

## LECTURE № 5

### British Media



The term “media” generally refers to the print industries (the press or newspapers and magazines) and broadcasting (cable and satellite television, radio and video). These systems overlap with each other and with books, films and the Internet. They cover homes, places of business and leisure activities and their influence is very powerful.

The first British newspapers appeared in the early eighteenth century, such as “The Times” (1785), “The Observer” (1791) and “The

Sunday Times” (1822).

The circulation of the newspapers at that time was hindered by transportation and distribution problems, illiteracy and government licensing or censorship restrictions. The growth of literacy after 1870 provided the owners of the print media with an increased market. Newspapers and magazines, which had previously been limited by the middle and upper classes, were popularized. Over the last two hundred years, an expanded educational system, new print inventions and Britain’s small area have eliminated these difficulties.

At first the newspapers were used for news and information. Later new types of print media used for entertainment appeared. The first popular national papers were printed on Sundays, such as “The News of the World “(1843) and “The People” (1881). They were inexpensive and aimed at the expanding and increasingly literate working class. In 1896, “The Daily Mail” was produced, which was targeted at the lower-middle class. In 1903 it was added by “The Daily Mirror” for the working-class popular market. Both “The Mail” and “The Mirror” were soon selling more than a million copies a day.

The early twentieth century was the era of mass-circulation papers. “The Morning Herald” (later “the Daily Express”) was created in 1900. The newspaper-ownership was concentrated in a few large publishing groups, such as Rupert Murdoch’s News International (which had and has large media holdings in Britain, Australia and the USA), causing fierce competition.

National newspapers are those which are mostly published from London and are available in all parts of Britain on the same day, including Sundays. Many are delivered directly to homes from local newsagents by newsboys and girls. The good internal distribution systems enable national press to develop and Internet online copies now offer updated and immediate availability.

The national press in Britain today consists of **10 daily morning papers and 9 Sunday papers**. Most national newspapers have their bases and printing facilities in London, although now editions of some nationals are published in Europe and the USA. Most of them used to be located in Fleet Street in central London. But many of them have now left this street and moved to other parts of the capital because of very high property rents, competition and opposition from trade unions to the introduction of new printing technology.

New technology meant that newspapers could be printed directly through computers and that resulted in job reductions and cuts in labour. New technology and improved distribution methods have increased the profits of print industries. Although sales are declining they still have a considerable presence on the market. Britons still buy more papers than any other Europeans. Some 50 per cent of people over fifteen years old read a national daily paper and 70 per cent read a national Sunday newspaper.

National papers are usually termed ‘quality’ or ‘popular’ depending on their differences in content and format (broadsheet or tabloid). Others are called ‘mid-market’ (e.g. The Mail Express”). They are between these two extremes.

The ‘qualities’ (such as “The Times”) are broadsheets (large-sheet). They report national and international news in depth and analyse current events and the arts in editorials and articles.

The populars (such as “The Sun”) are mostly tabloid (small-sheet). They deal with relatively few news stories and tend to be simpler in presenting materials. “Qualities’ are more expensive than populars but both carry up-market advertising that generates essential revenue.

There is no legal state control or censorship of the British press, although it is subject to laws of publication and expression. Papers may have a political bias and support a specific party, particularly at election times. For example, the largest selling national dailies “The Daily Mirror” and “The Daily Herald “(1911) have always supported the Labour Party. The press is dependent for its survival on circulation figures, on the advertising and on financial help of its owners. A number of newspapers in the 20th century ceased publication because of reduced circulation, loss of advertising revenue or refusals of further financial aid. Most national newspapers now have online Internet publication. Although some of them have survived, since the 1970s there has been a decline in sales and in the number of national and other newspapers and magazines.

Some 1,300 regional newspapers are published in towns and cities throughout Britain. They contain a mixture of local and national news and are supported by regional advertising. They may be daily morning or evening papers, Sundays or weekly. 75 per cent of local and regional newspapers also operate an Internet website.

Britain’s ethnic communities also produce their own newspapers and magazines, which are increasing in numbers, are available nationally in the larger cities and are improving in quality. There is a wide range of publications for Jewish, Asian, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese and Arabic readers, published on a daily or (more commonly) periodic basis.

## Periodicals and magazines



and

There are 9,000 different periodicals and magazines in Britain, which are of a weekly, monthly or quarterly nature. They are aimed at different markets and levels of professions business or are dealing with sports, hobbies and interests.

Among serious weekly journals are The New Statesman and Society, the Economist, the Spectator and The New Scientist.

“The Times” publishes influential weekly magazines, such as the Educational Supplement, the Higher Education Supplement and the Literary Supplement.

### The Broadcasting Media

In spite of Englishmen’s love for newspapers and magazines they have to compete with radio, television and internet. The broadcasting media consist of radio and television. Three authorities oversee these services: the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Independent Television Commission (ITC) and satellite broadcasting BSkyB .

