A Wrong Example in Article 62 of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, 1956
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Biosystematics is interpreted in a broad sense to include subjects such as experimental taxonomy, genecology, cytotaxonomy, micro-evolutionary studies and specification. Autecologists, comparative phytochemists, developmental physiologists and others interested in any field relevant to biosystematics are also invited to apply for membership. It is emphasized that the I.O.B. is concerned with such studies in all groups of the Plant Kingdom so that it is hoped that algologists, mycologists, microbiologists and bryologists will play a full part in the Organization.

A report is given of the first meetings of the I.O.B. Executive Committee, at which the following activities were planned:

1) The establishment of a registration centre at which biosystematic data and details of work in progress can be assembled and made available to all members.
2) The establishment of a system to expedite the acquisition of living plant materials for biosystematic work.
3) The preparation of a glossary of biosystematic terms.

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A WRONG EXAMPLE IN ARTICLE 62 OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE, 1956

H. P. Fuchs, Wassenaar (Neth.)

Article 62 of the 1956 edition of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature which was not changed in its wording during the ninth botanical Congress in Montreal [cf. LANJOUW 1959, Synopsis of Proposals. — Regnum Veget. 14: 61 (January 1959); LANJOUW 1960, IX. International Botanical Congress — Nomenclature Section. — Regnum Veget. 20: 84 (December 1960)] reads as follows:

"A legitimate [spaced by the author] name or epithet must not be rejected merely because it is inappropriate or disagreeable, or because another is preferable or better known, or because it has lost its original meaning."

This is followed by a number of examples to which PROKHANOV 1958, Proposal no. 207. — in Taxon 7(9): 271 [12 November 1958] added a few more, still however, only illustrating the first paragraph. Amongst the original examples the generic name Alexitoxicum appears. There is no doubt that SAINT-LAGER 1880, in Ann. Soc. bot., Lyon 7: 67 in an article "Réforme des noms composés d'un radical grec associé à un radical latin" changed the generic name Vincetoxicum into Alexitoxicum merely because he considered the former as a combination of a Latin and a Greek word: "En vertu de ce principe si bien formulé par Linné on doit proscrire de la nomenclature botanique tous les noms hétérogènes. C'est ainsi qu'il faut rejeter, par exemple, le mot hybride Vincetoxicum, formé par l'association du verbe latin vincere avec le substantif grec toxicon. Il est du reste facile, en imitant le mot grec Alexipharmacum, de composer le substantif Alexitoxicum, qui a le même sens que Vincetoxicum." As far as this goes Alexitetoxicum would be a striking example illustrating the meaning of Article 62, especially because no author's name is cited behind the generic names. Neither from the original publication of SAINT-LAGER nor from the reference cited as an example to Article 62 of the Int. Code:

1) The footnotes are placed at the end of the Article [Ed.].
Bot. Nomencl. does it become clear whether SAINT-LAGER intended to replace the specific name “Vincetoxicum” from the binomial Asclepias Vincetoxicum LINNAEUS 1753, Spec. Plant., ed. 1, 1: 216, n. 12 or one of the two existing generic names Vincetoxicum Th. WALTER 1788, Fl. Carol.: 13/104 and Vincetoxicum [N. M. von WOLF 1780, Gen. Plant. vocab. charact. def.: 130, pro syn.] F. C. MEDIKUS 1790, in Hist., Comment. Acad. Elect. Theod.-Palat., Mannheim., phys. 6: 404 2). That the new name “Alexitoxicum” was meant to replace the latter is illustrated, however, by a later publication by SAINT-LAGER 1882, Cat. plantes vasc. Fl. Bassin Rhône (6): 539 where he even made the combination Alexitoxicum officinale (MOENCH 1794, Meth. plantas horti bot., agri Marburg., staminum situ descr.: 717, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER, overlooked by most subsequent publications, as e.g. the “Index Kewensis” 3). Thus it becomes evident that the name Alexitoxicum as an example illustrating the meaning of Article 62 has to be omitted 4). Even though SAINT-LAGER intended to replace the generic name Vincetoxicum F. C. MEDIKUS by Alexitoxicum SAINT-LAGER simply for linguistic reasons, the latter has to be accepted as legitimate, the former being a later and therefore illegitimate homonym.

NOTES

1) The generic name “Vincetoxicum” apparently used for the first time by CAESALPINUS 1583, Plantis libri XVI: for Gentiana asclepiadea LINNAEUS 1753, Spec. Plant., ed. 1, 1: 227, n. 4, by DODONAEUS 1616, Stirp. hist. pempt. sex: 407 in the sense of the nomenclatural type of our genus, Asclepias Vincetoxicum LINNAEUS 1753, Spec. Plant., ed. 1, 1: 216, n. 12 is composed from the Latin verbe vincere = to vanquish, and the Latin foreign noun from the Augustan period and the silver latinity toxicum, -i (n.) [derived from the Greek adjective ῥοξικος, -η, -ος (toxikos) = pertaining to the arrow], originally used for arrow poison, later for poison in general. Both Gentiana asclepiadea and Asclepias Vincetoxicum were believed to be an effective antidote. The same idea is expressed in the generic name “Antitoxicum” of SAINT-LAGER, composed by the Greek prefix ἀντι (anti) = against and toxicum, and also by the word Alexipharmacum, from the Greek verbe ἀλεξηνων (alexin) = to keep off, and the Greek noun το φάμακον (to pharmakon) = poison.

2) For the date of publication of the generic name Vincetoxicum F. C. MEDIKUS see H. P. Fuchs 1961, in J. Soc. Bibliogr. nat. Hist. 4: [in print].

3) In addition to the name Alexitoxicum officinale the following combinations appear in the sixth part of SAINT-LAGER’s "Catalogue des Plantes vasculaires de la Flore du Bassin du Rhône", originally published in the “Annales de la Société botanique de Lyon” 9: 495-688 [1882] on page 539:

Alexitoxicum albidum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866, Brev. plant. nov. 1: 39, sub Vincetoxicum)

SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum alpicolum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 39, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum beugesiacum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 39, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum dumenticolum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 38, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum luteolium (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 39, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum ochroleucum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 38, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER

Alexitoxicum petrophilum (JORDAN & FOURREAU 1866: 39, sub Vincetoxicum) SAINT-LAGER


Alexitoxicum Shuttleworthianum [THURET & BORNET, ubi ?, sec.] SAINT-LAGER

ROUY 1908, Fl. France 10: 232 cites the latter name as Vincetoxicum Shuttleworthii BORNET, in sched. hb. ROUY.

4) Instead of omitting this example it might also be possible to include it in the following way:

“On the other hand, Alexitoxicum SAINT-LAGER must not be rejected, although it was meant to replace Vincetoxicum F. C. MEDIKUS simply for linguistic reasons, because the latter was when published a later, and thus illegitimate homonym.”

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