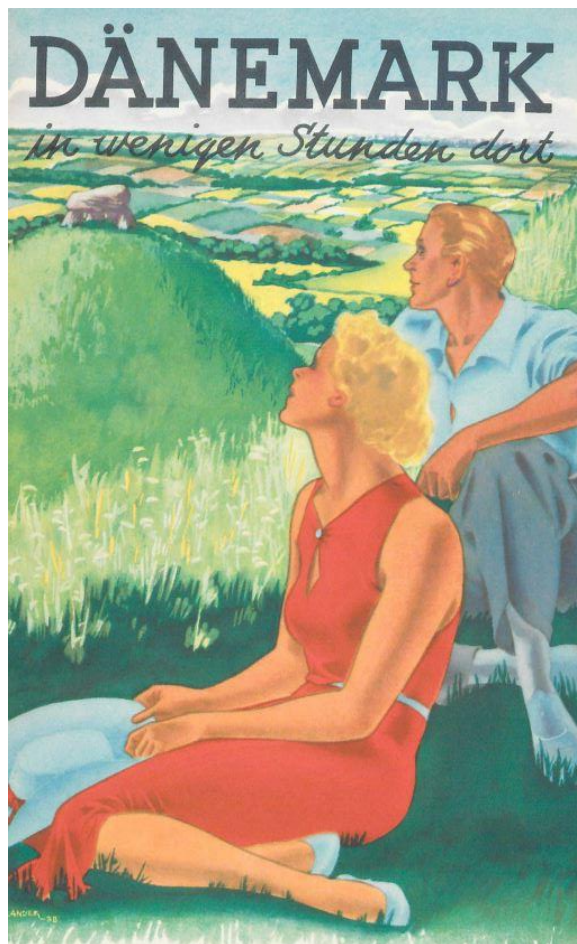


"IN WENIGEN STUNDEN DORT": THE TOURIST ASSOCIATION FOR DENMARK AND ITS PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS IN NAZI GERMANY, 1929-1939

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Abstract

This thesis outlines the development of the Danish tourist landscape in the 1930s, while probing the role played by citizens in Nazi Germany as a potential audience for tourist promotion. It shows that German tourism to Denmark was not tempered for ideological reasons but were rather influenced by economic concerns and policies. Based on archival material, the thesis furthermore argues that the re-organization of The Tourist Association for Denmark in 1935 laid the foundations for a modern, commercialized tourist industry to emerge in Denmark, while also retaining some of its idealist, voluntary grounding. It is shown how this framework led to a quite eclectic promotional strategy towards Nazi Germany, in which Nordicism, romanticism, and modern elements revolving around amusement, crafts, infrastructure, and social policies all featured. Ultimately, however, the promotional efforts increasingly aligned with a version of *Norden* centered on notions of social progressivism, which would become integral to Danish national self-promotion in the post-war era.

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Although writing a historical thesis resembles the individually formative Grand Tours of the 18th and 19th centuries more than the (individualist) collectivity charter trips of the 21st century, what follows is far from the result of a lone journey. A great number of people have helped me along the way, and I owe them my sincere thanks.

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Needless to say, I stand with CEU.

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This includes this study's cover image.

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Introduction

An hour before the ship's departure, I really have in my hands the currency which should open the door for our trip to the North. My comrades are already waiting full of impatience in front of the shipping company's office and can hardly understand that in the end it all, all works out, even if in the last minute. Then, happily, we embark our Copenhagen-steamer "Hansa," a Swedish ship from the Halland-Line [shipping company], take leave with all the towers of our Hanseatic city of Lübeck and are immediately surrounded by the whole atmosphere which a sea travel brings [...]¹

So recounts a member of Lübeck's branch of *Hitlerjugend* the enthusiasm engulfing his troop's travels to Denmark and Sweden in the summer of 1939 in an account in *Der Norden*, the monthly magazine of the *Nordische Gesellschaft* [Nordic Society]. Arranged with the help of the *Nordische Gesellschaft*—a Lübeck-based institution acting as facilitator of economic and cultural exchange between Germany and Northern Europe—the lengthy summer trip took the youngsters first to Copenhagen, where they would spend two full days before setting out for Stockholm. Touring the coastal regions North of Copenhagen, the adolescents were "greatly impressed" as they passed a string of baroque and renaissance palaces on board a bus; not driving too fast to sense "the great times of German [sic!] history" emanating from the palaces. The accommodation was another highlight, as it had been arranged so that the youngsters would live on the frigate "Jylland," "which intervened in the War of Liberation for Schleswig-Holstein."

As it turned out, the article appeared in what would be the last issue of *Der Norden* not entirely pre-occupied with the Second World War. Until weeks before the war broke out, then, young, ideologically trained Germans would travel northwards as

¹"Nach Norden – Hitler Jugend auf Auslandsfahrt zwischen Lübeck, Kopenhagen und Stockholm. Von Rudolf May, Obergefolgschaftsführer, Bann Lübeck [To the North – Hitler Jugend on trip abroad between Lübeck, Copenhagen and Stockholm. By Rudolf May, *Obergefolgschaftsführer*, Lübeck District]," *Der Norden* 16, 9 (September, 1939), 342.

tourists—going sightseeing by bus, the most emblematic of tourist experiences, along the way.

And they were not lone travelers. As I show in Chapter 1 of the present study, close to 200,000 overnight accommodations were booked by Germans in Copenhagen alone during the 1930s. Others would stay in the provinces, for example at the popular beaches on the western coast of the peninsula Jutland, come and leave by boat in one day, or sleep on-board anchored cruise ships—all in surprising large numbers. Yet, to the best of my knowledge no prior study has systematically approached this stream of tourists crossing the northern borders of the Third Reich to spend their free time in Denmark.

Thus, this thesis investigates German tourism to Denmark from 1929, through the rise of Nazism in 1933, and to the German occupation of Denmark in April 1940. Chapter 1 outlines the nature and development of German tourism to Denmark during the period, and situates the phenomenon in its larger European context. It argues that German travelers went to Denmark in quite substantive numbers throughout the decade, and that the numbers were tempered by political interests related to economic rather than ideological concerns.² In addition to outlining and analyzing the figures, the chapter delineates the types of tourist agencies and tourists involved, while it also touches upon the debates and images ascribed to them in the Danish press.

Chapters 2 and 3 take an institutional approach to the Danish tourist landscape. Chapter 2 outlines the institutional backdrop for tourism in Denmark until the middle of the 1930s, and the debates that would arise at the beginning of the decade as

² To the extent that I deal with ideology in this study, I do so along the lines outlined by Michael Freeden in his morphological approach to ideology. That is, I see ideologies as constituted by clusters of contestable concepts related through more or less close-knit webs. Spatially, the concepts are distributed within or at different distances to the “core” of the ideology. Both the relational location of concepts within the clusters that make up an ideology and the meaning of the concepts themselves are subjects to historical change. In this way, and although certain elements are ineliminable from certain ideologies, I take political ideologies to be contestable and evolving rather than fixed entities. See Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: a Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 47-91.

contemporaries increasingly perceived traveling to be approaching a new era and tourism to be a potential source for state revenue. Focus is on the Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD]: a voluntary, idealistic organization, which served as the main institutional force mediating between official, commercial, and popular concerns related to tourism. Chapter 3 traces the outcome of the debates: the government-commissioned “Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad [CTPA],” which was in place from 1934-1935 and dealt with the approaches to promotion abroad, and the re-organized, state-financed institution that would emerge as a result of the committee. In concert, the chapters argue that the Danish tourist landscape, especially as centered on TAD, was professionalized and commercialized during the 1930s, while still retaining elements of its popular and voluntary grounding.

This particular set-up, in which a modernizing impetus co-existed with romanticist ideals, would be evident in the promotional material aimed at Germany dealt with in Chapter 4. The chapter deals with a question, which with more than a small share of hindsight might be formulated as: how did TAD try to convince German tourists to cross the very same border during the 1930s, that German soldiers would transgress at the decade’s end? Answering this question, I look at a range of German-language tourist brochures produced by TAD and try to situate their content within a range of cultural and political discourses. These especially relate to the ways in which Denmark’s place in the symbolic geography of the North was negotiated in the material. In other words, what did the sense of belonging to the Nordic countries consist of, at what points did this sense intersect with romanticized and/or racialized notions of the North which already existed in Germany and were an influential tenet within Nazism, and how did this unfold in the promotional material?

In the end, I argue, the image of Denmark promoted in brochures distributed in Germany developed from being connected chiefly to romanticized Nordicism into an understanding of *Norden* linked effectively to notions of progress and of being modern. While the material intended to sell the nation to traveling Germans did indeed carry more romanticized notions of the North in its discourse and imagery than the Anglophone material from the same period, the image portrayed was nearer to the idea that *Norden* constituted a successful and particularly modern model which would fully crystalize in the public imagination within and outside of Scandinavia after the Second World War; however, as this study exemplifies, its branding as such had roots in the interwar period.

Political Context

Danish relations with Germany in the 1930s were intricate. While the Danish Social Democratic Party formed a government with the Danish Social Liberal Party from 1928 onwards, German social democrats had been among the first victims of Nazism,³ and the Danish government's gaze towards Germany was indeed a nervous one. Into this nervousness played the question of the Danish-German border as well—a border which had been redrawn in 1864, and again following the German defeat in the First World War. Although the Nazi leadership never actually demanded a revision of the border until (and even after) the *Wehrmacht* transgressed it, quite justified fears of irredentist demands dominated Danish foreign policy throughout the decade.⁴

Yet, it is a main contention of this thesis that understanding Danish-German relationships in the 1930s rigidly upon political antagonisms makes for an incomplete understanding. The boundary between the two political systems was sealed off neither virtually nor figuratively; rather, adapting a concept framed by one scholar of Soviet

³ E.g. Donna Harsch, *Social Democracy and the Rise of Nazism* (Chapel Hill, NC; London: North Carolina Press, 1993).

⁴ Claus Bundgård Christensen et. al., *Danmark Besat. Krig og Hverdag, 1940-45 [Denmark Occupied. War and Everyday Life, 1940-45]*, 4th ed. (Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 2015), 46.

relations with the West, it was a semipermeable membrane through which people, ideas, and symbolic gestures could pass.⁵ Despite the obvious differences between them, I argue that when viewed from the more mundane perspective of tourism and the national promotion that went along with it, the two societies were in frequent interaction.

According to Danish historian Niels Kayser Nielsen, all of the Nordic social democracies had taken a “pragmatic turn to the right” by the early 1930s as they self-transformed from class-parties into people’s parties.⁶ This brought along a stronger emphasis on concepts linked to cultural nationalism. Among other things, notions of *folket* [*das Volk*, the people] and peasant-pastoralism were appropriated by and became central to social democratic rhetoric, just like the 1930s saw the Nordic social democrats hegemonize *Norden*—a region-turned-concept based on a set of values like egalitarianism and freedom, derived from ostensibly deep-seated historical circumstances and traditions such as a strong and independent class of freeholder peasants.⁷

With the social democratic “turn to the right,” the representation of Denmark could potentially cater to an audience in Nazi Germany without compromising the country’s leading governing party, even if the political language of Danish social democracy was—and unwaveringly so—committed to democracy, also in its invocation of *folket*.⁸ This study was essentially born from this idea; however, I do not mean to say

⁵ Michael David-Fox, “The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane: Origins and Demise of the Stalinist Superiority Complex,” in *Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s*, eds. Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer, 14-39 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press for the University of Texas at Arlington, 2014).

⁶ Niels Kayser Nielsen, “Demokrati og kulturel nationalism i Norden i mellemkrigstiden – en realpolitisk højredrejning? [Nordic Democracy and Cultural Nationalism in the Interwar Period – a Pragmatic Turn to the Right?],” *Historisk Tidskrift (Sweden)* 124 (2004), 4: 581-603.

⁷ On the elements making up the cultural construction of Norden, see especially Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth, “Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden,” in Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth (eds.), *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, 1-24 (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997); Also, Bo Stråth, “Nordic Modernity: Origins, Trajectories, and Prospects,” *Thesis Eleven* 77 (2004): 5-23; and Jussi Kurunmäki and Johan Strang (eds.), *Rhetorics of Nordic Democracy* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2010).

⁸ See Ove Korsgaard, *Kampen om folket. Et dannelsesperspektiv på dansk historie gennem 500 år [The Struggle over the People. A bildungs-perspective on Danish history through 500 years]* (Copenhagen:

that any invocation of romanticized imagery was effectively an act of kowtowing to Nazism. Saying so would grossly underestimate the degree to which tourism was (and is) entangled with a quest for authenticity and an urge to escape modernity, if just for a little while. As Jonathan Culler has noted, “[o]ne of the characteristics of modernity is the belief that authenticity has been lost and exists only in the past—whose signs we preserve (antiques, restored buildings, imitations of old interiors)—or else in other regions or countries.”⁹ While I sympathize greatly with this point of view, I still take the configurations of respectively past-oriented and progressive visions in the Danish promotional efforts to hint at the degrees to which the shifts in social democratic political language presented an opportunity to target an audience in Nazi Germany.

Modernity, “Tourist Propaganda,” and the Tourist

What constitutes the “modern,” is, of course, a Pandora’s box of its own. Along with its derivatives, such as “modernity” and “modernism” for example, the term is more than a little intangible. The very core of these terms, as Susan Stanford Friedman has shown, perhaps more eloquently than anyone else, is “the contradictory dialogic running through the historical and expressive formations of the phenomena to which [they] allude.”¹⁰ In other words, in the term modernism lays both the radical and chaotic break with the past and the continuous, rationality-based progress of history. Its meaning—and the meaning of its relatives—varies with scholarly and artistic discipline, and this

Gyldendal, 2004); and Niels Finn Christiansen, “Socialismen og fædrelandet [Socialism and the Fatherland],” in *Dansk Identitetshistorie [The History of Danish Identity]* vol. 3. (eds.) Ole Feldbæk, 512-586 (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels forlag, 1992); I discuss this further in Chapter 3.

⁹ Jonathan Culler, “Semiotics of Tourism,” *The American Journal of Semiotics* 1 (1981), 1/2: 127-140, quote 132.

¹⁰ Susan Stanford Friedman, “Definitional Excursions: The Meanings of Modern/Modernity/Modernism,” *Modernism/modernity* 8 (2001), 3: 493-513, quote: 510.

inherent contradiction is what makes the term both intriguingly open-ended and frustratingly inconsistent.¹¹

For those involved with Danish tourism in the 1930s, it was all simpler. As the tourist officials and the Danish press discussed the need for, how to obtain, and the successful achievement of different elements of “modern” tourism, they were thinking in terms of infrastructural improvements, better—and more scientific—promotional techniques, and rationalized management and administration. Perhaps the word “modernize” captures the sentiment best, although it was far from the only one invoked in contemporary discourse. In terms of tourism, modernity meant development, it meant better opportunities for travel, and it meant greater numbers. While it appeared to contemporaries that modern tourism was an unprecedented phenomenon, the disturbance that came with it was seen in terms of progress rather than disruption. Finally, as I discuss briefly in Chapter 3, the models for modernity were found in many places, including in Nazi Germany.

Included in this view of modern tourism, and the underlying ambition of the Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad, was the perceived need for a modern tourist propaganda. The preferred term among contemporaries dealing with what we would term “marketing” today, the word “propaganda” has assumed entirely negative connotations in the course of the twentieth century.¹² For that reason alone, I use it sparingly in my writing, generally preferring terms such as “promotional material,” “tourist advertisement” or other similar (relatively) neutral terms which are present in the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² In the introduction to a recent Oxford Handbook on Propaganda studies, the editors note that while “often used strictly as a dismissive term, especially by one enemy against another, propaganda can more neutrally be understood as a central means of organizing and shaping thought and perception, a practice that has pervaded the twentieth century but whose modern origins go back at least to the spread of religious doctrine during the Counter Reformation.” See Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, “Introduction: Thirteen Propositions about Propaganda,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, (eds.) Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, online version (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

source base, even if not the most commonly used. I do occasionally use the term “tourist propaganda,” however. When I do so, it is with reference to the contemporary usage, in which effective propaganda was perceived as a hallmark of modernity; as a modern technique to be mastered.

Here, it might be worth reflecting on the person reading the promotional material. What is a tourist and how is (s)he to be delineated? A member of the 1935 committee asked the same question and elaborated upon it: “How can one distinguish at all if not by estimating—when it comes down to it, simply guesswork—between a tourist and for example a business traveler, that is, a traveler who comes whether Denmark is designated as a tourist country or not.” His answer provides the guideline for the present study: “If one wants to talk objectively about the matter—and namely about the economic value of the matter—one will have to look at the collective economic importance of the traveling traffic, whose presence must first be identified [...]”¹³ In the following, then, I use the term tourist to cover travelers of all sorts.

Sources and Literature

As I set out to write this thesis, it was on an impulse provoked by the frontispieces of a few tourist brochures made by the Tourist Association for Denmark that I, rather coincidentally, stumbled upon. I was especially struck by one German-language brochure cover from 1939, showing a young couple gazing longingly at a romanticized landscape featuring hills, fields, and even an ancient burial mound under the slogan: “Dänemark: in wenigen Stunden dort [Denmark: there in a few hours]” (see the cover page). As it turned out, the brochures were but a small selection of a rather large collection stored in what used to be the Danish Business Archive, but is now subsumed under the Danish State

¹³ V. A. Nielsen, “Indlæg til Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg angaaende dansk Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Submission to The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad],” 90 Dan. (10/5) Diverse, 90-32, Udenrigsministeriet: Gruppeordnede sager (1909-1945), Rigsarkivet, 3; emphasis in the original.

Archives. As I started looking for the context of these brochures, I soon realized that the 1930s was a seminal era for Danish tourism, as its institutional framework was shaken quite substantially by the work of the abovementioned committee, which not only increased the state's involvement in tourism but also facilitated a thorough contemplation of the development of European tourism and Denmark's role within it; importantly, from my point of view, this thought process left a long paper trail.

As I sought to broaden my research perspective, however, I undoubtedly spent too much time on *Kraft durch Freude*, the state-organized leisure organization of the Third Reich; having stubbornly trawled through material such as the Gestapo surveillance files from *KdF*-trips, stored at Berlin-Lichterfelde Bundesarchiv, reports on the organization's travel activities, leisure offers, and conference, as well as a significant amount of secondary literature, however, I was finally forced to concede that only as Europe ignited, the *Wehrmacht* made its way North, and *KdF* set out to provide leisure for its soldiers, did "Dänemark" occasionally appear in the organization's material. Other archival explorations proved equally disappointing. In Berlin, it turned out that despite its astounding collections of folders, guide books, postcards, and innumerable other items related to the history of travel, the *Historisches Archiv des Tourismus* only had one thin folder devoted to material on Denmark before the Second World War (what was more, I had already encountered this content in TAD's own archives).

As I later booked a flight for Lübeck, historically an important city for interactions between Germany and other countries around the Baltic Sea, I hoped to encounter archival traces of the tourists whose northwards trips I knew—to a smaller or larger degree—had been organized from here by the *Nordische Gesellschaft*. I was hoping in vain. As I sat in the *Stadtsarchiv*, beautifully located just within the borders of Lübeck's medieval city, it became clear that the documents stored here were not the organization's

own archival material; almost the entire documentation available on the *Gesellschaft* consisted of press clippings from the *Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel*. The reason for this appeared in an articles from 1942, stored among other articles on the *Gesellschaft*'s activities. As allied flights bombarded the city, seemingly destroying almost 3000 houses one September night, the house of the *Nordische Gesellschaft* was turned into rubble. "The archive," reported one Swedish newspaper, "yes practically all papers and inventories, the fruit of 20 years work, has been completely destroyed, and only pieces of burnt wood and bricks are left from the old house on Breite Strasse."¹⁴

Hence, the source base of the present study is more lopsided than I would have liked. Most of the archival material analyzed stems from Danish institutions and has been dug out of Danish archives; created at a time when focus groups and reception analysis had not yet emerged as mandatory marketing tools, this material was telling very little about how the promotional brochures fared upon arrival in Germany. Neither did it give many hints at what German tourists expected to find if they decided to make their way to Denmark, how they experienced the country, or what these experiences did to the ways they conceived of themselves or altered their cultural and political outlooks—if anything at all.

On some occasions I seek to make up for this lack and invoke a German perspective by using press material; needless to say, this approach can only go so far, when dealing with a country in which press freedom was limited at best. For a more extensive project, the subjective experience of tourism would have played a larger role; hopefully it would be clearer whether the *Hitlerjugend*, as they crossed the Baltic Sea in that tension-filled summer of 1939, were representative of the German tourist experience

¹⁴*Svenska Dagbladet, Stockholm*, 4/4 1942, in: 90, Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1938-1944, 2, Nordische Gesellschaft, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.

in Denmark in the 1930s when they ultimately saw the Danish sights in front of them through a “tourist gaze” almost entirely shaped by their own pre-conceptions and educational formation.¹⁵

Yet, there is still merit to the more institutional approach pursued here. I cannot—and do not—claim to understand how effective the Danish tourist promoters were at affecting the view of Denmark among Germans, why some German tourists decided to go to Denmark, or how these perceived of Denmark if they did indeed cross the border—and whether they went for ideological purposes or, on the contrary, in order to momentarily escape ideology. But I can hint at the attitudes towards neighboring Nazi Germany when it came to seemingly mundane matters like tourism, as seen from the view point of one democratic state’s semi-official institutional set-up at a time when neither the Second World War nor the Holocaust could be perceived as the inevitable end results to a volatile decade. Looking at promotional material, I can analyze the ways in which the same institutions perceived of Denmark’s place in a symbolic geography where romanticized notions of the North simultaneously did and did not fit, and where an alternative, more progressive regional identity was already in the making.

Finally, it should be noted that this study starts from an uneven base. Many a book has been written on tourism and leisure in Nazi Germany; few pages are devoted to the same period in Danish tourist history. Scholars such as Hasso Spode, Sarah Baranowski and Kristin Semmens have looked into the place for mass tourism in negotiating modernity and incorporating calls for mass consumption and worker leisure in Nazi

¹⁵ The notion of the “tourist gaze” was famously coined by John Urry. While he is ultimately more interested in the institutionalization of certain ways of seeing tourist sights (broadly defined), he does nonetheless concede that “[t]he gaze [...] presupposes a system of social activities and signs which locate the particular tourist practices, not in terms of some intrinsic characteristics, but through the contrasts implied with non-tourist social practices [...]” See John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London; Newbury Park; New Dehli: Sage Publications, 1990), 2.

totalitarianism.¹⁶ Although Semmens does touch upon the subject, little scholarship deals with the international aspects of tourism to and from Nazi Germany. Recently, however, works dealing with the transnational aspects of international tourism have started to make their appearance in a still largely underdeveloped field.

In Danish historiography, scattered work has been done on different aspects of tourist history, mostly on seaside resorts and beach culture. The interwar period, however, is still uncharted territory apart from its more or less superficial appearance in a few celebratory institutional anniversary publications and a small number of rather broad-scoped academic articles, Danish tourism during the interbellum remains off the beaten track.¹⁷ What follows is a travelogue of my journey into this by and large still uncharted territory.

¹⁶ E.g. Hasso Spode, "Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich: The 'Strength through Joy' Seaside resort as an Index Fossil," *Journal of Social History*, 38 (2004), 127-155; Shelley Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

¹⁷ For my purposes, the single most interesting work is an article outlining the historical institutional development of the Danish National Tourist Association in relatively broad strokes. See Mikael Frausing, "Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab? Turistforening for Danmark mellem hjemstavnsturisme og eksportturisme ca. 1888-1967." [A Happy Marriage of Convenience? The Danish National Tourist Organization c. 1888-1967], *Kulturstudier* 1 (2010): 25-52; Themes from the interwar period are touched upon in Karin Lützen, "Sommerferiens Historie [the History of the Summer Vacation]," *Kulturstudier* 2 (2011), 1: 134-160; On Danish autotourism throughout the period, see Michael Frederik Wagner, "The Rise of Autotourism in Danish Leisure, 1910-1970," *Journal of Tourism History* 5 (2013), 3: 265-286; For anniversary accounts, see the following volumes, all of which represent 'in-house narratives' of The Tourist Association for Denmark: Hans Joakim Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism through 100 years]* (Aarhus: Danmarks Turistråd, 1988); Knud Secher, *100 år i dansk turisme. Turistårbogen 1989 [100 years in Danish tourism. The Tourist Annual 1989]* (Århus: Samvirkende Danske Turistforeninger, 1989); Xenius Rostock, *Jubilæumsaarbog 1938 [Jubilee Year Book 1938]* (Turistforeningen for Danmark. 1938).

German Tourism to Denmark in the 1930s¹

[In the 1930s] the brakes of tourism had been slammed on, [... since, among other things,] [i]n Germany, National Socialism's iron fist began to quench the freedom and wanderlust of the German people.

(Hans Joakim Schultz, in *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism in 100 years]*)

The will to travel [to Denmark] has been so tremendous in Germany that it has gone well beyond given limits in the Danish-German tourist agreement, meaning that the German authorities have been forced to “take a small breather” before more hard currency is granted.

(From note entitled “45.000 Tyske Turister [45,000 German Tourists]” in the newspaper *Aftenbladet*, July 6, 1935)

The German tourist will find cheap treats for a travel snack
And many a brave Nazi, journeying by railroad track
back to the swastika flags
will make in their diary praising remark
of “die Herrliche Reise – und Dänemark!”

(Verse from satirical poem in the newspaper *Dagens Nyheder*, June 14, 1935. Translated by Lise H. Rasmussen)

Introduction

Explaining my research topic—namely, German tourism to Denmark in the Nazi era—to a distinguished historian of Nazi tourism, I was met with moderate puzzlement: the stream of German travelers faring northwards, the knowledgeable scholar was sure, had been stemmed effectively in the aftermath of the First World War, economic turmoil, and ideological ruptures. Of course, to a certain extent the historian was absolutely right. The war was indeed immensely disruptive for tourism, not just in Denmark but across the Western world, and the rise of the National Socialist regime undoubtedly complicated the process of traveling in and out of the German Reich. Expressing a somewhat similar understanding, subsequent celebratory histories of the Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD], the main association for promoting tourism to and in Denmark, have either

¹ Parts of this chapter have been presented as part of a paper given at the *GRACEH 2017* conference on “Beyond Established Narratives” at the European University Institute in the spring of 2017.

proclaimed the demise of German tourism to Denmark after the Nazi takeover in 1933 or ignored it entirely.² The remark of one chronicler of the association, quoted in this chapter's epigraph, is telling for this historical understanding.³ Nazi ideology, it is implied, did not condone traveling, least of all to ideologically unsound destinations such as social democratic Denmark.

Yet, the historical realities are more complicated. As I will show in this chapter, the numbers of German tourists to Denmark were substantial throughout the 1930s. On a general level, the figures increased during Nazism, even if they were only on level with pre-Depression numbers before the start of the Second World War in 1939. This antagonistic and erratic decade, then, was in many ways also one of continued mobility across the national and ideological borders of social democratic Denmark and National Socialist Germany. This chapter first presents the international context for the transformation of European tourism and its organizations in the 1930s, then outlines the argument that the developments of interwar tourism can only be fully understood if traveling between different political systems, whether fascist, communist or democratic, is taken into account as well. In this context, I situate the influx of German visitors to Denmark throughout the decade before I consider the nature of the institutions that made it possible for German tourists to go to Denmark. Finally, I discuss the ways the German tourists themselves were engaged with and understood by the Danish press and in the discussions of TAD.

Tourism and its Organization in the 1930s

European Tourism on the Rise

The phenomenon of mass tourism had its formative years in the inter-war period.

² E.g. Hans Joakim Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism through 100 years]* (Aarhus: Danmarks Turistråd, 1988), 51; and Knud Secher, *100 år i dansk turisme. Turistårbogen 1989 [100 years in Danish tourism. The Tourist Annual 1989]* (Århus: Samvirkende Danske Turistforeninger, 1989).

³ Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 51.

To be sure, some studies have shown that certain forms of workers' tourism, such as one-day leisure trips and proto-package tours to the Great Exhibitions of the second half of the nineteenth century, did indeed precede and carry into this era of mass tourism.⁴ Moreover, sweeping and highly rationalized resort areas à la Costa del Sol are chiefly associated with post war prosperity.⁵

Still, only the 1930s finally brought leisure travel to a broad range of workers, even if it had long been embedded in the expectations of working-class culture,⁶ just like rationalized means for mass travel and accommodation were indeed pioneered throughout the decade.⁷ Perhaps more important here, a range of holiday-oriented institutions such as youth hostel organizations, camping clubs, and worker's travel organizations either emerged or flourished remarkably in the last years of the 1920s and the first years of the thirties in democratic countries such as Great Britain, France, and Denmark.⁸

Correspondingly, state-organized leisure became institutionalized in fascist Italy as early as 1923, in Nazi Germany shortly after the power seizure in the early months of 1933, and in the Soviet Union "proletarian tourism" was organized in earnest from 1930 onwards although in an institutional framework subject to endemic struggles leading to conflicting

⁴ For the British case, see Susan Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism, 1840-1970* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2005), especially chapters 1 through 4.

