

“The Jew Is and Always Will Be Our Greatest Enemy!” Anti-Semitism in Slovak Radio Broadcast from the Reich’s Vienna Radio Station*

Michala Lônčíková

Abstract:

LÔNČÍKOVÁ, Michala: “The Jew Is and Always Will Be Our Greatest Enemy!” Anti-Semitism in Slovak Radio Broadcast from the Reich’s Vienna Radio Station.

The international political situation and the Nazi plans for Central Europe culminated in the late 1930s. The organisation of the collaboration with pro-Nazi and separatist Slovak representatives accelerated after the “Anschluss” of Austria in March 1938. From then on, Slovak territory was only separated from Nazi Germany by the Danube River. The proximity of the two major centres – Vienna and Bratislava – enabled the Nazis to affect the political development of Slovak autonomy and influence public opinion to favour the break-up of Czechoslovakia through the use of various propaganda tools. Modern technology further shortened the distance between places that were already physically close to each other. The main aim of this paper is to focus on Slovak radio broadcasts from the Reich’s Vienna radio station. It was established at the time of the Sudetenland crisis on 15th September 1938 and was organised by Ľudovít Mutňanský and Rudolf Vávra, members of the Foreign Hlinka Guard (FHG). Studying the period of Slovak autonomy is crucial for gaining an understanding of the original purpose for this broadcast – an attempt to influence public opinion in favour of the dissolution process. Taking into consideration the radicalisation of the broadcast pertaining to the racial perception of the Jewish community, contrary to the ideology of the Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (HSLŠ) at that time, special attention is paid to the role of anti-Semitism in the Slovak program.

Keywords: Jews, Anti-Semitism, Vienna, Slovak Radio Broadcast, Ľudovít Mutňanský, Foreign Hlinka Guard

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The proclamation of Jews as the alleged eternal enemy, as quoted in the title of this article, represented a significant and symptomatic framework of the Slovak radio broadcasts carried out by the Reich’s Vienna radio station. This motto was regularly used to close the daily broadcast¹ which targeted Slovak citizens during the last days of the First Czechoslovak Republic in the autumn of 1938. Even though the radio station and broadcasts, in general, were only in their infancy in the late 1930s in Slovakia, the Nazis did not underestimate the advantages of this form of propaganda to support their intention for a gradual disintegration of Czechoslovakia. It was not a coincidence that the Slovak section started its broadcasts under the umbrella of Nazi Germany on 15th September 1938, at the time of the Sudetenland crisis.²

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1 KAMENEC, Ivan. *Po stopách tragédie*. Bratislava : Archa, 1991, p. 40.

2 TULKISOVÁ, Jana. Ženy a trinásť hodina. In *História*, 2009, Vol. 9, No. 5-6, p. 15.

The existence of these broadcasts in Slovak is not unknown among scholars, however, so far, there has been little study of this topic in Slovak historiography. Interestingly, the publications most relevant to this subject have been published abroad – the monograph *Vienna Broadcast to Slovakia*³ by Henry Delfiner and a short chapter in the book *Rolle Wiens im Prozess der Staatswendung der Slowakei 1938/1939*⁴ by David Schriffl. In particular, the chapter by Schriffl, succeeded in defining the role of the broadcast into the broader context of Nazi policy and their attempts to influence Slovak political circles, in particular the mainly pro-autonomy Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana, HSĽS). Otherwise, at least according to the research I have conducted to date, the Slovak broadcasts have only been the subject of marginal analysis and this topic has only been partially addressed in a couple of articles⁵ and propaganda-related publications.⁶ These arguments demonstrate the relevance of this article which is focused on this understudied topic.

After the "Anschluss" in March 1938, the common Czechoslovak border was changed and Bratislava appeared to be located in the close neighbourhood of the Third Reich, not to mention its natural proximity to Vienna. This geographical arrangement allowed for the concentration of Nazi forces, whose mission it was to operate in Slovak territory in order to strengthen existing separatist tendencies and to organise the collaboration with pro-Nazi representatives.⁷ The rise in nationalism and the call for autonomy were gradually coming to a head in some Slovak political circles, the domestic political situation was gradually becoming less stable, and was becoming increasingly influenced by international circumstances. The Nazi plans to dissolve Czechoslovakia were eventually realised and the first phase took place after the signing of the Munich agreement at the end of September 1938. This was immediately followed by a declaration of Slovak autonomy on 6th October 1938. The short 167-day long existence of the Second Czecho-Slovak Republic culminated in the establishment of the Slovak State in March 1939 – as a Nazi satellite already ruled, at that time, by the single-ruling party, the HSĽS.

3 DELFINER, Henry. *Vienna Broadcast to Slovakia, 1938 – 1939: A Case Study in Subversion*. New York : East European quarterly; Boulder, 1974.

4 SCHRIFFL, David. *Rolle Wiens im Prozess der Staatswendung der Slowakei 1938/1939*. Frankfurt am Main : Peter Lang, 2004.

5 For example, TULKISOVÁ 2009.

6 For example, LÔNČIKOVÁ, Michala. Was the Antisemitic Propaganda a Catalyst for tensions in the Slovak-Jewish relations? In KUBÁTOVÁ, Hana – LÁNIČEK, Jan (eds.) *Jews and Gentiles in Central and Eastern Europe during the Holocaust. History and Memory*. London : Routledge 2018, pp. 76-98.

7 For detailed information about the special units "SD-Donau" see Michal Schvarc's article in this journal and some other publications: SCHVARC, Michal. Sicherheitsdienst a slovenská secesia 1938/1939. In ROGULOVÁ Jaroslava – HERTEL, Maroš et al. *Adepti moci a úspechu. Etablovanie elit v moderných dejinách. Jubileum Valeriána Bystrického*. Bratislava : Veda, 2016, pp. 287-302; SCHVARC, Michal. Organizácia nemeckej bezpečnostnej služby (Sicherheitsdienst – SD) na Slovensku od roku 1939 do vypuknutia SNP. In *Vojenská história*, 2005, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 41-55; SCHRIFFL, David – SCHVARC, Michal. „Vec: Československo“. Neznáma správa Wernera Götttscha o okolnostiach vzniku Slovenského štátu. In *Historický časopis*, 2012, Vol. 60, No. 1, pp. 115-139; SCHRIFFL, David. *Rolle Wiens im Prozess der Staatswendung der Slowakei 1938/1939*. Frankfurt am Main : Peter Lang, 2004, etc.

