

Bendler, G. 2016. Wilder Kaiser. Von Sommerfrischlern, Kletterlegenden, Skipionieren und dem Bergdoktor. 200 Jahre Alpingeschichte und Reisekultur. Tyrolia, Innsbruck-Wien, 256 p., . ISBN 978-3-7022-3547-5

This volume on the history of tourism in the very popular Alpine region Wilder Kaiser in Tyrol, Austria, starts in Chapter 1 with the earliest forms of tourism and the necessary transport infrastructure, traces the discovery and exploration of the mountains in Chapter 2, and in Chapter 3 points out the special significance of this mountain region for the development of rock climbing in Germany and Austria. Chapter 4 presents the development of summer tourism through the construction of huts and paths, Chapter 5 sketches the emergence of tourist organizations and the development of summer tourism since 1945, while Chapter 6 describes winter tourism from its beginnings around the year 1900 until today. The last chapter is reserved for *imagination*, i. e. the imagery of the Wilder Kaiser range in paintings, postcards or films, and especially in the popular TV series *Der Bergdoktor*.

This book holds a wealth of material and information, is opulently produced and full of attractive pictures, among them many historical photographs of special interest.

The author, a historian and trained mountain and skiing guide, knows the Wilder Kaiser range very well from personal experience and it shows on every page. He draws on the findings of various research projects on the history of tourism in which he has participated and quotes from a number of interviews he has made in this area. The resulting, highly individual, history of tourism in the Wilder Kaiser range works closely with its sources unlike anything available before. At the same time the author puts the regional developments in a wider context, with the result that the volume is of interest beyond the immediate region it covers.

It has to be noted, however, that geographical aspects are largely missing and the present-day situation is not covered comprehensively – this region is the largest coherent skiing area in Austria, which is by no means an entirely positive phenomenon. On p. 256 you can read that the idea for this volume and the financial support for the publication came from the Wilder Kaiser tourist office. Against this background these gaps are easier to understand.

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C. Pichler-Koban & M. Jungmeier 2015. Naturschutz, Werte, Wandel. Die Geschichte ausgewählter Schutzgebiete in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz. Bristol-Schriftenreihe 46. 297 p. ISBN 978-3-258-07942-4

This book reflects the history of seven protected areas in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, based on information extracted from more than 1000 written sources, with added interviews with *contemporary witnesses*. The two opening chapters provide the background, present the aims of the book and the questions addressed, and explain the sophisticated text analysis tools used for identifying common topics. The text analysis aims to break down a set of documents into a smaller number of thematic elements or topics that can be used to interpret patterns. Chapter 3 outlines the historical development of conservation in the three countries concerned.

The main part of the book is devoted to a comprehensive characterization of the history of the seven protected areas. Inspired by the creation of the American national parks (NP) in the late 19th century, the Swiss NP (Lower Engadin), was established in 1914 by scientists and conservationists as an innovative counter model, with an emphasis on researching the undisturbed dynamic processes in the protected area and excluding any further human impact. One hundred years later, the Swiss NP is still a strict nature reserve, with visitors allowed access only via marked trails in the snow-free season. Its significance for the regional economy, however, is enormous nowadays.

First ideas of preserving nature in the area of today's Berchtesgaden NP (Bavaria, Germany) have their roots in the 1890s. A special area for endangered plants was established in 1910, mainly to support the flourishing trade with alpine plants. In 1921, the Königsee became a designated conservation area. After several decades of struggle between stakeholders with different interests (alpine farming, hunting, tourism, nature conservation), Berchtesgaden NP was established in 1978.

For a long period, large areas of the present-day Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve (Brandenburg, Germany) served as hunting grounds. Even after World War II, the forests were used as an exclusive hunting and leisure area for the East German leaders. Exposed to little human impact, the forests, lakes, bogs and heathland developed into a wilderness area. The biosphere reserve was established in 1990.

Hohe Tauern NP (Eastern Alps, Austria) has a long and thorny development history, from 1912, when the German Nature Conservation Park Association propagated an Alpine protected area, until 1971, when the three provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol decided to establish a joint NP. This process was repeatedly interrupted by plans for the use of hydroelectric power and the construction of cable cars in the re-

gion. The operation and management of a park across three federal provinces remains a challenge even today.

Small areas of the floodplains of the River Danube between Vienna and Bratislava were legally protected as early as 1905, and were gradually extended thereafter. In 1977 the area was designated as a biosphere reserve. In the years 1983–1984, construction plans for the gigantic hydroelectric power plant at Hainburg provoked violent demonstrations by the urban population, which in turn triggered the planning process for Donau-Auen NP, eventually established in 1996.

The high conservation value of the rockslide landscape of what is today Dobratsch Nature Park (Carinthia, Austria) was recognized at an early stage and a nature reserve was set-up in 1942. However, the construction of an Alpine road and the development of a ski resort opened the Dobratsch area for tourism. Surprisingly, however, in 2002 the town of Villach decided to dismantle the unprofitable ski resort, restore the slopes and establish a nature park.

The final case study examines the process of the emerging Adula NP (cantons Grison and Ticino, Switzerland). The aims of this participatory bottom-up process are not only the protection of a unique landscape with many endangered species, but also the promotion of economic development in a peripheral region.

The comparison of the histories of the seven protected areas shows that there are different motivations

for establishing a new park. Everywhere there are conflicts between various stakeholders, whose claims are differently expressed, depending on the situation. Thus the history of a park must always be linked with the development of the local society as well as with the prevailing thinking of the society as a whole. This is an important achievement of the book and no doubt many people engaged in park management will frequently refer to it.

Less satisfactory, however, is the frequent repetition of the same facts under different subtitles, which makes the text a hard piece of work for the reader. The remaining chapters aim to synthesize the different park histories. The authors provide extensive tables on the frequency of terms or topics mentioned in various texts related to the parks. Unfortunately, however, statistical methods, such as model-based multivariate analysis, were not applied to investigate and visualize common patterns. Consequently, the reader will not find any firm conclusions. The presentation of 22 rather provocative hypotheses on future parks in the final chapter does not fill this gap. A better understanding of the history of parks is a good start, but perhaps there is room for further development of these themes in future publications.

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