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Birdsall, C.; Walewska-Choptiany, J.

DOI

[10.1080/01439685.2019.1643096](https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2019.1643096)

Publication date

2019

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television

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Citation for published version (APA):

Birdsall, C., & Walewska-Choptiany, J. (2019). Reconstructing Media Culture: Transnational Perspectives on Radio in Silesia, 1924–1948. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 39(3), 439–478. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2019.1643096>

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RECONSTRUCTING MEDIA CULTURE: TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON RADIO IN SILESIA, 1924–1948

Carolyn Birdsall  and Joanna
Walewska-Choptiany 

This article contributes to a growing scholarship in the field of transnational radio history that attend to radio as a border-crossing medium. Within this burgeoning field, however, there is a persistent tendency to privilege radio produced by national broadcasters in capital cities. In this article, our focus on radio in Silesia seeks to intervene in current discussions of transnational and regional media history. From 1924, radio in German-controlled Silesia was established amidst ongoing border disputes after World War I. Despite the geopolitical significance of this region – and its radio programming, infrastructures and industry between 1924 and 1948 – it has largely been written out of both German and Polish radio historiography. Our analysis focuses on the institutional, technological and socio-political components necessary to understanding radio culture with a transnational and regional lens, taking the example of Silesia as a context of significantly altered population demographics and governance. Taking into account the conditions of radio institutions, industry and the materiality of infrastructures, we examine how radio in Silesia served as a political symbol in the context of ongoing border disputes and linguistic nationalism. As this article suggests, the case of Silesian radio challenges notions of a clear-cut ‘1945 divide’ in radio history, and our analysis will acknowledge how the material culture of radio figures in the complex situation of German, Polish, Russian and Jewish relations, and against the background of looting operations, property transfer and population expulsions in the early post-war period. This

Correspondence to: Carolyn Birdsall, Department of Media Studies, University of Amsterdam, Turfdraagsterpad 9, 1012XT, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. E-mail: c.j.birdsall@uva.nl

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case is critically considered for its potential contribution to a more a layered, comparative research agenda on radio in Central Europe before, during and after World War II.

Recent scholarship has called for increased sensitivity to radio's status as a border-crossing medium, and the process, particularly in Europe, by which the launch of short-wave radio stations during the early 1930s sparked international services in foreign languages and intensified existing competition over available frequencies and the attention of listening audiences.¹ Such work can be framed as part of the growing 'transnational turn' in broadcasting history, which also brings in to sharp relief the formative role of geopolitics in radio history, especially with regards to the significant influence of imperialism, war, occupation and territorial disputes in constituting global landscape of radio across the twentieth century and up to the present.² Within this burgeoning field, however, there is a persistent tendency to privilege radio produced by national broadcasters in capital cities, located at the heart of 'media capital', and invested in reproducing the image of 'media centrality'.³ Yet while it is essential for scholars to attend to the concentration of power, resources and expertise in media 'capitals', especially in the centre-periphery models emphasised by national broadcasting companies, much radio scholarship remains rigidly attached to national frameworks, without exploring the analytical perspectives that might be generated by attending to, for instance, histories of international broadcasting, regional radio, global circulation of technology, design and expertise, international broadcast regulation and diplomacy, transnational co-productions and sales of programme content, and cross-border listening practices by audiences.⁴

In response, a growing number of media historians have emphasised the productive nature of the concept of entanglement for the purposes of thinking across scales and traditional borders, an approach which, as Michele Hilmes has pointed out, encourages researchers to attend to interconnections in media history and problematise neat distinctions of a national radio historiography.⁵ Working in a similar vein, historian Sîan Nicholas has pointed to the need for more plural media histories, which also deal with the media landscape or ecology that radio broadcasting operated in historically, thus, considering the various forms of cross-medial exchange between radio, newspapers, magazines and so forth.⁶ Such a sensitivity to (inter)mediality has allowed for rich interpretations of programming; we similarly contend in this article that it is also important, in transnational radio histories, to not restrict our analyses to the content of radio programming alone.

In this article, we seek to intervene in current discussions of transnational and regional media history. From 1924, radio in German-controlled Silesia was established amidst ongoing border disputes after World War I.⁷ Silesia is a historically industrial and agricultural region that today extends across two main areas in Poland, Lower Silesia and Upper Silesia, which together run along the full extent of Poland's southern border with the Czech Republic, and two smaller shared border areas with Germany and Slovakia. Its main large city is Wrocław, which was named Breslau until 1945, and constituted an important context for media-related activity during the 1920s to 1940s, and a large concentration of Germany's industrial production of radio receivers. Under German rule since the mid eighteenth century, Silesia was a Prussian province between 1815 and 1919. While remaining under German rule

between 1919 and 1945, in the period following World War I, Germany and Poland were engaged in ongoing border disputes during and after 1919–1922, when Posen, western Prussia and a part of Upper Silesia were ceded to Poland.

Despite the geopolitical significance of this region – and its radio programming, infrastructures and industry between 1924 and 1945 – it has largely been written out of both German and Polish radio historiography. Silesia offers a fascinating case for considering the possibilities for a more layered understanding of transnational media history, in terms of engagements not only across territorial space, but in the temporal periodisation ascribed by historians to discrete periods of history. In this article, we, thus, turn our analytical attention not only to successive periods concerning radio history of Silesia, but we also consider Wrocław as a useful model for studying the media histories of urban centres (or regions) in which significant changes occur in population demographics, governance and official language. Other cities in Central Europe for which this approach could be explored further include Kaliningrad (formerly Königsberg), which transformed from German to Soviet Russian rule; Lviv (from occupied Poland to Soviet Ukraine); and Vilnius (from occupied Poland to Soviet Lithuania), along with other cities in which large population transfers and changes in governance took place, with scope to critically examine other global and (post)colonial contexts along similar lines.⁸

We would, therefore, like to evaluate the challenges and possibilities of what we see to be a highly ‘entangled’ media history. In doing so, we recognise the broader historiographical value of this approach, and it is for that reason that we build and expand on recent work by historians like Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen who have argued for the necessity to treat Cold War in Europe from the perspective of ‘entangled histories.’⁹ Our analysis engages the institutional, technological and socio-political components necessary to understanding radio in Silesia with a transnational and regional lens. We, therefore, also seek to contribute to another strand of recent media studies scholarship, which calls for critical analytical attention to the material infrastructures that support the production, transmission and reception of global media communication.¹⁰ This field builds on a rich tradition of cultural geographies of media that attend to media infrastructures, such as undersea cables, wires or drones, which do not necessarily respect the jurisdiction of national borders or international regulatory frameworks. Radio transmissions, too, constitute a porous terrain, which becomes particularly politicised in a region predominated by a long history of multi-ethnic and multi-lingual populations.¹¹ As such, the present article seeks to build on a rich historiography about borderland territories of Central Europe, and highlights why media histories not only deserve a place there, but require a keen attention to the material cultures and infrastructures connected to media.¹²

This article represents a first collaborative effort to think through the possibilities for conceiving a history of radio in Silesia across the period 1924–1948, and it should be noted that the chosen examples are intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, as this present article offers a first snapshot drawn from ongoing archival research. In what follows, we first reflect on the conditions of radio institutions, industry and infrastructural investment, and how, from its inception, radio in Silesia served as a political symbol, representing a potential tool for nation-building but also for the effort to combat ‘national indifference’ in borderland

territories in this region.¹³ In doing so, we will not only attend to specific developments in Silesia, but understand the context of German governance of the Silesian region in conjunction with developments in Poland and Czechoslovakia from the mid-1920s to 1940s. When we turn to the immediate period after World War II (WWII), we will show how the case of Silesian radio challenges notions of a ‘1945 divide’ in radio history, and our analysis acknowledges the complex situation of Polish, Russian, German and Jewish populations and their relations during the period 1944–1948. Finally, we evaluate the challenges and possibilities of this ‘entangled’ media history, and the rich potential for a more integrated, comparative research agenda on radio in Central Europe before, during and after World War II.

Geopolitics and the identity of the Breslau radio station

The German-language station in Breslau (now Wrocław) was launched in May 1924 against the background of ongoing border disputes between Poland and Germany in the wake of World War I. Europe’s borders had been redrawn after 1918, with Poland regaining its status as an independent state, while new countries, like Czechoslovakia declared independence following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Initially named the Schlesische Funkstunde A.G., as part of a private holding initiated by the Breslau physics professor Otto Lummer, between 1925 and 1933, the Breslau station came to be governed by the German radio board (RRG). The Breslau station and its programming increasingly gained political significance, with its outlook continuing to be shaped by a linguistic nationalism and ongoing sovereignty conflicts with Poland.¹⁴

Following the inception of radio broadcasting, both Polish and German broadcasters recognised the potential for radio transmissions to reach both listeners across national borders, who were considered to be lost populations as a result of World War I. As a sketch depicting ‘The German Radio Network’ in 1925 demonstrates, already from this early period, the Breslau programme magazine projected the imagined listenership of its German-language radio programming as extending to the territories of Poland, and to German-speaking communities in Czechoslovakia (Figure 1).¹⁵ In a 1934 publication, the new director of the newly renamed station Reichssender Breslau, and, since 1931 the Nazi regional radio officer (*Gaufunkwart*) in Silesia, Hans Kriegler, summarised the changes at the Breslau station following the Nazi takeover in January 1933 and subsequent reorganisation (*Gleichschaltung*)¹⁶ Along with the rapid growth of radio membership licenses in the Silesian region, to 315,000 in 1934, Kriegler observed that the station also reached several hundred thousand additional listeners in Czechoslovakia, Eastern Upper Silesia, in Posen (Poznań), Transylvania and Austria, suggesting an ‘exceptionally wide range’ of reception; he also noted that the station frequently received listener letters from New Zealand, Namibia, Japan, China and other countries who accessed its short-wave transmissions.¹⁷

Waxing lyrical about the station’s identity being connected to unique industrial and agricultural character of Silesia, its people and culture, Kriegler asserted that, when hosting the new national ‘Stunde der Nation’ (The Nation’s Hour) programme, the



Figure 1. 'Das deutsche Rundfunknetz' (The German Radio Network), *Schlesische Funkstunde*, 13 November 1925, p. 6.

Breslau station focussed on regional identity, and had also started two new programmes, 'Arbeiter! Hör zu!' (Worker! Listen in!) and 'Bauer! Hör zu!' (Farmer! Listen in!).¹⁸ This emphasis on workers and farmers was consistent with the strategy, from 1935, of the German Propaganda Ministry that such programmes would be broadcast by Breslau and Munich towards German-speaking communities in northern Czechoslovakia; meanwhile, programming from Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) and Stuttgart was aimed at wealthier listeners whose more expensive receivers were expected to be able to pick up such broadcasts from a further distance, and for whom a more 'focused and subtle' propaganda was developed in programming.¹⁹

Previously, between 1929 and 1933, the Breslau station was under the leadership of Friedrich (Fritz) Walter Bischoff. Bischoff, a poet, writer and dramaturge, worked as Breslau's literary head from 1925 onwards, and achieved recognition for his contribution to the new genre of radio plays (*Hörspiele*), Bischoff's legacy at the Breslau station has been primarily understood in terms of his contribution to aesthetic innovation and to the vibrant experimentation with radio sound and sound recording in Weimar radio more generally.²⁰ Yet what Kriegler in 1934 euphemistically referred to as a 'reorganisation' of the station, resulted in Bischoff's forced dismissal and subsequent detainment by the Gestapo, prior to being subjected, along with other prominent figures of Weimar radio in Berlin, to prolonged internment and a sham trial, known as



Figure 2. The original station building, built in 1925, which is today the location of Wrocław Radio, photographed in 2006.

Source: Wiki Commons, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PolskieRadioWroclaw-ulKarkonoska.jpg.

the *Rundfunkprozess*, led by the new head of the national radio board (Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft), Eugen Hadamowsky.²¹

Kriegler frequently presented the work of the Reichssender Breslau in neutral terms, however, examined from the perspective of Polish and Czech(oslovak) radio history, both countries experienced the intensification of German broadcasts over the borders to German-speaking ethnic minorities on medium wave radio. The various efforts to ‘wire’ and network Breslau in the context of Silesia and Germany at large should, thus, be necessarily framed in geopolitical terms, from the vantage of ongoing tensions and disputes in the region. The first radio transmitter in Breslau was located in the Silesian Regional Board of Mines (Oberbergamt), located then at Hindenberg Platz (now Plac Powstańców Śląskich) between 1924 and 1925, at close quarters to the district postal office (Oberpostdirektion), which also defined the area of the radio station in terms of its districts of Breslau, Oppeln (now Opole) and Liegnitz (now Legnica). At this time, the transmitter strength was around 700 kHz, whereas following the opening of the purpose-built broadcast building in 1925 (Figure 2), the signal strength was increased to above 900 kHz by late 1926 and then up to around 1100 by around 1930. Until 1932, this transmission mast was primarily at the location of the broadcasting building at Julius-Schottländer-Strasse 8 (today at aleja Karkonoska 10, Krzyki), a further three kilometres to the south of the city from the postal office.²²

In 1932, the transmitter for the Breslau station was moved a further 10 kilometres south of the broadcasting station building, to Rothsürban (now Żórawina).