The Slovak Chapter

As previously mentioned, the brief history of the Slovak broadcasts as a specific form of propaganda intended to aid the disintegration of Czechoslovakia started in Vienna in mid-September 1938. Looking from a broader perspective, this propaganda strategy was not used exclusively for the Slovak case – attempts to saturate the country with nationalism and tension were realised through broadcasts in various languages targeted at different nationalities, such as Czech and Ukrainian (Subcarpathian Ukraine).⁸ An analogy of this scenario was used in contemporary Yugoslavia;⁹ broadcasts were made in Croatian targeted at pro-autonomy and separatist circles.¹⁰ Czech broadcasts by the Reich's Vienna radio station started first, broadcasting from 3rd September 1938. Initially, they targeted the central Czechoslovak government without making any direct reference to support for the autonomous movement.¹¹ The plan to organise the broadcasts was also noted in Joseph Goebbels' diaries, the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, where he approved this intention.¹² According to current research, the first evidence of the plan to run Czech broadcasts from Vienna was recorded in a letter from Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Reichsstatthalter (governor) of Austria to the Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop in late June 1938, where he mentioned a suggestion which had been made to him. The process that followed is not yet clear, but an expert in propaganda, Dr. Wolfgang Mühlberger,¹³ was approached to take over the broadcasts in August 1938, most probably by Karl Herman Frank or Wilhelm Sebekowsky, the ranking representatives of the Sudeten German Party (Sudetoněmecká strana, SdP). At the beginning, the broadcast was delegated to Joseph Brückel, the Nazi Gauleiter for Austria and from late October 1938, Seyss-Inquart himself was made responsible.

The existence of special Slovak broadcasts was personally linked to Ľudovít Mutňanský who became the first announcer.¹⁴ He arrived in Vienna to join in with the activities of Rudolf Vávra, the second announcer and later General Counsel of the Slovak Republic in Vienna. According to his personal explanation, published in the introduction to his brochure *Tu ríšsky vysielateľ Viedeň (Here is the Reich's Radio Station in Vienna)*, that contained a selection of the radio broadcasts, he should have decided to leave for Vienna in order to fight for a "Slovak thing" – self-determination and freedom for the Slovak nation.¹⁵ That he had built a position and

8 DELFINER 1974, p. 9.

9 Politisches Archiv Auswärtigen Amtes (PAAA), fonds (f.) Gesandtschaft Zagreb, box (b.) 253, number (no.) 230/39 Proko, Rundfunksendungen in serbo-kroatischer Sprache.

10 It is noteworthy to mention the Nazi propaganda interest in the Arab countries. For a more detailed analysis see e. g.: HERF, Jeffrey. *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*. New Haven : Yale University Press, 2009.

11 SCHRIFFL 2004, p. 146.

12 REUTH, Ralf Georg (ed.) *Joseph Goebbels Tagebücher 1924 – 1945. Band 3. 1935 – 1939*. München : Piper Verlag, 1999, p. 1262.

13 W. Mühlberger was claimed to be a Nazi propaganda expert for South and Eastern Europe, he later became a press attaché in Slovakia. More about his activities: Vojenský historický archív (VHA), coll. Slovensko 1938 – 1945, catalogue units 163-171.

14 The Hlinka Guard was a paramilitary organisation of the HSLS. There were also some specific units formed outside (Czecho)Slovakia. Controversy about Mutňanský's activities in the FHG will be discussed later.

15 MUTŇANSKÝ, Ľudovít. „Tu ríšsky vysielateľ Viedeň“. *Boj vo svetovom éteri o slovenskú pravdu a budúcnosť*.

the image of a passionate fighter for Slovak independence is evident, however, archival documents provide us with a very different and not so representative explanations, such as alleged financial problems, family and personal issues,¹⁶ his attempt to avoid mobilisation¹⁷ and, as was stated in the post-war indictment against him, being sent to Vienna by Ferdinand Ďurčanský, an HSLŠ politician and later Foreign Minister, to support the propaganda activities of the “radical” wing of the HSLŠ.¹⁸

Even though the real motives (or a combination of them) for Mutňanský’s decision to leave the country are not completely unambiguous, regular daily broadcasts in Slovak started on 15th September 1938. Initially, all of the broadcasts were intended to influence the situation in Czechoslovakia – Czech, Slovak, and Ukrainian – and were broadcast at 19:30. According to political scientist Henry Delfiner, they continued without interruption in all of these languages until the end of 1939.¹⁹ From November 1938, the original broadcast time was shifted to 13:00 and a 15-minute long news program in German was followed by 5 minutes dedicated to Slovak issues.²⁰ Both of these schedules were moved to a prominent part of the day – dinnertime and then lunchtime – which demonstrates the importance of the program within the Nazi propaganda system. The intention to spread the broadcast to the largest possible audience logically represented the core paradigm of a potentially efficient media campaign which was further evidenced by its move to “prime time”.

The Slovak program was broadcast until the end of 1939, however, according to Delfiner, it commanded its highest level of (and also international) attention in March 1939 during the final phase of the disintegration of Czechoslovakia. Some information about the existence of Slovak broadcasts by the Reich’s Vienna radio station also appeared in the international press, for instance in *The New York Times*, which informed its readers about this program from 5th March 1939 onwards.²¹ However, approximately 170 Slovak broadcasts had already been made between September 1938 and March 1939.²²

In particular, from this point of view, the “forgotten” era of Slovak broadcasts from Vienna will stand at the epicentre of this article. Firstly, the broadcasts were originally established as an intentional propaganda tool by the Nazis to accelerate the disintegration of Czechoslovakia which was partially achieved through Slovak autonomy and which culminated in March of 1939. Autonomy and the Slovak state were both side effects of the international political situation and the direct

Vienna : s. p., 1939, pp. 4-6.