The BBC is based mainly in Broadcasting House in London, but has stations throughout the country, which provide regional networks for radio and television. It was created by Royal Charter and has a board of governors who are responsible for supervising its programmes. They are appointed by the Crown on the advice of government ministers and are financed by a grant from Parliament, which comes from the sale of television licensees. These are payable by anyone who owns a television set. The BBC also generates considerable income from selling its programmes abroad and from the sale of a program guide (Radio Times), books, magazines and videos.

The BBC’s external services, the World Service in English and 42 other languages abroad, were founded in 1932 and are funded by the Foreign Office. These have a reputation for objective news reporting and programmes. News reports, documentaries and current-affairs analyses, animal films are generally of a high standard.

The BBC also began commercially funded television programmes in 1991 by cable to Europe and by satellite links to Africa and Asia. BBC World news has now merged with the World Service.

The BBC is not a state organization, but it is not as independent on political pressures as many in Britain and overseas assume. Its charter has to be renewed by Parliament and by its terms government can, and does, intervene in the showing of programs. The BBC governors are in fact government appointees. Governments can also exert pressure upon the BBC when the license fee comes up for renewal by Parliament.

There are 5 national radio channels and 39 local stations serving many districts in England and regional and community services in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The national channels specialize in different tastes. Radio 1 caters for pop music; Radio 2 has light music, news, and comedy; Radio 3 provides classical and

modern serious music, talks, discussions and plays; Radio 4 concentrates on news reports, analysis, talks and plays; and Radio 5 Live (established in 1990) has sport and news programs.

The BBC was certainly affected by the invention of television and the Internet, which changed British entertainment and news habits. The BBC now has two television channels (BBC1 and BBC2). BBC1 is a mass-appeal channel with an audience share of 28 per cent. Its programmes consist of news, plays and drama series, comedy, quiz shows, variety performances, sport and documentaries. BBC2, with an audience share of 11 per cent, tends to show more serious items such as news analysis and discussion, documentaries, adaptations of novels into plays and series, operas, concerts and some sports. The Labour government approved the expansion of BBC television services by the creation of a BBC4 channel (culture and the arts) and two channels for children.

A large number of the programmes shown on television are made in Britain, although there are also many imported American series. A few programmes come from other English-speaking countries, such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Although British television has a high reputation abroad, lately the bias of some programs is changing. At the moment there is a lot of criticism about sex, violence and bad language on British television. A Broadcasting Standards Complaints Commission monitors programmes, examines complaints, establishes codes of conduct for the broadcasting organizations.

Reuters News Agency is an international news agency headquartered in London. It operates in more than 200 cities and offers quick and easy access to hot news in about 200 languages.

Answer the questions:

1. What does the term “media” include?
2. What is the reason why the British continue to buy and read newspapers in our internet age?
3. Which categories are the British newspapers divided into?
4. Do you know any names of the British newspapers or magazines (journals)?
5. What are the main British radio and television channels?
6. What is the BBC service? 7. What is Reuters?

## Culture of the UK

The culture of the United Kingdom is rich and varied. Although the country is small (130,423 square kilometers) there is a great difference between South, West and North. The most places of interest are situated in South and especially in London. There is a sentence “When a man is tired of London he is tired of life”. There are so many things to see in London! To describe all sights of the UK we

need too much time therefore I want to talk only about the most popular and interesting ones.

To begin with –The Tower of London, situated close to the river Thames. The Tower was built in the 11th century by William the Conqueror to enforce the power of the Norman king. Over the time the complex was expanded and fortified with 20 towers. The Tower of London went through different periods. It was used as home of several kings and later as a prison for political opponents. Important prisoners were often locked there sometimes with their servants. Among famous people who were imprisoned in the Tower there was Thomas More before his execution.

At the moment the Tower is a museum best known for its Crown Jewels and Royal Armories, including the personal Armory of King Henry VIII. The main entrance of the Tower is at the Beefeater Tower, where visitors can see so-called Beefeaters or Warders. Dressed in historic clothes, they not only guard the tower but also give tours of the fortress. One of the Warders is called the Raven master, responsible for the ravens that have been living there for centuries.

There are plenty more to see in London.

The Houses of Parliament, also known as the Palace of Westminster, is the seat of two British parliamentary houses with the famous clock tower known as Big Ben. The oldest hall of the Houses of Parliament is Westminster Hall, dating back to 1097.

Buckingham Palace is one of several palaces owned by the British Royal family. The Palace was bought by George III from the Duke of Buckingham from whom it takes the name. Buckingham Palace is one of the major tourist attractions in London. The colorful Changing of the Guards in front of the palace always attracts plenty of spectators.

