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Broadcast Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Power Structures, Programming, Cooperation
and Defiance at Czech Radio 1939-1945



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1. Introduction

Points of Departure

Given the important role that media propaganda played in the creation and maintenance of the totalitarian National Socialist (Nazi) regime in Germany in the 1930's and 1940's, reviewing and understanding the latter's methods and tools is always a useful discipline for the vigilant citizen of today's functioning democracies blessed with a free press. The longstanding hope here is that by learning from history, one can avoid similar errors in the present and future.

The fact that Hitler's propaganda and media specialist, Joseph Goebbels, recognized the potential of radio – the most modern mass medium of the times – quickly took control of German broadcasting and harnessed it for the purposes of the Nazi regime, can be considered a part of the conventional historical wisdom on the subject of that specific medium and Nazism. Goebbels's use and abuse of radio accompanied the Nazis every step of the way along a path that would lead to their expansion into virtually all of Europe and North Africa. Via radio, Goebbels and his team created the justifications for – or as one might express it in modern terminology: the spin – for those very imperialist acquisitions. Due to the nature of radio waves, which is to propagate for hundreds or even thousands of kilometers, Goebbels had a tool at his disposal for influencing not only domestic public opinion, but also that in the rest of Europe and even overseas. For example, in the first two phases of their territorial expansion – the incorporation of Austria and the Bohemian-Moravian border regions of Czechoslovakia (the Sudetenland) into the German Reich in 1938 – Goebbels and his subordinates employed radio as an important means of demoralizing their opponents while rallying the indigenous German-speaking populations of those areas to the Nazi cause. Considering the enthusiastic welcome Hitler's triumphant entry into these territories received – images of the jubilant crowds thronging Vienna's Heldenplatz on 15 March and the main streets of Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) on 4 October 1938 come to mind – it would seem obvious that this propaganda work was a great success.

However, these were ethnic-German populations for many of whom – if definitely not for all – unification in a greater German state was the fulfillment of their national aspirations. For this reason alone, Nazi broadcast policy had an easy task with these people. With large segments of the Austrian and Sudeten-German

populations, Goebbels was in effect “preaching to the choir.” The situation was radically different, however, when the Czech provinces joined the ranks of Hitler’s objects of expansion in March 1939. For the first time, Goebbels was dealing with a non-German population for whom incorporation into a Great German Reich was not only not the apex of their national and cultural aspirations, but rather the complete negation thereof. Regrettably, however, very little specific or systematic information exists on how Goebbels and the Nazi hierarchy dealt via the medium of radio with this first conquest of a non-German-speaking part of Europe: the Czech provinces of the former Czechoslovak Republic. It is the aim of this study to shed some light on these matters.

Main Questions of the Study

The history of Nazi broadcast policy in the occupied Czech provinces raises a number of questions, which may also have relevance in the other non-German-speaking countries that eventually came under Nazi occupation. Hopefully, this study will inspire scholars in those areas to look more closely at these issues also within the context of their own national histories and help to paint a more detailed picture of Nazi media policy throughout occupied Europe. Furthermore, as very little has been written to date on this specific subject here in the Czech Republic, it remains something of a blank spot on the pages of Czech history, and specifically, in the annals of Czech media history. Some of the more important questions this subject raises include:

What were the Nazis’ overall intentions with the Czech nation, and what role did radio play in the implementation of their policies? The two extremes of Nazi radio policy lay between the forced expansion of broadcasting in the German Reich proper on the one hand and the complete destruction of Polish-language broadcasting in the Generalgouvernement on the other hand. Where does Nazi broadcast policy in the Czech provinces fit between these two extremes?

What was the institutional framework with which the Nazis sought to implement their broadcast policy? What role fell to the Czechs within this framework? Where did the boundaries lie between resistance and collaboration, defiance and cooperation? Regarding the German element within the institutions, what resources, especially what human resources, did the occupiers invest in broadcasting to the Protectorate’s audience?

What specific strategies, if any, did the invaders develop to influence the Czech population with radio programming after having so thoroughly offended and maligned the Czech nation through this very medium in the period 1938/39?

What target-group-specific sub-strategies, if any, existed for influencing the Czech population?

Specifically What effects did the invaders' media policy have on program structure and content? For example, how intrusive was German-language programming? How much of programming was overtly pro-German or pro-Nazi political propaganda?

What periodization is applicable to describe the development of Nazi broadcast strategy vis-à-vis the Czechs, particularly with regard to the course of the Second World War? For instance, did the progress to the "total war" phase of the conflict mean an emphasis on light entertainment at the expense of Nazi political indoctrination?

Did Nazi broadcasting policy in the Protectorate play a role in their other strategic goals and objectives throughout Europe?

Study Structure and Methodological Approach

In order to ascertain the answers to as many of these questions as possible, I have employed two main methods of research. After briefly reviewing the background of the German-Czech conflict in the Czech provinces and the position of Czech Radio within the context of this conflict, I continue with a micro-historical review of the institution of Czech Radio itself. This entails looking at the development of the broadcast corporation's actual institutional structure in terms of its ownership and command hierarchy over the course of the entire occupation period from 14/15 March 1939 to 9 May 1945. Obviously, the nature of a broadcast corporation in the context of mid-20th century Europe is extremely specific, which makes it different from other institutions such as banks or even from other media of the day, such as newspapers. Nevertheless, since there was only one official and legal broadcasting organization during the Nazi occupation of the Czech provinces, namely Czech Radio, a review of its institutional development over the course of the occupation should yield relevant results with regard to Nazi policy in a broader context. Thoughts in this regard include:

What can the micro-history of this one company tell us about Czech/German relations close-up within an organization?

