

Participants in the “Image Politics” of Doksy in the First Half of the 20th Century

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Abstract

This article, by using the analytical category “image politics”, tries to disentangle the network of people and organizations that in the first half of the 20th century developed, produced and promoted the “image” of the North Bohemian town of Doksy as a spa resort surrounded by unspoilt countryside. The information contained within this article is sourced from the town’s chronicle, correspondence between various organizations and former promotional materials. During their evaluation, attention was primarily focused on the sphere of competence of the participants and their interconnection and cooperation. The study also highlights the methodological problems generally associated with research into the role of participants in “image politics”. The conclusions are therefore beneficial to current international research into the history of tourism.

Keywords: Image politics, tourism, spa, participants, Doksy, Great Pond

Introduction

Although the spa industry and tourism in the Czech Republic have not been historiographically completely neglected (Štemberk 2009; Štemberk, Jakubec 2009), the two themes still hide many desiderata. These include, inter alia, the formation, distribution and reception of certain images by which spas and other tourist destinations intentionally presented themselves to rising numbers of visitors. The focus of this study is on the North Bohemian town of Doksy and its media exposure in the first half of the 20th century. The aim of using a specific example was to show the possibilities and limitations of such research.

For this purpose, Doksy (Hirschberg in German) represents an ideal subject for scientific analysis. Until the 1880's the town remained almost unknown. However, the town and the surrounding landscape, relatively untouched by the industrialization process at that time,¹ started to attract a growing number of summer guests. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries a spa boom took place in the whole Bohemia.² This motivated Doksy, along with dozens of other peripheral locations,³ to profile themselves as spa resorts. Due to the Great Pond (Großteich in German, after World War II renamed the Mácha Lake, Máchovo jezero in Czech), Doksy and the village Staré Splavy (Thammühl in German), which lies on the north side of the Great Pond, gradually built up a reputation as "the largest open-air spa in the Czechoslovak Republic" (Obrazová služba správy lázní 1931) and proudly called itself the "North Bohemian Lido" (*Böhmens Lido* [after 1930]). The Great Pond and the surrounding countryside certainly provided suitable conditions for Doksy's meteoric rise as a spa resort. However, these characteristics were by no means sufficient and the town had to set in motion and put in place various mechanisms of self-representation. Fragmentary information on the birth and growing importance of those mechanisms has been preserved in the town's chronicle, in correspondence of the Town Council and in promotional materials.

These sources describe the same phenomenon by using deferent names. "Reklame", "Werbung" and "Propaganda" were in the mostly German-speaking Doksy conventional terms that expressed the co-operation between specialized agencies, periodicals and individuals on creating a highly idealized "image" of the town. In present day historiography these terms for the analysis of the formation of urban "image" have been waived. Whilst the terms "Reklame" and "Werbung" in present day German scientific discourse are seen as short-term tactics to sell a certain product, the term "Propaganda" has gained negative overtones due to its abuse under totalitarian regimes. Science has yet to redefine "Propaganda" so that it can once again become a part of its professional nomenclature (Fröhlich 2008, p. 101-108; Söseman 2011, p. XXVIII-XLIV). Instead of these three terms, the expression "Public Relations" has recently been established in the Communication Sciences and is understood to mean the "systematic, long-term and continuous planned distribution of information among a relevant section of the public" (Com. Lange 2010, p. 2).

For towns and cities alike, "Reklame", "Propaganda", "Werbung" and "Public Relations" are currently only conceived to be instruments of so-called "Stadtmarketing" or "City Marketing", aimed at increasing the attractiveness of a community. This goal can be achieved not only by promoting tourism but also by improving the urban infrastructure or supporting the local economy (Grabow, Hollbach-Grömig 2006). The term "Stadtmarketing" arose in the 1980's and was introduced especially by German cities as a contemporary form of development in response to socio-demographic changes, to

¹ In the first half of the 19th century, Doksy was home to the textile industry, but only for a short time (Panáček, Wágner 1990, p. 11-12, 95).

² In 1903, for example, a so-called seasonal newspaper entitled "Healthy Air and Spa" (Zdravý vzduch a lázně) was issued under the tutelage of the Association of Bohemian Spa Doctors (Sdružení českých lázeňských lékařů) in Prague. One of its objectives was to show the benefits of spa treatments and "to inform the audience of the appropriate places and appropriate summer spas". At the same time based on the initiative of the same organization a guide to spas, medical and summer residences within the Bohemian territory was published and annually updated (Zdravý vzduch 1903, p. 1; Lázně 1903-1911).