St. Paul's Cathedral built by Christopher Wren from 1675 to 1711 is one of the largest cathedrals in Europe. Although it was not once destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt and expanded. The last damage was made during the Second World War when the German bomb spoilt the altar. Several famous people are buried in St. Paul's Cathedral including the Duke of Wellington, who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, Admiral Nelson, some other important people. Christopher Wren himself is also buried in his cathedral.

There are plenty of interesting museums in London. To begin with the

British Museum dedicated to human history and culture. Its permanent collection, numbering over 8 million works, is among the largest and most comprehensive in the world. The British Museum was established in 1753. Its expansion over the following time was a result of the British colonial expansion. There are departments of the multiple exhibits from all the countries of British former dominions and colonies. The departments of Africa and Asia and Oceania cover over 75000 antique objects from Egypt, Greece and Rome Empires, Iraq, India, Sudan, including the best collection of Egyptian mummies.

Drawing department presents works by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, Durer, Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt, Claude and Watteau.

Attached to the British Museum there is a Library where a lot of famous people got education ( Fredrick Engels, Vladimir Lenin, Charles Dickens).

Besides the British Museum there are some other art Galleries where one can see pieces of art. The most famous are the National Gallery and Tate Modern.

The National Gallery is located in Trafalgar Square in London. Founded in 1824, it houses a collection of over 2300 paintings dating back to the mid-13th century to the 20th century and until today.

Tate Modern holds the national collection of British art from 1900 to the present day and the works of international modern and contemporary art.

In London there is also National Portrait Gallery presenting the portraits and sculptures of royals starting with early Tudors, scientists, politicians and other celebrities, including the most famous portrait of William Shakespeare.

There are some other impressive art museums in different areas of the country. E.g., the National Museum of Scotland with collections of Scottish antiquities, culture and history. Science Museum is the home to the most magnificent collections of science, industry, technology and medicine (300000 objects. Among them the first computer by Babbage).

The special place among British Museums has the Museum by Madame Marie Tussaud. Marie Tussaud learned modeling techniques from a skilled wax sculptor Dr. Curtius for whom Maries' mother was a housekeeper. In 1794 Dr. Curtius died, and Marie inherited his business. Her talent became noticeable and she was invited to make the death masks of Marie Antoinette, Louis XVI, Jean Paul Marat after they had been executed during the French Revolution. Life was difficult in France at that time and in 1802 Marie Tussaud made a decision to go to England and run the exhibition. She spent 33 years travelling in Britain, exhibiting her growing

collection of figures. Her two sons helped her in making wax figures (among them figures of Lord Byron, King George IV, Shakespeare, and Emperor Napoleon). When she was able to find a building in London, her collection began to grow with the addition of what is called now the Chamber of Horrors, including famous murders and monsters. When she died in 1850 her portrait made 8 years before her death added her collection. At the moment Madame Marie Tussaud Museum is growing very fast, adding the most popular celebrities and remaining a world famous tourist attraction.

The world's largest museum of decorative arts and design is Victoria and Albert Museum housing a collection of 4.5 million objects.

The last museum which is absolutely necessary to mention is the one belonging to Greenwich Observatory displaying the astronomical and navigational tools and clocks including one of the most precise clocks belonging to Russian F. Fedchenko.

The Royal Observatory itself is best known as the location of the prime meridian. The observatory is located on a hill in Greenwich Park, overlooking the River Thames.

As for the parks: the Kensington Gardens, the Botanical Garden, Hyde Park.

### English Traditions

There are Robin Hood Dances, when people dressed in Robin Hood costumes dance for the whole day visiting many farms drinking and eating a lot of food.

What should one know on coming to England? First – a typical English breakfast different from the continental one, a lunch (from 12 o'clock to 1 o'clock), five-o'clock tea, dinner or supper (6-7 o'clock). There are some traditional dishes such as roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, and of course pies.

British people spent less time cooking now than they used to do in the past. Even traditional English breakfast is a bit of a myth today. Many people prefer to have a bowl of cornflakes or a cup of coffee for breakfast. A lot of people unite two meals: breakfast and lunch together (so-called "brunch"). When British people go out for a meal, they very often go to their local Indian or Chinese, Italian or Turkish restaurant or buy a "takeaway" food. Very many still go to the pubs. The word "pub" is short for "public house". Pubs are so popular in the UK that there are over 60,000 pubs there (53,000 in England and Wales, 5,200 in Scotland and 1,600 in Northern Ireland). Pubs are an important part of British life. People talk, eat, drink, meet their friends and relax there.

English Customs are reflected in popular British Holidays.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

In England less emphasis is placed on Christmas Eve than in other countries, much more is made on Christmas Day. Carol singing Christmas songs, midnight church services and going out to the pub are some of the activities that many families enjoy.

