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**THE CAVE IN POSTOJNA IN SLOVAK LITERATURE
BEFORE 1918**

POSTOJNSKA JAMA V SLOVAŠKI LITERATURI PRED 1918

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Marcel Lalkovič: Postojnska Jama v slovaški literaturi pred 1918

Omembe Postojnske jame je mogoče najti v slovaški periodiki že pred letom 1918. Največ takih prispevkov je bilo objavljenih na Slovaškem, nekaj v Budimpešti ali na Dunaju (*Domová pokladnica, Slovenské noviny, Lipa, Sokol, Pešt'budínske vedomosti, Obzor*, itd.). Vsi se navezujejo na drugo polovico 19. stoletja, ko je slovaški jezik dobil pravila in postal standardiziran. V tem času je najpomembnejša in morda najbolj obiskovana jama v Monarhiji pritegnila pozornost tako znanstvene sfere kot tudi celotne javnosti. Zato je tudi slovaška periodika skušala približati to znamenitost svojim bralcem.

Ključne besede: zgodovina speleologije, zgodovina jamskega turizma, bibliografija, Postojnska jama, Slovaška, Slovenija.

Abstract

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Marcel Lalkovič: The cave in Postojna in Slovak literature before 1918

Mentions of Postojnska Jama can be found in the then Slovak periodicals before 1918 already. The greater part of them was published in Slovakia, some of them in Budapest or in Vienna (*Domová pokladnica, Slovenské noviny, Lipa, Sokol, Pešt'budínske vedomosti, Obzor*, etc.). They belong to the second part of the 19th century - the period when Slovak language was codified as a standard language. At that time the most important and maybe the most visited cave of the Monarchy attracted scientific sphere and common public alike. Therefore also Slovak periodicals tried to inform their readers.

Key words: history of speleology, history of cave tourism, bibliography, Postojnska Jama, Slovakia, Slovenia.

Until 1918 Slovakia (the Slovak Republic) was a part of Hungary so the greater part of information about caves located in its territory or in other parts of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was published in Hungarian and German language. This tendency resulted from the then conditions. Slovak periodicals created another, yet not very known line. The greater part was published in Slovakia, some of them in Budapest or in Vienna (*Domová pokladnica*, *Obzor*, *Sokol*, *Slovenské noviny*, *Lipa*, *Pešti'budínske vedomosti*, etc). Next to their main orientation they also brought a lot of cave information. Although their considerable part is connected with Slovak caves, mentions of other caves of the Monarchy appeared here as well. On the one hand there are mentions about the Baradla Cave near Aggtelek. The cave is situated in the Slovak Gemer territory therefore it is understood as a local element. Number and character of informations appearing in the then periodicals prove it. But Postojnska Jama is another case. At that time it drew attention of specialized spheres and common public alike as the most famous and maybe the most visited cave. Therefore Slovak periodicals also tried to bring closer its remarkable character to Slovak readers. They mentioned not only the cave but also surrounding karst as the resemblance of this phenomena and Slovak nature was evident in many cases.

SLOVAKIA IN THE SECOND PART OF THE 19th CENTURY

In Slovak periodicals mentions about the Postojnska Jama and surrounding karst are connected with the second part of the 19th century, more exactly with the period during which Slovak national movement started to acquire another dimension in the light of revolutionary years 1848 - 49. On the one hand Vienna government tried to introduce Slovakized Czech language, so-called Church Slavic in *Slovenské noviny* (published by the government) in office relations and in schools. On the other hand at the beginning of the fifties a principle of Slovak language was clarified as a basic factor of Slovak national individuality and it was codified as the Slovak national standard language.

After the fall of Bach's absolutism and the October Diploma in 1860, Slovak national activity found its own expression in the Memorandum of Slovak Nation at the beginning of June 1861. In such a manner space to introduce some requirements of lingual, school, and cultural character was created to a certain degree. After establishing the *Matica slovenská* there was created space for organization of scientific activities in geographic and nature science as well. In Martin Slovak cultural centre started at the same time. Publishing connected with remarkable development of journals expanded intensively at that time. There was increased number of published newspapers and magazines dealing with different fields such as political, literary, scientific, school, economic, etc.