⁵ On the rise of Spain as the epicenter of industrialized mass tourism under the Franco regime, see Sasha D. Pack, *Tourism and Dictatorship: Europe's Peaceful Invasion of Franco's Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁶ Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism*, 10-13.

⁷ E.g. the "seaside resort of the 20,000" planned and almost completed by the Nazi regime on the island of Rügen in the Baltic Sea. See Hasso Spode, "Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich: The 'Strength through Joy' Seaside resort as an Index Fossil," *Journal of Social History*, 38 (2004), 127-155; Also, phenomena such as discounted group travels, relatively comfortable railway travel on economy class, cruises available for the less well-off, and even airplane travel (although still confined to the richest travelers) emerged in the inter-war era.

⁸ On Britain and France, see Gary Cross, "Vacations for All: The Leisure Question in the Era of the Popular Front," *Journal for Contemporary History*, 24 (1989): 599-621; No similar treatments exist on the Danish case, but a sense of the development of camping and autotourism in the interwar period is inferable from Michael Frederik Wagner, "The Rise of Autotourism in Danish Leisure, 1910-1970," *Journal of Tourism History* 5 (2013), 3: 265-286, especially 274-280; also, the emergence of the Youth Hostel Movement in Denmark as a German import in the early 1930s is briefly touched upon in Karin Lützen, "Sommerferiens Historie [the History of the Summer Vacation]," *Kulturstudier* 2 (2011), 1: 134-160.

interpretations of the function of tourism within the communist state.⁹

Thus, far from being fixed to any one ideology, the intellectual and political concern with the broader notion of leisure for the masses was shared by right and left alike.¹⁰ The American historian Gary Cross has noted that “[o]ne of the ironies of the 1930s was the democratization of the summer vacation in Europe,” as paid holiday became an accepted goal on both sides of the political spectrum.¹¹ Even in the framework of socialist aspirations, vacationing was imbued with traditional values related to family, nature, and community, which not only made mass leisure tenable to conservatives but were appreciated by socialists as well.¹² Furthermore, left and right alike were concerned with the cultural and moral implications of the increased time for leisure obtained by the working class.¹³

⁹ On Nazi tourism, e.g. Shelley Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); Spode, “Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich”; On leisure and the state in Italy, as organized in the *dopolavoro* organization, see Victoria de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge, England/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); On tourism in the USSR in the 1930s, see Diane P. Koenker, “The Proletarian Tourist in the 1930s: Between Mass Excursion and Mass Escape,” in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under capitalism and Socialism*, eds. Anna E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, 119-140 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); and Diane P. Koenker, *Club Red: Vacation Travel and the Soviet Dream* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2013)

¹⁰ For the most preeminent work on this, see Gary Cross, *Time and Money: The Making of Consumer Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993).

¹¹ Cross, “Vacations for All,” quote: 599; In France, it was the left-wing Popular Front government who—on June 20, 1936, a few days after its inauguration—finally introduced paid holidays. However, the legislation was met with little opposition, since French conservatives embraced the class-leveling nature of leisure as a measure warding off revolutionary sentiments in the tense social and political atmosphere of the late 1930s. *Ibid.*, 609; In Britain, no law of similar proportions came into being in the 1930s. However, Cross convincingly argues that “[a]lthough the paid holiday was not an entitlement but tied to a firm or trade, it was gained in the context of an international movement and was so general as to be understood as a national right.” *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Such free time was an uncommon experience for most workers, and according to politicians and intellectuals its usage promised political impregnation as well as degenerative time-wasting; On the uneasiness of intellectual elites of a range of different ideological persuasions towards how the increased free time was put to use, see Gary Cross, *Time and Money*; also, Gary Cross, “Vacations for All,” 604-605; Concerns regarding how the worker spent his newly gained holidays were voiced by the social democratic Danish Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning after the legislation on paid holidays had passed in 1938, as he reportedly remarked that “we should be amiss if we carried through a holiday legislation, only for the workers to have no place to go on holiday.” See Lützen, *Sommerferiens Historie*, 147, my translation; On the perplexing novelty of the holiday experience to French workers, as well as the argument that “[t]he 1930s were a time of extraordinary political tensions in Europe in which leisure became a site for

Although the movement towards paid free time, which indeed produced some very tangible legislative results throughout the decade,¹⁴ was a necessary precondition for the emergence of mass tourism, it did not automatically make a tourist out of the worker, who could still—and mostly did—spend the vacation at home or domestically until after the Second World War.¹⁵ Although the worker-based low-budget mass tourism of the post-war era was within sight in the thirties, the significant growth of tourism in the interwar period was as much a result of the middle classes increasingly taking advantage of cheaper, expanded, and more comfortable infrastructure.¹⁶

In Ideological Transit

The rapid developments of the institutions and practices of tourism in the interwar years outlined above can be seen as part and parcel of the three-way rivalry of democracy, fascism, and communism which defined the period, as Eric G. E. Zuelow has recently claimed in his state-of-the-art history of modern tourism.¹⁷ In various configurations, states governed according to principles of fascism, communism, and democracy all sought to utilize tourism (and leisure more broadly) in their quest for popular support in an ideological field crowded with contenders. To varying degrees, European states realized and sought to harvest tourism's potential in terms of health, national (as well as

competing cultural policies,” see Ellen Furlough, “Making Mass Vacations: Tourism and Consumer Culture in France. 1930s to 1970s,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (1998), 2: 247-286, particularly 249 and 258-259.

¹⁴ By 1935, 14 countries—most of them European—had instituted legislation granting an annual paid vacation for workers and salaried employees. In France, the Popular Front Movement adopted such legislation in June 1936. Furlough, “Making Mass Vacations,” 253; also in June 1936, the Holidays with Pay Convention was adopted by the International Labour Organization, a convention to be ratified by Denmark in 1939. See ILO's website:

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C052; In England, “the Holiday-with-pay Act finally turned Holidays into a politically guaranteed right of citizenship” in 1938. See Hartmut Berghoff, “From Privilege to Commodity?” in *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000*, (eds.) Hartmut Berghoff et. al. (Basingstoke, England/New York: Palgrave, 2002), 174.

¹⁵ For the French case, see Furlough, “Making Mass Vacations”.

¹⁶ E.g. Ruth Oldenziel and Mikael Hård, *Consumers, Tinkerers, Rebels. The People Who Shaped Europe* (Basingstoke, England/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 118.

¹⁷ Eric G. E. Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), here 134-148; Zuelow builds this understanding of interwar tourism on Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), e.g. “Preface,” x.

racial or political) sentiment and perceived superiority, economic growth, and as a showcase of modernity.¹⁸

However useful, this framework risks simplifying the ideological, institutional, and political contexts of tourism in the interwar period if communism, fascism, and democracy are perceived as three easily delineable and self-contained blocks. As for tourism between the wars, tours were not confined to places governed by the same political ideologies as the tourist's own country. To be sure, the governments of democratic, communist, and fascist states alike aimed to keep their citizens from spending money outside national boundaries through intensified promotion of domestic traveling. In Nazi Germany for instance, some destinations—such as fascist Italy—ranked atop an ideologically informed hierarchy of preferred tourist destinations.¹⁹

Still, as has been well established in the historical literature, political travelers set out to behold those novel political systems whose utopian and dystopian promises held enormous sway in the era's political imaginaries. Western visitors to the Soviet Union—so-called “political pilgrims”—are the most thoroughly studied of these travelers, but they were far from unique.²⁰ For example, according to Angela Schwarz, tourists made up the

¹⁸ Zuelow, *Modern Tourism*, 135.

¹⁹ For the German case, see Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), especially 134.

²⁰ There is a large body of works dealing with Western intellectuals visiting USSR. For the two most important recent examples, see Katerina Clark, *Moscow, the Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture, 1931-1941* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011); and especially Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); The term “political pilgrims” was originally coined by Paul Hollander, but—according to David-Fox (Ibid. 108-109)—the devotional connotations carried by the term are only warranted due to a selective source base centering on the most ardent fellow travelers of communist ideology. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, 1928-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Westerners traveled to Nazi Germany as well. In his classic study on British fellow travelers of Nazism, Richard Griffiths describes how British journalists and politicians were offered free trips to the *Reichstag* in the early years of Nazi rule when Hitler still held hopes of a Nazi-British alliance, just like British ex-servicemen and even school classes frequented Nazi Germany to a significant degree. See Richard Griffiths, *Fellow Travelers of the Right: British Enthusiasts for Nazi Germany 1933-39* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 124-25 and 130-32; For an account focusing exclusively on Nazi Germany as seen by British visitors, see Angela Schwarz, “British Visitors to National Socialist Germany: In a

largest group of British visitors to Nazi Germany, but while these tourists often traveled to Germany solely for purposes of vacationing, many came to “the realization that in Hitlerite Germany politics and everyday life could not be separated.”²¹ On another level, tourist professionals would occasionally meet at large-scale leisure and travel conferences throughout the period—a number of which took place in Nazi Germany.²²

Moreover, border-crossing tourism could serve as ideological promotion if destinations were carefully selected to highlight the deficiencies of other ideological systems. Thus, cruises organized by the Nazi state’s leisure organization *Kraft durch Freude* [Strength through Joy – KdF], to which we shall return shortly, purposefully set sail for and disembarked at destinations where poverty was plainly visible, whereas travelers on board KdF-cruises to the Norwegian fjords were not allowed to go ashore in the relatively well-off cities on the Norwegian coast.²³ Finally, as the case of Danish-German tourism will exemplify, ordinary tourism between countries with widely differing ideological regimes did not come to a complete halt even as new hindrances occasionally complicated the transit—such obstacles included strict border regimes where visas were hard to obtain, as well as currency restrictions pertaining to the amounts a traveler could carry abroad.

Familiar or in a Foreign Country?” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28 (1993), 3: 487-509; Surprisingly, traveling to the Soviet Union was not forbidden for Germans at any point throughout the 1930s, even if it was highly discouraged. See Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany*, 137. The scope of what I call trans-ideological tourism is not limited to the interwar period: traveling across the Cold War divide, for example, is another important case in point where tourism obtained a clear ideological dimension. E.g. Shawn Salmon, “Marketing Socialism: Inturist in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s,” in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under capitalism and Socialism*, eds. Anna E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, 186-204 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); and Eleonory Gilburd, “Books and Borders: Sergei Obratsov and Soviet Travels to London in the 1950s,” in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under capitalism and Socialism*, eds. Anna E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, 227-247 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); Duncan Light, *The Dracula Dilemma: Tourism, Identity and the State in Romania* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2012), especially 57-84; similarly, Sasha D. Pack has dealt with the engagements of democracy and Franco’s dictatorship through tourism in *Tourism and Dictatorship: Europe’s Peaceful Invasion of Franco’s Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

²¹ Schwarz, “British Visitors to National Socialist Germany,” 488.

²² See Kristin Semmens, “Tourism and Autarky are Conceptually Incompatible,” in *Touring Beyond the Nation*, ed. Eric G.E. Zuelow, 195-214 (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011).

²³ Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany*, 132-133.

Crossing the Reich-Borders: International Tourism out of Nazi Germany

It was in Nazi Germany that large scale mass tourism came closest to realization.

The *Kraft durch Freude* organization, created shortly after the Nazi power seizure in 1933, quickly established itself as “a kind of state-owned travel agency.”²⁴ According to Shelley Baranowski, KdF sought to mitigate the material shortages under the new regime. It did so by stressing a sense of belonging to the workshop and racial community [*Volkgemeinschaft*] as well as the joys of work and national revival, all of which were supposed to provide for the German worker a higher standard of living than in capitalist societies.²⁵ Still, according to Baranowski, these collective values were supplemented—sometimes even replaced—by adaptation to individual consumer demands.²⁶ This duality can be explained as a result of KdF’s position in the National Socialist system: as the constituency of the National Socialists expected a better life in material terms than had been the case in the Weimar Republic, KdF became a mediator between these expectations and the need for current sacrifices for the sake of future abundance in the “living space” envisioned by Nazi ideology.²⁷

Even though Kristin Semmens has convincingly argued that tourism served the Nazi regime as a “façade of normalcy” as well as a showcase for the achievements of

²⁴ Spode, “Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich,” 132.

²⁵ Baranowski, *Strength through Joy*, 4-6.

²⁶ Baranowski, *Strength through Joy*, especially chapter 5; Although the patterns of consumption were transformed, the coming of National Socialist dictatorship did not spell the end of consumer demands in Germany. In a recent study, S. Jonathan Wiesen has shown that companies and consumers in Nazi Germany were expected to produce and consume in ways consistent with “the needs of the state and the racial community.” Still, Wiesen argues, the Nazi government neither could nor wished to abolish a rationalized market-based consumer society since its legitimacy was tied tightly to its ability to generate material prosperity for the sorely tried German population. From these discordant foundations arose the “Nazi Marketplace:” more or less a market economy operating according to the rules of its bourgeoisie predecessor but now imbued with ideological meaning so as to “serve the aim of engineering a materially abundant, racially pure society.” In this market exclusion was based on ethnicity rather than prosperity. S. Jonathan Wiesen, *Creating the Nazi Marketplace: Commerce and Consumption in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), quote: 5.

²⁷ Ibid.

National Socialism both at home and abroad,²⁸ large-scale worker tourism was ultimately more aspiration than reality under Hitler.²⁹ This was especially so with regard to travels abroad. Baranowski asserts that while workers were relatively underrepresented on *KdF*-trips (unskilled workers even more so) and salaried employees relatively overrepresented,³⁰ while Semmens reminds us that tourism outside the realms of *KdF* remained a privilege for the wealthy, and limited by restrictions imposed by the regime on currencies that could be taken out of the country, often in accordance with the ideological priorities of the Nazi state.³¹

Such restrictions, which had existed to a lesser degree at the end of the Weimar republic as well, affected tourism to Denmark. Danish tourism enthusiasts more than once lamented the “conditions in Germany,” which thwarted the influx of tourists from the traditionally largest source of tourists outside the Danish borders and made promotional efforts in that direction fruitless.³² They were not alone with their complaints either. As Semmens has shown, large international tourist conferences in Nazi Germany in the latter half of the decade often revolved around questions such as the effects on currency restrictions on border-crossing tourism. At these conferences, the international guests repeatedly sought to exert pressure on the German state to alleviate or eliminate such

²⁸ Kristin Semmens, “A Holiday from the Nazis?” In *Life and Times in Nazi Germany*, ed. Lisa Pine, 131-159 (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), quote: 153.

²⁹ The most ambitious such aspiration, a “holiday plant” at the sea-side on the island of Rügen with a capacity of 20.000, was almost completed but never used because of the war. See Spode, “Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich”.

³⁰ Baranowski, *Strength through Joy*, 66-69.

³¹ Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany*, 135.

³² In a note suggesting corrections to the report from the propaganda sub-committee of the CTPA, one member comments that his “only comment to the budget is, that as the conditions are, one must ask questions as regards [the money devoted to propaganda in] Germany” before suggesting that more money are devoted to France instead, since it is the target country knowing the least about Denmark. See: “Side 24,” unspecified date. Rigsarkivet, Udenrigsministeriet, Gruppeordnede sager (1909-1945) [UMA-GS], 90-34 Dan (10/5), Sta. – Rek., Bemærkninger i reklame-udvalget; also “Dansk Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Danish Tourist Propaganda Abroad],” *Turisten [The Tourist]* 8 (1933), 12: 2.

restrictions.³³ Still, Semmens makes clear that Germans actually traveled abroad more often after 1933 than had been the case before, as traveling internationally was not forbidden by but actually served the long-term goals of the Nazi regime.³⁴

Taken as a whole, tourism out of the Third Reich followed the patterns of Nazi consumption and mass tourism in general: although altered organizationally, travels abroad functioned as commodities in the Nazi Marketplace.³⁵ Refashioned so as to ostensibly meet ideological goals, the availability of border-crossing tourism throughout the 1930s nonetheless testifies to the regime's acknowledgment of the purpose such opportunities served in building legitimacy; they satisfied a perceived need to travel grounded in the desires of the modern consumer society, especially among the middle class. However ideologically reluctant towards allowing tourism out the country it might have been, the regime held a pragmatic approach in which political and economic concerns took primacy.

Vacationing in the North: German Tourists in Denmark

Let us again return to the “the brakes of tourism” in the 1930s recounted in the account quoted in this chapter's epigraph. As already noted, the iron fist of Nazism certainly did not coerce or convince all Germans to remain in Germany. Furthermore, the actual amount of German tourists visiting Denmark tells a more complicated story. Although the statistical sources are rather inconsistent in their methodology and frequency, Table 1 gives an impression of the quantities of German visitors throughout the decade. It is noteworthy that the numbers dropped in 1931, well before the Nazis

³³ Kristin Semmens, "Tourism and Autarky are Conceptually Incompatible," in *Touring Beyond the Nation*, ed. Eric G.E. Zuelow, 195-214 (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011).

³⁴ Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany*, 135-139. Among these goals were the desire to build up the regime's legitimacy, to satisfy the desires for leisure consumption among richer parts of the constituency of the National Socialists, and to showcase the achievements of the Nazi regime, and allowing these to enter into favorable comparisons.

³⁵ On the notion of the Nazi Marketplace, see footnote 25.

came to power, and followed the general increasing trend in foreign visitors to Denmark from 1932 to 1934 when the absolute number of tourists surpassed the 1930 figures. Only then did the numbers decrease, albeit with a small recovery in 1936 before hitting the bottom in relative terms in 1937. However, the numbers from June 1938 to May 1939 shows a significant recovery in both absolute and relative terms until the tensions leading to the outbreak of war in September 1939 virtually terminated tourism between different countries.

Table 1: Foreign tourists and German tourists staying at Copenhagen's hotels in the 1930s.

Year:	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1939*
German Tourists:	25,945	18,812	19,695	22,346	27,560	21,376	23,084	19,000	25,000
All Foreign Tourists:	101,336	94,966	79,704	91,313	111,670	?	135,530	144,500	183,480
Relative share:	25.6 %	19.8 %	24.7 %	24.5 %	24.7 %	?	17 %	13 %	13.6/20.4 %

Sources: For 1930-1933: Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry's Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 17; For 1934: "Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934]," 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet 2; For 1935 and 1936: "Årsberetning 1936 [Annual Report 1936]," 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 13; For 1937: Møde i Turistraadet Den 28. April 1938. Beretning af formanden. [The chairman's Report at the meeting of the Tourist Council on April 28, 1938]." 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet; For 1939: Det Statistiske Departement [The Statistical Department], *Statistisk Aarbog 1939* [Statistical Yearbook 1939] (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel/Nordisk Forlag, 1939), 112.

*The numbers are from June 1938-May 1939, thus not including the late summer months of 1939 when uncertainty and finally the outbreak of war saw tourists making their way home. It should be noted that the 1939 statistical data were collected for the entire country rather than just Copenhagen, and the number given here is an approximation based on the ratio of tourists in Copenhagen vs. provinces observed in 1934. Furthermore, the 1939 numbers are based on Germans crossing Danish borders, whereas the earlier numbers count tourists staying at individual hotels. Thus, a German tourist sleeping at two different hotels during his stay counts twice. On the other hand, tourists accommodated privately are included in these numbers. The two values for the relative share in 1939 are based on the approximated values and the number of travelers crossing Danish borders respectively

Thus, the picture that emerges is far from transparent, and reflects practical political and economic concerns rather than travel patterns motivated or restricted by ideological motivations. In 1931, the Weimar government imposed a 100 RM tariff on all who traveled outside the German borders,³⁶ which along with the deepening crisis in

³⁶ Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany*, 133.

German economy might very well account for the steep pre-Hitler drop. As the restrictions alleviated by 1932, Germans were the sole group of foreign visitors to increase as the economic depression intensified internationally.³⁷ Contemporary tourist officials also saw the drop of visitors in 1935 in terms of currency restrictions imposed by the Third Reich.³⁸ However, it is unclear why such restrictions did not markedly affect the numbers in 1933 and 1934, when at least some restrictions were in effect, although they might have been less severe.³⁹ It is more certain that the temporary dip in 1937 coincided with the failure to obtain an agreement with Germany on the terms of tourism for that year (see further down).⁴⁰ Regardless, Germany remained a very significant source of tourists traveling to Denmark; throughout the period, only Swedes visited Denmark more frequently, even in 1937, when the share of German tourists was at its relative low point.⁴¹

Moreover, as shown in Table 2, a large number of German tourists—not included in Table 1—visited Copenhagen on board “excursion ships” throughout the Nazi era.⁴²

³⁷ “Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 4.

³⁸ “Aarsmødet 1935. Formandens Beretning. [Annual Meeting. Report of the Chairman],” 441 Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 4.

³⁹ At a meeting of the Executive Committee of TAD on April 29, 1933, the restrictions on German “travel money” and how to alleviate them were discussed. In Italy, it was noted, the German tourist could carry 700 RM, to Denmark only 200 RM, although pre-paid hotels could be excluded from the limit. See: Editorial. “Turistforeningen for Danmark holder Aarsmøde i Aalborg den 18. Juni [TAD’s Annual Meeting in Aalborg on June 18th],” *Turisten [The Tourist]* 8 (1933), 5: 71; This is instructive as to the place of Denmark in the hierarchy of destinations in the Nazi regimes view on border-crossing tourism, in which Italy was highest and the USSR was rock-bottom. See: Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany*, 135-137.

⁴⁰ “Beretning fra Formanden for Turistraadet paa Turistraadets møde den 26. September 1938 [The Chairman’s Report at the meeting of the Tourist Council on September 26, 1938].” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, 5-6.

⁴¹ See “Beretning om Foreningens Virksomhed i 1937 [Report on the Work of the Organization in 1937],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark.

⁴² The ships did not only set out for Copenhagen. For example, 13 excursion ships carrying 6,200 passengers visited provincial cities in 1937. “Beretning fra Formanden for Turistraadet paa Turistraadets møde den 26. September 1938 [The Chairman’s Report at the meeting of the Tourist Council on September 26, 1938],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark; Moreover, in 1935 *Turisten* reported that a large Tourist steamer from Lübeck would visit the city of Aarhus with 500 German tourists in the summer of 1936, and that a successful visit could lead to more visits of the same kind. Unknown Author, “Tysk Turistbesøg [German Tourist Visit],” *Turisten* 10 (1935), 12: 183.

These consisted of day-trips or to a lesser degree trips spanning one or two nights,⁴³ would arrive from Northern Germany, became a lot more pronounced from 1933 onwards, and the passengers would typically disembark and spend 6-8 hours in Copenhagen.⁴⁴

Some of the statistics in the source material mark a clear distinction between so-called “excursion ships” and regular “tourist ships” but what the distinction consists of is less clear. Presumably, the “excursion ships” were destined only for Copenhagen, whereas the “tourist ships” were cruises for which Copenhagen was one stop among many. It should be noted, then, that the number given here most likely understates the numbers of German ship tourists to Denmark in the period. Provincial cities would be visited by “excursion ships” as well, but the numbers were not consistently reported. It might give an indication of the quantities, however, that 23 ships with 4000 passengers anchored in provincial harbors in 1936, generally a strong year in terms of German tourism to Denmark.

Looking through what remains of *KdF* archival material, its own literature and annual accounts, and secondary literature on the fleet of the organization,⁴⁵ it is evident that the “excursion ships” going to Copenhagen were not part of *KdF*’s cruise program, to which recent scholarship has devoted a great deal of attention. These *Hochseefahrten*

⁴³ In 1934 approximately 2/3 of the passengers were day-trippers. Author unspecified, “Antal Passagerer med Turist-Skibe i 1934 [Numbers of Passengers on Tourist Ships in 1934].” 90-31 Dan (10/5), Diverse, Udenrigsministeriet: Gruppeordnede sager (1909-1945); other sources describe these “excursion ships” strictly as those arriving and leaving on the same day. E.g. Unknown Author, “144 Turistskibe med 60,000 udlændinge,” *Skagens Avis*, January 8, 1937.

⁴⁴ Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 16-18.

⁴⁵ In the hope of finding traces of KdF-tourism to Denmark I looked through not just the literature already cited here but also relevant archival material at the Berlin-Lichterfelde Bundesarchiv, as well as a long list of the organization’s own literature on their ships, trips, and leisure programs, mostly found at the library of the Berlin-Lichterfelde Archiv.

were often week-long cruises to destinations such as Madeira, Greece, and Norway.⁴⁶ To be sure, these cruises were important, as they came to be considered the epitome of worker tourism under Nazism, and since more than 700,000 package tours were sold for cruises abroad by the time that war broke out.⁴⁷

However, as Semmens has recently noted, it is undeserved that less attention has been paid to “the innumerable short excursions and weekend trips taken in the Third Reich, surely still to be considered a form of tourism;” even less, one might add, to day-trips beyond the *Reichsgrenze*. Such day tripping, Semmens argues, became part of the ostensible normalcy of everyday life in Nazi Germany.⁴⁸ Outside the realms of *KdF*—even if the network of official tourist organizations was thoroughly Nazified and the work of travel agents heavily supervised by the state—commercial tourism still catered to “[a] substantial number of middle class customers.”⁴⁹ The one-day trips to Copenhagen complement this picture, implying that everyday life in Nazi Germany consisted of a plethora of leisure activities on offer for the middle classes.

⁴⁶ Traveling to the fjords of Norway, the passengers on the *KdF*-ships stayed aboard. According to recent accounts, this resulted from the German dictatorship not wanting the conditions of National Socialism to be part of an unfavorable comparison, or alternatively from a fear that the German tourist might encounter criticism of the regime from democratically minded Norwegians. It is therefore significant, that the passengers on board the “excursion ships” to Copenhagen were allowed to disembark. See Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany*, 132; Claudia Schallenberg, “Kreuzfahrt unterm Hakenkreuz. Die KdF-Seereisen nach Norwegen [Cruises under the Swastika. The *KdF* Sea trips to Norway],” in *Nordlandreise. Die Geschichte einer touristischen Entdeckung*, eds. Sonja Kinzler and Doris Tillmann, 188-197 (Hamburg: Mare, 2010), 195.

⁴⁷ Spode, “Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich”: 133; furthermore, it should be noted that the working class rarely made up more than—if even—half of the cruise guests, see e.g. Claudia Schallenberg, “Kreuzfahrt unterm Hakenkreuz,” 193.

⁴⁸ Semmens, “A Holiday from the Nazis?” 132; elsewhere Semmens has shown that the Nazi regime ultimately allowed excursions across the border to Alsace, France and Switzerland offered by commercial travel agencies in the Black Forest region in South-Western Germany. Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany*, 82.

⁴⁹ Semmens, “A Holiday from the Nazis?” 134-137.

Table 2: German excursion ships on one-day trips to Copenhagen, 1933-1939

Year:	1933	1934	1936	1937	1938	1939
Ships:	?	?	46	36	48	24
Passengers:	8,000	19,000	27,000	22,000	28,500	15,000

Sources: For 1933-1934: Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry's Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 16-18; For 1936: "Årsberetning 1936 [Annual Report 1936]," 441, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 2; For 1937 and 1938: "Beretning fra Formanden for Turistraadet paa Turistraadets møde den 26. September 1938 [The Chairman's Report at the meeting of the Tourist Council on September 26, 1938]," 441, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet; For 1939: "Beretning om arbejdet i sæsonen 1939 [Report on the Work of the 1939 Season]," 442, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet.

Apart from the fact that the numbers were lower during the first years of the Nazi regime and that the numbers given for boat visitors are heavily affected by the outbreak of war in 1939, the quantities of passengers correspond to the amount of hotel guests outlined above, suggesting that similar mechanisms inform their developments. Therefore, the statistics outlined above caution against a teleological understanding of tourism out of Germany. Although tourism out of Germany was subject to hierarchies stemming from ideological concerns, it was even more subject to economic policy as the tourist agreements made between the two governments enabling German tourists to go to Denmark on a large-scale base were based on the Danish state committing itself to import extra goods from Germany.⁵⁰

The Danish press eagerly followed the negotiations and effects of these "tourist agreements." For example, as an agreement was signed in late June 1935, allowing German tourists to convert up to 500 RM to Danish currency, one provincial newspaper ran a headline stating that "The tourist agreement with Germany proves to work excellently." Economic considerations were highlighted as the main impetus for the German fondness for Denmark as a travel destination, while concerns were expressed as

⁵⁰ A duplicate of the initial proposal of the German government for the 1935 agreement can be found in the archive of the Foreign Ministry: 90-32 Dan (10/5), Diverse, Udenrigsministeriet: Gruppeordnede sager (1909-1945).

to the Danish tourist industry's capability to accommodate the upcoming "German invasion."⁵¹ The problem was not one of too few tourists but too many. In fact, only a week later, another newspaper would report that the tourist agreement had been temporarily suspended, since the "enormous will to travel" to Denmark on the part of Germans had made it impossible for Denmark to keep its trade-related part of the deal.⁵² Thus, it would seem that "the iron fist of Nazism" quelled neither the wanderlust nor the desire for leisure in the German people; Denmark, as a next-door neighbor, constituted a convenient destination for traveling Germans during Nazism as well.

Which Travel Agencies?

