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REQUEST FOR A RULING ON THE DATE OF THE GENERIC NAME  
*HANSENIA MELICHAR* (CLASS INSECTA, ORDER HEMIPTERA).  
Z.N.(S.) 173

By R. G. Fennah (*Commonwealth Institute of Entomology, London*)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to give a Ruling on the date to be attributed to the generic name *Hansenia* Melichar.

2. In 1844 (*Icon. Règne Anim. Ins.* : 361) Guérin described under the name *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* a species from the Bay of Campeche (a part of the Gulf of Mexico).

3. In *Ann. naturh. Hofmus. Wien* 16 : 195, 228 (dated 1901 on the title page), Melichar established a new nominal genus *Hansenia*, and designated *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin as its type-species. In 1902 (*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 14 : 53) Kirkaldy published a paper read at a meeting held in November 1901 in which he also published, as a new generic name, the name *Hansenia* with *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby, 1891 (*J. linn. Soc. Lond.* 24 : 154, pl. 6, fig. 14) as type-species.

4. Both Melichar and Kirkaldy identified the nominal species *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin and *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby with one another. Melichar, who indicated that he had examined the type-material of both these nominal species, adopted the specific name *pulverulenta* Guérin, sinking *glauca* Kirby as a synonym, while Kirkaldy took the opposite course by adopting *glauca* Kirby as the valid name and treating *pulverulenta* Guérin as a synonym.

5. In 1903 (*Homopt. Ceylon*) Melichar, when using the generic name *Hansenia*, attributed it to Kirkaldy, placing in it *H. pulverulenta* (Guérin) and *H. kirbyi* Melichar.

6. In 1903 (*Entomologist* 36 : 79) Kirkaldy appears to have realised that *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin and *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby were not synonyms of one another but were names for a New World and an Old World species respectively, and that therefore the synonymy noted in paragraph 4 above was incorrect.

7. In 1906 (*Fauna Brit. Ind., Rynch.* 3 : 411) Distant cited the nominal genus *Hansenia* Kirkaldy with *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby as type-species. In 1923 (*in* Wytzman's *Gen. Ins.* 182 : 67) Melichar also attributed the generic name *Hansenia* to Kirkaldy instead of to himself and treated (correctly) *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby as the type-species. The species *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin, which he had made the type-species of his own genus *Hansenia* he now designated as type-species of a new nominal genus, *Ormenoflata*.

8. Although Melichar's settlement of the *Hansenia* problem has been followed by later authors, it appeared until recently that it did not in fact do so under the Rules, for it involved the acceptance, as a valid name, of *Hansenia* Kirkaldy, 1902, which appeared to be invalid as a junior homonym of *Hansenia* Melichar. The acceptance of *Hansenia* Melichar as the valid name would involve the

transfer of the name *Hansenia* from an Old World genus to a New World genus.

9. However, Kirkaldy stated (1903, *Entomologist* 36 : 79) that Heft 3-4, Band XVI of *Ann. naturh. Hofmus. Wien* (i.e. the Heft containing the name *Hansenia* Melichar) was not published until June 1902, whereas his own paper containing the homonymous name *Hansenia* Kirkaldy was published in January 1902 and therefore that the name *Hansenia* Kirkaldy had priority. The contents of this Heft (including reference to an event which took place on 28 December 1901) were recorded in the *Zoological Record* for 1901, but this was not published until 1903 so that it would have been possible for a paper published in 1902 to have been recorded in it. The British Museum (Natural History) copy of Band XVI, Heft 3-4 was not received until 13 July 1903. Usually Heft 1 & 2 of each year were received at this Museum in the June or July of the following year. The Naturhistorisches Museum of Vienna is only able to say that Melichar's Monograph must have been published between 1 January 1901 and 1 August 1902. The Zoological Society of London copy of Band XVI, Heft 3-4 was received on 23 May 1902, and this, which is the earliest date at present known by which the work could have been published, becomes the latest date of publication which is compatible with the evidence, and must, under the Rules, be the date to be attributed to the generic name *Hansenia* Melichar. *Hansenia* Melichar thus becomes a junior homonym of *Hansenia* Kirkaldy, which was published in January 1902.

