

Peter Mikša, Matija Zorn: NACIONALNO 'MARKIRANJE' SLOVENSkih GORA PRED PRVO SVETOVNO VOJNO

NATIONAL "MARKING" OF SLOVENIAN MOUNTAINS BEFORE WORLD WAR I

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15292/IU-CG.2018.06.022-029> ■ UDK: 728.5 (234.323.6) ■ 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Scientific Article ■ SUBMITTED: August 2018 / REVISED: September 2018 / PUBLISHED: November 2018

IZVLEČEK

Slovenske gore so v drugi polovici 19. stoletja postajale vedno bolj obiskane. S krepitvijo meščanstva in industrijske družbe je namreč vse več ljudi imelo čas »prosti čas« za njihovo obiskovanje. Je pa to bil tudi čas po mladi narodov (1848), ko pride do afirmacije slovenstva in uveljavljanja nacionalnih teženj. Z obiskovanjem gora so se nacionalne težnje prenesle iz mest tudi v visokogorje in so se kazale zlasti v obliki tekme za osvajanje vrhov, gradnjo poti in koč. Planinstvo je postalo orodje za simbolno prilaščanje gora. Lahko bi rekli, da je šlo za tekmo pri »markiranju« gora. Osrednje območje te »tekme« so bile Julijske Alpe, zlasti njihov osrednji del, Triglavsko pogorje. Od zadnje četrtine 19. stoletja sta bili pri »markiranju« glavni dve nemški organizaciji (na Slovenskem sta bili s svojimi podružnicami prisotni od leta 1874), Nemško-avstrijsko planinsko društvo (DÖAV) in Avstrijski turistovski klub (ÖTC). Skupaj sta razvijali mrežo zavetišč in gorskih poti, ki sta jih markirali izključno z nemškimi napisi (kažipotne table, imena koč itd.). Proti koncu 19. stoletja (1893) so tudi Slovenci ustanovili svoje Slovensko planinsko društvo (SPD) ter se s tem uprli nemškemu markiranju. Z uporabo slovenskih imen, gradnjo poti, drugačnim načinom označevanja poti ter gradnjo slovenskih koč so želeli Nemce onemogočiti pri prisvajanju gora, ki so jih smatrali za slovenske. Izbruhnilo je tekmovanje v gradnji planinske infrastrukture, ki je prešlo tudi v medsebojno obračunavanje. Slednje je obsegalo uničevanje imetja, pa tudi fizične spopade, ki so bili kmalu poimenovani kot »boj za gore«. Največji uspeh slovenske strani je bil nakup vrha Triglava (1895), kjer je župnik Jakob Aljaž postavil stolp – najvišjo slovensko markacijo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

Triglav, planinstvo, markiranje prostora, gradnje koč, Slovensko planinsko društvo, Nemško-avstrijsko planinsko društvo

ABSTRACT

In the second half of the 19th century, Slovenian mountains became increasingly popular. By strengthening the bourgeoisie and the industrial society, more and more people had time ("leisure time") to visit the mountains. This was, however, also the time after the Spring of Nations (1848), when slovenianism is affirmed and national aspirations become realized. By mountaineering, national aspirations were moved from towns to high mountains and were particularly evident in the form of a competition to conquer the summits, build trails and huts. Mountaineering became a tool for a symbolical conquest of mountains. One could say that it was a race of "marking" the mountains. The central area of this competition were the Julian Alps, particularly their central part, the Triglav mountain range. From the last quarter of the 19th century, the "marking" champions were the main two German organizations (present in Slovenian territory through their branches since 1874), the German-Austrian Alpine Society (DÖAV), and the Austrian Tourist Club (ÖTC). Together they developed a network of shelters and mountain trails that were marked exclusively with German inscriptions (signboards, hut names, etc.). Towards the end of the 19th century (1893), the Slovenes founded their own Slovene Mountaineering Society (SPD) as well, resisting the German branding. By using Slovenian names, constructing trails and employing a different way of marking them, and building Slovenian huts, they wanted to prevent the Germans from conquering the mountains they deemed Slovene. A race in constructing the alpine infrastructure started, which eventually turned into arguments. The latter included destruction of property, as well as physical confrontations, which were later called "the battle for the mountains". The greatest success of the Slovenian side was the purchase of the Triglav summit (1895), where the priest Jakob Aljaž built a tower - the highest Slovenian marking

