

Resilience, Uncertainty and Local Periodicals: Making Sense of Agency in Two Small Towns in Czechoslovakia (1928–1943)

Jaroslav Ira

DOI: 10.21104/CL.2024.2.04

Abstract

This article explores how local media constructed resilience and agency in two small towns in interwar Czechoslovakia. It explores how small towns were represented as actors capable of coping with structural disadvantages and of navigating through the uncertainties of the turbulent period of the “long” 1930s. The research focuses on two towns, Kdyně and Heřmanův Městec, and presents the content analysis of two periodicals, *Kdyňská Stráž* (The Kdyně Argus) and *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* (The Heřmanův Městec Affairs). The comparative analysis of the periodicals’ agendas, the narratives of the towns, the towns’ relationship to a larger system, and the framing of major challenges during the analyzed period has unveiled common traits as well as differing strategies in creating a sense of agency: an internally- and individually-oriented discourse in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* and an externally and collectively oriented discourse in *Kdyňská Stráž*.

Key words

small towns, resilience, agency, uncertainty, local media, regional development

Acknowledgment

This publication was supported by the Cooperatio Program provided by Charles University, research area “History”, implemented at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University.

Contact

Mgr. Jaroslav Ira, Ph.D., Charles University, Faculty of Arts, Institute of World History, Nám. Jana Palacha 1/2, 116 38 Praha 1, Czech Republic;
e-mail: jaroslav.ira@ff.cuni.cz
ORCID iD 0000-0002-3686-1801

Jak citovat / How to cite

Ira, Jaroslav. 2024. Resilience, Uncertainty and Local Periodicals: Making Sense of Agency in Two Small Towns in Czechoslovakia (1928–1943). *Český lid* 111: 221–244. <https://doi.org/10.21104/CL.2024.2.04>

Introduction

This article explores how the resilience of small towns was constructed in interwar Czechoslovakia. It seeks to understand how a sense of agency was created, that is, how small towns were constructed in media as actors capable of coping with structural disadvantages, and of navigating through the uncertainties of the turbulent period of the “long” 1930s. Rather than tracing how the towns actually coped with the challenges, the focus here is on the ways in which their resilience was framed by local media. The research focuses on two towns, Kdyně and Heřmanův Městec, and on the comparative content analysis of two local periodicals, *Kdyňská Stráž* (The Kdyně Argus, 1928–1941) and *Žámy Heřmanoměstecka* (The Heřmanův Městec Affairs, 1929–1943), that aspired to become key promoters of the interests of the respective towns and the surrounding micro-regions.

Though basically a historical study, at the intersection of urban and media history, the article aims to contribute to contemporary debates on the development of regions and small towns which seems all the more pertinent due to persistent, and even increasing, regional disparities recently described by the umbrella term “left-behind places” (Fiorentino et al. 2024) and also due to failing regional development policies. The article thus addresses recent calls to examine (economic) urban imaginaries as a factor affecting the development of small towns, including “in what ways the current urban imaginaries on future development privilege metropolises and how do small cities try to develop alternative ways of thinking urbanity” (Lorentzen – van Heur 2012: 12), which in turn also requires research on local media as producers of such imaginaries. At the same time, the research presented here is only one part of a larger research project on how small towns coped with modernity in the early 20th century. The focus is thus narrowed down to one particular aspect, namely how the sense of agency was discursively created in two small towns and in what ways these constructions varied, while leaving aside other – though closely related – aspects that will be discussed in more detail elsewhere; these include what images the small towns created of themselves, or how the places were perceived, imagined or represented in diverse media, including fine art. Furthermore, the sources examined here are limited to the respective periodicals, though the discourse of resilience was (re)produced in a larger pool of texts. This is partly a deliberate choice as it foregrounds the role of a particular type of local periodical in regional resilience building.

The theoretical underpinning builds on recent debates on regional resilience, urban agency and uncertainty. Resilience has originally referred to the capacity of a system to recover after a shock, such as a disaster,

and to restore its pre-shock structure and vital functions (for an overview of the concept in the urban context, see Burayidi et al. 2020). From the perspective of urban planning and regional economy, which is adopted in this study, an evolutionary understanding of resilience is more useful as it renders resilience as the ability of a system to adapt to change, or as a system's adaptability that entails its capacity to set out on a new path (e.g. Pike – Dawley – Tomaney 2010; Simmie – Martin 2010; Mehmood 2016), while also stressing the importance of human agency and the role of manifold actors in producing resilient systems, such as small regions (Bristow – Healy 2014). Furthermore, a constructivist approach is adopted here as it is suited for exploring how perceptions and understandings of resilience and vulnerability have been discursively produced in the particular historical and socio-spatial settings (Christmann – Kilper – Ibert 2019). The language of resilience and the ways in which the towns, their inhabitants and broader contexts were discursively structured, related to or evoked are the focus of this study.

Uncertainty may refer to the universal condition of our ignorance about what the future brings, and in the context of decision making, about the outcomes of our actions (Hall 2023). From the perspective of resilience, uncertainty can also be understood in terms of a highly volatile and unpredictable environment. Here it relates especially to the Great Depression and the unstable world order, but also to policymaking at the state level that suddenly changed conditions for small towns, such as the territorial administration reform in 1928. Sociologists also provide more historically specific explanations; some claim that uncertainty is a key trait of “liquid modernity” that came after “solid modernity” (Bauman 2007) while others argue that uncertainty was temporarily reduced to some degree in the era of “organized modernity”, following the era of liberal modernity (Wagner 1994). In any case, this research focuses on a period that was extremely volatile and at the same time embedded in the “solid” or “organized” modernity characterized by the belief in progress, planning, and relative controllability of the social world.

Urban agency refers to the concept according to which the urban sphere is the driver of social processes and co-producer of structures, rather than merely their product or a passive backdrop against which formative processes play out. Some of those working with this concept have suggested that cities and towns, imagined as bounded entities, are agents of their own and although this conceptualization has undergone revisions (e.g. Brantz 2017), urban experience abounds with efforts by various actors to create a sense of collective agency, with the town in the role of a collective quasi-actor and the focus of social efforts mobilized for its sake. Building

on the understanding of agency as “the socially determined capability to act and to make a difference”, or the ability of “the enactment of X rather than Y course of action” (Barker 2004: 4), the sense of small-town agency is here understood more specifically as an idea, produced discursively and more or less accepted by recipients, that a small town, or small towns as a specific category of settlement, can navigate their future in spite of structural disadvantages and unfavourable conditions.

