Midwife at Britain's Rebirth?: The British Overseas Airways
Corporation and the Projection of British Power

Lewis Charles Smith

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

Department of History

University of Essex

March 2022

Abstract

Nationalised industries had to defend their use of public money, after all, the public owned them, but what did Britain's nationalised airline, the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) do to justify its activities? Given that most people could not afford the luxury of flight, between 1945 and 1965 BOAC became an instrument in marketing a resilient, powerful and moralistic nation. Amongst the uncertainties and dislocations caused in Britain's economic, political and social status as a result of the Second World War, aviation was seen as the pathway to economic, political and social prosperity. BOAC's brand was carefully crafted around the issues of the 'national interest' as it sought to orient and align a version of 'Britishness' that was believed to be necessary in the prevailing international political climate. It sought to portray a version of nationalist internationalism, projecting Britain as a powerful yet altruistic nation. In the words of an ex-BOAC Chairman, it was a 'Midwife' that was 'similar to the altruistic, though often rewarding, aid given by a mother to her young or a mother country to its colonies'. BOAC championed Britain's Cold War mixed economy message, believing that it offered an economy that represented fair capitalism. This was primarily a representation targeted domestically at travellers in Britain, helping primarily British citizens to conceptualise not just the world, but Britain's place within it. This thesis uses business records, newspapers and other media to explore the political economy of BOAC's post-war operations between 1945 and 1965, arguing that it helped to market Britain's (somewhat sensationalised) competitive position. Whilst this objective ultimately failed, BOAC, and the subsequent British Airways (BA) continued to see itself as a guardian of stability in the values associated with the British nation, particularly through times of crises.

Contents

Acknowledgements

I complete this thesis as a completely different person to who I am today, in some respects worse – more reticent, more self-doubting and insecure, and each of these have been developed under some of the poorest work habits imaginable. As a result of this PhD, I have become more defined by my identity as a researcher, not as a person, and every waking moment has been one of a 'live to work' mentality. In some respects, I emerge better – a better researcher and planner, a better communicator and teacher, a better strategist. In all respects I emerge changed. This thesis has been a part of my life since the summer of 2016, time I don't wholly regret, and despite the overwhelming negatives of the industry I hope the beauty of the academic world will continue to shine on in my future endeavours. Deep breath, press on.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Name
ATLB	Air Transport Licensing Board
BAHC	British Airways Heritage Centre
BCPA	British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines
BEA	British European Airways
BOAC	British Overseas Airways Corporation
BWIA	British West Indian Airways
CDC	Colonial Development Corporation (in 1964 this became the Commonwealth Development Corporation)
COI	Central Office of Information
EAAC	East African Airways Corporation
EATTA	East African Tourist Travel Association
EEC	European Economic Community
FCCBE	Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
IAL	International Aeradio Limited
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
KLM	Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij (Royal Aviation Company, Inc.)
MEA	Middle East Airlines
MOI	Ministry of Information
Pan Am	Pan American World Airways
QANTAS	Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services
SAA	South African Airways
Sabena	Societé anonyme belge d'Exploitation de la Navigation aérienne (Belgian Limited Company for the Exploitation of Aerial Navigation)
TEAC	Tasman Empire Airways Limited
TWA	Trans World Airlines
UAR	United Arab Republic

Table of Figures

1   Introduction

In an increasingly uncertain world in which Britain occupied an unsettled position of power, Britain's nationalised airline, the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) became an instrument in projecting a powerful, scientific, rational and charitable nation. As a respected international airline, it represented a fashionable and popular brand in British culture that championed 'Britishness' as a service construct, manufacturer and moral cause. Politicians paraded its potential to uphold the bonds of the receding Empire and Commonwealth, in full knowledge that it could symbolise new ideas about Britain leading a single, unified Commonwealth bloc capable of situating between the forces of Capitalism and Communism, however fanciful the realities of this vision were. It symbolised an enduring and evolving connectivity between Britain at the centre of the world and its peripheral states.

For the confident projection BOAC captured in its brand of 'Britishness', it also sought to communicate power; the imagery and rhetoric of a single unified Commonwealth did not mean widening the definition of 'Britain', and despite a language of internationalism the boundaries of the nation were drawn more boldly than they had been before. Implicit within BOAC advertising was the view that 'Britishness' was 'whiteness' and 'whiteness' was leadership. Its moral brand of Britishness gave Britain a mandate to intervene, develop and influence states that were once part of the Empire – helped along by a sense of nostalgic imperialism. BOAC's imagery helped craft Britain a role to navigate the complexities of its shifting nation-ness through the radical dislocations of the post-war period, resisting any notion that implied a declinism of power, race, economy or technology.

For Keith Granville, head of BOAC Associated Companies in 1963 and future Chairman of BOAC in 1971, BOAC was 'the "midwife" at the birth of so many other airlines' in which he described that 'similar to the altruistic, though often rewarding, aid given by a mother to her

young or a mother country to its colonies – in which BOAC have specialised.'[1] This metaphor encapsulates the substance of the argument of this thesis, that as a nationalised industry, born before the Second World War, BOAC saw itself as the industry that 'looked after' the interests of Britain and nations overseas. It saw its role with pride, authority, and economy. This thesis is first and foremost an analysis of nationalised industry communications, and how nationalised industries communicated a wider social value. This thesis seeks to offer a new interpretation of BOAC's history in post-war Britain; business histories of BOAC are broad and well examined, but its *function* as an organisation within the political economy of Britain's gradual self-redefinition in the early post-war period has been ignored, even underplayed. This thesis explores BOAC between 1945 – in its first services as a national carrier outside of wartime – to 1965 – a turning point for the airline's internal affairs accompanied by a refocus on commercialisation – to examine how it presented itself, both internally through corporate publications, and externally through advertising, as part of the evolution of British national identity in the post-war years.

This thesis argues that BOAC responded to political cues and tuned its image to the priorities of the post-war Labour Government and to project an image of Britain as a powerful and altruistic nation. It created a corporate character that charted Britain's future as an international developer, helping other states to achieve and then reap the economic benefits of an improved global transport network and exhibiting a 'nationalist internationalism'. BOAC's communication infrastructures held the weight and influence of a propaganda operation which aimed to recapture notions of a British social, economic, industrial and cultural decline, arguing that it developed and marketed a rigid conception of British identity against changing notions of Britishness. It reinforced the value in 'traditional' British institutions like Empire and Crown

---

[1] Keith Granville, "Help for Other Airlines," *The Times*, 1963/06/06/ 1963. xi.

that had witnessed damaging reputational blows through the war and post-war period, and helped British citizens understand their nation's location in the international order.

In utilising the internal and external communications as source material to drive its argument, this thesis also aims to demonstrate the value in using business records to inform broader historical debate. Business archival records are often overlooked by historians as they are seen to offer little more than business-serving teleological narrowness. However, when appropriately contextualised, they can provide an analytical frame that affords a new perspective on established historical interpretations.[2] They also offer a perspective that can inform critical discussions about BOAC's modern equivalent, British Airways (BA), and help explore how BOAC's history can inform and challenge established historical perspectives in post-war British history.

1.1 Politics and Economy in Post-War Britain

In order to understand why this positioning was necessary, it is important to consider Britain's economic and political context in the post-war period. The Second World War had brought about a 'fragile post-war confidence' which served as a 'reaffirmation of confidence in Britain's self-image of a 'great power'.[3] Post-war political attitudes had derived from an assumption that a wartime victory would reinforce the value of British institutions, values, technologies and peoples, suggesting that it was these 'British' values that had brought about a victory in the war. This sense of confidence and belief in the value of core British institutions was often echoed through industry as the experiences of the Second World War had 'encouraged a somewhat complacent and very insular belief in the value of British institutions and recent

---

[2] Alix R Green, "'Secret Lists and Sanctions': The Blacklisting of the John Lewis Partnership and the Politics of Pay in 1970s Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 2 (2019). 213.

[3] Robert Self, *British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945: Challenges and Dilemmas in a Changing World* (Macmillan International Higher Education, 2010). 29.

traditions, especially when these were compared with those of other European nations'.[4] Post-war foreign policy was dominated by the same attitudes, and thus served as the 'quest to sustain the image and the reality of great powerdom through leadership, influence, and "punching above our weight",' which represented the 'mentalité of British planners, the military, and the politicians'.[5] Hence, wartime confidence characterised policymaking, manufacturing and popular culture, and represented the backbone of the attitudes in post-war Britain and suggested that by virtue of its qualities, return to a position of global reverence.

This confidence was also located in broader shifts in attitudes to the roles and responsibilities of the *state* to the nation. The Second World War had also revealed a need for a greater focus on welfare – both domestically and internationally – as a result of the great sacrifices made by the participants in the war effort. As Eley argues, the Second World War was 'a "good war", not just because of its anti-fascist character[…] but because the egalitarianism and social solidarities needed for victory also made an irrefutable case for equitable social policies in the world to come'.[6] The newly elected Government, led by Clement Attlee, had set its sights on an agenda which echoed 'the importance of continuing with the interventionist measures that had served the nation so well in wartime',[7] as part of a 'clear sense of social purpose and delivered the welfare reforms,'[8] captured most prominently in the Beveridge Report in 1942 which had shaped Labour's legislative agenda.

---

[4] Keith Middlemas, *Power Competition and the State, Volume 1: Britain in Search of Balance, 1940-61* (London: Macmillan, 1986). 114.
[5] Anne Deighton, "Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1955," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge University Press, 2010). 113-4.
[6] Geoff Eley, "Corporatism and the Social Democratic Moment: The Postwar Settlement, 1945-1973," in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. Dan Stone (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2012). 41-2.
[7] Robert M. Page, "Attlee Versus Blair: Labour Governments and Progressive Social Policy in Historical Perspective," in *Social Policy Review 16: Analysis and Debate in Social Policy*, ed. Nick Ellison, Linda Bauld, and Martin Powell (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2004). P.145.
[8] Paul Addison, "Clement Attlee, 1945–1951," in *From New Jerusalem to New Labour: British Prime Ministers from Attlee to Blair*, ed. Vernon Bogdanor (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010). 10.

However, this confidence was undoubtably fragile and was underpinned by enormous political, economic and social challenges which threatened to undermine Britain's pathway to recovery. Above all, the emergence of a new period of diplomatic tensions, the Cold War, had put British politicians into a diplomatic conflict in which they faced 'altered and sometimes very unfamiliar political circumstances'.[9] As time went by, 'it had become increasingly clear that Britain lacked the immense financial resources needed to maintain its global imperial position, confront the Soviet Union in the Cold War, reconstruct the domestic economy, carry out its New Jerusalem social agenda – and lead the economic reconstruction of western Europe' and that above all, 'Britain did not lack interest or ideas. It lacked money'.[10] Therefore, in the post-war world, 'concessions had to be made, but British leaders wanted to decide how and when to make them. They sought to maximize British power, even while accommodating the fact that the economic and military means at their disposal were shrinking'.[11]

Given the enormity of these challenges and the difficulties Britain faced in overcoming them, the post-war period was dominated by a discourse of 'decline' followed by a 'traumatic process of self-examination, self-doubt, and declining morale, a perception of external weakness and internal decay'.[12] Scholars generally cite indicators of national output as centres of this process such as 'rate of GDP growth', 'industrial production', 'labour productivity', and 'trade'; Britain was observed to have been behind other European nations.[13] This generally meant contrasting Britain against a specific period of economic stability for Europe and America known as the 'golden age' which referred to 'an episode of rapid catch-up growth during which western

---

[9] Michael J Turner, *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position?* (Lexington Books, 2009). 6.
[10] David Russell, "'The Jolly Old Empire': Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51," in *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to Join the European Communities*, ed. Alex May (Chippenham: Palgrave, 2001). 14.
[11] Turner, *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position? British Power and International Relations*, 2.
[12] Kenneth O Morgan, *Britain since 1945: The People's Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). 197.
[13] Maurice W Kirby, *The Decline of British Economic Power since 1870* (Routledge, 2013). 106.

European economies rapidly reduced the large productivity gap which the United States had established by 1950',[14] as 'British productivity was taken over by' France, Germany, and the United States' where 'and an increasing gap developed during the 1970's, especially in manufacturing'.[15] This 'Golden Age' of American and European economic growth was seen to capture a sense of 'relative' decline against European growth, and dominated the substance of the doubts about the British economy in the mid to late 1950s.

The arguments were hard to pinpoint, but overall the argument that 'Britain had lost its sense of 'purpose','[16] and were gaining increasing political weight. It has been indicated that 'at least among the actively political and articulate nation, decline has been most often identified with the loss, not so much of income or wealth, as of relative power and international standing as a leading industrial nation.'[17] The search for 'decline' was political, often placed in a context which was designed to 'imply fault: that this loss of supremacy reflected some larger weakness in the British people, and that if weakness were corrected, decline would be reversed', and that it could be blamed on someone or something,[18] noting that 'the notion of an inexorable or pathologically driven decline' was often 'exaggerated and misleading, and that overarching explanatory models for British failure have been seriously undermined by detailed scholarly research.'[19] Nonetheless, the attempts by Governments to 'locate' a cause of decline have persisted.

---

[14] Nicholas Crafts, "British Relative Economic Decline Revisited: The Role of Competition," *Explorations in Economic History* 49, no. 1 (2012). 22.

[15] Charles Bean and Nicholas Crafts, "British Economic Growth since 1945: Relative Economic Decline... And Renaissance?," in *Economic Growth in Europe since 1945*, ed. Charles Bean and Nicholas Crafts (1996). 133.

[16] Jim Tomlinson, "The Decline of the Empire and the Economic 'Decline'of Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 14, no. 3 (2003). 203.

[17] Barry Supple, "Fear of Failing: Economic History and the Decline of Britain," *The Economic History Review* 47, no. 3 (1994). 5.

[18] George L Bernstein, *The Myth of Decline: The Rise of Britain since 1945* (Random House, 2011). 22.

[19] Richard English and Michael Kenny, "British Decline or the Politics of Declinism?," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 1, no. 2 (1999). 261.

The notion of decline was, however a 'historical product', that dates from the late 1950s and early 1960s,[20] which emerged from a 'general angst caused by the Suez debacle and the decline of Empire, political positioning by the opposition Labour Party and mounting evidence of the dynamism of the Western European economies, combined to create a "What's Wrong with Britain" furore'.[21] The political advocates of a 'decline thesis' often located it in the realm of industry, and more specifically *nationalised* industry, which included many facets of post-war civil aviation. This was often raised as a Labour Party criticism of Conservative Party consumerist policies of the late 1950s, which as 'the idea of living standards as a major concern, which underlies the new declinism, can only be understood politically' served to mark 'a change in ideas about the extent and nature of government responsibility for economic performance'.[22] BOAC was at the centre of these debates, emerging as a public transport infrastructure, but with the economic exuberances and a renewed standard of living for private travellers, BOAC sat uncomfortably close to the 'decline' excuses peddled by both political parties.

Declinists have also looked to the aviation industry specifically to explain the 'decline' thesis. Leading declinist Corelli Barnett described that the Churchill War Ministry 'simply took it for granted that to be a world leader in civil aviation rightfully belonged to Britain's status as a first-class power,'[23] implying that Governments placed a naive faith on the aviation industry as a solution to the issues in the post-war economy. Whilst Barnett 'should not be taken seriously as a historian of these matters',[24] as its account of aircraft production and the focus on a 'new

---

[20] Jim Tomlinson, "Inventing'decline': The Falling Behind of the British Economy in the Postwar Years," *Economic History Review* 49, no. 4 (1996). 731.
[21] "Thrice Denied:'Declinism'as a Recurrent Theme in British History in the Long Twentieth Century," *Twentieth Century British History* 20, no. 2 (2009). 235.
[22] "Inventing'decline': The Falling Behind of the British Economy in the Postwar Years." 733.
[23] Correlli Barnett, *The Lost Victory: British Dreams, British Realities 1945-1950* (London: Macmillan, 1995). 230.
[24] David Edgerton, "The Prophet Militant and Industrial: The Peculiarities of Correlli Barnett," *Twentieth Century British History* 2, no. 3 (1991). 361.

Jerusalem' agenda over the emergence of a modern economy has been termed as 'misleading'.[25] Nonetheless, BOAC has often been centred as one of the largest economic drains on an already strained economy. Therefore, a key point of investigation is to understand how BOAC attempted to explain and justify its expense, particularly to a travelling public that would rarely fly. As this thesis will argue, the substance of BOAC's justification was that it served as a 'guardian of Britishness', explaining its costly operations as in the interests of the 'nation' at large.

1.2 The 'Nation' in Post-War Britain

BOAC's justification in *national* terms requires a more nuanced understanding of the 'nation' in the context of post-war Britain. In *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation*, Edgerton described how the British nation was 'created' in this period more so than it had been at any other point in history:

> The British nation had emerged out of the British Empire, and out of a cosmopolitan economy, *after* the Second World War. Leaving behind empire entailed the rejection of imperial citizenship and imperialism and the development of a peculiar kind of nationalism. Leaving behind economic liberalism meant creating not just an economic border but increasingly a culture of national self-supply. None of this was the product of a choice by the British elites, who favoured free trading and/or imperialist projects, but they were thwarted by many brute realities.[26]

Hence, the emergence of the British nation happened as a result of the dislocations of the post-war period. Britain's struggle to conceptualise its national identity after the Second World War was a result of the ruptures in its established notions of economy and citizenship. Therefore, understanding the ways in which these were communicated and conceptualised can therefore offer a glimpse at how the British nation was formed in this period.

---

[25] Ibid.

[26] *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth-Century History* (London: Allen Lane, 2018). xxix.

BOAC formed an important symbol in this context as it has been agreed that there is an unassailable connection between the 'airline' and the 'nation'. In the leading analysis of the development of nations, *Imagined Communities*, nations are inventions of people made up of 'cultural artefacts of a particular kind',[27] which are *limited* insofar that they have finite borders and boundaries, they are *sovereign* insofar that they have overturned pre-existing political systems and processes, and they are *communities* such that they share a common identity across vast physical distances. Anderson's theories have been applied to different examples of national airlines; in the case of Malaysia and Singapore that 'especially after the attainment of independence,' Singapore and Malaysia's national airlines were an 'important emblem which, like the flag and national anthem, plays a crucial role in the creating what Anderson refers to as an "imagined political community".'[28] Similarly, in an African context, 'one of the first things a newly independent nation wants to do is to demonstrate its independence by having its own airline and to show its national colours on the independent countries' aerodromes',[29] and specific examples like Uganda Airlines have been identified as a 'fictional device' used as a means of 'critiquing the unravelling post-colonial state of Uganda.'[30] Hence, in the context of newly formed nations, national airlines formed important tools in the construction, and formalisation of, *new* national identities.

This raises important questions about the function of the airlines for established nations. Especially in the context of the creation of British nation in the post-war period. If newly formed national airlines have historically served to symbolise a newly born nation's expansion into the post-war global economy, what role did a national airline play for nations already integrated into the global economy? The answer to this may be found in the evolution of

---

[27] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso Books, 2006). 4.
[28] Kannan Raguraman, "Airlines as Instruments for Nation Building and National Identity: Case Study of Malaysia and Singapore," *Journal of Transport Geography* 5, no. 4 (1997). 240.
[29] Duncan Cumming, "Aviation in Africa," *African Affairs* 61, no. 242 (1962). 35.
[30] Eria Solomon Nsubuga, "Uganda Airlines" (University of Southampton). 11.