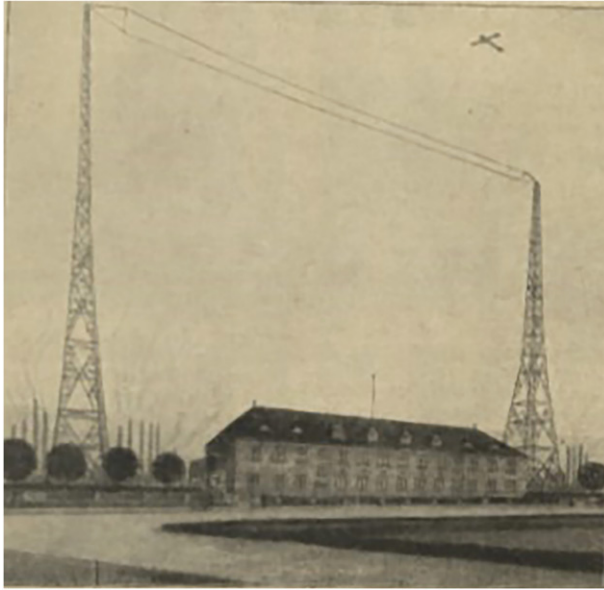


Figure 3. The Gleiwitz transmission building and towers in Upper Silesia.
Source: 'Unserem Oberschlesien,' *Schlesische Funkstunde* 2.46 (13 November 1925), 1–2, here 1.

This medium wave radio transmitter was a wooden tower construction, which was expanded in 1940 with an additional transmission aerial, where it remained operational until the siege of Breslau in February 1945. The strength of this tower remained around 950 kHz, even following the National Socialist reorganisation of radio in early 1934, but soon after, the relay station in Gleiwitz, located at the furthest eastern edge of Silesia, in the contested border area of Upper Silesia, was increased from around 900 to around 1200 kHz (see Figure 3). This relay station had been established in 1925 in Gleiwitz, on the Radauner Strasse (today, the site of the Radiowa Gliwice station), with the new, stronger transmitter installed in 1935 at what was then Tarnowitzer Strasse and was in use until 1945.²³ With the intensification of *völkisch* propaganda to German minorities in Czechoslovakia in the mid-1930s, there were further increases made to transmitter strength the areas around the borders shared with Germany, namely in the regions of Saxony and Bavaria, as well as Silesia. From 1937, Nürnberg-Kleinreuth, in northern Bavaria, had a signal strength for medium-wave transmissions of around 1200 kHz, and in Saxony, another new relay station in Görlitz-Reichenbach was added to the Breslau station network, with its station (and studio) put to various uses and also remaining in operation during the siege of Breslau, until April 1945, and destroyed ahead of the Russian military's arrival to the city in May 1945.²⁴

The longer-term project of 'wiring' the city of Breslau took on new proportions following the National Socialist takeover in 1933, against the background of Silesia's industrial and geopolitical significance.²⁵ In December 1937, in the wake of the large-scale German Choral Society Festival (*Deutsches Sängerbundesfest*) held in Breslau, preparations were made to install around one

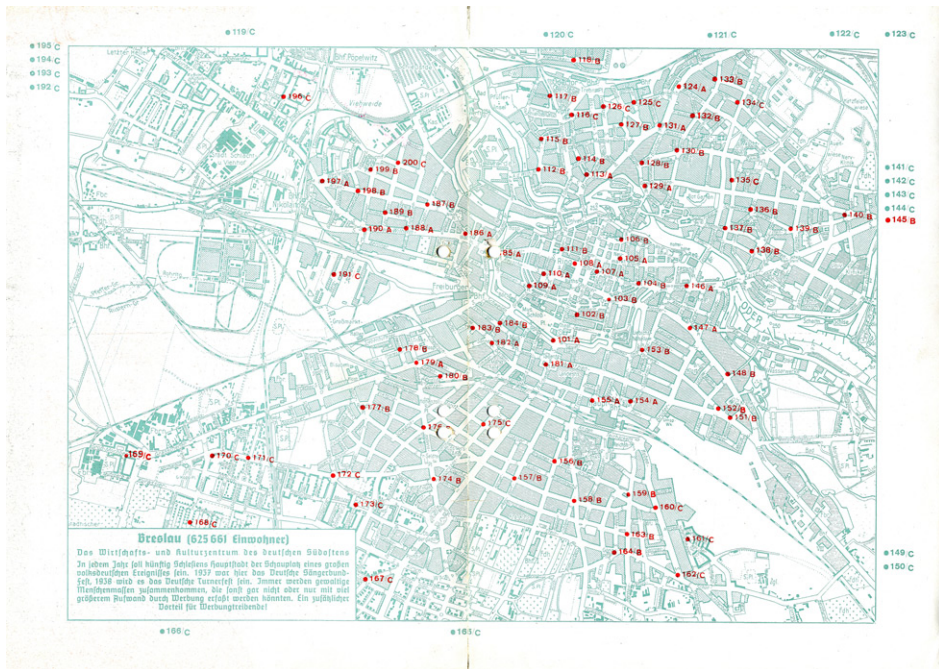


Figure 4. Map with the locations of Reich Loudspeaker Columns included with a press release by the Institut für Deutsche Kultur- und Wirtschaftspropaganda, December 1937.

Source: Stiftung Deutsches Technikmuseum Berlin, Historical Archive, Bestand Telefunken, Number I.2.060 A/6114.

hundred Reich Loudspeaker Columns (*Reichs-Lautsprechersäule*), ahead of the next large event, the German Gymnastics and Sports Festival (*Deutsches Turn- und Sportfest*), which took place during July 1938. A brochure produced in December 1937, and circulated by the Reich Institute for German Culture and Economic Propaganda, included a map of all of the locations across Breslau where these new radio columns would be installed (Figure 4). The loudspeaker columns were mainly placed in and around in the city centre, with the cover letter indicating that these columns would be located ‘in the middle of street life – at important crossroads, on large squares, on the edge of (factory) grounds; everywhere where there is the most concentration of pedestrians and traffic.’²⁶

Shortly after the installation of these loudspeaker columns in early 1938, Adolf Hitler delivered a speech in which he demanded the self-determination for ethnic Germans in Austria and Czechoslovakia, and on 12 March 1938 German military forces crossed the border into Austria before announcing its annexation. During the German Gymnastics and Sports Festival in Breslau, which included participants from Austria, there was an intensification of radio propaganda towards the northern Czechoslovak regions of Bohemia and Moravia. The Sudeten German Party leader, Konrad Henlein, along with a large delegation from the region, attended the festival, and delivered a speech on German radio, which supported the oft-used slogan of returning to ‘home’ to the Reich (*Heim ins Reich*).²⁷ The Reich loudspeaker columns project, affirmed as a successful implementation, were planned on a similar scale for other German cities, but on the outbreak of war in

September 1939, Breslau was the only German city with such an extensive, networked public address system for radio.

Reconstructing Polish radio and the Western territories after 1945

In the Polish context, 18 April 1926 marked the official start of regular broadcasts by Polish Radio, a company at that time directed by the prominent economist Zygmunt Chamiec. Only one month later, however, a military coup led by Józef Piłsudski meant that power in the Polish state was taken over by a political camp invested in the notion of *sanacja* ('moral cleansing'), and whose members in the subsequent years applied methods commonly recognised as authoritarian, including the imprisonment of political opponents, political trials, preventive censorship, banning of opposition parties and violating the constitution.²⁸ While the notion of controlling radio appealed to Piłsudski's followers, it took them a while before they became fully aware of its propaganda potential. It was only in 1930 that Polish Radio built its new – and at that time the strongest in Europe – 120 kW broadcasting station in Raszyn, provided by the Marconi Wireless Company, and that the ruling party started to look for possibilities to influence program content. By July 1935, 98% of the shares in Polish Radio had been acquired by the government. As a result, Polish Radio became a state-governed medium with the majority of staff sympathetic to the regime, and its long-standing director Chamiec was dismissed from his position; shortly after this development, Chamiec was appointed Vice-President of the International Broadcasting Union.²⁹

During the 1930s, one of the major preoccupations of Polish radio magazines was the 'propaganda war' on the air.³⁰ Numerous commentators publicly expressed their fears about the influence of Communist propaganda via radio, and, following the National Socialist takeover in January 1933, German broadcasting was looked to as a model for how Poland could develop both its radio industry and state propaganda. On 12 October 1934, Poland and Germany signed an agreement which echoed the spirit of an earlier non-aggression pact formulated in January that year, which was supplemented by an agreement on moral disarmament, aimed at stopping anti-Polish and anti-German propaganda in radio broadcasting, the press, cinemas and theatres.³¹

During this period, Polish Radio demonstrated an ambiguous attitude towards its German counterpart. On the one hand, Germany was sharply criticised for its hostile attitude towards Poland, especially after 1938. For instance, the weekly magazine *Radio dla Wszystkich* [Radio for Everyone] wrote in 1939 about provocative programs from the Gleiwitz station, among them 'Schlesische Stunde' (Reichssender Breslau), which repeatedly reported on the persecutions of Germans living in Polish Silesia to its listeners.³² Yet, on the other hand, Nazi Germany was perceived as a model for Poland due to its deployment of radio technology for political purposes. Similar to the German 'Peoples' Receiver' (*Volksempfänger*), Polish Radio launched a campaign for building a cheap valve receiver in 1938, which was considered as means of further popularising radio among its citizens.³³ In response, the *Radio dla Wszystkich* magazine reported that this policy 'would be executed with iron will until

victory is achieved; that is the moment when a cheap and good popular receiver, similar to the one used in German Reich, becomes available on the market.’³⁴ Nonetheless, when Germany started to develop network of wired radio, for instance in the Silesian towns of Breslau and Oppeln (now Opole), the Polish radio press perceived this process as an attempt at limiting the possibility for inhabitants to listen to non-German stations,³⁵ with *Radio dla Wszystkich* reporting that ‘the grim shadow of the swastika weighs heavily on German radio broadcasting’.³⁶

In November 1938, *Radio dla Wszystkich* reported on the dismantling of Czechoslovak radio broadcasting as a result of the Sudetenland annexation following the Munich Agreement. In this process, Germany took over broadcasting stations including one near Ostrava, which started to operate in the air under the name of Schönbrunn, with a programme mostly relayed from Breslau.³⁷ In June 1939, the magazine informed its readers about appointment of new managers for two stations taken from Czechoslovakia, namely Praha II and Mělník, which from that moment on were operated as Reichssender Böhmen.³⁸ The relatively cool tone with which the magazine informed about German-Czechoslovak relations is indicative of the complex relationship between Warsaw and Prague, given the ongoing dispute over the region of Zaolzie, which was seized by the Czechs from 1919 onwards, when Poland was engaged in military battles with Soviet Russia during the aftermath of World War I.

In October 1938, the Polish government took advantage of the fact that Czechoslovakia had been weakened by the Munich Agreement and issued an ultimatum which eventually resulted in the Polish army crossing the border on the Olza river. On the first page of *Radio dla Wszystkich* on 7 October 1938, an article reported on the Polish occupation of Zaolzie, although, significantly the editors omitted the fact that this was made possible thanks to the tacit concession of National Socialist Germany. In this period, nearly every issue of the magazine included articles about Polish Radio’s contribution to the process of restitution of this region to Poland and strengthening its connection to the ‘Motherland’.³⁹ The rhetoric of these articles bears a strong resemblance to propagandistic texts published after 1945 concerning the incorporation of Lower Silesia to Poland. Moreover, almost all issues of the magazine included reports from Zaolzie, with features on illegal reception of radio by Polish listeners⁴⁰, the activities of pirate stations in the region, or on the propaganda vans of Polish Radio that travelled to Karwina (Karviná), Cieszyn (Těšín) and other smaller towns and villages to promote Polish culture to the inhabitants (Figure 5).⁴¹

However, it was not only the geopolitical situation but also the propaganda war between Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia taking place on the air before 1939 that weighed heavily on the neighbourly relations between their respective radio broadcasters in the period following the end of WWII. Having annexed Austria and the northern Czech regions of Bohemia and Moravia during 1938, and the remaining part of Czech lands in March 1939, the regional influence of Germany had expanded significantly across the entire southern border of Silesia. By 1938, both short-wave and medium-wave radio from existing German stations (Breslau, Berlin, Königsberg) started to expand their propaganda efforts towards Poland, despite the non-aggression pact that the two countries had signed in 1934.

