



The Hess and Brezowsky synoptic catalogue: a timeless concept (although with a few drawbacks)

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The synoptic catalogue after Hess and Brezowsky (H&B) was designed and constructed about sixty years ago. Nowadays, in the period of massive advance of computer power, such an aged tool may be viewed as obsolete. Here we put the H&B catalogue and several of its objectivized versions into context of a numerous suite of objective classifications, produced within the COST733 Action. We show that the ability of the H&B catalogue to stratify surface temperature and precipitation is superior to most of objective classifications constructed over central Europe. The H&B catalogue is, however, superior also to objective classifications defined over the large domain covering whole Europe, and even to many objective classifications defined over regions fairly distant from Germany (for which it was originally designed) such as the Baltic Sea or the Balkans. To make the picture more complete, we also admit several deficiencies of the original subjective H&B catalogue, including spurious trends in its persistence and unrealistically frequent changes of types at edges of months. To summarize, the H&B catalogue is still an invaluable tool in synoptic climatological analyses.