Britain's airlines and the transition from inter-war to post-war operations, highlighted by the implications of their change in name. BOAC's precursor, Imperial Airways, was less a 'national airline' and, as its namesake suggested, an infrastructure of imperial communication. The change to 'British Overseas' in 1939 reflected a political economy interested in the expansion of its own sense of nationalism, but political engagement internationally. BOAC's formation under the 1939 British Overseas Airways Act 'drew boundaries' and 'blurred the lines of demarcation between a foreign territory and an imperial domain',[31] and 'in the undercurrents of the debates that surrounded the dissolution of Imperial Airways and the formation of BOAC was the trace of an earlier vision: Britain as an Empire without colonies'.[32] Britain's struggle to reconceptualise its post-war nationhood, particularly in relation to the wider world, its allies and its Colonial and Commonwealth partners, was reflected in this name change. It is in this context, of which this thesis will refer to as, 'nationalist internationalism' in which BOAC operated; born out of the pre-war need for national service and expanded in the welfare state to support Britain's international interests, negotiating the tensions between Britain's domestic economic policy, Cold War diplomacy, and the changing nature of the Imperial system.

1.3   Britishness and Empire

The success this form of nationalist internationalism relied on the maintenance and expansion of the pre-existing international networks derived from the British Empire. In seeking the leadership of a new world order, the British Empire was a key assumption in Britain's long-term success strategy. The Empire represented an institution in which the British character was at its most conceited – it displayed Britain as an able, influential, expansionistic yet liberating and nurturing power. Perhaps more importantly, the Empire was considered key in the revival of Britain's status after the Second World War, where a 'belief in "empire" shaded into a belief

---

[31] Chandra D Bhimull, *Empire in the Air: Airline Travel and the African Diaspora* (NYU Press, 2017). 125-6.
[32] Ibid. 125-6.

in "great powerdom",' a belief that 'proved stubbornly persistent in the post-war period.'[33] To policymakers, finding ways to uphold Britain's imperial relationships would therefore be most of the way to restore Britain's status as a 'great' power.

This foreign policy was, in reality, met with calls for independence and nationalist uprisings across the world. Between 1945 and 1965, twenty-five of Britain's colonies declared independence from Britain, motivated primarily by the 'the increased intensity of indigenous nationalist pressures for real autonomy and the seemingly autonomous shifts that were taking place in the pattern of Britain's overseas trade.'[34] Decolonisation did not, however, represent the end of imperial activities; the period of the end of Empire 'was part of a wider consensus that incorporated agreements over national identity' where 'both major political parties agreed on the need to bring the Empire to an orderly,' a belief that was met with 'parts of the Empire were being discarded' and 'others, like Africa, were being *increasingly* exploited.'[35] The post-war period's signalling of the end of Empire, it did not mark the end of imperialism. Rather, the post-war period marked a reformulation of what 'empire' meant and how it could be more effectively utilised.

This is particularly important given the context of the circumstances of the Cold War, in which Britain's empire had been seen as increasingly out of date. Little has been done to connect the circumstances of the Cold War with the advantages afforded by Britain's imperial connections as often, the 'questions of empire are generally treated as being derivative rather than primary and are hitched to the juggernaut of Cold War studies only where they appear to be particularly

---

[33] Andrew Thompson, "Social Life and Cultural Representation: Empire in the Public Imagination," in *Britain's Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). 254.

[34] David Sanders, *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy since 1945* (London: Macmillan, 1990). 100.

[35] Paul Ward, *Britishness since 1870* (Routledge, 2004). 32.

relevant to that theme.'[36] BOAC's unique historical position represented an important interface between issues in the Cold War and the broader function of Britain's Empire in the post-war era. By understanding BOAC's unique position, it becomes possible to identify how empire informed Britain's Cold War rhetoric, seemingly evidencing a form of 'racial liberalism' which could be used 'as part of the Cold War arsenal to represent the West as the upholder of human rights and freedom'.[37] Hence, this thesis identifies ways in which 'empire' helped to inform and evidence arguments about Britain's sense of paternalistic duty to its colonies and ex-colonies, and in particular identifying how BOAC presented the *value* of imperial connections.

The loss of empire had important cultural implications; alongside the process of decolonisation, there was an observable connection 'between the loss of Empire abroad and the demise of Britishness at home',[38] which coincided with a rise in satirical television shows that would take aim at British institutions such as 'privilege, patriotism, the parliament, the military and the Empire'.[39] The public conceptualisation of Empire in the post-war world was therefore interlinked with how public institutions understood and interacted with it. This has marked a recent trend in identifying how businesses and public institutions displayed and described imperialism to British viewers domestically which represents a literature that is attempting to understand how Empire in the post-war period was conceptualised outside of political institutions. Improvements in mobility, including by means like BOAC and civil aviation, played an important role in these perceptions of empire, and through advances like flight and technologies that increased mobility in the Twentieth Century 'shaped how less mobile

---

[36] AG Hopkins, "Globalisation and Decolonisation," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 5 (2017). 736.

[37] Anandi Ramamurthy and Kalpana Wilson, "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers: Racism, Appropriation and Resistance in Advertising," in *Colonial Advertising and Commodity Racism*, ed. Wulf D. Hund and Michael Pickering (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2013). 74.

[38] Stuart Ward, "The End of Empire and the Fate of Britishness," in *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, ed. Helen Brocklehurst and Robert Phillips (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). 243.

[39] ""No Nation Could Be Broker": The Satire Boom and the Demise of Britain's World Role'," in *British Culture and the End of Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001). 94.

members of the British public imagined both their place in the decolonising world and their responsibilities towards it'.[40] Understanding how different representations 'tapped into overlapping and, at times, contradictory discourses of decline, nostalgia, amnesia, optimism and paternalism' and therefore 'by asking how Britain engaged with its imperial past, these histories have begun to chart the complex interactions between nostalgia and amnesia taking place in cultural as well as political life'.[41]

Another significant way in which the empire was communicated and consumed was via legal and cultural responses to citizenship and immigration. Part of the nostalgia for empire was reinforced through responses to immigration in Britain, partly, but not wholly, a side effect of the changing relationship between Britain and its colonies. Immigration legislation defined and redefined citizenship for millions of Commonwealth individuals, notably as part of the 1948 British Nationality Act which conferred citizenship, and thus rights to work, to people throughout the Commonwealth. The Act 'provided a comprehensive classification of the notion of British citizenship, which considered every eventuality regarding the circumstances of prospective British citizens' and 'ultimately established the parameters for future government interventions on the nationality and citizenship question'.[42] This was framed as part of a Labour Party belief in a Britain consolidating the Empire and legally expanding citizenship as part of a vision of British overseas citizens, and represented an attempt to draw wider boundaries of cooperation while still protecting the assumed tenets of Britishness.

As notions of British and imperial citizenship evolved, so too did public perceptions of imperial migration. This migration 'was one for which few demonstrated enthusiasm' and in which 'the

---

[40] Anna Bocking-Welch, *British Civic Society at the End of Empire: Decolonisation, Globalisation, and International Responsibility* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019). 53.

[41] "Ghost Hunting: Amateur Film and Travel at the End of Empire," in *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century, Volume 2*, ed. Xavier Guégan and Martin Farr (Springer, 2013). 215.

[42] Christina Julios, *Contemporary British Identity: English Language, Migrants and Public Discourse* (Ashgate, 2008). 86.

earliest measurement of the public mood demonstrated hostility to new Commonwealth immigration, and both Labour and Conservative governments gave serious consideration to the possibility of restricting it.'[43] Consequently, Conservative governments progressed with a policy of 'covert administrative controls on immigration: pressurising colonial governments to limit the issue of passports; tightening proof of identity requirements; even issuing propaganda about the harsh conditions in Britain.'[44] Conservative governments were 'determined to prevent Britain from becoming a multiracial society, but also concerned to avoid charges of racism – which could have had damaging domestic and international ramifications'.[45] The Act therefore presented an image of widening citizenship and a widening of the boundaries of the British state, but without risking the 'core' values of Britishness.

As a result, in the later 1950s race became an increasingly important symbol as 'one axis of cultural power shifted decisively to the right in this period, and in that the syntax of Englishness itself was profoundly re-racialised'.[46] These policies reinforced a notion that Britain was 'white', and the process of migration was 'presented as coinciding with the dilution of once homogenous and continuous national stock by alien strains', such that 'alien cultures' had 'come to embody a threat which, in turn, invites the conclusion that national decline and weakness have been precipitated by the arrival of blacks.'[47] Such perceptions were inherently tied to the loss of Britain's imperial status as migrants were 'bearers not only of the colonial past, but also of the decolonising present,' arguing that British immigration policy became more hostile to immigration to avoid accepting this reality.[48] The challenge of immigration was not

---

[43] Randall Hansen, "The Politics of Citizenship in 1940s Britain: The British Nationality Act," *Twentieth Century British History* 10, no. 1 (1999). 68.
[44] Ibid. 68.
[45] James Hampshire, *Citizenship and Belonging: Immigration and the Politics of Demographic Governance in Postwar Britain* (Springer, 2005). 11.
[46] Bill Schwarz, "'The Only White Man in There': The Re-Racialisation of England, 1956-1968," *Race & Class* 38, no. 1 (1996). 74.
[47] Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (Hutchinson, 1987). 46.
[48] Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (London: University of California Press, 2012). 24.

solely caused by decolonisation, rather immigration issues were brought about by a process of political definition and redefinition of the relationship between Britain and its colonies.

This perception was captured in the later 1962 and 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act which demonstrated 'the fragility of the ideal of a Commonwealth community of equal races and nations' and revealed how 'a narrow understanding of Britishness was applied to first administrative and then legislative responses to New Commonwealth citizens.'[49] Despite the overarching political aim to create a Commonwealth of 'Civis Britannicus Sum', in reality, 'rights to national belonging were demonstrably undercut by racial classifications',[50] and was widely accepted to have been a means to assert a typical idea of British values. This was particularly important given how BOAC acted as a vessel of migration and brought a large proportion of Commonwealth migrants to Britain. These turbulent immigration measures and overarching challenges to the racial and imperial status quo 'reactivated the cosy myth of the war as a powerful frame for feelings of national pride'.[51] As a result of the search for stability 'amidst the social and political dislocations of this period, certainty was sought-although rarely found-through retreats into, and a revitalization of, wartime myths of national unity.[52] It is therefore essential to see these messages in line with the racist appeals they made, and how narratives of national unity were often exploitative of race as a way of defining citizenship.

The study of BOAC mattered in this respect because of its emphasis on its efforts to represent the nation. It could conceptualise a wider Britain without the substance associated with migration and free movement, and still promote an image of one unified bloc without challenging or altering conceptions of race in the homeland. As a result, these 'flag carrier'

---

[49] Saima Nasar, "Commonwealth Communities: Immigration and Racial Thinking in Twentieth-Century Britain," in *Commonwealth History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Saul Dubow and Richard Drayton (Springer, 2020). 121.
[50] Ibid. 121.
[51] Chris Waters, ""Dark Strangers" in Our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947–1963," *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997). 214.
[52] Ibid. 214.

airlines help to identify and understand broader questions of citizenship. Of course, citizenship signifies 'different things for different people in post-war Britain and is still a term which signifies different things for different historians',[53] and to successfully assess citizenship it is important to 'historicise' the term, acknowledging that it is a 'concept with historically and culturally specific meanings'.[54] Looking at BOAC – as an organisation that put a great effort into representing the nation and its citizens – defined travellers, citizens and drew boundaries around them. As airlines were important centres of nationalism and nationhood, it is important to identify and analyse how these nationalist messages were communicated. Issues of citizenship are not inherent within a national airline, rather they are constructed, communicated and consumed through publicity and advertising. In understanding how this imagery reflected notions of post-war international citizenship, race and Empire, it is important to understand the significance of consumption, communication and citizenship through advertising.

1.4 Advertising

Consumption has been posited as 'not just as outcomes of movements in prices and incomes, but as embedded in the whole range of economic activity' and hence 'it attends to relationships between the exchange, purchase and use of goods and the social relations, cultural forms and political institutions is shaping those activities, and therefore to the interaction of material, political and cultural aspects of past human experience'.[55] Therefore, an attempt to understand the ways in which the nation was 'consumed', both through buying and selling, and through imagery and representation, is paramount. To understand the ways in which British power was 'projected' - both internally to citizens and externally to other nations - requires an

---

[53] Matthew Grant, "Historicizing Citizenship in Post-War Britain," *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 4 (2016). P.1204.

[54] Ibid. 1204.

[55] Joanna De Groot, Catherine Hall, and Sonya O Rose, "Metropolitan Desires and Colonial Connections: Reflections on Consumption and Empire," in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (2006). 168.

understanding of the means by which power, information and political ideology were communicated through marketing. Above all, advertising is politically and culturally significant, and emphasises 'the importance of exploring advertising's relationship with political economy in order to understand the way in which discourses surrounding race operate within the context of contemporary imperialism and neo-liberal globalisation'.[56] Hence by exploring the 'political economy' of advertising and consumption, it becomes possible to make judgments about the consumption of more broad social trends.

General studies of advertising, while plentiful in the context of the United States, are sparser in a British context. Relatively little has been written on post-war advertising. Broad accounts of post-war advertising recognise the significance of the period for altering the landscape of the advertising sector, marking 1951 as the 'watershed year for both Britain, and for British advertising' in which the Festival of Britain 'advertised to the world that Britain had said goodbye to austerity and shabbiness, and was well on the way to recovery and prosperity',[57] bringing with it the professionalisation of market research and the 'commercialisation of Broadcasting'.[58] Histories of advertising tend to focus on the advertising *industry* rather than advertisements themselves, and therefore by looking at the context, content and connotations of advertisements it becomes possible to draw out the broader appeals to nationalism contained within advertisements, as well as understanding the reasons for those messages in particular contexts.

One notable gap in these already limited histories of advertising is any assessment of advertising that originates from nationalised industries. Most advertising histories consider advertising as an arm of commercially oriented, profit-seeking organisations – but particularly

---

[56] Ramamurthy and Wilson, "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers: Racism, Appropriation and Resistance in Advertising." Come and Join the Freedom Lovers. 70.
[57] Winston Fletcher, *Powers of Persuasion: The inside Story of British Advertising: 1951-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). 7.
[58] Ibid. 8-9.

in the post-war period, nationalised industries had become increasingly aware of the power of advertising. Writing in 1981, just before Thatcher's government moved to privatise British industries, Capon offered 15 propositions, concluding perhaps unremarkably that 'state owned enterprises react in addition to various noneconomic pressures and set objectives according',[59] suggesting that by virtue of being 'nationalised', political factors played a more significant part in the management of these kinds of organisation. Modern companies that have since been denationalised also suggest that past nationalised industries faced extra-market forces in their marketing departments. Assessing three case studies of recently denationalised industries including National Remote Sensing Centre, Royal Ordinance plc and The Stationery Office, it was concluded that in these organisations 'there was no marketing culture. Profits were not seen as requirements of these industries. Marketing was linked to profits and perceived as negative',[60] suggesting that there was an inability to see marketing as an exercise in generating sales.

However, this has been undermined by historical research which has suggested that nationalised organisations did have a marketing culture, albeit one which faced political pressures. This has been identified within the advertisements of nationalised industries themselves as one example highlights British Rail advertising was used to make political appeals to Thatcher's Conservative principles of free enterprise for its own institutional survival,[61] revealing that nationalised industries used advertising to actively protect their operations from political challenges. This is clearly a different set of less commercially aware,

---

[59] Noel Capon, "Marketing Strategy Differences between State and Privately Owned Corporations: An Exploratory Analysis," *Journal of Marketing* 45, no. 2 (1981). 17.
[60] Geoff Lancaster and Gerry Brierley, "A Comparative Study of the Emergence of Marketing Culture within Three Formerly Nationalised Companies," *International Journal of Public Sector Management* (2001). 369.
[61] Lewis Charles Smith, "Marketing Modernity: Business and Family in British Rail's "Age of the Train" Campaign, 1979–84," *The Journal of Transport History* 40, no. 3 (2019). 364.

but politically aware, attitudes towards marketing, and there is little attempt to analyse or understand the significance of why this is the case in the wider literature.

Modern marketing scholarship focused on the United States has suggested it may be the case that some industries have failed to market as a result of a managerial failure to appreciate an organisation's economic context. One explanation describes the presence of 'Marketing Myopia' originally theorised in the *Harvard Business Review* in 1960,[62] which described how companies become too focused on marketing products and services and not focusing enough on consumer habits. It argued that companies wrongly assume their industrial security and fail to evolve marketing in line with competitors, and wrongly assume who their competitors are. Using the example of the railway in the United States where 'the railroads did not stop growing because the need for passenger and freight transportation declined. That grew[…] they let others take customers away from them because they assumed themselves to be in the railroad business rather than in the transportation business[…] they were product-oriented instead of customer-oriented'.[63] Therefore, understanding the 'product' that nationalised industries were looking to market and how these 'products' were oriented against competitors (or rather, were *not* oriented against certain competitors) can reveal how managers saw their nationalised industry and how they wanted the public to see their industries.

There is a value in understanding advertising messages in relation to the broader notion of 'good' they seek to achieve. To an extent, this has been completed before; studies of the political economy of advertising have focused on how narratives of nationality helped to politically inform and positively influence their audiences in Britain and across the world. For example, national projection magazines like *Anglia* were a common feature of post-war marketing which, 'offered a deliberately selective, rosy vision of modern Britain' and 'far from

---

[62] Theodore Levitt, "Marketing Myopia," in *Marketing: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management*, ed. Michael John Baker (London: Routledge, 2001). 58.
[63] Ibid. 59.

being crude and manipulative propaganda' it 'exemplified a more subtle mode of influencing Soviet opinion'.[64] Similarly, the wartime 'careless talk' campaign 'incited a public counternarrative of British identity' that 'centred on the rejection of any kind of authoritarian vision, encouraged a debate that questioned the relationships between the state and the individual, and reemphasized freedom and privacy as key constituents of Britishness.'[65] These examples suggest that 'politically informed' advertising was common, and therefore applying these narratives to nationalised industry and marketing would be fruitful in exploring their representation of the nation. This is particularly valuable when considering the connection between advertising messages and a wider notion of the 'public good', helping to conceptualise what the 'good' represented for a nation at a particular time.

This assessment calls into question the function of the advertisements themselves. Advertising that served a 'public good' as described in American marketing literature, that is, at its core a 'means to a generally esteemed and mutually beneficial end' noting examples such as 'a drug-free America, social justice and public health' amongst other things, should be considered propaganda.[66] This implies that, for any advertisements that present an issue that can be considered part of a broader 'public good' can be considered a form of propaganda and can be compared to other formulations of post-war British propaganda. BOAC's rhetoric served to emphasise its own value as a 'public good', or in BOAC's terms, the 'national interest', that continually emphasised how supporting its endeavours was a mark of support for Britain's broader economic progress.

---

[64] Sarah Davies, "The Soft Power of Anglia: British Cold War Cultural Diplomacy in the Ussr," *Contemporary British History* 27, no. 3 (2013). 317.

[65] Jo Fox, "Careless Talk: Tensions within British Domestic Propaganda During the Second World War," *Journal of British studies.* 51, no. 4 (2012). 938.

[66] Paul Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods* (University of Toronto Press, 2000). 5.

This thesis seeks to draw out the tensions faced by BOAC as part of the wider formulation of its role as a nationalised industry in the post-war period. Advertising had to communicate both commercially attractive, yet politically sensitive messages. BOAC therefore offer an interesting case by which to understand the political economy of advertising – its focus on the nation, coupled with its complex funding arrangements lend it to be a case in point to understand how nationalised industries attempted to orient themselves in line with elements considered to be in the broader interests of the nation through broad notions of public good and national progress.