Importantly, Barker also reminds us of the uneven distribution of social resources that results in the unequal abilities of various actors to act (Barker 2002: 91). This also pertains to small towns as they constitute a specific category of settlements that are relatively disadvantaged in modern economies of scale and centralization. The scarcity of resources, such as industry, financial capital, jobs, political and administrative power, but also of culture and the lure of the metropolitan places, has weakened small towns both in relation to the larger systems and also in its inhabitants’ eyes, as the small town partly loses the capacity to serve as a place of attachment, a locus for investment of social energies, and even as a site for living, being haunted by outmigration. However, recent scholarship on modern and contemporary small towns has partly complicated this image, emphasizing the persisting role of small towns in the settlement structure, their attractiveness and their potential as an alternative urbanity; we find many success stories of adaptation, specialization, and resilience building, and even accounts of new opportunities in post-industrial societies (e.g. Zimmermann 2004; Bański 2022; Noronha Vaz – Leeuwen – Nijkamp 2013; Bell – Jayne 2006; Klusáková – del Espino 2021; Nell – Weiland 2020; Mayer – Knox 2010). Some authors have called small towns marginalized towns, though this experience has also nurtured a “culture of marginality”, a sort of social capital that includes strong social ties and appreciation of small-town qualities that has helped small towns to survive (Hannemann 2004: 311–312). Discourses of resilience often bolster this culture by appealing to the sense of community, mutuality, and common interests, but as this article reveals, they can also challenge the sense of marginality by advocating for the interests of small towns vis-à-vis the larger system, or even by calling for the transformation of that system and by the imaginative subversion of spatial asymmetries.

As regards the overall approach and methodology, the research is qualitative and in its essence it is a historical comparative analysis that traces certain ideational patterns in a relatively longer period and within a complex and dynamic historical context. The comparison is case-oriented (della Porta 2008) and it primarily aims to contrast the patterns of resilience building as conveyed in the researched periodicals. The content analysis covered

the topics in the leading articles in all issues (one to three in each issue) and this helped reconstruct agendas and their variations over time in the periodicals. This approach also played a role in selecting articles particularly relevant for the research question, such as articles focusing on local development and its preconditions or barriers, articles conveying narratives on the towns' fates and articles addressing broader challenges and disturbances in this period. These articles were then analyzed in more detail using several methods, namely narrative analysis (Finnegan 1998), discourse analysis (Lindekilde 2014; Reisigl 2018) and frame analysis (Lindekilde 2014), with each focusing on a particular aspect of the researched topic: the narrative construction of towns as collective agents and the stories of the development trajectories of particular towns, the appearance of relatively coherent sequences of discursive fragments related to a particular social problem, i.e. the resilience of small towns, which also covers particular language tools and the ways in which the problem and major challenges were framed and interpreted.

Small towns and their periodicals

The towns were selected because they represent similar, yet in some respects contrasting cases. Heřmanův Městec and Kdyně were two small towns of a similar size and position in the urban network. Furthermore, for selection purposes towns with an identical ethnic profile (with a predominantly Czech population) were preferred to eliminate the intervening factor of ethno-nationalist issues. Yet, the towns also differed in terms of developmental trajectories and this adds complexity to how the discourses of resilience and agency were affected by divergent experiences. Kdyně, located in southwestern Bohemia and close to the border with Germany, was a semi-company town, with a big textile factory and some other industries in the otherwise rural countryside. It was the seat of a judicial district, which started to erode after the reforms of 1928 and ultimately waned away by 1947. The town had 2,756 inhabitants in 1930. Heřmanův Městec, located more centrally in eastern Bohemia, was slightly bigger than Kdyně (3,969 inhabitants in 1930) but had no district offices. Unlike Kdyně, which grew moderately since the 19th century, this town faced a steady shrinkage of its population, following the decline of its small-scale industries, especially shoemaking (for the basic profiles of both towns, see Kuča 1997). Furthermore, Kdyně was included as a somewhat particular case of a small town in which the very notion of “smallness” and the role of small towns in modern society was negotiated with particular intensity. In the context of interwar Czechoslovakia, Kdyně sometimes served as a role model of an aspiring

small town, especially in terms of cultural activity (e.g. Navrátil 1928). In contrast, Heřmanův Městec was arguably a more representative case of an ordinary small town, in which, however, similar problems were solved, such as striving for the central function in the micro-regional setting, economic reorientation and cultural uplifting. Both towns competed with the nearby and larger district towns, Domažlice and Chrudim respectively, while trying to capitalize on the surrounding landscape and the rise of leisure, both towns sought to become leisure destinations and approved resorts. Another important methodological consideration for the inclusion of Heřmanův Městec as a counterpart to Kdyně was the existence of a periodical of the same kind and covering a similar time period, which enabled a more solid and even comparison.

The years 1928 and 1943, which mark the time frame of the analysis, refer to the founding and the demise of the periodicals in question. Furthermore, they coincide with the reform of territorial administration in Czechoslovakia (1927/1928) and the beginning of the Great Depression (1929) on the one hand, and the harshening of Nazi occupation after Heydrich's assassination in 1942, on the other. Administrative reform introduced with the so-called Organizational Act (for details see Hledíková – Janák – Dobeš 2007; Schelle 2019) brought greater centralization in favour of larger towns and affected particularly small towns such as Kdyně that were seats of judicial districts. Clearly, the period also witnessed two pervasive and protracted crises linked to the global economy and world politics, respectively: the Great Depression and the failure of the international order (the so-called Versailles System), which led to the Munich Agreement, the formation of the Second (Czechoslovak) Republic, and finally the occupation of what remained of Czechoslovakia (summarily, e.g. Heimann 2009; Hájková et al. 2018).

Just like the towns, the periodicals were in many aspects comparable. Both were the sort of provincial press that declared itself non-political and non-partisan or rather, as media that welcomed cooperation across all local parties and social classes. Their major declared aim was to pursue the interests of the covered microregions, Kdyňsko and Heřmanoměstecko, of which the towns were seen as cultural and economic centres. *Kdyňská Stráž* appeared from 1928 to April 1941, originally as a weekly, and from 14 July 1934 as a bi-weekly. *Zájmy Heřmanoměstecka* emerged in 1929 as a bi-weekly and was in circulation until March 1943. Their form and structure were similar as well, with a few leading articles and feuilletons followed by reports on local matters and classifieds.

