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COMMENTS ON THE BOOK "TRICHOPTERA OF THE LEVANT" BY L.BOTOSANEANU

Hans Malicky

In his recently published book, Botosaneanu (1992) has proposed several nomenclatorial changes. Some of them will certainly be discussed among fellow workers. Those in *Micropterna*, *Stenophylax* and *Allotrichia* are however so important that I feel it necessary to give my opinion now.

1.) At least since Schmid's (1957:4) revision of the group it was generally known that the genera *Micropterna* and *Stenophylax*, in the sense of this revision, show practically no differences, but for more than 30 years most authors have maintained both names in favour of the continuity of nomenclature, keeping in mind that changing names of these well-known animals does not mean a progress of science but may cause confusion. The first paragraph of the preamble of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature says: "The object of the Code is to promote stability and universality in the scientific names of animals". In this book (p.211), Botosaneanu has now synonymized *Micropterna* with *Stenophylax* which is not forbidden but may cause much confusion.

It is a similar case with *Allotrichia* and *Agraylea* in the same book (p.49). Such an important change of names of well-known insects would perhaps be justified as a result of a general revision of the group including some more genera, but not as an occasional aperçu in a faunistic work. I prefer to continue to use the names in the sense they have been used until now.

2.) With the synonymization of *Stenophylax* and *Micropterna*, *Stenophylax tauricus* Schmid 1964 becomes a junior homonym of "*Stenophylax*" *tauricus* Martynov 1917 and must therefore not be used (Code Art.52 a). If no other name exists for it, it must be renamed. But the author (l.c., p.226) instead replaces *Micropterna taurica* Martynov 1917 by *Stenophylax lindbergi* Tjeder 1951, for reasons unknown to me.

3.) On p.223, the author writes "*S.coiffaiti* is also mentioned from Cyprus, Rhodes and Asia Minor; a mention from "Greece" in Malicky & Sipahiler (1984:211) is probably erroneous." - As one can see on every map, Rhodes is part of Greece, so one wonders why this should be erroneous.

4.) On p.216 the author writes: "Malicky (1980b) describes three new species from this complex, one of them being *S.meridionalis* (as a matter of fact a new name for *S.speluncarum* McL., this last name being considered by the author as invalid because the male lectotype of *S.speluncarum* was found not to be distinct from British specimens of *S.vibex*). I disagree with some other conclusions of the mentioned publication.... Further, I consider the argumentation in this paper 'unsatisfactory' and unconvincing. The variability of this species is apparently interesting, in some cases it may have a geographic background; a careful study of this variability has yet to be performed; but one species is involved here, not several." On the same page, he puts the species *Stenophylax meridionalis*, *S.minoicus* and *S.zarathustra* into synonymy with *S.vibex*.

This needs a somewhat detailed discussion, otherwise it might happen that fellow workers who are not very familiar with these animals could accept these statements without examination.

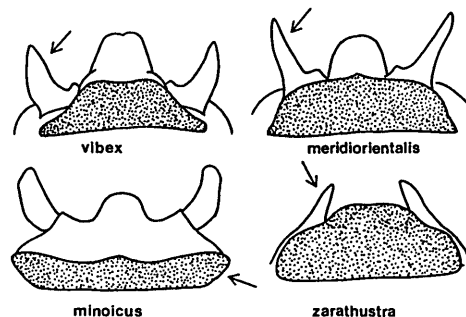
The first event of the story was that Schmid (1957) found that specimens from Eastern Europe (Hungary, Rumania) were different from those from Western Europe (Switzerland, England, Spain). If he had given the former a new name, no problem had arisen and all were satisfied. But unfortunately he called them *Stenophylax vibex speluncarum* without having seen the lectotype of

speluncarum McL. The separation was since accepted by many authors including Botosaneanu (1959, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1967, Botosaneanu & Schneider 1978), finally this author agreed to consider *speluncarum* a good species (Botosaneanu & Malicky 1978). The examination of the male lectotype of *S.speluncarum* has shown that it belongs to the western form, so this name could not be used for the eastern form (*speluncarum* sensu Schmid), and, as no other name was available, I have named the eastern form *S.meridionalis* (Malicky 1980), and put *speluncarum* into synonymy of *vibex* (and not "considered as invalid"). It may be noted that the main reason why McLachlan had considered *speluncarum* and *vibex* distinct was the striking differences between the females, thought to belong to the respective males, but the females (lectoallotypes) of *speluncarum* were actually *S.permistus*.

The separation of the males of *vibex* and *meridionalis* may sometimes be difficult, but a careful examination of all details of the macerated (!) end of the abdomen was successful in all specimens I have seen. The females are easily separated by the clearly thinner superior appendages in *meridionalis* (see e.g. the figures in the mentioned book no.458-463 on p.217).

Botosaneanu (l.c., p.218) says that the only Lebanese male which he has seen does not correspond with my description of *S.meridionalis*. I have never seen such an animal from Lebanon, and had only concluded from the fact that all Turkish specimens were *meridionalis*, those from Lebanon may also belong here (Malicky & Sipahiler 1984, Sipahiler & Malicky 1987). The figure of the male genitalia given by Botosaneanu on p.217 looks more like *vibex* than *meridionalis* (if it is correctly drawn). As the author says (p.218) that only one of the three specimens collected by H.Décamps could be found, it is possible that the figured male is a mislabelled specimen of French origin.