³ Around the same time as Doksy, for example, Potštejn in the Orlické Mountains also began to transform itself into a spa resort. Helena Kokešová presents it in her study (Kokešová 2009).

globalization and the resulting increased competition between cities (Grabow, Hollbach-Grömig, Birk 2006, p. 19-21).

Can the term “Stadtmarketing” be applied to events that happened before 1980? Some cultural historians do not consider the contemporary profiling of cities to be unique. They believe that “Stadtmarketing” existed much earlier - already during the construction of Berlin under the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I purposeful efforts were made to publicize the city (Martens 2008). On the other hand, some historians demur to such use of the word “Stadtmarketing”. According to the historian Torben Giese, individual elements of “Stadtmarketing” can be found in much earlier times, but it is only in the latter part of the 20th century that they fused into a holistic marketing concept, which subsequently shaped the city according to its market needs. Research by Giese on Frankfurt am Main, Wiesbaden and Offenbach introduced the concept of “modern urban image politics” which, according to him, developed in the late 19th century as a result of municipal governments’ attempts “*to influence, systematize and professionalize the image of their cities*” (Giese 2010, p. 14-18).

There is therefore a plethora of terms which can be used to describe what took place in Doksy in the first half of the 20th century. Below we desist from referring to the terms “Werbung”, “Reklame”, “Propaganda” and “Public Relations”, in part due to period conditionality, and in part due to their very narrow meaning. “Stadtmarketing” is also not considered an appropriate term, although the local politics of Doksy in the first half of the 20th century did resemble this phenomenon. However, “Stadtmarketing” is a term which refers to a certain modern matter. The transfer of the term to events prior to 1980 is inappropriate and is like using the word “sport” to describe medieval knight tournaments or “homosexuality” for ancient same-sex acts.

For this research project the most suitable instrument for analysis seems to be the term “image politics”. According to Torben Giese, “image politics” encompasses all attempts by a town to consciously and deliberately affect or alter its “image”, either through the media or urban construction (Giese 2010, p. 55). Due to the enormous thematic range, it is not feasible to investigate the whole “image politics” of Doksy. The role of urban construction will be set aside and the focus is only on the area of media. At the forefront of our interest is not the resulting “image” of the town, nor the media itself, through which the “image” was multiplied, it is rather who organized the “image politics” and who was engaged in it. This study shows that in addition to the special institutions of the Town Council, associations and private initiatives participated in forming the “image” of Doksy as well. This also included many forms of regional and sub-regional cooperation. What the “image” of Doksy was and which was displayed to the world, was not only decided in Doksy, but also for example in Česká Lípa, Liberec and Berlin.

Activities of the Town Council

The organization of tourism and the “image politics” in Doksy was characterized by long-term tensions between the Town Council and the noble Waldstein family who owned the Great Pond. Before World War I, the Doksy Town Council had to annually ask permission from the aristocracy to allow summer guests to swim in the pond. It wasn’t until 1910 that the nobility granted long-term permission to the town “*until further notice*”. This permission was granted on the condition that, as was the case in previous

years, visitors were only allowed to swim in designated places and that there should be a visible notice informing people that the Great Pond and swimming areas were privately owned.⁴

This unbalanced relationship ended with the conclusion of World War I. In the newly established democratic Czechoslovakia it suddenly seemed incomprehensible to have to beg the nobility to “allow summer guest to swim”.⁵ A Special Commission (Sonderkommission) was founded, which discussed the new legal situation. A chronicler of the town and the town’s mayor between 1927 and 1937, Josef Quaißer, was involved in the commission. According to his chronicle, the municipality bought numerous plots of land near the pond from the nobility and gained free access to several routes. The most important result of the negotiations in 1920 was the emergence of the so-called Great Pond Commission (Großsteichkommission) under the auspices of the Town Council. The commission consisted of 10 representatives from the municipality and one representative of the nobility. The sources do not reveal how the Great Pond Commission worked. Quaißer only writes in the chronicle of a “broader committee” to decide what should happen, and a “narrower committee” which was responsible for the implementation of the decisions made.⁶ It can be said with almost certainty that the competences of the commission did not only include the management and operation of the Great Pond but also the creation of the “image” of the town. The tourist brochure “Hirschberg und Thammühl” states the Great Pond Commission as its publisher (*Hirschberg und Thammühl* [after 1925]). Unfortunately, the work of the commission in the “image politics” cannot be evaluated very positively. Frequent changes in membership of the commission, partisan skirmishes, and the lingering animosity between the Town Council and the nobility prevented a more systematic and planned generation of the “image” of the town.⁷