In some respects, however, the periodicals differed. *Kdyňská Stráž* was run by a local print company owner, Alois Krutský, but from its inception its co-founder Jaroslav Štěpánek played a major role; he also served as

editor-in-chief from 1930 to July 1931. An attorney by profession, Štěpánek was a key protagonist of the regionalist movement nationwide, while also serving as head of a rather ambitious District Enlightenment Board (*Okresní sbor osvětový*) and a member of many other local and regional associations. This helps explain the ambitions and the broader agenda and outreach of the periodical, as discussed in the next section, and as also declared in Štěpánek's manifesto-type editorial (Štěpánek 1930). Furthermore, he was a member of the Agrarian Party (*Republikánská strana zemědělského a maloroľnického lidu*), a major right-wing political party in Czechoslovakia, and involved in local politics, including as deputy mayor between 1937 and 1939 (e.g. Koutník 1936–1941: 318). The periodical therefore sometimes became the target of other print media, such as *Český Směr*, a daily of the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party (*Československá strana národně socialistická*) in western Bohemia, which partly served as a platform for more left-leaning contributors from Kdyně, and that sometimes suspected *Kdyňská Stráž* of serving as a covert platform of the Agrarian Party or right-wing parties more broadly (e.g. *Kdyňská stráž* 1929). Some authors also associate the periodical with the right-wing party of National Democracy (*Československá národní demokracie*) (Kubíček 2004, vol. 2: 42). Still, many political adversaries contributed to it as well. The range of authors was rather wide and diverse, with many of them from the outside, such as fellow regionalists or intellectuals who visited Kdyně and gave public lectures there. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* was likewise founded by a local print company owner, Josef Moravec, but was directed more collectively by the board of editors headed by a local teacher Jan Rayman. The number of authors was smaller than in *Kdyňská Stráž* and mostly comprised of people closely connected to the town. Out of the identifiable authors, the one who often raised the issue of local development was Josef Plavec, Jr., composer, teacher of music and later professor of musicology, whose father Josef Plavec, Sr., owner of a shoemaking factory, had served as mayor of the town between 1908 and 1919 and was active in its cultural life (Kobetič 2002: 172–173). Like *Kdyňská Stráž*, this periodical was likewise linked to the cultural, political and economic elites of the town.

Though provincial and local periodicals remain an under-researched topic, a few interesting studies have appeared that address their social functions, which include regional identity-building and local myth-making (Willis 2021), the formation of a critical civic consciousness (O'Reilly 2020a) or the making of a community of readers around a shared place (O'Reilly 2020b). From the regional resilience perspective, studies on how local periodicals acted in the wake of social change and structural transformation such as deindustrialization are particularly revealing as in a declining small

town adaptation involves the re-orientation of mindsets toward different aspirations (Prowse 2012). Nevertheless, some scholars demonstrated that the declared objectives of the provincial press, such as serving the common good or making sense of normalcy and empathy with local readerships in times of hardship, may have concealed more prosaic motives behind news production, namely the commercial interests of the periodicals' publishers (Hodgson – Matthews 2021; Matthews 2017).

In line with the above, the periodicals are approached as socially productive media that, far from merely bringing news to local readers or chronicling local life, actively shaped local mindsets, produced particular knowledge and mobilized local communities in the name of regional interests. Of course, their impact should not be overemphasized, not least since they were only a minor part of media landscapes and of far more complex communication channels in both towns. Furthermore, they were – at least until the autumn of 1938 – by no means a uniform voice, which complicates their analysis or search for one particular direction. Typically, the periodicals gave voice to speakers from different political camps, though preferences for certain leanings were sometimes evident. In addition, they were not the official voice of municipal governments.

Notwithstanding these caveats, the periodicals provide an invaluable insight into the discursive means of resilience building and that in the framing and imagining of reality (what is going on; how the world works) and also in the language of social actors' agency (what we can do; what we shall do; where we should act). In what follows, these two aspects are pursued through an examination of four sub-themes: the agendas set in leading articles; the narratives about the towns conveyed in the periodicals; the image of the towns as collective actors in their larger environments; and the strategies of re-assurance and mobilization in the context of particular challenges and disturbances.

The agenda of the periodicals

Both periodicals repeatedly defined pursuing local and regional development as their major aim. The scope and focus were delineated accordingly, and partly in contrast to the regional party-based newspapers, national news, or regional periodicals with a broader scope. Yet, the analysis of the leading articles reveals that the agenda wasn't at all limited to local themes. At the risk of simplifying, we may divide the articles into three broad categories: a) those related to local and regional matters; b) those dealing with events happening at the levels of state and nation, world politics, and economy; and c) articles concerning universal topics, such as culture or modern lifestyle. Understandably, the categories often overlapped, such

as in an article addressing the local impacts of and the responses to the Great Depression. Still, it is important to highlight that many articles in both periodicals covered *non*-local themes and events.

However, the supra-regional agenda did not break away from the local news genre, rather the periodicals deliberately focused on it. The articles were reminders that the towns and regions are part of larger processes and structures and that there are factors and conditions beyond local control. At the same time, they strengthened the sense of agency in terms of commenting on broader issues at the local level and from a local perspective, a topic that deserves further and more systematic research. Significantly, most of the articles were not mere news reports but rather analytical, normative and sometimes mobilizing texts that sought to make sense of the crises of the period, engage in critical assessments of politics at national and global levels, and encourage certain approaches. Sometimes the periodicals even facilitated an exchange of views, such as on the pros and cons of democracy. This changed in the case of measures to defend democracy in 1933 and 1935, but especially with the Second Republic, the establishment of the Protectorate, and the outbreak of World War II. At these points the agenda and its framing yielded to censorship and the official approach of the respective regimes (Bednařík – Jiráček – Köpplová 2019), which undermined free criticism, although following the Munich Agreement with the delegitimization of the First Republic, some of the old themes, such as a critique of representative democracy and especially of the party system, were re-introduced (Rataj 1997; Jiráček et al. 2016).

The local agenda in the leading articles can be further divided into a) the coverage of extraordinary local events; b) topics that helped create a sense of place and community, such as descriptions of the places, celebratory or commemorative texts related to famous locals or important associations, or articles about local history; c) topics of urban and regional development, which the periodicals declared as their core agenda, and which are of particular interest for this research. The focus on urban and regional development oscillated over time. In *Žájezy Heřmanoměstceka*, the agenda was salient from the inception of the periodical until 1934 but it almost disappeared in 1935 and 1936 when national and international topics prevailed. Local development was covered only in a few articles on improving local tourism. The agenda appeared with a renewed intensity in 1937, stimulated by the President's recognition of regionalism (Moravec 1937a; 1937b) and it became even more pronounced immediately after the Munich crisis in September 1938. In *Kdyňská Stráž*, the urban and regional agenda was more evenly distributed, though (inter)national and European politics and the global economy dominated in the middle of the decade as well.

