PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO VALIDATE THE GENERIC NAME “HOPLITOPLACENTICERAS” (CLASS CEPHALOPODA, ORDER AMMONOIDEA) (UPPER CRETACEOUS) AS FROM PAULCKE, 1906, AND TO DETERMINE ITS TYPE SPECIES

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(Commission Reference : Z.N.(S.) 1197)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to give a direction as to the interpretation of the nominal species Hopites plasticus Paulcke, 1906, the type species of the genus Hoplitoplacenticeras Paulcke, 1906, and, having done so, to place the name of that genus on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology.

2. In 1906 W. Paulcke described and figured a series of ammonites from the Upper Cretaceous Campanian stage in Patagonia. Among them was a group of forms which he regarded as transitional between the genera Hoplites Neumayr, 1875, and Placenticeras Meek, 1876. He headed the section of his paper which dealt with this group (: 12—54) “Hoplites-Placenticeras” but later had a heading “Hoplito-Placenticeras”. He explains (: 17) that these “transitional” forms can be described as “Hoplitoplacenticeras”: those that show strong hoplitoid characteristics might, he suggested, be written with the “Hoplito-” portion in roman, and the “-placenticeras” portion in italic type, while the reverse method might be employed for those with placenticeratoid characteristics. Paulcke’s ideas are so peculiar that I annex below a facsimile of the passage in question:

Facsimile of the first complete paragraph on page 183 (= page 17 of separate) of Paulcke’s paper

Zwischenformen zwischen Hoplites und Placenticeras würden dementsprechend als Hoplitoplacenticeras bezeichnet. Wiegen Hoplitenmerkmale vor, so wäre der Name Hoplitoplacenticeras zu schreiben, wiegen Placenticeratenmerkmale vor, so müsste Hoplitoplacenticeras stehen. — Bei etwa Gleichwertigkeit der Merkmale würde kein Name hervorgehoben. — Als Beispiel eines echten Placenticeras wäre Placenticeras placenta MEEK anzuführen, während Placenticeras pacificum SMITH nach obigen Auseinandersetzungen als Hoplitolacenticeras zu bezeichnen wäre. Unter dem vorliegenden Material würden die Formen des plasticus-laevis als Hoplitoplacenticeras bezeichnet werden können, wenn man es nicht vorzieht, sie einfach noch Hoplites zu nennen.
3. Despite these generic names Paulcke described all his new species and subspecies of the group simply as "Hoplites". He refers (20) to the "Gruppe des Hoplites plasticus Paulcke" and the following "Untergruppen":

"Hoplites plasticus-Hauthali"
plasticus-crassus"
plasticus-costatus"
plasticus-emicostatus"
plasticus-laevis"

After preliminary discussion of each "Untergruppe" he describes each in the form normal for specific or subspecific descriptions, but describes no H. plasticus plasticus.

4. Cossman (1907 : 239) in a footnote to Sayn's review of Paulcke's paper pointed out that these proposals (paragraph 3 above) were completely contrary to the accepted rules of nomenclature.

5. However, the generic name Hoplitoplacenticeras, so spelt, has come into general use and is attributed to Paulcke. Spath used it in 1922 (111). Diener in his Fossilium Catalogus volume lists it and gives as type species "Hoplites plasticus Paulcke". Roman (1938 : 505) describes it and gives as type species "Hoplites plasticus Paulcke". Usher (1952 : 93) describes a new species and gives as type species of the genus "Hoplites plasticus-hauthali Paulcke". In 1953 Spath refers to the genus and sets out the peculiar history of the name, described in paragraphs 2 to 3 above. He mentions also the name Dechenoceras, listed by Kayser in 1924 as the generic name of the species Ammonites coesfeldiensis Schlüeter, 1867, a species which Spath and other authors regard as congeneric with the plasticus group. All the forms figured and described by Paulcke were so described in a way appropriate to subspecies, that is, as trinominals, apart from the fact that he linked the subspecific to the specific name with a hyphen. Clearly, he regarded them all as subspecies of one species which would consequently be the type species of his genus by monotypy.