In 1928, legal, financial and economic frictions between the two partners eventually resulted in the commission being restructured. Its membership dropped to five; three members represented the town and two the nobility. The mayor of the town was put in charge of the commission and the organization acquired a new, grander name - Spa Administration (Badeverwaltung). Like its predecessor, the Great Pond Commission, the Spa Administration was responsible for everything related to the management of the water areas. This included for example the distribution of seasonal work on the beach or the purchase of motorboats.⁸ Responsibility for the media was also among its many tasks. The Spa Administration negotiated with advertising agencies in Ústí nad Labem (Anonncen-Expedition Merkur) and Liberec (Propaganda-Anonncen-u.-Reklame-Verlag

⁴ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 129, Inventory No. 602, “Máchovo jezero – organizační agenda”, a letter from Count Waldstein to the Municipal Office, dated 6 June, 1908; a letter from the mayor to Count Waldstein, dated 7 April, 1910; a letter from Count Waldstein to the Municipal Office, dated 21 April, 1910.

⁵ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 194, Inventory No. 813, QUAIßER, J. *Gemeinde-Gedenkbuch*, p. 140.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 140-141.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 141, 153.

⁸ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file “Pachtungen – Jezerní správa Doksy – najímání a pronájem prodejen 1927-1932”, rental agreements for commercial stalls; State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 194, Inventory No. 813, QUAIßER, J. *Gemeinde-Gedenkbuch*, p. 153, 156.

A.-G. Piras, Rudolf Mosse A.-G., ALA A.-G.) the conditions for advertising in newspapers.⁹ In addition, it published several leaflets (*Nordböhmisches Strandbäder* s.d.; Bilddienst der Badeverwaltung 1931), a large number of postcards and a richly decorated anthology under the title “Hirschberg und sein Teichgebiet” (Badeverwaltung Hirschberg-Thammühl [after 1937]). Again, the sources do not tell us whether the work on the promotional materials was entrusted to one member of the administration, or to all, and whether regular meetings were organized at which specific strategies relating to “image politics” were discussed. In all probability, the activities of the Spa Administration were rather the result of improvisation based undoubtedly on the state of the municipal coffers at the time.

The town, through the Spa Administration, slowly consolidated its position and superiority over the Waldstein family. In 1940, the then mayor of the town, Rudolf Dittrich, concluded an agreement with Charles Waldstein, whereby the latter renounced all rights to any business associated with the Great Pond. The town finally became the master of the pond which was absolutely indispensable to Doksy’s fame as a spa resort. In addition, the fifth paragraph of the contract dissolved the Spa Administration. Its tasks - and evidently also matters concerning “image politics” - passed into the hands of the mayor, who was surrounded for this task by an undefined number of advisers.¹⁰ In order to be an adviser an important criterion seemed to be membership of the National Socialist Party. One of the members of the new committee is identified in the minutes of a meeting in 1940 even as an “Ortsleiter Parteigenosse”.¹¹ During World War II, however, the mayor and his circle did not contribute very much to the “image politics” of Doksy because they were concerned with far more serious problems - including the possibility that the hotels in Doksy would be transformed into military hospitals and shelters for those displaced by bombings.¹²

The Initiatives of Associations and Individuals Connected with the Town

“Image politics” was not just the domain of the Town Council in Doksy; it was rather a broad forum which infiltrated many other participants. Long before 1920, when the Great Pond Commission was founded, the Beautification Association Doksy (Verschönerungsverein Hirschberg) was active. From 1888, the Beautification Association embellished the town’s surroundings and was probably responsible for organizing the publication of adverts in several issues in 1904 of the periodical “Prager Blatt”. The adverts invited people to visit the “*oldest and most important summer resort*”

⁹ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file Správa Máchova jezera, 2) propagace 1935-1938”, correspondence of Spa Administration with advertising agencies from 1937.

