

KARL ROBERT PETRI AND THE TRANSYLVANIAN NATURALISM

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Abstract. The title of this paper presents in a suggestive way the place and the value of the entomologist Karl Robert Petri in the general movement of the Transylvanian naturalism. The structure of this paper is made with subchapters giving historical-chronological order of the main events about the natural sciences evolution in the Principality of Transylvania. At the beginning of the 19th century, after a period of accumulative evolution, there appear the first organizational forms of the natural sciences research. There appear, one after the other, some publications with a scientific character that reflects the endeavours and the results in the field of natural sciences. All these efforts were crowned by the foundation of the Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu (“Siebenbürgischen Verein für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt”) followed by the appearance of the specialized publication of the Society, the periodical publication: “Debates and Communication of the Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences (“Verhandlungen und Mitteilungen des Siebenbürgischen Vereins für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt”). The next step, in a logical and expected way, was the building of the Natural History Museum in Sibiu. Among the noteworthy personalities of the naturalist school in Sibiu was also Karl Robert Petri. There are presented data about his biography, the studies made in Transylvania and mostly abroad at the Jena and Leipzig University. He obtained his PhD in Natural Sciences at Leipzig University. The correspondence of Karl Petri with the great personalities of Europe is presented in a quasitotal way and also the entomological studies published by him. A subchapter presents the development of the Transylvanian naturalism about the Darwinian evolution, in which Karl Petri had a considerable role. All the supporters of Darwinism in the Principality of Transylvania were members of the “Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu”. The final chapter debates the scientific papers of K. Petri, their importance and also his way of work. Besides his scientific work, K. Petri achieved a collection of Coleoptera with 44, 000 samples that he let testamentary to the “Society” and it is presently preserved at the Natural History Museum in Sibiu.

Keywords: biography, entomologist Karl Robert Petri, published papers, historical data, collections.

Rezumat. Karl Robert Petry și naturalismul transilvănean. Titlul materialului prezintă sugestiv locul și valoarea entomologului Karl Rober Petri în asamblul mișcării naturalismului din Transilvania. Structura materialului s-a făcut pe subcapitole ale căror conținuturi redau într-o ordine cronologic-istorică evenimentele dezvoltării științelor naturii din Principat. Primele forme organizatorice din cercetarea științelor naturii apar, după o perioadă de evoluție cumulativă, la începutul secolului al IX-lea. Apar, pe rând, câteva publicații cu caracter științific, care oglindesc strădaniile și rezultatele obținute în studiul științelor naturii. Încununarea acestor eforturi a fost înființarea „Societății Ardelene pentru Științele Naturii din Sibiu” (“Siebenbürgischer Verein für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt”), urmată de apariția organului de presă specializat al “Societății” periodicul “Verhandlungen und Mitteilungen des siebenbürgischen Vereins für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt” („Dezbateri și comunicări ale Societății Ardelene de Științe naturale din Sibiu”). Pasul următor, logic și așteptat, a fost construirea Muzeului de Istorie Naturală din Sibiu. Printre corifeii școlii naturaliste din Sibiu a fost și Karl Robert Petri. Sunt expuse date privind biografia marelui entomolog, studiile urmate în Principat și mai ales în străinătate la universitățile din Jena și Leipzig. Doctoratul în științele naturii îl obține la Universitatea din Leipzig. Corespondența lui Karl Petri cu mari personalități ale Europei este expusă în cvazitotalitatea ei ca și studiile de entomologie publicate de savant. Un subcapitol ilustrează dezvoltarea naturalismului transilvănean pe carea evoluționismului darwinist, în care Karl Petri are rol semnificativ. Toți susținătorii darwinismului din Principat au fost membrii ai „Societății Ardelene pentru Științele Naturii din Sibiu”. Capitolul final discută despre lucrările științifice ale lui Karl Petri, importanța lor, precum și despre modul de lucru al savantului. Pe lângă opera științifică, Karl Petri a realizat o colecție de coleoptere care numără peste 44.000 de exemplare și care a fost lăsată prin testament „Societății” și care se găsește în prezent la Muzeul de Istorie Naturală din Sibiu.

