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CONTRIBUTION TO THE TAXONOMIC STATUS OF DERMATOPHAGOIDES SHEREMETEWSKYI BOGDANOFF, 1864

In his careful study on the taxonomic position of *Dermatophagoides sheremetewskyi* Bogdanoff, 1864, Fain (Acarologia 8: 302—327, 1966, Acarologia 9: 179—225, 1967) pointed out inaccuracies in the drawings and descriptions, and remarked on the absence of preserved types. He maintained that the species could not be interpreted on the basis of Bogdanoff's description (Bull. Soc. Imp. Nat. Moscow 37: 341—348, 1864, Table 7). This paper is not included in Fain's list of the literature. Although Fain was well-acquainted with the most recent literature on this subject, particularly papers by Dubinin (Fauna SSSR VI/6, 1953 and Dubinin V. B., Geselnikova M. I., Raznatovsky I. M., Bull. Soc. Sci. Nat. Moscow, sect. Biol. 61: 43—50, 1956), he made no mention of a paper by Traver (J. R. Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash. 53: 1—25, 1951) who synonymized *D. sheremetewskyi* Bogdanoff, 1864 with *Mealia pteronyssina* Trouessart, 1897. Having regard to the fact that Traver was the first revising author (see Art. 24, Intern. Code of Zool. Nomenclature), it is irrelevant in this case to discuss differences in descriptions, but important to obtain reliable evidence of possible Traver's mistake.

Bogdanoff's drawings are at least as accurate as later drawings by Berlese (Acari Myriopoda et Scorpiones hucusque in Italia reperta, Fasc. 92, No 3, 1898) which Fain (1966) used in his paper, and are in support of Traver's synonymization. The finding of the male at a different site than the female bears no significance, Bogdanoff himself was convinced that they belonged to the same species; their finding in two different localities confirms a predilection of the mite species to sites inhabited by man. Dubinin (1953) using literary data and Traver's (1951) drawings for a lack of his own materials, made keys to species of the genus *Dermatophagoides*. As suggested by more recent studies, *Dermatophagoides* seems not to be a pathogen causing various skin affections, e.g., dermatitides, etc. These are, apparently, secondary in nature having regard to a very common incidence of our *Dermatophagoides* in the environment of man (frequent findings in bedclothes, hair and clothes-dust). For the cosmopolitan distribution of the species, its substitution by another, similar species with identical living habits in other parts of Europe is most unlikely as evident also from results of our comparative study on materials from Central Europe and the USSR.

On the other hand, the name *Dermatophagoides pteronyssinus* (Trouessart, 1897) is well-established in both the medical literature and applied zoology, and any change in the name would be adverse to the effort of stabilizing the present status in the sense of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature.

Therefore, we propose to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to include the name *Dermatophagoides pteronyssinus* (Trouessart, 1897) in the list of valid names (nomina conservanda) (Art. 23, b III of the Code), with *D. sheremetewskyi* Bogdanoff, 1864 as its synonym.

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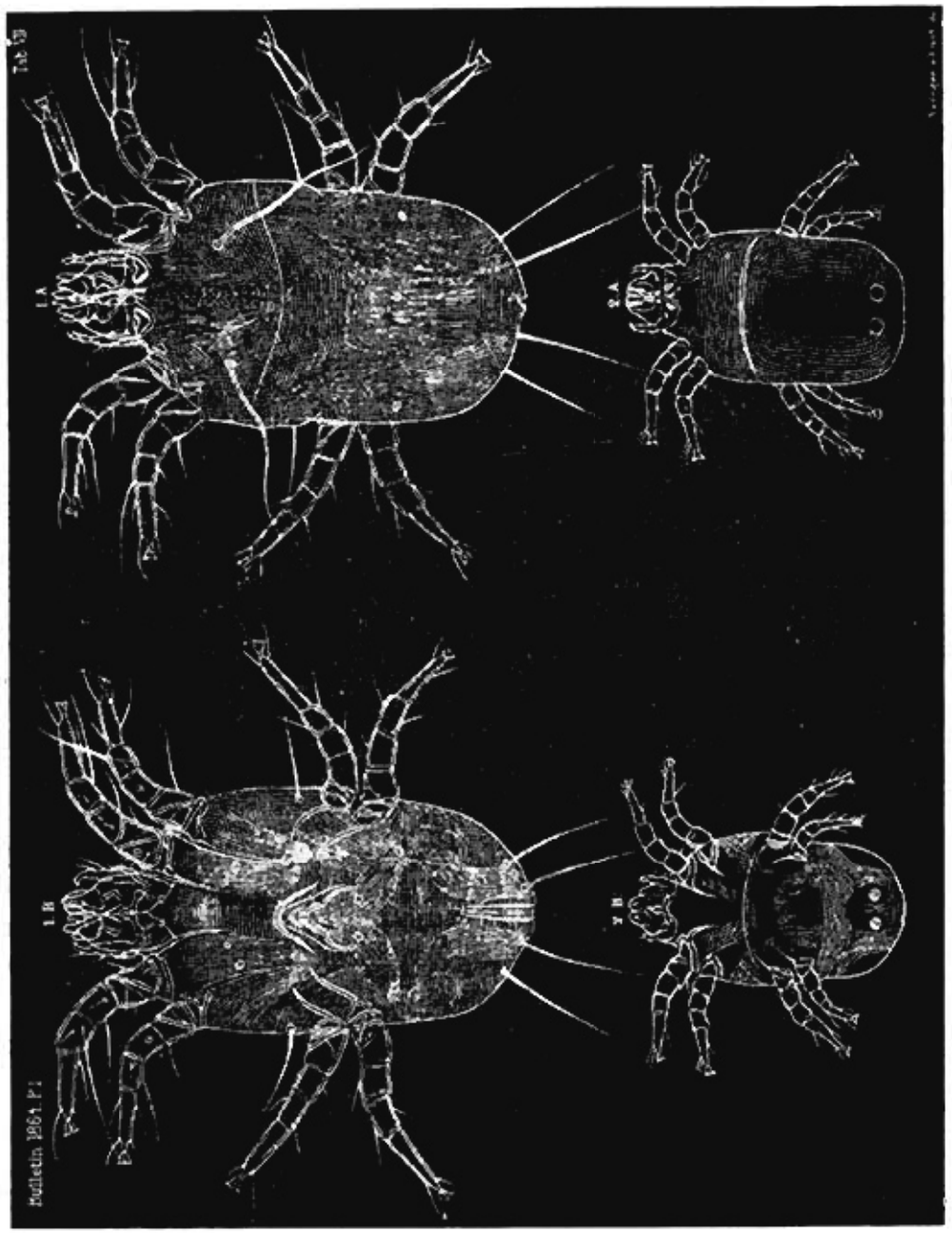

Fig. 1. *Dermatophagoides sheremetewskyi* Bogdanoff, 1864 — copied from the original drawing in Bull. Soc. Imp. Nat. Moscow 37, 1864, Table 7, using the difficult technique of scratch lithography