VOYAGE

DE

HUMBOLDT ET BONPLAND.

SIXIÈME PARTIE, *BOTANIQUE.*

PLANTES ÉQUINOXIALES,

RECUEILLIES

Au Mexique, dans l'île de Cuba, dans les provinces de Caracas, de Cumana et de Barcelone; aux Andes de la Nouvelle-Grenade, de Quito et du Pérou, et sur les bords du Rio-Negro, de l'Orénoque et de la rivière des Amazones.

TOME PREMIER.

A PARIS,

Chez F. SCHOELL, rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, N°. 29.

Et a TUBINGUE, chez J. G. COTTA.

1808.

Bonpland and Turpin

Publication of the Results in Paris

The reservations expressed in the letter written to Willdenow from Havana (Chapter Willdenow) suggest that Humboldt and Bonpland largely wanted to identify their findings and publish the botanical results themselves. When Humboldt arrived in Paris on 27 August 1804 (fig. 33) and temporarily moved into rue des Augustins in Faubourg St. Germain, he most certainly could not have known that it would take him almost three decades to publish them, that his collaboration with Bonpland would not last much longer, or that he would need help from Leipzig, or rather Berlin, through Carl Sigismund Kunth, a nephew of Gottlob Johann Christian Kunth, private tutor to the Humboldt household, to finish his project. Humboldt had the diaries, the *Journal Botanique*, the herbarium specimens (apart from those already entrusted to Willdenow in Berlin) as well as drawings, watercolours, plant self-impressions and living plant material with him in the French capital, and they all now had to be dealt with.

Paris at the time was one of the most fascinating cities in the world — and especially so for botanists. A major state-funded institution had been created with the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, the origins of which were to be found in the Jardin du Roi (fig. 35) — later simply called the Jardin des Plantes. Its mission, above all, was to record plant and animal diversity in time and space. It did so by collecting, preserving, cataloguing and investigating natural history collections that in the form of exhibitions were partly open to the public even then. No comparable institution existed at that time either in London, Vienna or Berlin. In its collections and library holdings, the Muséum mirrored worldwide interests from the start thanks to France's overseas territories and the major expeditions that, on government orders, circumnavigated the globe and even sailed as far as the most remote islands of the Pacific. The Muséum very much overshadowed the little that was then in Berlin.

Bearing this in mind, it was logical that Humboldt would want to work in Paris and was the reason, early on, that he presented the Muséum with part of the herbarium material he and Bonpland had collected. In an undated letter written between 2 December 1804 and 10 March 1805, Humboldt wrote to Jean-Baptiste-Nampère de Champagny:

> Je pourrais céder au Musée un Herbier de 6,000 espèces, fruit de mon Expédition aux Tropique[s], et ramassé dans des pays dont une grande partie n'a jamais été visitée par aucun Botaniste. D'après le coup d'œil que MM. Desfontaines et Jussieu ont

32 | A. v. Humboldt & A. Bonpland, *Plantes équinoxiales* (title page), Paris 1808

33

jetté sur nos herbiers, il est probable que nous avons rapporté près de 1500 — 2000 espèces inconnues en Europe. L'état actuel de finances ne semble pas permettre l'ésperance que le Gouvernement pourrait acheter cette Collection comme il a fait dans d'autres temps en cas pareil, ce Capital cédé à mon ami servirait d'ailleurs à lui former une fortune considérable. Tout ce que [je] puis espérer, dans les circonstances actuelles c'est qu'en cédant ce grand Herbier, on veuille bien aggréger M. Bonpland au Jardin des Plantes comme Naturaliste Voyageur et lui assigner une Pension qui le mette dans quelque aisance pour continuer à publier les fruits de ses travaux.
[I could transfer to the Muséum a large herbarium of 6,000 species, the fruit of my expedition to the Tropics, and collected in countries of which a large proportion had never before been visited by a botanist. Having had Mssrs Desfontaines and Jussieu examine our herbaria, it is probable that we have brought almost 1,500–2,000 unknown species to Europe. The current financial situation seems not to permit the hope that the government might purchase this collection, as it did in the past in a similar case. Giving this sum to my friend could provide him with considerable capital. All I can hope for under the present circumstances is that on transferring this important herbarium, the Jardin des Plantes will acknowledge Mr Bonpland as a travelling naturalist and pay him a pension that will provide him with a certain livelihood to continue publication of the results of his work].