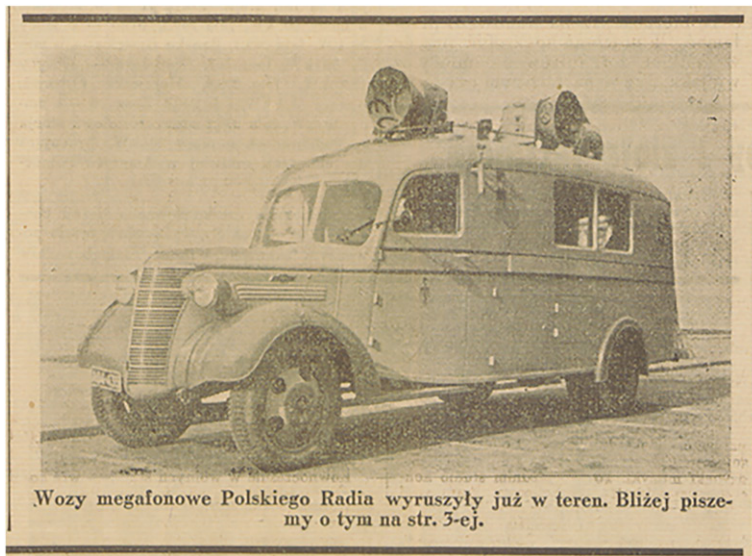


Figure 5. Loudspeaker vans from Polish Radio promoting radio subscription.
Source: *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 3 (1938): 10.

Similarly, the German-controlled 'Prag II' transmitters in Mělník, and Troppau-Schönbrunn, established in today's Ostrava in 1938, were positioned in a location for which broadcasts could be made to the disputed Zaolzie region, which, after the invasion of Poland, was annexed to Silesia, and placed under extensive terror measures by German occupiers.

In the context of tense diplomatic relations between Poland and Germany, radio in Silesia, therefore, represented an important component for the coordination of German propaganda towards Poland. The culmination of such tensions was the faked 'Polish attack' on the Gleiwitz relay station on 31 August 1939, which was used as a pretext for Germany to declare war on Poland the next day.⁴² While a crucial site for sparking the outbreak of WWII, the Breslau station experienced a declining geopolitical significance and propaganda role in the ensuing period. Within the first half year of the war, the Breslau station had 64 staff members recruited for military service, which was one-third of their total staff at that time.⁴³ Nonetheless, the context of the war drove up listener subscription numbers in the region, reported as reaching almost 900,000 licenses by March 1940.⁴⁴ By June 1940, the German Radio Board (RRG) reorganised all of the regional stations, including Breslau, so that they would each relay a national programme from Berlin, within which each regional station had a limited amount of airtime each day. While the Breslau station building did undergo renovations, with a new, state-of-the-art concert hall for 400 audience members unveiled in late 1942 (Figure 6), a former staff member has suggested that the station staff mainly concentrated on the technical responsibilities in facilitating the relay of the national programme from Berlin. The location of Silesia, at the far Eastern part of Germany, meant that it had reduced exposure to Allied air attacks, and the Breslau radio station continued its transmissions with few interruptions until the

DER NEUE GROSSE SENDESAAL
IM REICHSENDER BRESLAU



Figure 6. The new large concert hall at the Reichssender Breslau station, launched in 1942, and still intact today.

Source: 'Der neue grosse Sendesaal im Reichssender Breslau.' *Welt-Rundfunk: Internationale Zeitschrift für Rundfunk und Fernsehen* 6.6 (November/December 1942): 273.

evacuation and siege of Breslau, which lasted from February to May 1945, with the last transmission taking place in April 1945.

As a result of the decisions made at the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Poland lost its Eastern Borderlands to the Soviet Union and gained 'compensation' in the form of the lands in the West, reaching the Odra and Neisse river lines, which were the areas known in Polish Communist propaganda as the so-called 'Recovered Territories.' In order to promote 're-Polonisation,' which was a euphemistic term for Polish settlers taking over farms abandoned by forcibly displaced Germans, the authorities mobilised all possible propaganda channels, with a strong focus on radio, which, due to poor availability of newspapers, constituted at that point the main source of news. Polish Radio continuously broadcast programmes such as 'Jedziemy na Zachód' (We're Going West) or a series titled 'Ziemie Zachodnie i Odzyskane' (Western and Recovered Territories), which promoted settlement in these areas. However, the propaganda significance of radio was first seriously deployed in the period leading up to the People's Referendum on 30 June 1946, during which the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) tried to gauge whether it was possible to achieve a satisfactory result without mass terror, but with maximum use of persuasion tactics. The Democratic Bloc parties (allied with PPR) attempted to persuade the public to respond with 'yes' to all referendum questions, one of which concerned the preservation of Poland's borders on the Baltic, Oder and Lusatian Neisse lines.⁴⁵



Figure 7. At the Regained Territories Exhibition held from 21 July to 31 October 1948 in Wrocław, the Industry Pavilion (in the Berg Hall) housed an exhibition devoted to radio engineering sector (including radio sets, loud speakers, amplifiers and rectifiers), Polish Press Agency.

In turn, the ‘development’ of the Oder and Neisse regions, especially Lower Silesia, was identified by Polish Radio as an issue with high priority. The reconstruction of the radio station building in Wrocław and the expansion of the wired radio network in the Lower Silesian villages were both reported as significant events by the Polish Film Chronicle.⁴⁶ If we turn to the Recovered Territories Exhibition held from 21 July to 31 October 1948 in Wrocław, several dozen pavilions were devoted to the achievements of the People’s Republic of Poland.

The Industry Pavilion included an exhibition space devoted to the radio engineering sector, with a mock-up of a model working-class housing estate, embedded in a network of domestic loudspeakers connected to a central public address system, as one of its main attractions, along a display of various receivers (see Figure 7). Such ‘reconstruction’ propaganda was extremely popular among for the general public, since during the Second World War most of the broadcasting infrastructure of Polish Radio had been destroyed, including the Warsaw I transmitter in located in Raszyn, whose power had been raised to 600 kW in 1939, along with the radio stations in Poznań, Łódź, Katowice, Cracow, Toruń, Vilnius, Lviv and Baranavichy.⁴⁷ At the end of World War II, all the Polish factories producing broadcasting equipment, radio receivers and valves (e.g. Polskie Zakłady Marconi) had been destroyed, and the number of radio receivers available in Poland was very restricted, as these had been officially confiscated during the German occupation.

Since the Polish radio industry was in ruins, between late May and early June 1945, authorities sought to identify several of the least-damaged facilities located in central Poland: Polskie Zakłady Philips S.A. in Warsaw, Zakład Radiotechniczny Walewski in Cracow, ‘Centrala Światła’ in Katowice, the Szmidt company in Szopienice, Fabryka Głośników we Wrześni, and the ‘Ika’

factory plant in Łódź. The text of the PCNL (short for the Polish Committee of National Liberation; Polish PKWN - Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego)⁴⁸ decree of 22 November 1944 which established Przedsiębiorstwo Państwowe ‘Polskie Radio’ (‘Polish Radio’ State Enterprise); it focused mainly on technical and programming issues related to broadcasting, and the task of rebuilding the radio infrastructure could be framed as falling within the scope of ‘development of the radio network of the country and introducing improvements and additions in line with the development of radio technology.’⁴⁹

During the first months of 1945, the authorities managed to open only two factories in central Poland: the ‘Ika’ factory in Łódź, which specialised in the production of amplifiers, and Fabryka Głośników we Wrześni. As these factories were put into operation relatively quickly, it was possible to develop Poland’s radio network by means of a wired public address system with loudspeakers.⁵⁰ During the first post-war months, the only working broadcasting station was the so-called ‘pszczołka’ (little bee), a small field station donated by the Soviet Union, whose radio signal covered the territory of Warsaw. Another technical problem that needed to be resolved was the fact that, due to the lack of receivers, radio programmes were heard via street loudspeakers, and these transmissions consisted of little more than a newspaper read out aloud in a faint voice, providing information about military hostilities, which were still ongoing in some parts of the country. Due to this situation, Polish Radio decided that technical improvements would be their main focus, organising special operational groups whose task was to search for radio equipment that had survived the war, and which could be used to launch broadcasting stations and open the abovementioned factories for manufacturing radio equipment. The first group went to Warsaw and Cracow as early as January 1945, and the shifting line of the front determined subsequent search areas. However, this was not an easy task, because the retreating German troops had employed a ‘scorched earth’ policy, and whatever they had not managed to destroy or hide was later stolen or destroyed by the Red Army soldiers who plundered the remaining factories and warehouses. In this process, any equipment Red Army soldiers found was sent to the Soviet Union.⁵¹ In what follows, the analysis of Polish Radio’s work in the first years after the war, it is necessary to examine primary archival sources, such as technical reports, maps of radio station coverage, documentation from industrial factories or even preserved radio receivers, since almost no actual radio recordings from that period are available today.

Polish radio and institutional looting in Silesia during 1945

On 9 May 1945, Polish officials, headed by the self-proclaimed ‘city president,’ Bolesław Drobner went ahead and ‘took over’ Breslau.⁵² Despite establishing a Polish administration in the city, Poland did not yet have an internationally recognised government, because the Provisional Government of National Unity was only formed seven weeks later, and the official decision concerning the change of borders was not made before the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. Yet Polish Radio did not intend to wait for the decisions made by the ‘Big Three’ (Soviet Russia,



Figure 8. The State Radio Valve Factory, opened in 1946 in the former Telefunken factory building, Dzierżonów 1947. Source: PAP.

United Kingdom and United States) regarding Poland's western border region. Already on 13 April 1945, a Polish Radio expedition, including the Cracow Radio station director Lieutenant Schorr and three technicians, set out from Cracow to Wrocław. Even though Soviet authorities did not allow them to conduct a thorough inspection of Wrocław's radio station building, it was still possible to determine that the building and machines were intact, and the studios were well-equipped with advanced technology.⁵³

The haste with which Polish Radio sought to establish a foothold in Lower Silesia was motivated by the fact that this area was a treasure trove for sourcing radio technology. According to radio historian Alexander Badenoch, an estimated 80% of pre-1945 German radio plants had been located in the east, thus, constituting a considerable problem for the post-war reconstruction of German broadcasting; Silesia, therefore, represented a considerable opportunity for Polish Radio.⁵⁴ This large concentration of radio engineering plants in Silesia was in part due to the fact that in 1943, many additional factories had been evacuated to the region due to air raid attacks on Berlin and other industrial areas.⁵⁵

In Dzierżonów (at that time known as Rychbach [Reichenbach]), for instance, a textile factory was transformed into a radio equipment plant 'Hagenuk' (an acronym for the Hanseatische Apparatebaugesellschaft, Neufeldt und Kuhnke⁵⁶), which had previously produced transmitters for German submarines during the war. In Bielawa, a Telefunken factory was relocated to the town for the purposes of equipment production (see Figure 8). In Jelenia Góra, there was a plant named 'Askania' that had produced radio receivers, while in Duszniki Zdrój, the gramophone manufacturing plant of Gebrüder Scharf⁵⁷, which had produced precision parts for military devices during the war, including radars, and the Goldering radio equipment factory, were both relocated to the main hall of the 'Cinardy and Ross' weaving mill.⁵⁸ In addition, an almost-complete Telefunken radio engineering laboratory was discovered after the war in Kowary (Krzyżatka), which contained such elements as transmitters for testing and creating radio valves, about 100 high-

value measuring instruments, and a complete valve laboratory. By using the materials discovered in these locations, it was possible to launch a broadcasting station in Gliwice (formerly Gleiwitz) in October 1945. Additionally, warehouses full of tools, parts and radio engineering equipment were found in Krośniewice (Rankowo) near Jelenia Góra, in Legnica (Lignica), Zakrzew, Kudowa and many other surrounding towns.⁵⁹

Lower Silesia also served as a potential source for radio receivers, which, after the collapse of the siege of Breslau in early 1945, had been confiscated from the city's German population; indeed, dispossession and property seizure were an inherent part of the forced population transfers, and ratified by the international community during the Yalta Conference in February 1945.⁶⁰ In the case of the radio receivers, confiscations had admittedly occurred in exchange for confiscation receipts, but with no serious hopes for their return. As Edmund Odorkiewicz, who in July 1945 was the director of the radio station in Katowice, noted, '[The Germans] tell us that we are bandits, but they were given receipts.'⁶¹ Odorkiewicz claimed that 'for the sake of decency towards Poles, who during the war could not listen to the radio directly and had to do it surreptitiously, under the threat of death, we cannot reward those [Germans] who have legally possessed radio receivers for [the past] five years.'⁶² However, the fact that Odorkiewicz was reluctant to return the receivers also had a pragmatic dimension, since, as he himself admitted, if Polish Radio was to return the seized property to its owners, it would no longer have access to any receivers at all.