1.5   Histories of the Corporation

Of course, this analysis has much to contribute to histories of BOAC itself. Histories of BOAC are nothing new, and many have been written with detailed analyses of BOAC's business operations, usually within a brief and broad historical context. Formal histories like Higham's *Speedbird: A History of BOAC*,[67] and Simons' more recent *The British Overseas Airways Corporation: A History*,[68] offer examinations of the Corporation, its accounts, and some of its political barriers. Turner's *BOAC and the Golden Age of Flying*, which evolved from a Facebook group, captured public memories of the airline and in so doing attempts to reveal a more cultural examination of the Corporation and openly admits to be 'more of a celebration than a history', and much like its counterparts tends to present a progressive and positive story of progress and powerful individuals.[69] These works tend to isolate the historical context to BOAC and focus in great detail on specific facts, figures and individuals in the wider story of the airline. This often results in a failure to appreciate the wider social, economic and political context in which BOAC operated, and in particular tend to avoid engaging with the prevailing historical debates within these contexts. These histories, whilst useful, are broadly teleological

---

[67] Robin Higham, *Speedbird: The Complete History of Boac* (London and New York: IB Tauris, 2013).
[68] Graham Simons, *The British Overseas Airways Corporation: A History* (Yorkshire and Philadelphia: Pen & Sword Ltd., 2019).
[69] Malcolm Turner, *Boac and the Golden Age of Flying: Britain's Iconic Global Airline* (London: Burnt Ash Publishing, 2019).

in their construction and present a narrative of the Corporation in which it became increasingly conscious of its responsibilities and the economic system around it, often isolating it within a teleological national history. The central focus of this literature is, not unreasonably, BOAC as a business, which is read often in isolation from broader social, political and cultural changes.

Along similar lines, BOAC is often side-lined by niche histories of individual aircraft. Simons,[70] and Carlton,[71] have both written detailed histories of the world's first jet airliner, the De Havilland Comet, an aircraft that was definitive in the early optimism of BOAC's operations in the post-war era and features somewhat of an inflection point in this thesis, and further works by Cole have written about BOAC's operation of the Vickers VC-10 with an attention to the political circumstances that surrounded its funding and operations.[72] Less 'popular' aircraft, like the Bristol Britannia, have also been written about with tacit references to BOAC's operation of them, often hidden amongst technical performance statistics.[73] Each of these texts reflect histories that are described as 'hardware histories' that present histories of objects 'divorced from the context of their time',[74] and offer little academic or contextual historical analysis. This is, however, not to discredit these texts - whilst the focus on 'hardware' offers minimal analysis of the significance of the hardware itself, it does implicitly reveal a contemporary significance of the *representations* of the aircraft. They reveal a context in which aircraft represented an important symbol of industrial and technological modernity through nostalgic accounts of aviation manufacturing and operation. In identifying the image of these aircraft within the context of their production is a key objective of this thesis – as aircraft were

---

[70] Graham Simons, *Comet! The World's First Jet Airliner* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2013).

[71] James Carlton, *De Havilland Comet: The Plane That Changed the World* (London: Burnt Ash Publishing, 2020).

[72] Lance Cole, *Vc10: Icon of the Skies: Boac, Boeing and a Jet Age Battle* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2017).

[73] Frank McKim, *The Whispering Giant: The Story of the Bristol Britannia: The History of the Western World's First Turboprop Long-Range Airliner (Aircraft of Distinction S.)* (Ponteland: Scoval Publishing Ltd, 2007).

[74] Daniel R Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981). 4.

an important symbol of progress and economic modernity for both politicians and the public in post-war Britain and cannot simply be dismissed as 'hardware' but rather need to be contextualised in the broader political economy of the BOAC project.

More specific studies of BOAC tend to offer critical assessments of smaller sections of BOAC history. For example, competition with shipping companies meant that the airlines, including BOAC, borrowed language and imagery from the shipping industry to advertise transatlantic services and, as a result of an inherent preference over journey time and the introduction of 'tourist fares' in the early 1950s,[75] to eventually dominate transatlantic travel in the 1960s. Wider debates on the Corporation remain similarly narrow in scope, often attempting to reflect on the legacies of BOAC itself rather than part of a wider frame of post-war British history. Watson, an ex-British Airways pilot, described BOAC's history, though this history is broad and somewhat scattered historical account that presents BOAC in an inherently positive light, as one in which 'the benefit of passing time and our enhanced understanding of the legacy of BOAC have allowed us to view this period of history more kindly than contemporaries and many of us admire its varied achievements that laid the groundwork for future civilian air travel'.[76] Stanley-Price on the other hand takes a more pessimistic approach to BOAC's history and highlight that despite narratives of progress that there were many poor decisions that had regional consequences, arguing that 'the decision by BOAC in 1947 to discontinue services via the Trucial States was disastrous for those who lived there or who needed to visit for business purposes,' showing that 'BOAC's withdrawal was a factor in delaying the Emirates' future socioeconomic development that would be made possible by oil production.'[77] Hence, despite

---

[75] Graham P Gladden, "Post Second World War Trans-Atlantic Travel for Business and Pleasure: Cunard and Its Airline Competitors," *The Journal of Transport History* 41, no. 2 (2020). 175.

[76] Captain Dacre Watson, "British Overseas Airways Corporation 1940-1950 and Its Legacy," *Journal of Aeronautical History*, no. 03 (2013). 137.

[77] Nicholas Stanley-Price, "Flying to the Emirates: The End of British Overseas Airways Corporation's Service to Dubai and Sharjah in 1947," *The Journal of Transport History* 39, no. 3 (2018). 350.

an overarching persistence of teleological history, there is an evident value in using BOAC as a pathway into broader social, economic and political analyses.

This is particularly significant when considering that scholars have generally been more methodologically adventurous with histories of military aviation. One text highlighted a connection between aviation and the propagation of fascism, noting that 'for Italians, fascism was synonymous with flying' quoting the words of the Italian journalist Guido Mattioli who described that "Every aviator" "is born fascist",[78] which revealed a powerful argument about how aviation can be used as the substance of politicised and ideological messages. In identifying the value of combining sources of aviation and other cultural source material, this thesis seeks to identify the *cultural* implications of BOAC to highlight broader political, social and economic comments on the context of post-war Britain, much in the same way that military aviation has, disambiguating the role between the symbolism of military and civilian technologies.

The imagery of progress and modernity is one that has been regularly embraced within BOAC and British Airways' own corporate histories of design. As a result of the popularity of both brands there are a number of works that focus specifically on visual and stylistic material. A series of texts target BOAC's posters – arguing that Britain experienced a 'second period of quality design promotion in the period from the late 1940s to the early 1960s' in which BOAC 'expanded further from poster and print publicity to an all-encompassing strategy covering every aspect of industrial design and corporate identity.'[79] These materials have been subjected to more rigorous semiotic analysis and historical context, determining that the 'way cultural messages are constructed and the way the poster is able to promote both a specific, product-

---

[78] Robert Wohl, *The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950* (Yale University Press, 2005). 51.

[79] Scott Anthony and Oliver Green, *British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight* (Farnham: Lund Humphries, 2012). 11.

centred message and aesthetic pleasure through a multiplicity of connotations'.[80] Ovenden and Roberts, on the other hand, focus on aviation maps and argued that 'as technology became more reliable, and as airline empires expanded, so the maps staked claims on territory, promising regular flights to all manner of exotic destinations' where maps 'became associated with exciting imagery, and as technology, business fortunes, design techniques, and fashions changed, so did the appearance of airline maps'.[81] These books tend to focus on the visual appeal of the material, similarly neglecting the broader historical significance and whilst valuable collections of primary material, often do not contextualise sufficiently within the historical literature. As before however, they reveal the significance of design that implicitly suggests a broad association with the nation that can help shed light on issues of political economy in this thesis.

The focus on stylistic elements reveals that BOAC's design captured a nostalgic sense of post-war modernity: BOAC's style and image are often considered apart from its functions as an organisation and has often been ignored or treated as peripheral to the wider history. However, these design elements uncover 'an anxiety about the shape and nature of the post-war world revealed itself in the management and design policy' of the Corporation and the 'nature of BOAC policies[…] was an indicator of the perceived importance of state enterprise and corporate ideology, both in terms of an expanding mass travel market, and international competition'.[82] The core of its commercial design was that it was 'essentially selling a British identity',[83] and one which 'positions itself as an arbiter of modern taste, informing on British fashion, the strength of British industry, new and future modes of transport and the role that air

---

[80] David Scott, *Design in Airline Travel Posters 1920-1970: A Semiology and Sociocultural History* (Anthem Press, 2021). 2.

[81] Mark Ovenden and Maxwell Roberts, *Airline Maps: A Century of Art and Design* (London: Particular Books, 2019). 5.

[82] Frank Jackson, "The New Air Age: Boac and Design Policy 1945-60," *Journal of Design History* 4, no. 3 (1991). 167.

[83] Paddy O'Shea, "From Interior to Brand: The British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1939-1974. A Case Study of Post-Second World War British Commercial Design" (Kingston University, 2015). 14.

transport would play in a global business world.'[84] Imagery and design therefore played an essential role in BOAC's communications strategy, and this thesis seeks to bring these disparate sources together into one broad commentary on how it constructed imagery of the nation through elements of its design, and how these visual materials and advertisements echoed a wider sentiment about British citizenship, internationalism and empire.

What these accounts reveal implicitly is the value BOAC held within a *national* discourse as achieved by its operations, aircraft and design – BOAC was a function both *of* and *for* the interests of the nation. One of the most important elements of the Corporation was the way in which it constructed and represented – or at least, its construction of its interpretation of – the nation itself. Despite BOAC's status as a 'flag carrier' for Britain, little attention has been paid to its historical role in constructing the nation or to the value of its political economy throughout larger global shifts. There are some important exceptions to this – Lyth has written on the history of British Airways (BA) and in particular charting BOAC's role within the nation through corporate policy decisions, aircraft procurement, network structure, performance and strategy. He argued that BOAC held an 'illustrious history, but one with its share of disasters and disappointments',[85] focussing primarily on the results of the interactions between high politics and business decisions and little on its standing within a national discourse. Similarly, it has been argued that that 'politicians remained acutely sensitive to anything that diminished the "Britishness" of BEA (British European Airways) and BOAC', referencing an incident in which BEA removed Union Flags from its timetable in the 1950s which was found to disgruntle politicians,[86] thus implicitly recognising the importance of the nationalised airline's construction and representation of the 'nation'.

---

[84] Ibid. 100.
[85] Peter Lyth, "Chosen Instruments: The Evolution of British Airways," in *Flying the Flag* (Springer, 1998). 50.
[86] Martin Staniland, *Government Birds: Air Transport and the State in Western Europe* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003). 133.

This is also part of a broader agenda of transport histories. Turner has argued in reference to the historiography of transport history that 'before the recent mobilities shift did not have one theoretical or conceptual consideration, perspective or position' and that the field's 'principal features was that it was a community that transcended the borders of *historical* study, encompassing scholars of society, labour, leisure, politics, gender travel, business and economics, amongst other things'.[87] Histories of transportation need 'to see the ways in which transport is informed by the goals, values and interests of social groups and individuals' which would allow historians to 'see transport throughout history as a practice heavily informed by, and informing, power.'[88] It is through this lens with which this thesis examines BOAC, showing that it provided significantly more than a means of transportation, but provided a means of creating and ensuring unequal distributions of power. Rather, BOAC and its documentation represent a lens with which to conceptualise broader issues of the British nation in the post-war period. This thesis does not seek to solely contribute to histories of BOAC, but it does intend to reveal how broader narratives of nationalist internationalism, empire and power penetrated beyond government will to influence broader industry in Britain. It focusses on the broader social, political and economic forces and where the Corporation sought to position itself relative to them. Judging the political economy of the Corporation entails examining where BOAC sought to position its image and *why* it thought this positioning was necessary.

1.6   Methodology

In order to gather a sense of the ways in which BOAC projected itself, this thesis targets many different repositories and archival records. The British Airways Heritage Centre (BAHC) is particularly important in this regard as it offers both internal and external and communications

---

[87] David Turner, ""Making the Connections" - Introduction," in *Transport and Its Place in History: Making the Connections*, ed. David Turner, Routledge Studies in Modern History (London: Routledge, 2020). 5.

[88] Colin Divall and George Revill, "Cultures of Transport: Representation, Practice and Technology," *The journal of transport history* 26, no. 1 (2005). 101.

materials. The BAHC functions as a lively part of the BA ecosystem which carefully integrates the business' past with its present and future operations. Particularly as Coller, Mills and Mills have stated, within the BAHC that 'there was always a corporate presence' in the archive,[89] one which is also apparent within the books and materials produced by the BAHC. For example, Paul Jarvis, an ex-archivist at the centre, produced a series of 'histories' of BA which focused on different material contained within the collection. These works included *British Airways: An Illustrated History*,[90] *Better by Design: Shaping the British Airways Brand*,[91] and *Mapping the Airways*,[92] all of which present a strong positivist and teleological corporate perspective on the airline's history. These books are all endorsed by BA and present a very positive image of the company's history. Each focused on a different type of primary material contained within the collection, highlighting primarily visual materials with limited context.

These texts highlight, above all, the presence of the 'silences' in the archive. Corporate archives, as do archives more generally, present 'silences' as a result of accession polices, 'weeding' methods that encourage the use of archival space, document selection and other processes, resulting in gaps in the historical record. Gathering a sense of how the archive 'speaks' is central in understanding the historical narratives pushed upon visitors.[93] The BAHC is no different in this approach, and there were a series of noticeable silences and gaps in its presentation – silences particularly relating to the themes important to this thesis including citizenship and empire. These are not hidden per se, but they are not addressed directly by the BAHC and require deep readings of the material.

---

[89] Kristene E Coller, Jean Helms Mills, and Albert J Mills, "The British Airways Heritage Collection: An Ethnographic 'History'," *Business History* 58, no. 4 (2016). 560.

[90] Paul Jarvis, *British Airways: An Illustrated History* (Gloucestershire: Amberly Publishing, 2014).

[91] *Better by Design: Shaping the British Airways Brand* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015).

[92] *Mapping the Airways* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2016).

[93] Stephanie Decker, "The Silence of the Archives: Business History, Post-Colonialism and Archival Ethnography," *Management & Organizational History* 8, no. 2 (2013). 166-7.

This is, again, not to suggest that these histories are not deliberately hidden, but rather, as this thesis will attempt, to help organisations closed to the nation confront uncomfortable pasts. This kind of historical analysis in business archives, whilst still uncommon, has been effectively used to explore histories of the 'dark side of corporate history' where corporate history 'often reveals their unsavoury involvement in war, racism, slavery, and repression, or a disregard for human health and welfare' but that a 'genuinely independent critical review can be seen as an appropriate integrationist response to revelations of a dark history',[94] and can therefore help corporate records come to terms with uncomfortable pasts, and help to construct meaningful policy for the organisation and its future operations.

This thesis will go some way to highlight some of these 'silences' and, in particular, how the BAHC 'speaks' to its history. In utilising the collection, this thesis attempts to raise the profile of business records by offering a nuanced perspective on wider social, political and cultural historical issues, where there lies 'potential for integrating business archives more systematically into historical research' as the material contained within such archives 'gives us purchase on a full range of social, cultural, and moral, as well as political and economic, questions.'[95] In using material contained by corporate record holders, this thesis looks to draw out these hidden histories and their impact on wider social, economic and political themes running through post-war Britain.

In attempting to establish an impression of the internal values of BOAC staff and management, one of the most significant sources for this thesis consists of editions of the *BOAC Review*,[96] published between 1946 and 1967. The *BOAC Review* was published monthly and aimed at all

---

[94] Charles Booth et al., "Accounting for the Dark Side of Corporate History: Organizational Culture Perspectives and the Bertelsmann Case," *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 18, no. 6 (2007). 640.

[95] Alix R. Green, "'Secret Lists and Sanctions': The Blacklisting of the John Lewis Partnership and the Politics of Pay in 1970s Britain.," *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 2 (2019). 212.

[96] Whilst the name of the publication has not remained consistent, being named *SPEEDBIRD* and *BOAC Newsletter* in the late 1940s to *BOAC Review and Newsletter*, the name *BOAC Review* has been the most consistent of the names and is used as a blanket term in this paper for all of the airline's newsletters.

staff including pilots, cabin crew, administrative and management. Articles in the publication were broad but generally offered insights into the developments of the airline, staff experiences and perspectives from stations around the world. It also offered an opportunity for higher level management to proffer inspirational directives, Corporation updates and new policies. These materials had an important purpose in the corporate machine, which was to 're-establish bonds that had been broken by the growth in organisations, to create a feeling amongst staff of belonging, commonly referred to as *esprit de corps* and to provide information'.[97] This form of communication was valuable as 'an informed workforce is more likely to be motivated to work productively, and that this reinforces the company's licence to operate in its community,'[98] allowing for the interpretation that the efforts made by BOAC to inform its staff not only served to motivate them, but to align staff to the organisation and to make them more sympathetic to the corporate cause. The *BOAC Review* offers an insight into the airline's corporate direction, their representation of their own goals and successes, and how failures were constructed in a more sympathetic light, one which 'helped to position the Corporation and Britain at the forefront of modernity even though the immediate post-war reality was markedly different.'[99] These internal communications are valuable sources that help to establish an impression of corporate attitudes, providing an awareness of self-positioning and reveal how the Corporation wanted others to view them.

Over the course of the 1945-1965 period this thesis addresses, the underlying functions of management communication changed over three specific eras; in the 1940s staff publications were primarily designed to inform employees of the organisation and 'its plans operations and policies' often consisting of 'reports on company growth and expansion, the outlook for the

---

[97] Michael Heller and Michael Rowlinson, "The British House Magazine 1945 to 2015: The Creation of Family, Organisation and Markets," *Business History* 62, no. 6 (2020). 1010.

[98] Alison Theaker, "Internal Communications," in *The Public Relations Handbook*, ed. Alison Theaker (London and New York: Routledge, 2002). 131.

[99] O'Shea, "From Interior to Brand: The British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1939-1974. A Case Study of Post-Second World War British Commercial Design." *From Interior to Brand*. 101.

business and the industry, company financial reports,' amongst other benefits for the staff.[100]

In the 1950s this evolved into internal communications that offered interpretations and tried to persuade staff by explaining 'the significance of the facts in terms of their employee or reader interest, and[…] urging employees or readers, on the basis of the facts as they have been interpreted, to take specific action or to accept management's honest ideas and opinions,' a significant change in practice.[101] This interpretation has been updated to argue that the 1950s played a more significant role in the informing of employees, and the 1960s were focused on 'persuading' them to be more on board with corporate philosophies.[102] This evolution of the functions of management communication can help inform the interpretation of BOAC's directions, philosophies, and managerial view of its role within society more generally, and how it attempted to convince staff to interpret its role and influence their actions and attitudes in line with this broader philosophy.

Internal communications are also coupled with various external communications, including advertisements and newspapers. Advertising was 'spread across four media in the mid-1950s: national newspapers, mass circulation magazines, regional newspapers and outdoor advertising',[103] and over the course of the period, BOAC advertising crossed many of these different media. Advertising represents an important focus as they 'do not simply reflect the ideological perspectives of an era, but form part of the process through which these ideologies are produced',[104] and 'not only highlight general cultural perspectives but often reveal political positions that reflect particular company interests. Advertising provides a context which is

---

[100] CJ Dover, "The Three Eras of Management Communication," *Journal of Communication* 9, no. 4 (1959). 169.