What does it reveal about everyday media work in the Protectorate?

What does it tell us about the level of professionals the Reich employed in the Protectorate? Were they top-line radio experts or rather secondary staff?

Were they Reichs-Germans or were they Germans indigenous to Bohemia and Moravia?

The second step is a program content analysis, i.e., an examination of program content in terms of the percentage of airtime dedicated to any individual topic. It is a relatively simple if also very time-consuming method for obtaining a view of ratios of program content, which I developed in my work at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Audience Research and Program Evaluation Department in the late 1990's. Simply put, one identifies broadcast topics in a program log or broadcast schedule by minutes, tallies these and then quantifies them as a percentage either of total airtime or a subsection thereof (e.g., percentage of classical music in all music programming, percentage of German-language broadcasts in all talks programming, etc.). The analysis of program content in this study is based on the published broadcast schedules for nine weeks of programming spread throughout the years 1939 to 1945.¹

Choosing the relevant weeks for analysis was not a simple task. The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia existed for approximately 320 weeks with the Nazi occupation starting in the 11th calendar week of 1939 and ending in the 19th calendar week of 1945. Each of these calendar weeks corresponds to a broadcast week of Czecho-Slovak/Czech Radio. Since the data input for a statistical breakdown required at least 60 working hours for each broadcast week analyzed, it was not practical to analyze the thousands of program hours broadcast on each of the Czech medium- and short-wave stations during the course of more than six years of occupation. Instead, a selection of representative broadcast weeks became necessary. Finding representative or average broadcast weeks required the elimination of periods in the year that for various reasons could contain large amounts of unusual programming. In practice, that meant specifically not analyzing the popular summer vacation period in July and August. Even in a time of "total war," not only the listener, but also the Czech Radio staff members were likely to go on holiday at some point during this period, which could have had

1 The main sources used are Czecho-Slovak, later Czech Radio's official weekly radio program magazine *Náš rozhlas* ("Our Radio"), and after its discontinuation in May 1941 – concurrent with the discontinuation of all the German radio magazines – its sister publication *Týden rozhlasu* ("Radio Week"). For the German stations' programming, which is relevant for comparison purposes, the weekly German radio program guide *Funk-Woche* ("Radio-Week") served as the source material. "German" in this context means all stations run by the Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft ("Reichs-Broadcasting Corporation") and intended primarily for a German-speaking public in Germany, Austria, the Sudetenland and other territories annexed to the German Reich, i.e., the Protectorate, the occupied Polish territories, Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, etc.

effects on program content. Another concern in this regard involved the main growing and harvesting seasons for farmers, and the potential for effects on programming stemming from that.

Furthermore, it was necessary to exclude program weeks containing special holidays: i.e., primarily Christmas, New Years, the establishment of the Protectorate on 15 March, Hitler's birthday on 20 April, initially also the date of Jan Hus's immolation on 6 July, and St. Wenceslas Day on 28 September. At the same time, consistency required a comparison of the same program weeks throughout the entire period. Ultimately the choice fell upon nine weeks for the overall period. These were the

48th calendar weeks for 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1944 and the 9th calendar weeks for 1939, 1942 and 1945

The logic of this choice was that the 48th calendar week, starting at the end of November, met all of the above-listed criteria for ordinary programming. The same was true for the 9th calendar week in the corresponding years. In 1939, the 9th calendar week – running from 26 February to 3 March – provided a view to the status quo ante, i.e., programming content just two weeks prior to the invasion. The intention here was to provide a view of Czecho-Slovak Radio's programming at a point in time at which the political and state system of the Second Republic had basically stabilized, or at least progressed beyond the initial turbulent disruptions brought on by the effects of Munich.

For comparison purposes between Czecho-Slovak Radio and the German *Reichsrundfunk*, I chose the same week of broadcasting for the Reichssender Berlin. Berlin seemed the obvious choice, as, like Prague, it was the station located in the capital city alongside the central offices of state institutions. Under Goebbels's leadership, the Reichssender Berlin also became the flagship station eventually merging with the national long-wave station, the Deutschlandsender. Thus, despite the stronger tradition of regionalism in Germany's station network and programming, Goebbels centralization efforts eventually caused the Reichssender Berlin to play a similar role to that of the station Prague I within Czechoslovakia/Czecho-Slovakia and the Protectorate.

I also chose the 9th calendar week in 1945 to cast light on programming during the end phase of the occupation prior to the complete collapse of the Third Reich. For the 48th weeks of 1939 and 1940, I chose the programming of the Reichssender Böhmen (Mělník), as the relevant, local, German-language station for the Protectorate. Regrettably, no explicit program magazines are available for the period after May 1941, however.

The following program content criteria appeared to be the most relevant to the subject:

1. Duration of the broadcast day, i.e., the period when stations are on the air between the start of broadcasting in the morning and the end of broadcasting at night? Goebbels increased the average length of broadcast day by nearly 50% between 1933 and 1938.² If the same were true for the Czech stations, it would support the premise of a similar Nazi radio policy towards the Czechs as towards the Germans.
2. Regionalization or station of origin. Greater levels of programming originating from Brno and Moravská Ostrava could imply a strengthening of the position of the provincial stations and a weakening of the position of the central flagship station Prague. That could suggest a *divide et impera* strategy within the Protectorate similar to that applied towards Austria after the Anschluss.
3. Programming Structure: Similarities between the Czech stations and the *Reichsrundfunk* in the structure of programming content (i.e., primarily music vs. talks, politics versus entertainment, etc.) would show the extent of the application of Goebbels's broadcasting principles on Czech Radio. Regrettably, an exact analysis is not possible for the German stations after May 1941 due to the discontinuation of German radio program magazines.
4. Germanization: A) Music by German composers and B) German-language talks programming on the otherwise primarily Czech-language radio stations, i.e., Prague I, Brno and Moravská Ostrava, later also Plzeň;
5. Nazification: Overtly pro-German or pro-National Socialist political propaganda in the Czech language.

