



The Mountains that Wrote Them: Slovenians Climbing and Writing about Eight- Thousand-Metre Peaks

Góry, które ich napisały.
Słoweńcy wspinający się
na i piszący o ośmiotysięcznikach

Today, Slovenian Himalayan climbers are ranked among the best in the world. This metaphorical climb to the top began with successful ascents of Makalu in 1975 and Everest in 1979. By 1995, Slovenians scaled all 14 peaks higher than eight thousand metres. So far, 249 Slovenians have taken part in 126 expeditions to eight-thousanders; 82 of them summited an eight-thousander, some more than once, as there were 149 ascents in total. 27 of them (co-)wrote at least one book detailing the expedition; there are 56 such books in total. The article gives a chronology of Slovenian Himalayan expeditions with an overview of the first Slovenian ascents of eight-thousanders. Featured are also a list of expedition members who (co-)wrote books about expeditions to eight-thousanders, a graph showing the frequency of book publications, and a list of Slovenian climbers and their eight-thousanders.

SLOVENIAN MOUNTAINEERING,
HIMALAYA, MOUNTAINEERING
LITERATURE, ALEŠ
KUNAVR, TONE ŠKARJA

Słoweńscy himalaiści są współcześnie uznawani za jednych z najlepszych na świecie. Ta metaforyczna wspinaczka na szczyt rozpoczęła się wraz ze zdobyciem Makalu w roku 1975 oraz Mount Everest w roku 1979. Do roku 1995 słoweńscy wspinacze wspięli się na wszystkie 14 ośmiotysięczników. Do chwili obecnej, 249 Słoweńców wzięło udział w 126 wyprawach na ośmiotysięczniki: 82 dotarło na szczyt, niektórzy więcej niż jeden raz, tak że ogólna liczba wejść liczy 149. 27 himalaistów napisało co najmniej jedną książkę wyprawową (niektórzy we współautorstwie); w sumie można naliczyć 56 takich książek. Niniejszy artykuł prezentuje chronologię słoweńskich wypraw w Himalaje, podając pierwsze wejścia słoweńskich wspinaczy na ośmiotysięczniki. Zawiera również listę wspinaczy-autorów książek górskich, wykres ukazujący częstotliwość publikacji książkowych, oraz listę słoweńskich wspinaczy wraz ze zdobytymi przez nich szczytami.

ALPINIZM SŁOWEŃSKI, HIMALAJE,
LITERATURA GÓRSKA, ALEŠ
KUNAVR, TONE ŠKARJA

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INTRODUCTION

Slovenian high-altitude climbers have been ranked among the best in the world for more than 40 years.¹ Ever since the successful Yugoslav Himalayan expeditions to the south face of Makalu in 1975 and the western ridge of Everest four years later, Slovenian climbers have been recognised internationally as equals to the most successful Himalayan climbers from much larger and wealthier alpinist nations.

Very few sporting activities in Slovenia can boast a richer history than alpinism. This is not surprising given that alpinism has been a powerful connecting element for the Slovenian nation ever since the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, the first wave of conquering the highest peaks of the world passed Slovenians by. In the years following the Second World War, Slovenia, and Yugoslavia as a whole, missed the pioneering period of first ascents in the Himalaya and Karakoram, mainly due to their relative political isolation and lack of resources and experience compared to the most successful countries in the field of high-altitude mountaineering. By the 1960s, however, the Yugoslav government began to support expeditions to mountain ranges outside the country. At first, these were carried out in the former Soviet Union, mainly in the Caucasus and Pamir; a few years later, Hindu Kush, the Himalaya and Karakoram become attainable as well.

Initially, the expeditions were organised in a way which ensured that all six Yugoslav republics had their representatives in expedition teams. Eventually, Slovenians took over the leading role; led by two excellent expedition planners, Aleš Kunaver and Tone Škarja, they soon made up for lost time with several first ascents of some of the most difficult faces on eight-thousanders. In the late 1970s and early

'80s, Slovenian alpinists were among the founders of climbing Himalayan mountains via their most difficult faces, often in a style which had only been practiced in the Alps until then. This was their strategy to compensate for having missed the initial post-war conquest of the summits of eight-thousanders.

So far, Slovenian alpinists have received as many as nine Piolet d'Or awards for their climbs, including a life achievement award for Andrej Štremfelj. They would most likely have won more of these prestigious international awards if these had existed before 1992.