It, thus, perhaps comes as no surprise that Polish Radio eagerly began to concentrate on developing its operations in the so-called Recovered Territories and, as reported in October 1945, the broadcaster soon gained 'the reputation of one of the worst looters,' especially in the eyes of the new Wrocław President Bolesław Drobner. Most eyewitness reports and written accounts about Lower Silesia during the early post-war period are usually replete with references to the looting and disassembling of factories by the Soviets. Nonetheless, as historian Gregor Thum writes:

In the western territories, [looting] became a mass phenomenon, an everyday activity that not only criminals engaged in, but also upstanding people with the best of intentions. It was a form of taking resources for living from publicly available resources, a necessity of life, and at the same time a chance to get rich.⁶³

As Thum's study shows, there were no clear-cut divisions between theft, looting and 'obtaining' goods at this time, since it involved everyone, including soldiers, bandits, new settlers, officials and the German population, who were all fighting for their own survival.⁶⁴ However, when talking about plundering of German property, most documentation pays little attention to the looting legitimised by institutions, even though it represented a significant part of this phenomenon. In the case of Polish Radio, the severity of the issue is evidenced by the fact that between May and November 1945 not only was the Polish Radio representative in Lower Silesia replaced, but that radio authorities also conducted several inspections as a means of controlling the behaviour of its own inspectors.

In a letter to Prime Minister Osóbka-Morawski of June 1945 concerning the situation in Wrocław, Wilhelm Billig claimed that Lieutenant Szor had requested

Wrocław President Drobner for permission to temporarily move some of the equipment to Kraków, as the radio station did not have enough protection, but Drobner categorically forbade this and claimed that what Polish Radio did was looting.⁶⁵ Similar Polish Radio expeditions were sent to Wrocław three more times in April 1945, and the Operational Group lead by Captain Makowiecki was sent to Lower Silesia, most likely in May 1945, with the aim of securing the radio equipment and making the Wrocław radio station operational again. However, according to Billig's report, the efforts of his employees proved ineffective because the Soviet authorities did not agree to hand over the radio station, even after Polish Radio's appeal to the staff of the first Ukrainian Front. Billig also wrote that as a result of the 'ill-advised prohibition levied by Drobner', the most valuable equipment from the Wrocław radio studios were partially destroyed or damaged.⁶⁶ Although, it is not explicitly mentioned in the letter to the Prime Minister, it seems that Billig blamed the soldiers on duty for the loss of equipment, but the sources from this period show that everyone accused each other of misappropriating the equipment. To give an example, Captain Makowiecki was appointed to make the radio station operational in 1945, but according to the documents, he focused mainly on looting at the station building.⁶⁷

In June 1945, Lieutenant Józef Makuła replaced Makowiecki as the Polish Radio representative, which did not occur without complication, because Makowiecki, sensing that his career was coming to an end, kept postponing the transfer of power and 'handed over the entire warehouse (in Legnica, where his office was located – CB and JWC) to his employee, a radio technician, Mr. Krzysztof Kośmirski, who quickly got hold of a truck and raced home, most likely to the village of Tumlin, located near Kielce. To avoid anyone seeing what he took with him, Kośmirski left at 5 am.'⁶⁸ In the following months, Makuła also struggled with the Wrocław Propaganda Office, whose employees allegedly seized street loudspeakers and amplifiers, which had been installed in Wrocław prior to the war by the Nazi German administration. Makuła wrote the following to the Department of Security:

[A]head of our arrival the local Propaganda Office organised a special team consisting of German technicians who collected and transported equipment taken from the loudspeaker columns (...) The Germans worked without the supervision of a Polish professional and abused their authority as much as they could. It is no wonder that so many amplifiers can be found on the open market nowadays.⁶⁹

However, Lieutenant Makuła was not held in high esteem by other employees, which was described as 'mainly due to the fact that (...) during the German occupation he initially worked for the German radio in Katowice [a relay station for Breslau that had before 1939 been Polish Radio Katowice], then he was transferred to Breslau, where he was a cashier, and after the occupation of Lviv by Germans [in June 1941], he was transferred to the German radio station in Lviv, where he worked until the city was taken over by the Red Army [in July 1944].'⁷⁰

The subsequent recognition that something was going wrong is suggested by the decision by Polish Radio, in September 1945, to send Inspector Leon

Retmański to Lower Silesia to check on Makuła. Retmański, an experienced employee from Poznań who had been qualified radio technician before the war, had been travelling around the north-western part of the country in search of radio equipment since April 1945. Soon after his arrival, Retmański realised that Makuła was not suited to the job as Polish Radio's representative, because he did not control his subordinates in the field, and the only trip he took was to Kudowa (located almost 200 kilometres away from Wrocław), where he went to get a motor vehicle for his own purposes, without stopping anywhere along the way.⁷¹ Retmański, a resourceful and creative man, whose reports on his business trips and inspections were characterised by a large degree of self-reflection and a flowery style of writing, was also not free of all doubts:

When it comes to taking valves from the laboratory in Krzyżatka, even though I realised that it was rather unethical, I took into account the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 26 June of [1945], which in its last point, obliges the [Polish Radio] Directorate to take all steps to make the radio station in Wrocław operational as quickly as possible, and thus, I was forced to transfer the valves and the valuable and important frequency-counter-oscillator, which is of high value and importance to our radio, to Gliwice.⁷²

It is difficult to say why Retmański decided to take his equipment to Gliwice, perhaps he was afraid that it would be looted by the Soviet army and decided it would be safer there, although, it would have been useful where it was. However, in order not to characterise Retmański into a solely righteous man, one more fragment from a report from the inspection that took place in October and November 1945 should suffice: 'In Krzyżatka, Retmański took a small gauge film camera, various very valuable technical books, as well as workshop instruments and sliders. In Chorzów, Retmański took out valves from radios. The opinion on Mr. Retmański and his activities in Lower Silesia is very low.'⁷³

Although, looting was rather a common practice, it remains difficult to estimate the scale on which the Polish Radio employees were involved in stealing radio engineering equipment. Accusations of illegitimate misappropriation of the former German property constituted, like the accusation of collaboration with the Nazis or of favouring employees of German descent, a tool to slander one's opponents in the struggle for influence. In the report Stanisław Leszczyński, the Wrocław radio station director, summarised the first period of Polish Radio's activity in Wrocław between April 1945 and May 1948 as follows:

The state in which I found the Directorate of Wrocław was (...) disastrous, both in terms of organisation, and in terms of administration and programmes. There were many reasons for this – the period of looting, exploitation carried out by the expelled collaborator, Lieutenant Makuła, and the activity of the former representative, and later the Vice Director, Mr. Głowacki and some of his employees, whose actions were not much less damaging than those of Lt. Makuła. The dismissal of Mr. Głowacki and several other employees suspected of being German (inspection of Director Młynarski and Director Leszczyński in May 1947), and the appointment of Director [Juliusza] Petry to the position of the

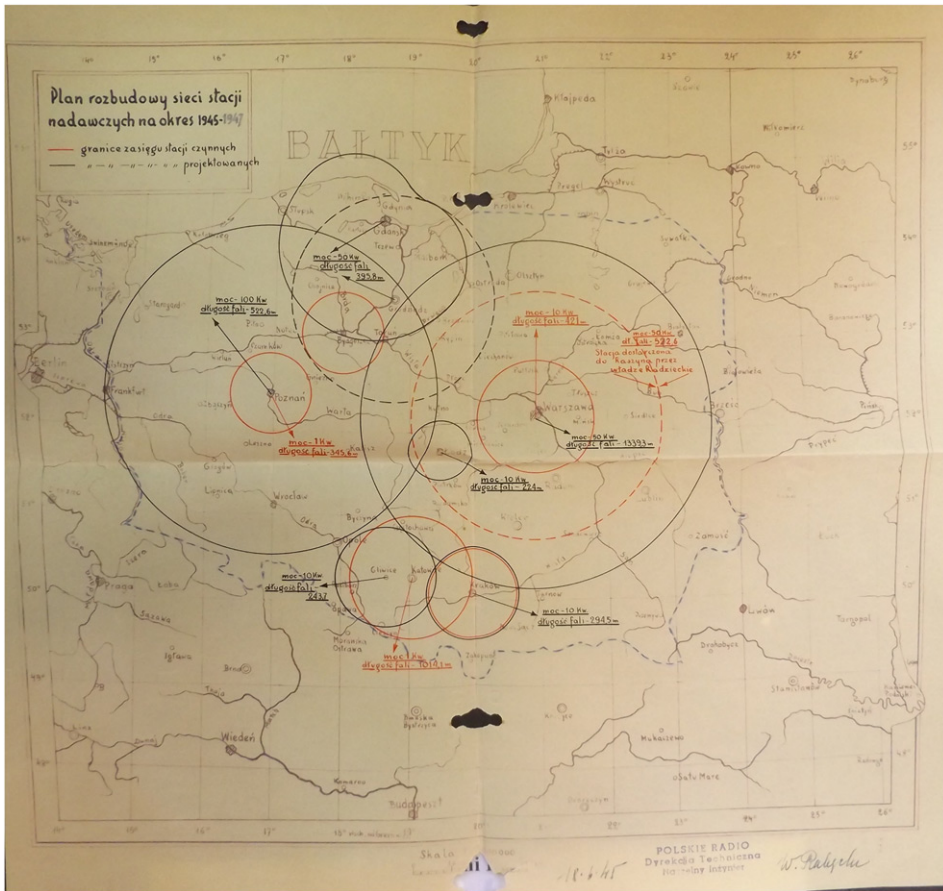


Figure 9. Map from April 1945 representing the range of existing and planned broadcasting stations, the construction of which was to be completed by 1947. Source: ADA.

District Director cleared the atmosphere a bit (...), but [Retmański] did not live up to the task which he had been entrusted to him.⁷⁴

The conclusions of the inspection mentioned in the report led to the dismissal of the last German employees of Polish Radio in 1947–48. In what follows, we will now turn back to the process of establishing radio infrastructures and how the new radio order and transmission capabilities were visualised.

Regaining the airwaves in Europe

Two maps, surviving from the early post-war period and drawn up by the Polish Radio chief engineer Władysław Rabęcki, which present the state of Polish broadcasting with the country's borders at that time. The first, from June 1945, presents the range of existing and planned broadcasting stations, the construction of which was to be completed by 1947 (see Figure 9). Both are typical maps which take into account the amplitude of the radio waves and the power of the transmitter to determine the areas where the individual stations can be received without interferences

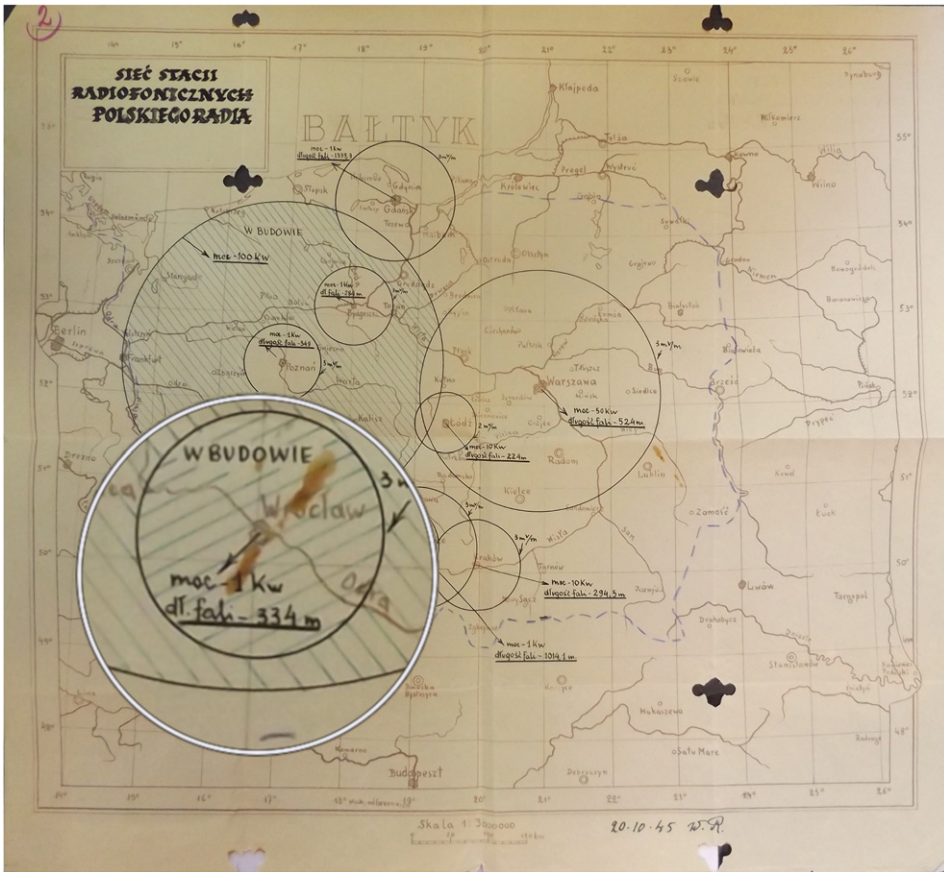


Figure 10. Map from October 1945 representing the range of existing and planned broadcasting stations, the construction of which was to be completed by 1947, with the inclusion of the Wrocław radio station visible in the detail.