[101] Ibid. 170.

[102] Theaker, "Internal Communications." "Internal Communications." 133.

[103] Sean Nixon, *Hard Sell: Advertising, Affluence and Transatlantic Relations, C. 1951-69* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). 20-1.

[104] Anandi Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders: Images of Africa and Asia in British Advertising* (Manchester University Press, 2003). 1.

economic and political as well as cultural.'[105] As such, advertisements are used to examine how meaning was created and how BOAC showcased its wider role in society.

Furthermore, advertising presents a similarly valuable social and cultural insight. Advertising scholars have presented a variety of methodological approaches with which to examine advertisements. Williamson indicated in her book *Decoding Advertisements*, a text known to be a long-established authority on the subject of analysing advertisements, that they 'take into account not only the inherent qualities and attributes of the products they are trying to sell, but also the way in which they can make those properties *mean something to us*',[106] such that advertising focused on generating an emotional, cultural response in crafting the image of a particular product or service. This ambiguity is advantageous for advertisers as imagery is held to less strict standards, and the 'ability to imply something in pictures while avoiding the consequences of saying it in words has been considered an advantage of visual advertising since the earliest days of its development as a mass medium'.[107] This also represents a contribution to the 'pictorial turn' in scholarship which originated in 1992, and argued that words and images are far from separate elements of 'cultural politics and literacy',[108] and suggested that scholars need to 'trace their linkages to issues of power, value, and human interest'.[109] Hence, this thesis therefore attempts to identify not just explicit messages in advertising but the implicit calls to action that would have encouraged readers to act.

Given the significance of this cultural approach, it is important to bring in sources that reveal a broader culture of post-war Britain. Perspectives on the image of BOAC in a broader social and political sense are located in newspapers, which offer journalistic and overtly politicised

---

[105] Ibid. 2.
[106] Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements*, vol. 4 (Marion Boyars London, 1978). 12. Italics as in text.
[107] Paul Messaris, *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising* (Sage, 1997). XIX.
[108] WJ Thomas Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (University of Chicago Press, 1995). 4.
[109] Ibid. 5.

representations of the circumstances surrounding BOAC decisions. Practically, this is achieved by use of the bank of source material from the digital archives of numerous newspaper proprietors including but not limited to *The Daily Mail*, *The Times*, and *The Economist*, accessed via Gale Primary Sources, Palgrave Historical Newspapers and the British Newspaper Archive. These perspectives are valuable as 'history is concerned[…] not only with what actually happened in any given time or place, but also with what people thought was happening, as revealed to them through the means of mass communication, which may have conditioned their subsequent actions'.[110] By examining these 'popular' representations, it is possible to assess the effectiveness and penetration of the philosophies and moralities BOAC had developed internally, assessing which attitudes were used and which ones succeeded.

The ways in which the press and politicians used BOAC to make political arguments helps to understand different political ideologies and the conflicting tensions behind the function of nationalised industries in general. These publications are useful for the extrapolation of the 'social and cultural values of a certain place and time',[111] allowing historians to build a picture of the attitudes and practices within Britain's experience of its wider political and challenges. Whilst the ready availability of newspaper resources have been digitised, the sources themselves 'do not offer information about the production of newspapers or about their reception by actual readers. We cannot properly assess the significance of newspaper content without moving beyond the texts themselves and considering the political, social and cultural contexts that the newspapers were operating in'.[112] In full view of the methodological

---

[110] Jerry W. Knudson, "Late to the Feast: Newspapers as Historical Sources," American Historical Association, https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october-1993/late-to-the-feast. Accessed 2nd March 2022.

[111] Sanjica Faletar Tanacković, Maja Krtalić, and Darko Lacović, "Newspapers as a Research Source: Information Needs and Information Seeking of Humanities Scholars" (paper presented at the Digital Transformation and the Changing Role of News Media in the 21st Century, IFLA Newspapers Section Pre-Conference, 2014). 2.

[112] Adrian Bingham, "The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians," *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 2 (2010). 230.

limitations by newspaper archives, they help to reveal a unique political and cultural perspective of BOAC that when used alongside advertisements help to reveal a sense of the wider social, cultural and political contexts in post-war Britain. The essence of this thesis is an attempt to understand *nationalised industry communications*, identifying and understanding the key messages this industry wanted to communicate about its roles and responsibilities in post-war Britain.

1.7   Chapter Outline

This thesis argues that, amongst the traditional functions of a nationalised industry, BOAC constructed a message that suggested BOAC was the 'guardian of Britishness'. This is completed through six chapters: **Chapter one** outlines how BOAC came to be, placing BOAC within its political, social and economic context as well as within the wider context of British civil aviation. Originally nationalised by the Conservative Government in 1939, its attitudes emerged out of the desolation of the Second World War when the new 1945 Labour Government gave it new life within the social welfare agenda. As part of a broad schema of nationalised industries, it was absorbed into a sense of ideological optimism as elites saw aviation as the pathway into the new world order, particularly as a pathway towards greater cooperation with the rest of the world. Whilst BOAC's outlook remained relatively consistent across the period, as the economic realities hit and governments changed, it became seen as increasingly outdated as successive Conservative governments brought with them an increasing reluctance to fund BOAC to continue its loss-making but goodwill-achieving operations, despite an overt recognition of its value. It also held a particular affinity for the beliefs and values of the 'national interest', and often functioned in line with a ministerial department – with responsibilities towards the nation and its interests and an attention to the priorities of ensuring its survival rather than business – which saw it performing traditionally political roles.

This led to a series of associations which suggested that BOAC served as a quasi-ministry of government.

Subsequently, **chapter two** identifies the core political economy of the elements of BOAC's image in the early period after the Second World War through. It demonstrates that, in this period, that BOAC and the aviation industry attempted to reflect a sense of British exceptionalism captured by unwavering optimism. It examines the ways in which BOAC maximised this image through visual vocabulary of the national interest and serving to unify one image of Britain as a 'world leading' country in manufacturing, economics and politics. This served not only as good marketing, especially for a state-run organisation, but helped to further emphasise the affinity between BOAC and the broader interests of the state. A key indicator of Britain's success was the De Havilland Comet, which seemed to evidence the political claims and belief that Britain's industrial future would endure. It symbolised the success of 'Britishness' as an attitude to industry and economy.

However, the Comet crashes in the mid-1950s were, as **Chapter three** argues, a point of inflection, where confidence declined and doubt was raised not just about industrial security, but about the security in the 'British' attitude. It revealed that 'Britishness' was inherently fragile. Britain's confidence in technology and manufacturing through sales channels across the Commonwealth and Empire was seen as the pathway to success against the United States was dramatically undermined by aircraft crashes. Following on from 1955, it examines how aircraft manufacturing in particular had called British manufacturing into doubt and fundamentally undermined the image of the early 1950s, challenged in particular by revealing that it was increasingly necessary to rely on the United States for aviation purposes and a European network for economic purposes.

Later chapters deal with BOAC in an international context, arguing that the imagery located in policy and advertising materials helped to conceptualise a broader role for Britain, particularly but not limited to, the Commonwealth as an *evolution* of the pre-Second World War order. This network, as **Chapter four** argues, held important economic and political advantages, supposedly offering a structure in which Britain could stress the 'goodwill' advantages gained by being a part of the network. In a structure reminiscent of the Empire Marketing Board and many previous international networks like the East India Company, BOAC emphasised Britain's political and economic 'centrality' throughout the world. This is further developed in **Chapter five**, which builds on the themes of 'goodwill' established by the Corporation and places this within the context of post-war development policies. Early advertising emphasised the positive impact of these policies, some directly and some indirectly brought about by British policy makers, and the opportunities they provided for local populations. As political interest in development at this level, more interest was paid to BOAC's arrangements with associates and subsidiaries, often consumed by imperial tensions, were often used as channels where local nationalism could be exercised. Imagery and policy continually pushed 'goodwill' and 'altruism' in an effort to promote Britain's positive global impact.

Whilst the idea that Britain was an 'altruistic' global force was central in the imagery of the Corporation, much like the policies of development themselves, this 'altruism' and 'goodwill' were underpinned by notions of racial power. The symbolisms that had persisted in the days of Empire continued to underpin the representations of non-white people, often used in comparison to notions of British technological ingenuity and industrial prowess, to emphasise 'primitivism' and hence emphasise a need for the aforementioned themes of development and altruism. **Chapter six** examines this in the context of post-war policy highlighting that these images helped to reaffirm the strength of the association between 'Britishness' and 'whiteness', suggesting that Britishness held with it a series of characteristics which helped promote the

interests of the nation. It is impossible to chart exactly how these images and messages impacted and influenced people in Britain. However, examining the package of representations alongside government policies helps to highlight a 'caricature' of Britain and how it came to define its own nation in the post-war period.

2 An 'Instrument of National Policy'?

2.1 Introduction

BOAC was created out of the needs of wartime Britain, and after the Second World War it was embraced as part of the programme of nationalisations in the public interest. These events had an extraordinary influence on BOAC's operations for the next twenty years. This chapter contextualises BOAC in the economic and political circumstances of the post-war world, from its formation in 1939 to its rebrand in 1965. It argues that its formulation before Second World War in 1939, and in particular its formation under the rhetoric of Attlee's Labour Government, set it on a trajectory to operate in the 'national interest'. BOAC's focus on this term was static over the next twenty years, but the political definition of the 'national interest' was not, and over the course of the period the 'national interest' changed dramatically. This chapter establishes where BOAC sat in the political context, understanding the prevalent rhetoric of nationalised industries and their broader role in society. Above all, BOAC's role was not disambiguated from politics, in fact, the circumstances which surrounded many of BOAC's operations suggested that it was performing intrinsically political roles – whether that be negotiating treaties for traffic rights, or going on tours, or making speeches. BOAC's to a Ministerial department meant it served as a valuable intermediary between both domestic policy and international relations.

2.2 Formation and Wartime Service

On the 24th of November 1939, just over three months after the declaration of war, the British Overseas Airways Corporation was formed under the British Overseas Airways Act. The Act merged two private airlines, Imperial Airways and British Airways Limited, which had operated aviation services across Britain and the Empire since 1924 and 1935 respectively moving passengers and cargo, most notably mail, across the world. Whilst these were largely

'private' air transport operators, they had been subsidised by the British Government to operate unprofitable services to the furthest reaches of the British Empire in the name of 'Imperial Communications'.[1]

The decision to nationalise these airlines had 'caused no controversy' in its passage through parliament,[2] and was seen as a necessary move to fulfil the need to expand services under the broader objectives of the Second World War. BOAC's central responsibility was to maintain the flow of international communications throughout the Empire, and required a huge increase in Government subsidies, and were operated 'without thought of profit' and 'for the good of the national war effort',[3] as part of a wider notion of public service and duty over private profit. This meant ensuring that when a person of importance needed to travel, BOAC would operate air services for them and perhaps more importantly, kept mail flowing to and from Britain's colonies. BOAC was responsible for keeping the lines of communication maintained.

As an allied victory looked an increasingly likely outcome of the Second World War, the wartime coalition began thinking of ways it could implement civil aviation for a world outside war. It was assumed by both the Labour and Conservative Parties that BOAC would remain under government control for the foreseeable future, however the *extent* the state would control or dictate the Corporations' remained generally undecided – an issue arguably left undecided until the mid-1980s. The Churchill War Ministry's plans were eventually formalised under the 'Swinton Plan', written by the Conservative Earl of Swinton, which prioritised three issues; divided BOAC into three 'chosen instruments' for differing geographic regions, ensured that there was provision for British aircraft manufacturers to fly British made planes and ensured

---

[1] Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume, *Imperial Airways, from Early Days to Boac* (Catrine, Ayrshire: Stenlake Publishing, 2010). 10.

[2] E Eldon Barry, *Nationalisation in British Politics: The Historical Background* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965). 362.

[3] Air World Books, *Airlines at War: British Civil Aviation 1939–1944* (Barnsely: Air World, 2018). 6.

that unprofitable routes would continue to be served.[4] Much of this was based on the consensus under the Churchill War Ministry, and the original, Conservative led, Swinton Plan gave BOAC *some* state funding to cover its losses but it expected that it would be part of a broader market of independent British airlines flying alongside, with the understanding that competition would eventually drive down costs.

However, the 1945 general election shook the political landscape and returned a Labour Government, one with very particular ideas about the role of the state, industry and ownership and industrial responsibility. This was particularly significant for the organisation of BOAC and the implementation of the Swinton plan, as 'rather than implementing the Swinton Plan' the Labour Government 'introduced their own legislation', and alongside the two newly formed British European Airways (BEA) and British South American Airways (BSAA), BOAC was to have 'exclusive rights to operate scheduled air services' and 'the remaining private firms were relegated to operating rescue and training flights and certain narrowly defined charter services.'[5] This led directly to the Civil Aviation Act of 1946 which officially implemented Labour's version of the Swinton Plan under which BOAC, BEA and BSAA were given exclusive rights to their allocated routes across the world,[6] deliberately restricting private airlines from competing with the services of Britain's nationalised airlines. Between 1945 and 1974, BOAC represented the largest of Britain's three nationalised airlines – BOAC, BEA and BSAA. Each of Britain's state-owned airlines was prescribed to operate within certain domains; BOAC operated within the largest domain including North America, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Australia; BEA served routes to Europe; and BSAA served routes to South America

---

[4] Peter Lyth, "The Changing Role of Government in British Civil Air Transport, 1919-1949," in *The Political Economy of Nationalisation in Britain, 1920-1950*, ed. Robert Millward and John Singleton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). 79.

[5] Philip Murphy, *Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography* (London and New York: IB Tauris, 1999). 75-6.

[6] Peter J Lyth and Marc LJ Dierikx, "From Privilege to Popularity the Growth of Leisure Air Travel since 1945," *The Journal of Transport History* 15, no. 2 (1994). 98.

and were absorbed by BOAC in 1949 under the Air Corporations Act.[7] Backed by the government, Britain's nationalised airlines became the *sole* operators of commercial aviation in Britain, almost directly echoing the service construct it had developed throughout the Second World War.

BOAC's enduring description was that it was Britain's 'chosen instrument', which reflected a tension that would echo throughout the organisation's history. A 'chosen instrument' policy referred to the Government's 'selection of one or two particular corporations to run the main services, coupled with the licensing of a number of independent companies to run subsidiary services',[8] effectively blurring the line between Government and corporation, and bringing whole industries under a state control. This policy was in line with the Labour Party's core post-war values which formed part of a broad programme of nationalisation, which included the 'Bank of England, coal, airlines, cable and wireless communications, inland transport, electricity, gas, and finally, towards the end of their first period of office, iron and steel.'[9] The Labour Party, which was mostly in agreement on the issue of nationalisation at this time 'saw nationalisations rather than a revival of competition as the appropriate solution to monopoly',[10] particularly for utilities that were seen as 'essential'. In this economy, nationalised industry was seen as 'a cheap service for the rest of the productive economy, with operating losses tolerated because profit was not a privileged indicator of performance'.[11] Therefore, giving state corporations vast land and assets to operate services was considered more useful and productive in national terms than if left to the free market.

---

[7] "Air Corporations [H.L.] a Bill Intituled an Act to Consolidate the Enactments Relating to the Constitution and Functions of the British Overseas Airways Corporation, the British European Airways Corporation and the British South American Airways Corporation," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1949).

[8] Gilmour Jenkins, *The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation* (Allen & Unwin, 1959). 18-19.

[9] David C Corbett, *Politics and the Airlines* (University of Toronto, 1965). P.57.

[10] Jim Tomlinson, *Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy: The Attlee Years, 1945-1951*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). P.72.

[11] Andrew Bowman, "An Illusion of Success: The Consequences of British Rail Privatisation," *Accounting forum* 39, no. 1 (2015). 53.

The aviation industry is somewhat of a hidden history of the nationalisation programme, often not featuring in broader histories of nationalisation. BOAC's nationalisation had happened before the Second World War, and had been merely amended by the Swinton Plan. The nationalisation of the aircraft production industry, however, features as part of a broader story of the Labour Party's nationalisation of the arms industry, and the 'moral and political' arguments for nationalisation persisted as a means to allow for 'better planning and coordination of resources.'[12] In reality, the aircraft production industry remained wholly privatised until the 1970s,[13] and 'warlike spending went up much more than welfare spending, and the "welfareness" of the British state spending did not return to early 1930s levels until 1970'.[14] But military spending did not need a public face – so while the vast majority of spending went on military aviation, the small civilian side represented an important, public facing and publicly responsible spin-off. BOAC had become, in essence, the public face of this private industry.

This programme of nationalisation in this period reflected the need to make industry serve the needs of the nation and echoed the priorities of the welfare state agenda. As Labour emphasised in the 1945 General Election Manifesto, the interests of the 'nation' had become an important direction:

> Britain needs an industry organised to enable it to yield the best that human knowledge and skill can provide. Only so can our people reap the full benefits of this age of discovery and Britain keep her place as a Great Power[…] Each industry must have applied to it the test of national service. If it serves the nation, well and good; if it is inefficient and falls down on its job, the nation must see that things are put right.[15]

---

[12] David Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines* (London: Penguin Books, 2013). 138.

[13] Ibid. 141.

[14] *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). 5.

[15] The Labour Party, "1945 Labour Party Election Manifesto," PoliticalStuff.co.uk, http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1945/1945-labour-manifesto.shtml. Accessed 02nd March 2022.

Industry was very much at the heart of the Labour post-war vision and the welfare state, believing that in order to maximise the benefits of industry and 'yield the best that human knowledge and skill', the state should be the guiding force in their operations.[16] The focus on understanding industry in terms of the ways in which it could support the development of the nation echoed a wider renewal of the 'nation' in political discourse within Labour's political beliefs. Within the 1945 manifesto, '"Socialism" appears once, whereas "nation", and "people" appear repeatedly, more so than Britain or British.'[17] This reflected a narrative present throughout the Second World War, in which industries had served through a 'time of national struggle and individual self-sacrifice' where 'self-interest had to veil itself decently in a cloak of legitimacy by claiming to be one aspect of the national self-interest'.[18] For industry, the 'nation' and working within the 'national interest' represented a continuation of the service values that had been the foundation of wartime Britain, and was central in the nationalisation agenda.

Of course, BOAC was not the only organisation that was affected by this change in rhetoric; The *White Paper on Broadcasting* in 1946 highlighted that 'broadcasting should be conducted by a public corporation' which would '[act] as Trustee for the national interest' and that 'its status and duties should correspond to those of a public service',[19] corresponding with the history of the BBC's 'public service ethos and a sense of independence that differentiated them from either commercial broadcasters or straightforward propagandists.'[20] Ministers responsible for nationalised industries, like BOAC, had legally defined parameters defined under the terminology of the 'national interest', which usually framed the Minister of the relevant

---

[16] Ibid.

[17] David Edgerton, "War, Reconstruction, and the Nationalization of Britain, 1939–1951," *Past & Present* 210, no. suppl_6 (2011). 1939–1951, 42.

[18] Middlemas, *Power Competition and the State, Volume 1: Britain in Search of Balance, 1940-61. Power competition and the state, volume 1.* 47.

[19] "Broadcasting Policy," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1946). 3.

[20] John Jenks, *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). 22.

department with the 'power to give the Board directions of a general character as to exercise of their functions in relation to matters appearing to him to affect the national interest', a statement reflected in BOAC's legislation,[21] and appearing in the Coal Industry Nationalisation Bill in 1946,[22] as well as the Transport Bill,[23] and the Electricity Bill, both in 1947.[24] The concept of the 'national interest' became interwoven with industrial organisations and was fraught with ambiguities, but nonetheless framed industry alongside the welfare state agenda.

