

British Propaganda Directed at Nazi Germany, 1938-1945

Seminar, Winter Semester 2022-23

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Course Description

During the Second World War, the BBC's German-language broadcasts and British leaflets dropped by the Royal Air Force over the Reich were an important alternative source of information for many Germans. Germany's media had been strictly censored and manipulated since 1933. Listening to foreign radio stations was illegal and penalties ranged from fines and confiscation of radio sets to imprisonment in a concentration camp, or even capital punishment. But the ban did not prevent Germans from listening to the BBC and reading British leaflets by their millions. British propaganda played a crucial part in British foreign policy and warfare towards Nazi Germany. It not only aimed at informing the German people about the British view of the war, but sought to undermine the German fighting morale and stir up popular resistance against the Nazi regime. Its ultimate aim was to help shorten the war. To achieve this aim the British government also employed so-called 'black' propaganda' as a method of subversive warfare. This seminar will familiarise you with the political aims, strategies and content as well as the bureaucracy and media of British propaganda during 1938 to 1945. We will not only study key texts of the historiography, but will also explore primary source materials.

Content Note

This course deals with a violent chapter of history, including area bombing and the Holocaust.

Course Requirements

This class is taught in English.

Come to each session and be an active participant by completing readings before class and taking part in discussions.

Detailed course assignment sheets will be made available through Stud.IP, but here is an overview of the work for the course:

3 CP	<p style="text-align: center;">Mandatory</p> <p>(1) Reading of the secondary literature (reading for all); watching of videos;</p> <p>(2) Oral presentation (ca. 20-30 minutes) on one topic in class, including a PowerPoint presentation which will be uploaded on Stud.IP (see list of topics for student presentations in the syllabus)</p> <p>(3) A research exercise in historical sources: You will select documents from the printed editions of leaflets and BBC broadcasts (Course Reserve Collection/Semesterapparat in the SuUB library), or research documents in the digital catalogue of the National Archives in London. This exercise includes a written statement (1-2 pages to be submitted to the instructor: a description/analysis of the documents researched and your research experience) and a discussion of your findings in class;</p> <p>(4) Course evaluation (discussing your learnings from the seminar in the last class on 13 January and filling out an anonymous questionnaire)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All assigned work is <u>ungraded</u> (unless otherwise agreed) and must be completed to pass the course.</p>
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Important

1. As English will be the second language for most of us, I strive to create an environment where everyone can speak freely without fear of being criticised or ridiculed by others.
- 2. Please bring paper and pen to each class as you will need to write things down**
- 3. Please bring physical or digital copies of the reading with you as we might re-read parts of the secondary literature in class**
4. Electronic devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops) may be used for classwork only.
5. Discussions in class may not be recorded in sound- or image-recordings without the instructor's written permission.
6. Out of courtesy and respect, please inform the instructor if you cannot come to class.

Syllabus

Meetings: Friday, 25 November 2022, 10.15 a.m. – 13.45 p.m., room SUUB 4330
Friday, 9 December 2022, 10.15 a.m. – 16.45 p.m., room SUUB 4330
Friday, 16 December 2022, 10.15 a.m. – 16.45 p.m., room SUUB 4330
Friday, 13 January 2023, 10.15 a.m. – 16.45 p.m., rooms Deutsche
Presseforschung and SUUB 4320

The seminar readings are available on Stud.IP.

25 November

1	10:15-11:45	<p>Introductory session</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>Specimens of British propaganda (print and audio)</p> <p><i>Definitions of propaganda</i></p> <p><u>Reading for all (please prepare for this session)</u></p> <p>Welch, David: <i>Propaganda: Power and Persuasion</i>. London: The British Library, 2013, Appendix.</p> <p><u>Watch this Video:</u></p> <p>Propaganda: Power and Persuasion - Defining Propaganda (5:34): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVGLCgqptI&list=RDLV_uVGLCgqptI&start_radio=1&t=82s</p>
2	12:15-13:45	<p>Introductory session</p> <p><i>British politics: Appeasement and the Second World War</i></p> <p><u>Reading for all (please prepare for this session)</u></p> <p>Weinberg, Gerhard L.: <i>World War II: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Introduction and Chapter 1: The inter-war years.</p> <p>Young, John W.: <i>Britain and the World in the Twentieth Century</i>. London: Arnold, 1997. Chapter 5: Appeasement and global conflict, 1937-1945.</p>

		<p><u>Watch these Videos:</u></p> <p>Neville Chamberlain returns from Germany with the Munich Agreement (2:25): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SetNFqcayeA</p> <p>World War II (short version) (11:21): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUXIuYHFgBE</p> <p>Course organisation and assignments</p>
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9 December