KEY-WORDS

Triglav, mountaineering, territory marking, hut building, Slovene Mountaineering Society, German-Austrian Alpine Society

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, mountaineering is part of the Slovene national identity and a true Slovenian national sport. Slovenian mountains and hills are visited by almost 1.5 million people every year and there are at least 2,000 marked alpine paths with a total length of more than 10,000 kilometers. Accommodation, rest and refreshments are provided by a network of alpine posts consisting of 181 huts, shelters and bivouacs, with around 7,400 available beds (Letopis ..., 2017). All alpine infrastructure is, naturally, equipped with Slovenian inscriptions. Few people realize that wasn't the case a hundred years ago. At that time, significantly rarer marked trails were branded with German inscriptions with mountain huts being dominated by the Germans.

As mentioned, mountaineering is part of Slovenian national identity and an inseparable component of Slovenian culture. It also played an important historical role in the national struggle. Mountains are visited by crowds today, while alpine motifs have an important place in Slovenian culture and art (Kristan, 1993). The highest mountain, Triglav, became the symbol of slovenianism (Mikša, 2018).

What was the situation in the 19th century? Mountaineering or, as it was called at that time among Slovenes, "touristry" (Svn. *turistika*), was a domain of the few (Mikša and Zorn, 2016), mostly enjoyed by the wealthy individuals, industrialists, merchants, officials, professors, clergy, etc. that could afford longer trips outside the towns to the mountains. Since such professions were mostly occupied by the Germans in the Slovene provinces of the Hapsburg Empire, the German alpine organizations were the first ones to appear in the Slovenian alpine world and in accordance with their then thinking took it for itself (Mikša, 2014).

The German influence in the Slovene mountains was the main reason mountaineering was closely connected to the development of the Slovenian national consciousness and the national struggle of that time (Mikša, 2011). Organized mountaineering was one of the tools to resist and defy the Germans. As the writer Janko Mlakar put it on the 60th anniversary of the Slovene Mountaineering Society (SPD), the association was founded "... not as much out of love for the mountains, but primarily as a defence against the German wave ...", because "... the foreigner felt at home in our mountains, while we felt like strangers on our own land." (Mlakar, 1953b, p.213) SPD's founding purpose was to "liberate" Slovenian mountains, even if it wasn't explicitly stipulated in the rules (Mlakar, 1953b).

2. MOUNTAINEERING AS A GLOBAL CULTURAL PHENOMENON

Organized mountaineering emerges simultaneously with the rise of sport and emotion-experience motives for alpine activities. The first alpine association in the world, called Alpine Club, was established in London in 1857. Soon, other countries followed with their own national alpine associations (Table 1). The first alpine association in the Alps was founded in 1862, namely the Austrian Alpine Society (ÖAV). The very next year, the Swiss and the Italian societies were founded, while the German society, soon the largest in the world, was established in 1869 (Mikša and Ajlec, 2015).

Table 1: First alpine societies (Mikša and Ajlec, 2015).

Year of establishment	Original name of the alpine society (place of establishment)	Country (today)
1857	Alpine Club (London)	United Kingdom
1862	Österreicher Alpenverein (ÖAV; Vienna)	Austria
1863	Club Alpino Italiano (CAI; Torino)	Italy
1863	Schweitzer Alpen Club (SAC; Olten)	Switzerland
1869	Deutscher Alpenverein (DAV; München)	Germany
1873	Magyar Karpati egyesület (Tátrafüreden)	Hungary
1873	Unification of ÖAV and DAV into Deutscher und Österreichischer Alpenverein (DÖAV)	
1874	Club Alpine Francais (CAF; Paris)	France
1874	Hrvatsko planinarsko društvo (HDP; Zagreb)	Croatia
1892	Bosansko-hercegovački turistički klub	Bosnia and Herzegovina
1893	Slovensko planinsko društvo (SPD; Ljubljana)	Slovenia