Hence, there was a profound connection between economic planning and the formation of the welfare state. Throughout the Attlee Government after the Second World War, 'central planning of the economic and social order formed the bed-rock for collectivist social welfare, based on universalist principles,'[25] and reflected industries each pulling together in the same direction in aid of the broader public benefit. Consequently, BOAC's formulation was one small part of the broader conceptualisation of the role of the British state. Whilst it was nationalised more broadly under the consensus in 1939, the fact that BOAC's nationalisation continued, and was expanded in 1945 to include other airlines, meant that the economic planning of aviation was intrinsically important for the interests of the nation (or at least, the view that it *could* be in the future). Aviation was considered to reflect issues concerning the 'national interest' and could offer a contribution to the expansion and extension of the welfare state. This was true in the early post-war period between 1945 and 1950, but as this thesis will demonstrate, the 'national interest' depended on broader political and economic circumstances.

---

[21] The National Archives (TNA), "Civil Aviation Act 1946: Progress Reports on the Three Corporations," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 217/1304, 1946-1947). Civil Aviation Act, 1946. 3.

[22] "Coal Industry Nationalisation Bill," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*; ibid. I.

[23] "Transport Bill," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1947). I.

[24] "Electricity Bill," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1947). 9.

[25] Noel Whiteside, "Creating the Welfare State in Britain, 1945–1960," *Journal of social policy* 25, no. 1 (1996). 85.

The emphasis on the 'national interest' in such terms reflected a 'holistic social theory in which the interests of society as a whole are argued to transcend narrow sectional interests, and thus dictate specific policy approaches' where 'society is held to comprise interdependent parts with the health of the whole.'[26] In other words, the 'national interest' described the view that exhibiting strength in certain specific sectors would help to symbolise the health of Britain's wider industrial and economic complex. The pioneering work argued that the National interest could be understood in a variety of different ways. This includes two central interpretations consisting of identifying the 'national interest' as a set of 'aspirational' policies which tend to emphasise long term, directive and 'hope forming' strategies, and 'operational' policies tend to root themselves in short term, based in the 'prospects of success', and 'based in capabilities rather than political will'.[27] There are a lot of reflections to draw between BOAC and understanding of the 'national interest'; it was formed on the basis of a long-term directive, possessed morale-building positivist messages and, as Frankel argued, 'aspirational' national interest policies tended to result in 'institutional tensions' with 'those responsible for the determinations of aspirations often think deductively, starting from first principles and ignoring the problems of implementation and cost.'[28] These tensions were clearly present in the enactment of the Swinton Plan.

2.3   Flying in Post-war Britain

Between 1945 and 1970, aviation across the world experienced perhaps the most radical and sweeping changes of any industry, more so in this period than at any other in its history. R.E.G Davies, noted writer on the history of flight and aviation across the world, described these radical developments as a dramatic evolution from the 'open-air, stick-and-string biplane to a

---

[26] Alan Cawson, "Pluralism, Corporatism and the Role of the State," *Government and Opposition* 13, no. 2 (1978). 179.
[27] Joseph Frankel, *National Interest* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1970). 31-33
[28] Ibid. 34.

comfortably cabined, all metal monoplane of double performance and many times the reliability'.[29] This was no coincidence, as aviation had been 'greatly helped by engineering advances spurred on by wartime pressures', and had embarked on 'rapid massive expansion, providing fast and safe longer distant transport, at increasingly cheaper prices in real terms'.[30] Britain and the United States, and to a lesser extent European powers, were the driving force behind these changes, and over the course of the post-war period, these changes affected almost every region across the world.

Between 1950 and 1965, air transport activity increased from 195,000 to 508,000, terminal passengers increased from 2,133,000 to 19,918,000, and freight handled increased from 31,000 tonnes to 418,000 tonnes.[31] Safety figures show that aviation related fatalities had increased overall, from 2138 fatalities in 1950 to 2272 in 1965[32] – though this is to be expected given the increase in passenger numbers over the period. The costs of aviation also decreased dramatically over the course of the period; in 1947 a flight from London Airport to New York cost £145.15.0 for a return fare,[33] equivalent to £5,632.33 in 2019 terms,[34] a huge proportion of the average family income which worked out at approximately £320.[35] Despite the fact that 'further reductions were made in 1958 when economy fares were first made available',[36] dropping the cost of an economy ticket to £114.6.0,[37] which represented £2,645 and was still

---

[29] R.E.G. Davies, *A History of the World's Airlines* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). 238.

[30] Leonard J Lickorish and Carson L Jenkins, *Introduction to Tourism* (Routledge, 2007). 13.

[31] Tom Rutherford, "Air Transport Statistics," *UK House of Commons Library* 5 (2011). Activity at civil aerodromes in the UK. 7.

[32] Bureau of Aircraft Accidents Archives, "Death Rate Per Year," https://www.baaa-acro.com/statistics/death-rate-per-year. Accessed 02nd March 2022.

[33] "British Overseas Airways Corporation," *The Sunday Times*, 1947/12/14/ 1947. 5.

[34] Inflation calculated from the CPI Inflation Calculator online. See Alioth LLC, "Uk Inflation Calculator," https://www.officialdata.org/1860-GBP-in-2017?amount=1. Accessed 02 March 2022.

[35] Office for National Statistics (ONS), "New Earnings Survey (Nes) Timeseries of Gross Weekly Earnings from 1938 to 2017," https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/adhocs/006301newearningssurveynestimeseriesofgrossweeklyearningsfrom1938to2016.

[36] Victor TC Middleton and Leonard John Lickorish, *British Tourism: The Remarkable Story of Growth* (Routledge, 2007). p.97.

[37] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "What Price a Holiday in N.America?," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1960/12/29/ 1960. 9.

dramatically above the £730 national average income,[38] the cost of flights had decreased dramatically. As dramatic as the rate at which these costs went down was, only a small minority of people could actually afford to fly. It would not be until the late-1960s that mass market flight would take hold.

In terms of BOAC's competitive position, it represented a leading, respected international airline, often third only to Pan American Airways (PAA) and Trans World Airways (TWA) in terms of profit, passengers and staff. It carried 66 thousand revenue passengers across the Atlantic compared to PAA's 118 thousand and TWA's 90 thousand in 1952, eventually overtaking TWA in 1959, remaining second only to PAA for the rest of BOAC's operational life.[39] In the early days of the post-war period it operated out of Croydon Airport, and from 1951, and throughout most of its life, it was based at London Airport, known from 1966 as London Heathrow. BOAC was not the only British international carrier – from the end of the Second World War, many private airlines like Hunting-Clan Air Transport, Skyways and Air Kruise operated commercial flights domestically and internationally. Most of these were strictly locked into operating very narrowly defined routes, such as Channel Island Airways which served the Channel Islands until 1947, where it was merged with BEA,[40] and over the course of the post-war period many were eventually merged into BOAC or BEA, or dissolved. Private British airlines were possible in theory, but in practice no airline had the resources, contacts, or government backing to operate on the scale as those operated by the state, and thus BOAC and BEA remained the dominant forces of British aviation for much of the post-war period. Other international airlines were also free to fly into British airports and compete with Britain's state-owned airlines: many of the major European powers had their own international

---

[38] Office for National Statistics (ONS), "New Earnings Survey (Nes) Timeseries of Gross Weekly Earnings from 1938 to 2017". *New Earnings Survey (NES)*.

[39] Davies, *A History of the World's Airlines*. *A History of the World's Airlines*. 461.

[40] Peter J. Lyth, "'A Multiplicity of Instruments': The 1946 Descision to Create a Separate British European Airline and Its Effect on Civil Aircraft Production," in *Air Transport*, ed. Peter Lyth (Abington and New York: Routledge, 2016). 4.

airlines of similar utility to BOAC; France had Air France (1933-present), Belgium had

SABENA (1923-2001) and the Netherlands had KLM (1919-present). Of course, BOAC's top

competitor and most profitable airline in the world throughout most of the twentieth century,

PAA (1927-1991) also served Heathrow. So, whilst it monopolised Britain's airways, it still

had to compete amongst the many heavyweight American and European airlines.

From London Airport, BOAC flew to destinations across the world from Britain, including

Europe, America, Africa and Asia. As aircraft had a significantly shorter range, these journeys

were undertaken in 'hops'. A passenger traveling from London to Sydney in 1950 would stop

off at Rome, Cairo, Karachi, Calcutta, Singapore and Darwin, and if passengers desired they

would have the option to 'break' their ticket at an intermediate destination for no additional

charge. Of all of these routes, the trans-Atlantic routes were by far the most prestigious and,

over time, the most profitable on the network, offering minimal expenditure, fewer hops and

huge demand. In December 1947, routes across the Atlantic made BOAC £2 million with

expenditure of £2.5 million, making for a loss of £0.5 million, a relatively small loss when

compared to the Eastern routes overall loss of £1.7 million and the African loss of £1.9 million

in the same year.[41] This is not to suggest BOAC was financially unsuccessful: despite the fact

that most nationalised airlines operating at the time were making losses, BEA and BOAC 'were

tremendously successful; BEA carried 60% of intra-European air traffic, and BOAC 50% of

trans-Atlantic air traffic'.[42] In 1953, BOAC first recorded a profit of £1.2 million,[43] though

throughout the period continued to mount an accumulated deficit which reached its peak in

---

[41] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 210th Meeting Held on 11th March 1948. No.44," (N4056 BOAC Board Documents October 1947 - March 1948, Meetings 205-210, 1948). Route Accounts for Quarter ended 31st December, 1947. Expenditure and Revenue – Summary. 2

[42] David R Devereux, "State Versus Private Ownership: The Conservative Governments and British Civil Aviation 1951–62," *Albion* 27, no. 1 (1995). 84. Figures rounded for concision.

[43] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1952-53," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1953). 1.

1964 at £90.4 million,[44] which would be subsequently written off in 1965. Over time, BOAC diversified its aircraft, carried more freight, and altered its ticket offerings, eventually resulting in respectable revenues. In introducing services over the Atlantic and regularly reducing fares to New York 'from £254 to £173' and 'further reductions were made in 1958 when economy fares were first made available'.[45] While the aviation industry remained prohibitively expensive to the vast majority of people in Britain, it successfully increased its passenger base, expanded its services, and eventually became a leader in affordable international travel in the 1970s.

2.4 Serving Political Ends

As a nationalised industry, BOAC served no explicit, legally defined political function or responsibility. However, within the structures and management of the organisation, there was a reflection of a political system and an attention to Britain's wider political positioning. Under the mantra of the 'chosen instrument' policy, BOAC was under the control of the Ministry in charge of aviation and transport affairs: this was originally designated as the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 1941, however the ministerial department changed three times between 1941 and 1967, becoming the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation in 1953 and reverting to the Ministry of Aviation in 1959.[46]

Broadly speaking, the Minister responsible had several core responsibilities to the Ministry which consisted of the power of appointment, obtaining information, development, regulation and direction. Perhaps most importantly was the 'power of appointment' which gave the Minister the power to choose which individual could serve as Chairman of BOAC, as well as appointing the 'members of the different Boards and of the various advisory boards or

---

[44] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1964," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1964). 13.
[45] Middleton and Lickorish, *British Tourism: The Remarkable Story of Growth*. British Tourism. 97.
[46] David Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts, 1900-2000* (Springer, 2016). 58.

Consultative Committees'. The Minister also had 'considerable power to control development' as 'the Airways Corporations must submit their yearly programme of activities with estimates of revenue and expenditure', as well as the power 'to make regulations, amplifying and filling in the details of the Acts in many cases' such as pensions or administrative duties. Lastly, the Minister has the 'power of direction' where the Minister 'may, by order, limit the powers of the corporations' and issue 'directions of a general character[…] in relation to matters appearing to him to affect the national interest,[47] a feature of the wider responsibilities designated to the Minister in charge of Nationalised industries generally. The broad overlap between the Chairman and the Minister represented a continual point of conflict, often resulting in stagnation, managerial change and political interference.

BOAC's organisational structure was complex, operating 'an internal managerial structure in the design sector' which 'functioned more like a government department than a clear-cut company hierarchy.' BOAC's organisational structure 'reflected the schism between its identity as a "national" airline, and its function as a competitive service industry, with the ability to be financially independent, if not wholly profit-making.'[48] BOAC's reflection of a Government department, bearing remarkable similarities between the administration of Government and the political role of its leadership is an important identification for this thesis. In many ways, BOAC reflected the functioning of a nation in and of itself: the Chairmen were effectively public servants, much like political figures, who had to convince the general public of the value of the decisions they had made, Regional Managers helped to enact broader corporate policy instigated from above, and the Pilots and Crew on the ground helping to keep the 'machine' running smoothly. As this thesis will suggest, BOAC functioned as a 'composite'

---

[47] Jenkins, *The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation*. 22.
[48] Jackson, "The New Air Age: Boac and Design Policy 1945-60." *The New Air Age*. 182.

Government department, merging issues of transport with foreign and commonwealth affairs, trade, communications and industry.

This attention to political and PR needs was embodied foremost in the role of the Chairman. Throughout the post-war period up until the mid-1960s, BOAC had six chairmen, individuals who were appointed by the Minister and were often selected as a result of their previous experience working in the aviation industry. Many Chairmen had chaired BOAC's smaller counterpart, BEA, and had business experience from years of working with other transport and industrial businesses. This also included doing things that would typically be associated with ministers and other government representatives, including international tours, negotiating with foreign governments and making statements. It is hard to overstate the value of the role of the Chairman of BOAC, as it played such a key role in the development of the wider formulation of British industry and international relations. The core responsibility of Chairmen was negotiating with the Ministers associated with aviation and transport affairs, often taking government instructions with little flexibility and, as many Chairmen specifically note in their autobiographies, often for lower pay than would be as standard in private industry, and Chairmen often opted to resign early.

Chairmen often came from backgrounds that instilled a sense of Britain's international responsibilities abroad, often directly informing their role as Chairman. BOAC's first three Chairmen; Lord Knollys, Harold Hartley and Miles Thomas, each brought military experience with them: Hartley was a former Brigadier General and Sir Miles Thomas and Lord Knollys were ex-RFC/RAF pilots,[49] each of which was 'tempered by different experiences that gave the airline a hybrid feel of part military, part business, part government agency'.[50] In practice, this meant a militaristic outlook and a sense of national purpose and value. The 'part government

---

[49] Albert Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture* (Springer, 2006). 120.
[50] Ibid. 121.

agency' angle is one which was also instilled in the attitudes of the Chairmen. Lord Knollys, for instance, had stepped down as Governor of Bermuda in 1943 to become Chairman,[51] and was particularly important in establishing BOAC's partnerships across Africa.[52] Harold Hartley, a distinguished chemist, (1947–49) took over in 1947, receiving an offer to move across from BEA,[53] and had experience working for the LMS Railway and serving under the deputy-governorship of Gas Light and Coke Company before joining BOAC.[54] Miles Thomas took over in 1949 lasting until 1956, and had multiple roles within Government administration and, in particular, colonial administration. Most notably of which was as a member of the Colonial Development Board where he described in the *Daily Mirror* after he had been offered the role of Deputy Chairman for BOAC, he would 'Run Two Jobs', seeking to build on the fact that 'the two tie up from the Empire angle' and that the next day he was 'flying to Southern Rhodesia tomorrow to discuss industrial projects there'.[55] This organisational structure, coupled with the experience brought by each Chairman, reflected not only the structures of a government organisation, but also the attitudes of a government department which saw a wider international role for BOAC within the responsibilities of the British nation.

Part of this role in keeping the esteem of BOAC high in the international order was participating in newly forming international aviation organisations and bureaucratic agencies responsible for global aviation practice. As much as the technologies of aviation had dramatically changed over the course of the period, so too had the means of coordinating aviation between states. Many of the most recognisable international conventions and regulatory bodies were developed as a result of wartime aviation advances: one of the most notable organisations formed as a result of the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation which set out a series of

---

[51] Aeronautical Correspondent, "B.O.A.C. Chairmanship," *The Times*, 1947/03/27/ 1947. 4
[52] Correspondent From Our Own, "African Air Routes," ibid., 1945/03/22/ 1945. 3
[53] "Chairman of B.O.A.C," ibid., 1947/04/03/ 1947. 4
[54] "Sir Harold Hartley Joins B. O. A. C," *Financial Times*, 1945/12/22/ 1945. 1.
[55] "Sir Miles Gets Air Post: Will Run Two Jobs," *Daily Mirror* 1948. 27.

standards for peacetime aviation. The Conference oversaw the formation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which established essential legal rights to fly from one country to another known as the 'Freedoms of the Air' which granted airline's a series of legal rights to fly to and from an airlines home country to another as well as setting out other legal arrangements.[56]

In addition to the ICAO, the other most influential body related to civil aviation was the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in 1945 as a successor to the 1919 International Air Traffic Association. The IATA was a trade body for international airlines, and was frequently described in negative terms. The IATA, was 'the most formidable cartel in the world' which 'settles everything from fares and legroom to the size of luggage and sandwiches – leaving the airlines to compete with planes, hostesses, courtesy and advertising', and making for 'circumscribed competition' between international airlines.[57] Nonetheless, the 1951 *BOAC Review* described the IATA as the 'world parliament of airlines' which had been 'influencing the conduct of some 95 per cent of the world's scheduled air transport' and described then BOAC Chairman Sir Miles Thomas 'taking up his office as President of IATA' alongside a series of BOAC executives also joining the administration of IATA.[58] BOAC thus played an important part in setting international standards by exerting influence in the global burrata bodies of aviation administration. The role of Chairman, and the connections it brought, was therefore one of great power and influence, and one which reflected the functions of a government minister leading a government department. Therefore a focus on broader national and corporate interests and diplomacy were an important part of running the airline. This thesis will examine specifically how these attitudes played into the administration of BOAC policy.

---

[56] David Mackenzie, *Icao : A History of the International Civil Aviation Organization* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010). 6.
[57] Anthony Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962). P.548.
[58] ""Parliament of Airlines" Held in London," *BOAC Review* October 1951. 4.

2.5 *Austerity Industries*

Whilst BOAC functioned like a government department, the power it wielded was often dependent on the political party in power. There was a general political agreement in favour of Britain having a nationalised airline as agreed by the Swinton Plan, but this was accompanied by deep criticisms about the costs associated with it. From its earliest days, the Conservative Party saw BOAC as a flagrant abuser of its state derived funding status. Throughout periods of austerity, economic uncertainty, and government cutbacks, BOAC was often seen to have an unfair and privileged position in Britain. On several occasions, BOAC requested additional funding to cover losses, in one instance asking for an increase of an additional £810,000 in 1947 for deficiency grant on top of their requested £4,000,000, a request that outraged Conservatives who argued 'in passing, that British South American Airways Corporation - who are asking for only £50,000 - are covering a route which private enterprise undertakings offered to do without a State subsidy at all,'[59] referencing BOAC's particularly high operational cost compared to its similarly organised sibling organisations. The prolific writer and commentator on transportation affairs, Courtney Edwards, wrote in his regular column in the *Daily Mail* in 1948 that 'the state-run British Overseas Airways Corporation is too big and unwieldy ever to be really efficient' going on to describe that BOAC 'were using their subsidy and privileged position to drive the independent operator out of business' and that it had 'been passing on to foreign airlines, rather than British airlines, surplus passengers or freight that they themselves could not carry'.[60] These issues would plague BOAC throughout its life.

