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EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING ON RADIO BELGRADE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Abstract: Drawing from archival documents, periodicals, and relevant literature, this paper analyzes the role and significance of educational programming broadcast by the Radio Belgrade within the broader propaganda efforts of Milan Nedić's government. The paper begins with a theoretical explanation of how media functions in education. This will be followed by the use of radio as an instructional tool in Serbian schools during the first half of the twentieth century. The analysis includes talks given during what was called *Prosvetni čas* (Educational Hour), a radio program broadcast in early 1944. Research has shown that, in a time of strong ideological influence on the educational process, the state educational authorities encouraged the use of any available means to achieve their political and propaganda-based ideological goals. Radio shows were produced for students during the 1930s and during the Second World War according to a similar model that made use of different content.

Keywords: Second World War, Serbia, Chief Council on Education, educational programming, radio, instruction, propaganda.

Historiographic and pedagogical research has shown the enormous educational potential of the mass media. Specific forms of media, including the press, radio, and television (and in modern times, the internet), convey information to a large number of recipients with whom a special kind of interaction is established. The manner and content in which a message is conveyed is generally up-to-date, immediate, dynamic, receptive, and interesting. As such, media brings a new dimension to the educational process that goes beyond what a traditional school can do.¹ It is possible to single out a few key factors for increasing the influence of the media in the process of education. Mandatory school curricula do not include everything children need to prepare themselves for life. New findings are slow to enter the curricula, yet they appear in the media before becoming part

¹ Carter 2021; Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 387.

of a general school education. Various forms of media present learning materials in an interesting way and make it easier to understand certain subjects. This is particularly true for those needed to reach level of operational thinking necessary for literature, history, religious instruction, psychology, political science, and the like.²

One of the most widespread means of mass communication during the early twentieth century was radio. According to the Canadian researcher McLuhan, the power of radio is its ability to “deeply engage people,” connect them with content, and evoke general widespread interest. Since the dawn of radio broadcasting, its role has been to inform, educate, and entertain. From a historical perspective, the connection between radio and schools is twofold. Radio had a significant educational component and educational needs, in turn, influenced the development of radio programming.³ Radio was first used in teaching in the United States in 1919, and the BBC’s department for education distinguished itself in terms of reach. In the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, educational programming began being broadcast in early 1929.⁴

Two basic aspects of educational programming were shows intended specifically for children and adults, although separating the two as distinct audiences is sometimes difficult because the educational shows are listened to with equal levels of interest, no matter the age of the listeners. In addition to educational programming, which had very specific informative and didactic functions, children’s radio programming often includes a variety of shows meant for fun and entertainment that are more free-form and flexible than shows that make up regular programming. They are also created by specific departments for children with the purpose of filling free time.⁵ Here, both types of programming will be discussed.

In the 1920s, radio was considered to be an innovative teaching tool. In addition to cost-effectiveness, immediacy, and relevance in conveying information, using it as a teaching tool enabled flexibility because programs could be replayed according to the needs of the curriculum. Radio was most often used as a teaching supplement to emotionally influence listeners by stimulating their imagination, engaging their interest, and influencing what opinions they formed.⁶ This was meant as a means of communication that needed to be “conversational rather than rhetorical” so that listeners could take pleasure in the illusion that the speaker was addressing them directly. This is characteristic of specialized programming, including educational programming. The combination of voice, music, noise, and sound in children’s shows create an auditory experience that shapes emotions, stimulates the imagination, and creates interest in the content being presented.⁷

A creator of one such method of storytelling was Rhoda Power (1890–1957), an author of children’s books and a longtime broadcaster for BBC Radio. Her professional experience strongly influenced her pedagogical ideas. In the 1920s, she worked as a writer and journalist, and prior to the Second World War, she was employed full-time by BBC Radio’s school broadcasting department. At the end of the war, she took an unpaid leave-of-absence to travel around South America, where she conducted anthropological research. She compared the

² Đurić 1997: 490.

³ *Ibid.*, 565–566; Carter 2021.

⁴ Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 427.

⁵ Bulatović 1979: 145; Carter 2021; Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 286.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 428; Đurić 1997: 566–567.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 629; Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 427.

study of underdeveloped civilizations to time travel and viewed historical events as a part of the *longue durée* of human culture. The question that occupied her for most of her career was how to convey history to a larger audience. The experience she gained from ethnographic observations of South American tribes helped her shape a concept of vivid storytelling she called “illustrative talking” or “an oral vision” that she applied to the history lessons she broadcast over the radio. This method essentially consisted of an understanding that storytelling could be more evocative through the use of sound effects. She therefore introduced into her broadcasts dramatic introductions, dialog, music, and various sound effects that would heighten the emotional component of her lessons in order to, as she described it, “humanize history.” This method became very popular among other broadcasters and has endured, even with the transition to the use of television as part of instruction. In 1950, Power received an award for her outstanding contribution to the teaching of history.⁸