The trips, at sea and on land, were arranged through commercial travel organizations and civic organizations. The commercial organizations constituted a patchwork of different actors, who, according to Semmens, especially catered to the large group of middle-class Germans who continued to prefer individual travel over the *KdF*-style group holidays.⁵³ *Norden*—the travel agency of the Danish State Railways—played an important role in this regard, leading the promotional efforts from their quarters at *Unter den Linden* in Berlin.⁵⁴ Their advertisements would typically highlight Denmark and Copenhagen on the one hand, and the means for getting there on the other, stressing train comfort, and—from the mid-thirties onwards—the excitement of traveling via a number of grand and newly constructed bridges.⁵⁵ International agencies were at play as well. For instance, American Express Company would—operating from the same boulevard as *Norden*—advertise weekend trips to Copenhagen during the summer of

⁵¹ Unknown Author, *Turistordningen med Tyskland viser sig at virke glimrende* [The tourist agreement with Germany proves to work excellently], *Fyens Stiftstidende*, June 30, 1935.

⁵² Unknown Author, "Tyske Turister [German tourists]," *Aftenbladet*, July 6, 1935.

⁵³ Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany*, 98-128.

⁵⁴ E.g. Schultz, 31.

⁵⁵ E.g. advertisement in the *Nordische Gesellschaft's* monthly: *Der Norden* 15 (1938), 7: 244.

1934.⁵⁶

Other tourists would embrace group travel, but in other institutional settings. In June 1937, for example, 2200 German tourists on board a ship chartered by *Hamburger Tageblatt* would spend the day in Copenhagen, a seemingly quite common model if judged by contemporary press accounts.⁵⁷ From Lübeck in Northern Germany, the *Nordische Gesellschaft* [Nordic Society] would arrange tours across the Baltic Sea. These trips, as will be discussed further in Chapter 3, had cultural and ideological underpinnings. The Society had existed since 1921 as a facilitator of economic and cultural exchange between the Nordic countries (initially in a very broad sense, even including Russia) and Germany, although until 1933 primarily catering to the local and regional interests of Lübeck and its surrounding area. Its activities were wide-ranging and included arranging major cultural festivities, such as a *Nordische Woche* [Nordic Week] and, after 1933, a yearly *Reichstagung*.⁵⁸

After the Nazi seizure of power, the *Nordische Gesellschaft* was Nazified, its leadership put in the hands of Alfred Rosenberg and its attitude to Scandinavia increasingly guided by the tenets of Nordic Racism (see Chapter 3). Telling for the organization's development is an article from a critical correspondent witnessing the 1935-festival for the broadsheet paper *Politiken*, who noted that the *Nordische Gesellschaft* and the *Reichstagung* had turned into a matter of politics and world views, and that it would seem that *Nordische Gesellschaft* was now working towards Nazifying the North, and would only be truly satisfied "when the Nordic countries acknowledge

⁵⁶ "Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934]," 441, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 10.

⁵⁷ Unknown Author, "2200 Femkrone-Turister i København i Gaar [2200 Five-Kroner Tourists in Copenhagen Yesterday]," *Nationaltidende*, June 25, 1937.

⁵⁸ These were intensively covered in the German press. See Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937, Nordische Gesellschaft: 1, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck. Vereins- und Verbandsarchive.

unequivocally that the Nazi spirit is the Nordic spirit.”⁵⁹

Furthermore, the Society entertained a tourist agency, *Nordische Verkehrs G.M.B.H. Lübeck*, as part of its organization. In the 1920s and early 1930s, its offers would include trips to the Soviet Union along with group travels to Scandinavia aimed specifically at academics and students.⁶⁰ In line with what Erika L. Briesacher—in her dissertation on the *Nordische Gesellschaft* as an actor in the processes of German cultural identification in the Weimar Republic and under Nazism—has noted about tours which the Society arranged for Nordic tourists in Lübeck, the trips were examples of “cultural tourism, highlighting art, architecture, and history [...]”⁶¹

The tours northwards would continue after 1933. The extent of the *Nordische Gesellschaft*’s travel activity is difficult to ascertain since the Society’s archival documents went up in flames during the bombing of Lübeck in 1942. Yet, according to a note in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, the *Nordische Verkehrs G.M.B.H* arranged 38 school trips bringing more than 45.000 school children “over the sea” in 1937 as well as 18.000 passengers on 27 trips. “The destination of many trips,” it is noted, “was Copenhagen, but smaller Danish cities were visited as well.” The popularity of the trips were beyond doubt, as “each and every spot were sold out for the Society’s weekend-trips.”⁶² The numbers, when compared to the numbers of day-trippers outlined in Table 2, are quite significant; thus it is unsurprising that the “cheap group travels” arranged by the

⁵⁹ Th. Steinthal in *Politiken*, June 28, 1935.

⁶⁰ *Nordische Verkehrs G. M. B. H., Sonderreise der Nordischen Gesellschaft nach Findland, Sovjet-Russland, Letland veranstaltet von der Nordischen Verkehrs G.m.B.H.*, and *Nordische Verkehrs G. M. B. H., Gruppenreisen nach Skandinavien*, in *Nordische Verkehrs G. M. B. H. Reiseprogramme* (Akte d. Weltwirtschaftsinstitutets Kiel), 1928, 4, *Nordische Gesellschaft, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck*; Unknown Author, “Nordlandsreise für deutsche Studenten,” *Kieler Zeitung* June 19, 1925 in *Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937, Nordische Gesellschaft: 1, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck*.

⁶¹ Erika L. Briesacher, “Cultural Currency: *Notgeld*, *Nordische Woche*, and the *Nordische Gesellschaft*, 1921-1945 (Ph.D. dissertation, Kent State University, 2012), 172-73.

⁶² Unknown author, “Der Zug nach dem Norden,” *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, October 29, 1937 in *Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937, Nordische Gesellschaft: 1, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck*.

Nordische Gesellschaft was mentioned as “The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad” (see Chapters 2 and 3) outlined the tourist landscape in its 1935 report.⁶³

Which Tourists?

It is premature to talk of mass tourism in Denmark in the 1930s.⁶⁴ Even if the overall numbers of foreign tourists to Denmark increased significantly throughout the 1930s, mass tourism—in Denmark as well as internationally—was by and large a post-war phenomenon.⁶⁵ Although, as we have seen, working class vacations became a political priority in a wide range of political settings between the wars, this did not lead to the immediate realization of a large scale industry. It is telling that the trips of the British Workers’ Travel Organization, a pioneer of working class travel established in 1921, ultimately appealed more to “teachers, white collar workers employed by the state, union officials” and other middle class customers than to workers; only by establishing holiday camps domestically could the organization cater to its intended base.⁶⁶

Indirectly, this realization would feature in the work of the government-initiated “Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad” [CTPA] which would be commissioned in 1934 to reform The Tourist Association for Denmark in an effort to

⁶³ Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 43.

⁶⁴ “Mass tourism” is a contested term in itself, and is, rightfully, seen as a heterogeneous entity in contemporary research. Here, I think of mass tourism in the form of pre-packaged tours, undergirded by easily accessible transportation infrastructure, and the use of large—often standardized—hotels, all of which comes at a low price due to the “mass” aspect of the enterprise (even if I agree with one scholar of contemporary tourism that “there can be no fixed numbers to define mass tourism, it depends on the viewer and the context as to how much is mass”). For a discussion on the scholarly discourses pertaining to mass tourism, see Vilhelmiina Vainikka, “Rethinking Mass Tourism,” *Tourist Studies* 13 (2013): 268-286; quote: *Ibid.*, 276.

⁶⁵ E.g. Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday. A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999), 155-212.

⁶⁶ E.g. Carina Gråbacke, “Organised Leisure for the Working Class – European Popular travel and Leisure Organisations in the Interwar Period,” Paper presented at the *Economic History Society Annual Conference*, March 31-April 2, 2006, 5-6; On the Danish state’s efforts to secure vacation for its worker’s, which was only institutionalized in 1939, see Nan Dahlkild, “Ferie for folket: Omkring oprettelsen af Dansk Folket [Holiday for the People: On the creation of Danish People’s Holiday],” *Arbejderhistorie* 31 (1988): 2-17.

professionalize the organization's promotional efforts abroad (see Chapter 2). In the committee's initial meeting, the chairman of the Association for Hotels and Restaurants argued for the extension of school holidays as a means for prolonging the tourist season. Doing so, he recounted that the "forced worker holidays" had not led to the expected increase of (presumably foreign) tourists, which was why the seaside resorts stood more or less empty and were forced to close for the season when the school holidays ended by mid-August.⁶⁷

Furthermore, reading through the extensive archival traces of the reorganizational efforts, one is not left with the impression that the "plainer [foreign] tourists" envisioned by the committee, as evinced in its final report, belong to the working class. For example, in a statement by the President of Georg Jensen, the tourist—as seen through the eyes of the porcelain-manufacturer—is, unsurprisingly, someone capable of and interested in spending time (and money) at the upper-level shops which dominated the central shopping street *Strøget*. Many a tourist had told the President that "they had gone to Denmark to see the country from which the beautiful porcelain and silver originated [... even if] they had often added 'and to see Thorvaldsen's museum'."⁶⁸

Politically inspired tourism also played a significant role in the discussions of the committee members. In the meetings of the advertisement sub-committee, for instance, study trips to farms, dairies, and social institutions were among the attractions emphasized outside of Copenhagen.⁶⁹ As we will see in Chapter 4, the social profile of Danish society came to be an important selling point in the promotional efforts of TAD

⁶⁷ *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 1st meeting, 8.

⁶⁸ *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 2nd meeting, appendix, 1.

⁶⁹ Minutes from "3. Møde i reklameudvalget [Third meeting in the Advertisement sub-committee]," July 4, 1934, 90-34, Udenrigsministeriet, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Rigsarkivet.

towards the end of the 1930s. Although visitors appreciating price and comfort were seen as the way of the future, especially in a country short of spectacular tourist sights, working class tourists were still far from being regarded as the bedrock of border-crossing tourism. While the re-organization would indeed lay the foundations of a tourist industry, this mass tourism based industry would not materialize in earnest until well into the post-war period.

For geographical reasons, however, Germany and Sweden would make the best markets for a foreign tourist audience. As we have seen, they did indeed make up the two largest groups of tourists, and the day trippers arriving from these two countries would take on something akin to mass proportions during the 1930s. As the Danish envoy in London sent a brief to A.J. Poulsen, the head of the Foreign Ministry's Press Department, in September 1934 on how to attract "The black coated army"—the staff in larger British businesses—to Denmark, he referenced "how much 'the little German tourist' had previously meant to Denmark."⁷⁰

Yet, in the concurrent committee work little attention was devoted to attracting German tourists of any kind. Instead, an entire section of *Danmarks Turistpropaganda* [*Denmark's Tourist Propaganda*]⁷¹—the report resulting from CTPA—reflected on how to engage in tourist promotion in overseas countries and the US in particular.⁷¹ As presented in the report, this choice reflected that pre-existing experiences with promotional efforts in these areas were sparse compared to the experiences with promotion in Nordic and Western European countries.⁷² Other factors likely played a role as well. In TAD's annual report from 1934, a correspondence with the association's representative in New York is recounted. Here, the representative asked for large quantities of promotional material, as

⁷⁰ Correspondence between The Royal Danish Embassy in London and The Danish Foreign Ministry, September 3, 1934, 90-31, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁷¹ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 102-119, 104-117 deals with the US.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 102.

he predicted that “the political conditions in Germany etc. gave Scandinavia and hence Denmark [good] chances of securing a significant proportion of the stream of tourists, which would leave America for Europe the forthcoming summer [of 1934].”⁷³ In an interview given in the spring of 1935, Conservative MP and member of CTPA H.F. Ulrichsen voiced a similar understanding while discussing promotional efforts abroad, namely that part of Denmark’s attraction to an Anglophone audience was the virtue of it not being a Nazi country.⁷⁴

Furthermore, the MP argued, German restrictions on currency convertibility made it necessary to shift attention to a British audience.⁷⁵ That only scant consideration was given to Germany as a target for tourist advertising, then, was mostly due to these restrictions imposed by the German state, the alleviation of which the committee members did not expect in the foreseeable future. Commenting on the promotional budget, for example, one member of the advertisement sub-committee remarked that “given the conditions, one must question [the amount devoted to] Germany.”⁷⁶ As we have seen. “the conditions in Germany,” an oft-invoked phrase among the contemporary discussants of Danish tourism, referenced not so much the ideological implications of the political conditions but, so it seems, the economic constraints which were pioneered

⁷³ “Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 4; The wish was granted: 10.000 folders were sent to New York.

⁷⁴ Unknown Author, “H.F. Ulrichsen siger noget om H.C. Andersen, det kolde Bord og Spøttrup på Turistplakaten [H.F. Ulrichsen says something about H.C. Andersen, the cold table and Spøttrup on the Tourist Poster],” *Berlingske Politiske og Avertissementstidende*, March 23, 1935.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Proposed corrections to the account of the advertisement sub-committee, 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet; In the same vein, the temporary Executive Board of TAD immediately after the organization’s reorganization in 1935 did not recommend making new German-language material, but instead recommended that the Foreign Ministry negotiated a tourist agreement with Germany. “Aarsmødet 1935. Formandens Beretning. [Annual Meeting. Report of the Chairman],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 2; Similarly, in a correspondence between the Danish Consul in Berlin and the Foreign Ministry’s Press Office, the currency restrictions were given as an argument for the Consul to decline a request made by the *Berliner Tageblatt* on Danish willingness to advertise in the Newspaper. See “Dansk Turistpropaganda i Tyskland. (‘Berliner Tageblatt’) [Danish Tourist Propaganda in Germany (‘Berliner Tageblatt)],” 90 Dan. (10/5) Diverse, 90-33, Udenrigsministeriet, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Rigsarkivet.

towards the end of the Weimar Republic and remained in force with the ascent of the Nazi party.

Still, in the final budget suggested for the new Foreign Department of TAD's promotion abroad, Germany and England came out on top with 41.690 DKK devoted to each country.⁷⁷ In fact, a newspaper based in the Danish-German borderlands put forward the argument that the 50 RM currency restrictions would lead to an increase in the numbers of visitors from Germany, as Denmark's proximity to Germany and its cheap prices made it the only country a German tourist could visit for a few days with that amount of money available.⁷⁸

However, in the public debate the German tourists were portrayed in rather negative terms, often caused directly by the conditions under which they traveled. Thus, those German tourists who would keep coming despite the conditions imposed by currency restrictions were not necessarily seen in positive terms by the Danish Press. As one newspaper reported on the successful negotiation of a "tourist agreement" in June 1935—the satirical celebration of which is quoted in this chapter's epigraph—the alleviation of the currency restrictions were seen as particularly helpful. This was the case, since "the fact that they [Germans] had continuously been allowed to [travel] had less practical implications, as long as they could only carry 10 [Reichs] Mark with them—an amount that even the most frugal wanderer [vandrefugl]—after the German *Wandervogel*] would find too modest."⁷⁹ In the midst of the 1937 tourist season, a conservative daily described the visit of "2200 Five-Kroner Tourists in Copenhagen" in a satirical account. Having only five *Reichsmark* available—half of the usual amount under the current restrictions, since the tourists had already been in Oslo—the tourists

⁷⁷ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, appendix inserted between pages 98 and 99.

⁷⁸ Unknown Author, "Mægtigt Fremmedbesøg i Danmark i Sommer [Tremendous Foreign Visit in Denmark this Summer]," *Hejmdal*, May 3, 1934.

⁷⁹ Loke, "Tyske Turister paany [German Tourists again]," *Dagens Nyheder*, June 14, 1935.

nevertheless saw Copenhagen “as thoroughly as only Germans see foreign places.”

Walking around the city, according to the article,

they photographed *Børsen* [the Stock Exchange], walked around Christiansborg [the Parliament] and ascended the Town Hall Tower. Everywhere they first asked: How much is it? When it was free, they entered without any hesitation. If the entry prize exceeded 10 øre [a hundredth of a Krone], a counsel had to be held before anything was settled. They were not seen at restaurants. On the other hand, they stormed the automate cafés [automatkafeerne]. The bravest would also seize the sidewalk cafés following the principle: if it is too expensive, one can leave.

As portrayed by the satirical journalist, having to make five RM last was an art form perfectly mastered by the mass of German tourists, who—despite the worryingly high entrance fee—had enjoyed themselves in Tivoli in the evening before embarking for Hamburg again, following the maxim: “Kein Bier—und nicht zu viel essen, dann geht’s! [No beer—and not too much food, then it works!]”⁸⁰

While the portrayal given here was relatively good-spirited, other press accounts would be more explicit in their grievances. Predictably, the harshest words came from the daily of the Communist Party, proclaiming in early 1938 that the decrease of tourists on board “excursion ships” in the summer of 1937 was not regrettable, since these were German tourists arriving carrying only “the famous 10 [Reich] Marks.”⁸¹ However, the negative perception of German ship tourists was also in part related to the image of the large tourist ships that—as part of the international shipping industry’s response to the financial crisis—emerged as an increasingly popular travel form in the early 1930s, and which would be the means by which many German tourists visited Copenhagen both before and during Nazism.

⁸⁰ Unknown Author, “2200 Femkrone-Turister i København i Gaar [2200 Five-Kroner Tourists in Copenhagen Yesterday],” *Nationaltidende*, June 25, 1937.

⁸¹ Unknown Author, “Færre Turistskibe til København [Fewer Tourist Ships to Copenhagen],” *Arbejderbladet*, January 4, 1938.

When it came to cruise tourism, German tourists were not the lone target for the critical press coverage. “The floating hotels” were often despised for not contributing economically to the city at which they anchored, as their passengers would often both sleep and eat on board. This would at times lead to rather critical descriptions in the press, as was the case in the summer of 1937 when one daily, in a not-so-subtle reference to the Battle of Copenhagen (1801), dryly remarked that “the English prefer to conquer Copenhagen from the seaside” on the occasion of a particularly large presence of English cruise ships one weekend. In 1933, another report had noted that the large number of tourist ships was “a dangerous competitor for the hotels of Copenhagen.” This was especially the case for German ships, whose passengers would not only sleep but also eat on board, or bring packed lunches.⁸² At other times, the brevity of their stays gave the tourist ships their bad reputation.⁸³

The topic was discussed by CTPA as well. Here, the attitude towards the “floating hotels” would strike a more appreciative note. On the committee’s very first meeting, one member remarked that the commotion regarding the tourist ships was unlikely to last, since the hotels were full anyway during the cruise ship season. The President of the Danish Association for Hotel and Restaurant Owners, also a committee member, chimed in, agreeing that “the animosity against these ships has fallen away.”⁸⁴ This newfound appreciation would last, at least within TAD. Thus, at a meeting for local tourist association leaders held in 1939, a lecturer on the economic benefits of tourism remarked that “[i]n the beginning, this form of tourism caused grievances, but in reality these

⁸²Unknown Author, “Englenderne har atter indtaget København, men Amerika svigter [The English have conquered Copenhagen again but the Americans are failing],” *Berlingske Politiske og Avertissementstidende*, July 27, 1933.

⁸³ E.g. an article from 1933 in which a newspaper from Bornholm, an island whose tourist industry were dependent on German tourist to a large degree, lamented that it was only planned for future ships to stay on Bornholm for four hours at a time. See Unknown Author, “Turistforbindelsen med Tyskland [The Tourist Connection with Germany],” *Bornholms Tidende*, July 5, 1933.

⁸⁴*Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 1st meeting, 8-9.

tourists are contributing a significant amount of money to the country,” while also citing that Copenhagen’s hotels were full during the season anyway.⁸⁵ The sentiment found resonance in the press as well. In 1936, the main Social Democratic newspaper cited a statistical report from the state’s Statistical Department as well as the Head of TAD’s Foreign Department—Mogens Lichtenberg—and concluded that “it is not just petty cash which arrives in the country along with these tourists.”⁸⁶

Certainly, national economic aspects of tourism were discussed frequently both in the press and within TAD. Newspaper headlines such as “The Ship Tourist contributed more than 2 Million to Denmark” and “Denmark—A Tourist Country. Tourist Visits from Abroad are among our most important Export Industries” were not uncommon.⁸⁷ In TAD’s annual reports as well, the significance of tourism as an industry was often touched upon. In 1939, for example, it was reported that incomes related to foreign tourists had amounted to 36 million DKK in the preceding year, a doubling since 1933. Furthermore, this sum made tourism comparable to incomes related to “important export items” such as seafood products (35.7 M), minerals (26.1 M), and living cattle (70.4 M).⁸⁸ As we shall see in the following chapter, such arguments would be central to the calls for increased attention to tourism from the state and the commercial sector as the voices calling for reform of the promotional efforts abroad intensified by the mid-1930s.

⁸⁵ Niels Banke, “Turismens økonomiske Betydning for Samfundet og Erhvervene [The Economic Significance of Tourism for the Society and the Industries],” in Turistforeningen for Danmark [The Tourist Association for Denmark], *En Samling Foredrag Holdt ved Turistforeningens Turistlederkursus 1938* [A Collection of Lectures given at the Tourist Association’s Tourist Leader Course 1938], 44-68 (Copenhagen: Kandrups & Wunsch Bogtrykkeri, 1939), 12.

⁸⁶ Unknown Author, “Skibsturisterne lagde over 2 Millioner i Danmark [The Ship Tourist contributed more than 2 Million to Denmark],” *Social-Demokraten*, December 31, 1936.

⁸⁷ Ibid.; Unknown Author, “Danmark – Et Turistland [Denmark—A Tourist Country],” *Horsens Folkeblad*, January 11, 1935.

⁸⁸ “Årsberetning 1939 [Annual Report 1939],” 442, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 3-4.

Conclusions

The “tremendous will to travel” from Germany to Denmark reported upon in the note cited in the present chapter’s epigraph was not tamed by ideological concerns in the 1930s. As this chapter has shown, it was rather economic concerns, especially in connection with the currency policies of the Third Reich, that would determine the flow of German tourists across the Danish-German border. A study of Danish-German tourism, then, goes to show that tourism in the 1930s cannot be divided seamlessly into categories such as “democratic tourism” and “fascist tourism.” While ideology did play a role in restricting movement across borders, it was not the primary concern in the case studied here.

Throughout the decade, and even before the rise to power of the National Socialists, Danish tourist officials would constantly be hopeful that state-negotiated bilateral tourist agreements would permit a continuous influx of German tourists. The willingness to undersign such agreements at the state-level—a willingness shared with the Norwegian and Swiss state among others⁸⁹—proves the seriousness with which the Danish state perceived tourism in the 1930s as it struggled to ferret out sources for revenue in the crisis context of the 1930s. Surely, the 1930s saw the economic impact of tourism grow significantly, and both the state, the broader public, and the actors involved with tourism were aware of its potential as a source for revenue. In this regard, ideology was of secondary importance. Instead, tourism seemed like an industry of the future; it was still mostly a privilege of the broader middle class and not yet a true mass phenomenon, but large-scale tourism was within the horizon of expectations. The next two chapters will investigate how these expectations reverberated on an institutional level

⁸⁹ Copy of correspondence between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Public Works, 90-32 Dan (10/5), Diverse, Udenrigsministeriet: Gruppeordnede sager (1909-1945).

to reform the Danish tourist landscape and lay the foundations for a full-scale tourist industry.

“The Strange Tourist Association”: The Danish Tourist Landscape before 1935

But its [the old Tourist Association for Denmark’s] structure did not fit the demands of the age, and undoubtedly hindered multiple new opportunities for development. Therefore, the re-organization was greeted with joy in all circles concerned with tourism

(From the Chairman’s Report at the last meeting of the General Assembly of The Tourist Association for Denmark in its pre-reorganizational form, 1935)

Introduction

In the last months of 1933, unprecedented debate erupted around tourism in the Danish public. The uncommon commotion originated in the daily press where, for example, the headline of an article in the leading broadsheet newspaper *Politiken* stated that “The Danish state should take over tourism advertisement abroad.”¹ In support of this statement, the journalist—a long time travel correspondent and writer on tourist issues—surveyed the European state of touristic affairs: In Sweden, efforts are planned to further streamline the advertising effort; in Italy, a special state organ has long been dealing with the issue; in Germany, the propaganda is more or less under the auspices of the State railway; and, “in different forms, France, Spain, Austria, [and] Hungary all have their official tourist organizations, who operates with state support, under the management of the state, [or] at least under state supervision.” To this author, it makes for a stark contrast that “no official organ for tourism and foreign advertisement exists” in Denmark and he is impressed neither by the efforts made by the Danish State railway nor by the amount of state subsidies designated for the tourist organization.²

This call for state involvement in the promotion of Denmark to foreign tourists brought a long-standing discussion about the institutional framework of tourism into the

¹ The article, written by journalist and author Carl Christian Clausen under his tourist correspondent alias “Tres”, appeared in *Politiken* on November 26, 1933. Here it is quoted from: Editorial. “Dansk Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Danish Tourist Propaganda Abroad],” *Turisten [The Tourist]* 8 (1933), 12: 1.

² Ibid.

public domain. The article in itself is instructive as it not only illustrates the legitimacy accorded to state involvement in but also the transnational discourse permeating the tourism debate.³ This discourse also shaped the political action which quickly followed once the debate had garnered public attention. The government commissioned “The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad” [CTPA], the report of this committee was published, and on this basis the state reorganized and professionalized The Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD], which was split into a domestic and a foreign department—all within the space of eighteen months following the publication of the *Politiken*-article.

This chapter and the one following it deal with this process of transforming and streamlining the institutional framework devoted to selling the nation taking place in 1934-35. In this chapter, I outline the institutional framework of Danish tourism prior to the reorganization and trace the debates and arguments which would eventually crystalize into a rather concerted call for action. For this purpose, I especially rely on two jubilee works devoted to the history of TAD, historian Mikael Frausing’s article on TAD’s shift from a popularly rooted organization to a more commercially oriented one in a *longue durée* perspective, as well as a selection of newspaper articles important in framing the public debate.⁴ Finally, the chapter is informed by material found in the archives of TAD

³ In a recent volume, Eric G.E. Zuelow has rightfully noted the striking paradox that “the narrative of tourism history is largely contained within national borders.” The volume that Zuelow is editing, however, makes an example worthy of imitation, as it offers insightful case studies highlighting the transnational nature of tourist spaces, politics, and promotion. Eric G.E. Zuelow, “The Necessity of Touring Beyond the Nation: An Introduction,” in *Touring Beyond the Nation: A Transnational Approach to European Tourism History*, ed. Eric G.E. Zuelow (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011), 1-16; For an older, and immensely readable, account sensitive to the “transnational mode of production” that tourism is, see Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday. A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999).

⁴ See Hans Joakim Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism through 100 years]* (Århus: Danmarks Turistråd, 1988); Knud Secher, *Hundrede år i dansk turisme. Turistårbogen 1989 [A hundred years in Danish tourism. The Tourist Annual 1989]* (Århus: Samvirkende Danske Turistforeninger, 1989); and Mikael Frausing, “Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab? Turistforening for Danmark mellem hjemstavnsturisme og eksportturisme ca. 1888-1967.” [A Happy Marriage of Convenience? The Danish National Tourist Organization c. 1888-1967], *Kulturstudier* 1 (2010): 25-52.

and the Foreign Ministry's Press Office as well as my reading of *Turisten*, the official organ of TAD. Edited by Anders Nordahl-Petersen, who also served as regional chairman of the Funen branch of TAD and would become the leader of the association's domestic department after the reorganization, the monthly served as the voice of the provincial, popular and voluntary faction of TAD, although it would not criticize the work of TAD's centralized leadership.

The Composition of the Tourist Landscape prior to 1934

By the early thirties, as Danish tourism faced both bleak outlooks of deep economic crisis and more encouraging expectations of a continuation or even acceleration of the growth of the twenties that had temporarily (so it was hoped) come to a stand-still, proponents of the tourist cause felt its institutional composition increasingly inadequate. Made up by commercial agents, voluntary associations torn between local interests and centralizing impulses, and various instances of cautious state funding, the institutions of Danish tourism—besides TAD also the Danish State Railways [DSB] and other private, semi-private or public actors such as the shipping company DFDS, private railroad companies, travel agencies, commercial associations as well as municipal governments and institutions, to name but a few—constituted a hodgepodge in which concerted action pertaining to tourist infrastructure and promotion—although occasionally carried out—was generally hard to come by.

Already in the existing institutional framework, the Tourist Association for Denmark was a central player. Emerging out of a well-visited Nordic Fair in Copenhagen in the summer of 1888, the association's predecessor—the Danish Tourist Association [DTA]—originally hosted a rather exclusive membership list made up of the upper

echelons of Copenhagen's bourgeoisie society.⁵ While originally focused on promoting travels abroad as much as facilitating tourism to Denmark, the association changed its statutes shortly before its decennial anniversary. Now, "in the interest of the Fatherland," DTA's purpose was "to spread the knowledge about Denmark and the Danish people [Folk] and thereby promote foreign visits to the country as well as [domestic] tourism in Denmark."⁶ Doing so, in the words of the historian Mikael Frausing, "the association's work consisted of equal parts of practical preoccupation with service and standards and a vain pride in being able to present the nation in a beneficial and complete light."⁷ At the same time, the organization garnered support outside the capital city as well: in 1893, the first local branch of DTA appeared in the provincial city of Vejle, and by the turn of the century 13 such local branches had seen the light of day. As provincial involvement increased, however, so did provincial aspirations for influence with regards to the workings of the tourist association, which was why the association was decentralized into three regional entities with a common chairman in 1906.⁸

Still, tensions prevailed between the interests of the provinces and the capital city, as did conflicts between idealistic and economic understandings of tourism—that is, between members of the local associations set on presenting their local regions (and, by extension, the country) positively to a greater number of foreign visitors while stimulating national awareness through domestic tourism, and those involved directly with the commercial aspects of tourism, often representing larger companies based in Copenhagen. In a sense, and even if the two groups overlapped to a certain degree, "popular" and commercial elements contended for dominance in DTA, leading to a

⁵ Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 19.

