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BOOK REVIEW

GOZMÁNY, L. 1978. LECITHOCERIDAE. In Amsel, Gregor & Reisser, Microlepidoptera Palaearctica, v. 5: text, 306 pp., 168 text figs.; plates, 122 (unnumbered) pp., 15 full color plates, 93 black and white. Vienna. Price of two bound, gold imprinted parts, DM540,—(approximately $290.00 U.S.); subscription price, DM450,—.

The new volume of this monumental series fills the reader with admiration: one holds his breath an instant and wonders that such a beautiful book can be produced in this day and age.

The series "Microlepidoptera Palaearctica" is so well known by now that my statement that the fifth volume has been written in the same spirit and style, and that it has been produced at the same high standards as the previous four, characterizes its qualities adequately. So much well-merited praise already has been given to the series, that it is difficult to add more, without being repetitious. Still, the present volume earns a special qualification: among those families of Lepidoptera already treated, the Lecithoceridae are, without doubt, the least known—and as a separate family, they are hardly known at all! Amazingly, Dr. Gozmány's critical revision provides access to a new group of Lepidoptera in the Palearctic fauna. Therefore, the scientific value of the fifth volume is considerable.

In the Introduction, an historical survey of the Lecithoceridae is presented. This group was separated as late as 1947 by Le Marchand as a Palearctic subfamily of the Gelechiidae, and in 1955 it was described again by Clarke as a separate family (the Timyridae), which included numerous species of the Oriental and Ethiopian tropics. Now for the first time the limits of the group are defined and a generic key to the Old World fauna is given as a basis for its total revision. (The family does not occur in the New World.) A list of all of the literature on the Palearctic species is compiled and each species has its own list of citations. Dr. Gozmány was able to study and dissect all of the type specimens except a very few which could not be found. The limits of the geographic region have been extended so that several neighboring countries are included in it [e.g., Nepal, Assam, North Burma and even Formosa (Taiwan)], in order to incorporate potential future intruding species. This has been done in view of our still inadequate knowledge of the family. Hardly anything is now known concerning the early stages and ecology of these insects, except in the case of several common European species. The Lecithoceridae seem to be chiefly detritophagous, but they also consume withering and dead plant tissue. Adults are attracted to light. The family is now divided into two subfamilies, with a total of 41 genera and 168 species. Of these, 15 genera and 67 species are new. Each is illustrated in full color with black-and-white figures of the genitalia of both sexes. In the second part there are 15 plates of magnificent watercolors by Dr. Gregor, and additional sketches and genitalia drawings by the author.

An important novelty is that the description of every species is followed by a special paragraph, summing up the differences between it and other allied species. Species discrimination is therefore made possible through keys, diagnoses, color and black-and-white figures, as well as by these handy summaries—methods worth following in the future.

With regard to benevolent critical remarks, I have just one: obviously the diagnoses of the species are meant to be more or less complementary to the color illustrations (or the other way around); together they are excellent, but separately the diagnoses are too concise. Perhaps this is a question of taste, but I would have preferred a diagnosis complete in every detail, as a taxonomic documentation for the identification of each species.

Entomologists have a strong personal attraction to certain groups of insects. This is one thing which makes our science so very fascinating! I must confess that I enjoy such a feeling of involvement with the Lecithoceridae, as well as with certain other groups. I have been highly privileged to encounter these elegant insects in numbers in southern Asia. This is one more reason that I must congratulate the author, artist, and editor

for their achievements. I welcome the present revision warmly and recommend its subject to a wide circle of my colleagues interested in Lepidoptera.

Unusual additions to this fifth volume are the sympathetic obituary of the third Editor of the series, the late Hans Reisser, and a fascinating review of the origin of the ten-year-old series "Microlepidoptera Palaearctica," by its initiator and Editor-in-Chief, Dr. H. G. Amsel.

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ESSAI DE CLASSIFICATION DES LÉPIDOPTÈRES PRODUCTEURS DE SOIE. Original fascicles published 1897–1934 in *Compte rendu des Travaux du Laboratoire d'Études de la Soie*, Lyon. Facsimile reprints now available, published 1976–1978 by Sciences Nat, 2 rue André Mellenne, Venette, 60200 Compiegne, France. Price different for each fascicle, but varying from 42 FF to 99 FF each. Presently only available through Sciences Nat.

This old classical series on Saturniidae (= Attacidae) and related moths has been quite rare and unavailable to workers. The series is particularly useful to taxonomists and of special interest to amateur students of Saturniidae. I own an original copy of fasc. 2 and can thus see that these reprints are accurate reproductions of the originals, except for size: originals measure ca. 19 × 27 cm and reprints are ca. 15 × 22 cm. It is now possible for both libraries and individual lepidopterists to own copies of these important works.

The series resulted from the immense interest in these moths from their economic standpoint as silk producers. Several experts at the Silk Laboratory in Lyon authored the text, all in French. The figures are not colored, but are line drawings and some are done from photographs. Almost every species is figured in the adult stage and a few larvae and cocoons are depicted. Citations to original descriptions and lists of synonymies precede the text of each taxon. The text mainly describes the imago and gives the patria. Each fascicle is indexed. The pagination coincides with that of the original separates (*extraits*) which differs from that in the *Compte rendu . . . Soie*. Below is a synopsis of each fascicle:

Fascicle 1. 1897. By J. Dusuzeau & L. Sonthonnax. Introductory chapter discussing morphology and early classification of Lepidoptera. Taxonomic group covered is Saturniidae, Saturniinae, Tribe Attacini: genera *Callosamia*, *Samia* (= *Philosamia*), *Hyalophora*, *Epiphora*, *Attacus*, *Rothschildia*, and *Archaeoattacus*. Most species figured well. 52 pages.

Fascicle 2. 1899. By L. Sonthonnax. The genus *Coscinocera* (Tribe Attacini) which had been omitted from fasc. 1 is covered here. The tailed saturniids are covered, including the complex of genera related to *Saturnia/Eudia*; also Agliinae, *Argema*, *Graellsia*, *Eudaemonia* (= *Copiopteryx*), *Eustera* (African). Also included are *Copaxa* and *Antheraea*. Many cocoons and a few larvae are figured. 78 pages.

Fascicle 3. 1901. By L. Sonthonnax. Excepting the Indo-Australian *Syntherata* and Neotropical *Sagana*, all of the species discussed and figured in this fascicle (such as *Nudaurelia* and *Imbrasia*) belong to the large African tribe Bunaeini. 76 pages.

Fascicle 4. 1904. By L. Sonthonnax. A wide range of saturniid groups are