6. Kayser's work is a textbook. The name Dechenoceras appears twice (175, 176), in the combination "Dechenoceras coesfeldiens Schlüter", in lists of characteristic fossils. To the best of my knowledge the name has not appeared before or since, except in the reference by Spath, quoted in paragraph 5 above. It is possible that Kayser quoted it from the manuscript of a colleague in the expectation that the name would have been validated in print before the publication of his own book.

7. Despite the irregularity of its publication the name Hoplitoplacenticeras is in general use. Confusion would be caused if it were to be replaced by
Dechenoceras or some new name and no damage would be done to the name of any other animal if the name Hoplitoplacenticeras were to continue in use. It would be both logical and desirable that the name should continue to be attributed to Paulcke, in whose paper are to be found descriptions of a number of forms of the genus.

8. Paulcke described no nominate subspecies for his nominal species Hoplites plasticus and one of his subspecific names must therefore become synonymous with the nominate one. Usher’s mention of Hoplites plasticus-hauthali, referred to above, may have been intended as a selection of hauthali as a synonym of Hoplites plasticus plasticus but, if it was so intended, his words cannot be accepted as a selection, if that term is rigidly construed. In 1953, however, Spath in the paper referred to in paragraph 5 above stated that “it is advisable to select a definite type species of Hoplitoplacenticeras from among the various plasticus forms of Paulcke and I propose to take as typical H. plasticus the species represented by Paulcke’s pl. xiii, figs. 1, ia—d (1906, p. 204 = “H. plasticus-semicoloncostatus”) which is intermediate between the extremes, H. hauthali and H. laevis”. I believe that the foregoing selection by Spath might be held to be valid, Spath clearly believing some or all of Paulcke’s named forms as representing full species. In anticipation, however, of the possibility that the Commission might take the view that, rigidly construed, a formal lectotype selection for the nominal species Hoplites plasticus Paulcke is required, I hereby select as the lectotype of that species the specimen figured as Hoplites plasticus-semicoloncostatus by Paulcke as figures 1, 1a and 1b on plate XIII(4) of his paper.

9. No family-group-name problem arises in the present case, the genus Hoplitoplacenticeras Paulcke being currently placed in the family Placenticeratidae Hyatt, 1900 (type genus: Placenticeras (emend. of Placentoceras) Meek, 1870).

10. I therefore invite the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:—

(1) to use its Plenary Powers to validate the generic name Hoplitoplacenticeras as from Paulcke, 1906, with the nominal species Hoplites plasticus Paulcke, 1906, as type species;

(2) to direct that the nominal species Hoplites plasticus Paulcke, 1906, be interpreted by the lectotype selection made in paragraph 8 above;

(3) to place the under-mentioned generic name on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:—

Hoplitoplacenticeras Paulcke, 1906, as validated under the Plenary Powers in (1) above (gender: neuter) (type species, by designation
under the Plenary Powers in (1) above: *Hoplites plasticus* Paulcke, 1906, as interpreted in (2) above;

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

*plasticus* Paulcke, 1906, as published in the combination *Hoplites plasticus* and interpreted as prescribed in (2) above (specific name of type species of *Hoplitoplacenticeras* Paulcke, 1906);

(5) to place the under-mentioned specific name on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology*:

*semicostatus* Paulcke, 1906, as published in the combination *Hoplites plasticus-semicostatus* (a junior objective synonym of the nominate subspecies of *Hoplites plasticus* Paulcke, 1906, through the lectotype selection approved in (2) above).

**References**

Cossman, M., 1907: *Revue critique de Paléozoologie*, Paris

Diener, C., 1925: *Fossilium Catalogus* (1) 29, Ammonoidea neocretacea

Kayser, E., 1924: *Lehrbuch der Geologie* 4, 2, Stuttgart