Radio talks are prepared with respect for and the application of basic pedagogical principles. In addition to interesting facts, the credibility of the facts being presented, time limits, and age-appropriateness all must be taken into consideration. What is specific to radio is that attention must be paid to how information is communicated and to highlight important actions.⁹ Certain issues can arise when broadcasting educational programming, such as how to engage the students as active rather than passive listeners, lack of access to a teacher if instruction is given exclusively over the radio, and schools’ lack of technical equipment.¹⁰

Even from the very beginning, state authorities recognized radio as a medium that could strongly influence how children formed their opinions and attitudes toward life, social, and cultural issues. In the early twentieth century, educational radio programming played a significant role in shaping future citizens. One could say that, because of the alignment of radio show content with official ideology, “educational effort and propagandistic intent” meet one another over the radio airwaves.¹¹

Educational radio programming in Serbia has a long tradition, primarily due to Radio Belgrade, one of the oldest stations in the country.¹² The development of radio in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the 1920s did not have the support of the government or any private funding, and was instead an initiative by individuals who wanted to be among the ranks of more advanced countries. For them, radio was a means to educate and disseminate information and culture.¹³ Radio broadcasting, however, was controlled by the state, which strictly regulated it.¹⁴ There were special rules regulating licenses and owning radio receiver for both social organizations and private citizens. To be able to receive radio transmissions, listeners were required to sign an agreement with the state that defined how receivers could

⁸ Carter 2021; Cannadine, Keating, Sheldon 2011: 82–83.

⁹ Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 428.

¹⁰ Carter 2021.

¹¹ Potkonjak, Šimleša 1989: 286; Carter 2021; Bulatović 1979: 146.

¹² In addition to Radio Belgrade there were Radio Zagreb (1926) and Radio Ljubljana (1928). Đurić 1997: 568; Marković 1976: 77.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 73, 75, 77.

¹⁴ Radio broadcasting was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph, except for the period of 1932–1936, when it was transferred to a department at the Ministry of Transportation. See also: Nikolić 2006.

be used, where they were located (which had to remain accessible and available to state monitoring), and news could not be transmitted to any third parties.¹⁵ Radio subscriptions were introduced in 1923 and were very expensive, as were radios themselves (more than three-months' salary for a teacher, according to some estimates), so the first subscribers were a small number of wealthy individuals, government ministers, bankers, and industrialists. Radio was especially popular among intellectuals.¹⁶

In the 1920s, efforts were made to create permanent programming, and there was a clear intention to create a department for educational content. The *Rules for Broadcasting Radio Station Programming* stated that broadcasts should “edify and educate the people” and required programming to “present all arts and sciences . . . of general importance in a way that is accessible, understandable, and is of interest to as many listeners as possible.” It was necessary to cultivate folk music, develop musical tastes, and to nurture literature—especially Yugoslav literature—through radio, with an eye toward purity of language and proper diction.¹⁷ In the beginning, programming was very brief—only a few short hours a day—with a basic division between musical and spoken content, which mostly contained announcements from the government. Over time, the number of listeners grew, as did the quality of the programming. Radio technology in Serbia gained momentum in 1929 when Radio Belgrade began broadcasting. Spoken word programming began to overtake musical programming, and a differentiation emerged between informative, educational, and entertainment programs.¹⁸

Educational programming changed over time but remained essentially the same. Initially, it consisted of mostly general cultural programming with information about the repertoire at the National Theater, services from the main Orthodox church, cultural overviews, and overviews of books and magazines. Radio talks were a basic part of educational programming, and it mostly included writers and poets reading excerpts from local and world literature. Lessons also appeared alongside talks as a specific type of program. They differed from the talks in that they were intended for a specific age group or for specific professional and social groups. Programming included different types of shows, including lessons on health, lessons for homemakers, and lessons for farmers. Foreign languages lessons, particularly French and German, were especially popular.¹⁹

¹⁵ Bulatović 1979: 257–259; Jokić 2004: 108.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 41; Marković 1976: 74, 77, 78; Bulatović 1979: 38.

¹⁷ *Prosvetni glasnik*, 4, 1933, 357–358; Bulatović 1979: 79.

¹⁸ Zec 2019: 223; Marković 1976: 79, 80; for more detail on changes in the number of subscribers, see Simić 2006. The emergence of radio service in Serbia was determined by the needs of High Military Command during the Balkan Wars and First World War. The construction of a radio-telegraph network in the Yugoslav kingdom was entrusted to a French company. Radio Belgrade was founded in 1929 and was managed by the company Radio AD, which received a concession from the state for fifteen years. The main shareholders were the British company Marconi and the Yugoslav state. The president was Milan Stojadinović. Danilo Kalafatović, a retired army general, served for as the general director of Radio Belgrade for many years, and the programming service was headed by Veljko Petrović, a writer and academician. When the international crisis leading up to the Second World War intensified, all of the country's radio stations were nationalized. Radio Belgrade was placed under the complete control of the state, which was headed by a pro-Fascist group led by Stanislav Krakov. Đurić 1997: 562; Zec 2019: 223; Marković 1976: 73–74, 76–77, 82.