Cuvinte cheie: biografie, entomologul Karl Robert Petri, lucrări științifice publicate, date istorice, colecții.

INTRODUCTION

The historical events in the second half of 18th century were decisive for the next evolution of the Principality of Transylvania on all plans, inclusively natural research.

The siege of Vienna finished in 1683 and, after eight years, there appeared the first Leopoldine Diploma in which the Principality of Transylvania was declared an Aulic province. One year later, Sibiu became the capital of the Principality and the headquarters of the governor. Habsburgic politics to East-orientation sets the basis of a progress period in all the compartments of economic, social and cultural life of the Principality, especially in Sibiu. Personalities from West-European countries, engineers, physicians, professors are invited to take important places in Principality. Sibiu, as a political and administrative centre, creates a scientific-spiritual platform that permitted it to have an important place among the other Transylvanian centers. Domenico Sestini, the Italian professor who visited Sibiu in 1780, being very impressed about it, exclaimed: “Sibiu must be the headquarters of one flourishing University (POP, 1970).

The first organizational forms in the natural sciences research, after an accumulative evolution, appeared at the beginning of the 19th century. There appeared, one after other, many publications with a scientific character. First was “Siebenbürgische Quartalschrift” by Martin Hochmeister jun. In 1833, it appeared “Transylvania” review, due to the efforts made by Michael Bielz that constituted a progress of the naturalist research comparative with the previous one.

In 1841, it was founded in Sibiu: “The Society for Research of Transylvania” (Verein für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde”) and also the “Archives for knowledge of the Past and the Present of Transylvania (Archiv für die Kenntnis von Siebenbürgens Vorzeit und Gegenwart). After a short time, the publication changed its name in: “The Archive of Society for the Knowledge of Transylvania” (Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde). The Society was structured in two sections: History and Natural Sciences.

It feels moreover the necessity of the establishment of a personal, own organism that entirely corresponds to the purpose of the naturalist researches. A step forward was made by Michael Bielz and Ludwig Neugeboren that founded the “Society for Naturalist Reading” (Naturwissenschaftlicher Leseverein) in 1847. The most important and decisive step for the development of the naturalist research was the foundation of the “Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu” (Siebenbürgischer Verein für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt) in 1849.

Now, one cycle in the birth and the development of the natural sciences in Sibiu finished and it started another one, on the new organizational basis. A new, very important step to facilitate the communication, information and implicitly the supporting of the naturalist trend, was the appearance of the specialized organ of the “Society”, the periodical publication: “Debates and Communications of the Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences” (Verhandlungen und Mitteilungen des Siebenbürgischen Vereins für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt).

Between 1849 and 1946, there appeared yearly, regularly, a number of 95 volumes of this publication. It is admirable the efforts, the passion and the perseverance of the members of the “Society” for this great work, during such a long period.

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM IN SIBIU

The crowning of this effort for development of the naturalist research in Sibiu, was the building of an own headquarters to house all the organizational structures of the “Society” and mostly to preserve the collections that were in a number of 265,777 samples (ANTONIE, 2015). In 1895, it was inaugurated a majestic building that embodied from the beginning, the temple of the naturalist research: the Natural History Museum in Sibiu (Fig. 1).

The studies of Coleoptera and Lepidoptera took place without interruption as early as the beginning of the activity of the members of “Society”, mostly because these hexapods represent the richest, most varied and diverse and most attractive groups of insects. They exercised a more intense attraction and they polarized all around a considerable number of naturalists, professional men or amateurs (IENIȘTEA, 1970).



Figure 1. Natural History Museum in Sibiu (original).

The publicistic activity concerning the museum patrimony of Coleoptera and Lepidoptera increased every year (AGAPI & PLATTNER, 1965, 1966; ANTONIE VLAD 2000; ANTONIE 2003, 2004, 2007, 2015; ANTONIE VLAD & RUCĂNESCU, 1996; CUZEPAN, 2011; CUZEPAN & TĂUȘAN, 2013; CUZEPAN et al., 2015; MOISE 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; RĂIANU, 1970; SCHNEIDER, 1975, 1984, 2003; STANCA-MOISE 2002, 2011, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; TĂUȘAN & BUCȘA, 2010; KURZELUK & TĂUȘAN, 2015).