3	10:15-11:45	<p><i>The history of propaganda</i></p> <p><u>Reading for all (please prepare for this session)</u></p> <p>Welch, David: <i>Propaganda: Power and Persuasion</i>. London: the British Library, 2013. Chapter 1: A brief history of propaganda.</p> <p><u>Watch these videos:</u></p> <p>The Power of Propaganda & Psychological Warfare (20:48): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bPLWq19tyA</p> <p>Hitler: The Power Of Manipulation Hitler's Propaganda Machine (50:46): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIu3k1hmfGc</p> <p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>The Third Reich and propaganda</i></p> <p>(1) Welch, David: <i>The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda</i>. London: Routledge, 1995. Chapters 2 (Goebbels as Propagandist) and 3 (Restructuring the Means of Communication).</p> <p><i>The origins of BBC foreign-language broadcasting</i></p> <p>(2) Potter, Simon J.: <i>Wireless Internationalism and Distant Listening. Britain. Propaganda, and the Invention of Global Radio, 1920-1939</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Chapter 4.</p>
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4	13:00-14:30	<p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>The organisation of British propaganda</i></p> <p><i>The pre-war gentleman's agreement between the Foreign Office and the BBC</i></p> <p>(3) Seul, Stephanie: "Journalists in the Service of British Foreign Policy: The BBC German Service and Chamberlain's Appeasement Policy, 1938-1939," in Frank Bösch and Dominik Geppert (eds.), <i>Journalists as Political Actors: Transfers and Interactions between Britain and Germany since the late 19th Century</i>. Augsburg: Wißner-Verlag, 2008, pp. 88-109.</p> <p><i>The wartime organisation of British propaganda</i></p> <p>(4) Seul, Stephanie: "British radio propaganda against Nazi Germany during the Second World." M.Phil. dissertation, University of Cambridge, UK, 1995. Open Access Publication: Apollo – University of Cambridge Repository, DOI: 10.17863/CAM.14329, pp. 23-54.</p> <p><i>British 'white' propaganda: The BBC German Service (overview)</i></p> <p>(5) Seul, "British radio propaganda", pp. 55-71.</p>
5	15:00-16:45	<p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>The BBC German Service</i></p> <p><i>News</i></p> <p>(6) Plock, Vike Martina: <i>The BBC German Service during the Second World War: Broadcasting to the Enemy</i>. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, Chapter 2.</p> <p><i>Sonderberichte: Talks</i></p> <p>(7) Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 3.</p> <p><i>Features and Satire</i></p> <p>(8) Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 5.</p>

16 December

6	10:15-11:45	<p><u>Watch these videos:</u></p> <p>Hier ist der Londoner Rundfunk - BBC in der Zeit von 1938-1945 (41:08): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POKMDz1bmoA (in German)</p> <p>The Oral History of the BBC: Interview with Leonard Miall, 25/05/1978, Part I (01:01:53): https://chbbc.sussex.ac.uk/play/?id=142</p> <p>Why the Allies bombed German cities The strategic bombing campaign (Imperial War Museum, ca. 13 minutes): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUqwtAMGJfI</p> <p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>The BBC German Service continued</i></p> <p><i>German personality speakers</i></p> <p>(9) Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 6.</p> <p><i>British personality speakers</i></p> <p>(10) Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 7.</p> <p><i>The women's programme</i></p> <p>(11) Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 4.</p>
7	13:00-14:30	<p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>'Black' propaganda</i></p> <p><i>Sefton Delmer and Gustav Siegfried Eins</i></p> <p>(12) Howe, <i>Ellic, The Black Game: British Subversive Operations against the Germans during the Second World War</i>. London: Michael Joseph, 1982, Chapters 10-12, pp. 95-132.</p> <p>Seul, "British radio propaganda", pp. 71-79.</p> <p><i>Kurzwellensender Atlantik</i></p> <p>(13) Ellic Howe, <i>The Black Game</i>, Chapter 19, pp. 174-91.</p> <p>Seul, "British radio propaganda", pp. 80-84.</p>

		<p><i>Black printed propaganda</i></p> <p>(14) Ellic Howe, <i>The Black Game</i>, Chapter 21, pp. 206-234.</p>
8	15:00-16:45	<p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>Case studies of British propaganda</i></p> <p><i>'Truth' and 'objectivity' as propaganda claims</i></p> <p>(15) Seul, Stephanie: "‘Plain, unvarnished news’? The BBC German Service and Chamberlain’s propaganda campaign directed at Nazi Germany, 1938-1940." <i>Media History</i> 21,4 (2015), pp. 378-96.</p> <p><i>The bombing campaign and leaflet propaganda</i></p> <p>(16) Overy, Richard, "Making and Breaking Morale: British Political Warfare and Bomber Command in the Second World War." <i>Twentieth Century British History</i> 26,3 (2015), pp. 370–399.</p> <p><i>Propaganda and military operations in the final phase of the war</i></p> <p>(17) Taylor, Philip M. and N.C.F. Weekes: "Breaking the German Will to Resist, 1944–1945: Allied efforts to end World War II by non-military means." <i>Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television</i> 18,1 (1998), pp. 5-48.</p>