¹⁹ Bulatović 1979: 145–148, 173–174.

In the 1930s, special lessons for schoolchildren were added. Radio Belgrade broadcast them on Wednesdays and Thursdays as supplements to content taught as part of subjects taught in schools. The Yugoslav Teachers Association participated in designing these lessons for students. At first, these lessons were meant exclusively for elementary school students, but programming was later expanded to include a wider student audience. Content for secondary school students mostly included additional material and dramatic interpretations of literature for young adults. Some topics were later presented as part of an educational program called *Jugoslovenski nacionalni čas* (*The Yugoslav National Hour*) which left its mark on educational programming during the interwar period. The show had a decidedly ideological and political significance that aimed to bring Yugoslav schoolchildren and young adults closer together, both spiritually and culturally. Teachers were encouraged to make as much use of these shows as they could as part of their lessons.²⁰

Radio Belgrade's prewar broadcasting was interrupted on April 6, 1941, when the wing of Serbian Royal Academy where the station's studio was located was damaged in an air raid. It was reinstated immediately after the German army entered Belgrade on April 20, 1941, under the name *Sender Belgrad*.²¹ After the occupational regime was established, the German military government's main priority was to normalize everyday life. The population needed to be persuaded to accept a state of occupation and to maintain law and order. All of public life was strictly controlled, sweeping censorship was instated, and various forms of coercion, repression, and propaganda were employed. Scholars of social and cultural history in Serbia during the Second World War generally agree that radio was the most important propaganda tool exploited by the occupiers.²²

The Second World War marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of Radio Belgrade. The radio station's place in occupied Serbia was determined by the role radio played as part of the Third Reich's propaganda efforts in occupied territories.²³ When it seized control of Belgrade, the German military leadership was given clear directives for taking over the radio station: It needed to remain intact to resume broadcasting on a limited scale as soon as full control was established.²⁴ Radio Belgrade was placed under the complete control of the German authorities. The number of institutions tasked with this

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 148; „Radio-sekcija Beograd. učitelj. zbora”, *Učitelj*, 3, 1931, 559; M. R. M., „Jugoslovenski nacionalni čas”, *Učitelj*, 9, 1934, 79–80.

²¹ Nikolić 2010; Mraović 2019: 215; Zec 2019: 224–225.

²² Mraović 2019: 214; Milosavljević 2006: 46; Petranović 1992: 424; Vasiljević 2013; Id., 2015.

²³ According to a study by a research associate Maja Vasiljević, at the time Nazi ideology was strengthening in the 1930s, radio was being promoted as “the media of the German future.” Goebbels's daily notes indicate its importance during the Second World War, according to which airplanes and radio were among the most useful German conquests. Vasiljević 2015: 55–56.

²⁴ The occupying forces easily assumed control of Radio Belgrade. At the time of the March 27 coup, the new management that took over the radio station, headed by Stevan Jakovljević and included Veljko Petrović and Vladimir Ćorović, retreated with the government and the High Command. They tried at first to continue broadcasting, but when the evacuation began, they chose to destroy the transmitter to keep it from falling into enemy hands. German troops then transferred the surviving radio equipment to the building that housed the prewar Central Press Bureau's shortwave radio station. Franja Mozer, the technical director who retained his position during the occupation, arranged the radio equipment for broadcasting. Jokić 2004: 291–295; Marković 1976: 82–83; Zec 2019: 224–225.

shows just how important propaganda was for the occupying forces. These primarily included the Southeast Department for Propaganda (*Propaganda-Abteilung Südost*), housed in the same building as Radio Belgrade, and the S Propaganda Department (*Propaganda-Abteilung Serbien*), headed by a select group of officers under the command of Lieutenant Reintgen, who was directly in charge of the Belgrade radio station. The formal director was Robert Vege, a local ethnic German.²⁵

The radio station was transformed into an effective tool for propaganda through a series of administrative measures. In May 1941, the military commander issued an order that permitted listening to all German radio stations along with Radio Belgrade and Radio Zemun. In cities' main squares and in some villages, loudspeakers were installed that carried news from the fronts, government announcements, and propaganda messages. At the same time, a ban was instated on listening to radio stations from Allied countries (primarily Radio London and Radio Moscow) that threatened to "break through the Nazi media blockade" and present a clearer picture of the situation in the country and the rest of the world.²⁶ During the occupation, Radio Belgrade became a significant broadcaster for the Balkans, Southeast Europe, and North Africa, and was used by the Third Reich to "demonstrate and implement" its supremacy.²⁷