But what markedly differentiated *Kdyňská Stráž* from its counterpart was considerably more focus on issues of social, economic and cultural development that went beyond the town. For instance, in *Kdyňská Stráž* in the early 1930s several articles on the role of small towns in society were written by authors active beyond the locality, they included the professor of sociology Inocenc Arnošt Bláha at the newly established university in Brno who devoted some of his career to research on the characteristics of small towns and whose articles were republished in *Kdyně* (e.g. Bláha 1930). Throughout this period a number of articles appeared on self-government and the badly designed structure of territorial administration (e.g. Chudoba 1930; Blahník 1930). Numerous articles also appeared on regionalism, many of them discussed this movement and ideology in general terms without relating it to *Kdyně*. This reflected the periodical's ambition to serve as a platform for regionalists nationwide and *Kdyně's* aspiration to function as one of the centres in which Czechoslovak regionalism was organized and theorized (Ira [2025]).

Articles on regionalism, of course, sporadically appeared in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstce* as well. In 1931 the two periodicals cross referenced each other when the editor-in-chief of *Kdyňská Stráž* responded to a reference to *Kdyně* as a role model of an active small town that should be followed, the response was published in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstce* on 7 March and the periodical also reprinted his article on regionalism in the next three issues. The regionalist articles, however, were included due to local interests that appropriated regionalism as a framework for mobilizing local energies; overall the periodical focused on the town and its region. In contrast, *Kdyně's* periodical aimed to serve as a platform for intellectual exchange beyond the region. More importantly, in terms of resilience, the agenda and the ways in which the articles were written, reflected a different strategy, one that aspired to reimagine and ultimately transform the larger system, i.e. to promote and introduce a vision of the state based on regionalist ideology. Furthermore, the articles that mainly focused on *Kdyně's* interests and troubles *vis-à-vis* adversary state policies were often framed as the collective reasoning of small towns, an endangered type of settlement, that share common problems. The fifth section of this article further explores the external and collective framing in *Kdyně* and the opposite more internal and individual framing in Heřmanův Městec.

Narratives of the towns

Narratives are essential to urban experience. Various actors create tales about a city, more general stories, such as those connected to urban theory

and development and particular stories, such as the personal narratives of urban dwellers which make up the narrative universe of the city (Finnegan 1998). The researched periodicals (re)produced such narratives as well. What concerns us here are the overarching stories of the towns' fates and recent narratives of collective achievements. The former were conveyed in articles on local history but also indirectly in those on current issues in local development. The latter included promotional texts as well as self-congratulatory articles on recent achievements or critical ones on failures. Both kinds of stories served resilience building in many ways: they taught that although uncertainty and unfavourable circumstances were integral to urban experience, towns were also long-lasting entities capable of surviving, adapting to, and even profiting from changing conditions provided appropriate actions were taken. Furthermore, local history is often used as an encouragement for the present by recalling the glorious past and historical collective achievements. Finally, local history evokes and makes sense of social change and thus helps facilitate adaptation to new conditions (e.g. Thomas 2020, chapter 6).

In Kdyně, the main narrative captured the success story of a place that developed from a small settlement into a small but thriving industrial town in the 19th century and eventually to the seat of a judicial district and a place with a vivid cultural life. The town's growth continued well into the 1920s, however, the situation changed dramatically in 1927 when the judicial district status began to crumble. From that moment, the story changed if not into an outright disaster, then at least to an uncertain future with the permanent threat of decline and a downgrading to the status of a village:

Thinking about the future of our town leaves one speechless. The wonderful promise of economic development in the post-revolutionary years came to a sudden end in 1927 with the abolition of self-governing districts in towns that were not the seat of the political district administration. That was the first step towards economic recession which has since been getting closer and closer, one step at a time. Everything that had been built for many decades and formed the town's and the district's economic base was reversed almost overnight and at that moment the town's development began to reverse. (Dočkáme se nápravy? 1936: 1)

Notwithstanding the Great Depression and the Munich crisis, it was the loss of the status of a district that was seen and narrated, even retrospectively (e.g. Žárný 1948: 10), as the critical challenge. The story of steady growth interrupted by ill-fated state policies was complemented with strong self-confident narratives of local advancement and collective

achievements reproduced in *Kdyňská Stráž* as well as in other media (most comprehensively in Blahník – Štěpánek – Soukup 1941). Despite occasional criticisms (missing lighting, delayed electrification) and political divisions in the town, these created an overarching image of locally-driven advancement, evidenced in urban improvement, growth of tourism infrastructures, integration of regional economy and especially in the cultural boom that turned Kdyně into a town with vibrant cultural and intellectual life.

The story that prevailed in Heřmanův Městec was of a town that had seen better times in the past and was experiencing a prolonged decline. The initial ambitions of the founders of the town were undermined by the Thirty Years War and its aftermath. In the middle of the 19th century, the town lost its administrative role which it did not manage to regain. The late 19th century brought a short-lived boom in shoemaking and leather processing that was reflected in demographic changes and the town's physical growth. Nevertheless, it declined due to competition with large-scale manufacturers such as the Baťa company that occasionally featured as an enemy. The town's economic decline, reflected in the steadily declining population, was accelerated by the Great Depression. (e.g. P. F. 1934; beyond the periodical, e.g. Moravec – Moravec – Plavec 1939: 6–7).

Yet the narratives were anything but nostalgic memories of the bygone past or demotivating stories. On the contrary, the implied messages were those of hope in a better future, of the town's ongoing robustness and even of the lasting legacy of grand plans made in the distant past and the urge to follow these: *“When our ancestors created such a spacious square in front of the church, already back then they must have envisioned a glorious future for the town of Heřmanův Městec.”* (Moravec 1942: 1) And though the glorious future had not materialized by 1942, when the town celebrated the 500th anniversary of its founding, it was yet to come provided that the memory of the past motivated the current population: *“Half a millennium is worth recalling. Let us now unite all the positive forces in our town to establish better living conditions for the next half of the millennium.”* (Ibid: 2) Crucially, the lessons to be learned were those of the meaningfulness of local action but also of the necessity to adapt, to tap into new opportunities and be ready for a time when conditions change:

We must not be passive observers of the situation developing in our country because we could miss a favourable moment for re-instating order [...]. We have to be watchful everywhere and in everything so that our town and the region of the Železné Hory can emerge from the current crisis as well as we would like. (K dnešku 1931: 1)

Unlike in Kdyně, the stories of collective achievements in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstceka* were more nuanced. There were voices of praise, such as celebratory articles about the recent history of cultural associations, a few new buildings built in the 1920s (a church and a sports hall for the Sokol association), some other improvements as well as a new outdoor swimming pool that was to become the driver of the leisure industry. Yet, there were also critical comments that appeared in some of the leading articles about opportunities not taken and unfulfilled opportunities. These included the failure to implement the urban regulation plan prepared in the 1930s by Emanuel Hruška and mediated by a local native and Prague-based urban planner Rudolf Zelenka who occasionally contributed to the periodical; the chronic inability to link the town and its rural surroundings through cultural, economic and educational institutions; the ineffective promotion of the locality and the fragmentation of cultural life.

