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WHO IS THE AUTHORITY FOR *CRYPTOPS HORTENSIS*?

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Many years ago, exploring our institutional library in search of classical literature on Myriapoda in connection with my nomenclatorial investigations, I noticed a small-sized book by George Samouelle bearing a title composed of no less than 99 words (!) of which the first are: The Entomologist's Useful Compendium. It was published in 1819. Although many books with the word entomology in their title relate to insects in the current sense, this sympathetic little book had some interesting pages on Myriapoda, with an original approach although apparently largely based on the work of Leach.

In the synonymy of *Cryptops hortensis* Leach I was struck by the clear citation of "*Scolopendra hortensis*. Donovan's Br. Ins." Preceding the citations of four works by Leach. This seemed rather curious because in the entire international chilopod literature Donovan is never quoted and Leach is always credited with the authorship of *Cryptops hortensis*. Subsequent consultation of the various works by Leach gradually solved the mystery.

In his well-known Zoological Miscellany (1817), Leach cites in his synonymy only his earlier publications; Donovan is not even mentioned.

Earlier, in 1815, Leach only gives only one literature citation:

"*Scolopendra hortensis*. Leach, Mss. In Donovan's Brit. Ins."

This suggested simply the quotation of a Leach manuscript name in the work of Donovan, without nomenclatorial consequences.

When I finally could consult the original publication by Leach in Brewster (1814), a work not available in the Netherlands, the problem was clarified. There we had it, the revealing statement by Leach:

"*Cryptops hortensis*. Leach's MSS. *Scolopendra hortensis*, Donovan's *British Insects*, vol. XV. Where it was first figured and described from four specimens sent by Mr Leach, under that name to Mr Donovan."

The work of Donovan (1810), also a rare publication, confirmed this. Under *Scolopendra hortensis* he gives a short description and remarks:

"This centipede appears to be an undescribed species: it was discovered in some abundance, by Mr. W. Leach, in the gardens at Exeter."

At the conclusion of the supplementary remarks it is stated "...and for this reason it is submitted as a new insect."

It is perfectly clear that, although Leach may have collected the material, may have recognised it as an undescribed species, gave it a name and donated specimens to Donovan, the latter is the author who is responsible for publication of the description and drawing. He is consequently, in perfect accordance with the provisions of the International Code of Nomenclature, the author of *Scolopendra hortensis*.

Obviously, as appears from the subsequent citations by Leach, that writer preferred to credit himself as the discoverer and author of the species. On account of the authority of Leach as the father of myripodology in Britain nobody ever dared to contest his view. However, the conclusion is clear: the garden centipede should henceforth correctly be cited as *Cryptops hortensis* (Donovan, 1810).

The type-specimen(s) may still be in the Natural History Museum, London and a lectotype might be designated because of the possibility that *Cryptops parisi* Brolemann could be represented in the material. That is, however, for British colleagues to decide.

REFERENCES

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