SLOVENIAN PATH TO THE HIMALAYA

Conquering the world's highest mountains was a matter of national prestige at the time and the Himalaya soon became an important goal in Yugoslav alpinist circles, as well as a motive for climbers to work even harder. Climbers and politicians began to talk about an expedition of Slovenian alpinists to the Himalaya. For the first post-war generation of Slovenian mountaineers, Himalayan mountains were a beacon which guided their actions and encouraged them to make increasingly difficult winter ascents and climbs in the Western Alps (see Škarja: 247).

Two unclimbed eight-thousanders became potential destinations, namely Shishapangma and Manaslu. In 1955, the Steering Committee for the Alpinist Expedition to the Himalaya was established by the Alpine Association of Slovenia (see Keršič et al.: 5). Together with the Himalayan Committee, which was founded in the same year by the Alpine Association of Yugoslavia, they drafted a plan for a Yugoslav expedition which would leave for the Himalaya in the autumn of 1956.² The

2 I should mention two post-war Slovenian emigrants to Argentina who attended Argentinian expeditions to eight-thousanders. In 1954, Dinko Bertonec] reached the altitude of 7,600 metres on Dhaulagiri; in 1971, Jure Skvarča withdrew just under 8,000 metres on Everest. Neither expedition was successful.

destination they chose was the eight-thousander Manaslu (see Mikša and Golob: 64).

The plan to visit the Himalaya had fallen through even before the expedition began (see Kunaver 2007: 12). The main reason behind the cancellation of the expedition was the reduced government support, as a rationalised supply for the population was in force due to the difficult economic circumstances of the mid-1950s. The organisers of the expedition also faced various other problems, as they had virtually no experience with such endeavours, to say nothing of the limitations which the political system in Yugoslavia had put on contacts with organisers of other European expeditions. All the preparations and joint trainings in the Western Alps were in vain; some of the best alpinists were so disappointed that they quit climbing altogether (see Mikša and Ajlec: 95).

Despite the major disappointment after the cancellation of the Manaslu expedition, the climbers' desire to visit the Himalaya remained a recurring topic at the general assemblies of alpine clubs. This led to the establishment of a new Himalayan Committee of the Alpine Association of Slovenia on 28 October 1959. This committee realised years of anticipation – in the following year, the time came for a Yugoslav expedition to the Himalaya (see Mikša and Golob: 84).

In 1960, the First Yugoslav Alpinist Himalayan Expedition or the First JAHÖ (Jugoslovanska alpinistična himalajska odprava) was destined for the Indian peak of Trisul (7,120m). It was the longest Slovenian expedition: as its members travelled there and back by ship, it took no less than five months (see Mikša and Ajlec: 96). Their initial goal was to conquer the second highest mountain of India, Nanda Devi (7,816m), but the Indian government did not give them permission to ascend it. It did, however, allow them to ascend Trisul. They failed to reach the

top of the highest peak of Trisul, but they did summit the neighbouring peaks Trisul II (6,690m) and Trisul III (6,270m). Despite their failure to traverse to the main peak, the expedition was rated a success, especially in terms of gaining climbing and organisational experience in the Himalaya (see Anonymous 1960).

With the ascents to the peaks of all 14 eight-thousanders in 1964, when the last previously unclimbed eight-thousander was scaled, the focus of Himalayan climbers slowly shifted in a new direction, namely from the easiest routes on eight-thousanders to routes across individual high faces of Himalayan mountains. This new direction in Himalayan mountaineering was indicated by the British in 1970, when they ascended the south face of Annapurna. Only two years after this influential exploit, an eight-thousander was tackled in this new way by the Fourth JAHÖ.³ The team first wanted to settle the score with Kangbachen (7,902m), which the Second JAHÖ had failed to summit. However, the Nepalese closed off the area around the mountain for a few years, so they were forced to find a new destination. They decided on the fifth highest peak in the world, the eight-thousander Makalu, and its unclimbed south face. Due to the extremely difficult exploit, their inexperience, tough weather conditions and problems with high-altitude porters, the expedition was only partly successful, as the climbers failed to reach the top; nevertheless, they were the first to climb the face and the first Slovenians to make it past the magical altitude of 8,000 metres.

THE FIRST TIME AT EIGHT-THOUSAND METRES: SUCCESS ON MAKALU

In 1975, Slovenian alpinists returned to the south face of Makalu in the framework of the Sixth JAHÖ, this time with a bigger and perhaps

3 Between the First and Fourth JAHÖs, the Second JAHÖ (1965) aimed to achieve the first ascent of Kangbachen. Pavle Dimitrov and Tone Sazonov had to withdraw at the altitude of 7,800 metres. West Kangbachen or Yalung Ri (7,538 m) was climbed, though, as the second highest peak to be summited first by Yugoslavs. The Third JAHÖ (1969) achieved the second-ever ascent of Annapurna II (7,937m) and the third-ever ascent of Annapurna IV (7,540m); that autumn, this was the most successful expedition in the Nepalese Himalaya (see Kunaver 1971).