Although in totalitarian regimes like the Nazi-dominated Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia virtually all aspects of media production are subject to political manipulation on some level, it would exceed the framework of this study to deal with all of them. Obviously, no study can cover all aspects of the weekly 112 to 140 hours of broadcasting for a period of more than six years in detail. Thus, while providing a view to general program structures, this study also takes a closer look at three crucial program areas in the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia:

Worker's Radio – an all important, i.e., weapons-producing target group for the invaders, whose favor they courted.

2 From an average broadcast day of 13.37 hours in 1932 to 19.43 hours in 1938. See: WEINBRENNER: *Handbuch des Deutschen Rundfunks Jahrbuch 1939/1940*, p. 315, graph "Sendeleistung".

Anti-Semitic broadcasts – as anti-Semitism was a core element of National Socialist ideology on the one hand and a virtually universal and relatively “safe” field of activity for Czech collaborators on the other hand. That is, while publicly defaming exiled President Beneš or his colleagues could easily be interpreted as treason, and frequently was in post-war trials, expressing anti-Semitic thoughts was a far less serious offense.

Satirical programming in the form of the “Political Sketches” – as political humor was not a propaganda tool the National Socialists used on the German population as a whole, but rather a weapon turned specifically against the Czech-speaking population.

Regarding methodology, I employ a basically historic-chronological approach to the topics, recounting developments over the period. The specific program content analyses described above illustrate the overall structure and texture of programming at specific historic junctures throughout the occupation. Finally, since he played such an important role in pro-Nazi and pro-German radio propaganda to the Czechs, I also review some of the radio work of Protectorate Minister of Education and National Enlightenment Emanuel Moravec, one of the most-fervent Nazi collaborators of Czech origin.

Topics and Limitations of this Study

The National Socialist state was among the first of the many totalitarian regimes inflicted on humanity since 1917 to mobilize the new electronic media for its own political purposes. By the time the German *Wehrmacht* marched into Prague on 15 March 1939, radio as a medium had progressed well beyond infancy and Czech Radio had also grown into a complex public service provider of entertainment and information to nearly three-quarters of a million radio receivers throughout the country and to many thousands of Czechs abroad as well.³ Apart from a vast variety of musical productions covering a range of genres from operas to symphonies to folk music and popular dance tunes, there was specialized talks programming for children and adults and also for women. There was religious programming for believers. Other specialized programming addressed

3 JEŠUTOVÁ, Eva et al: *Od mikrofonu k posluchačům, z osmi desetiletí českého rozhlasu*, (“From the Microphone to the Listeners, from Eight Decades of Czech Broadcasting”), Český Rozhlas, Praha, 2003, Table II. Počet koncesionářů (“Number of Subscribers”), p. 613. Hereinafter, when referring to general parts of the book such as the tables section: JEŠUTOVÁ et al: *Od mikrofonu*.

factory workers and employees, entrepreneurs and farmers respectively. For entertainment and educational purposes, the new genre of radio drama had developed in the decade and a half since the medium's inception. Alongside all of this, there were the all-important daily reportage and newscast programs targeted at the public as a whole. Thus, radio programming in the Czech provinces was already an extremely complex and highly developed media when Hitler's Germany invaded in 1939.

Regrettably, this study can not cover several interesting topics in depth. For example, music, which made up no less than 69% of all broadcast hours in Goebbels's *Reichsrundfunk* in 1938 and 1939,⁴ was definitely also a serious battlefield of the airwaves in the Protectorate's radio stations. Germans and Czechs sought to secure as much airtime as possible for musical works by their national composers. Unfortunately, only a profound musicological education would allow for a discussion sufficiently intelligent or in-depth to identify all the subtleties of music as a weapon. Thus it will not feature here extensively. However, this study is in any case primarily about the ideas and arguments used to influence listeners' thinking, and these are most easily examined in words. Furthermore, and as the present-day perspective of a unified Europe so often reminds us, the nature of music is such that love of it often supersedes national boundaries. A Czech listener in the Protectorate could conceivably enjoy Mozart, Beethoven or Brahms just as much as a German listener could thrill to Dvořák, Smetana or Fibich. There is evidence, for example, that Czech listeners were not opposed to tuning into German *Reichssender* directly, especially Vienna, Leipzig and Munich, when those stations broadcast appealing light music programs.⁵ Thus, analysis of music content alone may also not ultimately reveal a great deal about its reception by the audience.

Nevertheless, judging from discussions within the occupation authority and the great extent to which the works of German composers came to make up airtime on the Protectorate's radio stations over the course of the period, the Nazi authorities clearly did consider German music an important aspect of propaganda work. Therefore, neglecting music as a subject entirely would have meant omitting an important aspect of the overall picture of programming on

4 WEINBRENNER, Hans-Joachim, (Ed): *Handbuch des Deutschen Rundfunks Jahrbuch 1939/1940*, ("German Broadcasting Handbook 1939/1940") Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, Heidelberg-Berlin-Magdeburg, 1939, p. 317. Hereinafter: WEINBRENNER: *Handbuch des Deutschen Rundfunks Jahrbuch 1939/1940*.