They were assisted in this by the local authorities, who regulated radio service through various orders and directives. Mandatory radio subscriptions were introduced, and failing to pay would result in permits for owning a radio being revoked and fines amounting to the cost of three years of radio subscriptions.²⁸ An ordinance mandating radio broadcasting and listening in public places came into force.²⁹ The local authorities had no influence over how radio service was conducted without German approval.³⁰ All decisions were made by the occupying German authorities. However, the occupiers' goal in Serbia was not to ideologically reshape the population, but rather to economically exploit and make available all human and material resources in support of the German war effort. Because of this, certain freedoms related to propaganda were permitted to collaborationist governments. The only government body in this area was the Department for State Propaganda at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, within which was an office for the press and, after 1942, an office for film and radio. The head of the department was Aleksandar Stojković, who, by order of the minister of education, Velibor Jonić, also oversaw radio talks.³¹ The local authorities exercised their influence over radio programming through their involvement in the department that created Serbian language programming. This influence was used to place content that supported Milan Nedić's government.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 32; Borković 1979: 19–24; Kreso 1979: 74–75; Zec 2019: 225. Interestingly, Robert Vege had an interest in Serbian history: „Uspelo delo jednog Nemca o srpskoj istoriji: Inž. Robert Vege o srpskoj prošlosti i osobinama srpskog naroda”, *Novo vreme*, 20–21. 5. 1944, 3.

²⁶ Zec 2019: 233; Mraović 2019: 216; Petranović 1992: 132, 114; Kreso 1979: 112.

²⁷ Nikolić 2015: 159.

²⁸ Mraović 2019: 217; „Saopštenje radio-pretplatnicima”, *Novo vreme*, 7. 2. 1942, 5.

²⁹ *Službene novine*, 44, 4. 6. 1943, 1; *Novo vreme*, 5. 6. 1943, 3.

³⁰ Mraović 2019: 216.

³¹ Stojanović 2015: 101–102, 194; Borković 1979: 25–84; Vasiljević 2015: 57; Hermann Neubacher, a special representative for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, advocated a policy of concession and certain cooperation with the local administrative apparatus. See: Nojbaher 2004.

Programming at Radio Belgrade was created by a group of officers from the S Propaganda Department in accordance with the headquarters of the Serbian commander and other parts of the government. The programming had a distinctly propagandistic role and was meant to achieve several goals. These included creating an impression that Germany was invincible and persuading the population to accept its state of occupation. Musical and entertainment content was broadcast to offer a form of escapism from the everyday reality of war and create an impression that the country was finally stable.³² Radio Belgrade's programming was initially intended exclusively for German soldiers, and it was centered around a show called *Beogradski mladi stražar* (*The Young Belgrade Guard*). Over time, the basis for programming was expanded and enhanced with new content.³³ The station's programming was published in the daily newspapers. The occupational government extended its influence over the finalized broadcasting schedule to include as many listeners as they could. Broadcasting began early in the morning before work, and evening shows were scheduled until late in the evening during curfew.³⁴ The information and music departments and the postal service were in charge of implementing the programming. Programming consisted of short news reports in German and Serbian, reports from the High Command, commentary on current events, and German military songs. Later, shows directed at the Serbian population were added. At first, they were broadcast several times a day and then continuously between five and seven o'clock in the evening. There was ample musical programming³⁵ and dramatic content. Also worthy of note was the show *Čas nemačke nacionalne grupe* (*The German National Group Hour*), a political and informational show that introduced German soldiers to the customs of the local population. As part of a segment called *Zarobljenički pozdravi* (*Greetings from the Imprisoned*), each day a dozen messages from prisoners of war were sent to families in Serbia. Free-form programs and radio addresses from Serbian collaborators (mostly ministers and the president of Milan Nedić's government), which were later published in the daily press, played a particular ideological and propagandistic role.³⁶

Radio Belgrade's programming was expanded in 1942.³⁷ From then on, there were many programs that included content related to Serbian history and culture, and there were offices for art, literature, and children within the Serbian language department. Propaganda was spread through talks. Prominent experts from various fields were needed for these popular talks for the nation. There are numerous accounts of university instructors who were unwilling to participate.³⁸ Judging by what was written in the press, on-air German lessons

³² Nikolić 2015: passim.

³³ Milosavljević 2006: 47; Nikolić 2010: 71–88.

³⁴ Zec 2019: 226; Nikolić 2010: 36–42.

³⁵ At first classical music was played, and then operettas were added later. As programming began to include more music, German *schlager* and folk music were played more often. Serious music was first played from records but was later broadcast from concert halls. Live entertainment was provided by ensembles hired by the radio station. For details on how programming was structured, along with special reference to musical programming, see Vasiljević 2013.

³⁶ Nikolić 2015: 153; *Srpski narod*, 24, 26. 6. 1943; 1, 1. 1. 1944, 12; *Kolo*, 35, 29. 8. 1942, 14.

³⁷ Nikolić 2002: 157; „Dva sata samo srpske emisije: reorganizacija programa radio-stanice”, *Novo vreme*, 24. 5. 1942, 5.

³⁸ DAS, G–208, f. 20, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Rektorat, br. 5122, 23. 11. 1943.

were particularly successful. As during the interwar period, there were specialized broadcasts with economic lessons. A segment called *Literarni čas* (The Literature Hour) was highly popular and it featured readings from *Đulići*, a collection of poems by the children's writer Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, that were accompanied by classical music.

