

A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS *MELANIA* FROM THE COROMANDEL COAST OF INDIA (MOLLUSCA, GASTROPODA : FAMILY MELANIIDAE).

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INTRODUCTION.

In 1949, I published a paper dealing with a large collection of Molluscs<sup>1</sup> obtained from the Coromandel Coast of India. Amongst the material listed therein, there were six specimens of the genus *Melania* which had been misplaced by the Varuna flood of 1943 at Banaras. Fortunately, those missing specimens were found when the unnamed spirit collection of the Zoological Survey of India was being sorted out and rearranged after the re-transfer of the office from Banaras to Calcutta.

The characters displayed by the shells appeared so peculiar and interesting that they could hardly be assigned to any of the known forms. So, being desirous of ascertaining the exact identity, I sent all the specimens to Dr. W. J. Rees of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London, for identification. He was kind enough to refer them to *Melania siamensis* Brot. This identification aroused some suspicion in my mind which prompted me to consult the original paper of Dr. Brot with a view to know the details about that species recorded from Raheng in Siam (1886)<sup>2</sup>. Strangely enough, after carefully examining both the description and figures of *siamensis* I found that the specimens concerned could not be assigned to that species on account of the colouration and sculpture being markedly different. Moreover, a careful comparison of the shells in question with two identified specimens of *M. siamensis* in our named collection also pointed to the same conclusion. So, in order to demonstrate clearly the remarkable difference in shape and sculpture between these two types of shells I have spared no pains to reproduce here the original figures of *siamensis* Plate 1, figs. 7, 8 side by side with those of the specimens before me which may justify their separate specific ranks rather than indicating their exact identity. Now, I intend to designate the specimens in question as *Melania blisteri*, for having on the surface of the shells characteristic blister-like granules of varying shape and size.

I offer my cordial thanks to Dr. W. J. Rees of the British Museum, London, for the trouble he has so kindly taken in examining the specimens. Thanks are also due to Sri A. K. Mondal for drawing the figures with care and attention.

<sup>1</sup> Ray, H. C. *Rec. Ind. Mus.* XLVI, pp. 87-122 (1949).

<sup>2</sup> Brot, A. *Rec. Zool. Suisse*, IV, pp. 90-92, pl. vii, figs. 3, 3a, 3b (1886).

**Melania blisteri**, sp. nov.

(Plate I, Figs. 1 to 6 &amp; 1a to 6a).

Shell medium, solid, dextral, oblong-conical, decollated, brownish in colour, adorned on the surface with very fine regular close concentric striae together with a few thick and reddish-brown vertical lines of growth here and there, but more remarkable is the presence of numerous distinct blister-like granules varying greatly in shape and size and most irregularly distributed too, gradually increasing in number with growth; whorls 4 to 5, regularly increasing in size, slightly convex—bodywhorl being the largest of all, tumid, obliquely angular below—the angular area found encircled with a narrow band of lighter hue (starting from the upper end of the aperture and ending dorsally at the middle of the margin of the outer lip), and its length (varying from 11 mm. to 13 mm.) appearing to exceed that of the spire (measuring 8.5 mm. to 11.5 mm.); suture somewhat pronounced; columella thick, whitish, oblique in the middle but straight and produced below somewhat-like that of *M. siamensis*; outer lip thin, slightly expanded below but curving inwards unites with the inner lip forming an obtuse angle there—the degree of angulation may vary according to the nature of downward projection of both the columella and outer lip; aperture oval, longer than broad, anterior end much more narrowed and acutely angled, interior white—the brown band on the bodywhorl may be faintly visible from inside.

*Measurements in Millimetres.*

Serial No. of Shells.	Length of Shell.	Breadth of Shell.	Length of Bodywhorl.	Breadth of Bodywhorl.	Length of Aperture.	Breadth of Aperture.
1 . .	19 mm.	10 mm.	11 mm.	8.5 mm.	9.5 mm.	5 mm.
2 .	19 mm.	9 mm.	11 mm.	9.5 mm.	8 mm.	5 mm.
3	20 mm.	9.5 mm.	11.5 mm.	10.5 mm.	9.5 mm.	5 mm.
4 .	21 mm.	10 mm.	12 mm.	10 mm.	9 mm.	5 mm.
5 . .	21.5 mm.	9.5 mm.	11.5 mm.	11 mm.	9 mm.	5.5 mm.
6 .	22.5 mm.	10 mm.	13 mm.	11.5 mm.	10 mm.	6 mm. (Holotype)

*Type-locality.* Coromandel Coast of India.*Holotype.* Reg. No. M 16129/2. Zool. Surv. Ind.*Paratypes.* Reg. No. M 16130/2. Zool. Surv. Ind.

*Remarks*—The new species *Melania blisteri* appears remarkable for having on the surface of its shell numerous fine regular close concentric striae as well as blister-like granules of varying shape and size which are most irregularly distributed throughout. It may bear some resemblance to *M. siamensis* Brot regarding the character of the inner and outer lips as well as of the aperture. But *siamensis* seems to differ essentially from *blisteri* in having a slightly thinner shell of different shape, size and colouration (olivaceous green), with more convex whorls and stronger and prominent concentric striae intersected by the longitudinal striae—the point of intersection giving very slight indications as to the formation of fine tubercles.