This fruitful period finished after closing the *Matica slovenská* and Slovak gymnasiums in 1875 in the light of Austro-Hungarian levelling as well as the ethnic law from 1868. Therefore Slovak national life started to be oriented to other exercises and aims. This trend resulted in disappearing of many interesting mentions from Slovak periodicals as well. Among them there were also mentions drawing reader's attention to cave existence as well as to other interesting facts connected with Slovak and other caves.

POSTOJNSKA JAMA IN SLOVAK LITERATURE

As the first *Domová pokladnica* informed Slovak readers about the cave near Postojna (Adelsberg) in 1851. The article was written by František X. Škarnicel in Skalica in 1847 - 51 and 1863 - 64. The 5th issue of *Domová pokladnica* included a more comprehensive article by an unknown author dealing with the Karst bare land and its cave in Carniola.

The author of this article probably knew the cave near Aggtelek and the Demänovská Cave in Liptov very well. He considered both to be important natural phenomena but he was convinced that their beauty and extent cannot match the cave near Adelsberg (Postojna) in Carniola. He also mentions the Karst, an upland beginning near Planina village, where a large spring lies near the road to Trieste. There is such a huge river flowing out from the spring that boats with cereals can sail in a distance only several hundred steps from the spring. The most important part of the Karst bare land with no alternative in Europe starts here. Many sinks and abysses are located on this desert upland extending to Trieste. The largest of them is called Pivka Jama located near Postojna.

The Southern railway from Vienna to Trieste passes through the Karst upland. There was an idea of another railway branch towards Gorizia with consideration to local wind called Bora and other conditions. Another one proposed that railway would go into the Karst underground using cave spaces as tunnels and artificial tunnels would connect the entire railway. In such a manner the railway would avoid the most dangerous Karst parts between Planina and Postojna.

This proposal drew attention of official sphere. Therefore in August 1850 Vienna government sent Adolf Schmidl (1802 - 1863), an Austrian geographer to find out if it is possible to build the railway through the Karst. He was also entrusted to explore the then accessible caves. Besides the Postojnska Jama A. Schmidl also explored the cave near Planina and he reached places, which were inaccessible by that time. Here he moved in water mostly. Because of this he could only state that deep water in the caves meant a great barrier for the railway. According his opinion very steep banks of these subterranean flows would be widened and regulated because of the railway location in the underground. But Schmidl had no doubt about possibility of constructing the safe and comfortable pathway for local inhabitants. It would be used mainly in winter during high Bora wind.

At the end of the contribution the author describes the Postojnska Jama, in particular objects of his interest during his visit at the beginning of October 1850. Six Slovenians with torches guided him through the cave. Besides mention of a relatively narrow entrance part causing anxiety at cave visitors, he describes character of the so-called Great Cathedral in his next contribution. Immediately after entering the cave his guides scattered somewhere and illuminated cave spaces from different parts to show the cave in its best colours. In the lower part of the Cathedral the pathway continues by stairs to the Pivka which is crossed by a bridge illuminated by guides. Behind one can climb the stairs in the so-called Crystal Cave with beautiful dripstone decoration. There a lot of different inscriptions are found left by previous visitors. He also mentions the High Altar, the Calvary, and refreshment following the last monument of cave visit as well as the animal *Proteus anguinus* offered to sale at this occasion.

At this time the length of accessible cave parts developed for tourists was about 3,000 feet (5,690 m) and visit took 4 - 5 hours. According to an author A. Schmidl contradicted that the Pivka flowing through the cave is connected with the flow of the Planinska Jama. In the time

when Schmidl explored Planinska Jama, a storm proved that water from the Cerknica Lake surroundings and from local caves flows into Planinska Jama.

Some other informations related to the cave in Postojna can be found in *Slovenské noviny*. This official newspaper of Vienna government (printed three times a week) was published by the Ministry of the Interior in 1849 - 61. From 1850 the newspaper was issued in Slovakized Czech language. Science-popularized and economic sections belonged to the most important ones thanks to Daniel Lichard (1812 - 1882), as editor.