Another new 1942 addition to Radio Belgrade was the launch of a children's program. This and similar programs became part of a wider propaganda effort by the Ministry of Education and Religion in cooperation with the State Propaganda Department. The program was called *Dečji čas* (The Children's Hour) and was first broadcast on September 1, 1942. It was a collage-type show with children as the hosts and guests. The show was run by members of Radio Belgrade's children's group, and they were joined by performers from the Serbia Children's Theater. They were managed by Aca Pavlović, a Belgrade journalist. Children on the show sang songs, gave recitals, and played musical instruments. According to the daily press, the children's broadcasts were full of good cheer and optimism, and they offered fun and relaxation. They were so popular that the shows were recorded on records so they could be replayed.³⁹

In order to have a more successful impact on education, in early 1944, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs decided to include broadcasts for children on the Belgrade radio station as part of the radio talks. This was described as "a plan to prepare and educate schoolchildren in the national spirit."⁴⁰ The initiative had originated at the Chief Council on Education in November 1943. The directive was justified by the need for something to replace regular classes during the winter, especially in schools that could not operate due to the cold and lack of fuel for heating, so there would be no interruption in schoolchildren's national indoctrination.⁴¹ Otherwise, students would be left "to their own devices and unintended consequences." As a memorandum from the rector of Belgrade University stated, "This must be avoided at all costs. All means at our disposal must be made available to direct schoolchildren along the only Serbian path."⁴²

Management at the Belgrade radio station accepted the council's proposal to broadcast short educational talks three times a week in the afternoon as *Prosvetni čas* (the *Volkserziehungsstunde* or Educational Hour). The Ministry of Education maintained strict control over radio talks. The Chief Council on Education, and more specifically its General Secretariat, was responsible for all the preparations. There, the review and selection of talks was undertaken very "seriously and attentively." As was written in one of the reports about the General Secretariat's work, only the best and those that could be used "to properly inform young people" were selected from a large number of talks. Special care was taken to keep the topics varied so that all areas needed for popular education were covered.⁴³

³⁹ „Mališani pred mikrofonom: prvi dečji čas na beogradskom radiju”, *Novo vreme*, 30. 8. 1942, 8; Mraović 2019: 224; Nikolić 2010: 77.

⁴⁰ „Radiopredavanja za školsku omladinu”, *Novo vreme*, 7. 2. 1944, 3.

⁴¹ DAS, G-3, f. 162, 22-37-43, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet, s. br. 2144, Izveštaj o radu Generalnog sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta 15.11-15. 12. 1943, g., 15. 12. 1943.

⁴² DAS, G-208, f. 20, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Rektorat, br. 5342, 6. 12. 1943.

⁴³ DAS, G-3, f. 136, I pov. br. 429/41, Ministarstvo prosvete i vera, Glavni prosvetni savet, Izveštaj o radu Sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta u vremenu od 15. 1. do 15. 2., s. br. 363, 15. 2. 1944.

University professors and teachers from secondary and vocational schools all took part in assembling the programming content. At the beginning of December, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs issued official instructions defining the criteria for selecting topics and the length and form of the talks, which was sent to the Rectorate at Belgrade University and published in the daily newspaper *Novo vreme* as an open call to educators:

During these lessons, which will last for about fifteen minutes each day, students will be instructed on how to behave outside of school; proper hygiene; certain school subjects; options for enrollment in various schools, with specific propaganda for vocational schools; our history; the beauty and value of folk poetry and its meaning and importance for many past, present, and future generations; our national ethics and traditions; the role of certain vocations and national and state life; the role and importance of individuals in service of the common good of our entire nation; *srpstvo** and *Svetosavlje*** and other topics. Talks can be in the form of scientific explanations, dialog, or personal experience illustrated with examples, and they can be imbued with a sense of irony about negative things around us. Because these talks should be instructive, they must be interwoven with clear examples and be convincing, accessible, and as interesting as possible.⁴⁴

In a memorandum sent to the Belgrade University Rectorate on December 1, 1943, professors, assistant professors, and research assistants were called on to design talks according to a set of instructions and in a form of their choice that would, in their opinion, best influence young people. In the memorandum, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs expressed its high expectations for these university professors, and stated that, due to broader interests, they were not limited to only one topic. They were permitted to work with several related to the same cultural area and their particular research interests. Talks in the form of “three typed or four handwritten pages” were to be delivered directly to the Chief Council on Education by the fifteenth of each month, starting from the current month. At a meeting on December 3, 1943, the University Senate in Belgrade considered and then adopted the directive to invite regular and adjunct teaching staff to prepare and submit talks in response to the ministry’s request.⁴⁵

School principals were directed to organize listening to radio broadcasts and were given more detailed instructions on how to respond to the ministry’s directive. It was recommended that instructors “approach the preparation of these talks with the highest degree of seriousness and analysis.” These instructions also applied to school principals, who were required to distribute topics among the teachers, make sure deadlines were met, and sanction those teachers who did not obey these orders. The principals sent all talks directly to the Chief Council on Education by the fifteen of every month with a list of all the teachers and some basic information about them. The first deadline was December 20, 1943, for schools in Belgrade and December 25 for schools outside it. Each school needed to cover at least three topics.⁴⁶

* a sense of Serbian national identity and belonging to the Serbian people—Trans.