National alpine organizations mainly connected small groups of intelligentsia in the beginning. Mountaineering originated in intellectualism and did not arise among the commoners. The accelerated modernization, however, made an increasing number of people recognize their alienation from nature. The need for physical exercise complemented by the aesthetic pleasures of enjoying the mountain nature appeared. The development of mountaineering as a modern cultural phenomenon was also influenced by the changing social conditions. Visiting the mountains demanded free time and disposable income, which were provided to larger groups of mountaineers by the introduction of an eight-hour workday and free Saturdays. When primary needs were satisfied, people could actually spend their savings for active leisure time.



Figure 1: Shelter on Prodi (near the present-day Planika hut) was known as the 'Triglav Temple' due to its astonishing views. It was built in one month by Jože Škantar-Šest and his son Lovrenc in 1871 on the initiative of enthusiasts from the clique of 'Friends of Triglav'. The small stone building was built at an altitude of 2,404 meters, surfaced with sand on the outside and covered with shingles. There was a bunk bed for six people and a small open fireplace. On September 18, 1871, it was ceremoniously opened by a handful of mountaineers. Photo archive: Peter Mikša.

3. GERMAN ALPINE SOCIETIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIRST MOUNTAIN HUTS

The first alpine societies to appear in the Slovene provinces were the declarative German societies. The first official one was the Carniolan branch of the German-Austrian Alpine Society (Ger. *Deutscher und Österreichischer Alpenverein*), founded on March 30, 1874, in Ljubljana (Festschrift ..., 1901). The association established five branches in the Slovene provinces, namely in Carniola, Maribor, Celje, Villach and the littoral one in Trieste. In addition to the said organization, other alpine societies were active in Slovenia, such as the Austrian Tourist Club (Ger. *Österreichischer Touristen Club*), founded in Vienna in 1869, which also branched out all over the Slovenian provinces, but unlike the German-Austrian Alpine Society, it spread to smaller towns. Seven branches were founded in the territories of Carniola and Styria before 1886 (Mikša and Ajlec, 2015).

If the Germans were the first ones to organize mountaineering, the Slovenes overtook them with constructing the first mountain huts, or mountain shelters. The mountain guide Jožef Škantar – Šest from Srednja vas in Bohinj constructed a trail and built a small stone hut (Figure 1) under Mount Triglav on Prodi (near the present-day Planika hut) on the initiative of Slovenian patriots from Bohinj and their club called 'Friends of Triglav'. The hut was equipped with a table, two benches and a bunk bed. The hut, which was almost ruined by 1875, was called the 'Triglav home', but was mostly known as the 'Triglav Temple' (Lovšin, 1944). The journal *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice* wrote the following: "... We would prefer if people of Ljubljana came and visited our swiss-like and beautiful Bohinj, Savica, and Triglav. The roads are smooth and the trail to Triglav is quite handy. What snow and rime might damage, it will be fixed come spring, while Belempolje [Velo polje] is already equipped with pens for the accommodation; under Mali Triglav, a small stone hut shall welcome the guests. Everything is right; may the gracious God keep our lungs healthy and legs fast." (Škantar-Šest, 1871, p.88)

The 'Triglav Temple' was, however, just a flash in the pan during the German domination, which persisted in our mountains for the following couple of decades. The branches of the German-Austrian Alpine Society and the Austrian Tourist Club started building trails and huts, focusing their activities mainly on Mount Triglav and its surroundings.