Source: ADA.

and mark them with circles. It is worth noting that the Wrocław radio station is not listed on this map, because the radio network was supposed to be developed in Lower Silesia by means of a high-power station in Poznań, which was to cover the Western Territories. The station in Wrocław appears only on the map from October 1945, that is, after the arrangements of the Potsdam Conference, which might not have brought final decisions, but did result in decisive statements regarding the shape of the borders⁷⁵ (see Figure 10). It was only after these declarations were made that Polish Radio decided to make such large investments in the reconstruction of the mast and installation of a transmitter at its top.⁷⁶ This is significant, we suggest, since, until that point, Lower Silesia was treated as a reservoir of equipment that could be used, if necessary, to renovate and launch ‘Polish’ broadcasting stations, including the one in Gliwice (formerly Gleiwitz).

The other map from this period shows that Lower Silesia was covered with a fairly dense network of radio stations, which gives the impression that the reception of the radio in this area was at a fairly good level (Figure 11). In theory, public address systems were tasked with relaying radio programmes from Warsaw or



Figure 11. Map representing the wired radio network in Silesia. Date unknown.
Source: ADA.

other cities. However, at that time, Wrocław was not yet connected by cable to Warsaw, and, therefore, it was necessary to ‘catch’ the broadcast signals from the Raszyn, Poznań or Katowice transmitters, and then re-transmit them via public loudspeakers. Thus, these maps were only general models, imperfect representations of the propagation of radio waves in the ionosphere and troposphere on the contour map, which did not reflect the specific topography of the terrain, its mountainous shape and the presence of other sources of signal disturbance such as large industrial plants and tram systems, or other broadcasting stations in the area.

In order to take a broader perspective on Silesian radio in the Central-European frame, it’s worth noting that employees in Wrocław and at other Polish radio stations complained, for example, that often the only radio transmissions audible to listeners was Radio Prague whose programme was being re-transmitted close to the border; here musical content was prioritised, and great care was made that the spoken announcements in Czech did not reach Silesian listeners.⁷⁷ Interference from various German stations also posed a problem, as radio transmitters were rebuilt in all four occupation zones almost immediately after the end of the war.⁷⁸ A report from the inspection which took place in October and November 1945, reads as follows:

The reception of the [Polish] Raszyn signal is prevented in [Silesian] areas by [Radio] Stuttgart, only German and Czech stations can be broadcast; in Lower Silesia, which is almost completely Germanised, the Polish element is relatively insignificant and completely devoid of access to the Polish language – there is a notorious lack of newspapers, and those newspapers which are available, arrive with a delay of several days, so the radio should fulfil a particularly important role as the only agent of re-Polonisation of these areas at this time. The radio station does not have any records, not even recordings of the Polish anthem.⁷⁹

Radio Stuttgart was particularly troublesome: it had begun its transmission in June 1945 on a frequency that was unlawful, and subsequently necessarily taken over by Polish Radio's rebuilt Raszyn radio station near Warsaw, since the technical parameters of its transmitter changed and the station could no longer broadcast on the pre-war frequency allocated to it by the International Radio Union.⁸⁰ An additional explanation for why the decision on construction of the broadcast station in Wrocław occurred can be attributed, therefore, in part to the fact that the Stuttgart radio broadcast a speech by US Secretary of State James Byrnes, on 6 September 1945, which questioned the decision to allocate the so-called Recovered Territories to Poland.⁸¹ A related, ongoing concern in this context of Polish anxiety over territorial borders was the longer history of Polish-Czech competition over Zaolzie, which after World War II had come under Czechoslovak control.

Such concerns were articulated in the post-war radio press, as evidenced by the first issue of the *Radio i Świat* programme magazine, published on 22 July 1945, in which the author Jan Feliks (most like a pseudonym) described Germans as a 'despicable and disgraced tribe,' now temporarily stunned by the blast of history and docile, but, in their hearts, still hostile, 'invariably panting with hatred for us (...) [that was] perpetuated over millennia.'⁸² These comments are consistent with the dominant narrative articulated on the radio and in the press, which emphasised German guilt and animosity towards Poles. This also accounts for the strong negative reaction of the general public to the fact that the Allies were rebuilding radio stations in Germany at a time when Poland could not count on having looted radio receivers or destroyed radio equipment returned from Germany as war reparations.⁸³ *Radio i Świat*, for instance, reported on the Allies' decision to rebuild Germany's radio engineering industry and the decision by the American Military Government of Germany to relocate a modern transmitter to Frankfurt am Main, which had been in use in Luxemburg during the war (Figure 12). In response, Polish Radio felt that it would soon be left behind in the transnational race – in the European space – to rebuild national radio networks.⁸⁴

For this analysis, we choose to focus on how efforts to rebuild radio stations in Silesia and the other Western territories took shape with the aid of pre-existing infrastructures and facilities, with perhaps the most significant factor being that Wrocław already had a modern radio building, which had received a substantial renovation and upgrade in 1942 (see Figure 6). Even though the building had suffered during the siege in early 1945 and afterwards, according to an inventory made in 1946, it had 280 rooms and a large concert hall that could seat several hundred people, and therefore, its renovation was seen as a good investment.⁸⁵ The pre-war transmission station was located in Żórawina, near Wrocław, where in September 1946 the weak transmitter of a military telegraph radio was installed on a wooden mast (later transformed into an audio transmitter) (Figure 13).⁸⁶

Polish Radio was well aware of the importance of the Wrocław radio station, with correspondence in October 1946 noting it as 'one of the largest radio complexes in Europe.'⁸⁷ In the following year, a modern British transmitter was installed, and the Wrocław radio building was renovated to be inaugurated on 16 November 1947 (Figure 14).⁸⁸ During the opening of the radio station, Polish President Bolesław Bierut (see Figure 15) gave a speech underscoring the significance of the reopened station:

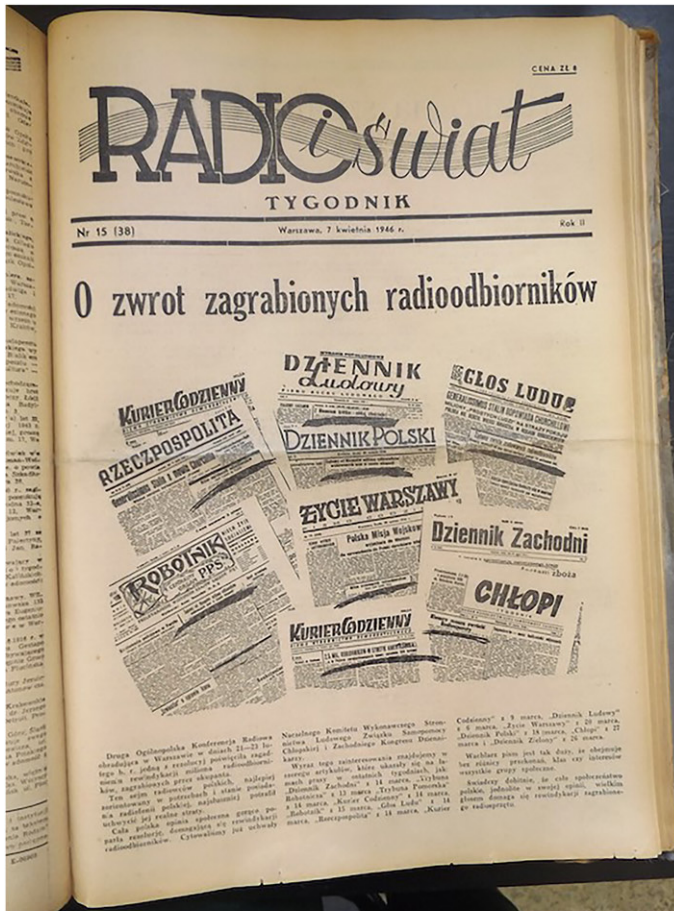


Figure 12. Front page of the Radio i Świat magazine from April 1946 presenting front pages of different newspapers and journals demanding Germany to return of looted radio sets, and a photo depicting a stock pile of looted junk radio receivers.
 Source: *Radio i Świat*, no. 15, 1946.



Figure 13. The Polish Radio transmitter in Żórawina, January 1, 1946.
Source: PAP.



Figure 14. The Polish Radio Wrocław broadcasting station on the day of station's inauguration, 16 November 1947.
Source: PAP.

The fact that our Recovered Territories gain a station of such power, that it arises as a new cultural achievement of Wrocław, a city which is rebuilding itself from rubbles, makes this serious accomplishment of Polish Radio particularly important. This is undoubtedly our new cultural heritage, important for the whole nation. Today, radio is becoming an increasingly invaluable instrument in the development and dissemination of culture.⁸⁹

This statement is indicative of not only the significance attributed to radio by the newly established Communist government in the early post-war era, but also



Figure 15. Polish President Bolesław Bierut (in the centre) during the inauguration of Polish Radio Wrocław, speaking in the renovated Music Hall, 16 November 1947. Behind him is standing Grzegorz Fitelberg with the Great Orchestra of Polish Radio.

Source: PAP.

the strong awareness that Lower Silesia, as a highly industrialized region, would play a crucial role in Poland's post-war reconstruction process. Although, the Resolution of the Council of Ministers from June 1945 stressed the importance of launching the Wrocław radio station for linking the 'Recovered Territories' with the 'Motherland,' it should be emphasised that it was actually only the fourth Polish radio station to be launched in the recovered Western Territories, since the

stations in Gliwice (previously Gleiwitz), Gdańsk (previously Danzig) and even Szczecin (previously Stettin), where before the war there was no such type of radio facility, were all launched earlier.

Remaking Silesian (radio) culture

According to Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, ‘representations of space in the social sciences are remarkably dependent on images of break, rupture, and disjunction’⁹⁰, which is exemplified by maps showing the borders of individual countries. We perceive the boundaries between individual societies and cultures, as something that separates them, and something whose removal would result in creation of conflicts. Lower Silesia, which after the war was a place of unprecedented population movements, where within a three-year period between 1945 and 1948, the ethnic composition of Silesia changed almost completely, was presented by the official propaganda as a battlefield between the German and Polish populations. A strong sense of being in the presence of otherness dominated over the experience of both the new settlers and existing inhabitants who came in contact with the new arrivals.⁹¹

However, it is more productive to consider this period not in terms of breaks, but rather multiple and diverse connections between the various cultural groups in the area. From this standpoint, it can be seen that a new kind of culture was created in Lower Silesia after the war, which was based on the struggle for survival and efforts to generate paid employment. While such processes can be observed in various sites of sociality and participation, we focus here on communication and cultural exchange between Germans, Poles, Jews and soldiers of the Red Army who, whether effectively or not, were all involved in some way with the reconstruction of radio in Lower Silesia. It is crucial that historical analysis takes the dynamics of these cultural contacts into account, since they have left their mark on how the process of re-making of radio broadcasting took shape in Silesia. It would seem that this process took place on two levels: on the one hand, in the form of interpersonal relations between existing residents and new settlers, and, on the other hand, through the assimilation of pre-existing material objects connected to radio culture.

The displacement of German citizens was spread over a period of several years, also partly since some of those who remained in service were highly specialised professionals, without whom the administration, as well as municipal companies and factories could not operate. Therefore, these highly skilled Germans were issued certificates with various categories that indicated their suitability for work and this, in turn, determined the phases in which the expulsion of Germans took place.⁹² Similarly, at the Wrocław radio station, the last German employees were dismissed only in May 1947, ‘with the exception of two specialists who have to temporarily remain to ensure the normal operation of the station.’⁹³ Ethnic Germans were also employed in radio equipment factories and on the farms that supplied these factories’ canteens with food.