16 Bundesarchiv (BArch) Berlín, f. R 70 Slowakei/254, Bl. 99-101; BArch Berlin, f. R 70 Slowakei/252, Bl. 79.

17 CHREŇO, Jozef. *Malý slovník slovenského štátu 1938 – 1945*. Bratislava : Slovenská archívna správa, 1965, p. 132.

18 Štátny archív v Bratislave (ŠABA), f. Ľudový súd Bratislava (LS BA), b. 3, T Ľud 5/48.

19 DELFINER 1974, pp. 8-10.

20 SCHRIFFL 2004, p. 147.

21 DELFINER 1974, p. 40.

22 Ibid, p. 1.

consequences of Nazi plans for Central Europe. Therefore, I see studying this period as being crucial for gaining an understanding of the original purpose of the broadcast – an attempt to influence public opinion in favour of the dissolution process. Secondly, Ľudovít Mutňanský was not only an announcer of the Slovak broadcasts, he also took the initiative to self-publish selected speeches from this specific period in two brochures: *"Tu ríšsky vysielateľ Viedeň". Boj vo svetovom éteri o slovenskú pravdu a budúcnosť*²³ (this was even published in four editions) and *Slovenská revolúcia na vlnách éteru (Slovak Revolution on the Radio Waves)*.²⁴ His intention in sharing the contents of the broadcasts was evident and put significant doubt on his claims in the post-war period, especially when he was indicted in the People's Court.²⁵ Because of the post-war controversy regarding the authorship of these radio broadcasts, the published speeches in these brochures are the primary source for this article. Taking into account the radicalisation of the broadcast and the racial perception of the Jewish community, which was not so common in HSLŠ ideology at that time, special attention is paid to the role of anti-Semitism in the program.

Through a brief digression I will provide more information about Mutňanský's other activities in Vienna and will put his work on the Slovak broadcasts into a broader context. He was also involved in the formation of the paramilitary organisation the Slovak Legion of Free Slovakia which was established in Vienna on 28th September 1938. It was soon transferred to the Foreign Guard (FHG) and he became its head.²⁶ This organisation helped to arm units of the Hlinka Guard in Slovakia by smuggling weapons from Ostmark (annexed Austria) on the Vienna – Bratislava line.²⁷ There was also an attempt to produce a special semi-weekly magazine *Naše zprávy (Our News)* within the FHG which would be dedicated to Slovak workers in the city. Radicalism, typical of the Slovak broadcasts by the Reich's Vienna radio station, was also noteworthy in the discourse from this magazine, including anti-Semitic invective. This topic was addressed many times, for instance in the campaign for the new book: *"Friends! Our publication "Jew" has already been published. I am persuaded that everybody who sincerely cares about the solution of the Jewish question will read this book and thus will clearly see where we would be and who we would be serving like slaves if there was not Adolf Hitler who, as the first of the first, has started the open fight against Jewry. It is a sad thing that to these Jewish evils belong also the so-called white Jews, mostly people with academic education and degrees. Those in their blindness, greed, and money have forgotten the existence of their nation. They preferred the coins of Judas, they sold their soul to evil – the Jew!"*²⁸ Ultimately, this magazine was published on an irregular basis with a circulation of approximately 8-10 000, but all in all, in the end this episode lasted no more than 10 months.²⁹

23 MUTŇANSKÝ 1939.

24 MUTŇANSKÝ, Ľudovít. *Slovenská revolúcia na vlnách éteru*. Viedeň : s. p., 1942.

25 ŠABA, f. LS BA, b. 3, T Ľud 5/48.

26 DELFINER 1974, p. 26.

27 SOKOLOVIČ, Peter. *Hlinkova garda 1938 – 1945*. Bratislava : Ústav pamäti národa, 2009, p. 128.

28 Kamaráti! In *Naše zprávy*, Vol. 1, No. 4, July 1940, p. 18.

29 ŠABA, f. LS BA, b. 3, T Ľud 5/48.

Anti-Semitism on the Radio Waves

The first six months of Slovak autonomy represented a kind of transition period as a single-ruling party system was adopted and democratic principles were rapidly destroyed. The monopoly of HSLŠ was politically enforced, consequently leading to the spread of its ideology which was essentially based on two main pillars: Nationalism and Christianity. These principles were also coherently present in the Slovak broadcasts from Vienna. “Struggle for the nation” was framed analogously by the creation of the image of the enemy, both real and fictitious. In terms of the Slovak pro-HSLŠ nationalists, “enemies” were symbolised by liberals, socialists, Bolsheviks/ Communists, Czechs, Czechoslovakists and Jews.³⁰ When speaking about propaganda strategies, it has been common to try to create the feeling that these people are a part of a homogenous group, diverse from the majority with allegedly clearly set up boundaries, with their personal identities being gradually denied.³¹ The process of categorisation systematically led to the automatic application of certain attributes to a whole group.³² It was rare for someone to be individualised or personalised. This usually only occurred with such leading representatives as, for instance, the former Czechoslovak president Edvard Beneš. In the case of Jews, anti-Semitism as such was not a Nazi ideology imported to Slovakia; autochthonous anti-Semitism had been shaping the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles even before the 1930s. An important turning point was represented by the changed paradigm – anti-Semitism became a political tool, both in Nazi Germany and later in Slovakia under the rule of the HSLŠ. Alleged Jewish omnipresence and omnipotence³³ was also being spread via propaganda campaigns.

It is noteworthy and must be highlighted that an analysis of anti-Semitism in propaganda, including the Slovak radio broadcasts, only focuses on a select and specific theme. Naturally, the content of the Slovak broadcasts was more diverse and not exclusively dedicated to anti-Semitism. Henry Delfiner categorised the broadcast content into certain topics: self-pity, anti-Czech propaganda, anti-Marxism, anti-Masonic propaganda, racism, a special appeal to workers, anti-Panslavism, pro-German propaganda, and fear.³⁴ Anti-Semitism and anticlericalism were elaborated separately, a previously mentioned statement on supposed Jewish universalism and notions of anti-Semitism also occurred in various other categories such as anti-Marxism and racism.

