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PARENTHETICAL AUTHORITIES AFTER SUPRAGENERIC NAMES

Steven P. Darwin¹

Summary

Proposals are made to revise the Code (Article 19.6, Article 49, and Article 61) relating to author citation of suprageneric taxa.

During the course of an investigation into the subfamilial, tribal, and subtribal nomenclature of the Rubiaceae (Taxon 25: 595–610. 1976), it became apparent to me that taxonomists are generally inconsistent in their use of parenthetical author citation after suprageneric names. I discussed this problem only briefly in the above-mentioned study, but since that time have been able to give the matter greater thought and prepare specific proposals for modification of the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. However, before considering those proposals, it is necessary first to outline the use and purpose of parenthetical citation and to point out certain peculiarities inherent to suprageneric, generic, and infrageneric names.

All suprageneric names are monomial names, that is, they consist of only one word and therefore have nothing whatever to do with the concept of "combination" as defined in the Code (Article 6.7). Authors who transfer tribes or subfamilies from one family to another do not make new combinations, but merely alter their systems of classification. Such transfer of suprageneric names has no effect on their nomenclatural standing. Therefore, the designation "comb. nov." has no meaning in such instances and parenthetical author citations similarly make dubious sense. The same is true if the "status" (i.e., rank) of a suprageneric taxon is changed. When, for example, a taxon of the rank of subtribe is elevated to the rank of tribe, some authors employ the designation "stat. nov.," cite in parentheses the author of the subtribal name, and list the subtribal name as if it were a basionym. Although a useful designation, "new status" has no nomenclatural meaning for suprageneric names; they are actually published as entirely *new* names when their rank is changed. For purposes of priority (and for purposes of typification, as will be discussed shortly) any earlier publication, at another rank, of a suprageneric name based on the same type has no nomenclatural significance. Since the concepts of "new combination" and of "new status" are meaningless with regard to suprageneric nomenclature, I am prepared to discount completely the usefulness or desirability of any parenthetical author citation after suprageneric names.

This having been said, I must comment on the necessity of parenthetical citation after generic and infrageneric names (combinations) whenever such citation is appropriate. What is the real function of parenthetical author citation and why is it mandatory under the Code (Article 49)? As I see it, such citation is a desirable bibliographic aid necessary for the proper *typification* of generic and infrageneric names.

By citing parenthetically the author of the basionym, the type of a new generic name or of a new combination is designated to be the same as that of the basionym. Unless the type specimen of each new specific or infraspecific name were cited with every new combination, there would be no other way of determining the type. The same holds true for generic names; for example, if a subgenus is raised to the rank of

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genus, the name of the author of the subgenus must be cited in order to establish the type species of the new generic name. In that last instance, the designation "stat. nov." would seem appropriate, since reference, for purposes of typification, should be made to the earlier name.

The situation with regard to typification is quite different for names above the rank of genus. The *Code* clearly states (Articles 10, 18, and 19) that such names are formulated from the name of the *type genus*, to which the proper rank-indicating ending is added. The type genus of the tribe Coffeae is necessarily *Coffea* L., that of the family Magnoliaceae is *Magnolia* L., etc. It is, then, only for generic names and all names of taxa below the rank of genus that parenthetical citation aids in proper typification.

In the matter of author citation after change in rank, it seems to me that all names fall into three general categories:

1. *Suprageneric names*.—These are monomials, their type genera clearly designated by the names themselves (e.g., Asteraceae, Mimosoideae, Cinchoneae, etc.). Their priority, as with other names, is restricted to the ranks at which they have been validly published; earlier publication of a suprageneric name based on the same type genus but at a different rank is immaterial.² The idea of "new combination," and the use of parenthetical authorities are both inappropriate here.

2. *Generic names*.—These are also monomials, but their type species are not apparent from the names themselves and therefore must be designated explicitly. If the name of a subgenus, section, or subsection is raised to the rank of genus, it is necessary to cite in parentheses the name of the author of the basionym in order to fix the typification of the new generic name. In that case, the idea of "new status" seems appropriate, but because generic names are monomials, there is never a "new combination" made.

3. *Names of all taxa below the rank of genus*.—These names are always parts of nomenclatural combinations, and comprise the various "epithets" used after generic names. Because their nomenclatural types (type species for names of subgenera, sections, and subsections; type specimens or other "element" for names of species and taxa of infraspecific rank) must be designated, it is necessary that parenthetical citation be used whenever infrageneric taxa are altered in rank. Such alteration always results in a "new combination" as well as a taxon of "new status."

Current Provisions of the Code

Having considered the purpose and usefulness of parenthetical authorities, I conclude that such citation is necessary only whenever new combinations are made, and whenever generic names are based on previously published infrageneric-supraspecific names. The *Code* is reasonably clear about the required use of parenthetical citation in each of the above-mentioned instances; Article 49 states "When a genus or taxon of lower rank is altered in rank but retains its name or epithet, the author who first published this as a legitimate name or epithet (the author of the basionym) must be cited in parentheses, followed by the name of the author who effected the alteration (the author of the combination). The same holds when a taxon of lower rank than genus is transferred to another genus or species, with or without alteration of rank." Although Article 49 is explicit as to generic and infrageneric names, author citation after suprageneric names is contradictory in the two sections of the *Code* touching upon it. The two pertinent articles are discussed below.