The attitude of the Polish Radio organisation towards their German employees was largely in keeping with the policy of the central authorities; the consensus was that Germans should be removed from service as soon as possible, but as long as their labour was deemed necessary, it should be ensured that they had sufficient

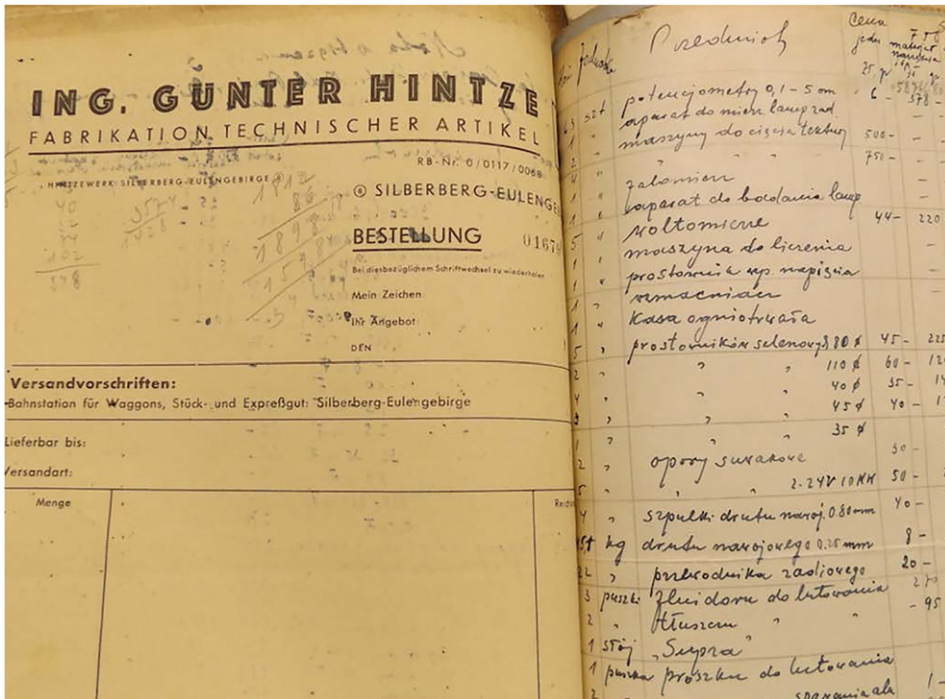


Figure 16. Front and back pages of Günther Hintze's Fabrikation Technischer Artikel inventory form, repurposed as a notebook for a stock inventory.
Source: APWK/596, Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu/o. Kamieniec Żąbkowski.

food supplies to survive.⁹⁴ The same commission encountered a similar case in Szklarska Poręba (previously Schreiberhau), where Germans were employed to renovate four villas, and, since there were no funds to pay them salaries, 'they were provided food at a local restaurant.'⁹⁵ Both situations can be viewed from the perspective of an institution that had strictly forbidden such occurrences, but these examples are suggestive of at least some basic level of solidarity between the employees of Polish and German origins.

There were many more similar examples of insubordination involving cooperation with the Germans, especially among the managers of smaller radio stations, who, working far away from Wrocław, had a relatively high amount of freedom on a daily basis. For instance, in the smaller town of Świdnica in 1945, 'the head of the Radio Station employ[ed] several Germans to repair the radio receivers, as well as his own sister, in a shop.'⁹⁶ Moreover, a similar situation took place in Kudowa Zdrój, where the head of the station, Mr. Bieżanowski, 'issued, without any grounds, certificates confirming the permanent employment by Polish Radio of Adolf Lakwencow, a Czech, and Erich Richter, a German.'⁹⁷ This Polish-German business consisted in repairing radio receivers in the building of the radio station and then lending them to local schools and workplace common rooms for a fee. Such forms of cooperation could be still found in 1946. A notification was sent to the Citizens' Militia in July 1946, reporting that the mayor of Srebrna Góra had taken over the premises of Production Plant no. 21, where he 'established a



Figure 17. Radio set 'Ludowe'.
Source: Muzeum Miejskie w Dzierżoniowie.

reparation workshop for radio receivers with the factory's former owner, a German named [Günther Hintze]⁹⁸ who was also accused of stealing the specifications of valves and the German technical library during the transfer of the radio equipment from his own production line to Państwowa Fabryka Odbiorników Radiowych (State Radio Receiver Factory) in Dzierżoniów.

In this case, of Production Plant no. 21, it is also significant to take note of the materiality of the preserved documents (see Figure 16), because quite frequently, due to the lack of paper, German documents or forms were overwritten or reused. This palimpsestic structure also applies to other documents, such as collections of German technical drawings from the German period, or buildings renamed by Poles, such as the aforementioned villa Fremdenheim Immergrün in Szklarska Poręba, which, after its takeover by Polish Radio, was renamed as 'Raszyn.' Radio receivers also constitute evidence of the interception and re-making of German material culture by Poles, and, if we treat them as cultural texts, they also turn out to have a palimpsestic structure. When in November 1945 a four-person group led by the engineer Kiesewetter arrived at the future radio receiver factory in Dzierżoniów, all buildings were ruined and the machines and equipment had been taken away, which is why the first radio receivers released through Polish production, i.e. the so-called 'Pionier' [Pioneer] models, were



Figure 18. Young Jewish men repairing radio sets during vocational course organized by the 'ORT', Dzierżoniów 1947.

Source: PAP.

manufactured only three years later. This was the amount of time needed to renovate the factory, transfer machines to the factory from the so-called post-German inventories, train the staff, prepare a new receiver design and implement its production. At the end of 1945, the radio valve and receiver factory staff consisted of only 11 people and it constituted, in fact, a reparation workshop that had previously repaired approximately ten thousand People's Receivers (*Volksempfänger*) brought to Dzierżoniów during World War II. These receivers were the German DKE38 model, on which the Reichsadler eagle emblem with a swastika was displayed above the tuning scale. In this reworked version, the eagle and swastika symbols were removed, but nevertheless the 'people's receivers' were colloquially known in Polish as 'hitlerki' (little Hitlers) (see Figure 17). The subsequent radio receiver model produced in Dzierżoniów was 'Srebrny Ton' (Silver Tone) which was also created on the basis of the parts of the 'Nora Graz GW79' receiver, and equipped with Telefunken loudspeakers.⁹⁹

The cross-cultural picture of radio at this time becomes even more complicated if we examine archival photos taken at the receiver repair workshop run by the Jewish Creativity Development Society ('ORT'). At the initiative of the Zionist leader, Jakub Egit, Dzierżoniów, like many other towns in Lower Silesia, became a destination for Jewish Holocaust survivors and returnees (e.g. from the Soviet Union), and which, by the middle of 1946, numbered 12,000 people.¹⁰⁰ The Jewish community council in Dzierżoniów was very active: there were 16 Jewish cooperatives in the town, including those offering services of tailors, shoemakers and electricians, and 127 jobs. The Creativity Development Society ('ORT') organised vocational courses that facilitated the Jewish population in gaining vocational skills. In turn, this made it possible for Jewish trainees to find employment in factories, which had begun to open. To give an example, a photo from 1947, which was made in the building at 30 Świdnicka Street, shows a group of young people, attending a radio technology course, during which they focus on

disassembling German radio receivers (See [Figure 18](#)). Many of the graduates of these courses went to work in the newly opened factories for producing radio receivers and valves.

This final part, which has closed with the multiple forms of exchange and contact, has been discussed in order to offer a more nuanced understanding of Polish, Russian, German and Jewish relations in the period until 1948. We finish with these examples as a way to point to the multiple conditions under which a radio culture previously designated as ‘German’ was remade in the context of a post-1945 Poland. Across this article, we’ve sought to challenge the ‘divided’ history of a pre and post-1945 radio culture in Silesia, and in Breslau/Wrocław specifically. In treating the case of radio in Silesia, we have highlighted (trans)regional and (trans)national perspectives, taking into account questions of Silesia’s geopolitical significance, and offering Polish, German and Czech(oslovak) historiographic perspectives, as well as larger frameworks of international diplomacy, border disputes, military occupations, population transfers and looting. Our effort, in this final part, to highlight the relations between Polish, Russian, German and Jewish populations is not to perform any exoneration of this past, but rather take note of the complexities of historical periodisation in Silesia in the first years following 1945; this analysis has attended to the ways in which the remains of a German radio industry, technical expertise and material culture were variously re-worked in the post-1945 period. Against this background of a rich, ‘entangled’ media history, we identify the necessity for a more integrated, comparative research agenda on radio in Central Europe before, during and after World War II.¹⁰¹ We see this study of media histories in a borderlands region as contributing to an emergent conversation about (post)colonial and (post)socialist perspectives on Central and Eastern European media cultures, and we hope that radio studies scholarship will develop further insights on the ways in which radio in mid-century Europe can be productively understood in this vein.¹⁰² The present case study, we hope, serves as an impetus to reconsider the significance of transnational radio in twentieth-century Europe, particularly those marginalised within nationally framed radio historiographies.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the anonymous peer reviewers and special issue editors Tobias Hochscherf, Richard Legay and Hedwig Wagner for their constructive feedback, along with Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, Ewa Stańczyk and Heidi Tworek. Both authors would also like to thank the following for helping to facilitate this research: Albert Miściorak, Renata Tańczuk and Sławek Wiczorek, Michał Kwiatkowski, Stiftung Deutsches Technikmuseum Berlin, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (Berlin), Archiwum Miejskiego (Wrocław), Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu/o. Kamieniec Ząbkowicki (Wrocław), the Polish Press Agency, Archiwum Dokumentacji Aktowej, Telewizja Polska S. A., and the Dzierżoniów Town Museum. Joanna Walewska-Choptiany’s research for this article was financed by the Polish National Science Centre as a part of a research project entitled ‘Radio on the Leash: Radio-Engineering Industry,

Institutions, and Listeners' Practices in the People's Republic of Poland (no. 2016/20/S/HS2/00070).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

ORCID

Carolyn Birdsall  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9870-3035>

Joanna Walewska-Choptiany  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1767-1890>

Notes

1. For example, e.g. Andreas Fickers, 'Broadcasting', in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, ed. Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (New York: Palgrave, 2009), 106–8, here 107; Michele Hilmes, *Network Nations: A Transnational History of British and American Broadcasting* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Marie Gillespie and Alban Webb, eds., *Diasporas and Diplomacy: Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service (1932–2012)* (London: Routledge, 2013).
2. See Alasdair Pinkerton and Klaus Dodds, 'Radio Geopolitics: Broadcasting, Listening and the Struggle for Acoustic Spaces', *Progress in Human Geography* 33, no. 1 (2009): 10–27.
3. See Michael Curtin, 'Media Capital: Towards the Study of Spatial Flows', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 6, no. 2 (2003): 202–28; Christoph Classen, 'Introduction: Transnational Broadcasting in Europe 1945–1990, Challenges, Concepts, and Preliminary Findings', *SPIEL* 2, no. 1 (2016): 7–22; Staffan Ericson and Kristina Riegert, eds., *Media Houses: Architecture, Media and the Production of Centrality* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010).
4. See, for instance, Golo Föllmer and Alec Badenoch, eds., *Transnationalizing Radio Research: New Approaches to an Old Medium* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2018); Ib Bondebjerg, 'Scandinavian media histories: A Comparative Study', *Nordicom Review* 23, no. 1–2 (2002): 61–79; Dwayne R. Winseck and Robert M. Pike, *Communication and Empire: Media, Markets, and Globalization, 1860–1930* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007); Aitor Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire: Geopolitics, Radio Industry and Ionosphere in the British Empire, 1918–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Suzanne Lommers, *Europe - On Air: Interwar Projects for Radio Broadcasting* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013).
5. Michele Hilmes, 'Entangled Media Histories: A Response', *Media History* 23, no. 1 (2017): 142–14, here 142.
6. Sian Nicholas, 'Media History or Media Histories? Re-addressing the History of the Mass Media in Inter-war Britain', *Media History* 18, no. 3–4 (2012): 379–94.