One of the most intensively spread anti-Semitic narratives in HSLŠ propaganda, in general, was the economic form of anti-Semitism.³⁵ Alleged Jewish usury and the

30 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard. *Obraz nepriateľa v propagande počas II. svetovej vojny na Slovensku*. Banská Bystrica : Múzeum SNP, 2016.

31 BRUBAKER, Rogers. *Ethnicity without groups*. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2004, pp. 7-8.

32 JENKINS, Richard. *Rethinking Ethnicity. Arguments and Explorations*. London : Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage, 1998. pp. 52-73.

33 BAUMAN, Zygmunt. *Modernosť a holokaust*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2002, p. 73.

34 DELFINER 1974, pp. 12-17.

35 For a more detailed analysis of anti-Semitic propaganda in Slovakia in 1938 – 1939 see e. g.: LÔNČÍKOVÁ, Michala. Frekvencia antisemitskej propagandy v období 1938 – 1939 na Slovensku vo vybranej periodickej tlači. In NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard – LÔNČÍKOVÁ, Michala a kol. *Antisemitizmus a propaganda*. Bratislava: Stimul,

avoidance of hard-physical work were often considered to be the reasons for the mass emigration at the end of 19th century to the United States of America. This stereotype that pertained to the economic migration of Jews was also addressed in the Slovak broadcast of early February 1939: *"Our fight against the Jews does not allow compromise or consideration. Let no one hide behind false Christian love. Who is surprised that in the course of the last twenty years more than 300,000 Slovaks have emigrated to work in Belgian, French, and American mines, while Jews and non-Slovaks pocketed their belongings and grew rich. The Slovak people will have their day of reckoning with the Jews at all costs. There will be no order or well-being in Slovakia as long as there is a single Jew left under the Tatra Mountains."*³⁶

It is not a coincidence that economy-related topics were intensively discussed in the radio broadcasts from Vienna because it was claimed that the workers were Mutňanský's dominant audience.³⁷ The call to decrease the Jewish dominance in trade and business and the emphasis on the alleged social justice in the gradual distribution (later called the process of "Aryanization") of property to Slovaks also appeared regularly. The practical fulfilment of the nationalist slogan "Slovakia for Slovaks!" was also demanded via the Vienna radio station. Broadcasts from 5th January 1945 on included tough criticism of the Slovak political representatives since the Jews still had the same power in the country as they had before the declaration of Slovak Autonomy and the announcer was calling for radical intervention: *"We can only ensure the Slovak worker a better life for the Slovak worker if a radical solution to the Jewish question is adopted. The Jewish problem must be solved by hard and uncompromising methods. It must be clearly stated that Jews are all those in whose veins there runs Jewish blood and that the property of Jews is the property of the Slovak people."*³⁸

The misuse of the Slovak people and Slovak workers should be stopped and should be unacceptable in the country. According to the broadcast content, the worker's soul and blood needed to be cleaned of the *"Judeo-Marxist bacteria"*³⁹ and the real solution to the contemporary problem could only be solved by the application of the principles of National Socialism which would bring an end to the era of the *"Jewish, Marxist, liberalist social order and feudal parasites"*.⁴⁰ A pro-Nazi inclination was clearly expressed in the radio speech dedicated to

2014, pp. 47-69.

36 Prečo sú Židia lekármi a lekárnikmi? " In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, pp. 45; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, pp. 53-54. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, pp. 104-105. All of the speeches are quoted due to Henry Delfiner who translated them from Slovak into English, respecting the following principle: *"Regarding translation, the rule that I have tried to observe has been to keep it as literal as possible and to deviate from that rule only where absolutely necessary in order to convey to the reader an emotional impact not brought out only by a literal version of the original."* DELFINER 1974, p. 1.

37 Other brochures which were written and published by Mutňanský were oriented specifically to the workers and social question – MUTŇANSKÝ, Ľudovít. *Nový slovenský robotník*. Bratislava : s. p., 1942; MUTŇANSKÝ, Ľudovít. *Slovenská sociálna výstavba*. S. l. : s. p., 1944.

38 Za statočnú prácu, statočnú plácu žiada slovenský robotník! In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 35. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, p. 92.

39 Zo slovenského proletára bude statočný slovenský robotník! In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 16; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, p. 40.

40 Zo Slovenska. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 13; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, p. 61.

the consequences of the Munich Agreement which was described as a guarantee that the “*times of minority slavery will never return*” and the right to self-determination will be respected.⁴¹ Furthermore, the status of the “new” Slovakia would progressively increase under the new political regime of the HSL'S under the umbrella of the national socialist Third Reich, as was promised by the radio broadcast in a 10-point program aimed to eliminate Jewish influence in the majority society: “*But the most important thing is that new Slovakia wishes to become a part of a new, healthy European organism, and let us not forget that political developments in Central Europe have not yet ended. Today the Slovak people know and understand that the Jewish problem must be solved in theory and in practise in order to free our national body from that dangerous cancer which is devouring it slowly but surely. Compromises and optical solutions can only bring catastrophic results in the future. [...] The Slovak people demand that the Jewish question in Slovakia be solved along the following lines:*

Point 1: A revision of civic rights enjoyed by Jews in Slovakia.

Point 2: A census and registration of Jewish property in Slovakia.

Point 3: A special property tax on Jewish property to be levied to compensate for twenty years of exploitation of the Slovak people.

Point 4: Institution of rigorous controls over business in Slovakia and appointment of government inspectors for the food business. Thus the Slovak government could give jobs to at least 20,000 people and could reward those Slovaks who suffered for their political beliefs during the last twenty years.

Point 5: Large Jewish enterprises, such as the baths [spas, M. L.], large estates, factories, and large commercial firms are to be nationalized.

Point 6: Prohibition of Jewish ritual slaughter of animals as being opposed to Slovak national feeling.

Point 7: Immediate closing of all Slovak synagogues in which hatred against Christians is preached.

Point 8: Jewish doctors to be dismissed by all public hospitals and bathing establishments. Jews to dismiss at once their Christian female domestic help.