5 See: NA, 114-307-2 Anlage SD-Tagesbericht Nr. 152/43 vom 29.12.1943, p. 8. Addendum to *Sicherheitsdienst* daily report of 29 December 1943.

Protectorate Radio. “German music” in the context of the times meant the works of ethnic-German or at least primarily German-speaking composers originating from and/or working in the German-speaking and adjacent areas of Europe, i.e., pre-Versailles Germany, Austria, Bohemia-Moravia and other territories annexed to the Reich after 1939, of non-Jewish heritage and whose style was officially approved of by Goebbels’s ministry. This proved to be a rather complicated process, requiring an analysis of the backgrounds of nearly 150 different composers. The result of this analysis is a simple depiction of the percentages of “German music” as a part of programming.

Another limitation is to Czech-language broadcasts originating in the Protectorate. There were, of course, German-language broadcasts that originated in the Protectorate from the Reichssender Böhmen (RSB) intended primarily for the local German audience and financed through the *Reichsrundfunk*. However, the RSB had only a limited independent life prior to being – for the most part – absorbed into the unified *Reichsprogramm*, i.e., the common, nationwide broadcasts of all German stations, in June 1940. Thus, there is relatively little to deal with in this regard. Similarly, while Czech-language broadcasts from Czechs in exile played a very important role for the occupied nation, it would exceed the bounds of this study to examine them in detail. Therefore, they appear only to the extent these broadcasts by exiled Czechs had direct effects on or provoked specific reactions from the Protectorate’s broadcasting authorities.

Furthermore, initial research into this subject conducted in 2003 to 2006, implied that the occupiers sought to reach specific sub-sections of the population or target groups with specialized programming. Some of the main target groups, which received the most attention from the very beginning, were:

- Factory workers
- Youth
- Women
- Business people
- Farmers

Of these, this report will deal with broadcasts to factory workers. Factory workers produced weapons for the *Wehrmacht* and were consequently of prime importance to the Nazi invaders, and received special treatment from them for this very reason. Therefore, they represent a target group of special interest.

Regrettably, I lack a comprehensive background in gender studies, which would allow for an intelligent examination of broadcasting to Czech women. Superficial research into this subject suggests that precisely broadcasting to women

in the Protectorate could be a rich and interesting area for research. Unfortunately, we will have to leave this potentially fascinating facet of Nazi policy vis-à-vis half of the Protectorate's population and specifically the role radio played in supporting that policy to other historians with the relevant gender-studies expertise. The situation is similar in broadcasting to youth and business people. A superficial review of Protectorate-period broadcasts to farmers, on the other hand, revealed them to have been mostly non-political and extremely practical in nature. While advice on increasing crop yields undoubtedly also served the German war effort in the Protectorate, I lack the specialized agricultural knowledge required to make any evaluation of them.

Finally, the scope of this study deals with the period of the German occupation of the Czech provinces, which means specifically 14/15 March 1939 to 9 May 1945. Nevertheless, wherever information is available and relevant, pre- and post-war destinies of the main actors in Czech broadcasting will be a subject of this report as well.

Source Materials

Already for several years, the scientific community has been able to turn to a number of good studies on National Socialist occupation policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Detlef Brandes's famous work published in two volumes in 1969 and 1975 *Die Tschechen unter Deutschem Protektorat*⁶ is valued by historians to this day as a standard work on the subject – and that despite the fact that it was researched and written for the most part during the brief period known as the Prague Spring of 1968 and prior to the onset of the so-called period of 'normalization'. Since 2006, the Czech historians Jan Gebhart and Jan Kuklík have contributed two more volumes on the subject of the German occupation of the Czech provinces and the Czech response to that occupation.⁷ Their

6 BRANDES, Detlef: *Die Tschechen unter Deutschem Protektorat, Teil I, Besatzungspolitik, Kollaboration und Widerstand im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren bis Heydrichs Tod (1939–1942)*, R. Oldenbourg München, Wien 1969 und *Die Tschechen unter Deutschem Protektorat, Besatzungspolitik, Kollaboration und Widerstand im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren von Heydrichs Tod bis zum Prager Aufstand (1942–1945)*, R. Oldenbourg München, Wien 1975, Hereinafter: BRANDES: *Die Tschechen I.*, and BRANDES: *Die Tschechen II.*).

7 GEBHART, Jan and KUKLÍK, Jan: *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české, svazek XV.a a XV.b 1938–1945* ("The Great History of the Lands of the Czech Crown, Volumes XV.a and XV.b 1938–1945"), Paseka, Praha Litomyšl, 2006 and 2007 respectively. Hereinafter: GEBHART, KUKLÍK: *Velké dějiny XV.a* and GEBHART, KUKLÍK: *Velké dějiny XV.b.*).

richly illustrated editions concentrate especially on Czech resistance to the Nazi occupation and touch on the importance of radio broadcasting from abroad for the Czech resistance. Cooperation with the invaders and changes in Czech society brought on by the occupation also play a role in these valuable works and were useful to this study.