7. For a comprehensive account, see Peter Polak-Springer, *Recovered Territory: A German-Polish Conflict over Land and Culture, 1919-1989* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2015).
8. See, for instance, discussions of India/Pakistan, Israel/Palestine, Rwanda and post-Socialist Eastern Europe, respectively, in Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017); Tamar Liebes, 'Acoustic space: The Role of Radio in Israeli Collective History.' *Jewish History* 20, no. 1 (2006): 69–90; Alasdair Pinkerton and Klaus Dodds, 'Radio geopolitics: Broadcasting, listening and the struggle for acoustic spaces', *Progress in Human Geography* 33, no. 1 (2009): 10–27; Anikó Imre, 'Postcolonial Media Studies in Postsocialist Europe', *Boundary 2* 41, no. 1 (2014): 113–34.
9. Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen, eds., *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2015). See also Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); James Mark and Péter Apor, 'Socialism Goes Global: Decolonization and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956–1989.' *The Journal of Modern History* 87, no. 4 (2015): 852–91.
10. See Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, eds., *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Nicole Starosielski, *The Undersea Network* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
11. Alejandra Bronfman, *Isles of Noise: Sonic Media in the Caribbean* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).
12. For instructive examples of this scholarship, which has been attentive to regionalism and 'national indifference' as well as coercive national divisions and classifications of populations in Central Europe, see Brendan Karch, 'Regionalism, Democracy and National Self-Determination in Central Europe.' *Contemporary European History* 21, no. 4 (2012): 635–51; Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (London and Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); James E. Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008).
13. *Ibid.* See also Tara Zahra, 'Imagined noncommunities: National indifference as a category of analysis.' *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010): 93–119.
14. Peter Polak-Springer, "'Jammin' with Karlik': The German-Polish 'Radio War' and the Gleiwitz 'Provocation,' 1925–1939,' *European History Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (2013): 279–300; on the prevalence of 'Heimat' programming in Silesia and elsewhere in Germany during this period, see Adelheid von Saldern, 'Volk and Heimat Culture in Radio Broadcasting during the Period of Transition from Weimar to Nazi Germany', *The Journal of Modern History* 76, no. 2 (June 2004): 312–46.
15. When informing listeners as to 'where people listen to us,' the publication reprinted listener letters less from the immediate regions around Silesia, and to a larger expanse of Austria, Switzerland, Italy and southern Germany (Munich, Allgäu). 'Wo man uns hört: Empfangsurteile aus dem Süden' *Schlesische Funkstunde* (2 January 1925): 6.

16. Hans Kriegler, 'Der Reichssender Breslau', in Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft, *Reichs-Rundfunk: Entwicklung, Aufbau und Bedeutung* (Berlin: Schröder, 1934), 63–4.
17. Ibid., 64. German original: 'ausserordentlich grosse Reichweite'. Further archival research would be necessary to uncover the full extent of this short-wave international service, its program content and staff members.
18. Such programmes are identified by Kriegler as being 'in opposition to the Liberal-Marxist radio, [we have] finally achieved the possibility that, for once, uneducated and simple people can appear in front of the microphone instead of only intellectual and educated citizens.' Ibid., 64. German original: '... haben wir im Gegensatz zum liberalistisch-marxistischen Rundfunk endlich dafür gesorgt, dass einmal der unverbildete und gesundeinfache Volksgenosse an Stelle des intellektuellen und eingebildeten Bürgers vor das Mikrophon treten kann.'
19. David Vaughan, *Battle for the Airwaves/Bitva o vlny* (Prague: Radioservus/Cook Communications, 2008), 33.
20. Examples include 'Hallo! Welle Erdball!' (1928), 'Song' (1929) and 'Das Hörspiel vom Hörspiel' (1931), the latter of which summarised the previous four years of radio play production at the station in the form of an edited collage on wax discs. Friedrich Bischoff, 'Hörspiel in den Zwanziger Jahren'. SWF. 29.10.1953. SWR Schallarchiv. Nr. 5950093. Quoted in Hermann Naber, 'Die Geburt des Hörspiels aus dem Geiste der Operette: Karl Sczuka und die Pioniere der Radiokunst', in Andreas Stuhlmann, ed. *Radio-Kultur und Hörkunst: Zwischen Avantgarde und Popularkultur, 1923-2001* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 105–16, here 111. See also Daniel Gilfillan, *Pieces of Sound: German Experimental Radio* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009); Solveig Ottmann, *Im Anfang war das Experiment: Das Weimarer Radio bei Hans Flesch und Ernst Schoen* (Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos, 2013).
21. Among those who were interned and/or trialed at the Berlin district court (between November 1934 and June 1935) were the social democrats Ernst Heilmann and Friedrich Ebert junior, radio board members Hans Bredow, Kurt Magnus and Heinrich Giesecke, and Berlin radio's Hans Flesch and Alfred Braun, who were variously accused of disloyal conduct, fraud, and falsification of documents. The accused were cleared of wrongdoing in 1937 following appeals proceedings. The charges against Bischoff were dropped after the first day of the hearing, following several months in custody. See, for instance, Hans Jürgen Koch and Hermann Glaser, *Ganz Ohr: Eine Kulturgeschichte des Radios in Deutschland* (Cologne etc: Böhlau Verlag, 2005), 140; Hans Bredow, 'Freud und Leid in drei Jahrzehnten', in *Linien eines Lebens: Friedrich Bischoff, Gestalt, Wesen und Werk*, ed. Ernst Johann (Tübingen: Verlag Fritz Schlichtenmayer, 1956), 19–27, here 24.
22. See Gisela Elven, 'Der schlesische Rundfunk, 1924–1939, unter Berücksichtigung seiner politischen und volkstumpolitischen Aufgaben' (PhD diss., Leipzig, 1945); Kriegler, 'Der Reichssender Breslau', 63–64.
23. Ibid.; Peter Becher and Anna Knechtel, eds., *Hörfunk und Hörfunkpolitik in der Tschechoslowakei und im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2017).
24. Ibid.

25. In the modern history of Breslau, which grew to become one of the largest cities in the German Reich around 1900, the city had been integrated into Prussian communications systems, with postal services and, later, the telegraph and telephone, all of which were administered through the district postal office (Oberpostdirektion). Officially included in Prussia after German unification in 1871, an early example of the 'wiring' of Breslau can be found with the decision to install 70 additional 'special telephone exchanges' in central Breslau in the late 1890s. Jan-Otmar Hesse, *Im Netz der Kommunikation: die Reichs-Post und Telegraphenverwaltung, 1876-1914* (München: Beck, 2001), 383–4. As part of a nation-wide electrification programme in 1909, the AEG company erected a power plant, Elektrizitätswerk Schlesien, in Breslau, later expanding services in the 1920s to electric trams and regional electricity services. See, for instance, 'Elektrizitätswerk Schlesien, A.-G.' *Frankfurter Zeitung* (5 Jan. 1927): n.p.
26. Press release from the Institut für Deutsche Kultur- und Wirtschaftspropaganda, December 1937. Deutsches Technikmuseum Berlin, Historical Archive, Bestand Telefunken, Number I.2.060 A/ 6114, 12. See also Arnold Brüggemann, 'Die ersten Reichs-Lautsprechersäulen.' *Der Hoheitsträger: Verkündungsblatt für das Hauptstabsamt, das Hauptpersonalamt und das Hauptschulungsamt der NSDAP* 2/2 (1938): 38.
27. Vaughan, *Battle for the Airwaves*, 95.
28. See, for instance, Eva Plach, *The Clash of Moral Nations: Cultural Politics in Piłsudski's Poland, 1926-1935* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006). For further details on the activities of the right-wing German news agency Telegraphen-Union in influencing the Polish media landscape and its efforts to reach German minorities in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1920s and 1930s, see Heidi Tworek, *News from Germany: The Competition to Control World Communications, 1900-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 141–68.
29. Maciej J. Kwiatkowski, 'Tu Polskie Radio Warszawa...' (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1980), 170–4.
30. Anon., 'Wojna w eterze trwa dalej. Wszystkimi językami mówią stacje krótkofalowe', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 6 (1938): 2.
31. Ryszard Miazek, *Przeminęło z radiem. Opowieść o Zygmuncie Chamcu – założycielu i pierwszym dyrektorsze Polskiego Radia* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Informatyki i Zarządzania, 2005), 156.
32. 'Gliwice prowokują', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 18 (1939): 8.
33. 'Czekamy na tani odbiornik radiowy', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 2 (1938): 1; 'Opracowujemy model odbiornika popularnego', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 3 (1938): 2; 'Polskie Radio pełni doniosłą służbę społeczną', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 1 (1938): 1.
34. 'Zgodnym wysiłkiem społecznym radiofonizujemy wieś i miasto', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 1 (1938): 6.
35. 'Czy rzeczywiście Niemcy ograniczą swobodę korzystania z radia?...', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no.16 (1939): 2.
36. 'Ponury cień swastyki fatalnie zaciążył na niemieckiej radiofonii', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 22 (1939): 2.

37. 'Rozbiór czeskiej radiofonii', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 3 (1938): 9.
38. 'Dalsza likwidacja Czeskiej Radiofonii', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 26 (1939): 2.
39. 'Śląsk Zaolziański wrócił do Polski', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 1 (1938): 1.
40. See, for instance, 'W dniach przełomowych Radio spełniło swoją rolę'; 'Słuchali nas z ukrycia...', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 2 (1938): 1.
41. See, for instance, 'Wozy propagandowe Polskiego Radia na Zaolziu', *Radio dla Wszystkich*, no. 4 (1938): 3.
42. See, for instance, Rainer Pinkau and Hans Weber, *Geheimsender. Schwarzsender, Propagandasender, Untergrundsender, Clandestines und Target Radios* (Baden-Baden: Siebel, 2004), 27. Heinz Rudolf Fritsche, 'Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand im Schlesischen Rundfunk', in *Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand in Schlesien*, ed. Lothar Bossle et al. (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1989), 121–36, here 135.
43. Heinz Rudolf Fritsche, 'Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand im Schlesischen Rundfunk', in *Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand in Schlesien*, ed. Lothar Bossle et al. (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1989), 136.
44. See Folder 2 (X.40.II, 1.5.39-30.9.40), X40: Rundfunk, Programme, Kritiken. Kolekcja Wycinków Prasowych Dawnego Archiwum Miejskiego we Wrocławiu.
45. The opposition parties encouraged people to vote 'no' in response to the first question regarding the abolition of the Senate. According to official, falsified results, 91% of respondents voted 'yes' in response to the third question concerning the borders, while in fact, this demand was supported by 67% of voters. Despite the fact that the real result was much smaller than reported, it was claimed that this postulate enjoyed the greatest social support out of all three, although, in practice it meant not only incorporating the Western territories into Poland, but also relinquishing the right to the eastern territories to the Soviet Union. Therefore, it seems that the propaganda campaign of Polish Radio and the press was successful. For more about the Polish Radio programmes of the referendum period, see: Archiwum Dokumentacji Aktowej, Ośrodek Dokumentacji i Zbiorów Programowych TVP S.A. w Warszawie (ADA), 85/12/1.
46. For example: *Przed Kongresem Zjednoczeniowym SL i PSL. Gilów. Radiofonizacja szkoły we wsi Gilów na Dolnym Śląsku*, Polska Kronika Filmowa (PKF) 1949, 47.
47. 'Straty wojenne polskiej radiofonii', *Radio i Świat*, no. 2 (1945): 1. According to the article, in July 1945 the estimated war losses of Polish Radio were 201,780,000 pre-war zloty. The estimation was based on the number of radio subscribers, whose radio receivers were confiscated by the Germans and the damage to the radio-engineering infrastructure.
48. Polish Radio was re-established in Lublin in 1944 under the umbrella of the Soviet Union by trusted communist activists sent from Moscow. The first broadcast, transmitted via loudspeakers installed inside the radio station building, was the text of the proclamation by the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PCNL, Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego). The PCNL was a provisional government, which was allegedly formed on July 22, 1944 under the direction of the State National Council in the opposition to the Polish government-in-exile. This puppet government exercised control over Polish

- territories retaken from the Nazi Germany, and was controlled by the Soviet Union.
49. *Dekret Polskiego Komitetu Wyzwolenia Narodowego z dnia 22 listopada 1944 r. o utworzeniu przedsiębiorstwa państwowego 'Polskie Radio,'* Dz.U. 1944 no. 13 item 69, <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19440130069>
 50. The chief engineer and pre-war employee of Polish Radio, Władysław Rabęcki, estimated that the losses of Polish radio broadcasting amounted to the substantial sum of over 15 million pre-war Polish zlotys. 'Straty wojenne polskiej radiofonii', 1
 51. Adam Dziurok and Bogdan Musiał, 'Oddamy wam tylko mury i pustą ziemię. Demontaże i wywózka sprzętu przez sowietów z terenu Górnego Śląska; *Czasypismo*, no. 2 (2012): 108–17.
 52. Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse, *Mikrokosmos: Portret miasta środkowoeuropejskiego* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2011), 446.
 53. 'Sprawozdanie z posiedzenia z dnia 18.04.1945 r., Warszawa dn. 18.04.1945 r.', Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu / o. Kamieniec Ząbkowicki [APWK], Zakłady Radiowe 'Diora' w Dzierżonowie-596 [596]/20.
 54. Alexander Badenoch, *Radio in Ruins: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 24.
 55. See: Yaman Kouli, *Dolny Śląsk, 1936-1956: Szybki rozwój i nieudana odbudowa. Wpływ wiedzy na produkcję przemysłową* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2018), 98–111.
 56. 'Protokół z kontroli przeprowadzonej w Państwowej Fabryce Odbiorników Radiowych w Dzierżonowie (...) w czasie od 15 stycznia do 28 lutego przez Inspektorów CzPEI ob. ob. Gwińskiego Bronisława oraz Pastuszka Romana', APWK/596/15.
 57. 'Protokół z kontroli finansowej w Państwowej Wytwórni Aparatów Fonicznych w Dusznikach Zdroju przez Głównego Inspektora Zjednoczenia Przemysłu Radiotechnicznego (...) w dniach 27.03-3.04, 14-21.04, 24-26.04.1947r.', APWK/596/15.
 58. 'List Z. Młynarskiego (w zastępstwie) Naczelnego Dyrektora Polskiego Radia do Ministerstwa Przemysłu z dn. 24 września 1945 roku', Archiwum Dokumentacji Aktowej, Ośrodek Dokumentacji i Zbiorów Programowych TVP S.A. w Warszawie [Archive of Polish Television in Warsaw] (ADA) 85/12/1.
 59. Several documents where German factories in Lower Silesia are mentioned can be found in APWK/596.
 60. For further discussion of confiscations of German property across the region, see, for instance, Kornelia Kończal, 'The Quest for German Property in East Central Europe after 1945.' In Yvonne Kleinmann et al, eds., *Imaginations and Configurations of Polish Society: From the Middle Ages through the Twentieth Century* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2017): 291–312.
 61. 'Zjazd Delegatów Dyrekcji Okręgowych Polskiego Radia w Szklarskiej Porębie, 17-19 lipiec 1945', ADA 14/3/2: 97.
 62. Ibid.
 63. Gregor Thum, *Obce miasto Wrocław w 1945 i potem* (Via Nova: Wrocław, 2008), 159.