⁶ From the statute passed on an extraordinary General Assembly in the Danish Tourist Association on September 16, 1897. Quoted from *ibid.*, 27.

⁷ Frausing, "Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab?": 28.

⁸ Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 32-33.

virtual schism in 1913, which would further weaken an institutional setup already short on financial means.⁹

Only in 1923, well after the disruptive effects of the First World War and its aftermath, which—although having a relatively moderate effect on Danish society¹⁰—broke down the conditions for international travel more broadly, had substantially diminished the flow of tourists internationally and at home, did a new, unified association emerge. According to Frausing, this new organization—the Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD]—was the first viable tourist association, mainly because it by and large obtained a balance between commercial and popular interests.¹¹ It should be added that efforts were consistently made to keep discomfort with the organization’s now more centralized structure at bay as well. By various means, TAD sought to stress that “Denmark is more than Copenhagen,” as the title of one lecture in Stockholm arranged by the association emphasized.¹²

Still, local tourist branches continued to feel that Copenhagen was favored at the cost of the provincial regions and that the leadership in Copenhagen did not appreciate local conditions was never extinguished entirely. For example, at a 1932 general assembly meeting of the regional branch of Jutland, whose Southern region (referred to as Southern Jutland and Northern Schleswig respectively) had belonged to the *Reich* prior to the border revisions of the Versailles treaty and which maintained a rather large German

⁹ E.g. Frausing, “Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab?": 28.

¹⁰ E.g. Nils Arne Sørensen, *Den Store Krig. Europæernes Første Verdenskrig [The Great War. The Europeans' First World War]*, 2nd ed. (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2014) 288-321.

¹¹ Frausing, “Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab?": 30-31.

¹² The title and its result, namely that a well-renowned Swedish journalist subsequently traveled to and wrote about the “Danish isles, the old towns and villages in Jutland, H. C. Andersen’s native city and—in general— ‘the idyllically, peaceful and traditional Denmark’,” was dealt with at some length in the TAD’s annual report at its annual meeting in 1932. “Årsberetning 1932 [Annual Report 1932],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 9.

minority,¹³ members raised concerns that the central organization when omitting Southern Jutland from radio programs and other promotional material aimed at the Southern neighbor. This was seen both as an “unnecessary caution,” since it was held that Germans and Danes were cooperating perfectly well on the local level, and as counterproductive given that “there is no more natural way of furthering the development of the peaceful relationship to our Southern neighbor than through a continuous tourist exchange.”¹⁴ As we shall see, this was neither the first nor the last time that the Danish-German border issue would cast its shadows on the field of tourist promotion.

TAD would subsequently expand its grounding in broader strata of the population (by 1933 the membership numbers had tripled to 15,000),¹⁵ while serving as an important rallying point and an innovative player in the efforts to promote tourism to and within Denmark throughout the twenties and in the early thirties. The annual report of TAD for 1932, delivered by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, testifies to the variety of activities undertaken by the association in its quest to promote Denmark abroad and is thus quoted at some length here. According to the Chairman, and despite the crisis-induced decrease in tourist numbers and shrinking budget, TAD managed

to send out 126.000 brochures and folders [...] with English, German, French, and Danish texts, as well as 5000 copies of a new poster with a map of Denmark; the text is in the four aforementioned languages here as well. We [TAD] have delivered a series of slideshow collections to be used in public talks at home and abroad (Sweden, Poland, England, France, Switzerland, Austria, etc.).

The copy of the Danish Tourist film located here [in TAD] has been on loan to the Danish vice

¹³ The question of the Danish-German border and the German minority in Southern Jutland/Northern Schleswig dominated discussions of Danish foreign policy throughout the interwar period, generally resulting in a cautious approach to the issue—why the frustrations aired at the meeting were not entirely unfounded. E.g. Claus Bundgård Christensen et. al., *Danmark Besat. Krig og Hverdag, 1940-45 [Denmark Occupied. War and Everyday Life, 1940-45]*, 4th ed. (Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 2015), 46.

¹⁴ Reported in Unknown Author, *Turisten* 7 (1932), 8: 120-21; It is very likely that this and other articles of *Turisten* where the author is not given are written by the long-time editor Anders-Nordahl Petersen.

¹⁵ Frausing, “Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab?” 32.

consul in Vlaardingen, who has given a substantial number of talks about Denmark — While talking about Holland, I should also state that this year the association [TAD] has paid for special propaganda in this so relatively well-off country, since arrangements have been made from the beginning of the year with a large travel agency inhabiting a particularly good location on one of the largest squares of Amsterdam. This travel agency has a very large window, in which Danish brochures, images, yes even a large Danish flag, continuously remind the Dutchman that Denmark is one of the countries in which he currently gets most value for his money.

Furthermore, the Chairman continued, the script for a new, modern tourist film was being written, while an American film crew originally filming in Sweden had been convinced to film in Denmark as well. At the same time, an excerpt of the already existing tourist film had been given to show on large passenger ships setting out from San Francisco.

Moreover, images, articles, and adverts had been sent to newspapers and magazines around the world, “mostly in Germany and in England,” while it had invited a number of foreign writers to the country as well, among them six French journalists who traveled on the first trip of the newly opened Paris-Copenhagen railroad line. The association also distributed “propaganda material” at international congresses in Copenhagen—the social congress, the international dairy congress, and the Eucharistic congress among others—and to English schoolchildren arriving on board large ships, while it supported various travel exhibitions in Denmark and Sweden as well. Finally, promotional material in the form of a large map of Denmark as well as posters from local branches of the tourist association had been put in place in a railway station of central importance to rail traffic from Germany.¹⁶ The account is representative of TAD’s efforts in the early thirties; indeed, by means of the creative enthusiasm of its members, the association proved remarkably capable of stretching its scarce resources on matters big and small.

¹⁶ Turistforeningen for Danmark, “Annual Report 1932”: 4-5.

Yet, despite the frugality and inventiveness that went into TAD's promotional efforts the association's influence was dwarfed by that of other, more resourceful actors, such as the large shipping companies DFDS and Ø.K. as well as the Danish State Railways [DSB]. In 1933, for example, the latter designated 105.000 DKK to "Tourist advertisement and notices" in its budget, while TAD used less than a third for the same purposes that year.¹⁷ DSB's travel agency, *Norden* [The North], which was established on *Unter den Linden* in Berlin in 1909, was the single-most important distributor of promotional material in Germany throughout the interwar years.¹⁸ DFDS' travel agency in London played a similar role in England,¹⁹ and TAD used both agencies along with Danish consulates abroad as distributional channels for their own promotional material.²⁰

In an interview given to *Turisten* in the autumn of 1933, DSB's Head of the Propaganda Department stressed the function of *Norden* as "the Southward outpost of Danish tourist propaganda" by virtue of its "hundreds of connections within and outside the German Reich and its neighboring countries." However, he also stressed that DSB was first and foremost advertising its transportation services: the "tourist advertising proper" was "a matter for the tourist associations and businesses—with the support from the state given by a specific allotment for the national [tourist] association."²¹ Thus, even if its impact on the tourist landscape was rather limited before 1933, the state did play a

¹⁷ On DSB's budget for advertisement, which was laid out in the state budget, see "Statsbanernes Propaganda for Turisttrafik: Et Interview med Propagandaens Leder, Hr. Kontorchef Olrik [The State Railways' Propaganda for the Tourist Traffic: an Interview with the Director of Propaganda, Mr. Olrik, Departmental Head]," *Turisten* 8 (1933), 11: 170; For the budget of TAD, in which around 35.000 DKK was devoted to promotional material (not counting some material which was mostly meant for circulation among the association's members) in 1933, which constituted a significant increase from 1932, see Turistforeningen for Danmark, "Kasseregnskab for Kalenderåret 1934 [Annual Budget for the year of 1934]" in 491: 1934-1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

¹⁸ E.g. Schultz, *Danish Tourism in 100 Years*, 31-32; and "Statsbanernes Propaganda for Turisttrafik": 170.

¹⁹ Frausing, "Et lykkeligt fornuftsægteskab?": 32.

²⁰ Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry's Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 90.

²¹ Unknown author, *Turisten*, "The State Railways' Propaganda for the Tourist Traffic": 170.

role as well. Besides the (rather meager) financial support granted to TAD, the state sponsored the quite substantial efforts made to promote railroad travel as well as to improve travel standards and infrastructure on the part of DSB since the State Railways' budget was subject to the state budget.²²

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in particular took a keen interest in the representation and promotion of Denmark abroad and facilitated interactions between German press and Danish tourist officials, especially through its consuls.²³ Among other initiatives in which the Press Service of the Foreign Ministry involved itself was a special issue of *Auslandswarte*—the organ of the *Bund der Auslandsdeutschen* [Association of Germans Abroad]—on Denmark in 1926.²⁴ The richly illustrated magazine featured articles by the magazine's editor along with pieces composed by Danish writers, many of which were collected and translated by the Danish press attaché in Berlin.²⁵

The special issue of *Auslandswarte* also featured forewords by the German envoy to Copenhagen as well as Thorvald Stauning, the social democratic Danish Prime Minister. The latter foreword consisted of less than ten lines but nonetheless testifies to the degree of importance with which issues related to national promotion abroad were

²² Ibid.: 171.

²³ The archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bear witness to the institution's interest in the promotion and representation of Denmark abroad. Many files are devoted to correspondences on the creation and promotion of books as well as articles in newspapers and magazines along with press clippings from or pertaining to these publications. For such files relating to representations of Denmark in Germany, see, among others, the files 90-31, 90-33, 90-42, 113-91, 113-92 and 113-136 in Gruppeordnede Sager (1909-1945), Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet; As regards the cooperation between press attachés and tourist propaganda abroad, in February 1932 *Turisten* reported on a meeting arranged by TAD at which leading members of the organization met with the attachés working in Berlin and London as well as A.J. Poulsen, the Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Press Service. Here, they discussed among other things problems related to the economic barriers imposed on German tourists (see Chapter 1) and the means for tourist promotion in Germany and Great Britain respectively.

²⁴ *Auslandswarte: Zeitschrift des Bundes der Auslandsdeutschen E. V. und des Auslandsbundes deutscher Frauen E. V. zur Förderung der wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Beziehungen von Heimat und Ausland*, Vol. 6, Issue 13, September 25, 1926; a copy of the issue can be found in 113-136, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

²⁵ This information on the press attaché's role in the genesis of the magazine issue was widely reported in Danish newspaper articles reporting on the publication, and was most likely given in a communiqué from the Foreign Ministry's Press Service. Press clippings from the coverage of the publication by major newspapers such as *Social-Demokraten*, *Berlingske Tidende*, and *Nationaltidende* among others can be found in 113-136, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

treated with. Of course, it is hardly surprising that the Prime Minister cared for the ways Denmark was perceived abroad, especially for the perception in a country which had been on the other side of a major border revision less than a decade earlier. Indeed, Stauning's brief foreword promoted the idea that German knowledge of Denmark was a precondition to "creating continuously better relations between the two neighboring countries" and not the physical act of traveling per se.²⁶ However, other articles in the magazine carried travel-oriented titles such as "Kopenhagen-Fahrt [Copenhagen Journey]," "Von Königen, Helden und Wikingern [Of Kings, Heroes, and Vikings]" and "Das unbekannte Dänemark [The Unknown Denmark]." This goes to show the imbricate relation between tourism and national self-promotion already in the twenties, while also speaking to the politicization of Danish-German tourism even before the rise of Nazism. Finally, Stauning's involvement was far from a singular occasion, and while he would be ousted from the Prime Minister's office later in 1926, he came to be an important figure in the reconfiguration of the Danish tourist landscape in the 1930s, as he would once again hold the position as Prime Minister from 1929 to his death in 1942.

The Need for Reform

The *Politiken* article cited in the introduction of this chapter was not alone in its call for reform. A somewhat belated article from the tabloid B.T., written in July 1934 when the committee-work was already well under way, is illustrative. Writing about "The Strange Tourist Association," which, as the case of an article in a misleading French "propaganda-article on Denmark as a Tourist country" ostensibly testified to, possessed neither the (modest) means nor the will needed to surveil what was written about Denmark abroad. Adding harm to injury, B.T. could cite an explanation by Captain Nielsen that advertising in France did not make sense "from a pure business perspective"

²⁶ *Auslandswarte* Vol 6, Issue 13, September 25, 1926: 397.

since very few Frenchmen were currently visiting the country; the tabloid was in little doubt: the “state-supported organization greatly [... needed] to be reorganized.”²⁷

Although it was the *Politiken* article which finally incited a larger discussion on the shortcomings of TAD in its dealings with foreign audiences, the criticism it entailed was not new. In the first years of the 1930s, TAD would occasionally be subject to public debate. The harshest attacks would often appear in provincial newspapers. In 1931, one such contemplated why otherwise well-founded expectations of a successful tourist season had been disappointed—the low currency rate should have been conducive to increased visitor numbers, but the numbers had shown a marked decline. Why? According to the paper, because “we have not at all learned [to produce effective] tourist advertising yet. That goes for both our hotels and railways—and our tourist associations.”²⁸

On another occasion, *Turisten*—the official organ of TAD—felt compelled to devote its front page to an editorial exclaiming in no uncertain terms in its title that “The advertising has worked.” This assertive article was an explicit response to “a provincial daily” who had alleged that the “propaganda methods” of the tourist association were out of touch with the times, especially in comparison with neighboring countries, and that the visitors had abandoned the country as a consequence. In an effort to rebuke this allegation, the editorial’s author referenced more recent estimates of the tourist influx showing an increase compared to the year before thus undermining the premise of the

²⁷ Unknown Author, “Den mærkelige Turistforening,” *B.T.*, July 27, 1934.

²⁸ In *Fynske Venstreblad* 1931 (date not given), quoted from Schultz, “Dansk Turisme i 100 år,” 64.

provincial polemic. Turning the argument upside down, the editorial went on to assert that the increased numbers were indeed a result of “the continuous propaganda.”²⁹

Yet, the issue of modernizing TAD’s promotional material and methods had been a matter of concern for its members for a while. In one example, the national secretary of TAD, Captain V.A. Nielsen, gave a talk on “The Modern Tourist Brochure” at a meeting in The Nordic Tourist-Traffic Committee on December 14, 1931, and defined it as opposed to the lengthy, lyrical, and aesthetic material aimed at the recreational and luxurious travelers of the past. To adopt to the “intense, harried life” of his age, on the other hand, the Captain advocated for short, factual, and catchy brochures rich on illustrations but suitable for mass production and distribution.³⁰

However, at the same time as prominent voices in TAD defended its efforts, the sense of crisis and the need for reform of the tourist landscape permeated the organization as well. For instance, a *Turisten* editorial from May 1933 lamented the lack of fresh members and initiatives in the organization.³¹ In another article from early 1933, Anders Nordahl-Petersen argued for state involvement in the modernization of older hotels which had “not been able to follow recent developments due to the crisis” but were “in reality healthy businesses.”³² A range of other articles were built around the theme of “the crisis and tourism” as well,³³ just like the harsh economic conditions and the crisis of

²⁹ Unknown author, *Turisten* 8, 9 (September, 1933): 131; a similarly self-celebratory article on the quantity and especially quality of the “Danish Tourist Advertising” had appeared three months earlier as well. See *Turisten* 8, 6 (June, 1933): 83-84.

³⁰ The talk is recounted in *Turisten* 7, 1 (January, 1932): 10-11.

³¹ Unknown Author, “Stilstand er langsom død [Stagnation is Slow Death],” *Turisten* 8, 5 (May, 1933): 71.

³² Anders Nordahl-Petersen, “Moderniseringen af ældre hoteller [The Modernization of older Hotels],” *Turisten* 8, 1 (January, 1933): 2.

³³ E.g. Unknown Author, “Turistarbejdet og Kristetiden [The Tourist Work and the Time of Crisis],” *Turisten* 7, 3 (March, 1932): Front page; “Ved Solhverv [At Solstice],” *Turisten* 7, 12 (December, 1932): Front Page. The latter pronounced a careful optimism that with the continued efforts of the organization, tourism was going towards brighter days.

international tourism were a recurrent theme in TAD's annual reports and general assemblies in the years before the reorganization.³⁴

Quite perceptively, however, TAD also saw opportunities in the troublesome economic circumstances. As the Danish Kroner had been devalued quite substantially

NACHRICHTENDIENST
TOURISTENVEREIN DÄNEMARKS
IN VERBINDUNG MIT DEN HOTEL-
ORGANISATIONEN IN DÄNEMARK

Ankunft über Reisen in Dänemark • Gratis Versand von Prospekten etc.

Eine Mark ist heute 1,57 dänische Kronen!

Es ist billig
nach Dänemark zu reisen
— aber noch billiger ist es,
in Dänemark zu reisen!

Nach Dänemark führt man über Warnemünde, Gedser (Seeland) oder über Padborg (Jütland).

Für die dänischen Staatsbahnen bestehen

- 1) Um 25 % ermäßigte *Hin- und Rückfahrkarten* (Doppelbilletter). Sie werden jeden Tag ausgestellt mit Gültigkeitsdauer 8 Tage.
- 2) Reisekarten, auf sämtlichen Staatsbahnstrecken gültig, für beliebige Reisen in 15 Tage (2. Klasse 75 Kr., 3. Klasse 52 Kr. 50 Öre) und in 8 Tage (2. Klasse 50 Kr., 3. Klasse 35 Kr.).

Hotelpreise in Dänemark (in dänischen Kronen):

	Zimmer	Frühstück	Lunch	Mittag	Pension
Klasse A	6-12,50	2,00	3,00	5,00	von 12,00
Klasse B	4-8,00	1,50	2,50	3,00	+ 9,00
Klasse C	3-5,00	1,25	1,50	2,00	+ 7,00

**Verbringen Sie
Ihren Osterurlaub
in Dänemark!**

Figure 1: “It is cheap to travel to Denmark — but it is even cheaper to travel in Denmark!”

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Nachrichtendienst* (1933). In 490: 1929 – 1933, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

after leaving the Gold Standard in September 1931, Denmark became a rather inexpensive country to travel in. This led TAD to declare 1932 a “Denmark-year;” a year in which larger amounts of visitors were to be expected but in which it would also be more expensive for Danes to travel abroad, which was why they were encouraged “not to stay at home but to travel at home.”³⁵ Yet, it took some prefacing to encourage domestic travel at the expense of international travel. In ideological terms, protectionism was continuously viewed as an (now necessary) evil, countering the conciliatory function often ascribed to international travel. Justifying a renewed call to “Travel in Denmark!” in June 1933, *Turisten* referred to measures taken in

Germany and Italy to encourage domestic traveling, showing the “abnormal” conditions under which travel subsisted. Beyond the comparative perspective, the article argued that

³⁴ E.g. “Årsberetning 1932 [Annual Report 1932],” no. 07798, 441, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 3-4.

³⁵ “En nyttaarshilsen om ‘Danmarksaaet’ [A New Year’s Greeting concerning the ‘Denmark-Year’],” *Turisten* 7, 1 (January, 1932): 2.

even in ideological terms it made sense to encourage a people to see its own country first; not only does the traveler “expand his spiritual horizon” when seeing his own nation, “he has also created for himself a far better foundation for a rewarding trip in foreign lands [i det Fremmede].”³⁶ It is quite representative that economic, idealistic, national, and international arguments were all invoked as TAD sought to find its way through the economic and political turmoil of the early thirties.

The economic argument was carried out in the promotion of Denmark abroad as well. In one advertisement from 1933, distributed as posters and fliers in Germany and Holland, it was announced that “it is cheap to travel to Denmark—but it is even cheaper to travel in Denmark!” (Figure 1). This strategy was pursued in the following years as well, as one German-language brochure from 1934 stated on the cover page that “At the moment, Denmark is the **cheapest** Tourist country” and encouraged German tourists to “take advantage of the low rate of the Danish krone” (the brochure will be dealt with at length in Chapter 3), while another short brochure was entirely dedicated to “information for German tourists about Danish currency conditions.”³⁷ That this selling point would find resonance in Germany was not an unreasonable assumption. In February 1933 the Danish consul general in Hamburg reported to the Foreign Ministry that the low currency rate had generated interest in Danish seaside resorts, whereupon the consulate requested material for distribution to interested parties, among them the prominent daily *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*—material which TAD willingly provided.³⁸

Still, the overall sentiment remained: the organization was overwhelmed and underfunded, and the financial crisis had only made matters worse. In addition, the

³⁶ Unknown Author, “Rejs i Danmark! [Travel in Denmark!],” *Turisten* 8, 6 (June 1933): 81.

³⁷ Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark* (Copenhagen: Fraenckel Dybtryk, 1934) in 491: 1934-1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet. Emphasis in the original.

³⁸ Correspondence between the Danish Consul General in Hamburg and the Foreign Ministry’s Press Service, 113-91, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

potential benefits of an effective tourist promotion in national economic terms only became more alluring as the crisis deepened and the Danish state sought additional sources of revenue and foreign currency. As the debate about the organization of foreign tourist promotion picked up steam during the winter and spring of 1933-34, the national economic argument took center stage.³⁹ It was also to the “manifold” economic returns given by “a concentration and further development of [... the] tourist advertisement” that the President of TAD pointed in a memorandum sent to the government on the third of February, 1934 arguing for increased involvement in tourist promotion on the side of the government, the municipalities, and the commercial sector.⁴⁰

This argument presumably played a role as the government finally asked a committee to “consider the possibility of and the forms of a rational organization of Denmark’s foreign tourist propaganda” and make suggestions for the financing of an effective promotional effort abroad on May 31st, seemingly at Prime Minister Stauning’s request.⁴¹ In the following chapter, I turn to the work and outcome of this committee.

³⁹ In May of 1934, for example, one newspaper reported on the report of a recent Norwegian committee, which had outlined the potential income of foreign tourism to Norway. See Unknown Author, “Hvad er en Turist værd i rede Penge? [What is the Worth of a Tourist in cash?],” *Aftenavisen*, May 16, 1934.

⁴⁰ See Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 57-58.

⁴¹ On Stauning’s influence, see *Ibid.*; On the commission’s mandate, see *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 6; It is also quite likely that a report from a Norwegian tourist committee had recently been published, which suggested that tourism could potentially become a major export industry. According to the minutes from the initial meeting in The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad, its members were given a copy of this report. See 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

The Making of a Tourist Industry, 1934-35

All old thoughts about tourism, its goals and its means, must shy away for new ideas. All boundaries have been broken. One may call this development fairytale-like, yes, no other word matches the facts [...] [T]he numbers of the traveling audience has been multiplied manifold all over the earth; there may not exist any clearer emblem of the current age than that of the traveling man

(Einar Boesgaard, in *Vi lever i Rejsealderen [We live in the age of travel]*, 50-year jubilee-text for The Tourist Association for Denmark, 1937)

Introduction

In the first months of 1934, the debates around the Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD] would finally lead to involvement from the state in the form of the commission of “The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad.” As it got to work, the committee faced a European context in which the possibility of traveling was available to an increasing proportion of the population, for political reasons and because of vastly improved transportation infrastructure. As this “fairytale-like” development—as phrased in one almost contemporary jubilee account cited above—unfolded, it did indeed force the committee’s members to engage critically with “[a]ll old thoughts about tourism, its goals and its means.” In this chapter, I first outline the composition of the committee, then analyze its work, before I finally discuss the institutional framework which would eventually be the result of the reform efforts.

Doing so, I argue that in institutional terms Danish tourism and its promotion abroad changed from being largely a voluntarily pursued “cause” into making the blueprint for a professional tourist industry with a keen eye for state revenue; in concert with the state, TAD aimed for a larger influx of travelers by pushing for comfortable hotels and infrastructure, as well as modern advertising, altogether laying the foundations for a tourist industry. In the process of professionalization, Danish tourism was modernized, commercialized, and industrialized. Still, some national and *folkelige*

[popular, *völkisch*] elements remained. Thus, the reorganization did not completely deprive TAD of its organizational basis as a popular organization based around a romanticized relation to tourism, as the Danish tourist movement had been from its infancy.¹

The notion of the *folk* had turned into an important term in the political language of Danish social democracy by the 1930s. As outlined by Ove Korsgaard among others, the concept had been central to political movements such as National Liberalism, Grundtvigianism, and Cultural Radicalism as the holder of sovereign power since the implementation of Danish democracy in 1849.² According to Korsgaard, it was “the greatest intellectual achievement” of Thorvald Stauning, the social democratic leader throughout the 1920s and 1930s, that he created “an ideological link between the social and the national” by making “the folk-concept a sober concept in the Social Democratic Party.”³ According to another Danish historian, the *folk* “had become the central category [of political legitimacy] in the social democratic political universe” by 1933-34, in part as a pre-emptive defense against the spread of Nazism.⁴ The democratic elements, of course, distinguished the *folk* markedly from the Nazi version of the *Volk*, just like the Danish concept, in contrast to the German, was not deeply ethnicized either.

This adaptation of the *folk* played into the “pragmatic turn to the right” of the Nordic social democratic parties in the interwar period observed by the late historian

¹ Of course, the romanticist-modern duality is not unique to Danish tourism. On the persistence of romantic notions in modern tourism, see Hartmut Berghoff, “From Privilege to Commodity?” in *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000*, ed. Hartmut Berghoff et. al. (Basingstoke, England/New York: Palgrave, 2002), 163.

² Ove Korsgaard, *Kampen om folket. Et dannelsesperspektiv på dansk historie gennem 500 år [The Struggle over the People. A bildungs-perspective on Danish history through 500 years]* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2004), particularly 465.

³ Ibid., 417.

⁴ Niels Finn Christiansen, “Socialismen og fædrelandet [Socialism and the Fatherland],” in *Dansk Identitetshistorie [The History of Danish Identity]* vol. 3. (eds.) Ole Feldbæk, 512-586 (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels forlag, 1992), 580-583.

Niels Kayser Nielsen.⁵ According to Nielsen, social democratic parties successfully adopted strands of cultural nationalism to hinder the breakthrough of political nationalism in the Nordic countries. As such, past-oriented visions would go along with modernizing political agendas. This duality, I argue, came to characterize the institutional set-up around TAD after it was reformed on the initiative of the social democratic-social liberal government in 1934-35.

I argue that this duality was evident in the re-organization of TAD into two separate branches dealing with domestic and foreign tourists respectively under one leadership. While the committee and the following re-organization were indeed intended and in large parts carried out as modernizing and professionalizing projects, elements of the old voluntarily based association and its ideals retained a presence in the new set-up.

The Make-Up of the Committee

“The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad” [CTPA] was set up on the 31st of May 1934 and delivered its report in December the same year. As suggested by its title, the committee was commissioned under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry. A. J. Poulsen, one of the ministry's leading officials and an energetic figure who had long been involved with tourism and selling the nation abroad, was entrusted with the chairmanship. The committee consisted of 22 members, divided into 7 subcommittees, and its composition as well as its work show the interests invested in the so-called tourist cause as well as the seriousness lent to tourism and the promotion of Denmark abroad. Represented were voices from TAD and leading figures from large industries and business as well as high-ranking public officials.⁶

⁵ Niels Kayser Nielsen, “Demokrati og kulturel nationalism i Norden i mellemkrigstiden – en realpolitisk højredrejning? [Nordic Democracy and Cultural Nationalism in the Interwar Period – a Pragmatic Turn to the Right?],” *Historisk Tidskrift (Sweden)* 124 (2004), 4: 581-603.

⁶ Unless otherwise stated, information on the make-up of the committee in this section is drawn from: Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [from The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on

The tourist association mastered a handful of members. All but one represented the main organization and harbored centralizing interests, assembling the task of promoting Denmark as a tourist destination to both domestic and foreign markets under the roof of one organization. To this group belonged both the President and General Secretary of the organization. Only few voices propagating the regional and local interests layered in the structure of the old organization had found its way to the committee, most prominently that of Anders Nordahl-Petersen, the chairman of the regional tourist association of Funen and editor of *Turisten*, the organ of TAD.⁷ Furthermore, the representatives from TAD were supplemented by members representing other organizations and institutions related to the tourist movement: the committee included the leaders of two different organizations devoted to car ownership as well as the Director of the Museum of National History.

The representation of the tourist associations, however, was overmatched by that of commercial sectors with interests in tourism, from where much of the financing of the future promotional work was envisioned to emanate. This sector, of course, was far from homogeneous. It contained actors directly concerned with tourist travel per se (such as DFDS, the largest Danish steam ship company; Wagons-Lit/Cook, the pioneering international provider of comfortable middle-class travel; and the central association for hotel- and restaurant owners in Denmark) and others whose interest might better be described as tangential to tourism and rather directed towards the promotion of Denmark in general (among others, these included *De Danske Spritfabrikker* [the Danish

Tourist Propaganda Abroad], *Danmarks turistpropaganda [The Tourist Propaganda of Denmark]* (Copenhagen: Dyva & Jeppensens Bogtrykkeri, 1935), 5-7.