These criticisms persisted throughout the lifetime of BOAC; in 1950, the Conservative MP Robert Perkins stated in a debate that there was a 'grave public concern in this country about

---

[59] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 11th February, 1947," (1947).
[60] Courtenay Daily Mail Aviation Editor Edwards, "Mps Will Inquire into Boac Loss," *Daily Mail*, 1948/01/06/ 1948. 4.

this nationalised industry with its ever-mounting losses' and that 'the general public believe that there has been gross mismanagement in these Corporations' and insisting on an inquiry into the affairs of the airline. He further noted that he wanted to 'see B.O.A.C. run as a business concern,'[61] implying that there was a common conception that BOAC was seen above competition and a need for profit. This was further iterated in 1951 by Conservative MP George Ward in which BOAC was described as 'unrivalled by any of their competitors and are well worthy of the proud traditions of this country' but conceded that it was 'disappointing[…] that while BEA have halved their losses as compared with the previous year, BOACs total deficit shows very little improvement.'[62] These perspectives reveal, above all, is the conflict in understanding what BOAC's priorities as a nationalised industry were, hence the conflict between the agreement that it should exist, but disagreement about pathway and function in Britain's economic future. These questions were fundamentally about the role of industry in Britain and the nature of competition, and suggested that to thinkers in the Labour Party, communication and connection was an endeavour above cost.

These views about nationalisation and the role of industry were not shared by the Conservative Party. In 1948, the Conservative Party released a series of propaganda films targeted at what they considered to be Labour's wasteful nationalisation programme, targeted key industries including coal, electricity, railways and, most importantly, the airways. Under the title 'Who voted for this? The nationalisation of air transport' claimed 'you and millions of others are still paying for the privilege' arguing that 'British nationalised airways lost £11 million last year, and you paid for it' under the tagline 'Nationalisation?! National frustration that's what I calls it!' calling for voters to 'Sack the Socialists! And set the people free'.[63] The Conservatives had remained principally against nationalisation on the grounds that it was too great an extension

---

[61] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 6th July, 1950," (1950).
[62] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 19th March, 1951," (1951).
[63] The Conservative Party, *Who Voted for This? - the Nationalisation of Air Transport* (BFI Player, 1948).

of state power, and that it imposed a political threat from the Cold War. Conservatives argued that the 'Labour Government's irrational and dangerous political dogma' threatened, as Eden explained, the 'special responsibility to guide and keep the world in the true path of freedom', using charged Cold War language such as 'socialist' and 'Communism' to describe Labour and its policies of nationalisation.[64] Conservative belief in the free market was therefore ideological, and that aviation should not be funded by public finances as state ownership was identified as a pathway to Communism. It is ironic, therefore, that the travelling public that could fly were extraordinarily wealthy individuals, often engaging in the free market and partaking in frivolous consumption through luxury and holidays.

These criticisms could be converted into Government action in 1951 as, to the surprise of many, Churchill acquired a majority of 17 seats in the General Election, despite Labour successfully winning the popular vote. The Conservatives re-entered power with a new focus on making the economy work more competitively, emphasising competition between different sectors to enhance Britain's post-war economy. These policies insisted that increasing competition was a 'major route to enhancing economic efficiency' which 'broadly followed a 'Keynesian' pattern, promoting government activism in the macro-economy but believing in the efficiency or market forces at the micro level.'[65] It is therefore unsurprising that, despite a generally high level of esteem from both benches, the Conservatives were particularly unsympathetic to BOAC and its monopoly and often made no secret of their disdain for its cost and the 'socialist' principles they claimed to have underpinned it.

One possible reason for the difficult relationship between BOAC and the Conservative Party likely derived from the changes made to the original Swinton Plan. Alan Lennox-Boyd, a

---

[64] Michael D Kandiah, "The Conservative Party and the Early Cold War: The Construction of 'New Conservatism'," in *Cold War Britain, 1945–1964* (Springer, 2003). 36.

[65] Nick Tiratsoo and Jim Tomlinson, *The Conservatives and Industrial Efficiency, 1951-1964: Thirteen Wasted Years?* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). 104.

Conservative MP and Churchill's newly appointed Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation, later the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was heavily involved in the draft of the original Swinton Plan and had insisted that BOAC should be entitled to a monopoly of government funds but not a monopoly of *routes*. In 1949 he argued in the Commons that he wanted an airline with a 'monopoly of operation' in civil aviation, arguing that 'there was nothing to stop competition' in his original contributions to the plan.[66] As the new Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation, his attitude to BOAC came from a 'very personal sense of grievance' as his contributions to the original plan had been ignored. Throughout his time at the Ministry, he insisted that private airlines should be afforded the opportunity to fly for Britain.[67] Much of Lennox-Boyd's preoccupation with aviation was therefore in improving the situation for private British airlines to fly for Britain by directly following their policy of government activism at the macro level, with improved competition at the micro level.

Lennox-Boyd specifically looked to create opportunities to help private operators arguing that BOAC had forced many private British airlines to lose contracts. This was identified as the forces of the state not just refusing to compete, but *actively supressing* competition in the name of the state. Lennox-Boyd pointed to specific instances where the public industry had supressed the private, arguing that Hunting Clan Air Travel, despite excellent load factors (that is, the amount of passengers on board an aircraft to make a profit), were not awarded a contract from the Overseas Food Corporation, rather offering it at a financial loss to BOAC as its government subsidy meant they could bid at lower levels. Lennox-Boyd argued in parliament that it was 'a squalid deal has been arrived at between two Government Corporations which has driven out of this business a highly reputable firm whose members pay taxes to the State to enable us to carry out these risky experiments.'[68] Fears of state enterprise disadvantaging private enterprise

---

[66] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 29th June, 1949," (1949).
[67] Murphy, *Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography*. *Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography*. 75-6.
[68] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 13th December, 1949," (1949).

were common, as fellow Conservative MP George Ward, addressing Lennox-Boyd, pointed out that there had to be assurances to ensure that the Corporation 'would not be allowed to use the resources of the State to the disadvantage of the private operator', concluding that there was 'abundant evidence' that the Corporation were 'using their subsidy and their privileged position under the Act of 1946 to try to drive the independent operators out of business.'[69] BOAC therefore should not be undercutting the interests of the private sector in the name of the 'national interest' as the opportunities presented to private operators by the state represented the 'national interest'.

The Conservative Party therefore sought to bring independent airlines more actively into Britain's civil aviation network. The Conservative government offered several opportunities directly to private airlines and in many cases deliberately bypassed BOAC: Trooping Flights were an effective example of this – these flights were chartered services specifically for flying British troops to locations overseas. BOAC assumed they would be offered them outright, believing in 1950 that 'the scale of the Trooping operation is such that the revenue, which might amount to £4,000,000 per annum, would materially reduce the Corporations' deficit, reduce the burden on the taxpayer, and bring that much nearer the day when an exchequer grant is no longer necessary.'[70] However, despite representing an ideal opportunity for BOAC, it was denied the ability to bid for these contracts. Instead, only government selected private operators were able to bid for these duties. This conversely aggravated Labour Party MPs, as they protested in 1954:

> Encouraging a private company to compete with a public corporation and then forcibly preventing the public corporation from using its higher efficiency to compete fairly with the private company[…] The Government, who talk loudly of

---

[69] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 19th March, 1951."

[70] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 234th Meeting Held on 11th May 1950," (N4061 BOAC Board Documents May 1950 - November 1950, Meetings 234-239, 1948). 235th Meeting held on 8th June 1950, No.70. Document entitled 'Trooping'. 1.

> expansionist policies, are restricting the Corporations. In the name of competition, they are giving State protection to private capital.[71]

Hence with the election of the Conservative Party, which would go on to last for most of BOAC's lifetime, the definition of the 'national interest' changed *externally* to BOAC. No longer would 'public service' be enough of a justification of financial losses, rather it now had to engage with the free market, and *explain why* its finances didn't balance.

Such policies were inevitably confusing for BOAC, especially given that there was an overarching acknowledgement from both parties as to the need and prestige that BOAC brought Britain, with constant emphasis on BOAC being the finest airline in the world. BOAC was caught between its foundations as set out by the 1945 Labour Government, but forced to operate under the realities of economic efficiency with the Conservatives – a political legacy that would last from 1951 to 1964. This political tension formed so much of a barrier that Winston Bray described in his unpublished *History of BOAC* that the Labour Government were often 'helpful and understanding' in relation to BOAC's development and expansion, but when it came to the Conservative Governments following 1951, the airline was 'open to attack' as a result of its status as a nationalised industry,[72] and this period represented 'difficult years for BOAC which felt itself to be under constant attack by the Independents who had the ear of the Government during the Conservative Administration.'[73] This was because BOAC's 1945 Labour principles of wartime service and public service continued, but the Government definition of 'national interest' did not.

Nonetheless, the Labour Party continued to argue that BOAC should be supported as it helped to secure a reputation for independent operators. Clifford Wilcock, Labour MP argued in the Commons in 1952 that 'after all, the long-term prospects of the independent operators rest upon

---

[71] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 8th March, 1954," (1954).

[72] Winston Bray, "The History of Boac," (Camberley Surrey: Wessex Press, Unpublished - No Year). 164.

[73] Simons, *The British Overseas Airways Corporation: A History. The British Overseas Airways Corporation.* 190.

the reputation earned by the Corporations. This is particularly so in the overseas market. The name of British aviation stands high, due to the excellence of B.O.A.C. and B.E.A., and charter companies and private operators benefit by the reflection of the glory of those two Corporations.'[74] The overall performance of the independent operators thus depended on BOAC's role as a 'reputation builder', suggesting that the construction of an image of a united British aviation effort was key to BOAC's, Independent Operators, and Britain's overall success in aviation.

Attitudes to nationalisation, whilst relatively consistent within the Conservative Party, had changed dramatically over the course of the period for Labour. While the initial nationalisation project had appeared to suggest a consensus, it had quickly become contentious as industries were facing a need for 'large investments of public funds to modernise and equip them to meet unsatisfied public demands for their products' and a diminishing enthusiasm for many who had spoken of the virtues of state-owned businesses.[75] The concept of nationalising certain industries, even within the Labour party, had become politically and ideologically debated. Hugh Gaitskell, writing as leader of the Labour Party in 1956, whilst not wholly against nationalisation outright, argued that 'there would have been some who, as consumers, expected that they would reap immediate benefits in lower prices and greater supplies. In a period of world inflation and rising wages they were bound to be disappointed.'[76] Gaitskell would go on to later attempt to remove Clause IV of the Labour Party Constitution, which would have removed nationalisation from its constitutional duties, attempting to 'to change the party's approach to meet new economic and social conditions, he was operating within a value set familiar to most party members.'[77] The difference, he argued, was that of efficiency and the

---

[74] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 16th July, 1952," (1952).
[75] Corbett, *Politics and the Airlines*. "Politics and the Airlines". 61.
[76] Hugh Gaitskell, *Socialism and Nationalisation*, vol. 300 (Fabian society, 1956). 24.
[77] Michael Kenny and Martin J Smith, "Discourses of Modernization: Gaitskell, Blair and the Reform of Clause Iv," *British Elections & Parties Review* 7, no. 1 (1997). 117.

idea that nationalised industries should serve a higher purpose within fairer, ideals against abuses of power and excessive waste,[78] implying that profit should not be a driving force, and over the 1950s the gradual decline in support of this economic system meant that BOAC was met with little defence and grew increasingly concerned about its role in Britain's economic system.

Perhaps most damning of all was the perspective of Reuben Kelf-Cohen, who served in the Civil Service and published on matters related to nationalised industry. In 1962 he argued that 'many of the reports tell too much and, at the same time, too little. There is a vast mass of facts and yet not enough editing. It would appear that each department of a board throws in its contribution and that there was no one person sufficiently powerful to write them all into a common language, intelligible to the common man'.[79] The stereotype of the 'nationalised industry' as a model of inefficiency and miscommunication, had grown so strong as to alienate once loyal supporters. This indicates that even perceptions from the left thought that nationalisation held with it a degree of, or at least perception of, inefficiency and miscommunication. As the historiography suggests, nationalised industry tended to serve as examples of the fundamental issues in the British economy, serving *moral* and social ends rather than economic ends. These issues were mostly issues of domestic policy and internal finance, however BOAC as a 'propaganda' tool could offer a much more effective strategy internationally, and serves as a major theme in this thesis.

2.6   *Cooperation and Internationalisation*
In the same way that Britain was to undergo a process of modernising its political, economic and social affairs, over the course of the 1950s so too would BOAC. In no area was this as noticeable than in Britain's international and Imperial outlook: the 26th of January 1952 marked

---

[78] Gaitskell, *Socialism and Nationalisation*, 300. *Socialism and nationalisation*. 7.
[79] Reuben Kelf-Cohen, *Nationalisation in Britain* (New York: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1962). P.161.

'Black Saturday' in Cairo, one of BOAC's most important interchanges for services across Africa, 'British properties in Cairo – and several other properties which seemed foreign enough to be suspect – were set on fire by mobs', included several properties owned by BOAC,[80] and forced BOAC to operate its Middle Eastern routes via Beirut instead of Cairo.[81] This would foreshadow a turning point in the history of the British Empire, as Israel's invasion of Egypt and the nationalisation of the Suez Canal prompted Britain and France to attempt to regain control.

The 1956 Suez Canal crisis brought about a significant change in the status of Britain as a world power, resulting in a sense of 'new vulnerability' which was 'felt in the increasingly insistent demands for decolonisation in Africa, the Caribbean and the Far East.'[82] The Suez Crisis 'had not *created* these demands or change, but it certainly gave them a significant voice'.[83] What Suez had revealed above all was the need for the 'modernising' of the political links between Britain and its colonies as 'Empire' had become an increasingly outdated conception of power between Britain and its nations. Particularly after Suez, politics was dominated by the rhetoric of 'decolonisation' as many of Britain's colonies started to declare independence and sought their own autonomy in the global economy.

What resulted was a shift away from thinking of the wider network of nations in terms of the 'Empire' and more towards a 'Commonwealth' brought together by common interests. BOAC Chairmen had been important in bridging these connections, as often Chairmen would undertake international tours and establish links with partner airlines and governments, as well as checking up on overseas stations and acting as focal points in media events. In a tour

---

[80] Alex Von Tunzelmann, *Blood and Sand: Suez, Hungary and the Crisis That Shook the World* (Simon and Schuster, 2016). 10.

[81] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1952," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1952). 9.

[82] Sanders, *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy since 1945. Losing an Empire, Finding a Role*. 103.

[83] Ibid. *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role*. 103.

undertaken by the chairman of BOAC, Sir Miles Thomas in 1950 frequently mentioned his role in increasing links with the Commonwealth, proclaiming that he intended to 'talk to the head officials of our associated airlines with a view to strengthening our joint operations between Britain and Australasia,'[84] much as a head of state would do for political gain and fulfilling a duty of international diplomacy for BOAC.

This more 'collaborative' way of thinking about Britain's post-colonial diplomacy meant adapting to broader legal changes brought about by decolonisation. In 1955 it was recognised that Colonial Governments had been granting international airlines licenses to fly to and from their territories – a move which suggested they had a right to make this decision. The British Government feared that this would override their decisions about aviation operators and would encourage some non-British airlines to compete with BOAC, an issue described by the British Government as an act of 'ignorance rather than malice' which prompted the government to 're-examine the relevant regulations and instructions to the colonies', concluding that 'if we allow the Colonies to decide cases, it may foster the notion that they have some authority in this matter. The main purpose of the circular is to make it clear that they have not'.[85] Like most formal elements of Imperial authority in the post-war era, 'the decline and disappearance of the old colonial empires removed all questions concerning the negotiation of landing rights in colonial possessions,'[86] leaving the authority of traffic rights firmly with the nations concerned. Nonetheless, aviation remained at the foreground of the issues of the commonwealth and empire, and BOAC had a significant role in bridging connections with colonial authorities through diplomacy rather than colonial authority as it had to negotiate Traffic Rights from national governments on its own. Thus, the changes in Empire complicated civil aviation

---

[84] "'Blazing the Trail for the Comet'," *BOAC Newsletter* March 1950. 3.
[85] The National Archives (TNA), "Proposed New Circular to Colonies on Traffic Rights," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 245/998). Letter reference AS 44/7/02. P. 3.
[86] Mackenzie, *Icao : A History of the International Civil Aviation Organization*. P.344.

considerably, as Colonial Governments were urged to forward their applications onto the British Government to ensure that there would be no undue competition from foreign national operators.

Both BOAC and the subsequent Government's commitment to the Commonwealth was reiterated regularly throughout the period. There were many opportunities for trans-national cooperation within larger aviation networks that were ignored in favour of continued Commonwealth cooperation. For example, in 1959 there were discussions within Europe at the possibility of a European 'Europair' system of pooled resources being studied by Air France, Lufthansa, Alitalia, Sabena and KLM, of which Harold Watkinson, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation 'says that it is unnecessary and undesirable for BOAC and BEA to participate in Air Union' as 'they enjoy a privileged position in the Commonwealth' which included 'cabotage rights', which were legal rights to operate commercial flights between two points in the same legal entity, 'between the United Kingdom and points in the directly-governed Commonwealth and also a special relationship with airlines in other Commonwealth countries such as Australia' concluding that 'BOAC can probably live quite happily without the cooperation of continental airlines'.[87] Other international networks also threatened BOAC, as in 1961 there were fears were that a 'Unified Arab Airline' was 'moving into the realms of the practical',[88] and, given that the Government were already fearful of losing territory in the Middle East, 'assuming that the Arab countries in practice formed a single block for the purpose of negotiating traffic rights, they would occupy a commanding position across the main West/East routes, even if the combination were limited to the UAR' which resulted in a need

---

[87] The National Archives (TNA), "Development of Co-Operation between Airlines of Europe and Commonwealth. Code Ga File 23," ed. Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office (FO 371/141649, 1959). Agreed views of the Civil Aviation Policy C'tte. On the development of co-operation with Commonwealth and European Airlines, Memorandum C(59)143 of July 27 by the Minister of Transport.
[88] "Development of Joint Airline Company between Arab States," ed. Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office (FO 371/158693, 1961). Notes on a Unified Arab Airline.

to 'fortify' North Africa.[89] Thus the suppression of an overarching single-state Middle East was a policy to be avoided to ensure that BOAC's larger network remained in control. Both cases reveal that, despite broader options of aviation in other large scale networks, both government and Corporation were determined to retain the advantages of the Commonwealth, and there were deep insecurities about any loss of the network to other airlines. As the advantages of Commonwealth cooperation waned in the late 1960s and as Europe became seen as a more advantageous economic prospect, so too did BOAC's sense of Commonwealth obligation began to falter to the economic advantages of Europe.

More fundamentally than the success of the project, BOAC's policy of cooperation with the wider Commonwealth helped to fortify an image of Imperial and Commonwealth cooperation, and was described in the 1964 *BOAC Review* which told staff of the positive international image amassing from the system of airlines. Highlighting to staff that in a meeting with the President of the IATA that he found himself 'tremendously impressed by the great respect other airlines had for BOAC and for our system of partnerships and associations with other operators. There is no doubt that this policy of "togetherness" with Commonwealth and other airlines is in itself a source of strength and growth potential.'[90] BOAC therefore helped to show Britain's cooperative example to the world and suggested the success of post-Imperial cooperation. What this shows above all was the fact that BOAC was embedded in the process of creating a reputation that showed that Britain was able to work comfortably and productively with ex-colonies without protest or ill feeling – even though in most cases, these were elements present.