10. I, however, consider that the evidence suggests that the use of the name *pulverulenta* Guérin by Melichar on page 228 and 229 of Heft 3 under *Hansenia* is an error transcribed from a communication from Kirkaldy; and definitely proves that Melichar intended this genus to be based on the insect now known as *glauca*. The evidence is set out below:—

(a) On page 195 of Heft 3-4 *Hansenia* n.g. is keyed out under "Beide Fühlerglieder fast gleich lang". The original description of generic characters includes "Das erste und zweite Fühlerglied gleich lang, die Fühler den Stirnrand überragend . . . Hintershienen mit einem Dorne". *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin does not have any of these characters: *P. glauca* Kirby has all.

(b) In pl. 2, fig. 3 of the Monograph (in Band XVII) Melichar figures "*Hansenia pulverulenta*" Guérin (figure references on pages 229, Band XVI; 234, and 251, Band XVII). The figure is unmistakably *P. glauca* Kirby or *H. kirbyi* Melichar and cannot possibly be *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin.

(c) Melichar cites the distribution of *H. pulverulenta* (Guérin) (: 229) exactly as follows:—"Ceylon, Pundaloya, Campeche, Paradeniya". On pages 228 (Band XVI) and 234 (Band XVII) he gives the distribution of *H. pulverulenta* as "Ceylon". Nowhere does he recognise *Hansenia pulverulenta* Guérin as a Central American species and, as the above citation shows, apparently overlooked the true location of Campeche.

(d) On page 70 of Heft 1-2, Band XVII, Melichar correctly describes *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin under *Ormenis*, and gives the distribution "Centralamerika, Mexico (Typen im Stockholmer und im Wiener k.k. Hofmuseum)".

(e) In his "Verzeichnis der Artennamen" Melichar lists "*pulverulenta*" twice, with the *Hansenia* and *Ormenis* references respectively, quite oblivious

of the fact that he had used the same name for two entirely different species.

(f) While Melichar's figure of "*Hansenia pulverulenta*" and citation of *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby in synonymy absolutely prove that he based the generic concept *Hansenia* on the insect now known as *Poeciloptera glauca*, it remains for Kirkaldy to provide a clue to Melichar's extraordinary lapse. In *The Entomologist*, 1903, 36 : 79, he wrote that he had wrongly synonymised *P. pulverulenta* and *P. glauca* and had been followed by Melichar in this error. In other words Melichar's error was almost certainly due to an unthinking transcription.

(g) I do not think that this is proof that Melichar received Kirkaldy's paper before he published his own. If he had he would have published "*Hansenia Kirkaldy*" with a bibliographic reference, and not "*Hansenia n.g.*". Moreover, while in Heft 3-4 of Band XVI (1901) he published the genus as new, in the index to genera on page 246 of Heft 1-2, Band XVII (1902) he lists "*Hansenia Kirkaldy*" and does not mention *Hansenia Melichar*.

(h) It is highly probable that Kirkaldy, an avowed admirer of Hansen's work, coined the generic name and synonymy, and as he knew that Melichar was compiling a comprehensive monograph on the family FLATIDAE (Kirkaldy noted this in his 1902 paper), advised him privately of his actions. Melichar, not knowing whether Kirkaldy's genus was published or not, was forced to insert the genus as new in order to expedite the submission of his part I to press. Before he compiled the index of genera at the end of part II in 1902 he discovered that Kirkaldy's generic name had been published and accordingly suppressed his own name in favour of Kirkaldy in the index.

11. In view of this evidence I request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature :—

- (1) To give a Ruling that Melichar's monograph contained in Heft 3-4 of Band XVI of *Ann. naturh. Hofmus. Wien* is to be considered to have been published on [23 May 1902]—the earliest date that is compatible with the evidence ;
- (2) to place the under-mentioned generic names on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology :—
  - (a) *Hansenia* Kirkaldy, 1902 (gender : feminine), type-species, by original designation, *Poeciloptera glauca* Kirby, 1891 ;
  - (b) *Ormenoflata* Melichar, 1923 (gender : feminine), type-species, by original designation, *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* Guérin, 1844 ;
- (3) to place the under-mentioned specific names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology :—
  - (a) *pulverulenta* Guérin, 1844, as published in the binomen *Poeciloptera pulverulenta* (type-species of *Ormenoflata* Melichar, 1923) ;
  - (b) *glauca* Kirby, 1891, as published in the binomen *Poeciloptera glauca* (type-species of *Hansenia* Kirkaldy, 1902) ;
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the generic name *Hansenia* Melichar, [1902] (a junior homonym of *Hansenia* Kirkaldy, 1902).