



Releasing a young male lynx near Horská Kvilda in November 1985. Photo Ivo Svoboda

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A list of documents referred to is attached to the web version of the article at www.casopis.ochranaprirody.cz

Notes:

¹ A comprehensive series on annual excursions for the Year of Czech Forests by Tomáš Vrška et al. was published in six issues of Živa magazine in 2018.

² PhDr. Zdeněk Wirth remained at MENE until 1939, when on his departure; the President of the Republic thanked him for his merits (Anonymous 1939).

³ The Act of January 30th, 1920, which was issued in accordance with § 10 of the Act of April 16th, 1919, No. 215 Coll., the provision on the allocation of seized land and regulating the legal relation to the allocat-

ed land (the so-called ‘Allotment Law’) in § 20 obliges land authorities “*The allotment shall not disturb the beauty of nature or the character of the landscape and not harm the natural, historical and artistic monuments. The Land Office may authorise to this end the areas devoted to parks, nature parks, which otherwise serve to embellish the landscape, or the purpose of which is to preserve an example of the original character of the landscape, or to secure and protect historical monuments and their surroundings closely related to them, may be left in the ownership of its original owners, in addition to the land area, which pursuant to § 11 of the Act of 16th April 1919, No. 215 Coll., may be left to its original owners and not confiscated, if the owner complies with the conditions set by the Land Office in agreement with the participating ministries, as regards the accessibility of those places to the general public, scientific and artistic staff, or uses them for humanitarian purposes*” and at the same time had the option according to § 50, “*to establish a special order on management ... protection of natural and artistic monuments,*

preservation of landscape character and landscape specialties in buildings ... and so on.”

⁴ Under Government Decree No. 14 of 15th January 1942 on the new organisation of some central offices, Coll. Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1942, pp. 75– 80 and Government Decree No. 208 of 15th March 1942 on the new organisation of certain central offices (‘reorganisation regulation’), Coll. Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1942, pp. 997–1003.4)

⁵ After 1946, the title of his position was changed to “Central Conservator of State Nature Conservation” (Čeřovský 2004).

⁶ Originally, two institutes were to be established; one for monument care and one for nature conservation. However, at a meeting of the ministry management, one common institute was eventually promoted (Kučera 1998).

⁷ Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture of 28 August 1958, ref. 38736/1958-E 1, MSK XIV Journal, 277.

⁸ As of 1990, 1 NP and 17 PLAs were designated and 13.5% of the territory of the country was covered by protected areas.

⁹ In cooperation with the Research Institute of Audio and Video Technology, aerial photography was commenced in 4 bands of the spectrum up to a scale of 1:25,000 and the production of derivatives for use at a scale of 1:5,000. On the example of Jizerské hory PLA, possible evaluation of the degree of damage to spruces by emissions was verified from the produced derivatives. At that time, no other organisation in Czechia was able to do that. In the mid-1990s, other Protected Landscape Areas and the Krkonoše and Šumava National Parks were photographed. In the 1990s, the RSL was transferred to building the GIS system.

¹⁰ Programmes Lynx (gradual repatriation of Eurasian lynx to Šumava) and Haliaeetus (stabilization of white-tailed eagle in Třeboňsko), as well as the programmes Tetrao, Lutra, Otis, Falco and Margaritifera (Trpák 1989). ¹¹ The main activities of SIMCNP in the field of nature protection were described by the Deputy Director for Nature Conservation at that time, František Skřivánek (1983).

¹² The only fully-fledged special nature conservation authority was the Bohemian Switzerland National Park Administration, which was established by a separate Act (No. 161/1999 Coll., declaring the Bohemian Switzerland National Park and amending Act No. 114/1992 Coll., on Nature and Landscape Protection, as amended).

The Elbe Canyon – Inspiration for Romantic Painters and Cradle of European Tourism

Zdeněk Patzelt

The Elbe Canyon is unique not only for its landscape and natural values, but also represents a huge potential for tourist and recreational use. While the German side realised this long ago, on the Czech side there is still an effort to transform the Elbe into an industrial transport channel. The history of tourist use of this landscape dates back to the 19th century, when one

of the oldest tourist associations in Europe was established, and the Elbe Canyon became the cradle of European and world tourism together with the Alps. The fascinating landscape of Bohemian-Saxon Switzerland inspired renowned romantic artists. Today their works and later old postcards can tell us about the natural appearance of the Elbe.