13 January

9	10:15-11:45	<p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p><i>British propaganda and the Holocaust</i></p> <p><i>Jewish refugees at the BBC German Service</i></p> <p>(18) Ganor, Sheer: "Forbidden Words, Banished Voices: Jewish Refugees at the Service of BBC Propaganda to Wartime Germany." <i>Journal of Contemporary History</i> 55,1 (2020), pp. 97–119.</p> <p><i>The persecution of the Jews and British propaganda 1938-1939</i></p> <p>(19) Seul, Stephanie: "‘Any reference to Jews on the wireless might prove a double-edged weapon’: Jewish images in the British propaganda campaign towards the German public, 1938-1939," in Martin Liepach, Gabriele Melischek and Josef Seethaler (eds.), <i>Jewish Images in the Media</i>. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2007,</p>
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		<p>pp. 203-23.</p> <p><i>The persecution of the Jews during the Second World War</i></p> <p>(20) Seul, Stephanie: “The Representation of the Holocaust in the British Propaganda Campaign Directed at the German Public, 1938-1945.” <i>Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 52</i> (2007), pp. 267-306.</p>
10	13:00-14:30	<p><i>Reception: German listeners of the BBC</i></p> <p><u>Reading for all (please prepare for this session)</u></p> <p>Plock, <i>The BBC German Service</i>, Chapter 10.</p> <p><u>Topics and readings for student presentations</u></p> <p>(21) Slattery, J.F.: “‘Oskar Zuversichtlich’: A German's response to British radio propaganda during World War II.” <i>Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television</i> 12:1 (1992), pp. 69-85.</p> <p><i>The legacy of the BBC German Service: Role model for the Norddeutscher Rundfunk after the war</i></p> <p>(22) Wagner, Hans-Ulrich “Repatriated Germans and ‘British Spirit’: The transfer of public service broadcasting to northern post-war Germany (1945–1950).” <i>Media History</i>, 21,4 (2015), pp. 443-458.</p> <p>Welch, David: “Political ‘re-education’ and the use of radio in Germany after 1945.” <i>Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television</i> 13,1 (1993), pp. 75-81.</p>
11	15:00-16:45	<p>Concluding session: Did propaganda make a difference in the British war effort?</p> <p><u>Reading for all (please prepare for this session)</u></p> <p>Seul, “British radio propaganda”, pp. 85-93</p> <p>Balfour, Michael: <i>Propaganda in War, 1939-1945: Organisations, Policies and Publics in Britain and Germany</i>. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1979, pp. 437-39</p> <p>Course wrap up</p> <p>Course evaluation</p>

Resources

Course Reserve Collection (Semesterapparat), SuUB, Ground Floor

Kirchner, Klaus (ed.): Flugblattpropaganda im 2. Weltkrieg. Erlangen: Verlag D+C.

- Vol. 1: Flugblätter aus England 1939/40/41 (1978)
- Vol. 4: Flugblätter aus England G-1942 (1974)
- Vol. 5: Flugblätter aus England G-1943, G-1944 (1979)
- Vol. 7: Flugblätter aus England, aus den USA 1944/1945 (1980)
- Vol. 11: Nachrichten für die Truppe 1944 (1989)
- Vol. 12: Nachrichten für die Truppe 1945 (1989)

Important: These volumes can be found in the permanent collection on the Third Floor, hit 248 7h/81

Adler, Bruno: *Frau Wernicke: Kommentare einer „Volksjensin“*, ed. by Uwe Naumann, Mannheim: Persona Verlag, 1990.

Lucas, Robert: *Teure Amalia, vielgeliebtes Weib! Die Briefe des Gefreiten Adolf Hirnschal an seine Frau in Zwieselndorf*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1984.

Mann, Thomas: *Deutsche Hörer! Radiosendungen nach Deutschland aus den Jahren 1940 – 1945*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1987.

Sarkowicz, Hans and Michael Crone (eds.), *Der Kampf um die Ätherwellen: Feindpropaganda im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1990.

Balfour, Michael: *Propaganda in War, 1939–1945: Organisations, Policies and Publics in Britain and Germany*. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1979.

Johnston, Gordon and Emma Robertson: *BBC World Service: Overseas Broadcasting, 1932-2018*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

Print and Online Sources

- 1) Printed edition of British propaganda leaflets and BBC broadcasts, see Course Reserve Collection above.
- 2) Website of the British National Archives in Kew, London: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>.

Search the catalogue with the keywords ‘propaganda’ and ‘Germany’: insert both keywords, and select the dates 1938 to 1945; when you get the results, select ‘available for download only’. You can download many documents for free; for some documents you have to register.