¹⁰ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 183, Inventory No. 775, file “Lázeňská správa Máchova jezera 1939-1940 – různé spisy”, agreement dated 15 March, 1940 between the mayor of Doksy and Charles Waldstein about the management of the Great Pond.

¹¹ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 183, Inventory No. 775, file “Lázeňská správa Máchova jezera 1939-1940 – různé spisy”, protocol from negotiations of the Spa Administration, dated 18 March, 1940.

¹² State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 183, Inventory No. 775, file “Zemský spolek cizineckého ruchu v Sudetech”, letter from the Regional Authority (Landrat) to the mayor of Doksy, dated 2 January, 1942; letter from the mayor of Doksy to the Reserves Management (Leitung der Reserve), dated 3 March, 1942.

in northern Bohemia" and enticed them to swim in the "manor Great Pond".¹³ The association was also the author of a number of postcards.¹⁴ It continued its activities until 1930, when it was dissolved and absorbed into the new Association of Tourism (Fremdenverkehrsverein). From this time onwards the Association of Tourism coordinated the activities of organizations and companies which were involved in the management and "image" of the resort. Among the association's members were for example the Association of Innkeepers (Gastwirtengenossenschaft) and the Association of Building Experts (Baumeistervereinigung).¹⁵ In addition to the "Fremdenverkehrsverein" the sources also refer to other organisations such as the "Verkehrsamt" and "Verkehrsverein".¹⁶ However, it is difficult to say whether they coexisted or whether it was still the same association simply called by different names.

The "image" of the town was also formed by individuals. Publishers of postcards were local merchants, innkeepers and hoteliers.¹⁷ In 1931, the photographer Karl Zimmer made pictures right on the beach of Staré Splavy. The pictures were offered for sale in the local stall of Erwin Morawetz.¹⁸ Emil Lorenz was Zimmer's competitor on the beach. He actively promoted Staré Splavy by taking "thousands of group photographs",¹⁹ as he writes in a motivational letter to the Spa Administration. The influence of local patriots, who lived in Doksy or had a very intimate relationship to the town, cannot be overlooked as well. They wrote different extensive brochures introducing readers to the countryside around Doksy and providing practical information on accommodation, restaurants and leisure time activities (e.g. Hantschel 1922, Kinský 1931).²⁰

All these organizations and individuals did not work in isolation; "image politics" was, on the contrary, about close cooperation. This was especially true in a small town like Doksy. It is perfectly feasible that a certain hotel keeper might have published its own postcards and leaflets, while he was also a member of the Beautification Association and, from the 1930's onwards, along with other accommodation providers, of the Association of Tourism. The mutual support given by the participants in the "image politics" of the

¹³ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Okrašlovací spolek Doksy", Box 77, Inventory No. 933/35, newspaper cutting from "Prager Blatt", dated 10 April, 1904 and 14 April, 1904.

¹⁴ Doksy Municipal Library, Regional Fund, for example the postcard entitled "Josefsanlagen, Gruss aus Hirschberg i. B."

¹⁵ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 194, Inventory No. 813, QUAIßER, J. *Gemeinde-Gedenkbuch*, p. 161-162.

¹⁶ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 183, Inventory No. 775, file "Reklama a propagace, korespondence 1939", a letter from the journal "Fränkische Tageszeitung" to Doksy's organization "Verkehrsamt", dated 27 April, 1939; a letter from the journal "Dresdener Anzeiger" to Doksy's organization "Verkehrsverein", dated 2 May, 1939.

¹⁷ Doksy Municipal Library, Regional Fund, for example the postcard entitled "Kasino Hotel und Tanzdiele, Sommerfrische Hirschberg am See, E. Kunzmann, Besitzer."

¹⁸ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file "Pachtungen - Jezerní správa Doksy - najímání a pronájem prodejen 1927-1932", a letter from Karl Zimmer to the Spa Administration, dated 15 September, 1930.

¹⁹ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file "Pachtungen - Jezerní správa Doksy - najímání a pronájem prodejen 1927-1932", a letter from Emil Lorenz to the Spa Administration probably dating to 1931.