4 Aleš Kunaver (1935–1984) is considered the main actor behind the success of Slovenian Himalayan alpinism. He is known for saying that Slovenians had to outrun the train to catch up to the level of climbing in the Himalaya. Kunaver's first visit to the Himalaya was in 1960 as a member of the First JAHO, during which he made the first ascents of Trisul II and Trisul III. From 1968–1984, he led the expedition to Hindu Kush (1968); the Third JAHO, during which he ascended Annapurna IV; the Fourth and the Sixth JAHOs, both to Makalu; the expedition to the south face of Lhotse (1981); and the Croatian-Slovenian expedition to Manaslu in 1984 (see Mikša and Golob: 78).

5 Together with Kunaver, Tone Škarja (1937–2020) is the main author of the Slovenian Himalayan story. From 1979–2013, he headed the Commission for Expeditions to Foreign Mountain Ranges (Komisija za odprave v tuja gorstva) at the Alpine Association of Slovenia. He attended five Himalayan expeditions as a climber and 13 as the leader. His stints as the leader include the 1979 expedition to Everest, which is still arguably the greatest logistical feat in the history →

better team (see Škarja: 268). The leader was once again Kunaver.⁴ The goal was to finish the route across the south face and reach the top of the first Slovenian (and Yugoslav) eight-thousander. On 6 October 1975 (Table 1), Stane Belak and Marjan Manfreda stood on top of an eight-thousander as the first Slovenians (and Yugoslavs) to do so (see Kunaver 2006: 133–46). Manfreda even ascended to the top without the help of supplemental oxygen, which was the world altitude record at the time (see Manfreda 1976: 161). The Yugoslav success in the Himalaya was regarded as the greatest alpinist act of 1975, as it was the most difficult large Himalayan face to be climbed (see Kunaver 2006: 161). Thus, Yugoslav alpinists joined the pioneers of modern Himalayan climbing in a time when the practice of climbing Himalayan mountains via faces had barely begun.

The success on the south face of Makalu along a new route triggered a substantial leap in the mentality of Slovenian alpinists, charting the course of Slovenian alpinism in the following decades. During the next Himalayan expedition in 1977, Andrej Štremfelj and Nejc Zaplotnik (Table 1) made the first ascent along the southwestern ridge of Gasherbrum I, thus scaling the second Slovenian eight-thousander (see Škarja: 268–69). An idea which would have seemed utopian, presumptuous or impossible a few years earlier – namely to summit an eight-thousander via a new route – was realised in the first attempt.

TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD: EVEREST '79

In 1979, the Seventh JAHO departed for the Himalaya under the leadership of Tone Škarja,⁵ the most important architect of Slovenian Himalayan climbing besides Aleš Kunaver; the expedition reached the top of the world along a new, Yugoslav route, representing the climax

of Yugoslav alpinism (see Štremfelj 1992b). The route along the western ridge of Everest was the fourth route to the highest peak in the world and it arguably remains the most difficult one to this day, when there are seventeen routes leading to the summit. Its difficulty comes from its great length, exposure to wind and substantial technical obstacles, especially in the top part of the mountain. Despite numerous attempts over the last forty years, only two expeditions have succeeded in repeating this difficult – and attractive – route.

The expedition lasted just over three months. It took the climbers three weeks to reach the base camp. 750 high-altitude porters carried almost 22 tons of equipment and food to the Khumbu Glacier at the altitude of 5,350 metres (see Štremfelj 2010: 9). The expedition was organised in the classic Himalayan style with a base camp and several high-altitude camps, five in total. On 13 May at 13:51 Nepal Time (Table 1), after a month of climbing, Nejc Zaplotnik and Andrej Štremfelj became the first Slovenians (and Yugoslavs) to reach the roof of the world (see Anonymous 1979). This is how Štremfelj remembered it in 1992: ‘We hugged and patted each other on the back, then Nejc switched on his radio and spoke the words all Slovenian alpinists know well: “Tone, we’re at the top! We’re sitting next to the Chinese pyramid and we don’t know what to do.”’ (Štremfelj 1992a)

→ of Slovenian Himalayan climbing. He also wrote five books about his Himalayan expeditions.