In the 62nd issue of *Slovenské noviny* appeared an article *Prírodopisná pamätihodnosť zo Štiavnice* informing about the session of the Reich Geological Institute in Vienna. J. Heckel, a custodian of natural-science collection drew participant's attention to small fishes, which he received from Banská Štiavnica. They were found about 1,000 fathoms (1,896 m) from the entrance of the *Erbštôľňa* near Banská Štiavnica in January 1851. One of them belongs to the *Cobitus fossilis* species, other nine to the *Phoninus Marsilii*. Finding of these small fishes,

commonly appearing in local streams, became a topic of active discussion at the session. According to participants opinion mining water cannot be a natural environment for them as it is the case of the *Proteus* (in Slovenian *človeška ribica*) appearing in caves of Carniola, as they have an evident relationship with local species.

In August 1852, Karol Kuzmány (1806 - 1866), a Slovak writer and then professor at the Theological Seminary in Vienna travelled from Vienna to Venice. He describes his own experiences from the journey in *Slovenské noviny*. He briefly describes country between Ljubljana and Trieste covered with differently formed rocks, he also mentions Postojna and its surrounding where they arrived by mail-coaches at 2,00 a.m. As rain started before their arrival to Postojna, after a short hesitation he decided not to visit the local famous cave. Due to bad weather he did not stay at Postojna for longer time and related to the cave he was satisfied with statement that all the caves with dripping limestone are very similar one to another. In the article he also mentions that although the cave is very large - almost a half of a mile long, the Baradla Cave near Aggtelek, which he visited before, is not smaller.

A year later in the 132nd issue appeared an article about subterranean flows in the Karst territory in Carniola. It brought some knew knowledge related to A. Schmidl's research. Its author reports of the Pivka sinking underground near Postojna, thus achieving the flow length of 4,965 fathoms (9,415 m). A. Schmidl explored some parts from the Pivka ponor, in Pivka Jama



Fig. 1: Daniel Lichard (1812 - 1882), the Archives of Literature and Art of the Matica slovenska in Martin.

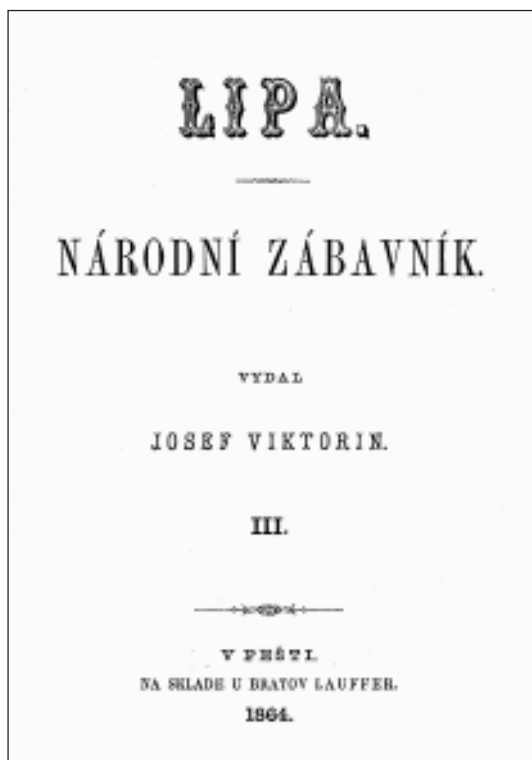


Fig. 2: Title page of *Lipa* literary magazine from 1864.

and from Planina in the length of 2,765 fathoms (5,243 m). In Pivka Jama he could not penetrate deeper because of a local siphon. Unknown parts remained those between Postojna and Pivka Jama and between Pivka Jama and an opening near Planina. Also the Rak flow, a main drainage of Cerknica Lake was not researched enough. A. Schmidl engaged it from the Škocjanská rock gate at the length of 239 fathoms (453 m), but he intended to continue its research work. In conclusion of the article it is stated that during long heavy rain a cave water level rises causing floods in valleys. Only regulation, more appropriate extension of the underground riverbed could prevent such calamity.

After several years only, in the section *Life and Nature* of the 33rd issue of *Slovenské noviny* from 1857 a more comprehensive report appeared. It writes about the visit of Emperor Franz Jozef to Postojnska Jama on March 11, 1857. The author reports how the cave was prepared and illuminated by 16,000 candles.