Among the entomological collections included in the patrimony of the Museum that contributed to the increase of its fame, are those concerning the Superfamily Curculionoidea Latreille, 1802 (Coleoptera). They are distinguished both by the great number of samples and also by their vast, large collecting area.

The Collection of the “Transylvanian Society” has a privileged place among the collections, being the oldest one and also the one that constituted the “nucleus” of the entomological collection formation. It contains 47,942 samples of Palearctic and exotic Coleoptera. The basis of this collection were set by Karl Fuss (1817-1874), known as the “Father of Entomology” in Transylvania.

The Collection “Eugen Worell” (1884-1961) contains 67,763 samples of Palearctic and exotic Coleoptera collected in the Dalmatian, the Alps Mountains, Mediterranean Coasts, Asia, Polynesia and also in Romania: Sibiu zone, the shore of the Black Sea, Bessarabia, Hercules Bath, etc.

The Collection “Rolf Weyrauch” (1906-1984) was achieved by Rolf Weyrauch who was a gymnasium teacher. In his Curriculum Vitae, it is mentioned the episode of his deportation in Russia between 1945 and 1948. His collection contains 7,953 samples of Coleoptera.

The Collection "Eckbert Schneider" contains 20,000 samples of different insect orders.

The Collection "Karl Robert Petri" is formed of 46,301 samples of Palaearctic and exotic Coleoptera. As a scientist, with studies in different European Universities and through his scientific activity, he is known as one of the most brilliant personalities of the naturalist school in Sibiu.

LIFE AND WORK OF THE GREAT ENTOMOLOGIST KARL ROBERT PETRI

Karl Robert Petri was born in Sighișoara on the 17th of December 1852 in a traditional, notorious family in different fields in the community life. He graduated the gymnasium in Sighișoara in 1872 and in accordance with the Transylvanian tradition, went to studies to Europe. From 1873 he was at the Jena University where he attended the theological-philosophical studies and natural sciences. He was a student of the Professor Ernest Haeckel, supporter of the Darwinism theory and of the Professor E. Strassburger. After five and a half years, he went to Leipzig University and he specialized himself in the zoological and botanical fields and he became accustomed to the method of microscope research in natural sciences.

At Leipzig University he obtained the title of Ph.D. with his thesis: "The copulation organs of Plagiostoms" (Die Copulationsorgane der Plagiostomen). His thesis was published in Leipzig in 1877 at "Wilhelm Engelmann" publishing house.

After he finished his studies, he came back to Sighișoara where he was concerned himself with his didactic and research activities. He was an employee at the "Inferior School" and taught natural sciences, mathematics, physics and chemistry. On the 2nd of September 1891, he received the title of Professor in natural sciences and mathematics. Between 1894 and 1916, when he retired, he worked as a headmaster of the "Civic School", former "Inferior School".

He practiced research in his free time. His brilliant results impressed A. Müller who declared about Petri: "for a long time he was the most famous Transylvanian coleopterologist" (MÜLLER, 1931/1932). Moreover, the other scientists considered him "a coleopterologist of an European renown" (SCHNEIDER & STAMP, 1970).

Karl Petri was a naturalist specialized in European Universities. So, he distinguished from many other precursors of the "Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu", who made their researches as amateurs, but through their devotion brought admirable professional services to the Transylvanian naturalism.

The Karl Petri's correspondence before the First World War reflects the large relations with many European scientists. A. Müller presented a list of the specialists who were in connection with K. Petri: Bielz, Horvart, Frivaldsky, Ormay, Merkl, Brancsik, Csiki, Deubel, Dudich (Hungary); Reitter, Ganglbauer, Apfelbeck, Melichar, Stussiner, Hetschko, Heikertinger, Holdhaus, Bernhauer, Formanek (Austria); Kraatz, Seidlitz, K & J. Daniel, L.v.Heyden, Kolbe, Kuhnt, Schilsky, Pape, Wagner, Schenkling, Benick (Germany); Stierlin (Switzerland); Desdrocher des Loges, Peyerimhoff (France); Gestro, Fiori (Italy); de la Fuente (Spain); Faust, Retowski (Russia); Strand (Norway); Hormuzachi, Netolitzky (Romania); Guy Marshall (England).