First, they renovated the deteriorated Triglav Temple and renamed it into Triglav-Hütte, later renamed again into Maria-Theresien Hütte (the present Planika) (Hoch ..., 2016). The German societies, mainly the German-Austrian Alpine Society, strongly opposed the bilingual signposts and thus installed German signs only. Mountain hut keepers only spoke German and prioritized the German mountaineers. "The main purpose of the branches of DÖAV in Slovene provinces was Germanization; [...] They made the German mountaineers feel at home in our mountains, as if they walk on German soil – which, in part, they succeeded, since there was nobody to obstruct them." (Mlakar, 1953b, p.213)

The next project was the construction of the hut in Ute in Zajezerska valley (the Triglav Lakes valley) called Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand Hütte (the



Figure 2: Deschmann-Haus under Triglav (the present-day Stanič hut). The hut was opened in 1887 by the Carniolan branch of the German-Austrian Alpine Society and was named after the German politician, archaeologist and curator of the Museum of Ljubljana Karel (Dragotin) Dežman. It was acquired by SPD after World War I and renamed to Stanič hut, after Valentin Stanič, the greatest mountaineer in Europe at the time. Photo archive: Peter Mikša.

present-day Triglav Lakes hut; Debelak-Deržaj, 1948), and the Triglav-Hütte build in 1887 (Hoch ..., 2016), soon renamed into Dechmannhaus (Figure 2) – it was named after Karl Dežman, the president of the Carniolan branch of the German-Austrian Alpine Society (Pirjevec, 1925). The construction of said hut and the parallel creation of the trail through the Kot valley to the foot of Mount Triglav meant a "new era, an era of mountaineering in broader terms..." (Debelak-Deržaj, 1949, p.45) for visiting Mount Triglav. If the Maria Theresia hut was mostly visited by the individuals who took the trail over Komarča and the Triglav Lakes valley, "the cosy hut at the top of Pekel, the trail through Kot and the trail to the top, Triglav became the lookout mountain and a trip destination for the masses..." (Debelak-Deržaj, 1949, p.45). The hut was opened on July 31, 1887 and the inscription on it said: "Triglav-Hütte – errichtet von der Section Krain – eröffnet am 31. Juli 1887. 2200 Meter Seeöhe!" (Od Triglavskega ..., 1887, p.3). The bitter aftertaste for the Slovenians was mostly the final part of the ceremony, the Dežman's speech, who reportedly said: "Und du, Altvater Triglav, strecke deine Hand schützend über unsere Deutsche Erde" [And you, Father Triglav, protect with your hand our German land.] (Debelak-Deržaj, 1949, p.46).¹ This was the occasion when the representative of the German-Austrian Alpine Society from Berlin named Mount Triglav as the German King of the Julian Alps.

¹ Henrik Tuma remembers the event slightly differently: "Dežman's words echoed in my memory when he held his ceremonial speech and, gesturing towards Triglav, called: Und du hehrer Triglav, blicke auf uns deutsche Söhne und schüttele beschützend dein Haupt über unsere deutsche Erde!" (Tuma, 1910, p.193).



Figure 3: An example of a signpost used by the German alpine societies. The signpost of the DÖAV littoral branch near Škocjan Caves is still visible today. Photo: Matija Zorn

4. THE SLOVENES FOUND THEIR OWN ALPINE SOCIETY AND DECLARE THE BATTLE FOR THE MOUNTAINS

The Slovenes did not have their own alpine organization that could resist the German pressure. The first attempt of organizing the Slovenian mountaineering, the mountain society 'Friends of Triglav' from Bohinj, failed quickly, just like the modest shelter, the 'Triglav Temple' (Strojin, 2009).

The Slovene Mountaineering Society (SPD) was founded 21 years later. On February 27, 1893, in the garden saloon of the Malič hotel in Ljubljana (where Nama store stands today) a founding assembly of the first Slovenian mountaineering society was held. SPD's main objective was national defence, as a stronghold of the Slovenian language, since its goal was to mark the trails in Slovene and use Slovenian geographical names. SPD's motto was "preserve the Slovenian face of Slovenian mountains" (Mikša and Ajlec, 2015, p.35).

By building huts, using Slovenian names for the summits, constructing trails and marking them in Slovene, especially in the Triglav mountain range, where the national confrontations were the most intense, SPD wanted to hinder the Germans in conquering the Slovenian mountain world as soon as possible. The Germans called the Slovenian huts *Trutzhütte* (Ravnikar, Dolar and Dolar, 2009, p.7) – the truculence huts, since they were built explicitly to defy the aggressive German nationalistic activities in the Slovenian mountains; while they called their own huts *Schutzhütte* – shelter huts (Mikša, 2017).