On the day of his visit special tickets allowed entrance to the cave and they were only for representatives of all classes in number of 2,000 people. Fifty couples of Slovenians in national costumes expected the Emperor's arrival at different places of the cave. He was welcomed by a national anthem in the Great Cathedral. The Bengal lights illuminated the Emperor Ferdinand's monument. In the so-called *Káplnka* the Emperor was welcomed by a song of the choir. Later the visitors were informed that the Emperor agreed to name the new cave parts after him and his wife. The Emperor's cave visit took 2 hours and the visitors received a poem written by dr. Costa at the occasion of this celebration.

In the 36th issue of the same year we can find a shorter report as well. It is connected with an imperial visit on March 11, 1857. Its author mentions several interesting fauna species (water flea, centipedes, etc). A. Schmidl found them in the cave and according to author they appear only in the Postojnska Jama.

In *Lipa* literary magazine Jozef Viktorín (1822 - 74) writes in 1862 about his visit to Postojnska Jama. This Slovak priest, publisher and publicist worked as a curate in Budim where he also edited and published the mentioned literary magazine. In the 3rd issue from 1864 he published a travel sketch in which he particularly described a visit to Postojnska Jama. He visited it on June 22, 1862 during his railway trip to Trieste organized by Pest entrepreneurial sphere. He states that the cave is the most important in Europe due to its extent and unique dripstone decoration. There-



Fig. 3: *Jozef Viktorín (1822 - 1874), a Slovak publisher and a publicist, the Slovak National Library, the Archives of Litetature and Art.*

lished. From 1885 he worked as a director of the Reich Geological Institute in Vienna. There he was engaged in a geologic-geographical situation of Slovakia and he wrote about character of local mountain ranges. In description of the so-called 3rd traction of calcareous mountains from Prašník to Nové Mesto he compared the most important northern part of the mountains above Čachtice called Nedze with the Karst in Carniola. This is documented by his statement: *“If you did not see the Karst, come here; there you can find hollows, sinks and ponors in which water is lost to spring near Čachtice again.”* We can find similar comparison in description of Choč as well. He states: *“From Lúčky to the granitic Tatra extend Prosečné calcareous hills.”* (He names them after the valley near Sielnica.) *“The valley is situated among high rock slopes. There is no water there because water flows underground similarly like in the Karst and it evidently*

fore many tourists from different parts of the world visit it. Although the weather was bad and they had only 3 hours to visit the cave, he was impressed by dripstone decoration, size of its underground spaces and in particular by the so-called Calvary at the end of the visit tour. He mentions cave illumination and a band playing in the Dance Hall as well. Among his trip impressions are also brief descriptions of Karst and its barren rocks extending to Gorizia and famous Bora wind.

In 1862 - 65 *Sokol* magazine was published in Pest and later in Skalica. It was edited by Viliam Paulíny - Tóth (1826 - 77), a later Slovak representative of the Hungary Assembly. In 1862 an interesting article by Dionýz Štúr (1827 - 93), an important Slovak geologist was pub-



Fig. 4: *Viliam Paulíny - Tóth (1826 - 1877), a Slovak deputy of the Hungary Assembly, an editor of Sokol magazine, the Slovak National Library, the Archives of Litetature and Art.*



Fig. 5: The cave near Postojna, an illustration from 1864.

springs only at one place.” In 1865 Štúr’s article also appeared in the 2nd part of E. Černý’s *Slovenská čítanka* published in Banská Bystrica as the 3rd issue of the *Matičné spisy*.

In 1864 a more comprehensive article about the cave near Postojna was published in *Sokol* magazine. Viliam Paulíny - Tóth, a magazine editor informs Slovak readers about the cave near Postojna, a small town in Carniola through which the Pivka stream flows. According to the author the cave is divided into two parts. It is an old part with the length of 143 fathoms (271 m), which was known for several centuries, and a new part discovered in 1816 with the length of 1,425 fathoms (2,702 m). At its beginning there is a stream. The cave is famous because of its interesting dripstone decoration and it is concluded by two staircases. One of them leads to a lake beyond which other spaces are assumed. The second one leads to the Cave of Ján. He mentions that the cave is usually closed and could be visited only with guides assigned for this aim by authorities. On the basis of J. Viktorín’s article from 1862 he also writes that the cave is the most famous in Europe and that many travelers from all over the world visit it. He also describes cave spaces and dripstone formations. It is remarkable that he completes his article by several illustrations.

