

EMILE G. RACOVITZA AND HIS IMPORTANT ROLE IN SPELEOBIOLOGY

VLOGA IN POMEN EMILA G. RACOVITZE V SPELEOBIOLOGIJI

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Izvleček

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Ede Barabás: Vloga in pomen Emila G. Racovitze v speleobiologiji

Emil G. Racovitza (1868-1947) je poleg prava študiral tudi geologijo in zoologijo. 1904 je obiskal jamo Cueva del Drach (Mallorca) in odkril novo jamsko žival. To je vzpodbudilo njegovo zanimanje za jamsko favno, ki ji je posvetil vse svoje življenje. 1907 je objavil najpomembnejše delo "Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques". Z R. Jeannelom je ustanovil revijo Biospeologica. Poleg opisov jamskih živali vsebuje opise stotine jam iz Evrope in sveta, kjer so nabirali jamsko živalstvo. 1920 je ustanovil speleološki inštitut v Cluju (Romunija).

Ključne besede: zgodovina speleologije, biospeleologija, speleološki inštitut, Racovitza E. G.

Abstract

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Ede Barabás: Emile G. Racovitza and his important role in speleobiology

Emile G. Racovitza (1868-1947) qualified in law and studied geology and zoology too. In 1904 he visited Cueva del Drach (Mallorca) and discovered a new cave animal. This aroused his life-long interest in cave fauna. In 1907 he published his most important paper "Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques". With R. Jeannel he established the journal Biospeologica. It included, among detailed anatomical papers, descriptions of many hundred caves all over Europe and elsewhere, in which fauna was collected. In 1920 he founded Institute of Speleology, at Cluj (Rumania).

Key words: history of speleology, biospeleology, speleological institute, Racovitza E. G.

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*The portrait of Emil G. Racovitza
(from Livre du centenaire Emile G. Racovitza 1868-1968).*

Emile G. Racovitza was born on 15 November, 1868 in Iasi and there he studied at the primary school and comprehensive school. When he was nineteen years old he started at the Paris University. There he finished the study of law in 1889 because he wanted to carry out his father's wish. He studied also geology, anthropology and zoology at the same time. It was in 1891 when he finally took the state examination in natural science.

Later, in 1897, he took part of the Antarcis Expedition on the ship "Belgica". Roald Amundsen, who discovered the South Pole few years later, was also between the members of the expedition.

On July 13th 1904 Emile Racovitza was invited by Odon de Buen to the island of Mallorca where he visited the famous cave "Cueva del drach". It was there that he discovered a small, blind animal which they described together under the name of *typhlocirolana moraguesi*.

This aroused his life-long interest in cave fauna and a wide literature search resulted, in 1907, in his most important paper "Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques". This long and fundamental paper established biospeleology (he called it "biospeology") as a science, emphasized its importance and set out a plan for future work. In a paper, published in Paris few years later, Racovitza's student René Jeannel, stated about the mentioned paper: "Le premier mémoire de se périodique, Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques par Emile G. Racovitza, est encore aujourd'hui le statut fondamental de la biospéologie".

1900 his old professor named Racovitza "sous-directeur du laboratoire maritime ARAGO" at Banyuls-sur-Mer and "co-directeur de la revue Archives de Zoologie expérimentale et générale". Together with his student and colleague, René Jeannel, he established the journal BIOSPEOLOGICA. It included, among detailed anatomical papers, descriptions of many hundred caves, all over Europe (from Carpathians, Dinaric Mountains, Alps and Pyrenees, that is mainly from France, Spain, Slovenia, Romania) and elsewhere (Africa), in which fauna was collected. They worked together with well known cave fauna specialists as Endre Dudich from Hungary and J. A. Birstein from Moscow. The result of their co-operation were "Biospeologica hungarica" and "Biospeologica sovjetica". Between 1905 and 1929 he published 20 papers on *isopoda* only.

With R. Jeannel he established the journal Biospeologica. It included, among detailed anatomical papers, descriptions of many hundred caves all over Europe and elsewhere, in which fauna was collected. In 1920 he founded Institute of Speleology, at Cluj (Rumania). Racovitza and Jeannel are not only the pioneers of biospeleology but also very important regarding the international scientific co-operation. So it is not surprising that UNESCO inscribed his name between the great cultural persons to commemorate in the year 1968.

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Povzetek

Emil G. Racovitza (1868-1947) je doštudiral pravo na pariški univerzi 1889 in do 1891 dokončal tudi študij geologije in zoologije. 1904 je obiskal jamo Cueva del Drach na Mallorci in odkril novo jamsko žival, ki jo je poimenoval *Typhlocirolana moraguesi*. To je vzpodbudilo njegovo zanimanje za jamsko favno, ki ji je posvetil vse svoje življenje. Resno se je poglobil tudi v literaturo in rezultat tega je njegov najpomembnejši prispevek "Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques" (1907). S tem obsežnim in temeljnim sestavkom je utemeljil biospeleologijo kot vedo, podčrtal njen pomen in predstavil načrt za bodoče delo. Skupaj s študentom in kasnejšim sodelavcem R. Jeannelom je ustanovil revijo *Biospeologica*. Poleg anatomskih opisov jamskih živali vsebuje revija opise stotin jam iz Evrope in z vsega sveta, v katerih so nabirali jamsko živalstvo. 1920 je ustanovil speleološki inštitut v Cluju (Transilvanija, Romunija).