The newly established society started working immediately. First, they had to take care of and mark the mountain trails. They established a marking division for that purpose. They introduced two branches in the first year,

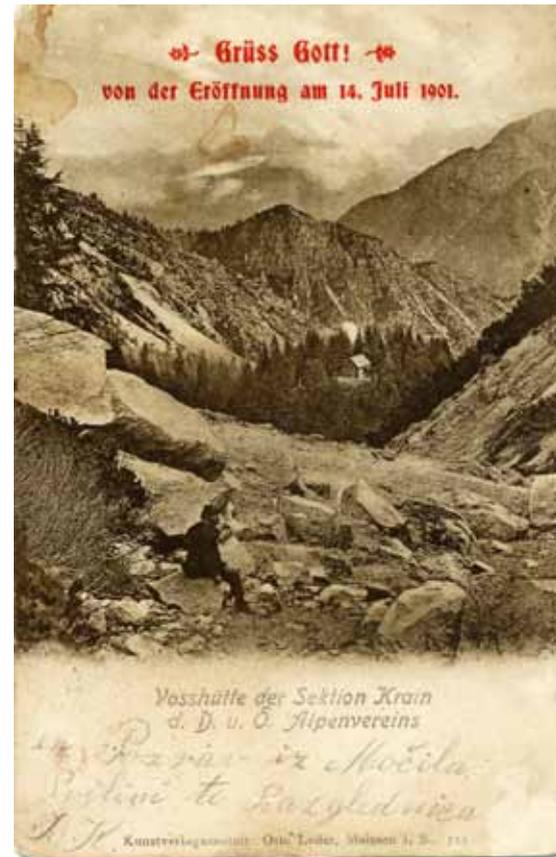


Figure 4: Vosshütte on Vršič Pass (the present-day Erjavec hut). The first wooden hut was opened on July 14, 1901, by the Carniolan branch of the German-Austrian Alpine Society. It was acquired by SPD after World War I, who opened a renovated and expanded hut on July 30, 1922. It was named after the natural scientist and writer Fran Erjavec. After World War II, it was acquired by the mountaineers from Jesenice. Mountaineering club Jesenice tore down the old wooden hut in the spring of 1987 and started constructing the present building, opened on August 1, 1993. Photo archive: Peter Mikša.

the Kamnik and the Savinja one. Numerous additional branches followed, including in Radovljica, Tolmin, Pazin in Croatian Istra, the Czech branches in Prague, the one in Trieste, etc.

4.1 The first mountain hut above Bohinj

It was its second year of operating when SPD already built the first Slovenian mountain hut, the Orožen hut under Črna prst in the Julian Alps (Figure 5), named after Fran Orožen, the head of the central society in Ljubljana. Just a few weeks later, SPD opened the Kocbek hut on Molička planina under Ojstrica in Kamnik–Savinja Alps (Dobnik, 1992). Both huts were built near the existing mountain huts owned by the German-Austrian Alpine Society, which was a sort of a dress rehearsal for the main "battle" – the Battle for Triglav.



Figure 5: The Orožen hut on the Lisec mountain pasture under the summit of Črna prst was the first mountain hut built by SPD. It was built in 1894, one year after SPD was established. The hut was built of thick plates and covered with shingles. Its length was 11.5 meters, while the width and height measured 6.5 meters. There was an entrance porch under the roof and they assumed it would be sufficient for accommodating twenty people. The opening was very festive and magnificent, and the event was quite important for that time. The guests were welcomed by an inscription saying “The first mountain hut opens, the entire valley of Bohinj rejoices!” in Bohinjska Bistrica. Photo archive: Peter Mikša.