How Goebbels achieved control over the German media and employed it for the National Socialists' political goals, a process he famously called *Gleichschaltung*⁸ – a term so successful that it has even made its way into English and Czech – has also been the subject of considerable research. On the subject of broadcasting policy to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia specifically, there is very little specialized literature, however. Ansgar Diller, the German doyen of radio research from the period of the Nazi era, devoted a chapter to the subject in his study *Rundfunkpolitik im Dritten Reich* from 1980.⁹ Diller covers the topic succinctly within the over all context of Nazi broadcast policy, using sources available in West Germany towards the end of the Cold War. Diller's Czech counterpart, František Hrdlička, also examined the subject as part of an overall history of Czech broadcasting, which was published in 2003.¹⁰ However, given that the chapter on the occupation was just one out of many in the book spanning 80 years of Czech Radio's history, Hrdlička was unable to go into very great depth. Nevertheless, both his and Diller's works offer a useful overview of the subject and in the case of Hrdlička's publication, rich and attractive illustrations as well.

An excellent resource that describes in detail specifically Goebbels's radio campaign against Czechoslovakia during the Munich Crisis and the poisoned atmosphere that created in German-Czech relations is David Vaughan's

8 *Gleichschaltung* – from the German “gleich”, meaning “same” and “Schaltung” meaning “switch” as in the switch of an electrical circuit. Expressed in modern American parlance, this might be: having all media institutions “on the same page” or figuratively “on the same wavelength”.

9 DILLER, Ansgar: *Rundfunkpolitik im Dritten Reich*, IN: BAUSCH, Hans (Hg), *Rundfunk in Deutschland Band 2*, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München, 1980. Hereinafter: DILLER: *Rundfunkpolitik*. The chapter on broadcasting to the Protectorate covers pp. 387–399.

10 HRDLIČKA, František: *Rozhlas v okupaci*, IN: JEŠUTOVÁ, Eva et al: *Od mikrofonu k posluchačům, z osmi desetiletí českého rozhlasu*, (“From the Microphone to the Listeners, from Eight Decades of Czech Broadcasting”), Český Rozhlas, Praha 2003, pp. 150–182. Hereinafter: HRDLIČKA: *Rozhlas v okupaci*.

bilingual study on the subject which came out on the 70th anniversary of the crisis.¹¹ This very grippingly written book is especially useful for setting the dramatic background against which the occupation then played out less than six months later. A much older work that covers the period and the occupation is a short book by Czechoslovak Radio's long-term employee, Miloslav Disman.¹² It provides a good review of the atmosphere, at Czech Radio, but also in Prague in general, especially in the initial days after the invasion. However, given that it was written in Prague in 1975, one does also feel the period of its inception at times.

Regarding specifically Department IV – Cultural Policy of the Office of the Reichs Protector and later of the German State Ministry for Bohemia and Moravia, to which Czech Radio was subordinated, a short study by Tim Fauth was very valuable for its overview of the genesis, make-up and results of the work of the Nazi media bureaucracy in the early phases of Department IV's existence.¹³ One can only hope that this talented historian will produce a volume on the period 1942–45 as well.

Crucial to any general radio programming and especially subject to manipulation in totalitarian regimes is also newscasting. However, this was not the domain either in Germany or in the Protectorate of the broadcast companies themselves, but rather of separate, centralized state news agencies. In Germany, the creation of four and later seven daily newscasts fell to Der Drahtloser Dienst (DDD),¹⁴ which between 1 May 1933 and 15 September 1939 was simply a section of the Press Department of Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry. After September 1939, it became a sub-division of the Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft,¹⁵ which was definitely more logical in terms of the overall organizational chart.

11 VAUGHAN, David: *Battle for the Airwaves, Radio and the 1938 Munich Crisis/Bitva o vlny, Rozhlas v mnichovské krizi*, Radioservis Cook Communications, Praha, 2008. Hereinafter: VAUGHAN: *Battle for the Airwaves*.

12 DISMAN, Miloslav: *Hovoří Praha, Vzpomínky na revoluční květnové dny 1945 v rozhlase*, ("Prague speaks, Remembrances of the Revolutionary Days in May 1945 in the Radio") Nakladatelství Svoboda, Praha, 1975. Hereinafter: DISMAN: *Hovoří Praha*.

13 FAUTH, Tim: *Deutsche Kulturpolitik im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren 1939 bis 1941*, ("German Cultural Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1939 to 1941"), Berichte und Studien edition 45, Hannah-Arendt-Institut für Totalitarismusforschung e.V. (Ed.), V&R unipress, Göttingen, 2004. Hereinafter: FAUTH: *Deutsche Kulturpolitik*.

14 Literally "The Wireless Service".

15 DILLER: *Rundfunkpolitik*, pp. 105–107.

Nevertheless, the DDD's newscasts remained a centrally produced product simply for retransmission by the Reichssender. Similarly, in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, newscasting was the job of the Broadcasting Editorial Department (Rozhlasová redakce) of the official Czech News Agency (ČTK). Thus, the history of newscasting in the Protectorate is actually part of the history of ČTK. Happily, a new publication released on the 90th anniversary of ČTK's establishment¹⁶ examines the genesis of the company, including wartime developments in it. Regrettably, since the ČTK building sustained serious damage during fighting in the Prague Uprising in May of 1945, which destroyed a lot of the original documentation, the work is not very explicit on the Broadcasting Editorial Department's staff. Nevertheless, it makes for a very interesting read for Czech-speaking media historians.