Imagining the towns and their contexts

Apart from providing encouragement, the stories conveyed what was to be seen as the critical threats and challenges, namely economic decline (Heřmanův Městec) and the undermining of central administrative roles (Kdyně). Furthermore, they implied how to understand the relationships between the towns and their broader contexts. And finally, they also helped clarify where action should be taken to respond to actual or perceived risks. Like the agendas, the narratives were in part shaped by the divergent strategies promoted by the periodicals. These strategies differed mainly in where to cope with unfavourable conditions.

Overall, three responses were proposed: a) to change the town's internal qualities; b) to change the town's position within the larger system and c) to change the qualities of the external system. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstceka* strongly emphasized the first option, reflected in recurring appeals to the community and efforts to mobilize local actors to make improvements in the urban space and infrastructures, to develop cultural activities and promote the place or to redirect the local economy to alternative paths, such as leisure or food industry, while ignoring the third option. In contrast, in *Kdyňská Stráž*, it was the third option that was foregrounded most, framed as the struggle for a more decentralized administrative system, while the appeals to improve internal conditions were much less pronounced. In terms of the second option, both periodicals presented improvements to the town's individual position in the larger systems as important, however, it was conceived as more instrumental in the case of Kdyně and they were also framed differently.

In *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, the dominant frame was the individual relationship between the town and the larger system, with the image of a town that has been ignored by the external world. In one of the most eloquent examples, the relationship was framed in terms of asymmetries and the desired but non-existent reciprocity.

Are we to blame for the fact that we lag behind regions that we once surpassed in many ways? No, we are only partly to blame. We are part of a whole but that whole ignores us. We don't have anyone anywhere who would speak up for us, who would – in appropriate places – put Heřmanův Městec with its surroundings on the map of the republic. The town fulfils its obligations, it pays taxes and works for the good of the whole and therefore it is necessary that something is given to Městec and its surroundings to enable them to be even more useful to the whole. (Naše bolesti 1930: 1)

However, this excerpt illustrates that rather than targeting the system, the message was ultimately for the community to increase its efforts at promoting the town and – in the case of influential locals working for the central government – to lobby for it.

Kdyňská Stráž had a different strategy that can be illustrated with the article “We protest” which was written in reaction to planned regulation on Czechoslovak localities that can hold livestock fairs. While the response was driven by the fear of losing yet another institution that made Kdyně a town rather than a big village – the insurance office and district offices were already closed and the tax office was the potential target – the article addressed the larger context and framed the local problem as part of an ill-designed system. “*It is the unhealthy system of centralization that is constantly harming us.*” (Protestujeme 1935: 1) Though an individual thread ran through the criticism with Domažlice featuring as the unfairly prioritized and always victorious enemy, it was articulated in line with many other articles in the periodical (e.g. Vilímec 1935) in the collective language of the needs and misfortunes of small towns and was framed by a wider argument about a system that violates the foundations of Czechoslovak democracy: “*This system, which favours larger towns and stifles the flourishing of others, is not democratic, it is not fair, and it is also harmful to the state itself as it violates the natural balance of its internal structure.*” (Protestujeme 1935: 2) The sharp criticism of the external system, i.e. of the centralizing policies, was tellingly contrasted with a positive image of the local community, portrayed as progressive citizens who cared for their town and loved their state:

The town of Kdyně is known throughout western Bohemia for its dynamic cultural life and considerable progress which is particularly noticeable in the town's improved appearance since the revolution. The vast majority of Kdyně's citizens are progressive people who like their town and who also sincerely love their state. That's why they find it hard to tolerate Kdyně suffering one injustice after another. (Ibid: 1)

This idealized image of Kdyně's community was instrumental in highlighting the contrast between the evils of the external system – that needed to be addressed first – and the local efforts that were destined to fail if the system was not corrected. It would be a mistake, however, to understand this image as a sociological depiction of the town. In fact, Kdyně was readily represented as a highly structured and politically diversified community in the periodical, for instance, in articles on elections (e.g. *Do voleb 1932*); this somewhat reflected the realities of an industrial semi-factory town. In contrast, in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, the community of Heřmanův Městec was typically addressed as “one family”, united by common interests and articulated in the language of “us”. This also translated into a stronger emphasis on the negative impact of political partisanship on the local community, while in *Kdyňská Stráž* the local political divisions were taken for granted. Yet, we should not overemphasize these differences. The differing imaginaries, I argue, often resulted from the different agency building strategies rather than from fundamentally different perceptions of the small towns in the periodicals and by their contributors.

Un/certainty and social mobilization

Both periodicals assured their readers that smallness as such was not a limiting factor for small-town agency. For instance, a leading article in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* explained that “*even in a small country town or in a village, good and big goals can be achieved if there are enough capable and dedicated individuals*” (Plavec 1929: 1). Beyond these structural givens, the periodicals had to create a sense of agency in the face of two large-scale crises, the Great Depression, and the breakdown of the international system that resulted in a failed state.

The Great Depression became a widely covered theme in both periodicals. Reflecting the unpredictable nature of the crisis, the articles varied in their use of language from uncertainty and gloomy certainty through hope in an imminent improvement to the pessimistic language of no change to be expected. Both periodicals also made it repeatedly clear to their audiences that the Great Depression was a structural crisis on the global scale, its

resolution was not within the towns' remit and they could only mitigate its consequences. A contributor to *Kdyňská Stráž*, who served as a municipal secretary and was also an active member of the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party (a distinct version of socialism), made this argument in his article on unemployment:

We are not so naive that we would believe that we ourselves can eliminate unemployment in Kdynsko. All national economists, politicians and even philosophers believe the same, the contemporary crisis [...] is global in nature. And so unemployment, a phenomenon linked to the economic crisis, cannot be evaluated and indeed solved from the narrow local point of view. (Šmíd 1932: 1)

Despite this, the author nevertheless refuted “hopeless passivity”, in his view typical of old liberalism and its mechanical view of society, and pleaded instead for human agency, imperative for building a better social order and necessary for helping the unemployed even in the limited conditions of the district. But it was in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, where the reassuring discourse of agency was deployed and this is in line with broader inward-oriented strategy of resilience building. Many articles thus tried to mobilize the local population precisely in the context of the crisis and in the seemingly deadlocked conditions. Articles such as the one entitled “Crisis and Deeds” were frequent: its author lamented that “*The word crisis has become commonplace and is liberally used on every occasion,*” while trying to mobilize for action: “*And yet few people – especially in our town – thought to employ deeds against this crisis. Much could be done.*” (Jml 1931: 1).