Point 9: Immediate institution of racial restrictions in public and private law.

Point 10: Facilitation of Jewish emigration providing that a certain part of their property be left behind.”⁴²

Another way in which the Jews were traditionally stereotyped (also) in the Slovak literature and later in the state-controlled propaganda of 1938 – 1945 was a personalised stereotype of Jewish doctors. Prejudices that already existed in the majority society were skilfully misused for propaganda purposes to support the hysteria and distrust of doctors with a Jewish background. A radical appeal for the expulsion of Jewish students from the Faculty of Medicine at Comenius University in Bratislava took place as early as November 1938 – the Slovak Medical

41 Ibid.

42 Najaktuálnejším slovenským politickým problémom je „židovská otázka“. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, pp. 36-37; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, pp. 47-49. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, pp. 97-98.

Association suggested the adoption of the principle of *numerus nullus* for Jewish students for at least 25 years.⁴³ It is noteworthy that in this resolution, Jews were defined as those who had Jewish nationality or practiced the religion. There was an effort to put the lectures on anti-Semitism into practice in the academic sphere in Slovakia, however, it needs to be stated that attempts to limit the numbers of Jewish students were not unique to Europe in the interwar period.⁴⁴ Even though this requirement had remained unfulfilled at that time, a limitation of the number of Jewish students at universities, and also at lower levels of education, was later realised by the Slovak state authorities – with general validity for all of fields of expertise.

Coming back to the propaganda representations, in particular in the Slovak broadcasts from Vienna, the main narrative was based on the supposed religious contradiction between Christianity and Judaism. From the perspective of the propaganda, the only aim of Jewish doctors is to exterminate Christians and they were also blamed for carrying out abortions: *"Jews do not become doctors in to order to heal patients, but in order to prepare poisons to kill gentiles. They do not become doctors to help the sick, but to take the health and life of non-Jews. Jews hate Christians. (...) It is for this reason that it is primarily Jewish doctors who specialize in abortions and in birth control. Jewish doctors show great delight and Talmudic passion in performing abortions. They love to ruin Slovak women's bodies and minds and cut down the growth of the Slovak people. (...) It is remarkable that Jews did everything to propagate abortions but refused to sanction them in their own lives. Jewish doctors never performed forbidden operations on Jewish women but enjoyed immensely doing so on Christian women."*⁴⁵

Even in these cases, the hate-speech was legitimised through the alleged will of the workers to get rid of Jewish doctors. According to the radio broadcast of 9th November 1938, Slovak workers do not trust Jewish doctors because they obey the "diabolical duties" in the Talmud.⁴⁶

Misinterpretations, non-contextual quotations and the intentional manipulation of Jewish religious texts were a common feature of anti-Semitic propaganda, especially in such rigid and conservative Christian societies as Slovakia.⁴⁷ This kind of invectives did not only occur in contemporary public discourse but also among theologians. One of the most significant polemics in the press regarding

43 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard (ed.) *Holokaust na Slovensku. Obdobie autonómie (6. 10. 1938 – 14. 3. 1939)*. Bratislava : Nadácia Milana Šimečku, Židovská náboženská obec Bratislava, 2001, document no. 38, p. 93.

44 See e.g.: FRITZ, Regina – ROSSOLIŇSKI-LIEBE, Grzegorz – STAREK, Jana (eds.) *Alma Mater Antisemitica. Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 – 1939*. Wien : new academic press, 2016.

45 Prečo sú Židia lekármi a lekárnikmi? In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, pp. 44-45; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, pp. 52-53. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, pp. 104.

46 Hlavné mesto Slovenska priamo triumfálne privítalo svojho veľkého syna profesora Vojtecha Tuku. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, pp. 17-18; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, pp. 23-24. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, p. 72.

47 For detailed analysis of the propaganda usage of confessional antisemitism in the Slovak Autonomy see e. g. LÔNČÍKOVÁ, Michala. "His Blood Be on Us and Our Children". Confessional Antisemitism and its Reflection in the Propaganda in Slovakia (1938 – 1939). In *Moreshet Journal*, 2016, Vol. 13, pp. 230-249 (Hebrew version: „Damu alejnu ve al-baneijnu“. Antisemiut al basis amuna datit ve hištakfut be-taamula be-Slovakia (1938 – 1939) In *Moreshet Journal*, 2015, Vol. 13, pp. 196-209).

the criticism of Talmudic teaching was published exactly at the time of Slovak Autonomy. It started in an interview with Rudolf Mikuš, a Jesuit Provincial, for the newspaper *Slovák (Slovak)* where he clearly expressed his opinion on the difference between the “Old Testament” and the contemporary “Talmudic Jews”.⁴⁸ Rabbi Armin Frieder immediately reacted to this misinterpretation and he appealed to Mikuš as a theologian, trying to explain that the Talmud is nothing more than a commentary on the Pentateuch. Frieder’s reaction was published in the pages of the Jewish periodical, *Židovské noviny (Jewish Newspapers)*, which was not banned until September 1939.⁴⁹ Mikuš did not change his mind and his intent was to defend his previous statement.⁵⁰

Viewed from this perspective, Mutňanský’s radio speeches turned out to be an appropriate ideological partner that supported this irrational and dangerous stereotype which also culminated in a call for practical consequences for pharmacists: “» [...] *Not only the property but the life of non-Jews is given into the hands of the Jews. The non-Jews must be destroyed, particularly the powerful nations. You must kill even the most honest of the heathen! This is what the Talmud says (Aboda Z. 26.2). It is permissible to kill heathen (Chosen 285). And the Jews are obeying their diabolical duties. That is why Slovaks do not want to have anything to do with Jews and demand that the licenses they obtained by such fraudulent methods be revoked.*« The Slovaks insist that it is intolerable to have the health of the people depend on Jews without conscience, whose aim is to destroy the Christian world. The Slovak people are convinced that the Slovak government will re-examine licenses and will not permit Jews to sell pharmaceutical products.”⁵¹ In his book *Vienna Broadcast to Slovakia*, Henry Delfiner analysed in more detail the false and misleading claims about the Talmud in these broadcasts.⁵²

Religion played a crucial role in the perception of the Jewish community in Slovakia. It was symptomatic that the first legal definition of “Jew” initiated during the period of Slovak Autonomy by the political representatives of HSĽS and was adopted a few days after the establishment of the Slovak State in March 1939 as government regulation no. 63/1939 Sl. z.,⁵³ which was primarily based on confessional criteria.⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that the question of a possible conversion to Christianity was regularly included in propaganda discourse, including the broad-

48 Provinciál jezuitov Rudolf Mikuš: Štát musí vyradiť židov z hospodárskeho života. In *Slovák*, Vol. 21, No. 34, 10th February 1939, p. 1.

