Preservation of the name Canadian (Lower Ordovician)

by Curt Teichert and Rousseau H. Flower

Summary. A plea is made for retention of the name Canadian for the Lower Ordovician Series as generally understood in North America. We advise against acceptance of a recent proposal to replace this name with a new name, Ibexian.

Zusammenfassung. Es wird vorgeschlagen, den Namen Canadian für das Unterordovicium im Sinne der nordamerikanischen Geologen beizubehalten. Wir raten von der Annahme eines neuernlichen Vorschlags ab, diesen Namen durch eine neue Bezeichnung, Ibexian, zu ersetzen.

R. J. Ross, Jr., and L. F. Hintze (in Ross et al. 1982, p. 7) have proposed to abandon the name Canadian for the Lower Ordovician Series in North America and to replace it with the name Ibexian, based on a type section in west-central Utah. We here wish to plead the case for retention of the term Canadian.

The name Canadian was proposed by J. D. Dana (1874) as a period name for the time during which the “Calciferous sand-rock” and Chazy limestone, as developed in the Quebec area, were deposited. These units were at that time ill-defined. “Calciferous” was a name applied to rocks in New York and Quebec most of which are now classified as Lower Ordovician and Clarke & Schuchert (1899) coined the formal name “Beekmantown Limestone” for the “Calciferous sandrock.” “Chazyan” was first used as a time-stratigraphic term by Grabau (1909) who included the Black River Limestone in this interval. It was Ulrich (1911) who restricted the Chazyan to the interval between the Beekmantown and the Black River which was commonly accepted usage until 1956, when Cooper inserted a new “Whiterock Stage” below the Chazyan as basal unit of the Middle Ordovician. Ross (in Ross et al. 1982, p. 10) has now proposed to extend the White-rockian as a series name upward, also to include the classical Chazyan, but this is beside the point we here wish to make.

* Authors’ addresses: Curt Teichert, Department of Geological Sciences, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, U.S.A.; Rousseau H. Flower, New Mexico State Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources, Socorro, New Mexico 87801, U.S.A.