²⁰ Franz Hantschel (1844-1940), came from Chotovice near Nový Bor. He was a doctor, a member of the "Exkursions-Club" in Česká Lípa and a publisher of its journal in which he published a treatise on the nature of northern Bohemia. He also dedicated his monographies to this area. Bohumil Kinský (1898-1987) was a teacher and later director of the secondary school in Česká Lípa, an avid hiker and photographer. In the years 1928-1936, he published six guidebooks on various parts of northern Bohemia. For more information, see the article in the periodical "Heimatkundliche Nachrichten" (*Zum Gedenken* 1964).

town is evident in tourist guides. Gilbert Japp, an expert from the now-defunct State Hydrobiological Research Station in Doksy, wrote several contributions for the booklet "Hirschberg und sein Teichgebiet" (Japp [probably 1937a]) and submitted an article on vegetation to Fritz Günther for his guide "Hirschberg, die Perle Nordböhmens" (Japp [probably 1937b]). In the brochure "Die Binnenseebäder Hirschberg-Thammühl", there is an advert for the book "Unterm Altperstein" (Quaißer 1928, p. 7) which in turn recommends the brochure "Das Hirschberger und Daubaer Land" by Franz Hantschel (Steinitz, Quaißer 1922, book cover). Some passages from the guide "Hirschberg und Thammühl" were even verbatim put into "Die Binnenseebäder Hirschberg-Thammühl" (*Hirschberg und Thammühl* [after 1925], 9; Quaißer 1928, 8).

Numerous links also connect the initiatives of the associations and individuals with the organizations of the Town Council. Karl Zimmer and Emil Lorenz had yet to receive permission from the town's administration to shoot photographs on the beach. To win the concession they were asked to pay 500 Czechoslovak crowns and had to pledge that they would provide 50 photographs to the town free of charge with the "*permission to reproduce them for advertising purposes*".²¹ In this way the Town Council acquired images which the Spa Administration could use in its promotional materials. Joseph Quaißer, who was probably a member of both the Great Pond Commission and the Spa Administration, published his own tourist guides and he also contributed with several treatises to the publication "Unterm Altperstein" (Quaißer 1922). Membership of the Spa Administration in the Association of Tourism is by far the best indicator of the interconnections that existed between the Town Council and the other participants in the "image politics" of Doksy.²²

Cooperation with Regional Organizations and the Organizations from the "Third Reich"

Although the centre of the "image politics" lay in Doksy, in reality the network of participants stretched far beyond the town's limits. For example, Gilbert Japp apparently lived in Česká Lípa, where also Franz Hantschel settled. Neither the photographer Karl Zimmer, nor his colleague Emil Lorenz, were residents of Doksy – evidence shows that both only came to Staré Splavy for the season. Even the most famous postcards of Doksy and its pond were not taken by a photographer who lived in the town. They were taken and published by Karel Streer from the nearby Dubá (Dauba in German).²³

There were many organizations and associations in the region with which Doksy established loose relations. The main goal of such cooperation probably lay in obtaining funds for the further development of the town's "image". The North Bohemian Union of Tourism (Nordböhmischer Fremdenverkehrsverband) was involved in the "image politics" of Doksy and it is probable that under its auspices the Association of Tourism in Doksy was formed. Doksy was also a member of the Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa (Verband der Nordböhmischen Kurorte und

²¹ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file "Pachtungen – Jezerní správa Doksy – najímání a pronájem prodejen 1927-1932", a letter from Doksy's Municipal Office to Karl Zimmer and Emil Lorenz, dated 7 May, 1931.

²² State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 194, Inventory No. 813, QUAIßER, J. *Gemeinde-Gedenkbuch*, p. 161.

²³ For artistic and political activities, see Streers profile in the publication about old postcards (Dulík s. d, p. 13).

Sommerfrischen in Böhmisches Leipa). In 1930, the confederation invited a delegation of German journalists to Doksy,²⁴ and in the following years it prepared mass advertising for North Bohemian spas, putting Doksy in first place.²⁵