This suggestion was taken up and Bonpland was granted a respectable pension which he drew for the rest of his life. A large collection of herbarium specimens went to the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, where it has since been maintained as a separate collection, i.e. one requiring no more additions, and is now treated as an 'herbier historique'. At the time, all the material had field numbers on loose labels without scientific names, but for the first time at least it was available to scientists to study. Nevertheless, the collection by no means included everything that Humboldt and Bonpland had taken back to Paris with them. It comprised only a part of it, again a mixture of unique specimens and duplicates; the remainder was divided up between Humboldt and Bonpland, and stored separately, so it seems, in their respective apartments.

Humboldt gave his first account of the expedition to the Institut de France in September and October 1804; on 5 November, Bonpland had his chance. His lecture was entitled 'Mémoire sur un Palmier qui donne de la cire, et qui a servi à établir un nouveau genre' [Paper Concerning a Wax-Yielding Palm which Served to Establish a New Genus]. Given mainly by Humboldt, numerous other lectures were to follow over the coming years.

A few days earlier, on 28 October 1804, Humboldt had been introduced to a rising young general — Napoleon Bonaparte, then First Consul for Life and, a matter of weeks later, the self-crowned Emperor of the French. During the audience he allegedly said to Humboldt: "You occupy yourself with botany? So does my wife." It sounds reasonable: Marie-Joseph-Rose Tascher de la

33 | J. N. Gibèle, *View of Paris (Île de la Cité and Pont Neuf)*, *c.* 1825

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34 | P. J. F. Turpin, *Tibouchina clavata* (Pers.) Wurdack, Paris pre-1808

PLATES · TAFELN

IN CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE
OF THEIR PUBLICATION

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IN CHRONOLOGISCHER REIHENFOLGE
IHRES ERSCHEINENS

1

***Solanum lycopersicum* L.**

Tomato cultivated in the Royal Botanical Garden at Schöneberg near Berlin

Coloured copperplate engraving by L. Schmidt after F. Guimpel, inscribed *Solanum Humboldtii*

C.L. Willdenow, Hortus Berolinensis, t. 27, Berlin, 1804

Library, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem,

Freie Universität, Berlin

***Solanum lycopersicum* L.**

Tomate, kultiviert im Königlichen Botanischen Garten in Schöneberg bei Berlin

Kolorierter Kupferstich von L. Schmidt nach F. Guimpel, bezeichnet *Solanum Humboldtii*

C. L. Willdenow, Hortus Berolinensis, t. 27, Berlin, 1804

Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Botanischer Garten und

Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Bibliothek

Solanum Humboldtii.

F. Guimpel ad Nat. pinx.

Lud. Schmidt fculps.

2

***Ceroxylon alpinum Bonpl.* ex DC.**

Wax Palm

Copperplate engraving by L. Sellier after P. J. F. Turpin, inscribed *Ceroxylon andicola*

A. v. Humboldt & A. Bonpland, Plantae Aequinoctiales, t. 1a, Paris, 1805

Library, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem,

Freie Universität, Berlin

2

***Ceroxylon alpinum* Bonpl. ex DC.**

Berg-Wachspalme

Kupferstich von L. Sellier nach P. J. F. Turpin, bezeichnet *Ceroxylon andicola*

A. v. Humboldt & A. Bonpland, Plantae Aequinoctiales, t. 1a, Paris, 1805

Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Botanischer Garten und

Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Bibliothek

Turpin del.

Gravé par Sellier.

CEROXYLON andicola.

De l'Imprimerie de Langlois.