ASCENTS OF EIGHT-THOUSANDERS, 1979–2021

In May 1981, in the framework of the last classically organised major expedition, the Eighth JAHÖ, the south face of Lhotse was climbed on the Yugoslav route. In the 1970s, this face, 3,300 metres high, was considered a problem for the next millennium (see Matijevic). It took Slovenians two months to climb the face. The climbers did not reach

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Unlike classic expeditions, the alpine style is characterised by a decrease in the use of gear, the absence of fixed ropes and camps pitched in advance, and the refusal of bottled oxygen. Alpinists carry all their gear and food with them. The climbing team is significantly smaller as well. Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler pioneered the alpine style with their ascent of Gasherbrum I along the north face (see Golob 1997).

the top of the mountain, but the expedition was nevertheless very influential throughout the international mountaineering community.

If the expedition to Lhotse was made up of the best Yugoslav climbers, most of the members of the autumn expedition to the south face of Dhaulagiri lacked real Himalayan experience. One exception was the expedition leader, Belak, who had chosen five young alpinists to accompany him (see Škarja: 270–71). This small expedition, a trendsetter for expeditions to high mountain ranges, tackled the mighty Himalayan face in the alpine style.⁶ After pitching nine bivouacs in the rock wall, the team managed to climb the new route in the alpine style up to 7,800 metres, which was the end of technically difficult passages; however, due to exhaustion and strong winds, they did not reach the top. Their descent could not follow the route of the ascent, so they descended on the northeast side. The ascent and descent took as many as 14 days, while the entire expedition lasted 18 days (see Belak). Arguably the most difficult alpine-style climb in the Himalaya at the time, the expedition was an exceptional promotion of climbing Himalayan faces in the alpine style (see Mikša and Golob: 150).

In 1983, a Croatian Himalayan expedition was organised to a new eight-thousander and it was also attended by Slovenians Viki Grošelj and Nejc Zaplotnik. The goal was Manaslu (8,163m) from the southwest side, but the climb ended tragically on 24 April when a serac collapse buried Ante Bučan and Zaplotnik.

This was a great shock for Yugoslav alpinism, which lost its best alpinist in Zaplotnik. The expedition was terminated instantly. In the following year, Croatians Stipe Božić and Edo Retelj and Slovenians Grošelj and Kunaver returned to the mountain; Kunaver also led the expedition. Grošelj and Božić reached the top on 4 May 1984 (Table 1). This was the last expedition led by the legendary Aleš Kunaver: a few

| | Date | Peak | Altitude | Climbers |
|-----|------------|---------------|----------|---|
| 1. | 6/10/1975 | Makalu | 8,463m | Stane Belak, Marjan Manfreda |
| 2. | 8/7/1977 | Gasherbrum I | 8,068m | Andrej Štremfelj, Nejc Zaplotnik |
| 3. | 13/5/1979 | Everest | 8,848m | Andrej Štremfelj, Nejc Zaplotnik |
| 4. | 4/5/1984 | Manaslu | 8,163m | Viki Grošelj |
| 5. | 28/7/1986 | Broad Peak | 8,047m | Bogdan Biščak, Viki Grošelj |
| 6. | 4/8/1986 | Gasherbrum II | 8,035m | Bogdan Biščak, Viki Grošelj, Pavle Kozjek, Andrej Štremfelj |
| 7. | 4/12/1987 | Dhaulagiri | 8,167m | Marjan Kregar, Iztok Tomazin |
| 8. | 2/11/1988 | Cho Oyu | 8,201m | Iztok Tomazin |
| 9. | 30/4/1989 | Lhotse | 8,516m | Viki Grošelj |
| 10. | 19/10/1989 | Shishapangma | 8,027m | Pavle Kozjek, Andrej Štremfelj |
| 11. | 31/7/1990 | Nanga Parbat | 8,126m | Marija Frantar, Jože Rozman |
| 12. | 1/5/1991 | Kangchenjunga | 8,586m | Viki Grošelj |
| 13. | 13/6/1993 | K2 | 8,611m | Viki Grošelj, Zvonko Požgaj |
| 14. | 29/4/1995 | Annapurna | 8,091m | Davo Karničar, Drejc Karničar |

← **TABLE 1**
The first Slovenians
on eight-thousanders

months after returning to his homeland, he had a fatal helicopter accident in the Slovenian mountains.