Doksy maintained active links with the neighbouring towns of Hamr na Jezeře (Hammer am See in German), Stráž pod Ralskem (Wartenberg an der Roll in German) and Hradčany (Kummer in German). All of them apparently tried to transform themselves into a resort like Doksy. Unfortunately, their budgets prevented them from investing in large-scale “image” campaigns. In the 1930’s they therefore joined forces with Doksy which had more experience and enjoyed a wider awareness among the public. The result of joining forces was the so-called “collective advertising” (Kolektivreklame) which Hamr, Stráž, Hradčany and Doksy organized independently of the Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa. The procedure went as follows: at the beginning of the year, the Spa Administration sent a letter to the advertising agencies Merkur, Piras and Rudolf Mosse with a request for a quote for collective newspaper advertising for the four towns. During February, the Spa Administration received a quote from each of the agencies. It was agreed beforehand that each town would contribute a different amount. Doksy, the largest and most prominent of the towns, would take responsibility for the largest share – and would take the most space in the advert. The representatives of the four towns subsequently met to compare the submitted proposals and instructed one agency to organize the “collective advertising”.²⁶

In 1939, the “image politics” in Doksy gained a new, supra-regional partner. The most important impulse was the “liberation of Sudetenland”. Where “*a short time ago the borders divided Germans from Germans*” (Bachmann [1939], p. 447), a “*free German*” (Bachmann [1939], p. 447) travel destination was suddenly created which “*met the demands of all who seek relaxation*” (Bachmann [1940], p. 54). Doksy and other local towns were immediately pulled into the machinery of the centralized institutions which were dominated by the Reich Association of Tourism (Reichsfremdenverkehrsverband).

This central organization was formed in 1936 with a view to bringing all sectors of tourism under Nazi control. The organization was managed by Hermann Esser. In the Reich Ministry of National Enlightenment and Propaganda (Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda) headed by Joseph Goebbels, Esser also held the post of Secretary of State for Tourism (Heilingbrunner [1940], p. 11). Among the 34 provincial associations which were affiliated to the Reich Association of Tourism was also the Provincial Association of Tourism Sudetenland (Landesfremdenverkehrsverband Sudetenland). The association, headquartered in Liberec, became a member in 1939. Until the end of March 1940 it numbered 463 communes. Doksy was not missing from the list. The association in Liberec also included

²⁴ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 194, Inventory No. 813, QUAIßER, J. *Gemeinde-Gedenkbuch*, p. 161-162.

²⁵ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file “Správa Máchova jezera, 2) propagace 1935-1938”, a letter from the advertising agency Rudolf Mosse to the Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa, dated 15 January, 1936; a letter from the Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa to the advertising agency Rudolf Mosse, dated 20 February, 1936.

²⁶ State Regional Archives Česká Lípa, Fund “Městský úřad Doksy”, Box 173, Inventory No. 739, file “Správa Máchova jezera, 2) propagace 1935-1938”, correspondence of the Spa Administration with advertising agencies and representatives of partner cities in the years 1936 and 1937.

an Advertising Committee (Werbeausschuss), which had 18 members, one of whom came from Doksy.²⁷ This is indisputable evidence of the town's years of experience in the field of "image politics".

The extent to which membership of the organization was voluntary remains a question for future researchers to examine in more detail. The benefit of being an associated member of both the Provincial and Reich Associations of Tourism was that they offered unparalleled opportunities to reach a mass audience. The downside was that the town experienced unprecedented interference in its "image politics". Esser had been commissioned to manage tourism in the whole of Germany under the same rules to the benefit of the national community (Graf [1940], p. 29). In cooperation with the Institute for the German Reich Spas (Reichsanstalt für das deutsche Bäderwesen) and the Reich Meteorological Office (Reichsamt für Wetterdienst), individual destinations were therefore categorized according to their nature into mandatory categories (Bacmeister [1940]) and "*their picture and written advertising, advertisements, advertising papers and posters were subject to an approval procedure*" (Graf [1940], p. 30). In the Reich's monumental encyclopaedic survey of tourist destinations from 1940, Doksy fell into the category of "air spa" (*Lufkurorte* [1940]) and its brochure "Hirschberg-Thammühl am See – Sudetenland" had to be certified by the Provincial Association of Tourism in Liberec (Verkehrsamt Hirschberg-Thammühl am See 1931). Although the new participant implemented clear rules and standards in the "image politics" of Doksy, the times in which there was freedom to form its own urban "image" had ended for good. All the other participants quickly got in line with their Reich partner.