2.7   Modernisation and Commercialisation

The new Prime Minister Harold Macmillan had come to power in the aftermath of the Suez Canal incident, widely considered to be a symbol of increased of the influence of the United

---

[89] Ibid. Notes on a Unified Arab Airline.
[90] Giles Guthrie, "The Chairman Writes..." *BOAC Review* October 1964. 20.

States and becoming the 'American client state',[91] as well as an economic shift in which the 'limited expansion in state institutions were to become the dominant characteristic of policy-making'.[92] Macmillan held the objective to continue Britain's pursuit of efficiency and productivity in the economy through a number of different industrial sectors - with a particular focus on civil aviation. He chaired the Cabinet Committee on Civil Aviation with a view to 'consider the whole scope of the aircraft industry and improvements that could be made',[93] and his committee concluded that the industry needed 'a rationalization of Britain's many aviation companies', of which there were eighty-nine in 1957, as well as the offering of a government 'launch-aid' to get future aviation projects off the ground.[94]

Of course, this period also saw the persistence of a narrative of 'decline' which, real or not, captured an overarching feeling that Britain was increasingly unable to exercise its idealistic domestic and international agenda, and BOAC, as a nationalised organisation, were observed as a key part of this narrative. These attitudes had begun to root itself in British culture which had become increasingly recognised as a problem in the mid-1950s. Industry, particularly nationalised industry, found itself a particularly pertinent target for the 'root cause' of decline. Anthony Sampson, one of the most public declinists of the post-war period, described in 1962 that nationalised industries were 'the major innovation of post-war Britain' where they have not grown slowly out of the past, but have been deliberately imposed, appearing fully armed, like Athena from the head of Zeus'.[95] As he argued, 'their size, as much as their ownership, has made them problem children, for when they were nationalised in quick succession, no one had

---

[91] David Pattie, *Modern British Playwriting: The 1950s: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations*, vol. 1 (A&C Black, 2012). 14.

[92] Peter Kerr, *Postwar British Politics: From Conflict to Consensus* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). 101.

[93] Devereux, "State Versus Private Ownership: The Conservative Governments and British Civil Aviation 1951–62." "State Versus Private Ownership." 80

[94] Ibid. "State Versus Private Ownership." 81.

[95] Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain*. *Anatomy of Britain*. 532.

had any experience of running huge concerns except generals'.[96] The image of nationalised industries was one of unwieldy management, inefficiency, and outdated structures of control for the 1960s. Hence, they formed an important target for Government opponents.

Macmillan's renewed focus on aviation as an industry did not wholly include BOAC, and was often consumed by attempts to help new independent airlines to buy aircraft and operate services – just as Conservative Governments had attempted before. In civil aviation terms, Macmillan's policies meant a renewed focus on the independent airlines and fully legalising competition with BOAC. This came in the form of the passage of the Civil Aviation (Licensing) Act, introduced in 1960 which 'established the Air Transport Licensing Board (ATLB) to grant airlines licenses to operate. All British airlines were required to hold such a licence, whether state or privately owned, and the reservation of scheduled services to the state-owned was ended,'[97] officially removing the Corporation's protection on routes *and* creating a board to accept and reject independent operators flying on the same routes and competing against BOAC. This legislation made it *significantly* easier to fly services alongside BOAC and therefore to compete directly - at least, legally, giving the Government the ultimate power to decide which 'British' airlines could fly.

Chairmen in this period also reflected a dramatic change in the priorities of the Corporation. The Chairmen hired following 1956 came from backgrounds with a focus on economic performance over national service. Gerard d'Erlanger for instance, joined BOAC in 1956 from an investment banking background, and sought to re-equip BOAC with new, commercially sound American airliners which were 'necessary to meet international competition', a decision motivated by commercial priorities rather than national ones and was 'the subject of

---

[96] Ibid. 533.
[97] A.J Burkart, "The Regulation of Non-Scheduled Air Services in the United Kingdom 1960 to 1972," *The Journal of Industrial Economics* 23, no. 1 (1974). 52.

criticism',[98] with many observing this was BOAC finally succumbing to the broader trend of 'Americanisation' and evidencing British 'decline'. The unpopularity of the decision to buy American meant picking a Chairman that would return to thinking about BOAC in terms of the 'nation', and as a result of d'Erlanger's resignation in 1960 his replacement, Rear Admiral Sir Matthew Slattery, was a distinguished military man, took over BOAC in 1960 as a result of d'Erlanger's resignation to 'devote all his time to banking interests',[99] and oversaw tremendous financial success, seeing a £4 million increase in revenue, though this included a very significant accumulated deficit that he wanted waived, a decision quickly rejected by the Ministry at the time,[100] though it would later be waived in 1965. The Minister's choice of Chairmen reflected the continued conflict of interest between commercial and national interests.

With the removal of monopolies and the threat of increased competition from independent airlines, BOAC set out to challenge the authorisation of these licenses. Applications for airlines to fly routes parallel with BOAC was abundant, much to their disgruntlement, and made explicit that it would 'scrutinise each application carefully to see whether the proposed operation could be mounted without detriment to the Corporation's plans.'[101] Such a statement which was lambasted in the *Daily Mail* which captured this sentiment in 1961 with the cartoon 'With my Bow and Arrow' which depicted, as figure 1 shows, BOAC Chairman, Gerard d'Erlanger and BEA Chairman Anthony Milward with Minister of Civil Aviation Peter Thorneycroft as birds. The cartoon pictures a dead bird with 'Cunard Eagle Airways', a well-known private operator, on its chest, showing Thorneycroft with a bow and arrow.[102] This aggressive teamwork to

---

[98] "Sir Gerard D'erlanger," *The Times*, 1962/12/17/ 1962. 12.
[99] Reporter Financial Times, "Sir Matthew Slattery to Head B.O. A.C," *Financial Times*, 1960/06/21/ 1960. 1.
[100] Aeronautical Correspondent, "B.O.A.C. Hope to Show Profit of £3m," *The Times*, 1963/11/07/ 1963. 12.
[101] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1961," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1961). 36.
[102] "'…with My Bow and Arrow'," *Daily Mail*, 1961/11/24/ 1961. 10.

eliminate new competitors from the field of aviation showcased the challenges of operating against BOAC and its strategy to keep its monopoly position.

Figure 1:'"…With my Bow and Arrow'." Daily Mail, 24 Nov. 1961, p. 10.

BOAC argued in its 1962 annual report that the Act encouraged unnecessary competition and undermined the time, finance and effort BOAC had spent in the development of those routes in the first place. BOAC argued that it was unfair that other airlines could simply step in and operate its routes, arguing that 'when independent airlines made their bid to introduce services on routes that BOAC had pioneered, nursed and developed over many years, often at considerable cost, the Corporation's objections did not arise out of fear of increased competition', rather, it was worried that independents would 'split the British effort,'[103] and that aviation should be represented by one single body, directly echoing the functions of the 'chosen instrument' policy. It also suggested that BOAC felt a sense of paternal responsibility, arguing that it had 'nursed' implied that it thought of its role in a developmental sense, to

---

[103] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1962," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1962). 49.

construct routes and run flights for the greater benefit of humanity, rather than for profit – language borrowed from Empire and for which this thesis will return.

Despite the Civil Aviation (Licencing) Act's principal philosophy to open up the airways and enhance competition, it failed to 'lay down adequate policy guidance',[104] leading to inevitable problems in applying the legislation in practice. Challenges under the Civil Aviation (Licensing) Act were abundant and numerous as airlines were questioned over whether they were breaching the licensing regulations, often leading to elaborate discussions amongst Civil Servants over what constituted a 'breach'.[105] It was also found in 1962 that airlines could subvert the regulations by registering their aircraft in Britain's colonies, effectively invoking rights to Commonwealth citizenship and operate services without intervention from the British Government. Despite the presence of 'breaches' in the system, little was done to enforce these regulations, and thus BOAC faced a large increase in competition after 1962. Centrally, this had meant a full reversal of BOAC's operation in the 'national interest', as no longer could it challenge competition. This forced BOAC to compete in *legal* terms.

This led to one of the more significant challenges to BOAC's role as the airline operating in the 'national interest' as it merged with the private 'Cunard-Eagle' airways to form 'BOAC-Cunard' for the brief period between 1962 and 1966. Cunard-Eagle, a private, independent British operator, shifted its base to the West Indies, highlighting a 'loophole in the licensing control' which was found to be 'an awkward one and it would be, to put it at its lowest, a bad precedent if Cunard-Eagle were able to get around the licensing system'.[106] This prompted

---

[104] Burkart, "The Regulation of Non-Scheduled Air Services in the United Kingdom 1960 to 1972." "The Regulation of Non-Scheduled Air Services." 53.

[105] The National Archives (TNA), "Enforcement of Licensing Provisions Made under the Civil Aviation (Licensing) Act 1960 (Not Including Tariff Enforcement): Includes Examples of Illegal Charters and Advertisements and Related Correspondence," ed. Records created or inherited by the Civil Aviation Authority (DR 3/182, 1960-1971). Facts of interest to the Board in connection with their functions under the Act. Appendix 1, E73A.

[106] "Air Transport Licensing Act 1960: General Papers," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 245/1064, 1963). Letter to AS(AOP), from US(ARP & G), dated 6th February 1962.

BOAC to 'extract at least some positive benefits from the negative situation' by merging with private aviation in order to prevent competition on the high profile international Atlantic routes.[107] Whilst the BOAC-Cunard merger was short lived, it raised important questions about BOAC as a nationalised industry; Labour Party MPs questioned whether BOAC-Cunard was a 'nationalised concern' and, if BOAC losses continued, whether the government would 'bear the losses on Cunard,'[108] describing the Minister as 'conniving at the creation of a monopoly, with the independents inside it, to ensure that we do not suffer the disadvantages of wasteful competition.[109] BOAC's decision to merge with an independent airline served to somewhat defend it from political attacks and helped to show a more commercially oriented and dynamic corporation, again revealing that the role for which BOAC was originally needed had changed. Therefore, nationalised industry was no longer to be serving a 'national interest' from a service sense, but rather serving a 'national interest' from the perspective that government funds were being used to support private enterprise.

This did not mean that BOAC had relinquished its quasi-ministerial role. As part of a broad policy of expansion, BOAC was a key delegate in negotiations with the Soviet Union to set up an agreement to allow flights to overfly its territory and thus drastically shorten BOAC's routes to Tokyo, offering a 'tremendous saving,' reducing flight times from 40 hours to 28.[110] In discussing the potential for negotiations, senior political figures agreed that 'such an ideal outcome, as well as variations short of the ideal, would also accord with our general policy of trying to open the Soviet Union to western influence[…] the effort should be made whenever the opportunity offers and I would count as gain any erosion, even if only in principle, of the

---

[107] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1962." 50.
[108] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 26th June, 1962," (1962).
[109] Ibid.
[110] British Pathé, "England: Flights to Far East Via Russia," (British Pathé, 1956).

totally negative attitude with the Soviet Government have hitherto displayed,'[111] indicating the continued political interference and symbolic role for BOAC management. These negotiations revealed that, despite changes in what the 'national interest' represented, the organisation continued to follow its political role and remained interwoven with the imagery of the nation – or in this case, the imagery of the state.

This meeting held a great deal of political significance, as a letter from BOAC to the Ministry of Aviation reported the results of the meeting, concluding that 'the Russians have said that they will grant BOAC a Moscow/Delhi route provided HMG will offer something which is fully reciprocal'.[112] BOAC's role in negotiating these rights was within the context of the wider tensions of the Cold War, engaging on a political level and not just a business one. BEA had already signed an agreement with Aeroflot to operate a service to Moscow on the 24th of March 1959,[113] whereas BOAC was only able to fly via Moscow via a pooling agreement with Pakistan International Airways in 1965.[114] BOAC's direct involvement in political issues illustrates the significance of the organisation's view of its political responsibilities. Whilst BOAC's impact on the discussions was likely negligible, it showed that it 'performed' an important representative role which was useful in a political negotiation and that it had to engage in matters which were in line with the political 'national interest'.

Despite its ability to 'perform' at this level, it was not enough to defend its poor economic performance in Macmillan's drive for economic efficiency. Given BOAC's continued poor performance, Macmillan tasked City of London Accountant John Corbett to investigate

---

[111] The National Archives (TNA), "Ussr-Uk Air Service Agreement: Route Amendments; Boac Services Beyond Moscow, Negotiations with Russian Authorities," ed. Ministry of Civil Aviation and successors: Air Services and International Relations Group: Minutes and Papers (BT 245/1244, 1961-1965). Confidential letter to the Right Honourable The Earl of Home, The Foreign Office, January 17th 1963.
[112] Ibid. Letter from Keith Granville to R. Burns dated 15th July 1964.
[113] "British European Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1959," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1959). P.82.
[114] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1965," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1965). P.17.

BOAC's financial matters. This ultimately resulted in the 'Corbett Report' which offered an analysis of BOAC and its poor economic performance concluding amongst many things, that various 'political and economic factors' had adversely affected BOAC's economic performance. These factors consisted of the 'steady contraction in the "cabotage" territories' from countries declaring their independence,[115] competition from independent operators as a result of the Licensing Act which 'encourages attempts by independent operators to run services competing to a greater or lesser extent with the Corporation's existing network',[116] and the 'declining relative importance of London as a traffic centre' in which jet aviation meant that jets from the East and West could bypass London without stopping.[117] The report pulled no punches in its examination of the Corporation, evaluating every managerial and historic detail that could have explained its loss and would form the groundwork of what would become the 1968 Edwards Committee report, the first step in the process to merge BOAC and BEA to become British Airways in 1974,[118] and subsequently led to the privatisation of British Airways in 1987.

Above all, the report prompted a regime change in BOAC, sparking the 'expulsion of the Slattery-Smallpiece team, which might well have continued to lead BOAC successfully as Corbett suggested, particularly as economic recovery and reform coincided to produce remarkable profits over the next decade.'[119] Slattery wrote angrily in the *Daily Mail* that 'I was fired[…] because I thought BOAC should be run to open the world's air routes and to boost British aviation, not primarily to make a profit. I was fired[…] because I fought the minister.'[120] In January 1964, in the wake of the upset caused by his departure, Sir Giles Guthrie became

---

[115] "Boac: Report for the Minister of Aviation by John Corbett, Financial Control Authority (Fca)," ed. Records created or inherited by HM Treasury (T 319/126, 1963). 39.

[116] Ibid. 43.

[117] Ibid. 44.

[118] "Edwards Committee: Report into Civil Air Transport," ed. General records of the Air Boards and Air Ministry (AIR 2/18454, 1968-1969).

[119] Higham, *Speedbird: The Complete History of Boac*. *Speedbird*. 229.

[120] "The Man—and the Plane—at the Heart of the Storm," *Daily Mail*, 1964/09/09/ 1964. 7.

Chairman with a view towards BOAC's financial soundness, hired to make BOAC 'pay its way' which prompted a renewed focus on commercialisation.[121]Alongside increased commercialisation and competition, the 1960s brought about a renewed discussion about BOAC and its functions within the 'national interest'. Its 1962 annual report assessed BOAC's significance in the narrative, arguing:

> Throughout the years from 1946 up to 1961 there was reason to believe that Her Majesty's Government regarded that price (whatever it might be) as an acceptable one for BOAC's support of the British aircraft industry, for during the whole of that time the Corporation was regarded to a large extent as an instrument of national policy. This conception of BOAC's role, while not always over-riding, provided a strong influence in the determination of policy towards aircraft purchasing, choice of routes, support of certain associated companies and many other matters.[122]

This, quite plain, account revealed BOAC's national interest policy and its overarching objectives. Tensions between operating in the 'national interest' and operating as a commercial endeavour became increasingly unsustainable, especially in light of economic difficulties and the drive for economic efficiency, such that clarification was needed on where BOAC's priorities should stand.

The new team, under Sir Giles Guthrie sought to fully understand BOAC's role in Britain, and in its 1964 annual report the Corporation outlined that 'it seemed appropriate for there to be a statement in writing of the Government's view of the role that BOAC was expected to fulfil and of the considerations that should guide its counsels.'[123] This exchange culminated in a letter sent by Julian Amery, Minister of Aviation, to Guthrie in 1964. In this letter, which he read out to the Commons in 1964, he explained the government policy plainly:

> I have sometimes been told that there is uncertainty on the part of the British Overseas Airways Corporation as to how far its role is commercial and how far it should take account of considerations such as public service and national prestige which might conflict with a purely commercial interest. The Government do not

---

[121] Aeronautical Correspondent, "B.O.A.C. To Be Made to Pay Its Way," *The Times*, 1963/11/22/ 1963. 12.
[122] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1962." 24.
[123] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1964." 5.

consider that there is any solid justification for such uncertainty. Nevertheless, it may help to remove any misunderstanding if I give you more specific guidance on this issue[…] It is important that the interchange of views between the Government and the Corporations should not blur the fundamental responsibility of the Corporations to act in accordance with their commercial judgment. If the national interest should appear, whether to the Corporations or to the Government, to require some departure from the strict commercial interests of the Corporation, this should be done only with the express agreement or at the express request of the Minister.[124]

Noted historian on BOAC, Robin Higham described this letter as the 'Commercial Magna Carter',[125] as this was the first time in the Corporation's history that 'any Minister gave the airline a clear line of policy as to how far it was to act commercially and what account it should take of considerations of national prestige', and was a likely reason for the BOAC Chairman's early resignation in 1964.[126] Amery's argument was clear, but the existence of the letter and the need for it to be written typifies the relationship between the government and airline, capturing two decades of miscommunication and misunderstanding about what stance BOAC should have taken with regard to financial matters. Perhaps more importantly, it put the lid on the responsibilities of a nationalised industry and its obligations to the state, categorically stating that it owed nothing to Britain other than income and profit.

2.8   Conclusion

As part of the evolution of the responsibility to the 'national interest' between 1945 and 1965, BOAC had remained relatively consistent in its policy: despite several changes in management and leadership and shifting government hostilities, BOAC continued to embody many of the core principles associated with its formation. Its focus was on how it could support the development of the British nation as it had done throughout wartime service. Its awkward designation towards the 'national interest' had implied that BOAC needed to think about where it sat in Britain's wider interests, often alongside the inconsistencies of the government. It was,

---

[124] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 5th February, 1964," (1964).

[125] Higham, *Speedbird: The Complete History of Boac*. *Speedbird*. 245.

[126] Bray, "The History of Boac." *The History of BOAC*. 165.

however, by no means a unique nationalised industry in Britain – many of these issues were fundamental problems in Britain's nationalised industries which were often accused of poor performance and lacklustre receptions amongst customer opinions. BOAC did, however, possess a unique global infrastructure and a responsibility to *represent* the state on an international scale more so than any other nationalised industry. Its responsibilities were both domestic and international. This thesis will subsequently examine the significance of this communications role, outlining the value of these communications as well as some of the core messages that were promoted about Britain as a nation.

3 The 'Dream Every Kid Has. A Dream Plenty of Grownups Get Too'

3.1 Introduction

The Second World War had glamorised the world of air power. Stories of heroism in the air, coupled with British pioneered technologies like the 'jet engine' had meant that throughout the post-war period there was a new wave of supporters and admirers across Britain. As an aviation company, BOAC advertising sought to communicate the successes of the British economic planning system which had supported it throughout the Second World War, highlighting that economic planning had created a successful economy based on technology. This view was captured by the successful introduction of the De Havilland Comet which was posited as evidence of Britain returning to its status as a 'world leader' both for Britain's aviation and for its wider economic interests. This 'Comet optimism' embodied a variety of different interests in the early post-war period, and it was suggested that BOAC's achievements in aviation were representative of a wider calibre of Britain as a nation. More importantly, BOAC's marketing in the early period needs to be understood within the context of the early Cold War. Between 1945 and 1955, the messages were important ammunition in the late 1940s and early 1950s where convincing the hearts and minds of citizens was at the top of the agenda. This chapter argues that achievements made in aviation were advertised as reflective a return to a broader culture of success in Britain – success in aviation apparently translated into success across the board. BOAC advertising emphasised the success of Britain's 'middle way' economy in contrast to the brashness of American Capitalism and the oppression of Soviet Communism. This chapter seeks to examine how BOAC's brand became emblematic of Britain's technical and social modernity, an icon which would serve as a strong marker in the increasing uncertainties of the Cold War.