** a concept that equates the Serbian Orthodox confession with Serbian ethnic identity—Trans.

⁴⁴ „Predavanje za dake preko radija”, *Novo vreme*, 10. 12. 1943, 4; DAS, G-208, f. 20, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Rektorat, br. 5342, 6. 12. 1943.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ DAS, G-3, f. 162, 22-37-43, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet, s. br. 2144, Izveštaj o radu

These talks were featured within the spoken part of the radio station's programming, but they were also the most common forms of influence on public opinion. They were given almost everywhere: in schools, at the Kolarčev People's University, in villages, and even in the concentration camps. In some cases, these live readings were broadcast over the radio. The Ministry of Education made sure the talks were of high quality. According to an announcement in 1942, it was suggested to teachers that they prepare their students in advance so they could understand the main idea of the talks, and that the texts should be read "close together" so that a "conceptual link" could be maintained. The expectation for this approach was that for the to find a "central focus" for building a view of the world based on the "best, national, spiritual, and moral values."⁴⁷

Special attention was given to narration as part of the *Prosvetni čas*. The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs gave authors the freedom to read the talks themselves or have them read by someone else. The criteria a good on-air speaker had to fulfill can be seen in a 1942 call for submissions for candidates to fill this role. Radio Belgrade's listeners were asked to choose which speakers would be hired, as was laid out in an article published in *Novo vreme* containing suggestions for how to make their selections. First of all, one needed to choose a voice that sounded "the most pleasant," "the warmest," and "the most engaging," and that would inspire "the greatest trust." The person had to speak in such a way that "every word can be understood" in the best and "most impeccable" Serbian and "without a harsh accent." Their diction must be such that listeners could easily follow the content of the talk and its meaning. "The ideal speaker for a radio station must read before the microphone as if addressing each and every listener individually—as would a good friend."⁴⁸

The first talk included as a segment in *Prosvetni čas/Kulturni čas/Ministarstva prosvete* (Education Hour/Cultural Hour from the Ministry of Education) on the Belgrade radio station was held on February 6, 1944. The deputy minister of education, Vladimir Velmar Janković, opened the program with a talk on the Serbian cultural plan. In his ten-minute presentation, he talked about coordinated work on a cultural and educational plan as being "the most significant modern-day task." Work on the Serbian cultural plan was to begin immediately, despite difficult times and the ongoing war. In his view, the key prerequisite for the survival of a nation was to preserve its "historical character." He then emphasized the role of young people, who would be the ones to bear the plan's implementation. Accordingly, one of the goals was to give young people a foundation and support for further progress. Proper upbringing in schools was a particularly important element of this. He emphasized the responsibility students had, first and foremost, to themselves and then to the community and its future development and their contribution to maintaining law and order.⁴⁹ This was

Generalnog sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta 15.11–15.12. 1943. g., 15. 12. 1943; f. 136, I pov. br. 429/41, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet–Opštem odeljenju, Izveštaj o radu Sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta od 15. 2. do 4. 3, s. br. 593, 4. 3. 1944; „Predavanje za đake preko radija”, *Novo vreme*, 10. 12. 1943, 4.

⁴⁷ DAS, G–3, GPS, f. 8, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet, pov. s. br. 39, 29. 12. 1942.

⁴⁸ „Konkurs za najboljeg radio-spikera”, *Novo vreme*, 21. 6. 1942, 5; The effectiveness of the educational message depended on authority, emotional charge, and how well it was adapted to the language of the listeners. On the persuasiveness of the message conveyed, see: Šušnjić 2011: 67–82.

⁴⁹ „Radiopredavanje za školsku omladinu”, *Novo vreme*, 7. 2. 1944, 3; Škodrić 2011: 156.

meant to draw students to the policies of Milan Nedić's government, engage all available forces to implement the Serbian cultural plan, and to prevent young people from approaching "harmful ideologies" such as communism. An analysis of talks given during *Prosveti čas* suggest the ministry's intention was for this educational program dedicated to students to be a type of propaganda for the Serbian cultural plan.⁵⁰ The first set of talks broadcast up until mid-February clearly demonstrate this.

