefit from learning that there is a gap between what one author writes and what he or she says and does and that concepts change as a function of historical contexts. In any case, analysis shows – as it will be made available in future papers - that the marriage between history of

homeopathy and social history of medicine is extremely successful, and its progeny will, certainly, contribute not only to a better understanding of the past of homeopathy, but to construct its future.

Acknowledgments:

My grateful thanks to Prof Dr Robert Jütte and Prof Dr Martin Dinges, as well to the work team at the Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation for their support and kind help.

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História da homeopatia e história social da medicina: a história de um casamento feliz

RESUMO

O Instituto para a História da Medicina (IGM) foi fundado em 1980 pela Fundação Robert Bosch em Stuttgart, Alemanha, na base de uma coleção de documentos e outros objetos pertencentes a Samuel Hahnemann, o formulador da homeopatia. No entanto, já desde sua fundação, seus diretores consideraram que a história da homeopatia também tinha um papel no panorama mais amplo da história da medicina. Do outro lado, a história da homeopatia não estaria restrita ao relato das idéias e vida profissional dos homeopatas, mas seria significativamente beneficiada por uma abordagem que levasse também em conta a perspectiva da história social, incluindo o estudo de instituições, a visão dos usuários, associações de partidários leigos e as publicações. Este artigo apresenta uma revisão desse projeto através da análise das publicações recentes que, tomadas em conjunto, refletem a contribuição historiográfica dos pesquisadores do IGM.

Palavras chave: História da medicina; História da homeopatia; História social da medicina; Instituições de pesquisa; Publicações.

Historia de la homeopatía e historia social de la medicina: la historia de un matrimonio feliz

RESUMEN

El Instituto para la Historia de la Medicina (IGM) fue fundado en 1980 por la fundación Robert Bosch en Stuttgart, Alemania, sobre la base de una colección de documentos y otros objetos pertenecientes a Samuel Hahnemann, el formulador de la homeopatía. Sin embargo, ya desde su fundación, los directores consideraron que la historia de la homeopatía también tiene un papel en el panorama más amplio de la historia de la medicina. Por otro lado, la historia de la homeopatía no estaría restringida al relato de las ideas y de la vida profesional de los homeópatas, sino que se beneficiaría significativamente de la adición de la perspectiva de la historia social, llevando en cuenta el estudio de instituciones, la visión de los usuarios, las asociaciones de partidarios legos y las publicaciones. Este artículo presente una revisión de este proyecto, mediante el análisis de publicaciones recientes que, consideradas en su conjunto, reflejan la contribución historiográfica de los investigadores del IGM.

Palabras llave: Historia de la medicina; Historia de la homeopatía; Historia social de la medicina; Instituciones; Publicaciones

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Support: FAPESP (#07/59694-0)

Conflict of interest: authors declare there is no conflict of interest

Received: 25 August 2009; Revised 20 September 2009; Published: 30 September 2009.

Correspondence author: Silvia Waisse Priven, silvia.priven@gmail.com.

How to cite this article: Waisse-Priven S. History of Homeopathy and Social History of Medicine: The Story of a Successful Marriage. Int J High Dilution Res. 2009 [cited YYYY Month dd]; 8 (28): 128-140. Available from:

<http://www.feg.unesp.br/~ojs/index.php/ijhdr/article/view/356/402>.