In the summer of 1986, an expedition to Pakistan achieved a number of feats. First, almost all the expedition members ascended the fifth Slovenian eight-thousander, Broad Peak, in the classic style; among them was Marija Štremfelj, the first Slovenian female alpinist to conquer an eight-thousander (Table 1). Of the 12 alpinists who summited Broad Peak, Bogdan Biščak, Grošelj, Pavle Kozjek and Štremfelj (Table 1) went on to scale Gasherbrum II.

The year 1987 brought success on the seventh Slovenian eight-thousander, when Belak led his fourth expedition to Dhaulagiri. He was joined by Marjan Kregar, Kozjek and Iztok Tomazin. In early December,

Kregar and Tomazin ascended to the top of the seventh Slovenian eight-thousander (see Mikša and Golob: 151). Dhaulagiri became the first and so far the only Slovenian eight-thousander (Table 1) to be conquered in the winter conditions (*ibid.*: 152).

In the following year, the Alpine Association of Slovenia organised an expedition of highly capable alpinists to Cho Oyu. The goal of the expedition was the unclimbed north face of the mountain. On 2 November 1988, Tomazin became the first Slovenian to reach the top of Cho Oyu (Table 1) (see Tomazin 1993).

The spring of 1989 finally brought success on Lhotse, which had been a great desire of Slovenian climbers ever since the expedition of 1981. That year, Grošelj and his usual co-climber, Božić, joined the Macedonian expedition to Everest. Grošelj and Božić also paid for permits to climb Lhotse, which Grošelj successfully ascended on his own (Table 1) after having ascended Everest, thus contributing the ninth peak to the list of Slovenian eight-thousanders (see Škarja: 274–75; Grošelj 1991).

The autumn expedition to the south face of Shishapangma was another milestone, contributing the tenth eight-thousander (Table 1). For the first time, the Slovenian expedition was designed as a set of more or less independent rope teams with separate goals; the shared base camp provided the alpinists with better logistics. The expedition was a great success because of the first ascent over the south pillar, which was climbed by Štremfelj and Kozjek, and because of the new variant of the British Descent Route climbed by Filip Bence and Grošelj (see Mikša and Golob: 157).

In 1990, several alpine clubs joined forces with the Alpine Association of Slovenia to organise an expedition to Nanga Parbat; the main goal was to reach the top as part of the Slovenian project of climbing all

14 eight-thousanders. On 31 July, Marija Frantar and Jože Rozman stood on the summit (Table 1). Marija, called Mariča by her fellow climbers, was the first woman to climb the famous Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat while ascending to the top; with its 4,500 metres, this is the highest face in the world.⁷

However, the next, twelfth Slovenian eight-thousander, the mighty Kangchenjunga, which Slovenians successfully ascended in 1991, proved fatal for Mariča. This expedition had very high goals. Slovenians wanted to conquer the remaining three peaks of Kangchenjunga,⁸ which they had not yet climbed. They successfully ascended Kangchenjunga Main, Kangchenjunga Central and Kangchenjunga South (Table 1). Despite its successes, the expedition was considered tragic because Frantar and Rozman were left stranded on the mountain while attempting to ascend to the top (see Štěrbová: 357–58).

In 1993, K2 was scaled by Grošelj and Zvonko Požgaj as the thirteenth Slovenian eight-thousander (Table 1). This expedition is considered tragic as well, as Boštjan Kekec remained on the mountain due to acute high-altitude sickness (see Golob 1999).

That left just one eight-thousander on which no Slovenian had ever stood, namely Annapurna. After several failed attempts, the Alpine Association of Slovenia organised a successful expedition in the spring of 1995. During the first Slovenian ascent of this peak (Table 1), brothers Davo and Drejc Karničar also made the first ski descent from this extremely deadly eight-thousander (see Mikša and Ajlec: 133).

The year 1995 was therefore a landmark year, but it did not mark the end of expeditions. From 1995–2021, Slovenians attended 75 further expeditions to eight-thousanders (the total number of all expeditions is shown in Table 2). So far, 82 Slovenian alpinists have stood on top of eight-thousanders (Table 4); the total number of ascents is 149.

7 By doing so, Frantar set the Slovenian women's altitude record; however, in the autumn of that year, Marija Štremfelj ascended to the top of Everest with her husband Andrej, thus beating her record. Moreover, the Štremfeljs became the first married couple to summit Everest.