When the German nationalism was getting more intense, every Slovenian hut opened by SPD, was a proper national demonstration. Members and committee members of SPD, guests and other attendees of the opening were welcomed by mortars and triumphal arches at the starting point under the hill where a new hut was standing. They were also welcomed by enchanted inscriptions such as: “We welcome you, the sons of mountains, who work for the glory of your homeland!” or “The first mountain hut opens, the entire valley of Bohinj rejoices!” (Ravnihar, Dolar and Dolar, 2009, p.7). Every opening was followed by SPD, their branches or individuals issuing postcards with images of newly built Slovenian huts – which were numerous and popular. They were the evidence of Slovenian presence in the mountains.

4.2 The Battle for Triglav

In the first year of SPD, another story was taking place simultaneously, closely connected to the activities of the association and the battle for the Slovenian mountains. In 1889, the parish of Dovje beneath Mount Triglav got a new priest: Jakob Aljaž, a great patriot (Mikša, 2015). He remembered his arrival to Dovje thusly: “A new field was introduced to me in Dovje: *touristry and Slovenian mountaineering. Unfortunately, everything was German, when I arrived; Alpenverein is putting up German signs, employing and paying handsomely German guides (born Slovenians). When I encourage people to establish a fire brigade, they want German language for its command; I can’t win with the Slovene language! A giant cement factory is being built with*

foreign capital in 1890, and the officials are Germans, the Slovene can only be a worker.” (Aljaž, 1923, p.146).

He was the founding member of SPD Radovljica branch in 1895 and he also became its deputy head. His striving for Triglav was even more evident after that. Aljaž managed to buy the land on top of Triglav from the municipality of Dovje for one gulden, which was the price for 50 eggs or 10 litres of milk. Together with Anton Belec, the tinman from Šentvid pri Ljubljani, he managed to erect a steel tower on the summit of Triglav, less than two meters high and one meter wide, made of thick galvanized sheet metal and iron pillars, reinforced with concrete (Mikša, 2015; Mikša and Ajlec, 2015). The tower, which was immediately christened as ‘Aljaž Tower’ (Figure 6) became the national symbol for most of the Slovenians in the following decades. In the first days, however, it was the “lighting rod” for the battle for the mountains between the Germans and the Slovenes. Aljaž’s action was not the only grandstanding of the struggle in the Triglav mountain range. He also built two additional mountain huts in 1896 – the Triglav hut on Mount Kredarica, which is still the highest Slovenian mountain hut (Mikša and Vehar, 2016) and the Aljaž hut in the Vrata Valley (Table 2). By doing that, he shook the German alpine societies in the Slovene territory. He caught the Germans by surprise and the hut on Mount Kredarica infuriated them especially. Jakob Aljaž was even sued for ruining a geodetic triangulation point of the first order by building the tower, but he managed to ward off all accusations, and both the tower and the huts remained where they were (Mikša, 2015).

The construction of the tower poses a question, though: why did Aljaž decide to erect a tower on top of Triglav, and not a cross? He was a mountaineer, so he knew a shelter would come handy, but he was also a great patriot, which could also be a reason to choose the tower, and not the cross. The tower was an important blaze as it marked Mount Triglav as Slovene. The words “Aljažev stolp” (Aljaž Tower) were the first Slovenian words written in the Triglav mountain range (Mikša, 2017).

Table 2: Jakob Aljaž’s constructions in the surroundings of Triglav.

Construction	Date of construction/ renovation
Aljaž Tower on Mount Triglav	August 7, 1895
Stanič shelter under the Triglav’s summit	1895
Aljaž hut in the Vrata Valley	July 9, 1896
Triglav home on Mount Kredarica	August 10, 1896
The chapel of Our lady of Lourdes on Mount Kredarica	August 12, 1897
Aljaž hut I. in the Vrata Valley (destroyed by avalanche in March 1909)	August 7, 1904
Renovated Triglav hut on Mount Kredarica	September 8, 1909
Aljaž hut II. in the Vrata Valley	July 17, 1910

4.3 Building the highest hut

Building “Kredarca” (Figure 7) was prompted by an event in the nearby German Deschmannhütte (the present-day Stanič hut), while erecting the tower in August 1895, which was described by Aljaž thusly: “We slept over



