

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORY OF MARIAN PULINA (1936-2005)



On October 22, 2005 in Katowice Prof. Dr. Marian Pulina, our good friend for many years, died of a treacherous disease. It was only at the end of June 2005 that he attended the International Karstological School at Postojna and visited his Slovene friends. Alas, for the last time! Poland lost one of its grand men and scientists whose figure and work adorned the whole country. His compatriots write that they lost a legendary speleologist, karstologist and explorer of Polar Regions, an outstanding geographer and geomorphologist. In his youth Marian Pulina created Polish speleology and karstology from almost nothing and, helped by his adherents and co-workers, established the science internationally. We may add that numerous karstologists in Europe and in the world lost an exceptional friend and co-worker who never differentiated whether one comes from a large, important country or from a smaller one.

Since 1957 when he probably visited our country for the first time Marian Pulina cherished friendly sentiments to Slovenia and Slovenes. This he proved by several ways, either by inviting us to regular Polish karstological days in the south of Poland, regularly held in February or we were his guests at some important professional expeditions of Polish geomorphologists (Siberia, Ural, Svalbard). It was never difficult for Marian to wake up in the earliest morning hours to wait us at the railway station in Katowice and then drive us through densely populated mining industrial Śląsk either to his home where he lived with his wife Mrs. Maria Pulinova, professor at the same Faculty at Sosnowiec or to his beloved faculty – Labo-

ratory of Karst Geomorphology in Będzińska Street or to karstological meetings in Polish Sudetenland. During our contacts he never forgot to mention his earliest experiences which he obtained in the company of Slovene, in particular Ljubljana cavers at the exploration of Triglavsko brezno and other caves; he remembered many Slovene songs and he was an excellent story-teller both of serious and funny events.

It was never boring in the company of Marian Pulina, his spirits were always high and his company inspired confidence and safety. He found a solution for every problem, in particular when he received numerous friends from abroad. Scientific contacts with foreign countries were the highest imperatives for Marian Pulina as his motto was since the first days of his career »Dla kontaktów!« This is why he was persona grata not only in Slovenia but also in Italy, Spain, and the former Soviet Union, Russia today, in particular Irkutsk and specially in France and the Czech Republic. In his professional sphere he had contacts with Croatian karstologist and also Norwegian, Canadian and others.

Marian Pulina was born on August 3, 1936 in Bydgoszcz in the north of Poland in a family of teachers where he spent his childhood. He studied geography in Wrocław from 1954 to 1959. At this time he started caving in the Sudety and Tatra Mts. At that time already Marian Pulina was becoming one of the leading Polish speleologists, organizing expeditions or taking part at them into shafts in the Tatras and abroad, to Triglavsko

brezno for example. About the exploration of Jaskinia Śnieżna he wrote in *Naše jame* (1961, 3, 22-27). The first scientific treatise about Naciekowa cave was published in 1957. When he finished studies he worked at first as a technician in a quarry and in a Research Station of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Wojcieszow and continued speleological explorations in the Sudety. In the years 1962 – 1964, as a scholar of the Polish Academy of Sciences, he was in Warszawa and within this research grant he visited in 1963 Prof. Jean Corbel in Lyon. The contact with the topmost expert and modern research methods in karstology was extremely important as he achieved a deepened knowledge about karst and Polar Regions at the same time. Not only for the French and the international community but also for Pulina personally, at that time young and promising Polish researcher, the loss of mentor Jean Corbel was extremely painful. Pulina's longing for knowledge brought him to the Lomonosov University in Moscow where he specialized in ice physics and a little later to the Institute of Earth's Crust of the Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences in Irkutsk. At that time he got familiar with karst hydrology in the area of new Bratsk reservoir construction on the Angara River. In 1965 he defended his doctoral thesis at the Institute of Geography of the Polish Academy of Sciences. So there opened his career starting at the Institute of Geography of the University in Wrocław, Department of Geomorphology supervised at that time by Prof. Alfred Jahn. Prof. Jahn as an excellent expert on the Polish Pleistocene geomorphology exerted an influence on young Pulina also. He stayed in Wrocław until 1976. During this time he lectured at the universities in Grenoble and Lyon thus starting a fruitful cooperation with many French universities and their karstologists, in the last time especially with Strasbourg and Bordeaux. In 1972 he successfully reached habilitation and this was another opportunity further to promote his scientific and didactic growth. In 1975 he started to establish a new scientific and didactic centre in a form of a Laboratory or School of karst geomorphology in the Department of Geomorphology, Silesian University in Sosnowiec. He was also a co-founder of Geosciences Faculty at the same university and its deputy dean. At the Silesian university he was vice-chancellor for research activity and international cooperation (1990-1993), member of senate and, obviously, numerous commissions. He was the head of the Geomorphology Department and for many years the head of the School of Karst Geomorphology. In this context we remember his efforts for cooperation between the Ljubljana and Silesia Universities, which due to lack of interest on our side, regretfully did not come to life. Since 1976 and up to his premature death he was all the time the head of this sole School of karst in Poland.

In 1966 he took part in the discovery and exploration of Jaskinia Niedzwiedzia in the Sudety Mts. and organized a multidisciplinary speleological research group. This group protected this cave opened in a marble quarry, and displayed it as a show cave. The case and practice connected with Jaskinia Niedzwiedzia helped to protect and touristically develop not only other caves in Poland but also elsewhere. This success encouraged M. Pulina to found in 1975 regular annual meetings of karstologists and cavers within the Speleological School, held every February in Łądek Zdrój at the south of Poland. At the beginning these were only Polish-Czech meetings related to Sudety karstological topics organized by the University in Wrocław. Since 1977 they have been international meetings of karstologists organized by the Silesian University. In 1991 he added the organisation of international meetings of karstological and nature conservation experts, named International School of Nature Protection in Karst Regions; the authorities of Landscape Parks in Poland and Moravian karst are included. The meetings and exchange of experiences between the experts from west and east undoubtedly proved efficient to development of karstology.