⁷ Mikael Frausing, "Et Lykkeligt Fornuftsægteskab? Turistforening for Danmark mellem hjemstavnsturisme og eksportturisme ca. 1888-1967." [A Happy Marriage of Convenience? The Danish National Tourist Organization c. 1888-1967], *Kulturstudier* 1 (2010): 25-52: 36.

Distillers]; the Danish Advertisement Association; The Copenhagen Retailers' Joint Representation; and the Industrial Council).

The sentiment of especially the latter of these groups might have been best expressed by the President of Georg Jensen, a famed silverware company. At an early committee meeting, he stated that the traders of applied arts—who were mainly concentrated on *Strøget*, the main shopping street in Copenhagen—could only be anticipated to give contributions if provided security that these were used exclusively for tourist propaganda aimed at foreign audiences, that this promotion was carried out by competent men schooled in modern advertising and business principles, and that the new organization would “do everything within its power” to ensure that tourists would have time to spent on *Strøget* during their visits.⁸

Finally, the state certainly took a keen interest in the progress of the committee. Apart from being set under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry and backed by the Prime Minister, the committee also included high-ranking officials from three ministries, a member of the town council of Copenhagen, and a member of the Parliament. In addition to Poulsen from the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Trade and Industry both send their Department Heads as well. That all three officials as well as the council member served on the two sub-committees pertaining most to the overall goals stated in the commission, namely the committees for organization and financing, is further evidence of the leverage obtained by the official institutions in the committee work.

⁸ *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderet., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 2nd meeting, appendix; Interestingly, in some of the first brochures created after the re-organization, made particularly with ship tourists staying only briefly in mind, *Strøget* does not figure in the suggested two-day itinerary; on the brochures' target audience, see “Årsberetning 1936 [Annual Report 1936],” in 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 6; for the brochures, see Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Copenhagen: The Smiling City* and *Kopenhagen: die lebenswürdige Stadt* (Copenhagen: 1936), archived in 491: 1934-1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

Making “The Tourist Bible:” The Tourist Committee

At the committee’s very first meeting, the chairman A.J. Poulsen began his introductory talk by invoking the international dimensions of tourism:

Throughout all countries, the tourist cause is currently subject to vivid attention and interested debate. Whether one considers international travel [det internationale rejseliv] from a political point of view as a means to develop mutual understanding and thereby strengthen the mutual trust between the nations, or from an economical point of view as a means to strengthen the revenue of the individual nations, it seems greatly required not to neglect anything which can serve to develop the most vivid exchange possible between the countries when it comes to traveling.⁹

Outlining two significances of tourism in the international realm, Poulsen refers to two elements so evidently present in the mindset of those engaged with Danish tourism in these years, namely idealistic notions of the mutual benefits of interconnectivity in political terms alongside the national gains in an era of economic protectionism. To a certain degree, these two strands of thought would co-exist in the discussions of CTPA. As we will see, however, economic concerns and interests would ultimately take center stage in the daily dealings of the committee.

Danmarks Turistpropaganda [Denmark's Tourist Propaganda], the final report of CTPA, was published in December 1934. It is an interesting document, which—in less than 150 pages—provides an overview of the state of affairs of Danish tourism and sets forth quite visionary suggestions for its future conduct. It is thus not entirely unjustified when the generally self-celebratory and nostalgic jubilee-texts making up most of the corpus on the history of TAD hails the report as “mandatory reading for all who are

⁹ Introductory talk given in The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad, A.J. Poulsen. Can be found in 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

involved with the tourist industry,” and as a veritable “tourist bible.”¹⁰ In its mandate, the committee was tasked with “considering the possibility for and the arrangement of a rational organization of Denmark’s foreign propaganda” as well as suggesting ways of obtaining the means to effectively carry out such propaganda. The committee report went further than that, however, as it concerned itself not only with the statistics, organization, financing, and propaganda related to tourism but also devoted two chapters to the infrastructure of tourism, dealing with tourist traffic and hotels respectively.

Envisioning a Tourist Industry

Recent technical and infrastructural developments, according to the sub-committee engaged with tourist traffic, had principally ensured that Denmark no longer needed remain off the beaten track of tourism. The geographic distances, so it was claimed, had become less important factors as tourists chose their destinations. Instead, what really mattered to modern tourists was price and comfort.¹¹ Here, according to the committee report, the Danish railways and shipping routes were fully on par with international standards, and would indeed only improve in the coming years as two new bridges (bridging the Little Belt and Storstrømmen) would make both East-West and North-South railway-travel faster and more comfortable. Only the conditions meeting airborne travelers met criticism in the report, as the state-owned airport in Kastrup just outside Copenhagen did not meet “the needs of the era” and risked losing ground to other Northern European airports, many of which were undergoing modernization. Still, by and large the report found the conditions in regards to traffic infrastructure rather gratifying.¹²

The evaluation of the Danish hotels was far less rosy. According to the part of the

¹⁰ Hans Joakim Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism through 100 years]* (Aarhus: Danmarks Turistråd, 1988), 57-58, and Knud Secher, *Hundrede år i dansk turisme. Turistårbogen 1989 [A hundred years in Danish tourism. The Tourist Annual 1989]* (Århus: Samvirkende Danske Turistforeninger, 1989), 26-31.

¹¹ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 36.

¹² *Ibid.*, 36-49.

report compiled by the hotels sub-committee, complaints had “often been advanced against Danish hotel conditions,” as these did not meet the standards for modern comfort: the beds and general furnishing were substandard, just like a general lack of running water and bathrooms in the rooms met criticism. Finally, too few hotels had rooms devoted to reading and conversation—an issue made especially pertinent due to the unstable nature of the Danish weather. Since hotels often served as the shaper of the tourist’s important first impression, the report stated, of the values and attractions of the country, the poor hotel standard was a serious impediment to obtaining “a growing and lasting” stream of tourists. In contrast, few complaints were made regarding “the service or the treatment of the guest, neither the cleanliness, nor food nor prices.”¹³

In line with the spirit of the committee’s report in general, the hotels sub-committee sought to outline the state of affairs in empirical terms. That is, much of the chapter was based upon a questionnaire meticulously collected with the assistance of the Central Union of Hoteliers and Restaurateurs as well as the Ministry of Justice and local police officers. Through these means, the answers of 350 hotels to eighteen questions regarding facilities, service, prices, occupancy, and the importance of foreign tourists to their business were presumably outlining the conditions of the contemporary hotelscape.¹⁴ On this highly quantitative foundation, the committee concluded that significant improvements were needed, especially among the hotels in the provinces. In line with the cited complaints of foreign tourists, and thus hardly coincidental, the report most insistently emphasized the lack of modern amenities.

However, the sub-committee acknowledged that the capital needed to raise the facility standards to a sufficiently high level was hard to come by in the context of the

¹³ Ibid., 50ff.

¹⁴ Ibid., 52-59.

economic crisis. To overcome this hurdle, the committee suggested the establishment of a financial institute offering hotels long term loans aimed at necessary improvements. The model, which was originally conceptualized within the industry itself, hinged upon a joint economical commitment of commercial actors and the state, thus—as will become clear—in many ways aligning with the conclusions the report presented on financing foreign tourist propaganda.¹⁵

The report went on to suggest an increased effort to prolong the tourist season—a season largely constrained to July and August—for the sake of making tourist-oriented hotels profitable, by offering reduced travel fares and hotel prices outside of high season and promoting weekend trips for domestic tourists among other things. The problem was particularly pronounced in the provinces: in the correspondence between the Danish General Consulate in Hamburg and a clerk in the Foreign Ministry in 1926, for instance, the former informed the latter of an agreement made with the Cooks travel agency on an article promoting visa free travel to Denmark in the fall. In this regard he voiced his concern about promoting other parts than Copenhagen: “but it really cannot do any good to propagandize any other places at this time of the year, as there are no hotels in which to stay.”¹⁶ Thus, the main solution propagated in the report related once again to the need for improved hotel facilities: only with the installation of central heating, running hot water, and rooms suitable for indoor activities in the event of poor weather could the season effectively be prolonged and the tourist hotels made profitable.¹⁷

The focus on the need for comfortable hotels with facilities meeting the demands of the time was inextricably linked to the committee’s understanding of the

¹⁵ Ibid., 59-61.

¹⁶ Correspondence between the General Consulate in Hamburg and Per Faber in the Press Office of the Foreign Ministry, August 26, 1926, 113-91, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

¹⁷ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 62 ff.

contemporarily occurring transformation of tourism into a mass phenomenon, which had been outlined at the outset of the section on tourist traffic:

The more recent decennials have brought thorough changes about in the life of travel, which has had the effect that it is no longer the few luxury tourists, who each can spend lots of money, but rather a broad stream of plainer tourists who in our day and age dictate the societal and national economic meaning of the tourist cause, and no doubt exists in the mind of the committee that the development of the future, possibly even to an increased degree, will continue down this path.¹⁸

The envisioned future hotelscape was one catering to not the few luxurious travelers of past times but to the desire for comfort and reasonable prices of the “plainer tourists.”

That is, the committee rapport shows an astute awareness of the transformative nature of tourism, in which the broader strata had come to dominate the traveling constituency and was seen as poised to continue its rise to prominence.

Which Modernity?

CTPA informed itself internationally. As such, it was in line with the pre-reform practices in the tourist milieu, which kept itself informed on international developments; in *Turisten*, for example, in the year of 1932 alone articles would appear on tourist promotion and other aspects of tourism in Italy, Spain, and the USSR among other countries.¹⁹ To a large degree, and as is evident from the *Politiken* article cited at the beginning of this chapter, it was exactly in comparison with international tendencies that Danish tourist promotion abroad seemed insufficient.²⁰ This line of reasoning carried into Poulsen’s introductory talk in the committee, in which he stated that “in this field [the tourist cause], we are outdone by other countries with whom we should normally be

¹⁸ Ibid., 51.

¹⁹ For example: *Turisten* 7, 3 (March, 1932): 48; *Turisten* 7, 4 (April, 1932): front page; *Turisten* 7, 12 (December, 1932): 190-192.

²⁰ Also, in another 1932-article in *Turisten*, it is told that Americans still travel to Europe, but that Danish promotion efforts in this regard lacks behind those of other Scandinavian countries. *Turisten* 7, 11 (November, 1932): 166.

comparable.”²¹ As the committee’s work got under way, the international outlook only became more evident. In the sub-committee dealing with suggestions related to financing the new organization and its promotional efforts, an extensive 38-page overview was drafted, outlining how tourism and tourist promotion was organized in no less than eighteen European countries, five of which made it into the final report.²²

In trying to modernize the tourist infrastructure and promotional efforts, then, CTPA consciously looked for models to follow. This gives rise to the question: what model for modernity did the committee members, and by prolongation the Danish state, have in mind when aspiring for a modern approach to tourism? This question, of course, cannot be answered in as simple a fashion as it is asked. As already hinted at, the committee found inspiration in many places. Comparisons with Sweden, Norway, and to a great extent Holland as well, saturated the report and the meetings leading to its publication; Denmark’s lagging behind these countries, which had all reorganized their tourism efforts recently, would serve as an important argument for initiating changes.²³

Other countries featured as well. Discussing whether the promotion abroad should be administered by an entirely state-financed (and –controlled) institution separate from the association concerned with domestic tourism or if the two should maintain some connection under the framework of TAD (as would eventually be the case), one member

²¹ 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet

²² “Turistvæsen og Turistpropaganda. En Oversigt over Forholdene i de forskellige Lande [Tourism and Tourist Propaganda. An Overview of the Conditions in the different Countries],” 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-33, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet; *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 125-128; the overview was authored by MP Ulrichsen, a Conservative politician and consultant in TAD before the reorganization.

²³ For example, the proposed budget in the report would reference the expenditures of the Dutch and Swedish tourist associations on a number of expenditure posts. See *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, appendix inserted between 98 and 99; Furthermore, reports from similar committees in Norway and Sweden were made available to the committee members. See *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 1st meeting.

highlighted the semi-official nature of Switzerland's "eminent office for propaganda abroad" as a model to follow.²⁴

When it came to promotional approaches, however, the examples to be followed were often found in Germany and Italy, whose tourist organizations were built upon corporatist principles in line with the authoritarian regimes under which they operated (Chapter 1). For instance, as the advertisement sub-committee got to work in the summer of 1934, it was invited by the German state railways to view "some new and very modern German Tourist propaganda sound films" (produced by the American production company Metro-Goldwyn).²⁵ In a memorandum penned down following the sub-committee's viewing of three promotional films, especially one film—advertising a German porcelain factory—caught attention as "excellently filmed and an outstanding means for promotion." The memorandum paid attention to the wide array of films and the means of their distribution as well, especially the free entrustment of the films to rental companies and their screening alongside popular feature films in the cinemas.²⁶ Although the inspiration from Germany was not mentioned directly in the section of the final report occupied with filmic promotion, the recommendations on the subject nonetheless seem inspired by the visit—something evident in the minutes from the sub-committee's meetings as well.²⁷ Indeed, the "remarks" column of the budget for "propaganda abroad"

²⁴ *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 4th meeting, 12; the member was MP Ulrichsen, the author of the overview over the organization of tourist promotion in other countries cited above.

²⁵ Quoted from the notification about the invitation found in the archives of the Foreign Ministry. 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

²⁶ "Memorandum," August 30, 1934, in 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

²⁷ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 93-94; "3. møde i reklameudvalget [3rd meeting in the advertisement sub-committee]," July 4, 1934, in 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet

appended to the report reads “according to the exemplary model of the official German tourist propaganda” in the row devoted to expenses related to film.²⁸

Two other examples indicate the role of German—and Italian—tourist promotion as setting the modern standard. In the third meeting of CTPA’s plenary committee, a director of the traveling company Wagons-Lit/Cooks highlighted the successes of Germany and Italy in attracting Danish tourists, pinning it to the approaches these countries had taken in engaging with travel agents.²⁹ Similarly, as news of the establishment of CTPA spread, the Danish General Consul in Hamburg sent to A.J. Poulsen in the Foreign Ministry copies of two “very beautifully—and also very expensively—produced” tourist folders, meant for the promotion of tourism to Germany and Italy respectively.³⁰

Of course, with these examples I am not claiming a primacy of authoritarian methods in the diverse set of inspirational sources that made up CTPA’s international outlook. What I am suggesting is rather that the modernizing impulse in the committee’s work had many fathers and was far from restricted to inspiration from liberal democracies or social democratic societies (even if elements emanating from such contexts figured heavily as well). Without going into the depths of the long-standing discussion tracing “the traffic between National Socialism and modernity,”³¹ it is noteworthy that in the discourse of contemporary discussions, such as those carried out in CTPA, the practices

²⁸ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, appendix inserted between 98 and 99.

²⁹ *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Minutes from CTPA]*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 3rd meeting, 6. To be sure, the director, a Richard Svendsen, also highlighted America as “a front-runner country in so many aspects,” especially in its usage of travel agents.

³⁰ “Forslag om nedsættelse af en turistkommission [Proposal on the commission of a tourist committee],” April 30, 1934, 90-31, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

³¹ Peter Fritzsche has done so with great insight. See: Peter Fritzsche, “Nazi Modern,” *Modernism/Modernity* 3 (1996), 1: 1-22, quote: 2; See also, for another thorough historiographical essay on Nazi modernism, Paul Betts, “The New Fascination with Fascism: The Case of Nazi Modernity,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 37 (2002), 4: 541-558.

of Nazi Germany represented a highly modern example to follow.³² This also substantiates an argument I made in Chapter 1, namely that it would be erroneous for historians of tourism to make rigid distinctions between the attitudes towards tourism taken by states adhering to different political ideologies in the 1930s.

Reforming the Promotional Efforts

Being “modern” in this sense most certainly included the skillful use of “modern tourist propaganda.” As we have seen in the previous chapter, failures in this regard were among the criticisms leveled at TAD before its reform, and it was a (if not *the*) central issue CTPA was asked to address. As suggested in the name of the committee, “The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad,” the main purpose of the committee was to outline the contours for an institutional framework capable of facilitating and organizing an effective promotional effort abroad. As such, it was only logical that the “propaganda sub-committee,” as it would be named in the final report, constituted the numerically largest sub-committee.³³

³² The place of Nazi Germany in the transnational networks of the 1930s has been reasserted in recent years. E.g. Kieran Klaus Patel, “In Search of a Transnational Historicization: National Socialism and its Place in History,” In *Conflicted Memories: Europeanizing Contemporary Histories*, edited by Konrad H. Jarausch and Thomas Lindenberger in collaboration with Annelie Ramsbrock, 96-116 (New York: Bergbahn Books, 2007); Another study of particular relevance here is Paul Petzschmann’s assertion that in the crisis decade, New Dealers looked to Nazi Germany for inspiration: Much of the work of students of public administration “was based on the assumption of an essential similarity between the administrative regimes of dictatorships and democracies.” See Paul Petzschmann, “Nazi Germany and Public Administration 1933-42: The Most Important Laboratory for Depression America?” *Public Administration* 92 (2014), 2: 259-273, quote: 270; of course, it is worth considering how many of these practices were continuations of those of pre-Nazi institutions, which however does not weaken the argument; it is worth noting that German tourist associations took pride in their tourist advertisement as well—for example, the Thuringian tourist association hailed its own work on the Thuringian Guest Day in 1935 as a “top performance in tourism advertisement.” See Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler’s Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 64; On *KdF*, and especially its “seaside resort of the 20,000” at Rügen, as “an outstanding example of the basic concepts—and ambiguities—of modernity” following the “grammar of rationalization,” see Hasso Spode, “Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich: The ‘Strength through Joy’ Seaside resort as an Index Fossil,” *Journal of Social History* 38 (2004), 1: 127-155.

³³ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 7.

Here, and in line with the general tenor of CTPA's work, a significant focus point was the improvement of the distributional channels related to tourist promotion.³⁴ In the final report, the importance of "conducting an analysis of the market, from which the foreign visitors going to Denmark must be found" was highlighted.³⁵ So was the need to differentiate between the needs of different promotional venues within national contexts. That is, between those institutions and individuals in need of "practical" folders to organize their trips after having decided to make the trip to Denmark, and those venues, such as "the actual travel associations," "hiker's organizations," and "automobile organizations" whose members liked to decide where to go on their own, which was why "lighter, incentive" folders were deemed more appropriate. As regards automobile owners, specific publications were envisioned, informing on "advantageous travel destinations and distances, crossing opportunities and gasoline prices." According to the advertisement sub-committee's report, both kinds of material should be made available to local tourist agencies with whom TAD should cooperate intimately—ideally, it was hoped that TAD's promotional material, if crafted skillfully, could be distributed by mail as part of the tourist agencies' advertisement efforts.³⁶

As for the publications themselves, the report requested they be written in a clear, comprehensible, impeccable language, and that they demonstrated "a clear vision of what would especially arouse attention and interest in the country of their intended use." Furthermore, adverts were better avoided, especially for the sake of ensuring a smooth distribution, and therefore expensive features should be kept to a minimum. Still, it was deemed important to make use of "capable advertisement artists" to ensure that the

³⁴ The minutes of the advertisement sub-committee's meetings can be found in the Foreign Ministry's archives. See: 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

³⁵ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 86.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 87-89.

“outwards appearance” of the Danish promotional publications possessed “a certain distinctiveness, so that they differ from other countries’ [publications].”³⁷

Other media for promoting the country were dealt with as well. In addition to the filmic representations already discussed above, the final report dealt with, among other things, exhibitions and window displays (the latter, according to members of the advertisement sub-committee, were especially suitable for “plainer audiences;” transected model ferries and model trains in particular caught attention), travelogues, illustrated magazines, event lists, posters, radio broadcasts (especially in the form of lectures, which could be exchanged between national broadcasters), advertising in newspapers and magazines (here, the association should primarily facilitate cooperative efforts between those private actors interested in advertising), slides and photographs, visits from travel writers, and the organization of special events and festivals (such as a Hamlet festival in Elsinore, which would be realized from 1936 onwards).³⁸

The potential conflicts between the commercial and idealistic interests within the tourist movement showed themselves in CTPA’s discussions about the future efforts in promotional work abroad as well. Centralization was clearly seen as a modernizing measure. At the general assembly of 1932, the Chairman of TAD’s executive committee had lamented the irrational features of brochures made by local tourist associations:

They include too much material, get lost in local trifles which are generally only interesting due to local patriotism, are overcrowded with commercials, which make them less handy at the same time as the appearance deteriorates, [and] becomes boring. All too often, the most important demands

³⁷ Ibid., 81-82.

³⁸ Ibid., 82-98; on window displays, see “3. møde i reklameudvalget [3rd meeting in the advertisement committee],” 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet; on the Hamlet festivals, see Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 70-71 and, more anecdotically, Secher, *Hundrede år i dansk Turisme*, 36-39.

of contemporary propaganda are not considered: Maps, [and] information about hotels and prices.³⁹

As the plenary committee gathered for the second time on June 11th, 1934, the “Propaganda Director” of a large airline company gave his view on the coming re-organization of TAD. Having formerly agitated for the total separation of a foreign and a domestic department, he now conceded to creating a foreign department within TAD. Yet, he still presented worries that too close a cooperation would “volatilize the influence which the private companies and institutions—especially those whose interests are tied with Copenhagen and its surroundings—have on the leadership of the foreign propaganda.” The commercial actors, he argued, would need guarantees that “the amounts given to the association really benefits the propaganda abroad and hence national economic purposes.”⁴⁰

Yet voices were also raised on behalf of local interests. At the sub-committee’s second meeting, the Director of the National Historical Museum located in a provincial city north of Copenhagen asked how “local- and special propaganda” would be dealt with in the new organization.⁴¹ More tellingly, the minutes from the group’s third meeting noted “some disagreements” on whether foreign journalists should always end their tips in Copenhagen, as a way of providing them with a “festive conclusion.”⁴² All being said and done, however, the efforts to modernize the promotional apparatus also effectively

³⁹ “Årsberetning 1932 [Annual Report 1932],” 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 7.

⁴⁰ Letter from Bendt Rom to A.J. Poulsen. *Mødereferater fra Udenrigsministeriets Udvalg for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet*, 90 Dan. (10-5a) Møderef., 90-27, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 2nd meeting, appended between 19 and 20.

⁴¹ “Reklameudvalget, 2. møde [2nd meeting in the advertisement committee],” 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 1.

⁴² “3. møde i reklameudvalget [3rd meeting in the advertisement committee],” 90-34, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet, 2.

amounted to a professionalization, in which the interests of commercial actors and the economic aspects of tourism would be increasingly prominent.

This was evident in the work done to gain support, and economic contributions, for the new organization from commercial actors immediately after the re-organization became reality. Hence, the first major action taken by the temporary Executive Committee—a temporary carryover from CTPA—was to invite more than 500 representatives of Copenhagen’s commercial sphere to a meeting in the city’s town hall, at which the new structure was presented along with a lecture on “the economic significance of the tourist cause.”⁴³ Here, it was laid out that “the tourist cause had started off as an idealistic issue for the [civic] society; as it grows, it increasingly takes on an economic and commercial character. In Denmark, the tourist cause has now reached such a point in its development that it ranks among our significant industries.” Therefore, the lecturer—himself the President of a large company—urged his audience to lend their financial support to the new organization.

Similarly, in a flier calling for new members in the wake of the re-organization, it was proclaimed that the new organization would “be able to meet all reasonable demands which can be made for modern tourist propaganda.” The arguments of the flier were almost entirely of pecuniary nature, stressing that the money given to the promotional efforts of the new organization would “generate tourism and thereby increase the

⁴³ More than 250 of the invited representatives honored the invitation. A draft of the lecture and a report of the town hall meeting sent to Prime Minister Stauning (in his function as acting Foreign Minister) can be found in the archives of The Foreign Ministry. See “Turistsagens økonomiske betydning [The economic significance of the tourist cause]” and “Udkast. Udvalget for Turistpropaganda i Udlandet [Draft. The Commission for Tourist Propaganda Abroad],” both in 90-37, 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor., 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

economic turnover, create new sources for income, benefit the country and **benefit you.**”⁴⁴ Clearly, commercial interests had moved to the center of the promotional efforts.

The New Organization

Of course, the part of the report making the greatest immediate impact was the new structure and set of laws outlined, which were implemented after a vote in the Danish parliament where all but one member voted in favor.⁴⁵ As has been argued by the Danish historian Mikael Frausing, the re-organization, in which TAD was split into a foreign and a domestic department but still remained as one unit, spelled a compromise between commercial actors set on centralizing and voices from the provinces seeking to retain and strengthen the localized popular elements so long connected with the Danish tourist cause. Evidently, the influence of Nordahl-Petersen, the spokesperson of the regional associations on the committee, proved strong enough to resist a complete unification of the tasks of foreign and domestic tourist propaganda in one department. As a testament to this influence, and possibly in order to silence one of the most vociferous opponents of the centralization and politicization of tourism, Nordahl-Petersen was appointed as director of the new domestic department.

It would prove a pyrrhic victory, however: when illness forced Nordahl-Petersen to resign in 1938, his position was never re-advertised; instead, the two departments were merged into one. In the words of Frausing, the power within the organization had finally “shifted from the 'tourist movement' to a professional secretariat and an executive committee dominated by private economic and public interests.”⁴⁶ This is very much evident in the make-up of the “Tourist Council,” the leading organ of TAD’s new Foreign

⁴⁴ The Tourist Association for Denmark, *Turistforeningen for Danmark [The Tourist Association for Denmark]* (1935) flier found in 491: 1934 – 1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet; Emphasis in the original.

⁴⁵ Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, endnote 27.

⁴⁶ Frausing, “Et lykkeligt fornuftsægteskab?” 37.

Department, whose forty members would largely consist of representatives of the different industries, while leaving only few spots for those representing the idealistic tenets of the tourist movement.⁴⁷

However, the compromise that did take place in 1935 still serves to illustrate an important point about the tourist infrastructure that came into place following the work of the committee, and one that is relevant beyond the compromise's life time. Thus, as Frausing has noted, it is significant that the new organization was ultimately not formed as a “state tourism department” and thus fell short of the degree of professionalization wished for by some commercial actors.⁴⁸ Traces of the popular movement and membership based structure of the old organization remained. Frausing speculates that this was partly based on a general acknowledgment of the organizational strength of the local organizations, partly because the Social Democratic-Social Liberal government was unwilling to undermine the popular elements of tourism so important for domestic tourism with the implementation of holiday legislation already on its agenda.⁴⁹

A complementary explanation might be suggested as well. That is, to a large extent the compromise was compatible with the dualities inherent in the political culture of the parties in governance, especially the social democrats. The “turn to the right” of Nordic social democrats, discussed above, turned the concept of the *folk* into a cornerstone in the Danish Social Democratic Party’s vision for the nation in the 1930s. Given the democratic connotations central to this concept in the Nordic context, retaining the popular grounding of the old organization does in fact fit well with the perception of a specific sort of Nordic modernity maturing during the 1930s. This duality aligns well with the self-descriptions in the committee report analyzed above, as the culturally nationalist,

⁴⁷ E.g. draft of press release on members of new tourist council, in 90-28, Dan. (10/5) Møderef., Gruppeordnede sager 1909-1945, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁴⁸ Frausing, “Et lykkeligt fornuftsægteskab?” 36.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 36-37.

romanticized understanding of the nation as a tourist destination was tied to the symbolic geography of the countryside. As we shall see in the next chapter, this duality played out in TAD's promotional material as well.