Valuable for its general review of the context of the Czech media in the 20th century is a study on that subject with the title *Dějiny českých médií 20. století* by Jakub Končelík, Pavel Večeřa and Petr Orság.¹⁷ The book also provides a brief review of Czech Radio and its development in the times. Given the breadth of the subject and the long period reviewed, 1848 to the early 1990's, the section on radio broadcasting remains necessarily brief, however, with roughly ten pages dedicated to it for the period of the First Republic and the so-called Protectorate. Nevertheless, it is a helpful guide, especially in terms of the context of the profession of journalists, including radio journalists for the period under discussion.

Very important sources of information on media policy and the situation of journalism and journalists in the Protectorate, which were also relevant for radio broadcasting, include the collection of notes from Wolfgang Wolfram von Wolmar's infamous Protectorate press meetings: *Český tisk pod vládou Wolfganga Wolframa von Wolmara* by Jakub Končelík, Barbara Köpplová und Jitka Kryšpínová.¹⁸ This book illustrates the concrete circumstances and instructions around Wolmar's meetings designed to guide, orientate and in many cases bully

16 STEJSKAL, Jan: *Zprávy z českého století, tiskové agentury a česká společnost 1848–1948*, ("News from a Czech Century, Press Agencies and Czech Society 1848–1948") ČTK, Triton, Praha, 2008. Hereinafter: STEJSKAL: *Zprávy*.

17 KONČELÍK, Jakub; VEČEŘA, Pavel; ORSÁG, Petr: *Dějiny českých médií 20. století*, Portál, Praha, 2010. Hereinafter: KONČELÍK, VEČEŘA, ORSÁG: *Dějiny českých médií 20. století*.

18 KONČELÍK, Jakub; Köpplová, Barbara; KRYSPÍNOVÁ, Jitka: *Český tisk pod vládou Wolfganga Wolframa von Wolmara*, ("The Czech Press under the Hegemony of Wolfgang Wolfram von Wolmar"), Univerzita Karlova v Praze Nakladatelství Karolinum, Praha, 2003. Hereinafter: KONČELÍK, KÖPPLOVÁ, KRYSPÍNOVÁ: *Český tisk*.

the Czech media into compliance during the occupation as written up by a participant in the meetings. Končelík, Cebe and Köpplová later followed this study up with a brilliant quantitative analysis of the subject content, orientation and leading speakers at the press meetings to provide an invaluable view of the nature and contours of Nazi media policy in the Protectorate.¹⁹

Further extremely useful studies on the subject of Czech media under the Nazis are the 2001 dissertation and another publication by Pavel Večeřa.²⁰ Especially interesting and helpful for understanding resistance to the occupation is Večeřa's systemization of typical resistance strategies in the Protectorate print media into six main strategies, which I paraphrase and summarize here:

Separation: emphasizing the national individuality of the Protectorate vis-à-vis the Reich;

Preservation: attempting to maintain ideals, values and norms from the First Czechoslovak Republic;

Retardation: concentrating on the postponed application of measures from the occupiers or the weakening of their effect during actual application;

Blockading: the attempt to pre-empt measures from the occupation authorities with one's own policies in order ultimately to negate the occupiers' intentions;

Ironizing: making fun of the occupation authorities and Protectorate realities;

Neutralization: avoiding support for the acts and intentions of the occupiers.²¹

19 KONČELÍK, Jakub; CEBE, Jan; and KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara: *Řízení tisku v letech 1939–1945: Analýza protektorátních tiskových porad*, ("Press Regulation between 1939 and 1945: Analysis of Protectorate Press Meetings"), IN: *Mediální studia, Český a slovenský čtvrtletník pro kritickou reflexi médií*, III/2007, pp. 272–290, Syndikát novinářů ČR, Praha, 2007. Hereinafter: KONČELÍK, CEBE, KÖPPLOVÁ: *Řízení tisku*.

20 VEČEŘA, Pavel: *Ošemetné Scylly a zrádné Charybdy protektorátních novinářů. K projevům pasivní rezistence a kolaborace na stránkách českých tištěných médií za německé okupace 1939–1945*, ("Tricky Scyllas and Treacherous Charybds of the Protectorate Journalists: Manifestations of Passive Resistance in the Czech Print Media during the German Occupation 1939–1945"), IN: *Mediální studia. Český a slovenský čtvrtletník pro kritickou reflexi médií*, III/2007, s. 252–271. Hereinafter: VEČEŘA: *Scylly a Charibdy*.

21 In the original: *separace, konzervace, retardace, blokace, ironizace* and *neutralizace*. The English language does not have equivalent noun forms for the verbs "to block" and "to ironize". Thus, I was forced to use the gerunds here. VEČEŘA: *Scylly a Charibdy*, p. 260.

In the context of Czech Radio's resistance, I would also suggest a seventh category, namely, "emulation." Like separation, emulation worked on the principle of the existence of a difference between the Nazi-led Germans and the Czech nation, although it did not necessarily emphasize that difference explicitly. Instead, texts employing an emulation strategy, openly praised Nazi methods and approaches for dealing with a given subject while calling for Czechs to emulate and apply Nazi principles. The particular cleverness of emulation was that on the surface it could be interpreted as overt glorification of Nazism, of the Nazis and their behavior – program content that no Nazi censor would find easy to forbid – while the actual application in a Czech context of the methods praised would, in fact, have counteracted the occupiers goal of Germanizing the Czech people. I would term Hubert Masařík's pilot lecture for the series on the "Causes of the German Victory" from the summer of 1940 a carefully nuanced example of "emulation."