Karl Petri was a member of the "Entomological Society in Budapest", member of the "Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu", being many years in the leadership council. He founded together with Heinrich Höhr a section of the "Society" in Sighișoara.

He scoured about large regions of the country, collecting a rich entomological material for his collection. He collaborated and published papers of speciality, monographs and catalogues in the publications in our country and abroad, on the international plan.

The most important work of Karl Petri is his "The Catalogue of the Coleoptera from Transylvania" that was published in 1912 in Sibiu. With the completions made by K. Petri and Fr. Deubel, this "Catalogue" remains available still in the present (IENISTEA, 1970).

On the special occasion of the 50 years Jubilee from his graduates, the University of Leipzig sent a letter to Karl Petri, at his age of 75 years. In this letter it was emphasized the contribution of Karl Petri that through his endeavours placed "Transylvania between the best studied from the South-Eastern countries of Europe" (MÜLLER, 1931/1932).

Karl Robert Petri died on 22 November 1932 and he was buried in the municipal graveyard in Sibiu.

TRANSYLVANIA AND THE DARWIN THEORY

The evolutionist idea of Darwin penetrated in Transylvania in the second half of the 19th century, especially thanks to those who studied at Jena University, where the great Darwinist Ernest Haeckel dominated. Among the naturalists who studied in Jena we mention: Julius Romer (1848-1926) from Brasov, Carl Friederich Jickeli (1850-1925) from Sibiu, Heinrich Höhr (1875-1949) from Sighișoara, Karl Ungar (1869-1933) from Sibiu and also Karl Robert Petri (1852-1932). All of them were renowned members of the "Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu". They admitted the evolution of species through natural selection, but they had different ideas about determination. C. F. Jickeli asserted an own theory, in accordance with, the variability of species is due to the processes and the equilibrium between anabolism and catabolism. One of the propagators of Darwinism in Transylvania was Daniel Popovici-Barcianu from Rășinari. He was the first Romanian with his Ph.D. in Biology (Leipzig, 1874) with his work about anatomy and vegetal embryology, published in Western Europe.

Karl Petri accorded a special importance to the variability of species as an evolutionary process, but he explained that as a result of the geographical isolation of species. The variability in its way toward a new species covered the successive, gradual alterations in time. It was still far away the understanding of evolution through genetic mutations.

THE PAPERS PUBLISHED BY THE ENTOMOLOGIST KARL PETRI

Karl Petri published the results of his researches in specialized reviews in Romania and abroad. The list of his published papers was included in his obituary elaborated by A. Müller and published in: "Debates and Communications of the Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu" (1931-1932). Some completions were made by the author of this paper.