The argumentation, which assured readers that the future is in their hands, might have partly reflected the inherent need of any social actor, including the town, to maintain at least some sense of certainty to remain operational, as well as the needs of the periodical to legitimate its existence. It would be wrong, however, to see this language as mere clichés. In fact, the periodical introduced wide-ranging ideas about what could be done, as well as launched a public inquiry into how to revive the town's economy which yielded several responses published throughout 1932. Importantly, the editors and contributors, as well as some of the respondents to the inquiry, demonstrated a remarkable sense of adaptability as they acknowledged that new paths will have to be adopted. As one of the editors explained: “*In the current and critical state of the industry and production and under already firmly embedded administrative structures, we can hardly ever hope to turn Heřmanův Městec into a striving industrial town or at least a centre of a district.*” (Plavec 1931: 1) It would be equally naïve to aim to make the

town a centre of high schools, given the proximity of bigger towns such as Chrudim or Pardubice which “*will likely remain a long-term obstacle in this respect*” (Ibid: 1). Instead, the suggestions were to improve the urban aesthetic qualities, promote the town, make some low-cost investments and develop alternative economic activities with the development of the leisure infrastructures the most preferred option.

The crisis of the international system followed a different trajectory, of course. For a long time it had no direct impact on local matters, though it was covered widely in both periodicals and was viewed with anxiety. The theme resonated more strongly in Kdyně, a town in the borderland where the crisis provided new arguments for highlighting its – and the region’s – strategic position and renewing the claims for reinstating district-level institutions (Ira [2025]). However, apart from articles on military exercises and civil protection, no links were made between local development and the international situation. The prospects of war or peace certainly fluctuated, just like the language of uncertainty, but the year 1938 was welcomed with moderate optimism. The Munich Agreement, a relatively sudden and surprising culmination of the crisis, therefore came as a “shock” or “disaster”, the terms used in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, while it did not appear in *Kdyňská Stráž* for a couple of weeks.

In both towns, the local elites quickly recognized new opportunities for local economies brought about by the Munich Agreement, such as the relocation of the industry from the annexed borderland or the larger numbers of Czech leisure seekers. For instance, Kdyně became an officially recognized resort with several newly built tourist and sports facilities in this period. But it was only in *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, where the outcomes of the Agreement were interpreted as an opportunity for regional growth. The article “Current Disaster and our Region”, for instance, combined the sense of despair from the new geopolitical context and a mere “hope in historical justice” with a far more confident claim for the region, “*what our future will look depends on us to a considerable degree*”, pointing out new opportunities: “*Why could Heřmanův Městec not be just an agricultural and artisanal but also an industrial town, and a growing centre in environs that are not poor at all? Why could the local textile factory not be revived and why could a new industry not emerge here?*” (Plavec 1938: 2) Consequently, the demands for the central administration that were raised in early 1930s, namely the district status, new industries, and a better railway connection, were put forward with new strength, in spite of – or precisely because of – the uncertain and ever-changing conditions. The assertive tone in some of the leading articles, such as “We Claim the District Office to Heřmanův Městec” (Moravec 1938) and “Open Letter to the Directorate of State Railways” (Otevřený list 1939)

was closely interrelated with the harsh critique of the failed political system of the First Republic.

Out of necessity and in line with the broader national campaign to cultivate the homeland reduced in size, the small town and its region became stabilizing points and the intense focus on their development the only reasonable way of navigating through unpredictable and difficult times, though this was framed as a sort of national duty rather than an option. The new situation could even be reframed as a state of a desirable certainty, gloomy as it was: “*Our horizon clears up, our mind clears up, we have got a new perspective on life. It is not world-encompassing, rather it is quite narrow but it is ours.*” (H. N. A. 1938: 1) But it was especially the persisting local tasks and the hard work they involve that were the source of certainty and continuity. In an article published immediately after the occupation of the country in March 1939, the periodical laconically commented that “*the circumstances have changed between the two issues, but work in our region has persisted, and we will keep working on the cultural and economic success of our region to the benefit of all our fellow citizens*” (Od slov – k činům 1939: 1). This reasoning was less apparent in *Kdyňská Stráž*, yet it appeared in a few articles that stressed the increased importance of municipal self-government as a platform for national survival, notwithstanding the actual limitations on it (Chudoba 1940a; 1940b; V. J. 1941).

Conclusion

This article explored how small-town agency was constructed in local media in two small Czechoslovak towns, Kdyně and Heřmanův Městec based on a comparative content analysis of the periodicals *Kdyňská Stráž* and *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*. The research aimed to address the broader question of how small-town resilience was discursively created in the face of challenges and uncertainty that stemmed from structural disadvantages as well as more unexpected disturbances that those communities faced in the “long” 1930s. The analysis revealed some common traits but also significant differences.

Both periodicals were instrumental in systematically pursuing the interests of “their” towns and micro-regions. Furthermore, both provided specific understandings of how the towns were related to larger systems and processes, in the past as well as in the present. They also addressed what constituted crucial risks and challenges, and what should and could be done to secure or stimulate local development despite unfavourable circumstances. Both media also deployed a multi-scale agenda and framing of resilience, thereby fostering the sense of a “cross-scalar dimension of re-

silience” (Lazzeroni 2020: 194). Finally, the periodicals served as stabilizers in otherwise uncertain times as they worked with a reassuring language of continuity, a sense of manageable future and reliable local commitments in spite of political changes, though the reassuring language also concealed the fact that many inhabitants including whole social groups, such as Jewish citizens, became extremely vulnerable and ultimately excluded from local communities. The analysis also revealed remarkable longitudinal continuities in arguments in support of small towns across three different political contexts of the First and Second Republics and the early Protectorate, albeit with adaptations to dominant discursive frameworks.

In many ways, however, the periodicals differed. *Kdyňská Stráž* adopted a more general or collective perspective and framed the local case as advocacy for all small towns. Furthermore, the articles emphasized the transformation of the external conditions in the form of decentralization and regionalization as crucial for local success. Uncertainty was associated especially with the long-term impact of the administrative reform of 1927 and other centralizing measures. The fact that the town was unable to maintain its central functions and thus its urban character was portrayed as a major vulnerability after dropping in the urban hierarchy due to external factors. This view was supported with positive narratives of collective achievements and a pluralistic vision of a progressive community.

Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka adopted a more individualistic perspective, with a stronger focus on the single town and its precarious relation to a larger system, which at times enabled some and disabled other ways of pursuing the town’s interests. No efforts to change the system were called upon and the language of agency and collective mobilization addressed community members, while stressing community imaginaries and interests vis-à-vis disruptors that include political partisanship. The failure to adapt to the new economic circumstances was seen as a major risk, fears were expressed about a further population decline and a decrease in local living standards. Since it was primarily the local sources of resilience that had to be mobilized, the accompanying vision of the community and a narrative of its collective achievements had more critical overtones.

These differences can be explained by three factors. First, different trajectories of development were involved, they were reflected in and took on particular meanings in the narratives. In *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka*, the decline was a matter of fact and thus the pressing question was how to initiate growth or stop further deterioration; in *Kdyňská Stráž*, growth was the actual experience and something that can be lost, and therefore, the main task was to avoid a decline by restoring previously existing conditions. Second, some of the differences between the towns played a role, such as

their different socioeconomic profiles and slightly different positions in the urban network. And third, the periodicals had different ambitions, these stemmed from the editors' profiles and aspirations, though further research is needed to elucidate how the editors shaped these agendas and strategies. The article has hopefully revealed the varied and often creative ways in which structurally disadvantaged and marginalized units, such as small towns and peripheral micro-regions, can increase their sense of agency in adverse and uncertain conditions and thus strengthen their resilience.

April 2024

Bibliography

- Bański, Jerzy (ed.). 2022. *The Routledge Handbook of Small Towns*. New York: Routledge.
- Barker, Chris. 2002. *Making Sense of Cultural Studies: Central Problems and Critical Debates*. London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi: Sage.
- Barker, Chris. 2004. *The SAGE Dictionary of Cultural Studies*. London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi: Sage.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. 2007. *Liquid Times: Living in the Age of Uncertainty*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bednařík, Petr – Jiráček, Jan – Köpplová, Barbara. 2019. *Dějiny českých médií od počátku do současnosti*. Praha: Grada.
- Bell, David – Jayne, Mark (eds.). 2006. *Small Cities: Urban Experience beyond the Metropolis*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Brantz, Dorothee. 2017. Assembling the multitude: questions about agency in the urban environment. *Urban History* 44, 1: 130–136. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0963926816000304>
- Bristow, Gillian – Healy, Adrian. 2014. Regional Resilience: An Agency Perspective. *Regional Studies* 48, 5: 923–935. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2013.854879>
- Burayidi, Michael A. et al. (eds.). 2020. *The Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Christmann, Gabriela – Kilper, Heiderose – Ibert, Oliver. 2019. Resilient Cities: Theoretical Conceptualisations and Observations about the Discourse in the Social and the Planning Sciences. In: Rampp, Benjamin – Endreß, Martin – Naumann, Marie (eds.): *Resilience in Social, Cultural and Political Spheres*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS: 121–147.
- della Porta, Donatella. 2008. Comparative analysis: case-oriented versus variable-oriented research. In: della Porta, Donatella – Keating,

- Michael (eds.): *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 198–222.
- Finnegan, Ruth. 1998. *Tales of the City: A Study of Narrative and Urban Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fiorentino, Stefania – Glasmeyer, Amy K. – Lobao, Linda – Martin, Ron – Tyler, Peter. 2024. ‘Left behind places’: what are they and why do they matter? *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 17, 1: 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsad044>
- Hájková, Dagmar et al. (eds.). 2018. *Republika československá 1918–1939*. Praha: NLN.
- Hall, Jeremy L. 2023. Confronting Uncertainty and Change: Challengers or Champions? *Public Administration Review* 83, 3: 461–467. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13645>
- Hannemann, Christine. 2004. *Marginalisierte Städte. Probleme, Differenzierungen und Chancen ostdeutscher Kleinstädte im Schrumpfungsprozess*. Berlin: BWV.
- Heimann, Mary. 2009. *Czechoslovakia: The state that failed*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press.
- Hledíková, Zdeňka – Janák, Jan – Dobeš, Jan. 2007. *Dějiny správy v českých zemích od počátků státu po současnost*. Praha: NLN.
- Hodgson, Guy – Matthews, Rachel. 2021. Never Failed? *Media History* 27, 2: 162–176. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2020.1769473>
- Ira, Jaroslav. [2025]. Regionalism and the (Re-)Construction of Subnational Communities: Chodsko and Kdyně in South-Western Czechoslovakia, 1918–1948. In: Łupienko, Aleksander (ed.): *Urban Communities and Memories in East-Central Europe in the Modern Age*. London – New York: Routledge. (forthcoming)
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032703206-14>
- Jiráček, Jan et al. 2016. *Druhá republika: 167 obyčejných dnů: politické a mediální klima a jeho reflexe*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova.
- Klusáková, Luďa – del Espino Hidalgo, Blanca (eds.). 2021. *Small Town Resilience and Heritage Commodification*. Bruxelles: Peter Lang.
- Kobetič, Pavel. 2002. *Osobnosti Chrudimska: (500 osobností chrudimského okresu)*. Chrudim: Okresní muzeum Chrudim.
- Koutník, Bohuslav. 1936–1941. *Československo – biografie*. Vol. 3. Praha: Státní tiskárna.
- Kubiček, Jaromír et al. 2004. *Česká retrospektivní bibliografie. Řada 1, Noviny. Díl 2, Noviny České republiky 1919–1945*, 2 vols. Brno: Sdružení knihoven ČR.
- Kuča, Karel. 1997. *Města a městečka v Čechách, na Moravě a ve Slezsku*. Vol. 2. Praha: Libri.

- Lazzeroni, Michela. 2020. Industrial Decline and Resilience in Small Towns: Evidence from Three European Case Studies. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 111, 2: 182–195.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12368>
- Lindekilde, Lasse. 2014. Discourse and Frame Analysis: In-Depth Analysis of Qualitative Data in Social Movement Research. In: della Porta, Donatella (ed.): *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 195–227.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198719571.003.0009>
- Lorentzen, Anne – van Heur, Bas. 2012. Introduction: Cultural Political Economy of Small Cities. In: Lorentzen, Anne – van Heur, Bas (eds.): *Cultural Political Economy of Small Cities*. London – New York: Routledge: 1–14.
- Matthews, Rachel. 2017. *The History of the Provincial Press in England*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Mayer, Heike – Knox, Paul. 2010. Small-Town Sustainability: Prospects in the Second Modernity. *European Planning Studies* 18, 10: 1545–1565.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2010.504336>
- Mehmood, Abid. 2016. Of resilient places: planning for urban resilience. *European Planning Studies* 24, 2: 407–419.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2015.1082980>
- Nell, Werner – Weiland, Marc (eds.). 2020. *Kleinstadtliteratur: Erkundungen eines Imaginationsraums ungleichzeitiger Moderne*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839447895>
- Noronha Vaz, Teresa de – Leeuwen, Eveline van – Nijkamp, Peter (eds.). 2013. *Towns in a Rural World*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- O'Reilly, Carole. 2020a. Creating A Critical Civic Consciousness. *Media History* 26, 3: 249–262.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2018.1530975>
- O'Reilly, Carole. 2020b. 'The Magnetic Pull of the Metropolis': The Manchester Guardian, The Provincial Press and Ideas of the North. *Northern History* 57, 2: 270–290.
- Pike, Andy – Dawley, Stuart – Tomaney, John. 2010. Resilience, adaptation and adaptability. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 3, 1: 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsq001>
- Prowse, Louise. 2012. Defining decline in the newspaper press: Local responses and national narratives in New South Wales country towns 1945–2006. *Rural Society* 21, 2: 85–98.
<https://doi.org/10.5172/rsj.2012.21.2.85>
- Rataj, Jan. 1997. *O autoritativní národní stát: ideologické proměny české politiky v druhé republice 1938–1939*. Praha: Karolinum.