Figure 6: In 1895, Jakob Aljaž, the parish priest in Dovje, bought the summit of Triglav (16m2) for one gulden and erected a tin tower that was less than two meters high and one meter wide. It had two main functions: serve as a shelter that could accommodate a few mountaineers in the event of bad weather; and serve as the highest Slovenian blaze during the battle for the mountains between the Slovenes and Germans. Photo archive: Slovenian Alpine Museum in Mojstrana.

in the old, small Dežman hut, since the Slovenes did not have our own hut. The fog was thick, so I didn't climb Triglav, but stayed in the hut, where I could hear them hammering the individual parts of the tower together. I was talking to the keeper of the hut [...]. He told me kindly and in confidence: 'You're in luck there are no Germans here tonight, otherwise I wouldn't be able to accommodate you.' [...] The German tourists, the members of the 'Alpen-Verein' obviously came before the Slovenians. But if the Slovene Mountaineering Society wakes up, we shall build a giant hut – the location of which I will inspect the following week; if I won't be able to find a place and nobody helps me, I will build my hut next to the Dežman hut, 10 feet away...: my national pride was so hurt." (Aljaž, 1922, p.84-85).

In September, soon after the opening of the tower, Aljaž was on Mount Triglav once again to find a place for the hut. When he descended, he stopped on Mount Mali Triglav and inspected the world beneath. He saw two chamois running over Mount Kredarica, so he thought: *"The hut must stand there. Kredarica called for a mountain shelter the way a bald head calls for a hat!"* (Mikša, 2015, p.120). He bought the land on Mount Kredarica in the following days and on September 9, 1895, he signed the contract with the municipalities of Dovje and Mojstrana (the buyer was SPD). He bought a fair amount of jucharts for five guldens (Mlakar, 1953a). The hut was fes-



Figure 7: The first hut on Mount Kredarica was at first a humble mountain building. On the land bought by Jakob Aljaž, it was built by SPD according to his designs. It was opened on August 10, 1896. On request of numerous priests who were members of SPD, they also built a chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes next to the hut in 1897, where Aljaž held service occasionally. They also installed a meteorological outpost. The hut was expanded in years 1909/1910 and renamed into Triglav home on Kredarica (Svn. Triglavski dom na Kredarici). In addition to the "German" trail through Prag, a "Slovenian" Tominšek trail was established from the Vrata Valley in 1903. Photo archive: Slovenian Alpine Museum in Mojstrana.

tively opened on August 10 the following year and called it Triglav hut on Kredarica (Slavnostna ..., 1896).

The Slovene mountaineering expanded significantly with the help of Jakob Aljaž and SPD, and the first decade saw 13 new SPD branches, 18 new Slovenian huts - 26 branches and 37 huts before WW1 (Figure 8).