49 Otvorený list P. Rudolfovi Mikušovi, provinciálovi jezuitov. In *Židovské noviny*, Vol. 2, No. 7, 17th February 1939, p. 4.

50 Mikuš, Rudolf: Talmud a židia. Krátka odpoveď na otvorený list pána hl. rabína Armina Friedera. In *Slovák*, Vol. 21, No. 46, 24th February 1939, p. 4.

51 Hlavné mesto Slovenska priamo triumfálne privítalo svojho veľkého syna profesora Vojtecha Tuku. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 18; Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, p. 71-72.

52 DELFINER 1974, pp. 18-23.

53 NIŽŇANSKÝ 2001, document no. 80, pp. 131-134.

54 This definition partially touched also the question of the origin, not only exclusively the religion. Legal historian Katarína Zavacká pointed out that even the confessional criteria was only a camouflage. ZAVACKÁ, Katarína. Vymedzenie pojmu žida v právnych normách slovenského štátu. In IVANIČKOVÁ, Edita a kol. *Z dejín demokratických a totalitných režimov na Slovensku a v Československu v 20. storočí: Historik Ivan Kamenec 70-ročný*. Bratislava : Prodama, 2008, pp. 98-114.

casts from Vienna: *"It is all in vain. A Jew will always remain a Jew. Everyday life confirms that converted Jews are the greatest threat to the Christian world. And it is certain that the Slovak people will not gain the sympathy of their neighbors by the mass conversion of Jews. [...] The great majority of the Catholic and Protestant clergy opposes the conversion of Jews when it is not a case of spiritual rebirth and genuine contribution but merely a business and a very dirty one at that. The Slovak public expects that the Catholic and Protestant churches will cease all conversions of Jews and will re-examine those conversions that have taken place beginning with September of this year."*⁵⁵ In this broadcast, Mutňanský emphasised the alleged impossibility of the "real" conversion of Jews.

The Role of Race

The examples of the presence of anti-Semitism in the Slovak radio broadcasts of the Reich's Vienna radio station so far mentioned somewhat represented the propaganda mainstream that followed the ideology of the HSLŠ, perhaps with the exception of a greater interest in worker and radical rhetoric. What made the content of the speeches special was the racial perception of the Jews which was not typical for Slovak political discourse or the majority society. This particular theme raises the question of the direct impact of the Nazis and their ideological framework on the Slovak broadcasts. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that precisely this feature became a crucial part of the indictment at the post-war People's Court against Mutňanský's activities in relation to the Vienna radio broadcasts.⁵⁶ Despite the fact that the racial definition of "Jew" was later legally adopted in the government regulation no. 198/1941 Sl. z., generally known as the Jewish Code in September 1941, it is still disputable whether this principle was successfully transferred into the political and (even) popular mind-set. According to the current state of the art, it seems that the confessional connotation did not lose its importance and dominance.

Already in broadcasts from late November, a commentary on the "Slovak racial question" as a supposed crucial step for the new Slovak state (actually, there was already Slovak autonomy when it was broadcast) appeared in the radio program: *"The famous race expert, Ernst Wagner, has written on the question of the Slavic races and we find the following valuable information in his interesting and educational book. The Slavic peoples belong to the so-called Dinaric race. This race comprises the following peoples: Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Ukrainians. We must note that the Czechs are not part of it. This ends the myth that the Slovaks are a branch of the Czech people. [...] Thus speaks the memorable scientist. The steadfastness and honesty of the Slovak race is proven by the historic fact that the Slovak people, suppressed for centuries, nevertheless preserved their own language, culture, dress, customs, pure family life, and steadfast faith in God. [...] This old-age custom and other historical discoveries prove that the Slovak people belong to an excellent*

⁵⁵ Židia hromadne utekajú od Talmudu. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 22; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, pp. 51-52. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, pp. 74-75.

⁵⁶ ŠABA, f. LS BA, b. 3, T ľud 5/48.

race and guard scrupulously their purity and identity. [...] In our new Slovak state we must work in this field too, and must maintain the purity of the Slovak race to the greatest extent possible. This is a requirement of sound common sense and a necessity for the existence of the Slovak people."⁵⁷

The racial perspective also enables an analysis of the direct impact of the ideological indoctrination on the content of the speeches – whereas anti-Semitism as such was autochthonous in Slovak society, the racial perception was rather unique, however, some similar notions also appeared in the periodical press published in Slovakia.⁵⁸ The “flagship” of the racial labelling of Jews, pointing to their allegedly specific characteristics was represented by some articles in *Gardista* (*Guardist*), the official periodical of the Hlinka Guard. One of the most significant articles was published under the eloquent title *Is the Jew the same human being as we are?*⁵⁹ The analogous principle was applied in Mutňanský's radio speech which was originally broadcast just before Christmas in 1938. In spite of the racial concept, the counterpoint was based on the dichotomy between Jewish and Christian and not “Aryan” as would be preferable and expected in “pure” racial theory. The complete avoidance of confessional criteria in the anti-Semitic narrative addressed to Slovak society seemed almost impossible: *“The Christian child's mind develops slowly as nature wishes it. It rejects everything that is not linked to the stage of its mental development. It rejects particularly impure and immoral speech and habit that contrasts with the purity of childlike feeling and thought. But how different are Jewish children. The Jewish child matures earlier in body and mind than the Christian child, and this circumstance has the effect of the child concerning itself with matters that Christian children do not wish to know and understand. To this something else must be added: Jewish children by heredity and parental environment acquire abnormal and immoral tendencies. Jews have the devil in them, and this devil awakens at an early age. It can be observed primarily in improper speech and habits. We could show hundreds upon hundreds of examples of immoral behaviour of Jewish ten-to twelve-year olds, and these children of the devil spread immoral talk among Christian children and poison the soul of the Christian child in a diabolical manner. We must protect Christian children from that danger. Therefore we must prohibit Jewish children from attending Christian schools, public places like swimming pools, playing fields, etc. We must segregate them. Children. Youth that is our golden treasure, the future of our people. We must guard it zealously.”*⁶⁰