At the end of January 1865 an unknown Slovak author published his own experiences from the journey to Rome in *Pešt’budínske vedomosti*. From Martin he travelled by stagecoach, and from Vienna he continued by train through Semmering to Trieste and then to Rome. During the journey he primarily planned to stop in Postojna. He wanted to visit the cave but then he changed his mind because of all-night rain and cold wind. Therefore when he frost-penetrated came into

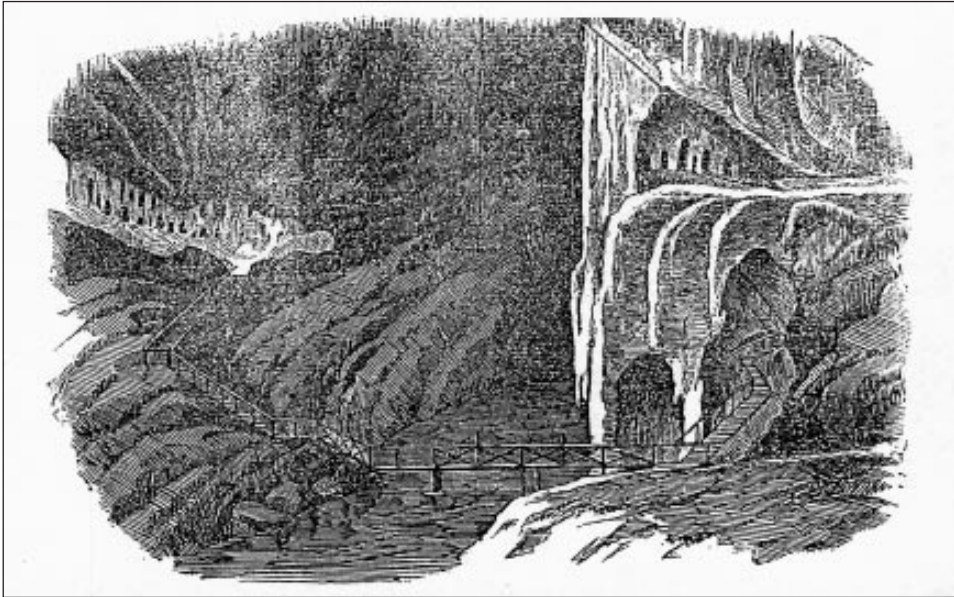


Fig. 6: *The cave near Postojna, an illustration from 1864.*

Postojna in the morning at 4.00 a.m. he had no wish to stay for longer time and he continued his journey to Italy. He thought to visit the cave on the way back. But finally he did not visit it.

D. Štúr's article published in *Letopis Matice slovenskej* in 1867 is in a certain degree related to the Karst in Carniola. It is written on the basis of letters by which *two searches of nature* drew attention to a periodical spring under the Havrania Rock in the Slovak Paradise at the end of 1862. In the article he also cites some information known by that time, mainly those of Ervín Helm in the almanac *Verein für Naturkunde zu Presburg* from 1860 - 61 and he discusses its karst origin as well. He tries to explain principles of its possible function on the example noticed in karst. It was most likely connected with his geological work in the surroundings of Adelsberg and Planina, which he carried on in the half of the fifties of the 19th century. Then he tries to sketch and explain principles of its function. In his opinion it is common that a whole flow disappears and later reappears again in the other side of the mountains. He documents it by an example of Liptov Prosečné.

Until now the latest known information related to the cave near Postojna is a comprehensive report about the cave railway published in *Obzor* magazine in 1872. This magazine was issued and edited by Daniel Lichard in Skalica. By its orientation it represents the most important Slovak economical magazine of the 19th century. Besides its main setting it deals with popularization of natural science. In 1833 an author of the article visited Postojnska Jama for the first time and he mentions the railway constructed there in the length of 800 fathoms (1,517 m) in about 1871. The train allows visitors to get out of coaches to look the surroundings and then to continue. A walking visit tour takes 4 hours. Therefore the train is an advantage for some visitor categories.