M. Pulina studied Sudety Mts., Tatras and Silesia – Krakow Upland but also karst areas abroad, for example in central Siberia. He organized numerous explorations and multidisciplinary scientific expeditions or excursions to Siberia, Bulgaria, Czech, Cuba, Svalbard and Iceland. In karstology he was mostly interested in the chemistry of karst waters, chemical denudation, dynamic karstology, karst development in mentioned regions, karst climatology, periglacial phenomena in caves and cryochemistry. The result of his studies are more than 150 papers and many books, among them the first one related to karstology in Polish language. The last book was published in France in September 2005. M. Pulina brought up hundreds of students, as founder of the Polish karstological school he bestowed his specific karstological knowledge on more than 100 students (not only Polish). As supervisor he educated many top experts and teachers.

A special love of M. Pulina was Svalbard. For a Pole aware of Polish history of arctic endeavours since the end of the 19th century this is not uncommon. Very quickly M. Pulina established that in the polar world almost nobody is interested in the phenomena, entirely or partly karstic or when they are similar to karst. First of all these are caves in glaciers, excavated by glacier water during the summer but also true sinking streams and hydrothermal phenomena. This is why M. Pulina is considered as the initiator of cryokarst explorations, in particular cryochemistry and glacier caves. In later years he attended almost every year several months long ex-

plorations of Svalbard's glaciers, around Hornsund specifically and took part in the origin and development of the huge Polish research station there. Among other things he was the leader of the second one-year scientific expedition to Hornsund 1979/1980. He succeeded in attracting the international experts and karstologists or speleologists, such as Adolfo Eraso (Spain), Jacques Schroeder (Canada) and Josef Rehak (Czech). All these efforts contributed to M. Pulina becoming the main Polish coordinator of polar researches. His work also is the scientific geomorphological and glaciological workshop on Svalbard with international participation in the years 2002 and 2003.

Let us stress another Marian's quality connected both with his character and width of his geographical visions. On the way to objective scientific goals he swore to cooperation between experts and professions, an interdisciplinary approach, in particular in karstology and polar researches. Beside geomorphology, very close to him were geology, chemistry and hydrology. As he was thinking he was also acting, he knew how to unite, connect and compare different views, attitudes and methodologies and their representatives. M. Pulina was a man with an extremely large circle of friends and co-workers, not only among geographers but also among many colleagues of other professions. This is the heritage to be cherished.

In 1959 M. Pulina founded a journal named *Speleologia* and later, in 1977 the journal *Kras i speleologia*. He was a member of editorial board of *French Karstologia*, *International Journal of Speleology*, *Polish Polar Research*, *Geographical Journal*, etc.

Permit me some words about Pulina's contacts with Slovenia and Slovene karstologists. Quite early he has visited Slovenia and made contacts with some speleologists, for example Peter Habič. He visited Postojnska jama and Škocjanske jame. I think that for the first time he visited the Department of Geography in summer term of 1957 when he lectured the students in Balcony hall about the Polish karst. According to oral communication of M. Vojvoda this visit left an impression on students, as he was a foreigner from the other side of the iron curtain. Thus he came to Slovenia already as a caver and, so to say, in the middle of his studies he was a valued expert for caves and karst. At that time he made contacts with the Society of Cave exploration of Slovenia and some of its members took part in the expedition into Jaskinia Śnieżna. In Slovenia Pulina was mostly interested in middle- and high mountainous karst very similar to the Polish. Together with P. Habič, they visited his field area between Idrija and Vipava valley. In the autumn 1957 he went with me to the high mountainous karst of Kriški podi for several days. Pulina met A. Melik also, who presented him with

one of his books *Slovenija* with dedication and he visited Prof. Ilešič.

In 1959 the nestor of Polish speleologists Štefan Zwolinski, a person that Pulina highly respected, led the team of Wrocław Academic Tourist Club in cooperation with Wrocław University. Pulina had an important role in the expedition as he measured physico chemical properties of high mountainous karst waters and he reported about the expedition (Pulina 1960). He visited Kamniške Alpe also. In 1963 he came to Slovenia again, sampling water for chemical analyses near Vrhnika and in the mountains. The next visit was in autumn 1965 when he participated at the 4th International Congress of Speleology and it pre-congress excursion into mountains around Triglav. His visits in Slovenia became more frequent when the summer Karstological School started and he became tightly connected with the Karst Research Institute ZRC SAZU and also as a tutor of post-graduate studies at Polytechnics Nova Gorica. With special joy we remember his presence at Slovene-Polish-French round table in 1991 in the time when Slovenia fought for independence and he enthusiastically congratulated us and then he had great difficulty to reach Ljubljana and home to Poland by side roads.

Marian Pulina had a vivacious and adventurous life of scientist and researcher, always aiming high. Dangers did not avoid him. Twice he was in a mortal danger, the first in a mineshaft in Upper Silesia by a stroke of lightning and the second time he fell into glacier fissure on Svalbard and had a narrow escape.

All the time of his fruitful and rich life Marian was the member of Wrocław caving club, coordinator of a caving club in Warszawa and honorary member of Caving Club Aven, Sosnowiec.

Slovene karst was a permanent inspiration for Marian Pulina and for us were many other precious karst and geomorphological horizons that he showed us in 40 years of uninterrupted fidelity. May the Polish earth rest light on him!

Jurij Kunaver

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