After the English Revolution in 1647 the English parliament passed a law that made Christmas illegal. All festivities were banned by the Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell, who considered feasting on what was supposed to be a holy day to be immoral. The ban was lifted only when Cromwell lost power in 1660.

During Queen Victoria's reign Christmas became a time for gift giving and a special season for children.

December 26 is Boxing Day – the day of giving gifts.

Easter is a festival that takes place on the first Sunday after the full moon.

Guy Fawkes Day - November the 5th. Guy Fawkes' Day is also known as 'Bonfire Night' or 'Fireworks Night'. In 1605 on the 5th of November Catholic Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators (60 in all) attempted to kill King James I and the Members of Parliament. This conspiracy arose as a reaction to the persecution of Catholics under the rule of King James, a Protestant. They hid 36 barrels of gunpowder in the cellars of the Houses of Parliament and were going to blow up the Houses of Parliament. But one of the plotters betrayed the conspiracy in a letter to his brother-in-law who told the government about the plotter's plans. Fawkes was caught with a box of matches in his pocket. Some conspirators fled but many were killed or arrested. Nine members, including Fawkes, were hung and quartered in January 1606.

Parliament made the 5th November a day of Public celebrated with fireworks and bonfires. Today children still make stuffed figures with masks of Guy Fawkes. They call these figures guys and display them in the streets.

November the 5th is also called the Ringing Day because it is appointed for the church bells to ring for the whole day.

One of the largest events in the UK is the Bridgewater Carnival. The procession is held each year on the Thursday nearest to November 5. It is an illuminated procession that takes about two hours to pass.



Bank Holidays - public holidays when banks, post offices, shops and some attractions are closed. Bank holidays always occur on Monday.

Midsummer Day - 24th June - ceremonies in honour of the Sun have been held from the earliest times. This day is preceded by Midsummer Night when supernatural beings are said to wander about.

Some holidays of different parts of the UK became the public holidays celebrated all over the world.

St. George Day – the Saint of England. According to the legend George was a knight who saved the princess from a dragon. For this her father, the King gave George his daughter to marry and a gold cross to wear. Since that time King Richard 1 (the Lionheart) adopted a cross as a uniform for his soldiers. We can see a red cross on the UK national

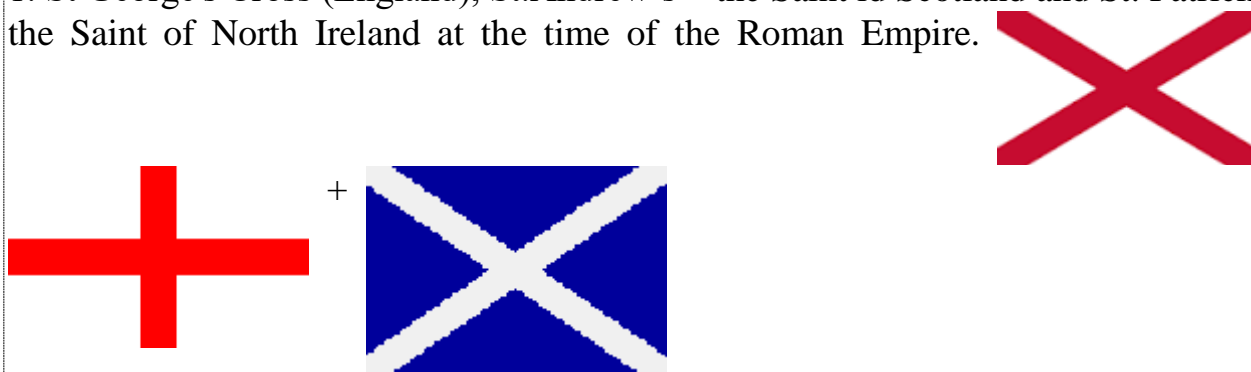


flag. The flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a combination of more flags.

There is also the theory that the name *Union Jack* came from King James, whose name is Jacobus in Latin.

The parts of the flag:

1. St George's Cross (England), St. Andrew's – the Saint of Scotland and St. Patrick the Saint of North Ireland at the time of the Roman Empire.



St. Patrick's Day - March 17<sup>th</sup>. is celebrated outside too (E.g. in Moscow).

St David's Day - March 1<sup>st</sup> St. David (520-588), or Dewi as he is called in Welsh, is the patron saint of Wales since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. He founded twelve monasteries across the country and now about 5 churches are dedicated to him. The flag of

Saint David (a gold cross on a black field) is a very important part of the celebrations in Wales.

The Highland games are events held throughout the year in Scotland as a way of celebrating Scottish and Celtic culture and heritage, especially that of the Scottish Highlands. Certain aspects of the games are so well known as to have become emblematic of Scotland, such as the bagpipes, the kilt, and the heavy events. Edinburgh Festival (began in 1947) in August and early September. The whole city turns into carnivals, international theaters, concerts and singing, and music.