3

***Cinchona officinalis* L.**

Quinine Bark

Copperplate engraving by L. Sellier after P. A. Poiteau, inscribed *Cinchona condaminea*

A. v. Humboldt & A. Bonpland, Plantae Aequinoctiales, t. 10, Paris, 1805

Library, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem,

Freie Universität, Berlin

***Cinchona officinalis* L.**

Fieberrindenbaum

Kupferstich von L. Sellier nach P. A. Poiteau, bezeichnet *Cinchona condaminea*

A. v. Humboldt & A. Bonpland, Plantae Aequinoctiales, t. 10, Paris, 1805

Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Botanischer Garten und

Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Bibliothek

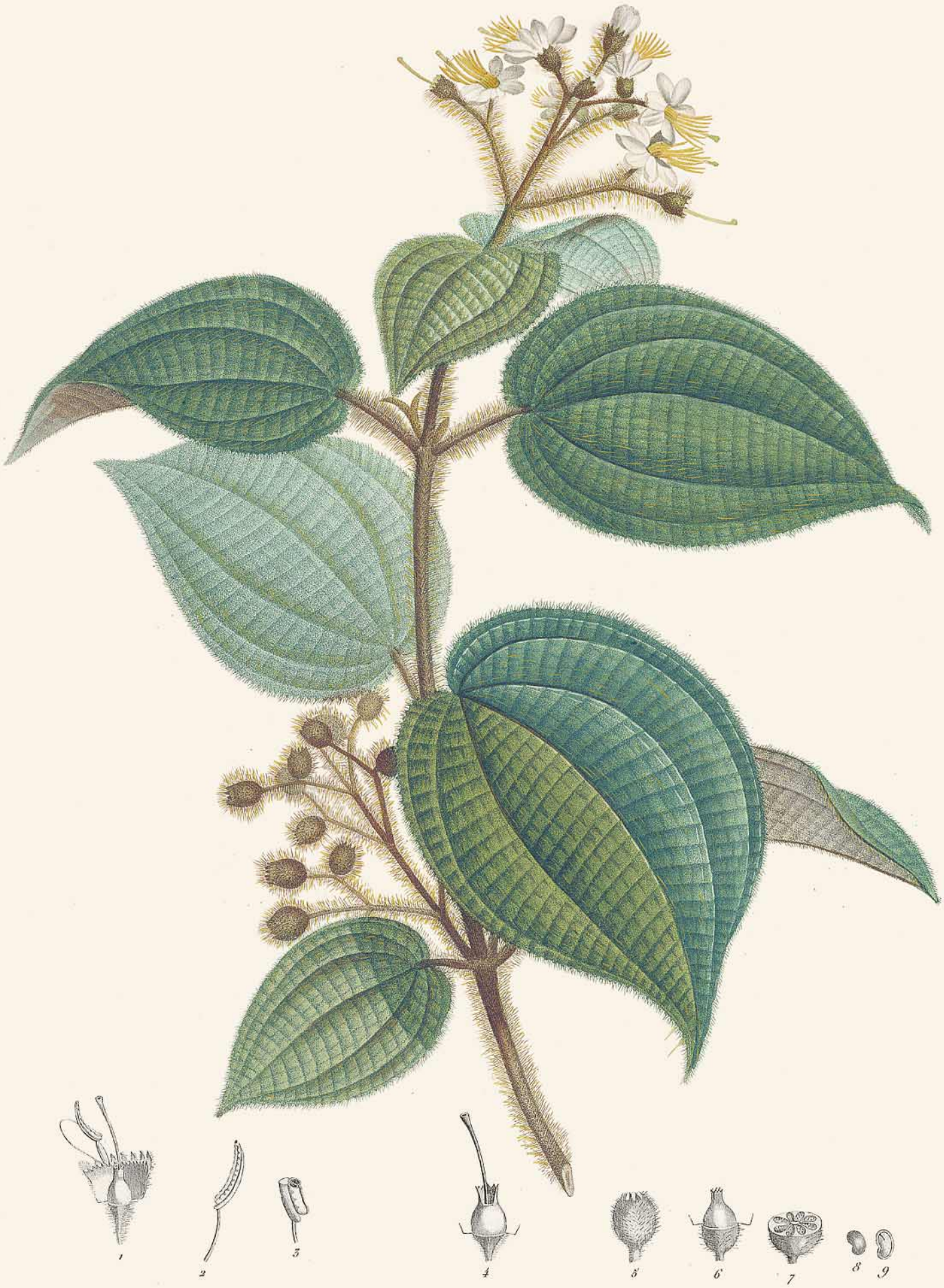
Poiteau del. *Sellier sculp.*

CINCHONA condaminea.

De l'Imprimerie de Langlois.

4
***Clidemia octona* (Bonpl.) L. O. Williams**
Coloured stipple engraving by L. Boucquet after P. J. F. Turpin,
inscribed *Melastoma octona*
A. Bonpland, Monographia Melastomacearum, vol. 1, t. 4, Paris, 1806
Library, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem,
Freie Universität, Berlin