CONCLUSION

Although these articles do not bring anything new regarding the research of Postojnska Jama and near karst, they are nevertheless important. On the one hand they document interest of Slovak ethnic-group society in natural phenomena to which Postojnska Jama absolutely belongs. There were also representatives of Slovak intelligence who tried to be informed about unique beauty and character of its spaces and to share their feelings with magazine readers. Considering conditions, in which Hungarian part of the Monarchy lived at that time, the articles brought knowledge to Slovak readers in their own language. They present interesting sites of the country including the Slovak territory as one of its integral parts.

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POSTOJNSKA JAMA V SLOVAŠKI LITERATURI PRED 1918

Povzetek

Do 1918 je bila Slovaška (Slovaška republika) del Madžarske. Zato so bile objave o jamah tiskane v madžarskem ali nemškem jeziku. Slovaška periodika, ki je objavljala tudi novice o jamah, ni dovolj znana. V tem prispevku so obravnavane objave o Postojnski jami in okoliškem krasu v drugi polovici 19. stoletja. To je čas, ko je slovaški jezik dobil pravila in postal standardiziran. "Oktobrska diploma" 1860 je omogočila izpolnitev nekaterih slovaških zahtev v zvezi z jezikom, šolami in kulturo. Ustanovljena je bila *Matica slovenská*, publicistika se je močno okrepila in časopisi so napredovali. Po izenačenju Avstrije in Madžarske se je slovaško narodno življenje pričelo obračati proti drugim ciljem. Vesti o jamah so za nekaj časa izginile iz periodike.

1851 je *Domová pokladnica* objavila prvo vest o Postojnski jami. V članku o pokrajini Kras in o jamah na Kranjskem avtor govori tudi o Južni železnici in o zamisli, da bi kraške jame uporabili za železnico. Več drugih novic o Postojnski jami je najti tudi v časopisu *Slovenské noviny*. Ta uradni časopis dunajske vlade je izdajalo notranje ministrstvo v letih 1849-1861. 1851 je poročal o sestanku državnega geološkega inštituta. Na njem so razpravljali o najdbi majhnih rib v "Erbštojni" pri Banski Štiavnici in o dejstvu, da voda v rudniku ne more biti njihovo naravno okolje, tako kot je to primer s protejem v jamah na Kranjskem. V *Slovenskih novinah* je 1852 dunajski profesor K. Kuzmány omenjal Postojnsko jamo v zvezi s svojim potovanjem v Benetke. Leto kasneje je izšel članek o podzemeljskih tokovih na Kranjskem. Prinaša tudi nekaj novosti na podlagi raziskav A. Schmidla. 1857 časopis poroča, da je cesar Franc Jožef obiskal Postojnsko jamo (marca 1857) in kratka vest o tem je izšla tudi v naslednji številki. Tu avtor omenja nekaj zanimivih primerov jamske favne, ki jih je nabral A. Schmidl.

Dionýz Štúr, slovaški geolog, od 1885 direktor državnega geološkega inštituta na Dunaju, je v reviji *Sokol* 1862 objavil geološko-geografski opis Slovaške. V njem nekatera slovaška pogorja primerja s Krasom na Kranjskem. J. Viktorin je 1864 v reviji *Lipa* objavil svoja opažanja ob obisku Postojnske jame junija 1862, ko je bil na izletu v Trst. Naslednji članek o jami je izšel istega leta v reviji *Sokol*. V njem V. Paulíny - Tóth slovaške bralce seznanja z jamo pri Postojni, majhnem mestu na Kranjskem, in z značilnostmi njenega podzemlja. Vest o jami je najti tudi v reviji *Pešťbudínske vedomosti* iz 1865. V tem prispevku neznan avtor opisuje svojo pot z Dunaja, potoval je z vlakom, preko Semmeringa, Postojne in Trsta do Rima.

V *Letopisu Matice slovenskej* iz 1867 je članek D. Štúrja v zvezi s krasom na Kranjskem. V njem skuša razložiti princip delovanja periodičnega izvira Havranja skala s primerom s Krasa. Morda je to v zvezi z njegovim delom v okolici Postojne in Planine. Naslednja novica je izšla v reviji *Obzor* 1872. Njen avtor, ki je prvič obiskal jamo pri Postojni 1833, govori o zgraditvi železniške proge okoli leta 1871 v dolžini 800 fathomov.