By February 15, four more talks for students had been given: "The Serbian National Community," by Dr. Žarko Stupar, an assistant professor at the university; "Love for the Fatherland" by Jelica Vlahović, a professor; "The National and Artistic Significance of our Medieval Art" by Mirjana Ljubinković, a professor; and "Notable Serbian Physicists" by Radmila Marjanović, a teaching intern.⁵¹ According to a report by the General Secretariat of the Chief Council on Education, all of the talks were a resounding success with the public and the audience accepted them with great interest, which was evident from the crowd that had gathered in front of the loudspeakers for them.⁵² *Dnevni list Novo vreme* praised the ministry's initiative because the selection of educational talks were properly directing Serbian youth on a path leading to a national life.⁵³

Talks dedicated to young people were held regularly according to a set schedule prepared by the Chief Council on Education and sent to the department for children's programming at Radio Belgrade.⁵⁴ They were broadcast three times a week on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:30 to 5:40 p.m. and on Sundays from 4:50 to 5:00 p.m. By the middle of March, seven more talks had been given: "Serbian Mining in the Past," by Ružica Tomić, a professor from Smederevska Palanka; "The Importance of Saint Sava," by Predrag Stojaković, a teacher; "Two Important Values from our National Poetry," by Svetozar Dimitrijević, a teacher at the Normal School in Užice; "The Spiritual Qualities of our People," by Rade Perović, a teacher at the Higher Commercial School in Niš; "The Need for Work and Law and Order," by Ljubomir Janković, a teacher from Belgrade; "Protecting Birds," by Ivan Lovše, a teacher from Kuršumlija; "Our National History through Embroidery," by Jelena Đorđević, the principal of the Normal School for Girls in Belgrade; "The Importance of Vitamins," by Radivoje Marinković, a professor at the *Realka* school in Belgrade; "National Poems about the Marriage of Milić Barjaktar," by Dr. Relja Popović, a professor at the university.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ For more on the Serbian Cultural Plan, see: Stojanović 2015: 329–362.

⁵¹ *Novo vreme*, 12. 3. 1944, 3; DAS, G–3, f. 136, I pov. br. 429/41, Ministarstvo prosvete i vera, Glavni prosvetni savet, Izveštaj o radu Sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta u vremenu od 15. 1. do 15. 2, s. br. 363, 15. 2. 1944; F. 14, 2128/43, Nacionalni i umetnički značaj naše srednjovekovne umetnosti.

⁵² *Ibid.*; DAS, G–3, F. 14, s. br. 2209/1943, Ž. Stupar, docent Pravnog fakulteta u Beogradu, Srpska narodna zajednica.

⁵³ *Novo vreme*, 7. 2. 1944.

⁵⁴ DAS, G–3, f. 22, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet, Predavanja za prosvetni čas, S. br. 638, 10. 3. 1944; Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet, Radio predavanja, S. br. 758, 24. 3. 1944; r. 370/1944, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet–Upravi radio stanice, S. Br. 879, 7. 4. 1944.

⁵⁵ *Novo vreme*, 12. 3. 1944, 3; 27. 2. 1944, 3; 28. 2. 1944, 3; 5. 3. 1944, 3; 6. 3. 1944, 3; DAS, G–3, f. 136, I pov. br. 429/41, Ministarstvo prosvete, Glavni prosvetni savet–Opštem odeljenju, Izveštaj o radu Sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta od 15. 2. do 4. 3, s. br. 593, 4. 3. 1944; Izveštaj o radu Sekretarijata Glavnog prosvetnog saveta od 5. 3. do 5. 4, s. br. 862, 5. 4. 1944; F. 14, S. br. 2163/1943, Predrag D. Stojaković, Značaj Svetog Save za nas Srbe.

The collaborationist press published articles celebrating the first month of *Kulturni/Prosvetni čas*. *Novo vreme* ran an article describing the talks as brief, very interesting and useful, and designed to spark young people's interest in their cultural heritage, while also informing them about current issues. Each talk dealt with a topic related to social life, history, science, or practical knowledge, in a way that was well-laid out and easy to understand. The goal was to illuminate a set of values the Serbian people needed to respect. In the article's estimation, the talks were well-received, not just by young people but by the broader public: "This is a kind of people's university through a microphone, a school that should prove useful to all young people no matter their class or level of formal education." According to this observation, the expectation was that the broadcast would be a useful addition to the education and upbringing of young people and of the nation.⁵⁶

During March and the beginning of April, nine more talks were held: "Behavior outside of School," by Lazar Đurđić; "Work and Joy," by Dragutin Milojković, a professor; "Serbian Hospitality," by Ljubinka Stokić; "The Need to Produce Technical and Skilled Workers to Develop the Serbian Economy," by Dragutin Đurić; "Popular Beliefs and Religious Customs among Belgraders," by Veselin Čajkanović, a university professor; "Getting better acquainted with Serbia," by Pavle Sokolović; "Education"; "Employment of Parents and Raising Children"; and "Hygiene and Ignorance."⁵⁷ All of the talks were meant to be published in the *Education Gazette*, which was generally common practice for all types of public and radio speeches in order to preserve them and make them available to the broader public. However, this did not happen. The talks are instead preserved in the Serbian State Archives as part of the fond for the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (1941–1944).⁵⁸

Except for some longer interruptions due to Allied bombings, Radio Belgrade continued broadcasting until the end of the occupation. In May 1944, it broadcast exclusively musical content. For reasons of security, the minister of education issued a directive for a break in the school year for students to prepare for their final exams. Radio programming was also suspended during the summer months of June and July. In August, *Novo vreme* announced that radio broadcasts through loudspeakers and spokespeople would resume. The only parts of the educational programming that resumed were *Dečji čas* and *Literarni čas*.⁵⁹