The sense of a clear separation of idealistic and economic persisted despite the general commercialization of TAD. In the phrasing of one member of the Tourist Council constituting the leading branch of the Foreign Department at a meeting in the Domestic Department in the fall of 1935, "at the first General Assembly since 'the revolution' [the re-organization of TAD]," the Foreign Department was perceived as "the sales department," while it was the job of the provincial tourist associations to "keep the house in order;" that is, to make sure the experience for the foreign tourist would match with the expectations created in the promotional efforts.⁵⁰ If the Foreign Department was thought of as a sales department, its newly appointed leader Mogens Lichtenberg was hired to be the Sales Manager. Thus, as the Executive Board of the new organization sorted through the 142 applicants for the job as leader of the Foreign Department, it was especially Lichtenberg's reflections on the national economic aspects of tourism and his background in advertisement which secured him the job.⁵¹

It was not only TAD's central administration that was commercialized, however. In the fall of 1935, it caused a stir in the tourist milieu when the municipality of Elsinore north of Copenhagen—the hometown to the castle Kronborg and Shakespeare's Hamlet—hired a former leader of the Cuban state's promotional efforts in North America as Head of their newly established tourist agency.⁵² What caused commotion among

⁵⁰ Minutes from general board meeting in the Domestic Department of TAD, September 29, 1935

⁵¹ A recommendation of Lichtenberg by Th. Møller, a member of CTPA and later the Executive Board can be found in the archives of the Foreign Ministry, along with the official recommendation of the Executive Board, largely based on Møller's text. See 90 Dan (10/5) Turistrådet – Fra. 7, 90-38, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁵² Letter from the leader of the Elsinore branch of TAD to the Sealand regional branch of TAD, October 7, 1935. In 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor. 90-37, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet

TAD's central leadership was the close link between this new agency and the local branch of the tourist association, which risked making the agency's activities appear to take place under the auspices of TAD. As the agency charged hotels—not just in Elsinore but in Copenhagen as well—in return for recommending them to foreign tourists, Lichtenberg argued in a letter to the Elsinore branch of the tourist association, its activities were not compatible with the aims of TAD. Maybe just as importantly, the by now heavily state-funded association was not eager to be perceived as directly funding a commercial enterprise competing with private tourist agencies. TAD guarded its image as an idealistic organization working for the best of the country in broad terms and not narrow commercial interests; in that regard, idealism and industry had to be kept separate.⁵³

The quality of TAD's promotional material became a topic of discussion in this debate as well. As the leader of the newly established agency was called upon to justify the path taken, he criticized the Danish brochures as having “a reputation for being ‘thoroughly boring’,” and added that “this reputation is probably deserved for the most part.” He found that the quantities and distribution of the material left a lot to be desired as well: “However, Denmark mostly distinguishes itself by the fact that its brochures are found almost nowhere in the world,” wherefore TAD's efforts did little to make attracting the desired amount of tourists possible.⁵⁴ The criticism would recur from other sources as well, for example in October 1936 when the former member of CTPA, the Conservative MP Ulrichsen, criticized the work of the organization in a speech in the Parliament.⁵⁵

⁵³ Letter from Mogens Lichtenberg to the leader of the Elsinore branch of TAD, October 25, 1935. In 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor. 90-37, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁵⁴ Memorandum from Tourist Director Gert Holm, appended to Minutes from Meeting of the Executive Board, October 26, 1935, 4. In 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor. 90-37, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁵⁵ Minutes from Meeting of the Executive Board, October 30, 1936, 3. In 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor. 90-37, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

Related to the commercial/idealistic dichotomy was another one pitting border-crossing against domestic tourism, which of course was mirrored in the structure of the new organization as well. With references to similar tendencies abroad, members of the Domestic Department called for “a movement” aimed at “making people travel at home instead of traveling abroad,” as one member would phrase it at a board meeting in 1937.⁵⁶ The calls were not new; for example, the old TAD had dubbed 1932 a “Denmark-year” as a response to the financial crisis.⁵⁷

However, such ideas did run counter to the idealistic tenets outlined by A. J. Poulsen at the first meeting of the committee, as cited above, in which tourism between countries was seen not just as a source of revenue but as a way to improve international relations among peoples as well. This understanding remained present throughout the decade, although it would often seem to play second fiddle to one oriented towards national economic interests. Even when the importance of border-crossing tourism was highlighted, it would often be coated in economic arguments, as in a meeting for leaders of local tourist associations in 1939 where one lecturer would refer to the League of Nations—“whose blue-eyed optimism regarding politics is as annoying as its economic educational work is helpful”—when stating that “one cannot expect increasing tourist revenues and export and simultaneously limit outbound travel at home and make the tariff walls higher.”⁵⁸

As for the financial foundation of TAD itself, the new organization would receive a markedly increased amount of state support, and a corresponding amount from

⁵⁶ Minutes from general board meeting in the Domestic Department of TAD, September 4, 1937. In 90 Dan (10/5) Turistfor. 90-37, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet.

⁵⁷ E.g. Unknown Author, “En Nytaarshilsen om ‘Danmarksaaret’ [A New Years’ Greeting on ‘The Denmark-year’],” *Turisten* 7 (1932), 1: 1-2.

⁵⁸ Niels Banke, “Turismens økonomiske Betydning for Samfundet [The economic Significance of Tourism for Society],” in Turistforeningen for Danmark [The Tourist Association for Denmark], *En Samling Foredrag Holdt ved Turistforeningens Turistlederkursus 1938 [A Collection of Lectures given at the Tourist Association’s Tourist Leader Course 1938]*, 44-68 (Copenhagen: Kandrup & Wunsch Bogtrykkeri, 1939), 9.

commercial actors. Still, the age-old sentiment of being insufficiently funded for the task at hand remained. In a report on TAD's Foreign Department's work from 1937, it was appreciated that "the significance of the Tourist Association's work is acknowledged more and more, especially by the industries." Still, it was assumed, the association would have to "continue begging [gaa med Tiggerposen] for another few years." Confidence was expressed, however, that the financial situation would continue to improve as the state along with local municipalities seemed to be increasingly interested.⁵⁹ Yet, in 1939 the leader of a local branch of TAD was still emphasizing the need for further municipal financial backing at the aforementioned meeting for tourist leaders.⁶⁰

The state's involvement did increase, however, from 16.000 DKK in the last budget before the re-organization to 145.000 DKK by 1938.⁶¹ This made it possible, for instance, for TAD to have paid representatives abroad, even if most of them only worked for the association on a part time basis. In 1939, these were located in the US, Germany, South Africa, and Egypt, among other places.⁶² As TAD celebrated its 50 years anniversary in 1938, the interest from the state was manifestly evident: the main speaker was no less than Prime Minister Stauning. In his speech he reiterated the association's self-understanding, stating that

even if tourism has taken on many practical and commercial aspects as the years have passed, what ties together city and countryside[;] what unites high and low in the efforts, is not first and

⁵⁹ "Beretning om Udlandsafdelingens Arbejde fra 25/3 1936 til 21/4 1937 [Report on the Foreign Department's Work from March 25, 1936 to April 21, 1937]," in 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 6.

⁶⁰ J. Rothausen, "Turistbetjening [Tourist Service]," in: Turistforeningen for Danmark [The Tourist Association for Denmark], *En Samling Foredrag Holdt ved Turistforeningens Turistlederkursus 1938 [A Collection of Lectures given at the Tourist Association's Tourist Leader Course 1938]*, 28-43 (Copenhagen: Kandrup & Wunsch Bogtrykkeri, 1939), 28-29.

⁶¹ For 1934, see "Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934]," 441, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 11; For 1939, see: "Regnskab 1. Januar – 31. December 1938 [Budget, January 1 – December 31, 1938]" 492: 1938 – 1941, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

⁶² "Beretning om arbejdet i sæsonen 1939 [Report on the Work of the 1939 Season]." 442, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, no. 07798, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 6-7.

foremost the economic and business-oriented; that, which makes up the true motive for our interest in the beneficial development of the tourist cause is, deep within: the joy we get from our beautiful country and the love for Denmark⁶³

Quite astutely, the Prime Minister sought to connect the different interests which still prevailed in the tourist landscape around common patriotic sentiments.

Conclusion

Although obviously adorned for the occasion, Stauning's outlining was not unconnected to reality, even if the emphasis was slightly off. While commercial and economic interests in tourism moved to the forefront with its re-organization in 1935, TAD's efforts were indeed still marked by a relatively strong unity. Appreciating the need to modernize the tourist infrastructure and a tacit acceptance of its commercialization could easily be reconciled with loving the fatherland and caring for its economy. As this chapter and the one before it have shown, it seemed increasingly evident by the early 1930s that a new form of tourism was on the rise; that, in the words of the jubilee-account quoted in this chapter's epigraph, "all old thoughts about tourism, its goals and its means, must shy away from new ideas." Among the still voluntary and largely idealistic forces propelling the "tourist cause" forward within the framework of the Tourist Association for Denmark, keeping up with international developments seemed increasingly important—and increasingly difficult.

When the state came to the association's aid by mid-decade, the resulting re-organization was also a modernizing effort. Even if some "old thoughts about tourism" did indeed remain, the work of "The Foreign Ministry's Committee for Tourist Propaganda Abroad" marked a serious effort to transform ways in which foreign visitors were cared for, how they could transport themselves to and within the country, and not

⁶³ Quoted from Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 66-67.

least how to convince them to make the journey in the first place. Furthermore, it would give increased leverage to the commercial actors interested in the economic aspects of tourism. As such, it formed the foundations of a tourist industry that would emerge fully in the post-war era.

Yet, not all ideals of the old association were lost in the process of professionalization. Patriotic, idealistic motives remained central to many of the actors involved, especially in the regional and local branches and sub-branches that would continuously constitute an important part of TAD. But even in the newly established Foreign Department, the value of the popular base emanating from the provinces was recognized. As the re-organized organization began to promote Denmark abroad, the products emanating from this professionalized institutional framework would carry the traces of its rather peculiar character. It is to this promotional material, especially that which was targeted towards Nazi Germany, that the next chapter will turn.

Selling the Nation in the North, 1929-1939

Introduction

In June 1937, leaders of the Nazi state including the chief ideologue Alfred Rosenberg, Hermann Göring, and the Reich's Transport Minister and General Director of the State Railways Julius Dorpmüller as well as racial scientists such as Alfred Ploetz celebrated the fourth annual *Reichstagung* of the *Nordische Gesellschaft* [Nordic Society] in Lübeck.¹ The society had acted as an interlocutor of German interactions with the Nordic countries since 1921—originally as a locally based organization caring primarily for trade, commerce, and cultural exchange, but from 1933 onwards a Nazified institution with increasing representation across the Third Reich. Present at the festivities were also cultural and political personalities from the Nordic countries, although not as prominent as the organizers might have liked.

While the week-long celebration of German-Nordic relations—this “Bridge over the Baltic Sea [... and] from *Volk* to *Volk*” as the *Reichstagung* was portrayed in the German press²—ran its course, the local daily wrote extensively on the Northern countries. Thus, on June 19 the readers of *Lübecker General-Anzeiger* could read about “Denmark, the land of peasants” as part of an article series on the “country and people” of “Der Norden [the North].”³ “From whichever side one enters the little Kingdom,” the article proclaims, “one impression determines the character of this state: the peasant is the pillar of the country.” After hailing the “unique appeal of the Danish landscape”—found away from “Copenhagen, the country's beautiful capital”—where “the peasant dominates

¹ E.g. *Der Norden* 7, July 1937; Unknown Author, “Vierte Reichstagung der Nordischen Gesellschaft – Fragen des Verkehrs,” *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, June 6, 1937; both found in Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937: 1, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Nordische Gesellschaft Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.

² E.g. Alexander Funkenberg, “Brücken über die Ostsee,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, Berlin, June 18, 1937.

³ Unknown author, “Der Norden. Land und Leute,” *Lübecker General-Anzeiger*, June 19, 1937.

the scene,” the article goes on to describe the Danish peasant cooperatives and agricultural production system in some detail. Here, we find a peculiar blend of romanticized notions, linked closely to images of the North rooted in nineteenth century romanticism and the pseudoscience of Nordic race theory popularized after the First World War, and an affinity for a progressive, corporate, and communal organization of society and production processes, also linked to modern technology; the latter is emphasized by the fact that the piece was accompanied by an image of the bridge over the Little Belt, a modern feat of engineering whose construction had been completed only two years earlier.

Using the concept of “tourism imaginaries,” coined by Noel B. Salazar,⁴ this chapter investigates how these notions combined to make a basis for The Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD]’s promotion of Denmark to Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Inspired by Paul Ricoeur, Salazar describes imaginaries as “socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people’s personal imaginings and are used as meaning-making and world-shaping devices.”⁵ With regards to tourism, he holds these imaginaries to operate through “[s]tories, images, and desires, running the gamut from essentialized, mythologized, and exoticized imaginaries of otherness to more realistic frames of reference [which] often function as the motor setting the tourism machinery in motion.”⁶ For my purpose, I understand these imaginaries to interact with and be reinvented, reiterated and reproduced through the cultural and commercial self-fashioning of the agencies of tourism, here especially TAD and—to a lesser extent—the *Nordische Gesellschaft*.

⁴ Noel B. Salazar, “Tourism Imaginaries: A Conceptual Approach,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 39 (2011), 2: 863-882.

⁵ Salazar, “Tourism Imaginaries,” 864.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 865.

Doing so, I argue that while TAD did indeed invoke both textual and visual references to a certain cultural and (if less so) racial mythology of the North, its promotional material would eventually use a discourse resembling what has been called “Nordic modernity.” The notion of *Norden* as constituting an exceptional development in especially socio-economic and political regards would only be fully developed in the post-war era, but its contours were being shaped in the exercises of national self-characterology carried out by Danish tourist promoters in their interactions with foreign audiences in the 1930s.⁷

In the following, I first intend to outline the existing tourism imaginaries related to the symbolic geography of the North, both in cultural and racial terms; that is, in the form of Nordicism and Nordic race theory.⁸ In the second—and largest—part of this chapter, I probe the reinvention, reiteration, and reproduction of pre-existing tourism imaginaries. I do so by analyzing TAD’s promotional efforts in the 1930s, and interpret these as a negotiation of national self-identification and belonging centered on questions such as: Which character traits are peculiar to the nation, and how does social democracy and progressive social organization align with the specter of Nordicism and a German audience?

Nordicism, Race Theory, and Promoting Northwards Tourism

The Roots of Rassenkunde: The Fall of Neoliberal Anthropology

Emerging in the late 1860’s as what Woodruff D. Smith has called “neoliberal cultural science” around the *Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und*

⁷ As argued by Balázs Trencsényi, the constructs of national peculiarities are more often than not created in intricate transnational exchanges in which ideological interpretations as well as mimetic competition are major shaping elements. See Balázs Trencsényi, *The Politics of “National Character”: A Study in Interwar East European Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 17.

⁸ As noted in Chapter 2, Danish tourist officials struggled to carve a place for Denmark into this symbolic geography, as the country’s landscape did not invite the tourist to enjoy the vistas and sights of other Scandinavian countries that would often be linked to the romanticist mythologies of the North.

Urgeschichte [Berlin Society of Anthropology, Ethnology and Pre-History] with founding members such as the physical anthropologist Rudolf Virchow and the ethnologist Adolf Bastian, the anthropologic German cultural sciences had initially been built on a positivistic epistemology stressing a fundamental unity of mankind.⁹ Yet, at the twilight of the Weimar Republic, empirical anthropology had turned into racial anthropology, and scholars and popularizers such as Hans F. K. Günther, the leading Nordacist of the interbellum, comfortably divided and hierarchized humanity according to racial characteristics outlined and measured anthropologically.

Whether a result of its entanglement with German imperialism, caused by the rise to prominence of a generation disappointed in its distanced, apolitical, and empiricist stance, or the consequence of interactions between its institutions and an increasingly demanding public sphere, as argued by Andrew Zimmerman, Smith and H. Glenn Penny respectively, the cultural sciences of Virchow and Bastian were overthrown by a “diffusionist revolution” shortly after the turn of the century. This paved the way for a framework in which cultural traits diffused between so-called *kulturkreise* [cultural areas] as different *völker* [peoples] migrated (and interacted in other ways, such as trade) across the relatively rigid borders of the *kulturkreise*. Thus, cultures were historicized and *völker* hierarchized, since, according to this interpretation, a *volk* could only be successful in migrating and imposing its own cultural traits on a *kulturkreis* if the cultural traits it carried along were superior to those of the peoples already living in the area.¹⁰

According to Andrew D. Evans, however, it was only with the experience of and defeat in the First World War that the anti-liberal elements of German anthropology

⁹ See Smith, *Politics and the Sciences of Culture*, especially 100-114.

¹⁰ Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001); Smith, *Politics and the Sciences*, especially 140-161; H. Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), especially 131-162.

crystalized into a nationalist, eugenically inspired science in which racial types and their characteristics became the predominant concern.¹¹ In addition to the effects of war-time nationalism and an incentive to be ‘nationally useful’ given institutional insecurity in the post-defeat crisis, Robert Proctor has noted that the German loss of empire brought along by the Versailles Treaty made German scholars shift their focus from the external others of the colonial subjects to the others within – almost always in racial, social-Darwinist and eugenic terms.¹²

The Nordic Ideal

The pseudoscientific discipline often known as *der Nordische Gedanke* [The Nordic Ideal] emerged from this scientific shift and was popularized in the tumultuous twenties of the Weimar Republic. Hans F. K. Günther’s *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* [Racial Science of the German Peoples] (1922) can justifiably be ascribed the status as its founding document. As the book had gone through sixteen printings by the time the Nazi party assumed power,¹³ Günther was arguably the most successful popularizer of the Nordic ideal in Germany. For this, he was acknowledged in the German racial anthropological community even if the validity of his scientific work was often perceived as questionable.¹⁴

Although outlining the existence of six European races in later editions, the original version of *Rassenkunde*, a book which one scholar has called “the Bible of Nordic racism,”¹⁵ lists only four: ‘the Nordic’, ‘the Western’, ‘the Eastern’, and ‘the

¹¹ Andrew D. Evans, “Race Made Visible: the Transformation of Museum Exhibits in Early-twentieth-century German Anthropology,” *German Studies Review* 31, (2008), 87-108.

¹² Robert Proctor, “From Anthropologie to Rassenkunde in the German Anthropological Tradition,” in *Bones, Bodies, Behavior: Essays on Biological Anthropology*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press), 138-179, here: 152.

¹³ Hans F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (München: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1922); On its printing and sales numbers, see Hans-Jürgen Lützhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland 1920-1940* [The Nordic Ideal in Germany 1920-1940] (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1971), 31-32.

¹⁴ Christopher M. Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 62.

¹⁵ Geoffrey G. Field, “Nordic Racism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38 (1977): 523-540, here: 523.

Dinaric’.¹⁶ Of the European races, Günther was prioritizing the Nordic, which was conceived as “tall, long-headed, narrow-faced with a prominent chin; a narrow nose with high bridge; soft light hair; deep-lying blond eyes; rosy-white skin color.”¹⁷ Although his race definition stressed physical rather than psychological distinctions, Günther devoted almost twenty pages to the mental characteristics of the Nordic race, in which he linked physical and mental traits, warned of “the slow death of the Nordic race via the city,” and summed up its psychological constitution in three words: “courage,” “sagacity,” and “veracity.”¹⁸ Physical health and sound mental characteristics were thus linked effectively to the countryside, which was given primacy in the cultural hierarchies of Nordicism.

Psychological as well as physiological, these traits were supposed to have been carried along as the race had migrated from the hardening environment of its ancient homelands.¹⁹ Like most other racial anthropologists, Günther made clear distinctions between races and peoples. The German *volk*, Günther worriedly estimated a few years later, consisted of no more than 6-8 % undiluted Nordics.²⁰ The large majority were “mongrels,” an intolerable situation for Günther, since he held that “any demise of an Indo-Germanic speaking *Volk* is contingent upon the running dry of the blood of the creative race, the Northern race.”²¹

To Günther, there was thus no direct link between any Scandinavian *Volk* and the Nordic race. Still, he found it rather unproblematic that the racial and geographical North could be easily confused.²² In general, the movement held Scandinavia in high regard, although, as Hans-Jürgen Lützhöft has reasonably claimed, the racial ideals of the Nordic

¹⁶ Günther, *Rassenkunde*, 18-20.

¹⁷ Ibid., 18.

¹⁸ Ibid., 128-145, especially 130 and 135.

¹⁹ Lützhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke*, 118.

²⁰ See Proctor, “From Anthropologie to Rassenkunde,” 151.

²¹ Günther, *Rassenkunde*, 288.

²² Ibid., 20.

racists spurred their fascination with the Northern countries and not vice versa.²³ Once awoken, this fascination could rely on a long-standing and somewhat less sinister tradition of *Nordlandromantik* [North Romanticism] in Germany. In a sense, *Nordlandsromantik* would serve as a cultural appendage for the adherents of Nordic race theory, even if the two could exist independently. Indeed, the German fascination with the “unaffected,” “wild,” and “sublime” nature of the North served as a refuge from the control and constraints felt to emanate from the adherence to “progress” long before the popularization of race theory.²⁴

What is more, a new-found *Zug nach dem Norden* [pull of the North] would increasingly manifest itself in journeys along the coasts of Western Norway. These *Nordlandsreisen* [Nordland journeys] would, for example, set out for North Cape—Europe’s Northernmost point—from 1845 onwards.²⁵ Famously, Emperor Wilhelm II. was an ardent traveler to *Norden*, and, under the influence of Wagner among others, his enthusiasm for the North was neither devoid of anti-Semitism nor of the more noxious ideals of Nordicism.²⁶ The tourism imaginaries related to these travels are perhaps best exemplified, however, in an earlier account, namely a 1836-article in a German ladies’ lexicon. As recounted by Hasso Spode, the lexicon

enthused over the “sublimity” of this “wonderful land with its fabulous past and wild romantic [wildromantischen] nature”: The “long very blond [hochblonden] Norwegians were since the dawn of time sea heroes on all seas. [...] Sagas about Thor and Odin and the lovely Freia formed the old

²³ Lützhöft, *Nordische Gedanke*, 204.

²⁴ Hasso Spode, “Nordlandsfahrten. Norwegen als Idee und als touristische Destination [Nordland Journeys. Norway as Idea and as Tourist Destination],” in *Nordlandreise. Die Geschichte einer touristischen Entdeckung*, eds. Sonja Kinzler and Doris Tillmann, 16-33 (Hamburg: Mare, 2010), 19.

²⁵ Ibid., 23.

²⁶ Ibid., 27; and Stefan Gammelien, “Kaiserliche Nordlandfahrten. Die Reisen Wilhelms II. nach Skandinavien [Imperial Nordland Journeys. The Travels of Wilhelm II. to Scandinavia],” in *Nordlandreise. Die Geschichte einer touristischen Entdeckung*, eds. Sonja Kinzler and Doris Tillmann, 68-83 (Hamburg: Mare, 2010).

doctrines of this wondrous people. [...The inhabitants], although still unspoiled sons of nature, have already moved closer to nature.²⁷

Thus, the adherents of Nordic race theory looked northwards not only in their search for contemporary members of the race in “indigenous” studies such as those performed by the Norwegian anthropologist Halfdan Bryn,²⁸ but could also draw upon a long-standing tradition of Nordicism in order to find what Lützhöft terms “a mirror image of the German spirit [Seele],” which they would find in Scandinavian history, romantic culture, and especially the idealized peasant societies.²⁹ In other words, the projection of Scandinavia as pre-industrial, romantic, anti-urban, and *völkisch* served as a pre-modern counter-image to the chaos of modern Weimar Germany.³⁰

But Scandinavia served as more than just an object of nostalgic longing for the adherents of Nordic race theory; it was also part of a future-oriented vision where modern science and (eugenic) technology were essential elements. In a sense, Scandinavia served as the projection of the past which Günther and his followers sought to make their future in a version of what Roger Griffin has termed “palingenetic modernism.”³¹ While the Nazi leadership came to view Nordicism as increasingly suspicious, since it promoted a racial elitism and division even *within* the German *Volk*, “the Nordic aesthetic remained

²⁷ Ibid., 23.

²⁸ An army physician and part of the small Norwegian community of physical anthropologists, Bryn had been advocating for eugenics based on the Nordic ideal since the 1910s. As Jon Røyne Kyllingstad has shown, this work was initially neither met with approval nor disapproval among his most prominent colleagues. Ten years later, however, professional quarrels as well as Bryn’s adherence to Nordic race theory and his growing support for radical eugenics caused him to be marginalized from institutionalized science, and his work to be deemed pseudoscientific. See Jon Røyne Kyllingstad, “Norwegian Physical Anthropology and the Idea of a Nordic Master Race,” *Current Anthropology* 53 (2012), 46-56

²⁹ Lützhöft, *Nordische Gedanke*, 208-233.

³⁰ See Field, “Nordic Racism,” 532.

³¹ Roger Griffin, “Tunnel Visions and Mysterious Trees: Modernist Projects of National and Racial regeneration, 1880-1939,” in Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling eds., *Blood and Homeland. Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), 417-456; Griffin’s notion stresses the link between ultra-nationalistic ambitions of a national palingenesis—that is, rebirth—in the face of perceived spiritual decline and physical degeneration (coming together in the contemporary terminology of “decadence”) and a scientific modernism through which it was thought that society could be revitalized and national decline be reversed.

central to popular iconography and visual propaganda” according to Christopher Hutton.³² Undoubtedly, the German audience was highly literate in and susceptible to the visual language of Nordicism in the 1930s.

Nordische Gesellschaft and Tourism to the North

In the late 1920s, officials concerned with tourism in Denmark understood the potential of the popularized Nordicism when it came to possible visitors. At a meeting with TAD in 1927, A.J. Poulsen—the Head of the Press Office of the Foreign Ministry, who would play an instrumental role in the reorganization of TAD seven years later—presented impressions from the Danish General Consulate in Hamburg. According to his own account, Poulsen agitated for the usage of paid advertisement in German papers, while stating that “a still growing stream of tourists” could be expected from Germany, since “many circles are now adjusting to take in the foreign cultural input [kulturstoff], which they would formerly fetch in France and Italy, from the Nordic countries.” Furthermore, he went on, “at different locations in Germany, [in the] Nordische Gesellschaft [Nordic Society] for instance, a steady effort is made to drive German tourists northwards.”³³

As shown in Chapter 1, *Nordische Gesellschaft* did indeed play a role in promoting leisure travels to the North, often with Denmark as the first stop. It would continue to do so after it was essentially turned into an ideological and propagandistic prolongation of the Nazi apparatus after 1933,³⁴ when its effective leadership was taken

³² Christopher Hutton, “Racial ideology as elite discourse: Nordicism and the visual in an age of mass culture,” *Social Semiotics* 27 (2017): 3, 355-347, quote: 344.

³³ Letter from A.J. Poulsen in the Press Office of the Foreign Ministry to the General Consul in Hamburg, November 14, 1927, 113-91, 1909-1945 Gruppeordnede Sager, Udenrigsministeriet, Rigsarkivet

³⁴ E.g. Erika L. Briesacher, “Cultural Currency: *Notgeld*, *Nordische Woche*, and the *Nordische Gesellschaft*, 1921-1945 (Ph.D. dissertation, Kent State University, 2012), 214.

over by Alfred Rosenberg³⁵—for example, as we have seen in the introductory chapter, by facilitating the trips of *Hitler Jugend*.

In the *Nordische Gesellschaft*'s promotion of its yearly *Nordlandsreisen*, different authors close to the association would write relatively long pieces deliberating not just the upcoming journeys but also the underlying reasoning of the trips Northwards.

Unsurprisingly, these were imbued with Nordicist imagery. In an article in the *Völkischer Beobachter* advertising the “Deutsche Nordlandsreise 1936,” the organization’s *Reichsgeschäftsführer* [Executive Director] took on a by now oft-discussed topic, namely the hierarchy of North- and Southbound travel.³⁶ “The German people’s longing for the South [Südsehnsucht] is much talked about,” writes the author, “but it is easily overseen that the root of the vitality [Lebenskraft] have always been located in the North and that the South has brought many a blossom to a splendid development but has never been able to strengthen the *constituent power of life*.”³⁷

It is also overlooked, the article goes on,

that, in historical and daily life, a longing to the North can be found in any true German. Every year, tens of thousands of German people [Volksgenossen] find their way to the North Sea and the countries of the North [...] We believe that the fact that many more Germans travel to the North Sea than to the Mediterranean is not just caused by cheaper prices, but rather an unconscious, primal feeling of belonging to the Nordic world [nordischer Weltzugehörigkeit].

³⁵ The “Supreme council” of the *Nordische Gesellschaft* would, after the inclusion of Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop in the spring of 1938, include: von Ribbentrop, *Reichsbauernführer* R. Walther Darré, *Reichsminister* Dr. Frick, *Reichsleiter* Alfred Rosenberg, *Reichsführer-SS* Himmler, *Reichsorganisationsleiter* Dr. Ley, *Reichsjugendführer* Baldur von Schirach, *Stabschef der SA* Lutze, *Reichssportführer* von Tschammer und Osten, and the Major of Lübeck, Dr. Drechsler. See “Reichsaußenminister von Ribbentrop im Oberste Rat der Nordischen Gesellschaft [Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop in the Supreme Council of the Nordic Society],” *Der Norden* 15 (1939),4: 131.

³⁶ See Lützhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke*, 209; also Spode, “Nordlandsfahrten”.

³⁷ Ernst Timm, “Deutsche Nordlandsreise 1936,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, Berlin, December 14, 1935 in Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937: 1, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Nordische Gesellschaft Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck; emphasis in the original.

This, according to the *Reichsgeschäftsführer*, is the background for the upcoming trip with the MS Milwaukee, on board which leading German and Nordic personalities, films, and artworks (including folk dances and folk music) would purvey to the travelers “the best possible way to get to know the character of the North.”³⁸ It serves to show that, while Kristin Semmens is undoubtedly correct in asserting that Italy was the preferred ideological destination for international tourism among the Nazi leadership,³⁹ other forces in Nazi society sought actively to overturn this hierarchy.

In a similar promotional account, another author described the itinerary for the trip in some detail—the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norwegian fjords, the Hansestadt Bergen, and then Southwards to Hamburg like the Vikings, albeit peacefully!—before reflecting upon the bonds between Germany and the North in *völkisch* terms:

The relations between Germany and the North, which are founded on the basis of a shared [and] common composition of a common and geographically and racially connected living space [Lebensraum], deserve the strongest and most lasting support, [and] are better cherished through in-depth knowledge of Nordic countries, Nordic people, the Nordic life and its special forms of expression, the Nordic tradition of history and sagas, the old Nordic peasant and seafarer culture, than through lectures and books. We go into the country, to the people themselves, as guests who want to take a breath of the peculiar that these countries have to offer, from the conviction that these countries have something to bring the new Germany [....]⁴⁰

Selling its tours to the Nordic countries, then, the Nazified *Nordische Gesellschaft* combined all elements of Nordicism, including Nordic race theory and *Nordlandsromantik*, to provide a portrayal of the North as a travel destination in terms not

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 135-137.