8 In 1985, Tomo Česen and Borut Bergant scaled the west peak, Yalung Kang.

SLOVENIAN HIMALAYAN CLIMBERS AND MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE

If we enter a decent Slovenian bookshop, we quickly discover that many books are devoted to mountains. They include fiction; mythological tales; guidebooks for children, families, hikers, ski tourers and alpinists; coffee table books; and so on. If we dwell for a moment on alpinism as a sporting discipline we can say that there are more books about alpinism and alpinism-related exploits than about any other sport. In light of the successes achieved in other sports, the situation could be different, though (see Mikša et al.: 24). If we look back on the Slovenian Himalayan expeditions from the first explorations of the Himalaya in the 1960s onwards, we see that the books about these expeditions are a genuine heritage of the history of Slovenian Himalayan climbing. That is why books about the Himalaya are also of documentary importance.

This type of publications began with a book entitled *Himalaja in človek* (The Himalaya and Man). It was written in 1957 by Igor Levstek and Janko Blaže, two versatile alpinists from the first post-war generation of mountaineers; they wrote a review of mountaineering achievements in the Himalaya based on available written sources from all around the world. In 1962, this was followed by the first Slovenian original book on the Himalaya, *Noči in viharji* (Nights and Storms), which combined the diary entries of three participants in the First JAHO, namely Marjan Keršič, Ciril Debeljak and Ante Mahkota (see Strojin: 251). Today, COBISS, the Slovenian library information system, offers over 160 hits under the keyword *Himalaya*. This includes books, e-books and BA and MA theses in Slovenian and other languages. Based on the chronology of conquering the most iconic peaks, one would

| Mountain | All expeditions | Successful expeditions | Slovenian summiters |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Cho Oyu | 15 | 13 | 34 |
| Broad Peak | 6 | 5 | 18 |
| Everest | 16 | 9 | 18 |
| Dhaulagiri | 10 | 4 | 15 |
| Shishapangma | 13 | 5 | 13 |
| Gasherbrum II | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| Makalu | 9 | 2 | 8 |
| Kangchenjunga | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| Lhotse | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Gasherbrum I | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| Annapurna | 11 | 3 | 4 |
| K2 | 11 | 4 | 4 |
| Manaslu | 7 | 3 | 3 |
| Nanga Parbat | 8 | 2 | 3 |

← **TABLE 2**
Slovenian expeditions
to eight-thousanders

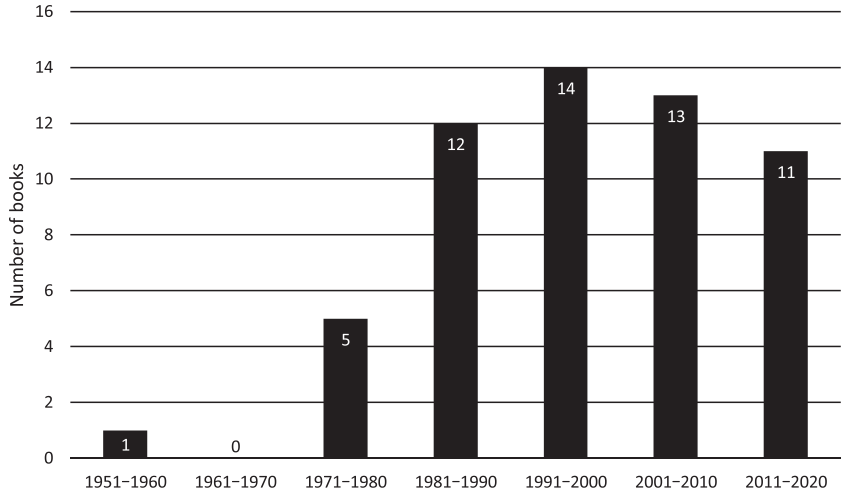
think that most of the books describe the expeditions from the 1970s and '80s, but that is not the case. The majority of books were written in the 1990s and 2000s (Graph 1). Today, there are 56 books on the Slovenian expeditions to eight-thousanders, written by 27 authors (either individually or as co-authors). 19 of them have stood on top of an eight-thousander.

The review of the published books shows that the major Himalayan expeditions until Everest 1979 or Lhotse 1981 are carefully documented; afterwards, the eagerness for such large-scale descriptions of expeditions wore off. The most persistent chronicler to date is Grošelj (Table 3), while the main achievements of the past decade are yet to be discussed in mountaineering books. ♡

