OPINION 16

Conservation of the Generic Name Chromobacterium
Bergonzini 1880 and Designation of the Type Species
and the Neotype Culture of the Type Species

Sneath (1956) has asked for an Opinion relative to the legitimacy of the generic name Chromobacterium Bergonzini. He notes that Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1879 included four species, one of which has not since been recognized, the three others are now generally included in the genus Pseudomonas. Pseudomonas Migula is, therefore, a later synonym of Chromobacterium Bergonzini, but by international agreement (Opinion 5) Pseudomonas Migula has been conserved against all earlier synonyms. In 1880 (or 1881, the exact date of the publication is uncertain), Bergonzini placed a new species, Chromobacterium violaceum, in this genus and said it was not the same as Schroeter's Bacteridium violaceum 1872.*

Chromobacterium Bergonzini has been commonly accepted as a generic name for the violet bacteria. Sneath proposes that Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1880 be conserved against Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1879. Only one species, Chromobacterium violaceum Bergonzini 1880, was included and under Rule 9c(3)b this species is the nomenclatural type.

Sneath calls attention to the fact that there is not unanimity of opinion as to the characteristics of Chromobacterium violaceum and there has been no designated type strain or culture. He proposed, therefore, that a neotype culture be agreed upon for the species and suggests that the strain labeled MK in his collection (American Type Culture Collection 12472 and National Collection of Type Cultures 9757) shall be designated as the neotype strain.

It should be noted that the neotype proposed by Sneath is mesophilic whereas Eltinge (1957) suggests a psychrophil for this species. Evidence is lacking to indicate whether

*In fact Bergonzini created a new genus Chromococcus to provide for Schroeter's organism, giving it the name Chromococcus violaceum (Schroeter) Bergonzini. It is apparent, therefore, that Schroeter should not appear in the author citation of Chromobacterium violaceum.

Bergonzini described a mesophilic or a psychrophilic bacterium, and choice of a neotype strain necessitates an arbitrary decision.

The following Opinion 16 was approved unanimously by the Judicial Commission and by the International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature at meetings held in August 1958 in Stockholm, in connection with the meeting of the VII International Microbiological Congress.

Opinion 16

1. The generic name Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1879 is rejected and placed in the list of nomina generica rejicienda.

2. The generic name Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1880 is conserved and placed in the list of nomina generica conservanda.

3. The type species of the genus Chromobacterium Bergonzini 1880 is Chromobacterium violaceum Bergonzini 1880.

4. A neotype strain of Chromobacterium violaceum Bergonzini 1880 is designated and has been deposited in the American Type Culture Collection, Washington, D.C. (12472) and in the National Collection of Type Cultures, London (9757).

REFERENCES

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- Eltinge, Ethel T. 1957. Status of the genus Chromobacterium. Internatl. Bull. Bact. Nomen. Tax. 7:37-44.
- Schroeter, J. 1872. Ueber einige durch Bacterien gebildete Pigmente. Beitr. Biol. Pfl. Haft 2, pp. 109-126.
- Sneath, P.H.A. 1956. Conservation of the generic name Chromobacterium and designation of type species and type strains. Internatl. Bull. Bact. Nomen. Tax. 6:65-91.