

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am dismayed at the changing of the spelling of the words “homœopathy” and “Bönninghausen” in my article *Polarity Analysis in Homeopathy. A Precise Path to the Simillimum*. I was quite intentional in the spellings utilized.

I can empathize with *Simillimum*'s policy to retain consistent American spellings within the journal. However, language changes over time, and as a culture we rarely consult a dictionary to understand the origin of words. To many people, this spelling issue is a trivial debate, yet the very name of our profession is actually of great importance that warrants deeper reflection.

The diphthong in “homœopathy” is the proper spelling to indicate the Greek origin of the word, “*omoion*”, which gives the etymological connection to the “Law of Similars.” As George Dimitriadis has said,

“I would here point out to our American colleagues, that the spelling of Homœopathy is improperly rendered “Homeopathy” even if it be done for the sake of phonetic consistency with the rest of their language, for in this special case, the *diphthong* (œ) is significant in that it indicates the source of the term from the Greek “*ομοιον*” (omoion; Latinicised as *omeion* or *omeo* as a prefix = similar [Similia in the Latin]). To replace the prefix *homæo* with *homeo* removes its etymological connection to the foundation stone of its existence, the “Law of Similars.” We must retain the diphthong within the term Homœopathy – how would it be for *psychiatry* to be written as *syciatry* (which would similarly remove any connection to its etymology from the Greek “*ψυχη*” (psychy [=soul])); or *physics* (Gr. *φυσικη* [physics, physical]) where the “ph”

informs the scholar of its Greek root, as “*Fisics*” (itself suggesting a Latin root); *taxonomy* (Gr. *ταξις* [taxis, class] as *tacsonomy*, etc. These few familiar examples should serve as ample evidence that the roots of specific terms must not be removed if we are to retain their fullest meaning and therefore a sense of connection, especially for future generations, to our inheritance.” [Letter to the Editor, submitted May 2002, JAIH]

“Homœopathy” was the standard spelling used in American publications in the 19th and early 20th centuries. This spelling has unfortunately been dropped in modern American writings. However, “homœopathy” is still the English spelling used internationally outside of the United States. Perhaps this will spark a revival in the use of the diphthong in spelling homœopathy in America.

Sincerely,

Jamie Oskin, N.D.

