IS TODAY'S NEOTYPIFICATION ALWAYS NECESSARY?*

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As Fosberg et al. (1964: 111) put it "The type method ensures that a name is applied in the sense of its original author." Stability of names is thus reached not only for the future but also with respect to original application from the dates of publication of the names respectively.

The problem arises when "all the material on which the name of the taxon was based is missing." The Code (1966) proposes neotypification for solution of this problem.

When a botanist neotypifies a species, he might operate consistently with his regard that the primary purpose of the type-method is to ensure that the name will be applied in the sense of its original author, or he might simple select such a neotype so as to provide the stability of the name in its current application. The latter procedure is the easiest but not necessarily the best. I would radically disagree when such a procedure would a priori be taken for every case of neotypification.

I fully agree here with Fosberg et al. that "The committee believes that botanists in general are of the opinion that faithfulness to the original application of a name should over-ride consideration of stability in current nomenclature." Following this concept, I think that in each particular case where neotypification is required, one should strongly take into consideration the interpretations of his predecessors.

The majority of names that require neotypification have been already cited or used in connection with revisions, monographs, local treatments or floras. Such early works were usually based on material which can be traced today. The material accompanying the early work can serve for purposes of neotypification because the respective author was closer in time to the original publication than anyone else. It is my opinion that we should regard the earliest available documented publication as the place and time of the neotypification of a taxon. The author of this earliest pertinent publication should be regarded as the designator of the neotype and his name should be prefixed by ex after the original author of the particular name in question.

The application of the earliest publication which is apparently suitable for neotypification purposes should however, not be done arbitrarily, but with knowledge of the reliability of the candidate. This is most important when all predecessors' applications of a name are under consideration. By this procedure, I think, the principle of retroactivity of the Code is followed with the same consistency that holotypes, isotypes, syntypes, isosyntypes, and paratypes are retroactively applied and sought for previously published taxa.

Some lectotypes might fall within the same category of neotypes and be treated similarly. For instance, when Grisebach (1864) founded his new species Panicum Sloanei indirectly he chose Morison's element as the lectotype of Panicum latifolium L., 1753 (Baum, 1967).

The following proposal is submitted to the 11th International Congress of Botany. 113. Article 7, Note 3: A neotype is a specimen or other element cited deliberately by the earliest reliable author who applied an earlier published name to a specimen or element which can be regarded indirectly as nomenclatural type; or a neotype is a specimen or other element that has been selected directly to serve as nomenclatural

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type, as long as all of the material on which the name of the taxon was based is missing.

References