Racial notions were often accompanied by attempts to dehumanise⁶¹ the Jewish community and put their status in society in doubt. These narratives were intended to generate a public perception of the Jews as lesser humans. In extreme cases, this literal dehumanisation, as a propaganda tool, led to an explicit comparison between Jews and animals (worms, spiders, bats, snakes, etc.). This approach was typical, for instance, of the Nazi periodical *Der Stürmer*, however, it was rather rare in Slo-

57 Niekoľko slov o slovenskej rasovej otázke. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 10-11. Quoted due to DELFINER 1974, pp. 62-63.

58 LÔNČÍKOVÁ 2014, pp. 64-65.

59 Je Žid taký človek ako my? In *Gardista*, Vol. 1, No. 16, 20th May 1939, p. 11.

60 Chráňte si deti! In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 27; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, p. 50. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, p. 78.

61 Herbert C. Kelman. Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on Dehumanization of Victims and Victimiziers. In *Journal of Social Issues*, 1974, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 25-61.

vakia. In general, dehumanisation represented an important part of Nazi ideology and the Jews were classified as a special (anti)race.⁶² Emphasising their alleged lack of morality sometimes even resulted in demonization – this scheme was usually turned against Jewish men who were described in contrast to supposedly naïve, innocent and pure Slovak women. The Slovak program and Mutňanský's publications also contained this kind of "warning" statement: *"Have Slovak women ever stopped to think why Jewish women do not take jobs as servants, as laundry women, as field hands, as waitresses; or have Slovak men ever thought why Jewish men do not take jobs as servants, farm hands, mountain herdsmen, behind the plow, or as sharecroppers? At the same time we see that every Jew has a female servant and that girl is a Christian. How does he treat her? She must work hard from dawn to dusk to earn a few crowns and, furthermore, she is molested by that Jew. How many thousands of illegitimate children result from this [...] How many thousands upon the thousands of honest Christian servants have been ruined spiritually and physically because of this Jewish devilry? [...] In new Slovakia every Slovak soul is valuable and necessary. We must not allow the Jews to destroy and soil our Slovak blood. It is the duty of the responsible authorities to free our Christian girls from the claws of Jewish devils. We must also make it possible for our girls to find husbands or, if need be, find other ways of earning their living. But they must be released from the Jewish inferno at once."*⁶³

Efficacy?

Radio broadcasts were a relatively new form of mass media in this period, but it soon became a powerful propaganda tool. The Nazis did not underestimate its power and they applied their previous experiences to the Slovak radio broadcasts. Logically, information spread much more quickly by radio than by the daily press. On the other hand, radios were not common property – in 1937 only twelve out of a hundred households owned one.⁶⁴ Listening to the radio in larger groups together with other family members or neighbours could be considered as a social activity. It would hardly be possible to count the absolute number of listeners. This is analogous to calculating the number of newspaper readers because of the assumption that more people read it than buy it, not to mention the real impact on the re-shaping of public opinion in favour of state ideology. Even though radio broadcasting was still in its infancy in this period in Slovakia, political representatives took control of it and primarily used it for their own purposes. The government ordered the confiscation of radio sets owned by people who were suspected of being politically unreliable, including Jews in general, or allowed the use of private radio sets that could only tune into the Slovak and German channels.⁶⁵ At the same time, the authorities were trying to secure a larger number of listeners, so they insisted that owning radio sets be compulsory, for example in pubs and inns.⁶⁶ Taking into account the function of the pub as

62 HITLER, Adolf. *Mein Kampf*. Bratislava : ARA, 2000, p. 196.

63 Nech slovenské ženy rozmýšľajú. In MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 31; MUTŇANSKÝ 1942, p. 49-50. Quoted due to: DELFINER 1974, p. 81.

64 LIPTÁK, Ľubomír. Život na Slovensku v medzivojnovom období. In *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka*, 2004, Vol. 9, p. 189.

65 Slovenský národný archív (SNA), f. Ústredňa štátnej bezpečnosti (ÚŠB), b. 826, no. 209-826-5.

66 See e.g. the case of M. Iváková. SNA, f. ÚŠB, b. 826, no. 209-826-5.

a “natural” meeting point for the people in towns and villages, this step was logic and practical, especially for propaganda purposes. Policies regarding the confiscation of radios by Central State Security (Ústredňa štátnej bezpečnosti) and their subsequent distribution, typically to schools, cultural organizations, the Hlinka Guard, or the Hlinka Youth were successfully carried out. Priority was usually given to organisations rather than to private individuals. However, the number of applicants reflected the rising population of radio broadcasts.⁶⁷

On one hand, the radio was ideal for quickly sharing the news, but on the other, its biggest disadvantage was its ephemerality. In a political regime which had a monopoly on the mass media, such as the HSLŠ regime, this problem was skillfully avoided by the publication of the most important and relevant radio speeches in the press within the following few days. Focusing on the Slovak radio broadcasts, Mutňanský himself took care to spread the main parts of his speeches by self-publishing the previously mentioned brochures.