64. Beata Halicka, *Polski Dziki Zachód: Przymusowe migracje i kulturowe oswajanie Nadodrza 1945-1948* (Cracow: Universitas, 2015), 221.
65. 'List W. Billiga do Premiera Rady Ministrów R.P. ob. Osóbki-Morawskiego, Warszawa 5.VI.1945 r.', ADA 85/12/1.
66. Drobner sent a letter to Polish Radio in which he wrote that the employees sent to Wrocław were completely uninterested in the radio station, focusing only on looting the equipment, and that he would like to know if the radio station is supposed to be taken out of the city. Cf. 'List Prezydenta Miasta Wrocławia Drobnera do Polskiego Radia w Warszawie z dn. 23 maja 1945 roku', ADA 85/12/1 and another letter from 24.IX.1946 r., ADA 85/12/1. In order to prevent the removal of equipment from the Western Territories, the Ministry for the Recovered Territories had issued a decree prohibiting such actions without permission. However, for Polish Radio, Lower Silesia was a reservoir of radio equipment, and consequently, in a letter of 2 May 1946, Billig turned to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Recovered Territories, Gomułka, to ask for a license to move equipment necessary for developing the radio network within the country from the Recovered Territories to Central Poland, referencing the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 26 June 1945 which gave Polish Radio ownership over technical equipment located within the country, ADA 85/12/1. In letters of 6 and 10 May 1946, Billig wrote to the Ministry for the Recovered Territories that due to the exhaustion of the stocks of radio receivers in the Śląsko-Dąbrowski District Directorate in Katowice, which did not cover the demand of central institutions (e.g. Ministry of Information and Propaganda, Ministry of Education, etc.), Polish Radio was forced to use the receivers located in Lower Silesia to meet these needs. Cf.: ADA 85/12/1. It is worth noting here that on 1 October 1946, that is, after launching the 2.5 kW station in Wrocław, the number of radio subscribers in Wrocław was 21,631, of which 21,355 owned valve receivers, 21 owned detectors, and 255 had speakers installed in their flats. In addition, there were 72 public address speakers installed in the city. Cf. 'Dr. Inż. A. Blicher z Dyrekcji Technicznej Polskiego Radia, Notatka dla Dyr. Pańskiego (nt. Zradiofonizowania Ziem Zachodnich), Warszawa 1.10.1946 r.', ADA 85/12/1.
67. 'Letter from Józef Makuła to Wydział Bezpieczeństwa we Wrocławiu, Wrocław, 7.08.1945', ADA 85/18/1.
68. Ibid.
69. 'Letter from Józefa Makuła, Dyrekcja Okręgowa PR we Wrocławiu to Dyrekcja Polskiego Radia w Katowicach, Wrocław 8/10.1945', ADA 85/11/1.
70. 'Sprawozdanie z odbytej inspekcji w czasie od 26 X do 8 XI 1945 r. na terenie Dyrekcji Okręgowej Polskiego Radia we Wrocławiu', ADA 85/18/1.
71. Ibid.
72. 'L. Retmański, Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Dyrekcji Katowickiej i Wrocławskiej PR przeprowadzonej przy pomocy i współpracy przedstawicieli Wydziału Finansowo-Budżetowego ob. Miki Stefana na czas 27.08-29.09.1945 r., Warszawa dn. 27.09.1945 r.', ADA 85/18/1.

73. 'Sprawozdanie z odbytej inspekcji w czasie od 26 X do 8 XI 1945 r. na terenie Dyrekcji Okręgowej Polskiego Radia we Wrocławiu', ADA 85/18/1.
74. Leszczyński was elected as the director in the intervention mode and held this function from December 1947. He was replaced by Kofta. Cf. 'Sprawozdania za okres od dn. 15.12.1947 r. do dn. 14.4.1948 r., Warszawa dn. 24 maja 1948', ADA 18/1/2.
75. 1 October 1945 is also the date of the project prepared by Rabęcki under the title of 'Expansion of the Polish Radio's network of radio stations', which included the station in Wrocław, for whose sake the Katowice radio station was to be rebuilt and launched with 1.5 kW power, on the 315.8 m wave, ADA 85/12/1.
76. In his letter to Bolesław Drobner on 31 May 1945, Billig asked, on behalf of the Silesian radio station director, Odorkiewicz, for help in obtaining the necessary radio valves to start the radio station in Gliwice and at the same time wrote that 'in the case of the launch of the radio station in Wrocław, there are still talks held between representatives of Our Government and the Head of the USSR Military Mission in Poland,' ADA 15/12/1.
77. 'Sprawozdanie z odbytej inspekcji w czasie od 26.X do 8.XI.1945 r. na terenie Dyrekcji Okręgowej Polskiego Radia we Wrocławiu', ADA 85/18/1
78. Badenoch, *Radio in Ruins*, 19.
79. 'Sprawozdanie z odbytej inspekcji w czasie od 26.X do 8.XI.1945 r. na terenie Dyrekcji Okręgowej Polskiego Radia we Wrocławiu', ADA 85/18/1
80. Several documents regarding Stuttgart radio station see: ADA 85/11/1.
81. In October 1946, the Polish Western Association submitted to the Ministry for Recovered Territories a proposal to create a permanent radio show in German, which would be broadcast from the radio station in Toruń. The aim would be to create an alternative source of information on the western border issue, because 'due to poor knowledge of local relations, [foreign media] possessed information that came mostly from German sources and was transmitted in German, and was therefore presented from a false perspective, because Polish propaganda does not reach them.' Cf. 'List z Ministerstwa Ziem Odzyskanych do Polskiego Radia z dn. 24.IX.1946 r.', ADA 85/12/1.
82. J. Feliks, 'Głosy o Niemcach', *Radio i Świat* no. 1, 1945: 2.
83. In his letter from 8 June 1945 to President Bolesław Bierut, Billig asked for 'submitting a request for the German radio stations and radio equipment to be allocated for Polish radio broadcasting purposes (...): 1. A 100 kW long wave radio station in the antenna; 2. A medium-wave radio station with 50 kW power in the antenna; 3. Laboratory equipment.' In this letter, this equipment was to be the 'only fair compensation' for the losses suffered by Polish Radio. Billig spoke in the same spirit, however much more firmly, on behalf of the participants of the Second National Radio Conference which was held in Warsaw on 21–23 February 1946. In the letter from 28 March 1946, addressed to the Prime Minister of the Provisional Temporary Government of National Unity, Billig presented the assumptions of the resolution adopted by the afore-mentioned Conference – 'getting back the radio receivers stolen by the Germans in an amount of not less than one million units,' and

- simultaneously cited a dozen or so articles on the subject which had been published in the press. For both documents, see ADA, 14/12/1.
84. 'Bijemy na alarm! Alianci radiofonizują... Niemcy', *Radio i Świat*, no. 8, (1946): 1–2.
 85. Although the building was in fairly good condition, however, it did not have the necessary infrastructure, i.e. working water and gas installations. City authorities wanted Polish Radio to cover the costs of these repairs and even the cost of expanding the tramline to Krzyki (previously Krietern), where the building was located. Cf. 'List J. Pańskiego, Z-cy Naczelnego Dyrektora Polskiego Radia do Ministerstwa Ziem Odzyskanych z dn. 13 lipca 1946 roku', ADA 85/12/1.
 86. On 24 May 1946, in a letter to Gomulka, Billig 'communicated with pleasure' that a 2.5 kW broadcasting station was sent to Wrocław and that its assembly will begin immediately. Cf. ADA 85/12/1 and 'Przejęcie do eksploatacji urządzeń radiostacji Wrocław, położonej w miejscowości Żurawin, 7.10.1946 r.', ADA, 85/19/2.
 87. 'Dr. Inż. A. Blicher z Dyrekcji Technicznej Polskiego Radia, Notatka dla Dyr. Pańskiego (nt. radiofonizowania Ziem Zachodnich), Warszawa 1.10.1946 r.', ADA 85/12/1.
 88. Stanisław Miszczak, *Historia Radiofonii i telewizji w Polsce* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Komunikacji i Łączności, 1972), 278.
 89. *Otwarcie radiostacji wrocławskiej*, PKF 1947/48, <https://www.youvalve.com/watch?v=d-Gk4yaKKTQ&t=149s>
 90. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference', in *The Cultural Geography Reader*, ed. Timothy Oakes and Patricia Price, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 60.
 91. See Thum, *Obce miasto*; Halicka, *Polski Dziki Zachód*.
 92. Halicka, *Polski Dziki Zachód*, 303–5.
 93. 'List od Zygmunta Młynarskiego (z upoważnienia Naczelnego Dyrektora Polskiego Radia) do Dyrektora Okręgu PR we Wrocławiu ob. Juliusza Petry z dnia 7 maja 1947 roku', ADA 4/3/1.
 94. 'Sprawozdanie z odbytej inspekcji w czasie od 26.X do 8.XI.1945 r. na terenie Dyrekcji Okręgowej Polskiego Radia we Wrocławiu', ADA 85/18/1.
 95. *Ibid.*
 96. *Ibid.*
 97. *Ibid.*
 98. 'Letter from A. Gołębiowski to M.O. w Srebrnej Górze, Bielawa dn. 9 lipca 1946r.', APWK/596/1; 'Letter from A. Gołębiowski to M.O. w Srebrnej Górze, Bielawa dn. 30 lipca 1946r.', APWK/596/1.
 99. *Budujemy radiodbiorniki* [We are building radio sets], PKF 1947/1.
 100. See Davies and Moorhouse, *Mikrokosmos*, 474; Jacob Egit, *Grand Illusion* (Toronto: Lugas, 1991); Agnieszka Ilwicka, 'Grand Illusion? The Phenomenon of Jewish Life in Poland after the Holocaust in Lower Silesia.' *The Person and the Challenges* 4, no. 2 (2014): 97–125; Bożena Szaynok, 'The Beginnings of Jewish Settlement in Lower Silesia after World War II (May 1945–January 1946)', *Acta Poloniae Historica*, no. 76 (1997): 171–95; Katharina Friedla, *Juden in Breslau/Wrocław, 1933-1949: Überlebensstrategien, Selbstbehauptung und Verfolgungserfahrungen* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2015).

101. Marie Cronqvist and Christoph Hilgert, 'Entangled Media Histories: The Value of Transnational and Transmedial Approaches in Media Historiography', *Media History* 23, no. 1 (2017): 130–41.
102. Imre, 'Postcolonial Media Studies in Postsocialist Europe'. See also recent work by television and film scholars such as Dana Mustata, Sabina Mihelj, Irena Reifová, Timothy Havens and Katalin Lustyik.

Notes on contributor

Carolyn Birdsall is Associate Professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Her publications include *Nazi Soundscapes: Sound, Technology and Urban Space in Germany, 1933–1945* (2012), and the new co-edited volume *Doing Memory Research: New Methods and Approaches* (Palgrave, 2019). She is currently leading the NWO-funded project 'Mapping Transnational Conflict Heritage,' which examines how European radio was archived, circulated and re-used under conditions of war, occupation and reconstruction.

Joanna Walewska-Choptiany is Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Her current research project, *Radio on the Leash: Radio-Engineering Industry, Institutions, and Listeners' Practices in People's Republic of Poland* is concerned with the cultural and social dimensions to radio in Central Europe during and after World War II.
