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Our Corpus and Carrpos. A Reply

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In 1905 he went to Constantinople, now Istanbul, and for many years he was a professor in Natural History at St. George's College. He collected a representative set of plants in the Istanbul area which served together with Nemetz's collections and Aznavour's numerous contributions as a basis for the "Enumeratio Florae Constantinopolitanae" published by the writer of this notice in Fedde's Repertorium spec. nov. reg. veg. Beihefte vol. 98. After World War I, Wimmer settled down in Vienna, serving as a priest at different places in and around Vienna until his retirement in 1958. In his spare time he became an unofficial research associate at the Botany Department of the Vienna Natural History Museum and finally received the award of being made a Correspondent of the Museum. The late A. Zahlbruckner aroused his interest in the Campanulaceae-Lobelioideae. Wimmer published numerous papers on this large and taxonomically difficult group. In 1943 the first volume of his monograph was published. The larger part of the stock however was destroyed by war action and the book had to be reprinted in 1950. In 1953 the second volume was issued and a few months before his death a manuscript for an important supplement had been delivered to the editors. Wimmer also contributed treatments of the Campanulaceae-Lobelioideae to several floras, e.g. to those of Peru, Hawaii, and Madagascar. In the meanwhile Wimmer had started monographing the tribe Cyphioideae. It is hoped that this manuscript can be prepared for publication. In addition to his widely known studies in Campanulaceae, Wimmer was keenly interested in medical plants. He arranged an instructive exhibition of Austrian Medical Plants which was displayed at the Natural History Museum from 1934 to 1938.

Wimmer was of an extremely kind disposition, quiet and rather reticent. In order to continue his research work he was prepared to face almost every hardship; neither the intense cold of the unheated herbarium rooms nor the 144 steps up to the herbarium (before heating and an elevator were installed) could prevent him from his studies. Even his prolonged severe illness could not interrupt his work for longer than the days he was actually in bed.

An obituary and a list of his publications will be published in *Annalen des Naturhistorischen Museums in Wien*.

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## OUR CORPUS AND CARRPOS - A REPLY

A. A. Bullock (Kew)

Dr. Proskauer's note on the orthography of generic names (Taxon 10: 155—156, 1961) points the necessity for clarification at several places in the Code. I have here taken up an interpretation opposed to that of Dr. Proskauer, but this has no personal bias whatever, and I shall be glad to see the question unequivocally settled either way.

Some considerations in regard to generic names often have been overlooked or not given their full weight. The first, obviously accepted also by Dr. Proskauer, is the arbitrary nature of generic names. Even if the derivation and meaning of a name are either given by the author or evident from the context, the orthography remains arbitrary and subject to the whim or scholarship of the author. Art. 20 is unequivocal, "... It may be taken from any source whatever, and may even be composed in an absolutely arbitrary manner." Art. 73 gives permission to correct [proven] typographic or orthographic errors, and requires certain conventional corrections

whilst insisting that “The original spelling\* of a name or epithet must be retained . . . .” It is implicit that in order to constitute an error, a particular orthography must be unintentional on the part of the author or of the printer. Another consideration in this context is the weight to be given to different orthographies of generic names when they refer on the one hand to the same genus [*i.e.*, the same nomenclatural type] and on the other hand to different genera [*i.e.*, different nomenclatural types]. It is to this second point that, in my opinion, Dr. Proskauer has not given due weight, and has in fact treated the two cases as of equal significance.

In the former case, later orthographic variants must be regarded as orthographic errors and must be discarded unless the original spelling is itself shown to be either a typographic or an unintentional orthographic error; such later variants cannot be regarded as superfluous new names. In the latter case, different orthographies may very well (and frequently do) represent different names; whether or not they are to be regarded as homonyms requires a judgement on the merits of each name in the light of Art. 75. On the basis of the examples quoted in the Code, below and by Dr. Proskauer, *Monocarpia* Miquel and *Monocarpus* Carr are certainly different names under Art. 75 and are not homonyms, whilst under Art. 73 “*Monocarpus* Post et Kuntze” is a mere error for *Monocarpia* Miquel.

It has been pointed out many times that the Code is equivocal in regard to the kind of orthographic variance which leads to homonymy. Thus *Peponia* and *Peponium*, differing only in gender, are to be regarded as different names although they have the same root, and by analogy one assumes that *Adenia* and *Adenium*, having different roots, are also to be regarded as different names. These two pairs of names, however, refer to pairs of different genera; it is in fact the taxonomic difference between them that allows their acceptance as different names by the Code. Taxonomic difference permits also the retention of both *Rubus* and *Rubia*. Other similar pairs are regarded as homonymous owing to either taxonomic affinity, community of origin, or for other reasons, in a quite arbitrary manner.

