

REPLY TO THE FORBES "NOTES"

by A. DIAKONOFF

Dr. FORBES kindly sent me the manuscript of his above remarks, and I gratefully use the opportunity to answer his criticisms. I have the general feeling that Dr. FORBES and myself rather are at cross purposes. His principal concern is for homologies, to be detected by methods of comparative morphology, mine—clearing of terminology for taxonomists. Furthermore, Dr. FORBES is principally concerned with the genitalia of the Noctuidæ, and I myself, with those of the Microlepidoptera.

I regret having overlooked older use of certain terms; still this fact is very instructive, as it only proves the necessity of accepting of my suggestion (2), viz. abstention from the priority rule (Dr. FORBES completely agrees with that point); equally instructive (and considerably consoling) is the fact that HÜBNER'S *Lep. Zuträge* and the Spanish reprint of RAMBUR'S work were overlooked not only by myself but by the whole bunch of five reviewers of genital terms for the "Glossary".

Tegmen Hübner 1820, which I overlooked, is homonymous with the obsolete term *tegmen* Chapman 1898, but not with *tegumen* Pierce 1909 which still stands.

Dr. FORBES stipulates that the structures of the inner side of the valva are, morphologically speaking, of a totally different origin, judging from their separate musculature; and that therefore these structures should not be included in the compound conception *harpe* which was my suggestion; Dr. FORBES further remarks to me that the term *harpe* is ambiguous, as it was used for the *valva*, as well as for a projection on its inner surface, the "clasper". This is very true; I proposed *harpe* only because no other term seemed available. As to "clasper", it is as ambiguous a term as *harpe* is; besides it is a barbarism.

However, in my opinion, the surmised difference of the origin of these structures is of much more importance for comparative morphology than it is for taxonomy. And since homologies of such structures as "*digitus*", "*editum*", "*ampulla*", "*pollex*", etc. are vague (except in the Noctuidæ), as I already stipulated in my paper, and since morphologists fail to agree upon a uniform terminology for them, applicable to as many superfamilies of the Lepidoptera as possible, and not to one or two only, my suggestion (4) sub (a) to taxonomists still seems practicable in principle. I am ready to make an exception only for the "clasper" of the Noctuidæ, and not include it in the term *harpe*, provided that a new latin term is made to denote this structure.

I must fundamentally disagree with my esteemed critic where he says that "... we must propose terms as we need them and often leave it to future morphologists to figure out how wide are the homologies involved". In my opinion, a similar attitude is responsible for the now existing confusion of genital terminology. The intention of my paper was, among other things, to suggest preventing of such practice in the future.

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