The proximity of Bratislava and Vienna and the infancy of the technical infrastructure in Slovakia could lead to the notion that the Slovak broadcasts were structured and aimed only at listeners in Bratislava, but the reality was different. There is clear evidence that the authorities in Banská Bystrica District (a region in Central Slovakia) were familiar with these regular broadcasts.⁶⁸ Moreover, the technical progress of the transmitter used and operated by the Nazis culminated brought the “propaganda war” to a new level – special jammers were installed and activated at the time of the Slovak radio broadcast which made it impossible to listen to any other program.⁶⁹

To sum it up, the technical conditions were optimised to enable the most efficient spread of propaganda as possible. Sources about the impact of the broadcasts on public opinion are rare, however, some relevant evidence, especially from documents of German provenance, might help in at least a partial, analysis of this question. SS Obersturmführer Dr. Chlan reported on the popularity of the Slovak broadcasts specifically resulting from anti-Semitic tendencies. Mutňanský’s direct superior in Vienna, Wolfgang Mühlberger, agreed with this statement and claimed that the broadcasts “fell on fertile ground in Slovakia”.⁷⁰ In his memoirs, Gejza Medrický, a former Minister for the Economy, identified the radio program as the main source for the rising radicalisation in the call for “the solution of the Jewish question” immediately after the establishment of the Slovak State.⁷¹

To shift the responsibility predominantly onto the Slovak broadcasts would be overestimating their effect, however, criticism of the radical rhetoric also resonated among the HSLŠ authorities as early as late 1938/ early 1939.⁷² Mutňanský stopped broadcasting in August 1938. According to another report from Chlan, soon after

67 See e.g. the cases of R. Trepáč and A. Póka. SNA, f. ÚŠB, b. 826, no. 209-826-1.

68 Štátny archív v Banskej Bystrici (ŠABB), f. Okresný úrad v Banskej Bystrici, b. 106, no. 251/39.

69 SCHRIFFL 2004, p. 152.

70 BArch, f. R 70 Slowakei/254, Bl. 89-90; DELFINER 1974, p. 17.

71 MEDRICKÝ, Gejza. *Minister spomína*. Bratislava : Litera, 1993, p. 162.

72 SCHRIFFL 2004, p. 156.

March 1939, Mutňanský claimed that he wanted to quit his radio position by the autumn of the same year.⁷³ Nonetheless, Mühlberger expressed his disappointment with Mutňanský's work for the Reich's Vienna radio station.⁷⁴

Criticism regarding the activities in Vienna also culminated in a discrepancy between the Hlinka Guard and its foreign units. The separatist tendencies of the FHG resulted in its dissolution in 1940.⁷⁵ German documents announced the subsequent re-organisation being planned for the FHG with two centres, one in Berlin led by Rudolf Strieženec and one in Vienna led by Rudolf Vávra.⁷⁶ The new plan did not count on any assistance from Mutňanský. His "professional" time in Vienna was slowly over.

Mutňanský's further steps led him to Berlin where he served as a social attaché at the Slovak embassy. The final phase of his career in the wartime period took place in Slovakia (Mutňanský's second brochure pertaining to the Slovak radio broadcasts was written in Slovakia in 1942) where he worked as an officer for social issues in an insurance company and simultaneously in the social department of the Propaganda Office.⁷⁷

The Game of Responsibility

In the introduction to his brochure, *Tu ríšsky vysielateľ Viedeň*, which he published in four editions, Mutňanský himself proclaimed and emphasised that neither the German offices nor their political representatives had influenced the activities of the Slovak radio broadcasts and that he worked in accordance with his "best knowledge and conscience".⁷⁸ Naturally, it is not so surprising that his argument changed when he was facing an indictment in front of the People's Court in Bratislava after the Second World War when the Slovak state ended.

Ľudovít Mutňanský was tried together with Rudolf Vávra.⁷⁹ The core accusation was based on their activities leading up to dissolution of Czechoslovakia, however, the radio broadcasts were also taken into consideration. The quest to find the real authors of the radio speeches received its legal framework. Mutňanský was trying to push the responsibility onto the Nazi authorities, in particular onto Wolfgang Mühlberger who was his direct superior at the Slovak radio in Vienna. Mutňanský claimed he was being an obedient employee. The testimony of I. Kormanová, who worked as an interpreter in the office, spoke in support of this argument.⁸⁰ To the contrary, according to Henry Delfiner, Mühlberger confirmed in the 1960s that Mutňanský wrote the content of the broadcasts alone, and that he only regularly received particular

73 BArch, f. R 70 Slowakei/254, Bl. 99-100.

74 Ibid.

75 SOKOLOVIČ 2009, p. 309; BArch, f. R 70 Slowakei/151, Bl. 18.

76 BArch, f. R 70 Slowakei/151, Bl. 13.

77 *Biografický lexikón Slovenska. VI.* Martin : Slovenská národná knižnica, Slovenský biografický ústav, 2017, p. 640.

78 MUTŇANSKÝ 1939, p. 5.

79 Together with a pro-HSLS journalist Viliam Kovár and an HSLS politician, former head of the Propaganda Office, chargé d'affaires in Croatia Karol Murgaš.

80 ŠABA, f. LS BA, b. 3, T ľud 5/48.

instructions from him.⁸¹ Another “apple of discord” represented the spread of radical anti-Semitism based on racial perception. Mutňanský did not deny anti-Semitism as such, but he insisted that it was based on its social and economic background.⁸²

To conclude, Mutňanský was sentenced to 20 years in prison, 15 years loss of civil rights and the confiscation of a quarter of his property.⁸³ The final verdict found him guilty of participating in the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, collaboration with the Nazi authorities and also condemned him for his activities as an announcer of Slovak radio broadcasts by the Reich’s radio station in Vienna, including the propagation of the radical “solution of the Jewish question” on racial principles, etc.

Even though the existence of the radio broadcasts is claimed to have taken place for only a short period (for Mutňanský even shorter), it was created to serve as a propaganda tool in order to disintegrate Czechoslovakia. The radicalism of its content and the strong message about the racial perception of the Jewish community wound up turning it into a separate chapter on (anti-Semitic) propaganda in Slovakia under the HSLŠ regime between 1938 and 1945.

81 DELFINER 1974, p. 27-28.

82 ŠABA, f. LS BA, b. 3, T Iud 5/48.

83 Ibid.

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Mgr. Michala Lônčíková
Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies
Rabensteig 3
1010 Vienna
Austria
michala.loncikova@gmail.com