

30 YEARS AFTER BIBLIOGRAPHIA ARANEORUM OF PIERRE BONNET  
- WHAT NEXT ?

par

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*SUMMARY.* - Necessity of having a Catalogue of Spiders in the literature of the world from the year 1940 onwards. How should it look like? Possibilities provided by computer usage.

*Index entries :* Araneae : Salticidae, catalogue, bibliography, computer application.

It has lapsed already more than 30 years since publication of great catalogue - *Bibliographia Araneorum* of P. BONNET (1945-1961) and of its competitor - *Katalog der Spinnen* of C. F. ROEWER (1940-1955). The possibility of finding quick reference to all spiders of the world, they have provided, has opened the new epoch in the arachnological research. One could expected that the great progress in subsequent studies would stimulate edition of new versions of these two catalogues - but that is just what did not happen. Why? Simple - too much work and too expensive publication. Paradoxically enough - what is too difficult for us with our modern technics and resources, was not too difficult for Professor P. BONNET, who has handwritten his bibliographic cards and published the huge edition by own expense.

There were some trials to produce catalogues of limited size : local catalogues, catalogues of collections and, most important of all - BRIGNOLI's continuation of ROEWER's : A catalogue of Spiders described between 1940 and 1981. At the moment a continuation of BRIGNOLI's is being prepared by N.I. PLATNICK, containing taxa described or changed since 1981, complemented by current references to all significant (i.e. illustrated) taxa described earlier. Important as it was, the BRIGNOLI's "continuation" is limited to new taxa only and does not give current references to the taxa described earlier. It also can be used efficiently only together with the original catalogue of Roewer. And ROEWER's is not the best catalogue of spiders in my personal opinion.

What do we need is actually continuation of BONNET's, based on the same principle : all existing references to all species of spiders. Or even better - not continuation but synthesis of contents of the original BONNET's with all subsequent literature up to now - if we could manage that.

Let us consider for the moment more general question : which form of the catalogue would suit our needs the best. After my recent experience I have no doubts that it should be a catalogue on computer disks, with parallel edition in a book form for those who have no computer. What is the advantage of such computer disks catalogue? First of all could grow with development of research. New papers and references to taxa could be added by every owner of a disk as soon as they are published. Information needed could be selected from a disk automatically and instantly. Writing of scientific papers, list of species and literature references could be speed up considerably by elimination of necessity of retyping - these could be simply copied from the

catalogue disks. The disks themselves could be copied swiftly within minutes and cheaply. The only danger is that fast technical progress could continuously make obsolete the best computer equipment and programs every few years. And everybody shall be forced to use hardware and programs compatible with those used by majority of arachnologists of the whole world. Those unhappy ones without computers shall find themselves unable to participate in the international cooperation and exchange - out of the market. But it sounds at present a little too futuristic.

Continuation or synthesis ? This shall depend from finance and labour force possibilities. I have gained some working experience on preparation of a catalogue - now working on subsequent versions of my Catalogue of *Salticidae* : the first, incomplete, already published in April 1987, the second "full" version of a continuation of BONNET's and ROEWER's being much advanced now and hopefully ended by next year, and the third version - an extract of the full version containing the taxa described after BRIGNOLI's - which shall be my contribution to PLATNICK's work and shall be expectedly finished by the end of this year. I would like to discuss some of the problems encountered now, in the hope of soliciting good, useful advice.

The amount of typing, word processing and editing work on the computer, when one has an access to a well stacked library is not as prohibitive as it may appear. We (that is myself and some of my collaborators - especially Mrs. Anna DZIEWANOWSKA-BOHDANOWICZ) have managed to advance our Catalogue of *Salticidae* within less than a year. And one should realize that with work on the computer the contents of the collected data could be printed almost instantly at every stage of work. I am convinced that having a little more means that we have in our Laboratory in Siedlce, we would be presumably in the position to produce "a continuation" catalogue to the whole spiders within a few years. The same could be presumably done in an international cooperation of arachnologists (if cooperation itself wouldn't take too much time).

The production of a "synthesis" catalogue would be more laborious because it calls for retyping into computer memory some 10 000 pages of the existing catalogues (BONNET's, ROEWER's, BRIGNOLI's) or usage of the electronic equipment (Optical Characters' Reader) which is at the moment still beyond our financial possibilities. But it may become possible within a few years time.

The "full" version of the catalogue I have been working on should consist of : species name and author, geographical distribution, references to the original combination of a valid species and to each of its synonyms, references to the current revision, references to all papers after BONNET's and ROEWER's and page references to catalogues of BONNET's, ROEWER's and BRIGNOLI as well as the collection catalogue and local catalogues. May I put the question : do you think these references shall be sufficient to fulfill our needs ? Maybe something more of them for the moment ? Should the references concern only taxonomic works - or all work of any kind mentioning particular species should be referred to ? The information contents of reference should be signalized (for instance neurophysiology or geographical distribution) or not ? And the most important advice I seek : do you think synthesis of great catalogues data should be included and is of such importance that it warrants the terrible amount of additional work, or maybe anybody interested can just compare the new catalogue with indicated pages in great old catalogues ? Answer to these questions may greatly improve quality of the catalogue, but also speed up and facilitate completion of the work.

I speak on the experience with Catalogue of *Salticidae* because that work is advanced enough and the end almost visible. I suppose that division of the future Catalogue of Spiders - a continuation of BONNET's

into families - instead of consequent alphabetic order of genera, may be one of a few amendments we may agree to differ from our great example. It shall be easier to handle by specialists working on particular spider families, who seldom look into other taxa. If so, we may consider Catalogue of *Salticidae* being now in preparation - the first part of the new Catalogue. Will the other parts be prepared as well ?

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