Apparently Botosaneanu (l.c.) makes this single specimen important enough to change his earlier opinion which was based on the examination of probably hundreds of specimens from Rumania. However, he puts into synonymy not only *S.meridionalis*, but also two other species described by me, *S.minoicus* and *S.zarathustra* which he apparently has never seen and which are more clearly different from *S.vibex* than *S.meridionalis*. For those who are not familiar with the group, I reproduce here the outlines of the ventral scales and the superior appendages of the females:



Such a decision needs stronger arguments than simply to state "I disagree".

My former conclusions (Malicky 1980) remain therefore unaltered which means that I consider the four mentioned species distinct. For the Lebanese specimens, more information is obviously necessary.

It would however be another story if the four species would be considered subspecies instead of

species. As I have pointed out (l.c.:96), arguments exist for both opinions. The "forms" are closely related and have allopatric distribution. I prefer the species rank for traditional reasons. If vibex-meridionalis-minoicus-zarathustra would be considered subspecies, the same should be made for mucronatus-crossotus which are often confused, or testacea-aurica, or sequax-coiffaiti, between which field hybrids are apparently not rare in the contact zone (Malicky & Sipahiler, in press). But as far as I understand from his book, the author has not considered this possibility, and has fully synonymized the mentioned species. This cannot be accepted for the above reasons.

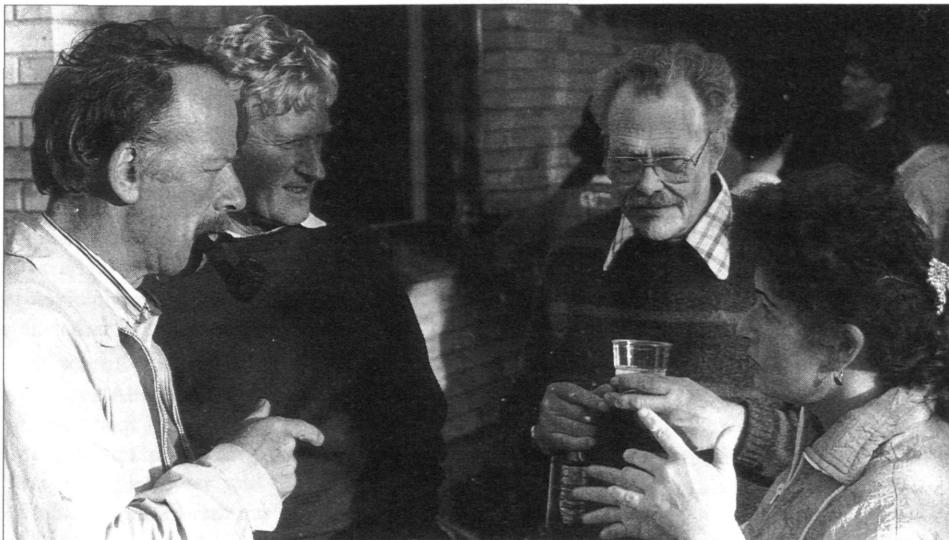
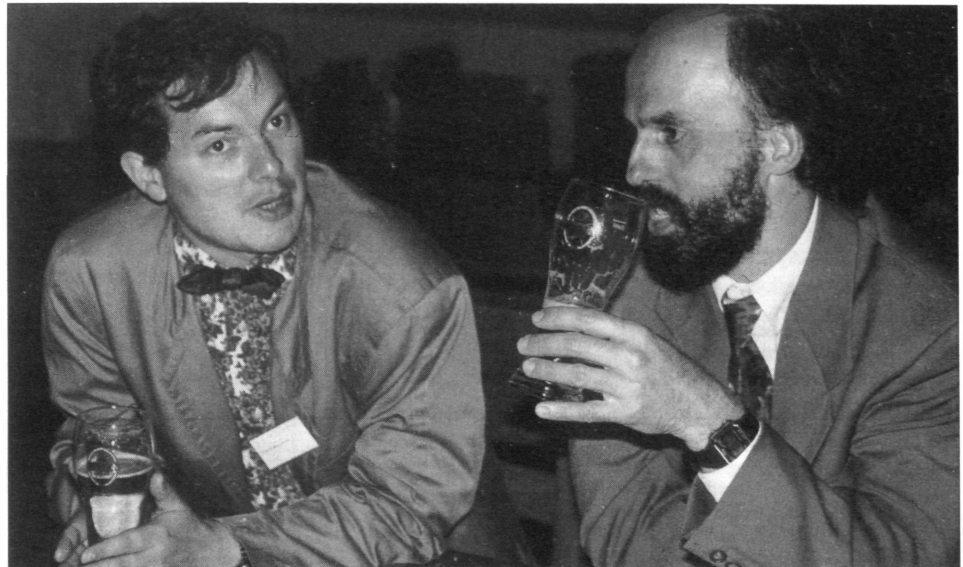
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Photographs from the
7th Trichoptera
Symposium, Umeå,
3 - 8 August 1992

Gibon, Usseglio-Polatera



Higler, Szczesny,
Anderson, Vshivkova

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Autor(en)/Author(s): Malicky Hans

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