⁴⁰ Heinrich Jessen, “Wir fahren in den Norden,” *Nordische Rundschau, Kiel*, May 8, 1936 in Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1921-1937: 1, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Nordische Gesellschaft Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.

only compatible with but even highly attractive to an audience influenced by Nazi ideology. The shared living space—defined racially—served as justification for a romanticized longing for the North, its peoples, history, and cultures. Here, an understanding of the Nordic countries is seen not as an alternative to but rather the essential precondition for a thorough understanding of “the new Germany.” As we shall see, while TAD would not explicitly invoke these ideologically laden tourist imaginaries connected to the North in its promotional efforts in Nazi Germany, many of the themes would be similar. It is to these promotional efforts that the rest of this chapter is devoted. Before turning to the travel brochures at the center of my analysis, however, I will first turn briefly to another medium whose potential for tourist promotion caught TAD’s attention in the 1930s: stamps.

TAD’s Promotional Efforts, 1929-39

With the reorganization of TAD 1935, described in Chapter 2, the organization could devote more resources to its promotional efforts abroad. With more resources new promotional initiatives followed. For example, the leadership of the association would take part in various efforts at redesigning Danish postal stamps, a medium increasingly perceived as valuable tourist promotion in the public debate by the end of the 1930s.⁴¹ In 1936, TAD co-organized a design competition calling for “proposals for a series of stamps, which through their illustrations were to work for propaganda purposes for Danish tourism at home and abroad.”⁴² In the spring of 1937, Mogens Lichtenberg—the post-re-organization leader of TAD’s foreign department—sat on the jury for a similar

⁴¹ Anne Marie Rechendorff and Andreas Marklund, “At visualisere en nation: Frimærket og det nationale i mellemkrigstidens Danmark [Visualizing a nation: Stamps and the nation in Denmark in the inter-war period],” *Kulturstudier* 1 (2015): 121-153, e.g. 136-148.

⁴² Quoted from *ibid.*: 145.

competition organized by a major daily, which stressed the value of stamps as widely circulated advertisement.⁴³

Historians Anne Marie Rechendorff and Andreas Marklund have shown that while these two competitions did not actually result in the circulation of new stamps, the contributions to these and similar competitions in the late 1930s signified “that parts of the population wanted stamps which visualized Denmark in a broader fashion than through references to the state, the king, and national historical milestones.” These “popular” (as opposed to the canonized official) stamps partly consisted of images inspired by the modern and industrialized nation, partly of (rural and provincial) landscapes including (but not limited to) touristic highlights. As such, Rechendorf and Marklund conclude, stamps became part of a struggle between elitist and popular visions in Danish national self-identification.⁴⁴

I argue that these tensions would reverberate in the country’s promotional efforts abroad. As we will see, both strands had been present in the promotional material prior to the reorganization of TAD. Given the triadic nature of influences feeding into the work of TAD, especially after its reorganization—with the state featuring alongside commercial interests and the “popular” framework of the tourist movement—the interactions of elitist and popular imageries are more intricate than is the case for “the visualization of the nation” that Rechendorf and Marklund trace in the stamp debates of the 1930s.

Besides elitist (statist) and “popular”—folkloristic, rural, and provincial—elements, a particular string of modern visions would interact as well. These visions would especially relate to the Danish crafts industry, infrastructural aspects, and the social state. The different ways these elements played out throughout the 1930s and the ways

⁴³ Ibid.: 137.

⁴⁴ Ibid.: 149-151.

they were configured when aimed at Nazi Germany are particularly interesting for the present study. These different configurations are telling with regards to the manner in which images of the Danish nation were negotiated in the semi-official sphere that TAD constituted, and how these images would draw upon various understandings of the nation available among the different (commercial, “popular,” statist) actors making up the framework of TAD.

Here it is worth noting that while the following analysis will not build upon documents reflecting on the genesis of the individual brochures and the considerations leading to their design (if these exist, I have been unable to locate them), such considerations were indeed made. At a meeting for leaders of local tourist associations, Mogens Lichtenberg, the head of TAD’s foreign department since the re-organization (and thus the person with the overall responsibility for the central association’s promotional material), encouraged his audience to make choices regarding style, content, and design based upon the “place, for which propaganda is being made, or the audience one hopes to engage.”⁴⁵

Prior to the Reorganization of TAD

It was not only through the efforts of *Nordische Gesellschaft* that romanticist Nordicism persisted in the touristic appeal. This is evident in a 1929 TAD-brochure, in which Denmark is marketed as *Das Land des Meeres [The Land of the Sea]*⁴⁶ (Figure 2). On the cover, a dark-haired woman stands on a beach wearing a bathing-suit, her arms stretched so as to make her body form a cross, her face turned sideways and her hair caught in the ocean breeze. Rather heavy on text compared to later folders, the brochure

⁴⁵ Mogens Lichtenberg, “Fremstilling af Brochurer [Production of Brochures],” in *Turistforeningen for Danmark [The Tourist Association for Denmark], En Samling Foredrag Holdt ved Turistforeningens Turistlederkursus 1938 [A Collection of Lectures given at the Tourist Association’s Tourist Leader Course 1938]*, 44-68 (Copenhagen: Kandrups & Wunsch Bogtrykkeri, 1939), 44-45;

⁴⁶ Danmarks Turistforening, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres* (Copenhagen: 1929), archived in 491: 1934 – 1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

is also saturated with romanticist and Nordicist notions. The booklet works as a descriptive tour through the country—arriving in Jutland by train from Hamburg, then touring the peninsula before leaving for Funen, Sealand and Bornholm—in which the sea, unsurprisingly, occurs as a persistent reference point.

The Herderian romanticism is pronounced already as the imagined traveler arrives in Jutland and “steps on the soil [Boden] of this country, beloved by all cultural nations [Kulturvölkern] of the earth.” On this soil stands Ribe, the old dome-city in South-Eastern Jutland where, according to the brochure, “the air is suffused with the folk songs [Volksliedern], the sagas of the land which float above the pointed roofs of the half-timbered houses.” On the Western coast of Jutland, the sand dunes are accompanied by “the organ sound of the sea” swelling up “from the past,” and “nowhere does such a melancholy Adagio sound through nature as when the ‘white nights’ lay their fragrant silver veil on

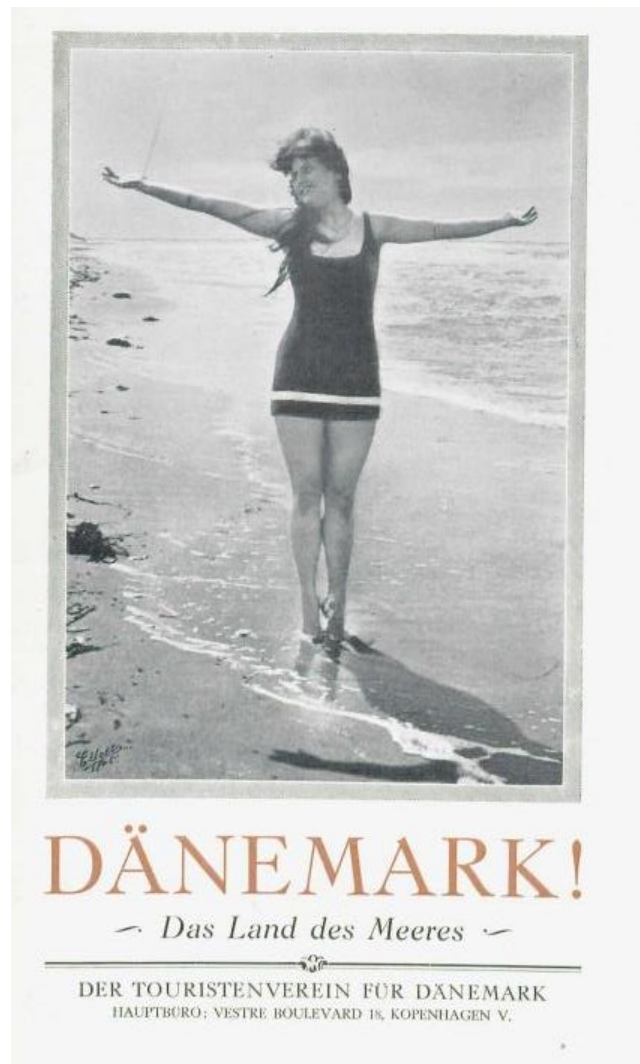


Figure 2: Denmark – The Land of the Sea

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres*. 490: 1929 – 1933, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

this pale, Nordic world,” for example at the migrating coastal dune Råbjerg Mile to the North of the peninsula.⁴⁷ The apogee of the brochure’s romanticism, perhaps, is the description of the national romantic town hall of Copenhagen as “a splendid building of the highest perfection, which can be considered an expression of the high culture of our tribal brothers [Stammesbrüder].”⁴⁸

The “Nordic world” is a recurring theme throughout the text as well. Describing the island of Funen, the text invokes a poetic saying that “over the castles near cities and fjords, sing the larks about life in the North.”⁴⁹ Elsewhere, imitations of ancient Viking songs along with romantic poetry add Nordic flavor, while the terms *Nordisch* and *Norden* are used liberally. Of course, Nordic Romanticism and national sentiment were intertwined entities; as pointed out by Bo Stråth and Øystein Sørensen, *Norden* played out in different ways as a constitutive—but not dominant—element in the nation building projects of the different national Scandinavian contexts.⁵⁰ As such, Kronborg—the castle known as Elsinore in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*—according to the brochure, “is said to be one of the few remaining monumental mementos from when Denmark and Rome shared world domination.”⁵¹ Needless to say, this domination only ever really amounted to superiority in parts of Northern Europe.

Das Land des Meeres is in no way confined within a Nordic symbolic geography. Noticeably, the brochure is almost absurd in its usage of tourist clichés linking Denmark’s tourist sites and attractions to international ones in no less than fourteen comparisons with

⁴⁷ Ibid., 3-6.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 10.

⁵⁰ Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth, “Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden,” in Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth (eds.), *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, 1-24 (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997).

⁵¹ Danmarks Turistforening, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres*, 17.

artists, cities, and sights.⁵² Of course, this is a testament to Denmark's position in the international tourist hierarchy as well. A rather large amount of the text and images deals with provincial cities and their surroundings, just like only four of the fourteen days in the brochure's itinerary are devoted to Copenhagen. Landscape descriptions are prominent throughout; while not always explicitly invoking Nordicist imagery, they consistently operate within a romantic discourse. Furthermore, the description of Copenhagen is largely focused on architectural sights, as well as museums, sculptures, and squares, and even contains a paragraph devoted to the "seductive rhythm" of the metropolis.⁵³ While especially the mention of Copenhagen's leisurely sides pointed towards a modernist framing, which would become more prominent in the tourist material from this point onwards, the brochure's text is by and large quite a traditionalistic, romanticist, and at times Nordicist piece of travel writing.

The visual imagery of the brochure is one solidly rooted in the romanticist tradition of tourism as well. For the most part, its photographs portray either castles and other (often



Figure 3: "Panorama of the Silkeborg Lakes"

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres* (Copenhagen: 1929), archived in 491: 1934 – 1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

neo-classical) historical buildings, or landscape panoramas and vistas. As described by

⁵² According to the brochure, the dome of the city of Ribe reminds one of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople; the Sand-Covered Church near Skagen is the Pompeji of Denmark; also close to Skagen, the sand waves of the migrating coastal dune Råbjerg Mile is Skagen's Sahara; the painter responsible for the inner decoration of the church in Viborg is the Danish Michelangelo; with its monument, the city of Silkeborg can be called a Danish Pantheon; the Fjord of Vejle can resemble a lake in German Switzerland; in Southern Funen lies the "Alps of Funen"; *Strøget*, the capital's main shopping street, is Copenhagen's Corso; the houses in the canal district Nyhavn shows Hanseatic character; the Town Hall pigeons of Copenhagen can be fed like those in Venice; Copenhagen is, for different reasons, both the Nordic Florence and the Nordic Athens; the coastline of Northern Sealand goes by the name of "the Danish Riviera"; and the bathing town Hornbæk is the Danish Ostend.

⁵³ Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres*, 12-16.

Orvar Löfgren among others, looking for the picturesque in castles and framing the sublime in nature from carefully selected viewpoints became an institutionalized and absolutely integral part of upper-class leisure travel from the eighteenth century onwards.⁵⁴ The panoramas of the hilly landscapes of Jutland, for example, are perfectly in line with this tradition (Figure 3), even if the scenery does not quite match the sublimity of the Niagara Falls or the Swiss Alps, which had originally been the objects of the admiring gazes of the travelers. Other visuals include photographs of (mostly idyllic) streetscapes, sand dunes and beaches, as well as female gymnasts at a people's high school on Funen (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Danish [People's] High School on Funen

Source: Danmarks Turistforening, *Dänemark. Das Land des Meeres* (Copenhagen: 1929). In 491: 1934 – 1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

The gymnasts are not addressed in the text, but they nonetheless visually represent a body culture which moved “between the pre-modern and the modern,” according to the

⁵⁴ Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday. A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999), especially 13-40.

late historian Niels Kayser Nielsen, and was thus closely related to fascist ideologies.⁵⁵

The building behind the gymnasts is the Ollerup Gymnastic Folk High School, whose leader—Niels Bukh—in the words of Nielsen, “was perhaps Scandinavia’s most illustrative example of [... a] combination of essentialism, body fixation and longing for authenticity in the 1930s.” It is worth noting here that Bukh was a household name among the Nordacists in the *Nordische Gesellschaft*, his gymnasts performing at its annual festival.⁵⁶

While Bukh sought for authenticity and saw his gymnastics as “primitive,” he simultaneously insisted that they were based on highly scientific principles, just like the subjectification at the core of his body culture transformed the body into “the domicile for the forward-looking, utopian strategies of the self;”⁵⁷ as for the adherents of Nordic race theory, Bukh’s modernism was a palingenetic one. What is more, the gymnasts were carefully selected—with a preference for blue-eyed blondes—so that

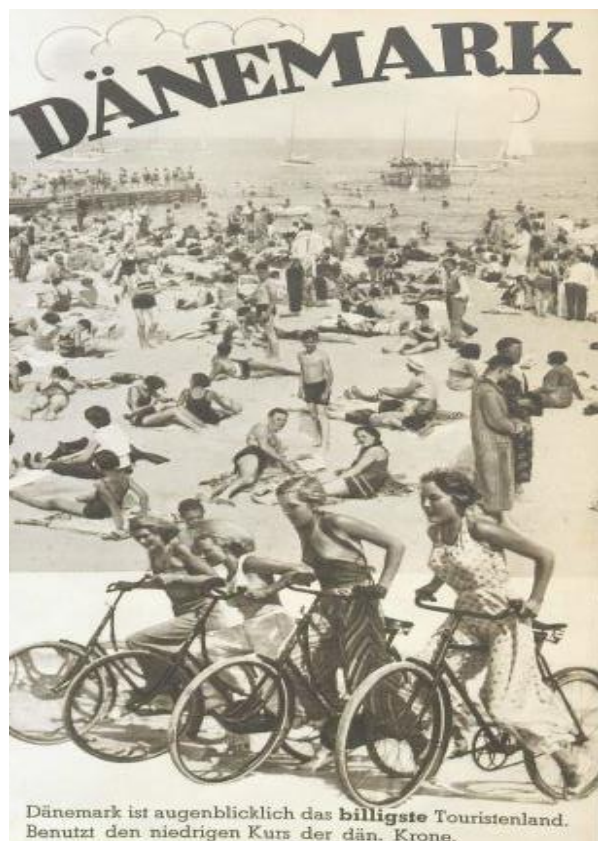


Figure 5: Denmark is at the moment the **cheapest** tourist country.

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, “Dänemark” (Copenhagen: Fraenckel Dybtryk, 1934) in 491: 1934-1937,

⁵⁵ Niels Kayser Nielsen, “The Cult of the Nordic Superman – Between the Pre-Modern and the Modern,” *The Sports Historian* 19 (1999): 1, 61-80.

⁵⁶ A series of photographs depicting Buk and his gymnasts at the Second Reichstagung appeared in “2. Reichstagung der Nordische Gesellschaft [2nd Reichstagung of the Nordic Society],” *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, June 28, 1936 in 90, Allgemeines (Zeitungsausschnitte) Band 1 (Akte d. Weltwirtschaft Instituts Kiel) 1938-1944, 2, Nordische Gesellschaft, Vereins- und Verbandsarchive, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

“[e]ach individual girl was to incarnate the general and abstract Nordic ideal body in the hard toil for bodily perfection [...]”⁵⁸

In 1934, while “The Foreign Ministry’s Committee on Tourist Propaganda Abroad” [CTPA] was still at work, TAD (in cooperation with the State Railways) published a four-paneled double-sided German-language brochure entitled “Dänemark” in 20.000 copies.⁵⁹ As already discussed in Chapter 2, the folder had a particularly economic profile, advertising Denmark as “[a]t the moment, [...] the **cheapest** tourist country” on the frontispiece (Figure 5). The economic argument shines through in the content of the folder as well. Whereas the brochure from 1929 provided itineraries for two alternative tours of Denmark of fourteen days each, this folder suggested three different three-day trips with a local focus (Copenhagen, the island of Bornholm and the islands of Lolland and Falster south of Sealand) and a seven-day Denmark tour. Undoubtedly, these itineraries were more suited to lower budgets than the much more extensive fourteen-day trips in the 1929 brochure. To drive the point home, each trip was accompanied by a price, which—for the 7-day tour—was meant to cover transportation (ship, train, and car) as well as “good hotels” with full board.

TAD’s annual report from 1934 states that the “Dänemark”-brochure “propagates [...] its message] ‘through the eye’.” “The maxim ‘Denmark, Land of the Sea’,” it is further pointed out, “finds expression in the cover’s bathing motifs.”⁶⁰ Indeed, the brochure is heavily illustrated and very light on text compared to the 1929 version. The text strikes a very practical note; stripped of romanticized description, the brochure provides only basic information on travel routes and prices, as well as itineraries devoid

⁵⁸ Ibid., 73.

⁵⁹ Turistforeningen for Danmark, Dänemark (Copenhagen: 1934), archived in 491: 1934 – 1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet; on the number of copies, see “Årsberetning 1934 [Annual Report 1934],” in 441, 07798, Årsberetninger 1924-1965, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 4.

⁶⁰ Turistforeningen for Danmark, “Årsberetning 1934,” 4.

of any sight descriptions. In accordance with TAD's own description, the imagery is called upon to do the promotional work beyond the economic argument.



Figure 6: Female beachgoers

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, "Dänemark" (Copenhagen: Fraenckel Dybtryk, 1934) in 491: 1934-1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

The 1934 brochure's visuals link it to the 1929 booklet in a certain sense. Many motifs are similar to the ones portrayed visually and textually in the earlier publication. It is still focused largely on landscapes, castles, and idyllic streetscapes, although in a more balanced fashion than the landscape-heavy 1929 brochure. What is most markedly different, however, is the visual introduction of female beachgoers on bikes and in the sand, not just on the cover but interspersed inside the brochure as well (Figure 6). The "beach girl" would become a standard icon in Danish tourist marketing in the following years; so much so that "the cult of the beach girl" would be the subject of rather spirited public debate from time to time.⁶¹

⁶¹ According to Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 53 (image caption).

Much more could be said about the gendered aspects of the promotional material and how it intersects with the images of female beauty in Denmark and Germany in the interwar period. Unfortunately, a few indicative remarks will have to do here. As hinted above, the Nordic body ideal came through in the promotional efforts before TAD's reorganization, as they would do after 1935 as well. As presented in the promotional material, the ideal was also primarily linked to the female body through female gymnasts. As is equally true for the beach girls, the show of female gymnasts allowed for a—by the standards of the 1930s—rather revealing depiction of the female body without breaking with perceived decorum. Overall, the predominance of female figures in the promotional material is hardly coincidental. Neither is it surprising that they would often appear in what scholars of contemporary state tourism brochures have identified as objectified representations showcasing female submissiveness or subordination,⁶² or in the category “photographs of attractive young women in advertisements and brochures that promote tourism.”⁶³ While the topic needs further research, it would seem that a sexualized side of the Nordic body ideal materialized in the promotional efforts.

After the Reorganization of TAD

The efforts to reform the promotional efforts by reforming the framework of TAD, as described in Chapter 2, were not unequivocally successful if measured by the reception of the subsequent brochures. In 1938, the author Xenius Rostock, who wrote TAD's yearbook for its semi-centenary the same year and was generally quite

⁶² E.g. Ercan Sirakaya and Sevil Sonmez, “Gender Images in State Tourism Brochures: An Overlooked Area in Socially Responsible Tourism Marketing,” *Journal of Travel Research* 38 (2000), 4: 353-362.

⁶³ C. A. Heatwole, “Body Shots: Women in Tourism-Related Advertisements,” *Focus* 39 (1989), 4: 7-11; quoted from Sirakaya and Sonmez, “Gender Images in State Tourism Brochures,” 361.

sympathetic to the work of the association,⁶⁴ described the tourist brochures showcased at that year's large "Traffic and Tourist Exhibition" in less than flattering terms:

In general, this whole category of publications [tourist promotion material] apparently excels in covers, including these color orgies. Regrettably these can only be described as whited sepulchers. After all, one will sooner or later open them and realize how noticeably dated the content is.⁶⁵

Others have described the promotional efforts of the new organization in much more positive terms, both in terms of quantity (10,000 posters and 500,000 brochures a year) and quality of the material created by some of Denmark's leading graphic designers.⁶⁶

No matter the critique, it is noticeable from the archives that possessing greater means and more manpower, the newly professionalized TAD could to a larger degree differentiate their brochures in accordance with the audiences aimed at. According to historian Mikael Frausing, "the increased economic resources had, first of all, brought about a considerable increase in the quality of the material, but furthermore the publications were, for the first time, results of a collected strategy for marketing abroad."⁶⁷

Furthermore, in some senses the committee's report in itself constituted—or at least pronounced—a shift in TAD's approach to the promotion of the Danish landscape. In *Danmarks Turistpropaganda* [Denmark's Tourist Propaganda]—the committee report dealt with at length in Chapters 2 and 3—a proposition on how to prolong the Danish tourist season was made. Here, it was suggested that an orchestrated effort should instill in potential visitors that the Danish climate differs from the "Scandinavian" more broadly

⁶⁴ See Xenius Rostock & Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Jubilæumsårbog 1938* [Anniversary Yearbook 1938] (Copenhagen: Turistforeningen Danmark, 1938).

⁶⁵ Xenius Rostock, "Trafik og Grafik [Traffic and Graphics]," *De grafiske Fag* 34 (1938): 170.

⁶⁶ Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år*, 68-69.

⁶⁷ Mikael Frausing, "Et lykkeligt fornuftsægteskab? Turistforeningen for Danmark mellem hjemstavnsturisme og eksportturisme ca. 1888-1967 [A Happy Marriage of Convenience? The Danish National Tourist Organization c.1888-1967]," *Kulturstudier*, 1 (2010): 25-52, here 47.

conceived; that Denmark is not subject to the same harsh weather conditions in the early summer as Norway and Sweden, but that actually “[t]he beauty of the Danish land is no less in May when the beech has blossomed and the bright nights have made their entry [...]”.⁶⁸

This seemingly rather innocuous suggestion is nonetheless rather revealing of the somewhat awkward cultural and symbolic geography within which Danish tourist proponents had to understand themselves as being somewhere in-between. That is, neither in the mountainous, picturesque, mythical North, nor on par with the cultural and historical behemoths of Western Europe or the attractions of more southerly climates, the symbolic constructs and climatic realities of Danish geography seemingly posed significant challenges for the tourist promoters to engage with.

Yet, the country is still deemed competitive as a tourist destination. Part of this has to do with the changing nature of tourism, something—as we have seen in Chapter 3—which the committee was astutely aware of. Is it not true, asks the text rhetorically, that foreigners will prefer “the Mediterranean countries with their warmth and their sun, the exceptional cultural treasures and rich historical memories?” Are not the pyramids or the mountains of Central Europe and Scandinavia proper more alluring than the green mounds or “tranquil, [...] fjords and peaceful plains” Denmark has to offer as a tourist destination? While it is conceded that this is often still the case, it is not always so:

The tourists are not anymore, as they often were in times past, only mountaineers and salmon anglers. Nor do they all possess such a great interest in art and history that this alone determines the destination for their trip. And finally, in the last decades the amount of tourists has risen with hundreds of thousands who cannot afford to travel to the pyramids.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 63.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 10-11.



Figure 7: The Danes

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Ferien in Dänemark* (Copenhagen: Oscar Fraenckel & Co, 1936) in 491: 1934-1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

Thus, foreign travelers might in fact find Denmark appealing. Based on “numerous statements from foreigners about Denmark as a tourist country,”⁷⁰ the report states that many of these find that although “not as grandiose and fierce as some other countries’,” the Danish landscape does still possess “its own unique character.” While not possessing many of the traits normally associated with touristic landscapes, the text highlights the very contrast with such countries as an attraction for the foreign traveler. “For the inland-dweller,” for example, “Denmark is first and foremost the land by the sea.” Even the lack of strong contrasts in the landscape, it is held, is attractive to those who “wants peace and

⁷⁰ Ibid.; many of these were likely extracted from a quite substantial amount of press clippings and travel literature which can still be found in the archives of the Foreign Ministry.

quiet, for those who want momentarily to flee the excessive wear that [the passage of] time causes on [one's] nerves and mood.”⁷¹

The first series of brochures after the re-organization of TAD, distributed in 1936, features a remarkable mixture of commercial, “popular,” statist influences.⁷² On page three, the state is represented visually by images of the King, a Royal Guard, and a view of the royal castle framed by classical columns and an equestrian statue. The official imagery is supplemented by a text proclaiming that “Denmark is the oldest Kingdom in Europe.” However, even in this manifestation of statist symbols, the text devoted more attention to the popular grounding of the monarchy. Thus, it is highlighted that

in his plainness [einfachheit] and sobriety [schlichtheit], in his cordiality and closeness to the people [volksverbundenheit] King Christian X. leads his people by example, beloved and feted [umjubelt], where he shows himself, whether on his daily morning ride [through Copenhagen] or amidst the festive joy of his people.

The next double-page counters the official narrative even more effectively. Here, smiling faces of ordinary-looking people, seemingly from the country-side, and images of “the sunny Danish landscape” and a “Midsummer-celebration” provide a “popular” and folkloristic framing, quite literally, to a textual description under the headline “The Danes” (Figure 7). The text echoes the visual language’s focus on rural life in the open spaces by highlighting the connection between the people and its physical environment. That is,

[h]earty and amiable, cheerful and happy, the Danes are really children of their country with its bright fairy summer nights, with the harmonic landscape, with the green oak and beech forests, with the wide fields and grasslands and the gently waving hill chains [...]

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Ferien in Dänemark* (Copenhagen: Oscar Fraenckel & Co, 1936) in 491: 1934-1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

As was the case for almost all of TAD's promotional material from the late 1930s, the same brochure was published in a slightly altered English-language version as well.⁷³ The subtle differences in content for the versions aimed at Germany and Great Britain respectively suggest different perceptions of the target audiences among the marketers at TAD. They might thus hint at the degrees to which some tourism imaginaries—tied to Nordicism for example—were prioritized above others in material aimed at Germany relative to Great Britain, which is why I devote some effort to comparing material prepared for the two different national contexts in the following.⁷⁴

In contrast to this Anglophone version, the German-language version of the 1936-brochure leaves unmentioned that the country entertains “the most advanced social laws in the world.” While visually alike in everything but the cover pages, the two different versions of the brochure differ in textual details throughout. On the second pages of the brochures, for example, the features of Denmark as a travel country are summed up. According to the English-language version, Denmark is:

The sea-girt land of the **Vikings**.

The land of **Shakespeare's Hamlet**.

The land of **Hans Christian Andersen**.

⁷³ Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Denmark next* (Copenhagen: Oscar Fraenckel & Co, 1936).

⁷⁴ From a methodological point of view, one might suggest that I am comparing transfers here; that I approach each tourist brochure as a transfer starting-point. The methodology is thus based on the opinion held by J. H. Elliot and Jürgen Kocka, among others, that comparative history and transfer history are mutually reinforcing rather than irreconcilable approaches. This ‘comparative transfer’ approach makes it possible to take into account the categories through which contemporary actors inevitably understood the world when engaging an otherwise obvious transfer-phenomenon like tourism. See Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, “Editors’ Preface,” H.-G. Haupt and J. Kocka, (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European Approaches and New Perspectives*, 2-22 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), particularly 20; J. H. Elliot, *History in the Making* (New Haven, MA: Yale University Press, 2012), 168-195; and Jürgen Kocka, ‘Comparison and Beyond’, *History and Theory* 42 (2003): 39-44; In spite of its reputation, then, comparative history can bring the historian closer to his subject matter when applied in a self-reflexive way. In a sense, this is a reproach to the position held by critics such as Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann that “the comparative approach assumes a point of view external to the objects that are compared;” See Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann. ‘Beyond Comparison: Histoire croisée and the Challenge of reflexivity’, *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30-50. Quote: 33; On the oft-voiced critique that comparison risks reiterating categories such as the nation state, see Raymond Grew, ‘The Case for Comparing Histories’, *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 763-778, particularly 767

The land with the wonderful **Beaches**.