During the Second World War, Radio Belgrade had an important place in the propaganda efforts of the occupying and collaborationist governments. Spoken word programming in the form of direct addresses and radio talks were particularly effective in creating a desirable image of reality. There were high hopes for *Prosvetni čas*, despite it being cut short by the approaching end of the war. The show was meant to achieve a few aims: to preserve continuity for national education due to school instruction frequently being suspended, to educate and enlighten the wider population, to present a particular type

⁵⁶ „Narodni univerzitet preko mikrofona: kratka, ali poučna radio-predavanja za omladinu”, *Novo vreme*, 12. 3. 1944, 3.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*; *Novo vreme*, 15. 3. 1944, 3; 19. 3. 1944, 3; 20. 3. 1944, 3; 22. 3. 1944, 3; 27. 3. 1944, 3; 29. 3. 1944, 3.

⁵⁸ DAS, G-3, GPS, f. 8, 14, 24–26.

⁵⁹ *Novo vreme*, 28. 4. 1944; 21–22. 5. 1944, 3; 20–21. 8. 1944, 3; „Zmajev čas na beogradskom radiu”, *Novo vreme*, 6. 4. 1944, 3.

of preparation for life in accordance with ideas propagated by the Serbian Civil Plan, to build a new system of values, and to support the policies of Milan Nedić's government. It also demonstrated heightened propaganda efforts in late 1943 and early 1944 by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs directed at the student population, who would be the citizens of the future.

Translated by *Elizabeth Salmore*

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ОБРАЗОВНИ ПРОГРАМ РАДИО БЕОГРАДА ЗА ВРЕМЕ ДРУГОГ СВЕТСКОГ РАТА

Резиме

Радио је једно од најраспрострањенијих средстава масовне комуникације у првој половини XX века. Радио програм је од почетка имао истакнуту образовну функцију. У оквиру образовног програма постојале су посебне емисије намењене деци. Посматрано у ширем смислу, поред емисија са образовном и васпитном функцијом, у дечји радио-програм се убрајају и емисије забавног типа, слободније и флексибилније по својој форми, чија је сврха да употпуне слободно време. Радио је широко употребљаван у школској настави. Захваљујући својим карактеристикама – директно обраћање слушаоцу услед чега се појачава убедљивост преношења васпитне поруке, аудитивни доживљај који изазива емоције и подстиче машту - радио је као наставно средство омогућавао лакше савладавање градива и развијао мотивацију за учење. Поред осталог, нова сазнања се појављују у медијима пре него што постану део редовног образовања. Државне власти су препознале овај потенцијал и подстицале употребу радија као медија путем кога су покушале да утичу на формирање система вредности и ставова ученика.

Образовни програм у Србији има дугу традицију за шта је заслужан Радио Београд. Од његовог оснивања 1929. године, повећава се број претплатника, поправља се квалитет програма, шири се програмска шема у оквиру које се јављају културне и образовне емисије. У оквиру радио-предавања све чешће се уводе емисије у виду часова намењених деци школског узраста. Тридесетих година XX века у школама у Србији почиње употреба радија као наставног средства. С обзиром да је то било време снажног идеолошког уплива у наставни процес, радио-програм је такође стављен у функцију остваривања пропагандних и политичких циљева државних власти. По сличном моделу је развијан образовни програм за време Другог светског рата, када је Радио Београд стављен под потпуну контролу немачких окупационих власти и наставио рад под новим називом Sender Belgrad. Утицај колаборационистичких власти на радиодифузну делатност је био ограничен. Немачке војне власти су им дозвољавале деловање у оквиру редакције програма на српском језику која је креирала емисије путем којих је ширена идеологија владе Милана Недића.

У вршењу пропаганде међу ученичком популацијом учествовало је Министарство просвете и вера. Почетком 1944. године донета је одлука да се преко радија уведу емисије за ђаке чији је циљ „планско просвећивање и васпитање у националном духу“. Целокупан посао у вези са припремом предавања био је у надлежности Главног просветног савета. У реализацији образовног програма је требало да узму учешћа професори универзитета и средњих школа. Одзив просветних радника није био задовољавајући, упркос великим очекивањима власти. Циљ образовног програма је био изграђивање система вредности, буђење интересовања за српске културне тековине и информисање о савременим проблемима. Заступљене су биле разноврсне теме из друштвеног живота, историје, науке и практичних знања. Анализа предавања која су емитована показала је сличност са идејама садржаним у пројекту Српског цивилног плана. Образовни програм је у колаборационистичкој штампи оцењен као веома

успешан и слушан не само међу ученичком популацијом, него и ширим слојевима становништва. Емитовање програма прекинула су савезничка бомбардовања у пролеће и лето 1944. године. Иако се емисија *Просветни час* није дуго одржала (трајала је од од фебруара до априла), колаборационистичке власти су полагале велику наду у њену делотворност у креирању пожељне слике стварности.

Кључне речи: Други светски рат, Србија, Главни просветни савет, образовни програм, радио, настава, пропаганда.