



The real lectotype of *Kentrosaurus aethiopicus* HENNIG, 1915

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With 1 figure and 1 table

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Abstract: A detailed study of the relevant literature reveals that contra recent use the lectotype of the stegosaur *Kentrosaurus aethiopicus* HENNIG, 1915 is a partial individual from excavation ‘St’ at Kindope, Tendaguru, Tanzania in the collection of the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin (MB.R.4800.1-37). This significantly influences the diagnosis of the taxon, defining several characters based on the lectotype instead of referred specimens, notably the sub-vertical neural spines of the medial third of the tail, and the hook-shaped, anteriorly inclined neural spines in the posterior caudals.

Key words: *Kentrosaurus*, type specimen, stegosaur, Tendaguru.

1. Introduction

Many first descriptions of dinosaurs and other extinct or extant animals predating the year 2000 did not include an explicit definition of a holotype specimen in accordance with the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN). In such cases all material assigned to the species in the original description is regarded as the type series. In order to determine what material is part of this series, for species defined prior to 2000 any published or unpublished evidence may be taken into account, and the type series may include material not specifically listed, figured or bibliographically referenced in the original description. Article 74.1.1 of the ICZN states that once a lectotype has been validly defined, no later designation of a different lectotype has any validity.

Kentrosaurus aethiopicus HENNIG, 1915 is an example of a species for which no type specimen was defined in the original description, and where only a very limited number of elements were explicitly described and figured. Many others may

belong to the type series. In the literature, two different specimens are referred to as ‘Type skeleton’ [type skeleton] (HENNIG 1925; JANENSCH 1925) or ‘holotype’ (e.g. GALTON 1982; MAIDMENT et al. 2008), only one of which can be the lectotype. Here, I attempt to clarify which specimen is the valid type according to the ICZN.

Institutional abbreviations: MFN – Museum für Naturkunde – Leibniz-Institut für Evolutions- und Biodiversitätsforschung an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Collection numbers MB.R.####
IFGT – Institut für Geowissenschaften der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen. Collection numbers GPIT####

2. Material

All stegosaur material of the German Tendaguru expedition that could be located in the IFGT and MFN collections in August 2009 was inspected firsthand. All other material, especially those specimens sent to other institutions throughout Germany before WWII (see details in MAIER 2003), is either de-