A further relevant category might also be "fabulation." Fabulation could describe extremely bombastically worded praise for Nazis or Nazi institutions on the part of Czechs, which ultimately said nothing meaningful at all. Unfortunately, I was only able to identify this approach in texts published by Czech Radio, however not generally in the existing radio recordings from the time.²²

Specifically positive for Czech Radio is the fact that a complete description of its war-time programming still exists. Unlike in the rest of the Reich, where the radio program magazines discontinued publication in May 1941, the Czech weekly *Týden rozhlasu* remained in print throughout the entire period of the occupation and beyond – with Hitler's black-framed death announcement rapidly making way for portraits of Josef Stalin and Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš in May 1945. Thus, the content and texture of programming is clearly evident for analysis for the entire period. By contrast, apparently no program magazines were published for the *Reichsrundfunk* or the post-war stations operating in the Allied zones of occupation between May 1941 and December 1946.²³ Reporting in newspapers did compensate for some of the information vacuum, which ensued after the discontinuation of the German program magazines, however it was often sporadic and, with the overall reduction of the volumes of German newspapers due to paper shortages, became completely unreliable and

22 Particularly Jan Bor's contribution to an article comes to mind: "*Jaký dojem jsem si odnesl z cesty po Německu*", ("What Impression Did I Take Away With Me from the Trip to Germany"), in *Náš rozhlas*, vol. XVIII, edition 40, (29 September–5 October 1940), pp. 4–6.

23 *Hör Zu!, Die Rundfunkzeitung*, volume 1, Number 1, 15 to 21 December 1946, p. 2.

erratic in the later years of the war. Instead, the German radio consumer had to turn to regular program announcements broadcast on the radio to learn what programs were coming, and these announcements have not been preserved. A drawback here is, however, that all program magazines have their limitations. First of all, they reflect only the content of what was intended for broadcast. They do not take account of last-minute strokes of censors' pens – which were reportedly quite frequent, especially in the period 1939 to 1942. Nor do technical difficulties at the individual stations become evident in program magazines.

Another useful source for what was actually broadcast, however, is the informational leaflet *Rozhlasová korespondence*. Published on a nearly daily basis at times during the occupation, this short, generally two- to four-page publication dedicated to highlights from broadcast programs intended for editors of the Protectorate's newspapers was helpful in illuminating some aspects of programming more prone to such ephemeral disturbances. Nevertheless, only a few years of this publication are available at the Library of the Czech National Museum (Knihovna Národního muzea) in Prague-Bubeneč.

Extremely useful particularly in the context of the section on anti-Semitic broadcasts was the essay *Die Protektoratspresse und die "Judenfrage"*²⁴ by Jaroslava Milotová from the Institute of the Terezín Initiative, which offered an insightful and thorough review of this crucial area of Nazi media policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Furthermore, the Institute's website – holocaust.cz – has developed in recent years into an extremely rich source of information featuring a wide range of original documents, press articles and the like that deal specifically with the Holocaust in the context of the Czech provinces.

Towards the very end of the research phase of this dissertation, in 2010/2011, a work by Radek Žitný was published,²⁵ in which he investigated the content and people behind Protectorate Radio's so-called "Political Sketches." Although actually a student of Prague's Music Conservatory, young (born 1988) Radek Žitný's meticulous research led to an attractively written and richly illustrated book on the subject like none other I have ever seen on the Czech market. One can only

24 MILOTOVÁ, Jaroslava: *Die Protektoratspresse und die "Judenfrage"*, ("The Protectorate Press and the 'Jewish Question'"), IN: *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente* 1996, Nadace Terezínská iniciativa, Academia, Praha, 1996, pp. 153–184. Hereinafter: MILOTOVÁ: *Die Protektoratspresse*.

25 ŽITNÝ, Radek: *Protektorátní rozhlasový skeč. Jak zlomit vaz (nejen) králi komiků*, ("The Protectorate Radio Sketch. How to Break the Neck (not only) of the King of Comedians"), Nakladatelství BVD, Praha, 2010. Hereinafter: ŽITNÝ: *Protektorátní rozhlasový skeč*.

hope that he will continue with such work in the future, as it can help to popularize and clarify the subject for the Czech public in general and may inspire others to research as well.

Nevertheless, given the relative dearth of published sources specifically dedicated to Czech Radio and its programming in the period, I had to turn to archival material for more information. Undoubtedly the most detailed source material concerning broadcast texts and plans can be found in the post-war court cases against the main Czech collaborators and against some German authorities as well. Necessarily, these are organized around the prosecution of those individuals involved in radio programming. They include particularly the case before the post-war National Court against Alois Kříž²⁶ and to a limited extent also material on Emanuel Moravec²⁷ whose case regrettably was never fully explored due to his suicide in May 1945. A further and often extremely rich source of similar information can be found in the court files from the Extraordinary People's Court of Prague (Mimořádný lidový soud v Praze – MLS),²⁸ located at the Státní oblastní archiv Prague (State Territorial Archive Prague). Here, in particular, the post-war cases against Josef Opluštil²⁹ and Jaroslav Mrkvička³⁰ and several others were important and rich in information on the fetid milieu surrounding Czech Fascists and Nazi collaborators. The Archive of the Czech Interior Ministry (Archiv Ministerstva vnitra ČR – AMV) also contains considerable information on many of the main Czech collaborators.