[...]

In the German-language version, the country is advertised as:

The land of **Nordic Folklore [Volkskultur]**

The land with the beautiful **Beech Forests**

The land with the **roaring Ocean**

The land with the **mild Summer Nights**

[...]

While no clear-cut distinction in promotional strategies can be extrapolated from these examples, I will still suggest that the Anglophone version carries more concrete historical and cultural references than the material aimed at Germany, which puts stronger emphasis on folkloristic notions related to romantic readings of the Danish landscape. While this landscape differs quite markedly from that of the mountainous Scandinavian peninsula with which much *Nordlandsromantik* was associated, it does nevertheless fit quite well into the folkloristic imaginaries of the North centered around the Nordic peasant.

Copenhagen fills a double page as well, well over half of which is devoted to photographs showing a mixture of historical buildings, museums and sculptures (the Little Mermaid had become mandatory at this point) and festive life at Tivoli Gardens and *Dyrehavsbakken*, a less known, older amusement park North of Copenhagen. At the same time, “endless rows of bicyclists” have made their way into the visual as well as textual representation of the capital city; in the portrayal of Copenhagen the contours of a distinctively Nordic modern are being shaped.

Another element, which goes to show TAD’s commercial interests, appears in a section entitled “Denmark is cheap.” Instead of repeating the argument of the favorable currency rate, however, the text focuses on what can be bought for little money: “Danish agricultural products are exquisite, Danish arts and crafts, especially Danish glass,

porcelain and silver, are well-reputed all over the world [haben Weltruf].” Before the re-organization of TAD, advertisements for Danish art craft such as Royal Copenhagen and George Jensen—whose Managing Director had played an important part in CTPA—had been quite prominent in the tourist brochures, for example in a “Copenhagen”-brochure from 1931 (Figure 8). With the professionalization of TAD, however, and as the commercial actors and the state would now each pay into the association’s promotional efforts (see Chapter 2), the crafts had moved into the text as attractions in themselves.



Figure 8: Advertisement for Craft from Copenhagen folder

Source: H.F. Ulrichsen, *København [Copenhagen]* (Copenhagen: Turistforeningen for Danmark, 1931), 13-21. In 490: 1929 – 1933, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

The following year, TAD’s brochures celebrated the øing’s 25-year jubilee. Apart from textual alterations made to accommodate for the jubilee festivities, however, all but the covers were exact reprints of the 1936 editions.⁷⁵ Once again, however, the different cover motifs adorning the brochures aimed at Germany and Great Britain respectively

⁷⁵ E.g. “Årsberetning 1937 [Annual Report 1937],” in 07798, 441, 07798, 441, *Årsberetninger 1924-1965*, Turistforeningen for Danmark, Rigsarkivet, 5.

(Figure 9) hints at the subtly different approaches to promotion pursued in TAD's efforts to attract tourists from these radically different political and cultural entities.

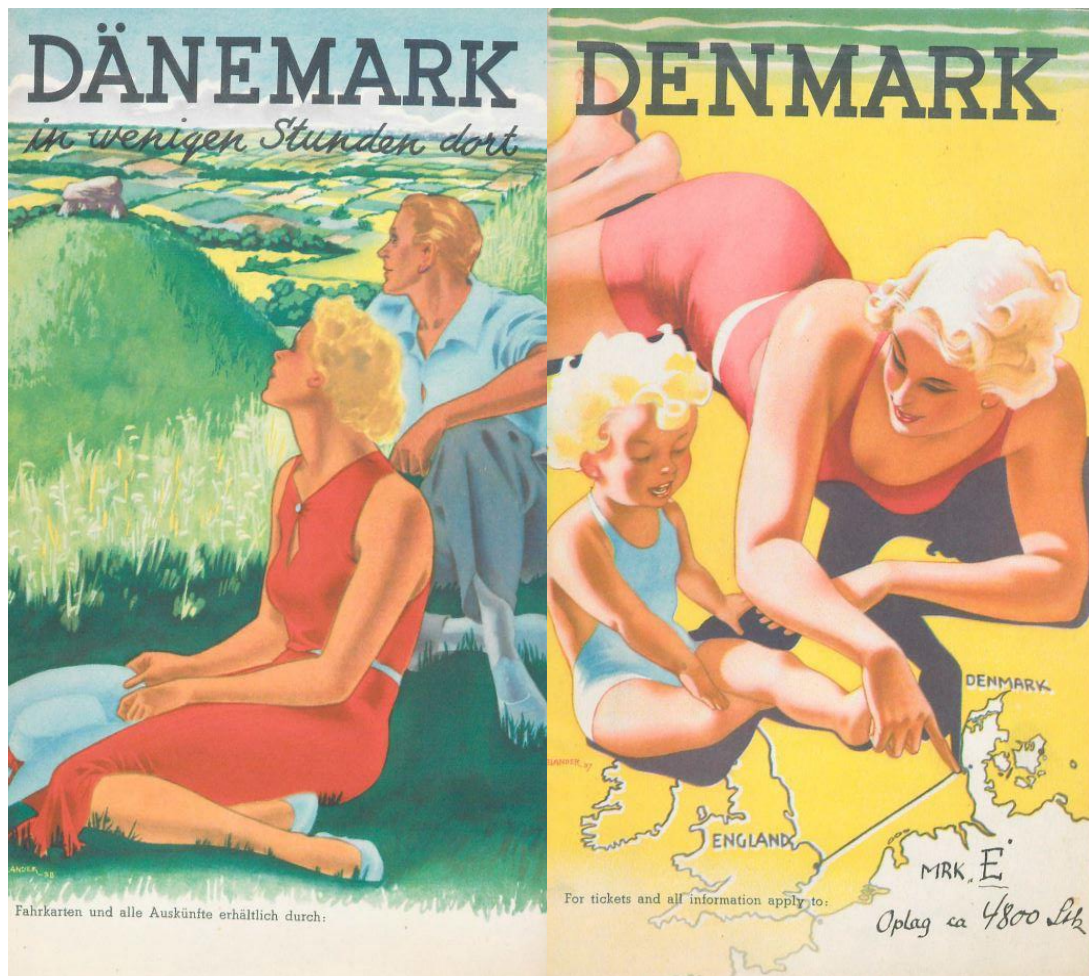


Figure 9: Frontispieces of Denmark-brochures from 1937.

On the left the brochure aimed at a British audience, to the right the German version. Sources: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark: in weniger Stunden dort* (Copenhagen: Oscar Fraenckel & Co, 1937) and *Denmark* (Copenhagen: Oscar Fraenckel & Co, 1937), both in 491: 1934-1937, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

The cover image for the Anglophone poster depicts a woman lying on a beach.

Next to her sits a small child. The woman is young with shoulder-length curly blonde hair. Her bathing suit is red with a tint of pink and above her waist is a white belt. She is depicted slightly from above and front-on, although her head is turned sideways, facing a small child next to her. The child, dressed in blue, sits on what appears to be a map of Great Britain and Northern Europe inserted into the bottom of the frame. The eyes of the child are directed at a point on the western coast of Jutland to which the woman points. In

the poster prepared for Germany, a similar looking woman is accompanied by a young man. She wears a dress which is more conservative than the bathing suit in the 'British' image. Its color is a regular red and it is divided nearly halfway by a white belt as well. The woman is depicted from the side, with a hat in her lap. The man sits slightly behind and above her. Both are looking longingly at the idyllic nature behind them. Their focus seems to be on a burial mound rising above a landscape of yellow fields, blue streams and green forestry.

There are some obvious similarities at play here: both images consist of two individuals focusing their attention on a symbolic object, both are anchored linguistically through almost identical headings, and in both cases, the backgrounds portray the romanticized "Danish" landscapes of the hilly countryside and the wide and sandy beach on Jutland's western coast. There are similarities to be found on a more symbolic level as well. The red and white clothing of the young blonde women is hardly coincidental and adds national symbolism to the youth, beauty and Nordic traits embodied in their appearances. In general, both images connote youth, vitality and nature, while neither urban settings nor elitist tourist attractions such as monuments and museums are showcased. In the same vein, whereas the woman on the cover made with Great Britain in mind literally points to a geographical connection between Great Britain and Denmark easily surmountable with modern technology, the same connection is made in the linguistic message on the image adorning the cover of the brochure distributed in Germany: "there in a few hours."

Nonetheless, one monument appears symbolically on the cover of the German-language brochure. Through her posture, the direction of her gaze and the sideways direction from which she is depicted, the woman evokes the statue of the Little Mermaid

as seen from the Copenhagen waterfront (Figure 10).⁷⁶ The statue, which after the reorganization of TAD rose to prominence as an icon for Denmark,⁷⁷ alludes to the romanticist values and indeterminate longings with which the fairy tale of The Little Mermaid is saturated. Thus, rather cleverly, another layer of meaning is added to the brochure cover; one which bears traces of the romanticized tourist culture which was otherwise becoming less prominent in the promotional material.

In general, the organic and past-oriented symbolism is generally stronger on the images for the German traveler as compared to the Anglophone brochure. The image on the cover of the brochure prepared for Great Britain leaves a more modern impression, the style being fairly simple without the idyllic and detailed backdrop



Figure 10 The Little Mermaid Seen from the Copenhagen Waterfront

Source: Wikipedia

of the German image. The beach as a landscape invites relaxation and vacationing (with the stress on vitality, to be sure), whereas the hilly fields make excellent destinations for youthful hikes while providing a setting in which the longing tourist can be one with history and the primordial landscape signified by the burial mound. Furthermore, the healthy child in the British image does not only symbolize family values but points towards future generations as well. The idealized couple exploring the villages and hillsides, on the other hand, is engulfed in the romanticized organic past; in this imagined experience, albeit only “a few hours” away, the modern world already seems a far-away land.

⁷⁶ I owe my thanks to Eszter Timár for this observation.

⁷⁷ Frausing, “Et lykkeligt fornuftsægteskab?": 49.

However, beyond the cover art, the promotional material did consistently take up additional modern elements. As a case in point, infrastructure became an increasingly important element in Danish tourist marketing. As the brochures became more functional, some containing little more than practical information, means and routes for travel rose in prominence in the visual language of the promotional material as well. Bridges (of which three major ones were constructed in the course of the decade) and trains became the exemplary visual symbols signifying this heightened sense of mobility, which took on clear modern connotations. This was evident to a certain extent in the 1936 brochures (reprinted in 1937) but would reach a high point by 1939 as a new set of folders was produced, which, drawn in a rather simple drawing style adding to the modern feel,

were almost devoid of the romanticized imagery that had been so dominant a decade earlier. Here, bridges, cars, bikes, trains, and even airplanes featured instead of landscape panoramas (Figures 11 and 12).



Figure 11: How does one travel in Denmark?

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Wir treffen uns in Dänemark* (Copenhagen: Egmont, 1939). In 491: 1934 – 1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

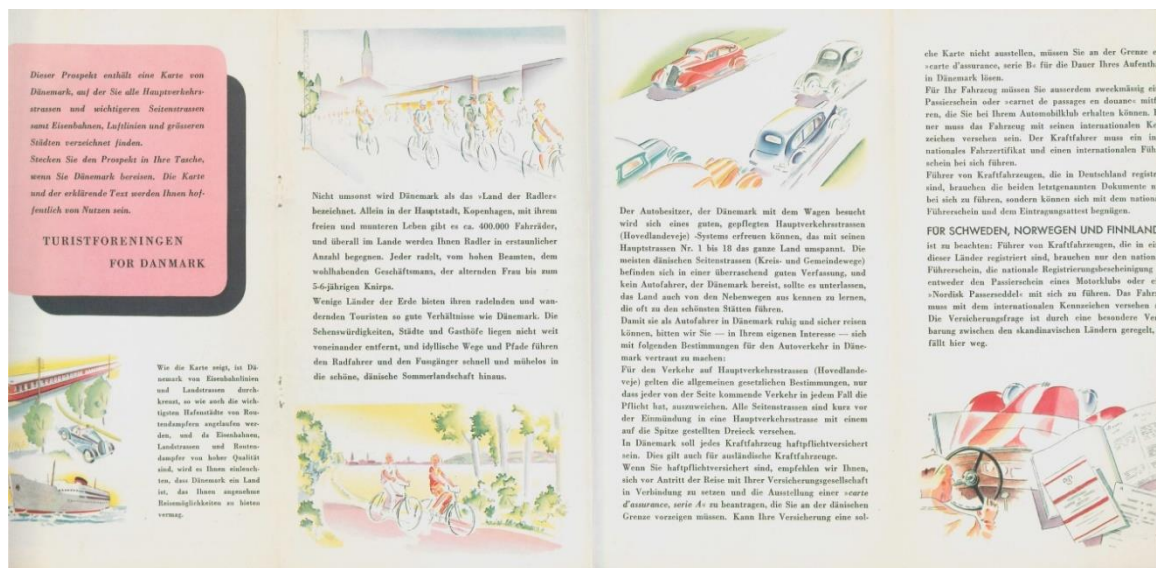


Figure 12: Infrastructure on display in 1939 brochure

Source: Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Dänemark – der Ferieland...* (Copenhagen: F. E. Bording, 1939). In 491: 1934 – 1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

Two German-language publications of different lengths were distributed by TAD in 1939. The shorter folder was almost entirely devoted to conditions, means, and regulations for travel in the country, while the longer—promotional as opposed to informational—version included sections of a more descriptive character, as well as a map complete with brief descriptions of forty different tourist sights. The first four sections of the brochure carry headlines all meant to serve as descriptors of Denmark as a “land of the past”, “land of the Middle Ages,” “modern land,” and “well-ordered land.” Other sections deal with hotel standards (unsurprisingly, these are represented in an entirely positive light, in contrast to the discussions of the committee dealt with in Chapter 2), food culture, travel infrastructure, amusement, and sports.

Remarkably, specific tourist sights are absent in the visuals of these section—and the brochure as a whole—while more abstract illustrations of a lure-blowing Viking, a castle on a hill and a well-ordered road stand in their stead. Textually, these sections were identical to similar sections in the corresponding Anglophone brochure published the same year. In a sense, then, they duly illustrate a self-understanding neatly summed up in

the slogan “Denmark, the old land with the modern life” propagated in the brochure.⁷⁸

This was in many ways in line with the Danish Social Democratic Party’s self-understanding after it transformed itself from a worker’s party to a people’s party in the late 1920s and early 1930s.⁷⁹ Having successfully integrated national and romantic concepts into its ideology, however, the Party stood tall on the progressive legislation achieved on social policy among other things throughout the 1930s.⁸⁰

Norden as a Social Configuration

A brand of Nordicity, to use the term coined by historian Christopher Browning, would crystallize in the post-war era, carrying entirely different connotations from the ones of interwar Nordicism in both racial and cultural terms. Nordicity as a brand was construed as a specific approach to conducting international relations, in which peace building operations featured along with “internationalist solidarism” and the image of “egalitarian social democracy” constituted elements of the “Nordic exception” in the Cold War.⁸¹

The interpretation of *Norden* as a region turned concept, especially its social aspects, rose to prominence in the 1930s as a competing—if not actually conflicting—vision alongside the romantic (and racial) notions of Nordicism and *Nordlandsromantik*. Although not a particularly social democratic concept at the outset of the interwar era, *Norden* had to a large (although not entirely hegemonic) degree become attached to social democracy by the end of the 1930s. The concept was contested among contemporary

⁷⁸ In the Anglophone version, the phrasing is: “Denmark, the land of tradition and modernity.”

⁷⁹ E.g. Niels Kayser Nielsen, “Demokrati og kulturel nationalism i Norden i mellemkrigstiden – en realpolitisk højredrejning? [Nordic Democracy and Cultural Nationalism in the Interwar Period – a Pragmatic Turn to the Right?],” *Historisk Tidskrift (Sweden)* 124 (2004), 4: 581-603.

⁸⁰ Elsewhere, I deal with the state’s promotion of its social legislation to Nazi Germany in regard to the occupation context. See Frederik Forrai Ørskov, “Screening *The Social Face of Denmark* to the Nazis: Social Policy as subdued Resistance during the German Occupation of Denmark,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* (forthcoming).

⁸¹ See Christopher Browning, “Branding Nordicity. Models, Identity and the Decline of Exceptionalism,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 42 (2007), 1: 27-51.

political actors but encompassed such features as egalitarianism, (peasant) freedom, pragmatism, and social progressivism, while also standing in close relation to other concepts such as the notion of *folkhemmet* [the people's home] and being part of composite concepts such as "Nordic democracy."⁸²

Perhaps unsurprisingly, elements related to social progress were completely absent in the 1929 folder. At a time when the Social Democratic Party had only briefly held power, a discourse of a specific Nordic social model was yet to crystallize (although awareness of a high social standard existed to a certain degree) and thus did not appear in the promotional material either. Already in 1931, however, traces of a discourse emphasizing societal progress appeared in a trilingual—Danish-, German-, and English-language—booklet entitled "A Visit in [sic!] Copenhagen," which, under the heading of "facts and figures about København [sic!]" featured an entire section on social conditions in the capital city. Here, Copenhagen was described as a "happy" and "democratic" city; statistics were given on payment, housing, and living conditions in general—including the number of telephones and bicycles—while both hospitals and care of the elderly were touched upon as well.⁸³

The presence of such elements would gradually increase during the 1930s. The report of CTPA, discussed earlier, highlighted the interest taken by foreign visitors in Danish societal conditions in its discussion of Denmark's possibilities as a tourist country. According to the text, the foreign visitors would "again and again" recognize Denmark's status as "one of the countries in the world where the social measures have

⁸² On the elements making up the cultural construction of *Norden*, see especially Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth, "Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden," in Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth (eds.), *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, 1-24 (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997); On the contestations of core concepts within the notion of *Norden*, such as "Nordic Democracy", see Jussi Kurunmäki and Johan Strang (eds.), *Rhetorics of Nordic Democracy* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2010).

⁸³ H.F. Ulrichsen, *København [Copenhagen]* (Copenhagen: Turistforeningen for Danmark, 1931), 13-21. In 490: 1929 – 1933, *Turistbrochurer* (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

made most progress.” Moreover, they linked the ostensibly “thoroughly democratic” and egalitarian social order to notions of the *folk*, understood as a thoroughly democratic concept, making for “a truly free Kingdom, a country without any great social opposites.”⁸⁴

This understanding was reflected to a certain extent in the German-language brochure from 1936, where the description of the popular monarchy discussed further above featured under the headline “a democratic Kingdom.” In fact, the text holds, Denmark is among Europe’s “most modern democracies.”⁸⁵ Only with the brochure in 1939, however, would an entire page be devoted to the well-orderedness of the country. The manifestation of this order was two-fold: as cleanliness and in the Danish social legislation. The latter, it was understood, “conferred upon the entire Danish nation a happy and peaceful character,” which “hundreds of foreign politicians and national economists study each year.” At the same time, the cooperative movement is described as a unifying force, making “the Danes feel like one single big family.”⁸⁶ As such, the brochure mirrors the construction of an exportable “Nordic model” based on the notion of “Nordic democracy” combined with universalistic socio-political principles that would take shape by the late 1930s as well.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ *Danmarks Turistpropaganda*, 12-13.

⁸⁵ Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Ferien in Dänemark*.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ A lot could be written about the promotion of a specific “Nordic Model” in the late 1930s. Here, however, it will have to suffice to note that this effort began to crystallize towards the end of the 1930s, both in the writings of foreign authors like Marquis W. Childs and Frederick C. Howe among others, and in nationally based efforts to promote and even put on scientific formula the elements that were perceived to belong uniquely to *Norden*. The autochthonous discourse mostly emerged from a social democratic context, for example in the writings of political scientists Herbert Tingsten and Gunnar Myrdal as well as in intense state-initiated promotion. E.g. Jussi Kurunmäki and Johan Strang, “Introduction: ‘Nordic Democracy’ in a World of Tensions’,” in Kurunmäki and Strang, *The Rhetoric of ‘Nordic Democracy’*, 9-36; Carl Marklund, “Sharing Values and Shaping Values: Sweden, ‘Nordic Democracy’, and the American Crisis of Democracy,” in Kurunmäki and Strang, *The Rhetoric of ‘Nordic Democracy’*, 114-140; and Frederik Forrai Ørskov, “Screening The Social Face of Denmark to the Nazis: Social Policy as subdued Resistance during the German Occupation of Denmark,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* (forthcoming); These promotional efforts clearly showcased that national versions of the North existed as they gave rise to a long-lasting Danish-Swedish discursive struggle for hegemonic control over Scandinavian progressivism. See

Finally, the focus on cleanliness resembles what Sofia Eriksson has found in a study of interwar tourism to Sweden. Here, she has shown that visitors traveled to the country with the expectation to find “a space for modernity and progress even prior to their experience of it.” However, such seekers of modernity were not only political pilgrims—journalist travelers such as Marquis W. Childs for example⁸⁸—but also non-political tourists who “emphasized another aspect of cultural modernity; that of cleanliness and racial whiteness.”⁸⁹

According to Eriksson, the obsession with cleanliness among travelers to Sweden as early as the 1920s was partly linked to notions of progress of modernity but also to “an increased popularity of and preoccupation with the Scandinavian race and culture” among English- and German speakers. As such, Eriksson links it to a perceived Nordic body culture and “an athletic lifestyle [which] was explicitly linked to the Nordic blood flowing in their veins.”⁹⁰ In the Danish promotional material, these connections are not made explicitly, but the same brochure emphasizing the cleanliness of the country mentions both the affection for hiking among the Danish youth and the achievements of Danish swimmers at the Berlin Olympics in 1936.⁹¹ Race, body culture, and cleanliness all stood alongside social progressivism and a “modern democracy” to inform the image of Nordic modernity being promoted by the late 1930s.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed the promotional efforts of The Tourist Association for Denmark towards Germany in the 1930s. In general terms, the tourist brochures

Kazimierz Musiał, “Tracing Roots of the Scandinavian Model. Image of Progress in the Era of Modernisation,” *Working papers: Gemenskapen Gemeinschaften 17*, 19-29 (Florence: European University Institute, 1998).

⁸⁸ Marquis W. Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1936).

⁸⁹ Sofia Eriksson, “A Rarity Show of Modernity. Sweden in the 1920s,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 37 (2010), 1: 74-92, quote from 75.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 83-84.

⁹¹ Turistforeningen for Danmark, *Wir treffen uns in Dänemark* (Copenhagen: Egmont, 1939). In 491: 1934 – 1937, Turistbrochurer (1923-1986), Danmarks Turistråd, Rigsarkivet.

analyzed here developed from featuring highly romanticized language and visual imagery rooted in nineteenth century tourist culture in the late 1920s to include a relatively large proportion of commercialized and forward-looking discourse by the end of the 1930s. This latter discourse featured elements linked to the commercial, statist, and “popular” interest represented in TAD in various configurations before and after its re-organization in 1935. By the end of the decade, the marketers at TAD would make commercial and statist elements increasingly prominent in the material; perhaps unsurprising, given—as shown in Chapter 2—that the funding of TAD after its reorganization predominantly came from these sources. Romanticized and past-oriented imagery and descriptions along with a recognition of the fascination for the North that drove many visitors to the country would not disappear entirely, however. Rather, it would combine with notions of social progress, modern infrastructure and comfort as well as modern living (in the form of the Capital’s amusement and bicycling cultures, for example) to constitute a peculiar image of the nation in the promotional material.

The act of national characterization analyzed here was shaped by the basic fact that the promotional material was created with a German audience in mind. Comparing the material aimed at the German tourist to the Anglophone versions of the same brochures, I have shown that the former did indeed feed upon a Nordicism tourism imaginary to a greater extent. While blond women were pervasive in all of TAD’s marketing from mid-century onwards, romanticized landscape descriptions and symbols, often related to notions related to a perceived authentic *völkisch* culture, were undoubtedly more pronounced in the German material. Despite these differences, however, the promotional material analyzed here did not utilize tourism imaginaries related to Nordicism and Nordic race theory to nearly the same extent as did the Nazified *Nordische Gesellschaft* in its promotional efforts.

TAD's promotional material, instead, would eventually shed more and more of its former romanticized discourse and visual imagery in favor of a discourse of Nordic modernity quite different from, if not entirely uninfluenced by, the images related to Nordicism. The re-organization of TAD seemingly only reinforced this trend. The professionalization of the organization, and the increased resources allocated to its promotional efforts, did not amount to much more than a subtle accommodation to its audience in Nazi Germany. Rather, in TAD's promotional material aimed at Germany in the 1930s an exercise was carried out in which the image of what constituted Denmark and Danish character was negotiated through the perceived need to represent and promote the country abroad.

Conclusion

Tourist Record – If the War had not come

(Headline in the Newspaper *Bornholms Social-Demokrat*, November 28, 1939)

The outbreak of the Second World War effectively stemmed the stream of German tourists flowing Northwards to Denmark. Although those serving in Denmark for the *Wehrmacht* would largely perceive the country—or the *Sahnefront* [cream front] as it was called among soldiers¹—as a holiday from the war of sorts, regular tourism in Denmark would be restricted to Danes exploring their own country, mostly by bike or on foot.²

The war, however, capped off a decade full with development in regards to tourism. In this study, I have argued that tourism from Germany to Denmark did not decrease with the rise of Nazism in the 1930s. Instead, the numbers of German tourists to Denmark would be contingent on the amount of currency German citizens were allowed to carry out of the country. In years when an agreement was negotiated successfully between the governments of the two countries, tourists would travel to Denmark in quite substantive numbers. To a large extent, traveling between the two countries continued as before; as such, this study aligns with recent works by scholars such as Kristin Semmens on tourism—and, more broadly, consumption—in Nazi Germany, highlighting the seemingly normality of everyday life, which served to lend legitimacy and political capital to the Hitlerite regime.³

¹ E.g. Claus Bundgård Christensen et. al., *Danmark Besat. Krig og Hverdag, 1940-45 [Denmark Occupied. War and Everyday Life, 1940-45]*, 4th ed. (Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 2015), 352.

² See Hans Joakim Schultz, *Dansk Turisme i 100 år [Danish Tourism through 100 years]* (Aarhus: Danmarks Turistråd, 1988).

³ E.g. Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); S. Jonathan Wiesen, *Creating the Nazi Marketplace: Commerce and Consumption in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

In a sense, geography served as a way to mitigate ideological differences in the portrayal of Denmark to tourists in Germany. The tourism imaginaries connected to Nordicism and Nordic race theory outlined in this study could—and did to a certain extent—act as a bridge over the Baltic Sea which forestalled, or at least disguised, ideological differences. Especially through the framework around the *Nordische Gesellschaft* in Lübeck, but also in part via the brochures produced and distributed by the Tourist Association for Denmark [TAD], Denmark was portrayed in terms ringing true with a long but recently radicalized tradition of Nordicism. However, in its most radical shape, namely the Nordic race theory popularized by Hans F. K. Günther and his apostles, Nordicism would only appear subtly in the aesthetic profiles of the people depicted in the brochures.

It is noteworthy that the development of the promotional material after the Nazi rise to power, as traced in this study, was one in which the presence of Nordic romanticism decreased rather than increased. Neither did the re-organization and professionalization of TAD in 1935 facilitate a Nazification of the visual and textual language of the organization's German-language tourist brochures. To be sure, romanticist notions did remain in the promotional material just as idealist representatives of local and provincial interests retained some influence in the new institutional set-up. In fact, at the end of the decade Nordicist notions would be more pronounced in brochures written with the German traveler in mind than those aimed at British tourists. That being said, my analysis of TAD's tourist brochures has shown that these notions were not nearly as dominating in 1939 as they had been a decade earlier.

The romantic tourism imaginaries were replaced by markedly modern notions linked to free-spirited entertainment, comfortable tourist infrastructure (such as hotels, bridges, and railroads), as well as social progress and democracy. Intertwined with these

emerging visual and textual elements, however, were portrayals of a Nordic body culture and an emphasis on order and cleanliness, both of which carried racial and gendered connotations linked to the image of the North. While this image of the Nordic countries and their populations was far from confined to Germany (and, I would argue—although that is the subject of another study—exists in an altered form to this day), its presence went well with favorable images of the North among potential German visitors.

Yet, what emerged in the promotional material of the 1930s was generally not ideologically adapted to a German audience, despite—as I have shown—a significant increase in influence over the promotional efforts abroad of those parts of TAD who held economic interests in tourism. Why did TAD not go even further in its efforts to sell the nation to one of its potentially largest markets? The above study has hinted at two different but compatible answers to that question. First of all, because German tourists seemingly kept coming despite political or ideological differences: to a large degree, traveling continued as before. German visitors would continue to find respite from everyday life as they went on trips to the North. Secondly, the progressive notions that emerged as part of a new image of *Norden* were increasingly seen as distinctive outside the sphere of tourism. While the early tourist marketers dealt with here were far from unified around any political position, they were often proud patriots who saw the nation's uniqueness in foreign visitor's appreciation of the Nordic modern in its Danish alteration. This image—along with the tourist infrastructure emerging from the re-organized tourist landscape—would be foundational for the tourist industry that would flourish as once Europe reemerged from the war.

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