The situation is quite different when similarly different orthographies produce names referring to the same genus (*i.e.* names having the same type). Thus the genus described as *Lepistemon* Blume (1825) was adopted by Hasskarl in 1844, but he used the spelling “*Lepidostemon*”, the “correction” being on the ground that *Lepistemon* was wrongly formed. In such circumstances the correction was unwarranted and is in fact forbidden explicitly by the Code. “*Lepidostemon*” Hasskarl was not a new name; it was merely an orthographic error for the arbitrarily formed *Lepistemon*, and Hasskarl attributed it without comment to Blume. The fact that it was an intentional error, as compared with the unintentional error (such as “*Woodia*” written in error by R. Brown for the intended “*Woodsia*”) explicitly mentioned in the Code, is highly relevant.

Similarly, the correction of *Monocarpia* Miquel by Post and Kuntze to “*Monocarpus*” was not permissible, but this does not make *Monocarpus* a new and superfluous name. It is clear from the text of Post and Kuntze that they were merely correcting what they wrongly regarded as an error by Miquel and it is significant that they attributed the name in its “corrected” form to him. Under the Code there was no justification for the correction, and indeed the corrected form itself must be regarded as an orthographic error so far as the generic name is concerned, though not on grounds of scholarship.

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\* Of course, another spelling may be conserved, but without change of author or date.

In these circumstances, *Monocarpus* Carr (1956) and *Monocarpia* Miquel must be treated as legitimate and different names in the same way as *Peponia* and *Peponium*, since "*Monocarpus* Post & Kuntze" (1903) has no real existence. It follows at once that the arbitrarily formed new name *Carrpos* Proskauer (1961) is superfluous and illegitimate.

This is not a plea for the general retention of the idea that names should be made which differ only in the ending, or only slightly in other ways. It is in fact unfortunate that the consequences of retaining *Peponia* and *Peponium* were not foreseen; only taxonomic difference was taken into account and the possibility of orthographic and typographic confusion in non-taxonomic work was overlooked. The much more liberal application of Art. 75 by Rickett and Stafleu in their recent correction of the list of *nomina conservanda* might well form a pattern for an amendment to the Code forbidding the future manufacture of such variants. An amendment of this kind could not be retroactive owing to the possibility of upsetting a large number of names established as correct under the Code as it stands.

The danger in acceptance of Dr. Proskauer's interpretation lies not only in his treatment of orthography as such, but more especially in regarding the publication of later orthographies as valid publication of new names under the terms of Art. 32.

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## NOMINA CONSERVANDA PROPOSITA

(79) Proposal to conserve the generic name **Sorghum** Moench (*Gramineae*) versus *Sorghum* Adans. (*Gramineae*).

**Sorghum** Moench, Meth. 207 (1794), *nom. cons. prop.*

Typus: *S. bicolor* (Linn.) Moench, *l.c.* (*Holcus bicolor* Linn.)

The name *Sorghum* has been maintained by a large number of workers, but has been variously attributed to Moench, or to Persoon (Syn. Pl. 1: 101, 1805) who employed the name in the same sense. The following are a few examples: Beauv., *Agrost.* 131 (1812); Roem. et Schult., *Syst. Veg.* 2: 53 (1817); Trin., *Fund. Agrost.* 188 (1820); Nees, *Fl. Afr. Austr.* 85 (1841); Dumortier in *Bull. Soc. Bot. Belg.* 7: 32 (1868); Benth. in Benth. et Hook. f., *Gen. Pl.* 2: 1135 (1883); Boiss., *Fl. Orient.* 5: 459 (1884); Hegi, *Ill. Fl. Mit.-Eur.* 1: 184 (1907); Stapf in *Prain, Fl. Trop. Afr.* 9: 104 (1917); Hitchcock, *Man. Grasses U.S.* 748 (1935); Snowden, *The cultivated races of Sorghum* (1936); Snowden in *J. Linn. Soc., Bot.* 55: 191 (1955). Furthermore the name has become deeply entrenched in agricultural literature: Snowden (*l.c.*, 1936) cites over 250 references to agricultural papers referring to the crop under this name.

**Sorghum** Adans., *Fam. Pl.* 2: 38, 606 (1763), *nom. rejic. prop.*

The name *Sorghum* was adopted by several of the earlier botanists but was attributed to Linnaeus or Micheli. *Sorghum* Adans. has recently been taken up by Mansfeld in *Fedde. Rep.* 45: 7 (1938), and subsequently by Pilger in *Engl. Nat. Pfl.-Fam.* ed. 2, 14e: 142 (1940) and Ohwi, *Fl. Jap.* 158 (1953), among others, in place of *Sorghum* Moench, not strictly in the sense of Adanson.

Discussion: The generic name "*Sorghum*" was first used by Linnaeus in his *Systema* (1735), but in the various editions of his *Genera Plantarum* it was included in *Holcus*. The latter name is now conserved, with *H. lanatus* Linn. as its type. In the *Species Plantarum*, 1047 (1753) Linnaeus placed the *Sorghum* of his earlier work under *Holcus* as *H. sorghum*, *H. saccharatus* and *H. halepensis*. It is therefore clear that "*Sorghum*" and "*Sorghum*" are orthographic variants.

The citation by Adanson of "*Holcus* Linn." as a synonym of his *Sorghum* renders the latter superfluous and therefore illegitimate; its rejection is automatic. On account of its homonymy with *Sorghum* Moench, however, the latter still requires to be legitimized by conservation.