

Papilio medea Borkhausen, 1788. Naturg. 1 : 74. Nomen praeoccupatum (nec *Papilio medea* Cramer, 1781, Uitl. Kapellen 4 : 107, non *Papilio medea* Fabricius, 1775, Syst. Entomol. : 508 !).

Papilio psodea Hübner, [1803], Samml. europ. Schmett., fig. 497—499. Partim !

*Oreas franconius**) Oken, 1815, Lehrb. Naturg. 3 (1): 744 (sub synonym !).

*) As to the origin of the name *franconius* I can furnish only a very small account. C. D. SHERBORN (1926, Index Animalium, sect. II, 10 : 2508) does not mention even OKEN's name, this being merely a citation of the synonym for his *Oreas medusa*. But I was unable to excerpt the name *franconius* from any earlier literature (before 1815), and for modern sources relating to that period, like SHERBORN's Index Animalium, sect. I. The sole reference I can give in this connection is the following: „Le franconien” [= a vernacular name], ERNST & ENGRAMELLE, 1779(—1793), Papillons d'Europe : 114, tab. 25, fig. 47a-b (♀). This butterfly seems to be an individual form of *Erebia medusa*.

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The Schiffermüller Names

by

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No group of species names in European Lepidoptera has been more discussed than those published in the Systematisches Verzeichniz der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend. There cannot be the slightest doubt that many of them are invalid. To understand why they have succeeded to maintain themselves into our time it is sufficient to remember that they were used by OCHSENHEIMER and TREITSCHKE in their Schmetterlinge von Europa, and this publication played a dominant rôle in the study of European lepidoptera during a great part of the 19th century.

As long ago as 1910 STICHEL already proposed to submit the problem of these names to an International Commission (Int. ent. Z. Guben 4 : 80), but up to the present moment no such decision has ever been pronounced. Though a definite regulation of the SCHIFFERMÜLLER names is certainly highly desirable in order to arrive at stability, I do not think that it is necessary to take the validity of all these names into consideration. For we have an excellent guide in art. 25 of the International Rules which clearly indicates that only those names are valid which are published and accompanied by an indication, or a definition, or a description, if the author has applied the principles of binary nomenclature. This last provision does not cause any difficulty in the case of the Verzeichniz.

The names used by SCHIFFERMÜLLER and his cooperators can be divided into the following groups :

- a. Nine names of species fully described on p. 244—297 and figured on plates Ia and Ib.
- b. A few names the description of which is given in a footnote (e.g. *Papilio Ilia*, p. 171, and *Sphinx Pruni*, p. 308).
- c. Names which are substitutes for already existing ones. The old name is always cited with the new one (e.g. *Geometra Bupleuraria* for *Phalaena Fimbrialis* Scopoli, p. 97).

d. Names which are provided with a reference to another publication in which the species was described, mostly the works of DE RÉAUMUR or GEOFFROY (e.g. *Noctua linariae* (p. 73) with reference to "La chenille de la Linaire" of DE RÉAUMUR, p. 57).

e. Names which are accompanied with a short description (e.g. *Noctua Xanthographa*, "Kastanienbraune gelbgezeichnete Eule", p. 83).

f. Names of species of which the authors knew the caterpillar. In that case the lepidopteron is always indicated by the food plant of the larva (e.g. *Bombyx Reclusa*, "Rosmarinweidenspinner", p. 56).

There is, of course, no doubt about the validity of the names belonging to groups a, b, c, and d. The trouble is caused by those belonging to groups e and f. In my opinion there cannot be a doubt that all names belonging to group e are valid. The words preceding the name clearly constitute a description, however short it may be, but probably sufficient at the time of publication to recognize the species. Here I may quote the opinion of G. H. E. HOPKINS in his "Notes on Mallophagan Nomenclature" (1947, Entomol. 80 : 87): "... the fact that the description may be extremely inadequate is irrelevant (and must necessarily be so, because who is to decide what constitutes an adequate description?), so that even a few words of useless description attached to a name are sufficient to save it from being a *nomen nudum*".

