

TIN MINING IN BOHEMIA AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE TIN MINING OF SAXONY

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There are important tin deposits on both sides of the Saxon-Bohemian border, especially near Graupen, Zinnwald and Altenberg in the east, in the Karlsbad-Eibenstock granite region in the west, and in the „Bohemian *Zinnländchen*“ around Schlaggenwald, Schönfeld and Lauterbach. Tin-streaming probably antedated mining proper. Near Graupen, tin — presumably stream tin — was probably already mined in c. 1240. There is documentary mention of the Graupen mine for the year 1305. From here the Saxon tin workings of Altenberg and Geising were opened up. Some of the galleries, among them the „Tiefe Bünaustollen“, led underneath the boundary, and miners went down into them from both sides. On the Bohemian side, tin was mined near Zinnwald until the end of the 19th century, and the Altenberg surface dip still yields this metal today.

In the western Erzgebirge, the first tin-streamers and miners worked along the upper Schwarzwasser near Platten, around Neudek, Frühbuß, Sauersack and Heinrichsgrün, which yielded tin as early as in 1340. The forest tin-mining laws of 1494, which were developed for this region, were an important legal creation of these miners, similar to the tin-mining laws of Ehrenfriedersdorf and Geyer from the time around 1450. A part of the western Erzgebirge, which was rich in tin deposits, passed from Saxony to Bohemia in 1554: it included such tin workings as those of Gottesgab and Platten. Also located here were the famous „Hengst“, a very rich tin mine, and, next to it, Zwittermühl, Goldenhöhe, Halbmeil and Irrgang, with stamping mills and smelters. Around Neudek, Frühbuß, Hirschenstand and Sauersack, this „forest“ tin mining flourished until c. 1654. Then, because of their Lutheran faith, the mi-

ners migrated to the newly established Saxon mine workings of Johanngeorgenstadt.

Already at the end of the 15th century, princes of Saxony endeavoured to control the „purchasing of tin“. In 1518 a monopoly was planned for Saxony and Bohemia, in which, aside from the tin-mining towns of the Erzgebirge, Schlaggenwald was also to take part. The cooperation of tin-dealers from Leipzig and Nürnberg was to be enlisted for the project. Later the Fuggers in Augsburg, through Konrad Mayr, took over all of Bohemia's tin and in 1550 cut off the export of tin to Saxony, planning, however, on the other hand a tin cartel with Moritz, the Elector of Saxony. Mayr's monopoly collapsed. In an effort to overcome the resultant misery, miners-union members joined hands with the „forest“ tin-miners. Emperor Maximilian II and the Elector August of Saxony attempted once again to establish a monopolistic control over the tin of Saxony and Bohemia, but were unable to reach agreement. The Thirty Years' War and crises caused tin mining on both sides of the border largely to die out. Only on the Saxon side, in Altenberg and Ehrenfriedersdorf, is tin still mined today.