TABLE 3 ▶

Number of book accounts of expeditions to eight-thousanders written by expedition members

| Writer | Number of book accounts |
|---|-------------------------|
| Viki Grošelj | 16 |
| Tone Škarja | 5 |
| Iztok Tomazin | 4 |
| Aleš Kunaver | 3 |
| Danilo Cedilnik | 2 |
| Dušan Jelinčič | 2 |
| Ivan Kotnik | 2 |
| Milan Romih | 2 |
| Igor Škamperle | 2 |
| Jože Andlovic et al. | 1 |
| Stane Belak | 1 |
| Dinko Bertoncelj | 1 |
| Bogdan Biščak | 1 |
| Tomo Česen | 1 |
| Urban Golob | 1 |
| Andrej Gradišnik | 1 |
| Tomaž Humar | 1 |
| Davo Karničar | 1 |
| Davo Karničar, Tadej Golob Tadej, Urban Golob | 1 |
| Silvo Karo | 1 |
| Stane Klemenc | 1 |
| Franček Knez | 1 |
| Pavle Kozjek | 1 |
| Marjan Manfreda | 1 |
| Miha Marenče | 1 |
| Marija Štremfelj, Andrej Štremfelj | 1 |
| Nejc Zaplotnik | 1 |
| Jože Zupan | 1 |



◀ **GRAPH 1**
Books detailing expeditions to eight-thousanders by decades

| | Climber | Peaks | Number |
|-----|------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | Roman Benet | All eight-thousanders | 14 |
| 2. | Viki Grošelj | Makalu, Manaslu, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II, Cho Oyu, Lhotse, Everest, Shishapangma, Kangchenjunga, K2 | 10 |
| 3. | Andrej Štremfelj | Gasherbrum I, Everest, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II, Shishapangma, Kangchenjunga, Cho Oyu, Dhaulagiri | 8 |
| 4. | Pavle Kozjek | Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II, Shishapangma, Everest, Cho Oyu | 5 |
| 5. | Iztok Tomazin | Dhaulagiri, Cho Oyu, Shishapangma, Gasherbrum I, Gasherbrum II | 5 |
| 6. | Franc Pepevnik | Cho Oyu, Everest, Lhotse, Shishapangma | 4 |
| 7. | Marija Štremfelj | Broad Peak, Everest, Cho Oyu, Dhaulagiri | 4 |
| 8. | Tomo Česen | Broad Peak, Lhotse, Kangchenjunga | 3 |
| 9. | Milan Romih | Lhotse, Shishapangma, Cho Oyu | 3 |
| 10. | Nejc Zaplotnik | Makalu, Gasherbrum I, Everest | 3 |
| 11. | Tomaž Rotar | Everest, K2, Kangchenjunga | 3 |
| 12. | Marko Prezelj | Cho Oyu, Kangchenjunga | 2 |
| 13. | Jože Rozman | Cho Oyu, Nanga Parbat | 2 |

◀ **TABLE 4**
Slovenians on eight-thousanders

| | Climber | Peaks | Number |
|-----|------------------|---------------------------|--------|
| 14. | Davo Karničar | Annapurna, Everest | 2 |
| 15. | Tomaž Humar | Annapurna, Shishapangma | 2 |
| 16. | Bogdan Biščak | Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II | 2 |
| 17. | Stojan Burnik | Cho Oyu, Gasherbrum II | 2 |
| 18. | Grega Lačen | Dhaulagiri, Everest | 2 |
| 19. | Tomaž Jakofčič | Dhaulagiri, Everest | 2 |
| 20. | Tadej Golob | Dhaulagiri, Everest | 2 |
| 21. | Franc Oderlap | Cho Oyu, Everest | 2 |
| 22. | Stane Belak | Makalu, Everest | 2 |
| 23. | Marjan Manfreda | Makalu, Dhaulagiri | 2 |
| 24. | Matej Flis | Everest, Broad Peak | 2 |
| 25. | Dušan Jelinčič | Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II | 2 |
| 26. | Dušan Debelak | Cho Oyu, Shishapangma | 2 |
| 27. | Borut Bergant | Kangchenjunga | 1 |
| 28. | Irena Mrak | Gasherbrum II | 1 |
| 29. | Silvo Karo | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 30. | Matevž Lenarčič | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 31. | Janez Dovžan | Makalu | 1 |
| 32. | Mojmir Štangelj | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 33. | Marjan Kregar | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 34. | Rado Nadveršnik | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 35. | Blaž Jereb | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 36. | Roman Robas | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 37. | Filip Bence | Shishapangma | 1 |
| 38. | Marija Frantar | Nanga Parbat | 1 |
| 39. | Janez Jeglič | Everest | 1 |
| 40. | Uroš Rupar | Kangchenjunga | 1 |
| 41. | Aleš Cvahte | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 42. | Marjan Gregorčič | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 43. | Marjan Urh | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 44. | Matija Urh | Cho Oyu | 1 |