Especially among the Agrotidae and Geometridae there are many descriptions which are too short to recognize the species with certainty. This does not make however the name to a *nomen nudum*, as has so often been claimed, but to a *nomen dubium*. Such names are fully valid, they only wait for the moment that they can be recognized to take their full rights. Now it is a great advantage that several later authors saw the SCHIFFER-MÜLLER collection and gave adequate descriptions of a great many species. The first of them was FABRICIUS in his *Mantissa Insectorum* 2 (1787). The result is that by far the greater part of the names of group e can be determined with certainty. A rejection of these names would mean a source of great trouble, which can be shown by a simple example. The description of *Noctua ambigua* only consists of the words "Röthlichte hellgraugezeichnete Eule", a typical *nomen dubium*. Those who would like to reject this name, and substitute it by *Noctua ambigua* of FABRICIUS (1787) with a sufficient description, are at once faced with the difficulty that this substitution is not permitted, because FABRICIUS' name would be invalid as a primary homonym. Clearly the rejection of group e would cause the greatest difficulties in the nomenclature of our European Lepidoptera.

Finally as regards the names belonging to group f, they are all *nomina nuda*, as they are not accompanied with an indication, or a definition, or a description. The word "Kahneichenspinner" before the name of *Bombyx Dodonaea* (p. 49) is nothing but a vernacular name, to be compared with the "Broom Moth" or the "Galium Carpet" of SOUTH's books. These names are invalid and they cannot influence the rights of later names because of homonymy.

It is sometimes argued that these vernacular names are also accompanied with a description on the following ground. The Lepidoptera belonging to one genus (*Bombyx*, *Noctua* etc.) are divided into groups. These groups are provided with a definition, and then a list of the spe-

cies is given belonging to the group. This definition is considered a part of the species description. This is of course correct, and for that reason WARREN in his famous Monograph of the genus *Erebia* (1936, p. 183) treats *Papilio Medusa* Schiff. as a valid name. He forgets however, that the definition of the group is not part of the description of one species, but of a whole series of them. Every time the same definition has to serve as part of the description of another species. If we accept this as validating the name, then the consequence would be that, if an author fully defines a genus, and then gives a list of the new species belonging to it, only mentioning their name, these names would be valid. That is of course not the case, and for the same reason we must consider all names of group *f* as nomina nuda.

It will be clear that only a strict application of art. 25 can make an end to the instability in our Lepidoptera nomenclature as far as the SCHIFFERMÜLLER names are concerned. That means, that we shall have to abandon all names of group *f*, but to accept all belonging to group *e* that can be identified. This does not cause much inconvenience. I have studied the problem only the last few months. In the parts of the Dutch Catalogue which have already been published I used in the main the nomenclature of the English Lepidopterists, because it is the best in Europe. In the last instalment, however, which is in the press, I have checked all SCHIFFERMÜLLER names, also those of the preceding parts as far as the Agrotidae and Geometridae are concerned. The result was beyond expectation. The great majority of the nomina nuda (group *f*) could be maintained, because they had been used by FABRICIUS in 1787, so that only the author's name had to be changed. Only in very few cases, where a strict application of art. 25 would cause the abandonment of a well known name, I have followed the same practice as Dr PACLT in his preceding article, and advised to place that name on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology. I have little doubt that it will be equally easy to settle the names with which I was not concerned in the same satisfying way. I may add that with only very few exceptions all names of the so called Microlepidoptera are valid, because the caterpillars of most species were unknown to the authors so that they could not use vernacular names.

STAUDINGER used relatively few SCHIFFERMÜLLER names in the 3rd ed. of his Catalogue (1901). Yet we meet with *Cucullia chamomillae* Schiff., *Cuc. asteris* Schiff., *Heliothis scutosa* Schiff., etc., which are all nomina nuda (group *f*). PROUT (Seitz 4, 1912—1915) used numerous names of the Verzeichnisz, many of which are invalid. The greatest number, however, is to be found in the modern Check List of British Insects of KLOET & HINCKS (1945). One of the most astonishing nomenclatorial novelties is the use of *Noctua advena* Schiffermüller, not for *Noctua advena* Fabricius, but for *Noctua opima* Hübner (KL. & H., p. 97), thus creating a hopeless confusion (to be met with in practically all modern British publications!), and that whereas the name of SCHIFFERMÜLLER is without any doubt a nomen nudum (Verzeichnisz, p. 77)! I need hardly say that nobody on the continent has accepted this change.

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