

160 years of D.E.Z. – what is the recipe for thy long life?

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This year we look back at 160 years of entomological research published in the DEZ. Believe it or not, our journal is the third oldest of all still existing entomological periodicals worldwide! A concatenation of favourable circumstances? At first glance, the first decades were rather tough ones, involving personal controversies, splitting of the society behind the journal and the journal itself, and later reunion (Wessel 2007). However, at the second glance, this period seems to have been an excellent one at the same time, as the young and dedicated visionary, Gustav Kraatz, the first editor of the DEZ, guided the journal throughout these troublesome waters for the first 50 years. What makes him visionary? Already 160 years ago, he promoted high standards in taxonomical publications such as the description of both sexes when erecting new genera, the publication of comprehensive revisions instead of single species descriptions and the exploration of new diagnostic characters (Wessel 2007) – not much to add 160 years later! More than this, under his editorship the DEZ was at the forefront of the development and establishing of internationally recognized nomenclatorial rules in entomology, regulating foremost issues of priority (Wessel 2007). Still today, nomenclatorial issues constitute a hot topic in entomological publishing.

Finally, Gustav Kraatz was driven by the urge to combine collections and libraries of all German entomologists, so that scientists could have free access (Wessel 2007).

In 1886, he founded an Entomological National Museum that still exists and is nowadays known as DEI – Deutsches Entomologisches Institut. It would have certainly pleased Gustav Kraatz that since the transfer of the DEZ from Wiley to Pensoft in 2014 all articles are published under an open access policy, likewise facilitating the access to knowledge.

The incredible number of 22.613 species descriptions published in the last 160 years in the DEZ (Stelbrink and Wessel 2008; numbers updated) are a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the insects on this planet. The vision of Gustav Kraatz and the commitment of many following editors and authors have made the success of the DEZ possible.

Together let's do our best to continue this line to the future!

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