A further and altogether invaluable source of information describing the situation in the Protectorate's broadcasting institutions is available at the German Broadcasting Archives in Frankfurt am Main (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Frankfurt – DRAF) with the title *Sendergruppe Böhmen-Mähren*. This text of roughly 20 pages is a post-war apology written by none other than Ferdinand Thürmer, the director of broadcasting in the Office of the Reichs Protector/German State Ministry for Bohemia and Moravia from spring 1942 until May 1945. Remarkably, Thürmer survived not only the Prague Uprising (5 to 9 May 1945), but also internment by the Soviet NKVD. Thürmer wrote his apology in 1950. Unfortunately, there is no information at the DRA as to why or for whom

26 Národní archiv (Czech National Archive Prague), archival collection Národní Soud (post-war Czechoslovak National Court), Hereinafter: NA–NárS.

27 NA-MORAVEC-AMV 39.

28 SOA, Mimořádný lidový soud v Praze (post-war Extraordinary People's Court in Prague), hereinafter: SOA-MLS Praha.

29 SOA-MLS Praha, LS125/48, carton 741.

30 SOA-MLS Praha, LS104/48, carton 735.

precisely he wrote it at the time. While we need to regard the word of Nazi occupation official Thürmer with a critical mind, a good deal of what he wrote seems borne out by other sources. Most notably, Czech Radio's personnel chief Karel Remeš's post-war court testimony described the Thürmer era in relatively positive terms and seems to confirm many of Thürmer's claims. This is even more remarkable given the poisoned atmosphere prevailing in post-war Czechoslovakia in connection with the retribution of German crimes.³¹ Furthermore, as Benjamin Frommer pointed out in his study on post-war retribution against Nazi collaborators, fraternization with Germans, the declared enemies of the re-established Czechoslovak state, became an offense also in the post-war period with the potential to cause Czechoslovak citizens very serious legal problems.³² Under the circumstances, Remeš would not have risked even indirect praise for Thürmer's rule at Czech Radio had he not had very good reason. Most of all, Thürmer's professed overall strategy of "giving the Czechs in the Radio a useful cultural instrument, as much as possible connected with the feeling that it was 'their' radio," is clearly confirmed in Remeš's testimony – two sources, which arose in complete independence of each other. There are small errors or inaccuracies in Thürmer's essay. For instance, he did not actually manage to raise the radio subscription fee in the Protectorate to Reich levels,³³ but only to 75%

31 As an illustration of this atmosphere, one need only call to mind the public attacks and recriminations targeted against the Czech humanitarian worker Přemysl Pitter after he dared to criticize and took steps to alleviate the plight of civilian internees – Germans, Czechs from mixed marriages and others – vegetating in camps spread throughout Prague in the summer of 1945. For his efforts to help especially the children among these people, including saving many lives, Pitter harvested a vicious media campaign that was by no means limited only to the Communist daily *Rudé právo*, but included parts of the democratic press as well. For instance, the Social Democratic *Právo lidu* and the organ of the Federation of Liberated Political Prisoners, *Hlas osvobozených*. See: VAUGHAN, David: *Přemysl Pitter: the good fundamentalist*. Available on-line at: www.radio.cz/en/section/books/premysl-pitter-the-good-fundamentalist (March 2011) and the biography of Pitter: KOSATÍK, Pavel: *Sám proti zlu*, Nakladatelství Ladislav Horáček-Paseka, Praha-Litomyšl, 2009, pp. 205–211.

32 The period in which such crimes as collaboration or fraternization could potentially occur was set between 21 May 1938 and 31 December 1946! Thus even 19 months after the end of the war, a person could potentially get into trouble in connection with the Germans. See: FROMMER, Benjamin: *National Cleansing, Retribution Against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005, p. 240. Hereinafter: FROMMER: *National Cleansing*.

33 THÜRMER, Ferdinand: *Sendergruppe Böhmen-Mähren*, DRAF A04/18, p. 23.

of Reich levels. However, given that Thürmer was working five years after the events described and presumably without access to detailed documentation located in Communist-ruled Prague, this error might be forgiven. In general, Thürmer's essay seems very credible indeed.

With regard to original broadcast and background materials, it is unfortunate that very little remains in the Czech Radio Archive (Archiv Českého Rozhlasu – AČRo) in Prague itself. Much of the company's correspondence – and especially that of the German-language stations – was apparently shredded and pulped in the post-war period. What survives can only be described as a tiny fragment of the original documentation. Some of this state-of-affairs undoubtedly had to do with material shortages during and after the war, but also with the intense anti-German sentiment reigning in the immediate post-war period. However, some losses arose even in much later periods. For example, one important document – the minutes from the 1941 program planning conference of Czech Radio – although documented as belonging to the collection in the late 1960's has disappeared in the course of the ensuing years. The situation is similarly unhappy with regard to program recordings. In the course of the Second World War, recording tapes (made of metal at the time) and other resources became extremely short in supply and often had to be reused – thereby erasing original broadcast records. Only a very small residue of the thousands of hours of programming broadcast between 1939 and 1945 remains today, and much of it is not of great relevance to this study. The most useful material can be found in what were the employee files for each of the main actors involved. Fortunately, at the outset of my research into this subject, it was still relatively easy to access such material. In the ensuing eight years, Czech data protection laws have tightened, making access to these personnel files very problematic indeed.

Finally, important information on Thürmer, his predecessor in office Lothar Scurla, and on the first director of Department IV – Cultural Policy, Karl Freiherr von Gregory, is also available at the Bundesarchiv Berlin (German Federal Archive Berlin). Particularly relevant correspondence regarding them in the Reichs-Kultur-Kammer proved useful. In the cases of Gregory und Thürmer, who were members of the SS, these were the files PK/Parteikorrespondenz and SSO/SS-Führerpersonalakten.