CURCICIA, A NEW GENUS OF ENDEMIC GROUND BEETLES (TRECHINI, CARABIDAE, COLEOPTERA) BASED ON DUVALIUS BOLEI PRETNER. S. B. Ćurčić and M. M. Brajković, Institute of Zoology, Faculty of Biology, University of Belgrade, and Centre for Biospeleology of Southeast Europe, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro.

Fourty years ago Pretner (1963) described a new species of the coleopteran family Carabidae from a cave in southeast Serbia. This endemic form was subsequently included into the nominal subgenus of the genus Duvalius Delarouzée: Duvalius (Duvalius) bolei Pretner, 1963.

However, a thorough analysis of all important taxonomic traits of this taxon and its comparison with other members belonging to the genus Duvalius and its phonetically close genera has yielded that "Duvalius" bolei pertains to a separate genus, new to science: Curcicia n. gen., which is probably relic and endemic to cave systems both in southeast Serbia and the Balkan Peninsula.

CARABIDAE LATREILLE

CURCICIA, NEW GENUS

Etymology - After the name of Prof. Dr. Božidar P. M. Ćurčić, a noted Serbian naturalist and biospeleologist.

Type-species - Curcicia bolei (Pretner).

Other species - None (monotypic genus).

Synonym (generic name) - Duvalius (Duvalius) (part.): Pretner, 1963: 144.

Fig. 1. Distribution of Curcicia bolei (Pretner) in Serbia (note the asterisk). Scale line in km.

Fig. 2. Curcicia bolei (Pretner): holotype male, habitus (dorsal view) (after Pretner 1963).
Synonym (specific name) - Duvalius (Duvalius) bolei
Pretner, 1963: 144.

Type locality - Prekonoška Pečina Cave, village Prekonoge, near Svrljig, Svrliške Planine Mts., southeastern Serbia. 26 May 1959 (Fig. 1): holotype male, collected by E. Pretner.

Diagnosis - Curcicia n. gen. is clearly distinct from all other phylogenetically close genera in a complex of correlative traits such as: the form of head, the total lack of eyes, the presence of deep and complete frontal furrows, the smoothness of cheeks, the absence of longitudinal furrows on fore tibiae, the length to breadth ratio of the first article of protarsus (in males), the presence of 2 elytral discal setae, the specific position of humeral setae, and the shape of aedeagus and copulatory piece (Figs. 2-4).

By some of its features, Curcicia n. gen. resembles the genera Duvalius Delarouzée (compared only to its type-species; all other forms of this "genus" are under suspicion and should therefore be revised, since these belong to some other, probably new higher taxa; Čurčič et al. 2001) (the number of elytral discal setae, the presence of complete frontal furrows, the presence of smooth cheeks, the absence of longitudinal fissures on fore tibiae, and the length/width ratio of male protarsomere I), Serboduvalius S. B. Čurčič, D. Pavčevec & B. P. M. Čurčič (the presence of deep and complete frontal furrows, the length/width ratio of male protarsomere I, the similar position of humeral setae, and the presence of smooth cheeks), Rascioduvalius S. B. Čurčič, M. M. Brjaković & B. M. Mitić (the presence of deep and complete frontal furrows, the length/width ratio of male protarsomere I, the number of elytral discal setae, the similar position of humeral setae, and the similar form of copulatory piece), Javorella S. B. Čurčič, M. M. Brjaković & B. P. M. Čurčič (the number of elytral discal setae, the presence of complete frontal furrows, the presence of smooth cheeks, the length/width ratio of male protarsomere I, and the similar position of humeral setae), and Paraduvalius Knirsch (the number of elytral discal setae, the presence of complete frontal furrows, similar position of humeral setae, the shape of the humera, the absence of longitudinal fissures on fore tibiae, and the similar position of humeral setae).

However, there are also many important distinctions between the genera Curcicia n. gen. and Duvalius (the position of humeral setae, the body form, the head shape, and the differences in the structure of aedeagi and the copulatory pieces), as well as between Curcicia n. gen. and Serboduvalius (the length/width ratio of male protarsomere I, the number of elytral discal setae, the form of the the head, the differences in the structure of aedeagi and the copulatory pieces, the presence/absence of longitudinal fissures on fore tibiae, the form of hind pronotal angles, and the form of shoulders), as well as between Curcicia n. gen. and Rascioduvalius (the setation of cheeks, the position of humeral setae, the form of humeral setae, the differences in the structure of genitalia, the presence/absence of longitudinal fissures on fore tibiae, the form of hind pronotal angles, and the form of shoulders), as well as between Curcicia n. gen. and Javorella (the position of humeral setae, the form of head, the differences in the structure of genitalia, the presence/absence of longitudinal fissures on fore tibiae, the form of hind pronotal angles, and the form of shoulders), as well as between Curcicia n. gen. and Paraduvalius (the body setation, the body form, the shape of head, the position of humeral setae, the differences in position of humeral and medium setae of the "série ombiliquée", the differences in the structure of genitalia, and the form of tarsi) (Čurčič et al. 2001, 2003, in press; Jeannel 1928; Pretner 1963).

Finally, Curcicia n. gen. presently comprises a single species: C. bolei (Pretner). It is of interest to underline that even Pretner (1963) claimed that C. bolei had an isolated position in the "subgenus Duvalius (s. str.)" and could not be associated with any of existing congers. Or "La découverte d'autres espèces avec les mêmes caractères demandera peut-être l'introduction d'une sous-genre spécial" (Pretner 1963) which means that this author was aware of the supraspecific taxonomic position of "D. bolei".

Distribution - This new genus is presently known from a single cave in southeastern Serbia (Prekonoška Pečina Cave, v. Prekonoge, nr. Svrljig). It may also be present in other subterranean habitats in the area studied.

Remarks - Curcicia n. gen. probably belongs to a separate phylogenetic line which originated during the Paleogene. The endemic differentiation of Curcicia n. gen. and its related genera in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula was facilitated by the great Alpine Orogeny, paleoclimatic events, as well as by the subsequent evolution of the underground karstic relief.

Therefore, the new genus represents an endemic and relic form both in Serbia and the Balkan Peninsula.

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