- 1877 *Die Copulationsorgane der Plagiostomen*, Inaug.-Dissert. 3. Taf. S.-A. Ztschr. f. wiss. Zool. Bd. 30, Leipzig.
- 1884/85 *Ergebnis entomologischer Excursionen im Gebiete Schäßburgs*, Gymn.-Program, Sighișoara.
- 1886 *Beitrag zur siebenbürgischen Käferfauna*, V.u.M., 36:72-75, Sibiu.
- 1891 *Über den Stand der Coleopterenfauna der Umgebung Schäßburgs*, V.u.M., 41:1-26, Sibiu.
- 1895 *Monographie des Coleopteren-Genus Liparus Olivier*, V.u.M., 44:1-26, Sibiu.
- 1896 *Revision der mitteleuropäischen Arten der Gattung Plinthus Germ.*, Wiss. Mittheil. aus Bosnien und der Herzegovina, 4:561-582. Aceeași lucrare apare și în Glasnik des Museums în limba croată.
- 1901 *Monographie des Coleopteren-Tribus Hyperini*, V.u. M., 1-210, Sibiu.
- 1901 *Curculionidae 6. Teil Hyperini I. Best. Tab. Europ. Col.*, 44, Paskau I. Mähren.
- 1902 *Ein neuer Quedius aus den transsilvanischen Alpen*, Zool.-bot. Ges. Verh. Wien, 42:153-154, Viena.
- 1902 *Othiorrhynchus amplus nov.spec.*, Zool.-bot. Ges. Verh. Wien, 42:94-95, Viena.
- 1902 *Ein neuer Dorytomus aus Ungarn und Mähren*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 21:156-157, Viena.
- 1903 *Einiges zur Synonymie des Dorytomus armatus M.*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 22(2):57, Viena.
- 1903 *Macrotarsus similis n.sp.*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 22(2):51-52, Viena.
- 1903 *Einige Berichtigungen zur Monographie des Coleopteren-Tribus Hyperini*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 22(2):52, Viena.
- 1903 *Agabus regalis, eine neue Art aus der Verwandtschaft des bipustulatus L. und Solieri Aubé*, Wien. Ent. Ztg. 22(2):49-50, Viena.
- 1903 *Das Haftorgan von Malthodes spathifer Kiesw.*, Ann. Nat. Hungar, 1:410-412, Budapesta.
- 1904 *Fünf neue Lixus-Arten*, Ann. Nat. Hungar, 2:233-236, Budapesta.
- 1904 *Beschreibung einiger neuer Lixus-Arten*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 23 (3/4): 65-77, Viena.
- 1904/05 *Curculionidae. 11. Teil Genus Lixus Fbr.*, Best. Tabele, 55 (extrase din revista Wien. ent. Ztg. 1904 și 1905), Packau.
- 1906 *Zwei neue russische Lixus-Arten (Coleoptera, Curculionidae)*, Revue Russe d'Entomologie, 1/2:1-3.
- 1906 *Malthodes Serbotae n.sp., ein neuer Malthodes des Subgenus Podistrella Seidl. aus den transsilvanischen Alpen*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 25:(5,6,7): 224-225, Viena.
- 1906 *Podistrella Seidl. aus den transsilvanischen Alpen*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 25(5,6,7), Viena.
- 1907 *Vier neue Rüssler aus Turkestan und China und eine neue Crepidodera aus Siebenbürgens*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 26(2):57-61, Viena.
- 1907 *Bestimmungs-Tabelle der Gattungen Larinus Germar (inclus. Stolatus Muls.), Microlarinus Hochhuth, Rhynocyllus Germar und Bangasternus Gozis aus dem europäischen, mediterranen, west- und nordasiatischen Faunengebiete*, Verh. des naturf. Vers. in Brünn, 45:51-146, Brünn
- 1908 *Ein neuer Lixus aus Algerien*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 27, Viena.
- 1908 *Coleopterologische Mitteilungen*, Ann. Mus. Nat. Hung., 6: 273-275, Budapesta.
- 1910 *Ein neuer zentralasiatischer Liparus nebst einer Übersicht der in meiner Sammlung befindlichen Liparus-Arten des Subgenus Trysibius Schönh. (Col.)*, Deutsch. Ent. Zeitschr., 561-566.
- 1910 *Was Schäßburg dem Entomologen bietet*, Festschrift sächs. Ver. Tagung, 87-107, Sighișoara.
- 1912 *Siebenbürgens Käferfauna auf Grund ihrer Erforschung bis zum Jahr 1911*, Jos. Drotleff, Sibiu.
- 1912 *Ein neuer Lixus aus Turkestan und Bemerkungen zu meiner Bestimmungstabelle des Genus Lixus Fabr.*, Ann. Mus. Nat. Hung., 10: 277-280, Budapesta.
- 1912 *Die Gattung Gasteroclinus Desbr.*, Ann. Mus. Nat. Hung., 10:340-373, Budapesta.
- 1913 *Bemerkungen zu einigen Lixus-Arten Dedrochers*, Entom. Bl., 9.
- 1914 *Einige neue Rüssler und Bemerkungen zu bereits beschriebenen Rüsselkäfern*, Entomol. Bl., 10.
- 1914 *Beiträge zur Käferfauna*, Festschrift, Sieb. Ver. f. Nat. Hermannstadt, 1-24, Sibiu.
- 1915 *Einige neue Rüssler des palaearktischen Gebietes*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 34, Viena.
- 1915 *Beitrag zur siebenbürgischen Käferfauna*, Wien. Ent. Ztg., 34, Viena.
- 1918 *Revision der Curculionidengattung Gasteroclisus Desbr.*, V.u.M., 68:1-87, Sibiu.
- 1918 *Einige afrikanische Rüsselkäfer*, V.u.M., 68:87-90, Sibiu.
- 1924/25 *Ergänzungen und Berichtigungen zur Käferfauna Siebenbürgen 1911*, V.u.M., 75/76:165-206, Sibiu.
- 1928 *Bestimmungstabelle der mir bekanntgewordenen südamerikanischen Arten der gattung Lixus Fbr. nebst Neuhebeschreibungen*, V.u.M., 78:63-132, Sibiu.
- 1928 *Zwei neue Othiorrhynchus-Arten aus Griechenland*, Koleopter. Rundsch., 14.