| | Climber | Peaks | Number |
|-----|------------------|---------------|--------|
| 45. | Zvonko Požgaj | K2 | 1 |
| 46. | Matej Kranjc | Shishapangma | 1 |
| 47. | Drejc Karničar | Annapurna | 1 |
| 48. | Marko Čar | Gasherbrum I | 1 |
| 49. | Miha Marenče | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 50. | Peter Mežnar | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 51. | Janko Meglič | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 52. | Dušan Polenik | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 53. | Primož Štular | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 54. | Primož Pišek | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 55. | Roman Dobrajc | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 56. | Matija Klanjšček | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 57. | Miha Habjan | Dhaulagiri | 1 |
| 58. | Andrej Terčelj | Gasherbrum II | 1 |
| 59. | Tomi Aurednik | Shishapangma | 1 |
| 60. | Viktor Mlinar | Everest | 1 |
| 61. | Marko Lihteneker | Everest | 1 |
| 62. | Uroš Samec | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 63. | Aljaž Tratnik | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 64. | Emil Tratnik | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 65. | Marjan Kovač | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 66. | Cene Berčič | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 67. | Janez Levec | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 68. | Aleš Koželj | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 69. | Damjan Karničnik | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 70. | Dušan Rauter | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 71. | Simona Pogač | Manaslu | 1 |
| 72. | Miha Valič | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 73. | Tone Perhaj | Cho Oyu | 1 |
| 74. | Janko Ažman | Makalu | 1 |
| 75. | Ludvik Golob | Broad Peak | 1 |

| | Climber | Peaks | Number |
|-----|------------------|--------------|--------|
| 76. | Andrej Gradišnik | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 77. | Jurij Gorjanc | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 78. | Tadej Zorman | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 79. | Tomaž Žerovnik | Shishapangma | 1 |
| 80. | Zoran Mislej | Shishapangma | 1 |
| 81. | Aleš Česen | Broad Peak | 1 |
| 82. | Luka Lindič | Broad Peak | 1 |

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Povzetek

Alpinizem je v Sloveniji precej razširjena dejavnost z bogato zgodovino, ki sega v konec 18. stoletja, ko so t. i. štirje srčni možje prvič pristopili na Triglav, najvišjo slovensko goro. Gore so predstavljale Slovencem bojišče proti potujčevanju. T. i. boju za gore, v največji meri med Slovenci in Nemci, lahko sledimo vse od konca 19. stoletja naprej. Po 1. svetovni vojni se boj za gore med istimi akterji spremeni v boj za stene. Takrat, v desetletjih pred 2. svetovno vojno, je bil alpinizem pomemben element zamišljanja slovenske nacionalne identitete. Kljub temu pa je v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja Slovence prvo osvajanje najvišjih vrhov na svetu obšlo. Pobude o odhodu v Himalajo so v Sloveniji sicer pojavile že kmalu po 2. svetovni vojni. Leta 1951 je bil ustanovljen inozemski odsek Plalninske zveze Slovenije, ki pa s svojimi pripravami ni bil uspešen. Leta 1959 ga je nadomestil himalajski odbor pri zvezi, ki je že naslednje leto organiziral prvo odpravo v Himalajo. Prva jugoslovanska alpinistična himalajska odprava (I. JAHÖ) je bila namenjena na sedemtisočak Trisul v Indiji. Odprava je bila zelo uspešna, čeprav alpinisti glavnega vrha niso dosegli. Do uspešnega vzpona na osematisočak Makalu 15 let kasneje so bile izvedene še štiri alpinistične odprave, na katerih so plezalci, vodje odprav in organizatorji pridobivali izkušnje za uspehe v naslednjih desetletjih. Za pristop na vseh 14 osematisočakov so Slovenci potrebovali 20 let – prvi je bil leta 1975 Makalu, zadnja pa leta 1995 Anapurna. Posebnost vzponov je bila, da so bili pristopi večinoma opravljeni v modernem, alpskem slogu, pogosto po prvenstvenih smereh, brez velike pomoči višinskih nosačev in vmesnih višinskih taborov. Vrhunec je vsekakor nastopil leta 1979 z vzponom na Everest, najvišji vrh sveta, in sicer po prvenstveni smeri, ki še danes velja za najtežjo. O odpravah, vzponih in doživetjih med gorami so udeleženci odprav

napisali kar nekaj knjig. Pregled odprav, pristopov na osemtisočake in piscev, ki so o teh vzponih pisalih, pa prinaša pričujoči članek.

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