Conclusion

From the end of the 19th century until the outbreak of World War II, the North Bohemian town of Doksy and the adjacent village Staré Splavy changed beyond recognition. From a marginal agricultural area it gradually developed into a popular destination for summer guests who sought relief from their hectic city lives on the banks and in the waters of the Great Pond (now the Mácha Lake). To intensify its appeal and to enter the public consciousness as a spa resort, Doksy operated intense media "image politics" in which several players participated. These players included individuals (local patriots, artists, hoteliers, innkeepers) and organizations either directly from Doksy (Beautification Association, Great Pond Commission, Spa Administration, Association of Tourism), or from the surrounding area (Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa, North Bohemian Association of Tourism, Provincial Association of Tourism Sudetenland), as well as from abroad (Reich Association of Tourism). Until 1938, the dominant participant in the "image politics" of Doksy seems to have been the institutions connected with the Town Council. The products of the Great Pond Commission and the Spa Administration were obviously considered official and apparently became prototypes for brochures, leaflets and postcards of other

²⁷ The Provincial Association of Tourism Sudetenland was appointed by decree on 31 October, 1938. The founding assembly took place in Liberec, 17 January, 1939. Regional State Archives Česká Lípa, Fund "Městský úřad Doksy", Box 183, Inventory No. 775, File "Zemský spolek cizineckého ruchu v Sudetech – korespondence s obecním úřadem, 1939-1943 Cizinecký ruch", *Geschäftsbericht des Landesfremdenverkehrsverbandes Sudetenland (Oktober 1938/März 1940)* [probably 1940], Reichenberg: Landesfremdenverkehrsverband Sudetenland, p. 5-6, 7, 29, 35.

participants. Once Doksy joined the Provincial Association of Tourism after the occupation of the border, the “image” of the town was strictly regimented according to the guidelines defined by the central office in Berlin. The scope of the influence of other participants in the “image politics” of the town was seriously limited.

The fragmentary nature of the sources and their informative value prevents us from getting a closer insight into the mechanism behind the “image politics” of Doksy. From the chronicle, correspondence and promotional materials, it is not possible to learn more about the participants other than their names. The full extent of the activities of the Spa Administration or the Association of Tourism therefore remains obscured. The fate of the majority of hoteliers, retailers, photographers and local patriots who supported the fame of Doksy with their images and texts also remains uncertain. For this reason, it is not possible to exactly determine who for example was brought into the “image politics” for profit or for the love of their community and country.

The sources reveal very few clues to the interactions between the different participants. Certain strategies, agreements and of course finances were needed to create the “image”, so that the participants had to often negotiate among themselves. The cooperation established between Doksy and its neighbouring towns on “collective advertising” is the only substantiated evidence that exists of such negotiations. There is no information on further communications between the participants. In effect, this means that we know the participants by their names, we know the results of their work in the form of advertisements, postcards, leaflets and tourist brochures, but we cannot reconstruct the processes that made it happen.

Finally, it is necessary to take into account the nature of the sources which are available on the “image politics” of Doksy. The sources were mostly produced by organizations (correspondence of the Spa Administration) and by individuals (chronicle written by Josef Quaißer) associated with the Town Council. To fully understand the development of the “image” of the town, we would require documents respecting the perspective of other participants - the Waldstein family, the Confederation of North Bohemian Spas and Resorts in Česká Lípa or accommodation providers in Doksy. Due to their absence a multi-perspective analysis of the topic is strongly compromised.

It is possible to assume that for larger tourist locations comprehensive and content-rich files of sources exist that would enable us to look in detail at the role of participants, individuals and organisations in “image politics”, as well as clarify their interactions over a longer period of time and from different perspectives. On the contrary, in smaller locations researchers will often be confronted with the same limitations which our study encountered when trying to get acquainted with the protagonists of the “image politics” of Doksy in the first half of the 20th century. Nevertheless, further research into the stakeholders involved in the creation of the Doksy’s “image” would not be wasted and promises to reveal new and interesting findings. This would be particularly the case if it involves research over a broader time line. Doksy’s popularity among summer visitors did not cease in 1945. Although the town stopped being a fashionable lake and air spa, its new “image” as the recreation centre of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement guaranteed the town’s continued boom. New times and new clientele required new participants in the “image politics” of the town. Although some authors of tourist guides embodied their personal continuity in the “image politics” of the town during the inter-war and post-war years, local, regional and national entities entered the scene and

distanced themselves from past trends. Their analysis can be an important insight into the functioning of the mechanisms of “image politics” with regards to socialist recreation. This study not only provides a number of theoretical and methodological impulses on the history of tourism, but it is also the starting point for further research into a regional topic with supra-regional relevance.

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