***Clidemia octona* (Bonpl.) L. O. Williams**
Farbpunktstich von L. Boucquet nach P. J. F. Turpin, bezeichnet *Melastoma octona*
A. Bonpland, Monographia Melastomacearum, vol. 1, t. 4, Paris, 1806
Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Botanischer Garten und
Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Bibliothek



MELASTOMA octona .

Turpin del. De Imprimerie de Langlois Bouquet Sculp.

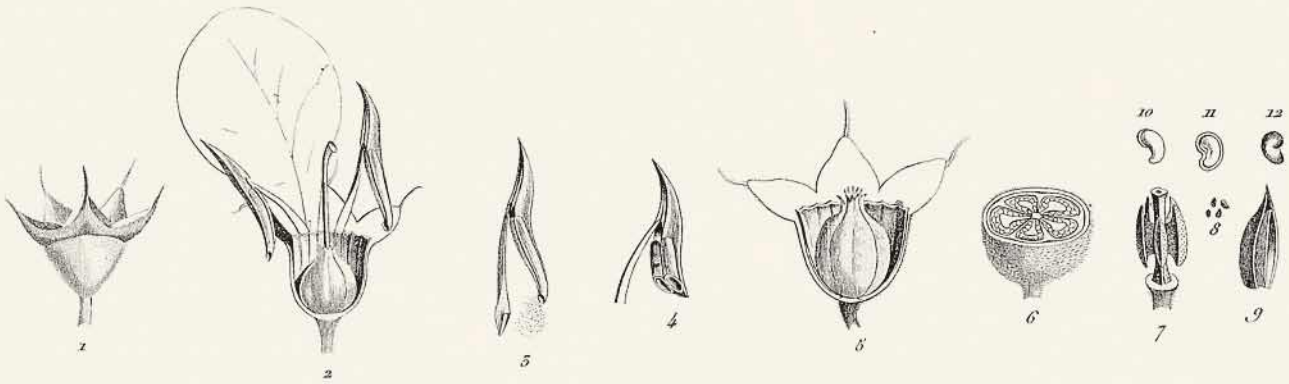
5

***Meriania speciosa* (Bonpl.) Naud.**

Coloured stipple engraving by L. Boucquet after P. J. F. Turpin, inscribed *Rhexia speciosa*
A. Bonpland, Monographia Melastomacearum,
vol. 2, t. 4, Paris, 1806
Library, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem,
Freie Universität, Berlin

***Meriania speciosa* (Bonpl.) Naud.**

Farbpunktstich von L. Boucquet nach P. J. F. Turpin, bezeichnet *Rhexia speciosa*
A. Bonpland, Monographia Melastomacearum,
vol. 2, t. 4, Paris, 1806
Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Botanischer Garten und
Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Bibliothek



RHEXIA speciosa.

Turpin del. *de l'imprimerie de Langlois.* *Bouquet sculpsit*