REQUEST FOR A RULING AS TO THE SPECIES TO BE ACCEPTED AS
THE TYPE SPECIES OF THE GENERA “CULTER” AND “NASUS”
BASILEWSKY, 1855 (CLASS PISCES)

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The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Com-
misson to give a ruling on the question of the species to be accepted as the
type species of the genera Culter Basilewsky, 1855 and Nasus Basilewsky, 1855
(Class Pisces). The facts of this case are set out briefly in the following para-
graphs.

10: 236) was established for six new nominal species to which Basilewsky
gave the names alburnus (236), erythropterus, mongolicus, pekinensis, exiquus
and leucisculus. Basilewsky did not specify any of these species as the type
species of this genus, but in a line by itself directly below the generic name and
before mentioning any of the new species included in this genus, he wrote
“(Cypr. cultratus Linn.)”. The first author to select a type species under
Rule (g) in Article 30 was Bleeker who in 1863 (Atlas ichthyol. Indes orient.
néerland. 3: 33) so selected Culter alburnus Basilewsky, 1855.

3. Bleeker’s type selection was accepted by all subsequent authors up to
1938, though Jordan (1919, Genera of Fishes 2: 262), in accepting alburnus
as the type species, added the comment:—“Basilewsky plainly intended to
make his type Cyprinus cultratus”. In 1938, however, Dr. Hugh M. Smith
(J. Wash. Acad. Sci. 28(9): 407–411) advanced the view that Basilewsky
himself designated Cyprinus cultratus Linnaeus, 1758 (Syst. Nat. (ed. 10) 1: 326)
as the type species of the genus Culter at the time when he first published that
generic name. Dr. Smith put forward this thesis as follows:—

In setting up Culter alburnus as the type of Culter, Bleeker and various
writers who agreed with him in this course entirely ignored the fact that
Basilewsky himself adopted or considered Cyprinus cultratus as the type of
Culter. No other interpretation can be placed on the circumstances that,
immediately after the first use of the word Culter, Basilewsky devoted
a whole line to the words “Cypr. cultratus Linn.”. The case is clearly

covered by the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature, reference being made particularly to article 30, paragraph g, reading:

"If an author, in publishing a genus with more than one valid species, fails to designate or to indicate its type, any subsequent author may select the type."

That Basilewsky did select a type species by "indication" seems to be fully established by the international rules and the opinions thereunder, and Bleeker's action was void.

4. Smith's reference to Rule (g) in Article 30 is clearly beside the mark, for that Rule refers only to the selection of a type species of a genus for which no type species was designated or indicated by the original author at the time of the first publication of the generic name concerned. If any case is to be advanced in favour of the view that Basilewsky designated a type species for the genus Culter, it must be an argument founded upon the interpretation of Rule (a) in Article 30, the Rule relating to the original designation of a type species by the author of a generic name. In the case of the selection of a type species by a subsequent author under Rule (g) there is a supplementary provision which was omitted by Smith in the extract quoted in his paper which is, however, very relevant in the present case. This provision reads as follows: "The meaning of the expression 'select the type' is to be rigidly construed. Mention of a species as an illustration or example of a genus does not constitute a selection of a type." Rule (a) (type species by original designation) does not contain a supplementary provision of this kind, but it has been the practice of zoologists to assume that the expression "designate" a type as used in Rule (a) should be construed as rigidly as the expression "select" a type as used in Rule (g). This principle seems to me to be correct and I notice that a proposal that this principle should be expressly written into Rule (a) has recently been submitted to the Commission (Hemming, 1954, Bull. zool. Nomencl. 9 : 188-190).

5. I think it quite clear therefore that Smith's attempt to bring forward Cyprinus cultratus Linnaeus as the type species of Culter Basilewsky was incorrect and that the valid type species of this genus is Culter albunus Basilewsky, the species so selected by Bleeker in 1863. If Smith's conclusions had been correct, the generic name Culter Basilewsky would have fallen as a junior synonym of Pelecus Agassiz, [1836] (Mém. Soc. Sci. nat. Neuchâtel 1 : 39). This would have been very unfortunate, for the name Culter has been used by all workers on Chinese fishes, e.g. Günther, Bleeker, Kner, Sauvage & Dabry, Berg, Nichols, Rendahl, Chu and others.

6. The generic name Nasus Basilewsky, 1855 (: 234) was published in a manner very similar to that in which the name Culter was introduced in the same paper, for, in addition to species expressly included in this genus—in this case, the single new species Nasus dahuricus—Basilewsky devoted the
line immediately following the generic name *Nasus* to the entry "(Cypr. nasus Linn.)". It is very doubtful whether Basilewsky recognised—or was even aware of—the principle embodied nearly fifty years later in Rule (d) in Article 30 under which, where no type species is designated or indicated by monotypy for a genus and where one of the included species bears a specific name consisting of the same word as the generic name, the species bearing that name becomes the type species of the genus by absolute tautonymy. However, as *Cyprinus nasus* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 325) was certainly included by Basilewsky in his genus *Nasus* and as Basilewsky (i) did not expressly designate a type species, (ii) did not include in the genus a species bearing the specific name *typus* or *typicus* and (iii) included more than one species in the genus, Rule (d) (type species by absolute tautonymy) applies automatically in this case, thus making *Cyprinus nasus* Linnaeus the type species. In this case no difficulty arises, for this species is currently accepted as the type species of *Nasus* Basilewsky.

7. No family-group-name problem arises in the present case, the genera concerned being currently referred to the family *Cyprinidae*.

8. In order finally to dispose of this matter, I now ask the International Commission:

(1) to rule that the type species of the genus *Culter* Basilewsky, 1855, was first validly determined when in 1863 Bleeker selected *Culter alburnus* Basilewsky, 1855, to be the type species of this genus (selection made under Rule (g) in Article 30);

(2) to place the under-mentioned generic names on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*:

   (a) *Culter* Basilewsky, 1855 (gender: masculine) (type species, by selection by Bleeker (1863): *Culter alburnus* Basilewsky, 1855);

   (b) *Nasus* Basilewsky, 1855 (gender: masculine) (type species, by absolute tautonymy: *Cyprinus nasus* Linnaeus, 1758);

(3) to place the under-mentioned specific names on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology*:

   (a) *alburnus* Basilewsky, 1855, as published in the combination *Culter alburnus* (specific name of type species of *Culter* Basilewsky, 1855);

   (b) *nasus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Cyprinus nasus* (specific name of type species of *Nasus* Basilewsky, 1855).
Myers, George S. 1956. "Request for a ruling as to the species to be accepted as the type species of the genera Culter and Nasus Basilewsky, 1855 (Class Pisces)." The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature 12, 136–138.

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