- Reisigl, Martin. 2018. The Discourse-Historical Approach. In: Flowerdew, John – Richardson, John E. (eds.): *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies*. London – New York: Routledge: 44–59.
- Schelle, Karel. 2019. *Státní mechanismus meziválečného Československa*. Praha: Wolters Kluwer.
- Simmie, James – Martin, Ron. 2010. The economic resilience of regions: towards an evolutionary approach. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 3, 1: 27–43.
- Thomas, Marcel. 2020. *Local Lives, Parallel Histories: Villagers and Everyday Life in the Divided Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wagner, Peter. 1994. *A Sociology of Modernity. Liberty and Discipline*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Willis, Ian. 2021. Local Newspapers and a Regional Setting in New South Wales. *Media History* 27, 2: 197–209.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2020.1833710>
- Zimmermann, Clemens (ed.). 2004. *Kleinstadt in der Moderne*. Stuttgart: Thorbecke.

Sources and referred articles

Kdyňská Stráž (1928–1941)

- Bláha, Inocenc Arnošt. 1930. O společenském životě na malém městě. *Kdyňská Stráž* 3, 19, 10. 5. 1930: 1–2.
- Blahník, Jaroslav. 1930. Kraj a jeho práva. *Kdyňská Stráž* 3, 9, 1. 3. 1930: 1–2.
- Chudoba, Eduard. 1930. Proč se neosvědčuje veřejná správa. *Kdyňská Stráž* 3, 18, 3. 5. 1930: 1–2.
- Chudoba, Eduard. 1940a. Do užší spolupráce v samosprávě. *Kdyňská Stráž* 13, 11, 1. 6. 1940: 1.
- Chudoba, Eduard. 1940b. K novému našemu samosprávnému usilování. *Kdyňská Stráž* 13, 18, 21. 9. 1940: 1.
- Dočkáme se nápravy? 1936. *Kdyňská Stráž* 9, 20, 3. 10. 1936: 1.
- Do voleb. 1932. *Kdyňská Stráž* 5, 16, 16. 4. 1932: 1–2.
- Protestujeme. 1935. *Kdyňská Stráž* 8, 18, 7. 9. 1935: 1–2.
- Šmíd, Jakub Jan. 1932. Do boje proti nezaměstnanosti na Kdyňsku. *Kdyňská Stráž* 5, 24, 11. 6. 1932: 1–2.
- Štěpánek, Jaroslav. 1930. Úvodem, *Kdyňská Stráž* 3, 33, 16. 8. 1930: 1.
- V. J. 1941. K prohloubení naší územní samosprávy. *Kdyňská Stráž* 14, 1, 18. 1. 1941: 1.
- Vilímec, Karel. 1935. Proč žádáme na Kdyňsku vydání zákona o obvodových měšťanských školách, *Kdyňská Stráž* 8, 5, 6. 4. 1935: 1.

Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka (1929–1943)

- H. N. A. 1938. V práci všech síla Heřmanoměstecka. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 9, 25, 3. 12. 1938: 1.
- Jml. 1931. Krise a skutky. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 2, 7, 21. 2. 1931: 1.
- K dnešku. 1931. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 2, 26, 14. 11. 1931: 1.
- Moravec, Václav. 1937a. Regionální poslání Heřmanova Městce. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 8, 4, 13. 2. 1937: 1.
- Moravec, Václav. 1937b. Heřmanoměstecký kraj vpřed! *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 8, 5, 27. 2. 1937: 1–2.
- Moravec, Václav. 1938. Žádáme okresní úřad do Heřmanova Městce. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 9, 24, 19. 11. 1938: 1–2.
- Moravec, Václav. 1942. 500 let města Heřmanova Městce. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 13, 1, 1. 1. 1942: 1–2.
- Naše bolesti. 1930. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 1, 4, 11. 1. 1930: 1.
- Od slov – k činům. 1939. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 10, 7, 25. 3. 1939: 1–2.
- Otevřený list ředitelství státních drah v Hradci Králové. 1939. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 10, 2, 14. 1. 1939: 1.
- P. F. 1934. Heřmanoměstecko v minulosti a přítomnosti. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 5, 13, 23. 6. 1934: 1–2; 14, 7. 7. 1934: 1–3.
- Plavec, Josef. 1929. Heřmanoměstecké veřejnosti, našemu venkovu, všem rodákům, příslušníkům a přátelům města i kraje Heřmanova Městce. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 1, 1, 30. 11. 1929: 1.
- Plavec, Josef, 1931. Estetika města. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 2, 5, 24. 1. 1931: 1–2.
- Plavec, Josef. 1938. Současná pohroma a náš kraj. *Žájmy Heřmanoměstecka* 9, 22, 22. 10. 1938: 2.

Other sources

- Blahník, Jaroslav – Štěpánek, Jaroslav – Soukup, Václav (eds.). 1941. *Kdyňsko*. Kdyně: Okresní záložna hospodářská.
- Kdyňská stráž agituje pro národní demokracii. 1929. *Český směr* 31, 253, 27. 10. 1929: 6.
- Moravec, Václav – Moravec, Oldřich – Plavec, Josef. 1939. *Železné hory: letovisko Heřmanův Městec, koupaliště v Konopáči: turistický průvodce*. Heřmanův Městec: Knihtiskárna Josefa Moravce.
- Navrátil, F. O. 1928. Pramen české krajové kultury. *Rozpravy Aventina* 4, 24: 240.
- Žárný, Vojtěch. 1948. Bolesti a radosti. In: *Letovisko Kdyně na Chodsku*, Kdyně: 7–12.