Article 61.—This article, with others pertaining to the choice of a name when the

² It may, however, be desirable to cite the earlier name as a synonym; such citation would be necessary if it constitutes reference, required for valid publication, to an effectively published Latin description or diagnosis (Article 36).

rank of a taxon is altered, is found in Chapter V Section 5. The text of Article 61 appeared as a recommendation in earlier editions of the *Code*, becoming the text of Article 7 in the Stockholm (1952) edition. The question as to whether or not this article is really necessary has been raised by Silva (Taxon 8: 9. 1959), but attempts to delete it have been unsuccessful. Although the general provisions of Article 61 may be deduced from other sections of the *Code*, its inclusion in Chapter V Section 5 seems useful. The article stipulates the nomenclatural procedures to be followed when suprageneric taxa are altered in rank, namely that the stem (i.e., the name of the type genus) of the older name should be retained and only the termination altered, provided, one assumes, that there is no other name at the new rank which would have priority.

Allusion to proper author citation after such change in rank is made in the example following the article, and parenthetical citations are used there. This usage is contrary to my own views on the proper role of parenthetical authorities, and no other comment is made in Article 61 about parenthetical citation after suprageneric names. Considering the purpose of the article—the formulation and choice of names when suprageneric taxa are altered in rank—the example is evidently designed to illustrate the phrase “the stem of the name is to be retained and only the termination altered.” The use of parenthetical authorities is regrettable, especially because it contradicts what I believe to be the correct mode of citation illustrated under Article 19.6.

Article 19.6.—This article has had a long and complicated history, much of which is irrelevant to the present discussion. The text of Paragraph 19.6 (formerly Note 2) is essentially unchanged from the Stockholm (1952) Code. The paragraph principally deals with author citation when *termination* of a suprageneric name is corrected, but the second sentence of the paragraph and of the example stipulate the mode of author citation when the *rank* of a suprageneric taxon is changed. In such an instance, the name of the rank-altering author “is then cited as author for the name with the appropriate ending, in the usual way.” The example goes on to state that “If it is held necessary to change the rank of this taxon [subfamily Climacioideae] to tribe, then the name Climacieae is to be used followed by the name of the author making the change.” In neither text nor example are parenthetical authorities mentioned.³

It should also be pointed out here that the above-mentioned passages from Article 19 seem rather out of place in a section of the *Code* dealing with “names of families, subfamilies, tribes, and subtribes.” Article 18 and most of Article 19 discuss the formulation of suprageneric names, alternative family names, and suprageneric autonyms. The parts of Article 19 concerning name *selection* when rank is changed seem discordant here; such matters are handled under Article 61.

Conclusions and Proposals

After reviewing the function of parenthetical authorities in botanical nomenclature, the reasons for their citation by some taxonomists after suprageneric names, and the provisions of the *Code* regarding such citations, I make the following observations: (1) Article 19 (like Article 18) should deal exclusively with the formulation of suprageneric names. Regulations concerning name selection after change in rank should be deleted because they are not appropriate in that section of the *Code*, and because they are given in greater detail under Article 61. (2) The citation of parenthetical authorities in the example under Article 61 is confusing. Such usage after suprageneric names is not specifically provided for under any other article of the Code,⁴ nor has there been agreement among taxonomists as to whether or not such citation

³ In a proposal to the Montreal Congress (*Code* of 1961), H. P. Fuchs (*Taxon* 7: 218. 1958) proposed that Article 19 be made to require citation of parenthetical authors in such instances as outlined in the example; his proposal was rejected.

should be employed. As stated, parenthetical authorities after suprageneric names do not provide any information necessary for typification or determination of priority—in fact, they frequently betoken an incorrect extension of the concept of “combination” to suprageneric names.

The following proposals are designed to eliminate the conflict over mode of author citation as discussed under Article 19 and Article 61.

Proposal (33). Article 19.6: Delete second sentence of text “However, when the rank”

Add as last sentence of text: “For author citation when the rank of a suprageneric taxon is changed, see Art. 61.”

Delete second sentence of the example “If it is held necessary”

Proposal (34). Article 49: Add the following sentence to the text: “Parenthetical author citation is not used after names of suprageneric taxa (see Art. 61).”

Proposal (35). Article 61: Delete parenthetical authorities from the example.

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⁴ Aside from Article 61, the only other reference I am able to find in the *Code* to parenthetical authorities after suprageneric names is in the list of *Nomina Familiarum Conservanda*. The first name (*Cladophoraceae* in the *Chlorophyta*) is followed by an author's name in parentheses. The meaninglessness of such citation is emphasized by the fact that a “basionym” is not given.