Tourist restaurant at Großer Winterberg. Anonymous, mid-19th century, Hasse-Stiftung Foundation at the Saxon Switzerland NP Administration





Děčín with Chateau. Anonymous, mid-19th century: Hasse-Stiftung Foundation at the Saxon Switzerland NP Administration



Vantage point at Bastei. Anonymous, mid-19th century: Hasse-Stiftung Foundation at the Saxon Switzerland NP Administration

Cradle of tourism

The Bohemian Switzerland Mountain Association (Gebirgsverein für die Böhmische Schweiz) was founded in Děčín as early as 1878. Thanks to the association and the owners of the local Clary-Altdringen and Kinský estates, the most beautiful destinations, such as the Pravčická brána Arch and the Kamenice Gorges, were made accessible in the wild landscape, attracting tourists from all over the world. On the Saxon side, the discovery of the landscape by tourists dates back to an

earlier period, as this historic act is considered to be the moment when the farmer Adalbert Hauff provided accommodation to the first holiday-makers in today's resort of Kurort Göhrisch as early as 1869. Thanks to its proximity to Dresden, Saxon Switzerland became a very popular area for visitors. Already around the year 1800, tourists began to visit Bastei, the most visited destination in Saxony, where a massive stone bridge was built for tourists in 1850–1851. Today, with a visitor rate of about 1.5 million people per year, Bastei is the

most visited place among all national parks in Germany. The Bastei Bridge offers breathtaking views of the surrounding rock labyrinth and the panoramic terrace near the tourist hotel offers spectacular views of the Elbe river. It was this view of the unfettered Elbe and its surroundings that inspired the artists of that time most of all.

The first conservationists

Tourist use of the landscape of Bohemian-Saxon Switzerland increasingly became a source of livelihood. So a century ago, the locals began to realise the need to protect the local nature, where many natural rock formations in the Elbe Canyon were irreversibly destroyed by sandstone quarrying. Therefore, on 31st March 1910, the Saxon Switzerland Protection Society (Verein zum Schutz der Sächsischen Schweiz) was established. Its mission was to preserve the unique local nature and above all, to stop the quarrying. By 1917, the association had managed to purchase most of the quarries, preventing further destruction of the landscape. Similarly, tourist associations bought up dilapidated historical monuments and saved them in order to increase the attraction of the area for tourists. For example, the castle above the town of Wehlen was bought in 1882 by the Saxon Switzerland Mountain Association, which set up a vantage point here. Even today, it is clear that the preservation of nature is not only a concern for state nature conservation, but also for the local residents for whom tourism provides livelihoods, and for tourists who come here to admire the unspoiled nature. Therefore, the local history suggests that the potential of tourism income here far exceeds the real income from the Elbe as an industrial transport route.

Romantic inspiration as a commitment for the future

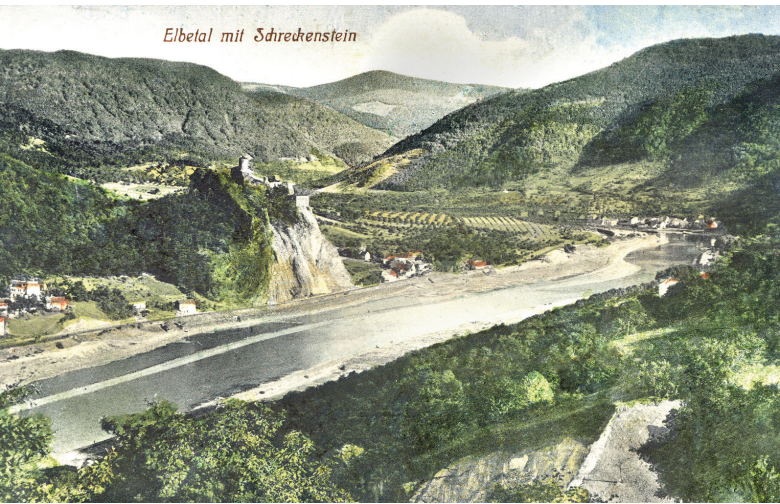
The mysterious attraction of the landscape of Bohemian-Saxon Switzerland has always tempted man to discover and portray it. It is no coincidence that centuries ago famous artists found inspiration here. The classical composer Carl Maria von Weber set the story of his opera ‘Der Freischütz’ (The Marksman) here and the territory also captivated Hans Christian Andersen and Johann Wolfgang Goethe. After all, it was the Swiss painters Adrian Zingg and Anton Graff, based at the Saxon Royal Court in Dresden at the end of the 18th century, who apparently named the area Saxon, and later, Bohemian Switzerland – they were so enchanted by the area that they named it after their homeland.



Historical postcard according to painting by Ludwig A. Richter, Ferry below Střekov (Überfahrt am Schreckenstein), original from 1837. Archive Zdeněk Patzelt

Visitors can see the unique collection of many beautiful works of art from the Hasse-Stiftung Foundation's collection at the Saxon Switzerland

National Park Administration in the gallery at Bastei. Many of the depictions of the Elbe Canyon of past centuries show how the river was full of life and



Historical postcard of the Elbe near Střekov, c. 1910. White-sand beaches lined the river where the locks stand today. Archive Zdeněk Patzelt

small boats creating dense traffic. The artistic rendering of the landscape of Bohemian-Saxon Switzerland compels us to preserve its values for the future.



Picture from Saxon Switzerland, steel engraving 14 × 18 cm, A. Tromlitz, mid-19th century, Hasse-Stiftung Foundation at the Saxon Switzerland NP Administration