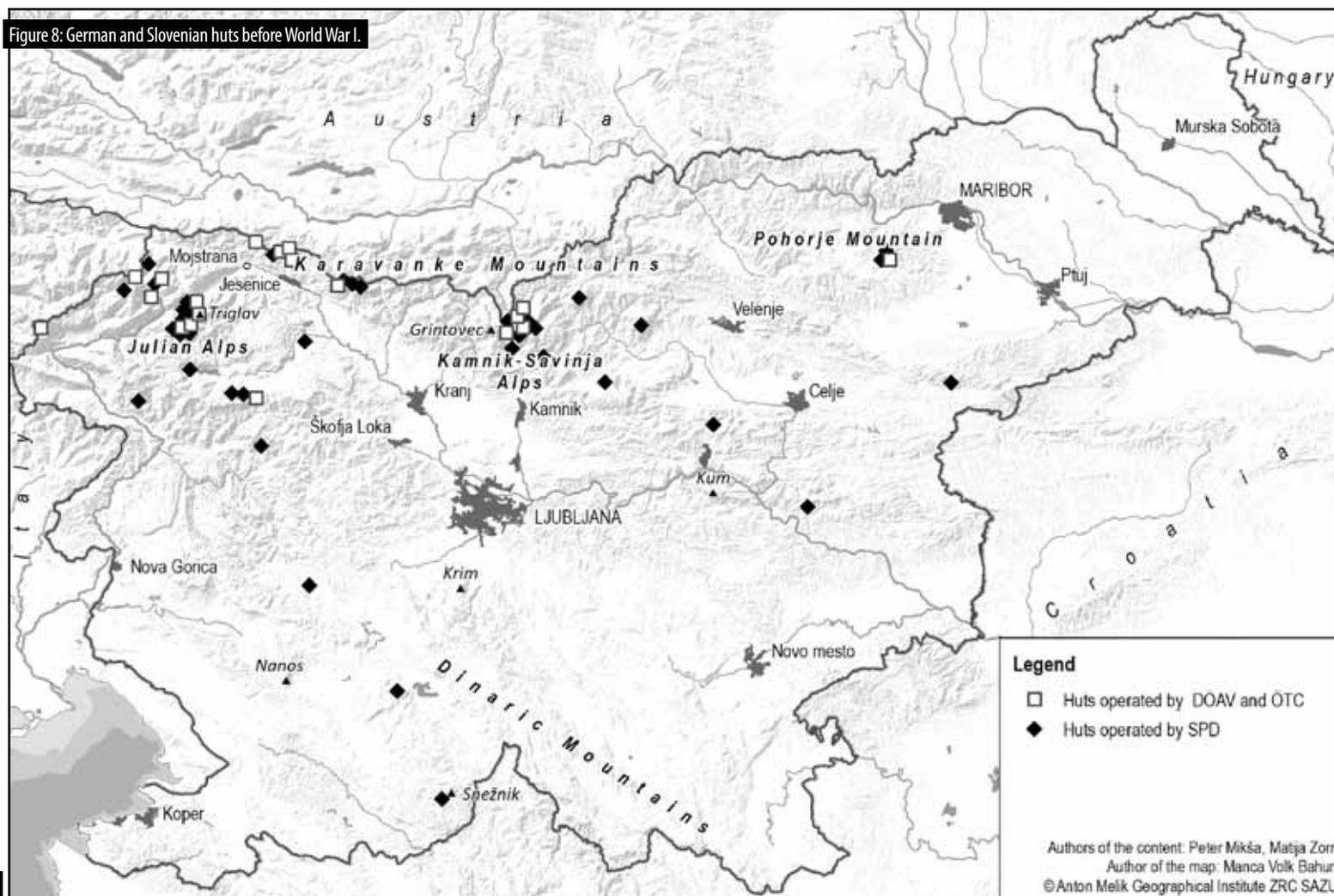
5. CONCLUSION

Slovenian mountains anchored in the Slovenian national identity through the national struggle and became a visible symbol, which is evident in innumerable postcards with the motif "Greetings from Triglav" and the image of Aljaž Tower. Such triumphs on national fronts boosted the self-confidence of the Slovenes.

There's another positive feature of this German-Slovene national battle for the mountains through the construction of mountain trails and huts – the latter would not be built in such numbers were it not for the national struggle (Mikša, Ogrin and Glojek, 2017). In point of fact: the German-Austrian Alpine Society had altogether 97,000 members and 331 mountain huts, which is around 300 members per hut, while SPD and its 37 huts had 116 members per hut (Mikša and Zorn, 2018).

The period of the national battle for the mountains as a sort of a blaze of individual nations was temporarily over when the mountains became part

Figure 8: German and Slovenian huts before World War I.



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of the Kingdom of SHS after World War I. Temporarily, because the struggle between the Slovenes and the Germans was rekindled during World War II. The part of the Julian Alps that became Italian after World War I became a new front of the battle for the mountains between the Slovenes and the Italians. The Kingdom of SHS made foreign societies illegal and SPD took over the ownership of all property that had belonged to the German alpine societies on the Slovene territory. On the other hand, numerous structures, members and branches were lost in the national territory that remained outside the borders of the new state after World War I. The huts got new names, for instance Deschmannhaus, which became Stanič hut; Maria-Theresien Hütte became Aleksander hut; Vosshütte (Figure 4) became Erjavec hut. Valvasor, Zois and Piskernik huts kept their original names (Mikša and Ajlec, 2015).

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