Abbreviations:

Ann. Nat. Hungar - Annales Musei Nationalis Hungarici

Deutsch. Ent. Zeitschr. – Deutscher Entomologische Zeitschriften

Entom. Bl. – Entomologische Blätter

Gymn. - Progr. - Programme des ev. Gymnasiums von Schässbur

Koleopter. Rundsch. – Koleopteren Rundschau

Verh. des naturf. Vers. In Brünn - Verhandlungen des naturforschenden Vereins in Brünn

V.u.M. - Verhandlungen und Mittheilungen des siebenbürgischen Vereins für Naturwissenschaften zu Hermannstadt

Wien. Ent. Ztg. - Wiener Entomologischen Zeitung

Wiss. Mitteil. - Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen

Zool.-bot. Ges. Verh. - Verhandlungen der zoologisch-botanischen Gesellschaft in Wien

Ztschr. f. wiss. Zool. - Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Zoologie

Karl Petri considered thoroughly his researches in a solid, profound study of the Family Curculionidae Latreille, 1802 and especially the genera *Cleonus* Schonherr, 1826; *Lixus* Fabricius, 1801 and *Hypera* Germar, 1817. His works belong to the systematic and faunistic fields, being obvious the modern conception of the European naturalism that means the evolutionism of Darwinist type.

His credo and his ideas concerning the research in Entomology are presented in the preface of his work “The fauna of Coleoptera in Transylvania from the beginning till the year 1911” (Siebenburgens Kaferfauna auf Grund ihrer Erforschung bis zum Jahr 1911) published in 1912.

“Under the influence of the modern theories of the natural sciences, it was necessary that Systematics must include new elements as evolutionism, comparative anatomy and palaeontology. So, it was possible to establish definitely the phylogenetic connections between species, genera and families. So, the Entomology, from a pure systematic science became a biological one“.

A special contribution in systematics was the descriptions of new species for science. In his work “Contribution to the Transylvanian beetle fauna” (Beitrag zur siebenbürgischen Kaferfauna) from 1886, Karl Petri described a new species: *Elescus salicis*. In 1891, he described another species: *Omius maxillosus*, and in 1901, he discovered the new species: *Donus minutus*.

He identified the material sent by entomologists from abroad and this was an opportunity to describe new species from other continents. In his paper: “Some African beetles” (Einige Africanische Russelkafer), he described three new African species: *Blosyrus elegans* Petri 1929 (Tanzania), *B. trisulcatus* Petri 1920 (Togo), *Brachycerus subglobosus* Petri 1918. He described also a new species of *Lixus* in the material received from South America. He demonstrated a special scientific probity and declared: “Through new and repeated examinations I am able to recognize errors in the former identifications of some species and I can correct them”. So, in 1918 he published a paper about the revision of the genus *Gasteroclisus* Debrochers (Curculionidae). In his faunistic works, he was concerned about the variations of the local races and he affirmed: “The modern Entomology must study in great detail the variations that are an important mean to establish the relationship between different species. In this way, the variations could offer a rich and precious documentary material to support the evolutionism. His Collection of Coleoptera contains more than 44,000 samples that belong to 80 families. Karl Petri let it testamentary to “The Transylvanian Society for Natural Sciences in Sibiu” in 1932. At present, the Collection is preserved in the patrimony of the Natural History Museum in Sibiu and it is a valuable material for future research.

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