3.2 Fighting the Cold War at Home and Abroad

In 1946, participating in a debate on aircraft noise, Labour politician Arthur Symonds argued that there was 'a feeling in many people's minds that civil aviation is the rich man's hobby which the ordinary man in the street cannot afford; and so we get the feeling that the airborne plutocrat gaily flies into the air, ignoring the discomfort of the less affluent and grounded man in the street'.[1] In this speech, Symonds suggested a notion that aviation services had revealed, and exacerbated, a set of major social and economic inequalities. However, in nationalising the airways, the Government had effectively made the decision to subsidise the 'airborne plutocrat' and his travels across the world. What made this matter more pressing, however, was the image this created for Britain's economic and social systems in the early days of the Cold War, where the success of a social and economic system was powerful ammunition in the battle for hearts and minds. Britain's 'welfare state' could argue that the essential services it nationalised, for example, health and coal, were done for a greater, and clearer, sense of public good. The airways did not meet this example. Hence, the important issue of this chapter is to understand how BOAC presented itself under a broader narrative of public service.

This was particularly important for the broader context of the early Cold War. There was an early acknowledgement that the Soviet Union was expansionist, and that communism and its policies were a threat to Britain's interests. The Cold War also meant that there was competition from the Soviet Union on the 'home front', which was forming 'a necessary part of the emerging Cold War strategy' to 'secure the hearts and minds of the population in Britain and the Empire against the baleful tenets of Communism'.[2] There was no question that the British political elite interpreted Soviet Style propaganda as step towards global expansion,[3] and despite the awareness of this ideological threat to Britain, it was severely limited by the

---

[1] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 31st October, 1946," (1946).
[2] Deighton, "Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1955." "Britain and the Cold War." 113.
[3] Beatrice Heuser, "Stalin as Hitler's Successor: Western Interpretations of the Soviet Threat," in *Securing Peace in Europe, 1945–62* (Springer, 1992). 19.

economic realities after war. Britain remained constrained in its capacity for military intervention throughout the period, and thus attention was paid to ways that demonstrated effective power with limited economic means. It is important to acknowledge that these domestic and international ideological threats, certainly in the immediate post-war period, were not wholly from the Soviet Union – the United States also typified an ideological threat as it also offered an ideological social system that threatened to undermine Britain.

Therefore, political communication formed a key part of Britain's competitive strategy, positioning itself between the ideological forces of Capitalism and Communism through an emphasis on an economy and leadership inspired by a sense of moral responsibility and welfare. Rather than initially aligning with the US or the Soviet Union, British Government's saw Britain as a nation that presented a competitive case as a 'middle ground' distinct from the extremes of both the Capitalism of the US and of Communism in the Soviet Union. Britain was backed by 'the more just society of the welfare state at home and pursuing an enlightened policy of decolonization abroad' where it could 'serve as an example to those who disliked both Russian autocracy and American plutocracy', especially in light of the US involvement in the Korean War in 1950 and Khrushchev's speech to the 20th Congress in 1956.[4] Britain's approach to Cold War tensions were thus more intrinsically determined by cultural attitudes derived from a character of morals, which were 'informed by other features of British society such as masculinity, family, religion, nation, social democracy and humanitarianism' which was underpinned 'by uncomfortable relationships between tradition and a creeping modernity which characterised the 1950s and early 1960s,'[5] and BOAC and had assumed that correctly communicating these specifically 'British' values would result in successfully communicating a 'characterisation' of Britain. Publicity therefore played a huge part in international relations.

---

[4] Anthony Hartley, "The Lost Vocation," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 1 (1980). 70.
[5] Nicholas Barnett, *Britain's Cold War: Culture, Modernity and the Soviet Threat* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018). 20.

BOAC's implementation of information and communication to alter perceptions of the nation was completed in an international political culture of communicating the 'values' of Britain. Soon after the Second World War, in 1948 the Information Research Department (IRD) which was set up and given the 'task of projecting Britain positively as a democratic socialist power capable of creating a Western European bloc independent not only of Soviet Russia but also of capitalist America', describing it as the creation of Britain as a 'Third Force'.[6] The IRD was motivated by the need to counter Soviet propaganda in locations across the 'third world' to present Britain as an alternative superpower to the Soviet Union and United States. The idea of the 'Third Force' was about 'propaganda attacking Capitalism as well as Communism' where the aim was 'to win the confidence of the workers and peasants' by showing that 'there was more social justice and better living conditions for ordinary people under Social Democracy than under Communism'.[7] Whilst 'third-way' policies had largely dissipated by the 1950s, the construction of the belief that Britain's unique selling point was as the 'mid-way' power between Capitalism and Communism persisted and the ideas of the 'third force' and 'middle way' continued, shifting into the realms of industry and Government policy.

In the context of the Cold War, described as 'the apogee of the twentieth century struggle for hearts and minds,' it was 'by its very nature a global propaganda conflict, the alternative to real war. Machinery for the effective employment of propaganda, therefore, has become an essential weapon in any national arsenal'.[8] Effective participation in this propaganda effort would therefore have focused on 'talking to broad swathes of global populations about who "we" are, by offering information about "our" values and culture, and, importantly, by listening to who

---

[6] Hugh Wilford, "The Information Research Department: Britain's Secret Cold War Weapon Revealed," *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (1998). 354.
[7] Lyn Smith, "Covert British Propaganda: The Information Research Department: 1947-77," *Millennium* 9, no. 1 (1980). 70.
[8] Philip M Taylor, "The Projection of Britain Abroad, 1945-51," in *British Foreign Policy, 1945-56*, ed. Michael Dockrill and John W Young (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989). 10.

"they" are'.[9] The 'representational forces' thus could be implemented across a variety of different departments, industries and sectors, forming a broader movement of national communications which highlighted the intrinsic value of Britishness – in economic, political and cultural terms.

These political attitudes had penetrated the rhetoric of a variety of different organisations, for example, a commissioned report described the value of the BBC and British Council as 'vehicles,' noting particularly that the British Council formed to promote 'cultural propaganda' which was 'broadly interpreted as the dissemination of British ideals and beliefs in a general rather than specifically political form - would not only serve to enhance British influence and prestige abroad, but would also effectively further the wider ideals of international peace and understanding'.[10] Similarly, the BBC would 'help restore national unity and social, cultural, and political stability' which, when applied overseas, 'came to mean that the BBC would also seek actively to reinforce the bonds of Empire' as it was believed that 'broadcasting and communications would encourage international peace and order and, to a lesser extent, the spread of democratic values, thus helping Britain retain its influence in the wider world.'[11] Hence, Britain's pursuit of information and propaganda was mobilised across a variety of different sectors, and was part of a broader process of ensuring that every means at Britain's disposal united to pull the line of the alternative power in world affairs.

The idea of the 'middle way' grew in significance over the post-war period, particularly in the realms of business and consumption – which became key theatres of Cold War ideology in Britain. Where Communism interfered too much with the regulation of commerce, there were

---

[9] Janice Bially Mattern, "Whysoft Power'isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," *Millennium* 33, no. 3 (2005). 610.
[10] Philip M Taylor, "Cultural Diplomacy and the British Council: 1934-1939," *British Journal of International Studies* 4, no. 3 (1978). 244.
[11] Simon J. Potter, *Broadcasting Empire: The Bbc and the British World, 1922-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). 5.

beliefs that the 'wild and untamed' capitalist free market was also dangerous for consumers. This prompted a rise in consumer organisations and initiatives, including coops and co-ownerships which, whilst not unique to Britain, represented the unique structures of British consumer culture. These were presented as a series of 'domestic efforts to construct a social democratic society, which would stand as a humane alternative to both cutthroat US capitalism and dictatorial Soviet communism,'[12] which, whilst not wholly accepted, did create a significant force for the inner workings of consumer organisations, trade unions and the Labour Party itself.

This represented a wider hesitancy towards extreme politics in the post war period in Britain's industrial sector. For example, in the John Lewis Partnership, a 1948 vote banned the admission of new partners associated with either totalitarian or communist ideologies. Founder and Chairman John Spedan Lewis described in 1954 that his Partnership was 'designed to be democratic in the British sense of that word' and that the Partnership 'does not desire members whose preference for totalitarianism of any sort impels them to do what they can to convert the party government of British democracy'.[13] Such intolerance for extremity was also present in BOAC, as there were concerns to ensure that the specifically 'British' form of democratic values continued. In 1950 were fearful of an internal Communist insurgency and investigated their own unions for hints of communism, as a Board Meeting launched a report into the 'alleged communistic tendencies in trade union branch leaders' which concluded that 'the branch is wholly and completely non-political and loyal to the Corporation.'[14] This was particularly important in light of the McCarthyist trials sweeping the United States in the mid-

---

[12] Peter Gurney, "'Co-Operation and Communism Cannot Work Side by Side': Organized Consumers and the Early Cold War in Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 3 (2019). 360.

[13] John Spedan Lewis, *Fairer Shares: A Possible Advance in Civilisation and Perhaps the Only Alternative to Communism* (London: Staples Press, 1954). 168.

[14] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 234th Meeting Held on 11th May 1950." A.S.S.E.T. Alleged Communistic Tendencies in Trade Union Branch Leaders, 27th April 1950. 1.

1950s, which were intent on removing Communists from positions of influence and authority, 'spiritual assets such as British tolerance and liberty could be proudly compared with the allegedly flawed American example',[15] and could be channelled through business and industry, reaffirming the incompatibility of the extreme ideologies.

Such international communication and cultural representation has been identified as an important tool in the study of international relations. One of the leading theorists in international relations, Joseph Nye, argued that nations could influence the world agenda by utilising 'soft power' which emphasised features of a nation that would encourage others to admire its 'values' and would seek to 'emulate its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness' and to make the example set as one that others would 'want to follow'. [16] The key was to 'set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions.'[17] Across the world, aviation has been regularly appreciated as a critical instrument of 'soft power' and non-militaristic influence. Scholars noted that 'well-run national carriers can lift global perceptions of their home country' and that 'aviation is a great facilitator of soft power, closing distances and connecting people, cultures, companies, ideas, innovation, and opportunity.'[18]

Despite an acknowledgement of the power of airlines had in contributing to national 'soft power', it has rarely been historicised. Some examples offer an intersection between the two issues, for example, Turkish Airlines played an important 'soft power' role through the 'developing business ties through free trade agreements and increasing tourism potential

---

[15] Giora Goodman, "The British Government and the Challenge of Mccarthyism in the Early Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 1 (2010). 64.
[16] Joseph S Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Public affairs, 2004). 5.
[17] Ibid. 5.
[18] Jonathan McClory, "Love from Above: The Soft Power of Aviation," in *2014 Report Essays* (Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders, 2014). 30.

through a liberal visa regime.'[19] Particularly in the post-war period where propaganda and influence were, in many cases, the only ways of eliciting change in global politics, the use of soft power through aviation has been a significant mobiliser of change, but one rarely acknowledged. It is also rarely applied to Britain, a case where, as the 'middle way' approach indicated, would be valuable in the context of decline, empire and power.

BOAC was very much a child of the state planning agenda, with a direct line to the government and an agenda that purportedly operated with the needs of the nation at the forefront. It also encouraged and supported the capitalist agenda, helping to promote international capitalism through improved mobility, but also encoding luxurious consumption and holidays within this agenda. It very much embodied notions of the third way, using state capital to promote and support capitalism. BOAC needs to be observed within the context of these organisations, and should be considered as very much a part of the cultivation of the core messages. Given its popularity, it played a part in representing an essence of British values and the advantages of continued subscription to British ideas. The immediate focus for the post-war period was to embody the middle way British economic approach to industry and ideology: it was an example of the best of the 'democratic socialist' power. Therefore, examining the key messages contained within communications materials offers an insight into how Britain's agenda was understood by managers and marketeers from a British perspective, and help to understand the narrative of these messages throughout Britain and the wider world.

3.3 Building BOAC's Britain

For the average citizen, indeed for the vast majority of people in Britain, flying was prohibitively expensive. Therefore, the BOAC brand was rarely consumed through sitting on aircraft and experiencing BOAC services, rather it was consumed through advertising, media

---

[19] ORÇUN SELÇUK, "Turkish Airlines as a Soft Power Tool in the Context of Turkish Foreign Policy" (Boğaziçi University, 2012). 56.

and corporate news. As the largest airline in Britain, BOAC defined ordinary citizens' engagement with flight, and in many cases it was the largest airline operating in other countries and therefore defined aviation for them as well. Thus, BOAC's position in post-war Britain was an important interface between industry, internationalism and the public. BOAC's PR department recognised this, noting in the 1948 budget that 'one of the primary Public Relations duties of a national Corporation such as BOAC is to gain and maintain the goodwill of those tax paying shareholders, the majority of whom got no material benefit from air transport'.[20] The act of BOAC attempting to foster a sense of domestic 'goodwill', particularly amongst individuals that would never fly on board a BOAC aircraft in their lifetime would mean justifying the expense of an international airline in political, economic and social terms to non-flyers.

The 1948 budget allocated £112,000 to Great Britain, £136,000 to the 'Atlantic Division', £28,000 to the Eastern division and £32,000 to Africa and the Middle East.[21] Advertising in the late 1940s was relatively mundane and unimaginative, and offered little 'advertising' and more 'information', highlighting the gradual expansion of air travel rather than any reasons for it. In 1946 an advertisement demonstrated that aviation was gradually being less legally restricted and outlining that 'BOAC can now fly you without a Government priority',[22] highlighting the opening up of the industry to non-government and non-military interests after the Second World War. Destinations played a minimal role in this form of advertising, often represented by little more than simplistic icons. Advertisements were designed to highlight where passengers could fly, and not as much of the *why* people would want to, describing in *The*

---

[20] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 207th Meeting Held on 8.1.48," (N4056 BOAC Board Documents October 1947 - March 1948, Meetings 205-210, 1948). Appendix B, Public Relations Budget 1948/49. 1.
[21] Ibid. Appendix A, Advertising Budget 1948/49. P.3.
[22] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Boac Can Now Fly You without a Government Priority To..." *The Times*, 1946/08/06/ 1946. 5.

Economist that 'it's a small world by Speedbird,'[23] and listing the number of 'Speedbird Routes across the world' in *The Economist*.[24] Aside from minor visual flair in the form of single colour graphics in 'India, Pakistan, Ceylon' in 1948,[25] there was little emphasis on aircraft, destinations, or service. There were some more blatant attempts to associate BOAC in more national terms in this early period of advertising. Amongst generic advertisements for flights were advertisements which emphasised that BOAC was acting as guardians of Britain's future prosperity. In figure 2, an advertisement in *The Times* in 1947, BOAC asked 'What is a Speedbird?' described that the Corporation's 'Speedbird' logo 'symbolises an ideal – the determination to place BOAC ahead of the world's air lines and to keep it there by unceasing improvement'.[26] This implied that 'world leadership' on behalf of Britain formed an important basis of BOAC's international publicity policy.

---

[23] "It's a Small World by Speedbird," *The Economist*, 1948/08/07/ 1948. 228.
[24] "Speedbird Routes across the World," *The Economist*, 1947/05/10/ 1947. 729.
[25] "India, Pakistan, Ceylon," *The Times*, 1948/06/18/ 1948. 2.
[26] "What Is a Speedbird?," *The Times*, 1947/01/21/ 1947. 9.
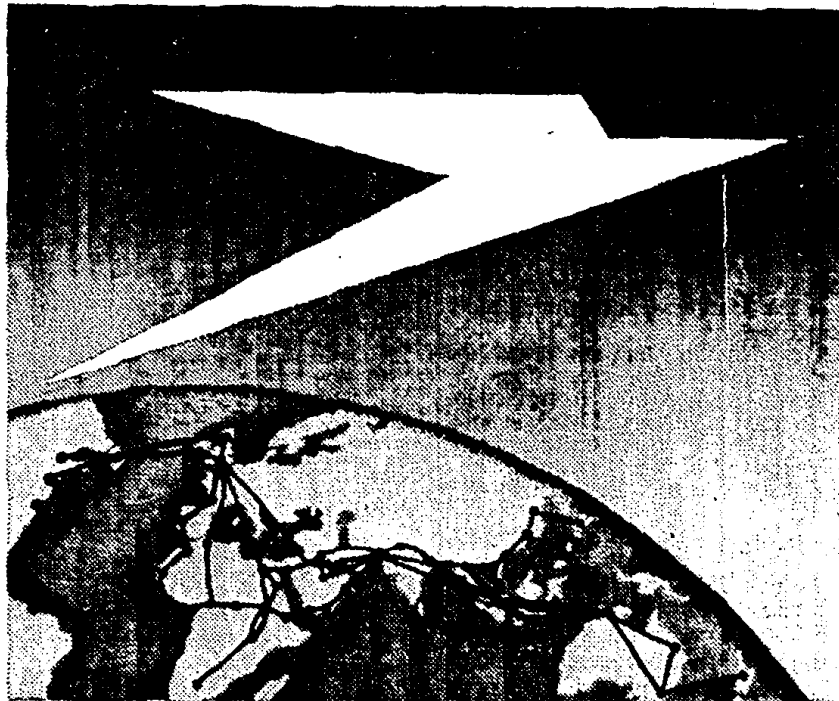
What IS a SPEEDBIRD?

● The Speedbird is a symbol — the emblem of B.O.A.C.

● The Speedbird is a route — 72,104 miles of routes, linking 5 continents across the world.

● The Speedbird is a plane — any aircraft operated by B.O.A.C.

● And, above all, the Speedbird symbolises an ideal — the determination to place B.O.A.C. ahead of the world's air lines and to keep it there by unceasing improvement.

B·O·A·C

Speedbird Routes to:
CANADA · U.S.A. · MIDDLE EAST · SOUTH, EAST AND WEST AFRICA · INDIA · FAR EAST · AUSTRALIA · NEW ZEALAND

BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH QANTAS EMPIRE AIRWAYS, SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS, TASMAN EMPIRE AIRWAYS

Figure 2: "What IS a SPEEDBIRD?" Times, 21 Jan. 1947, p. 9.

This notion of advertising had important political implications. Advertising in the late 1940s was seen, particularly by commentators in the Labour Party who had championed the idea of nationalised industries, to be needless, persuasive and ideologically dangerous. The Labour Party had 'stood in the vanguard of left-wing political attacks on the advertising industry,'[27] describing it as an industry that was deceptive, manipulative and needless, hostilities that had convinced advertisers that the industry 'would never be safe until a Conservative government

---

[27] Stefan Schwarzkopf, "They Do It with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics," *Contemporary British History* 19, no. 2 (2005). "They do it with mirrors." 135.

was returned to power and they worked hard to bring that about.'[28] However, in spite of this hostility, the 'Attlee government's use of these channels, as a contribution to the solution of its post-war economic problems, was innovatory,'[29] and despite the aversion to advertising there was no misgiving about the use of advertisements for overt political ends. Commercial advertising in the Second World War and early post-war period could be justified on the basis that it could 'could sustain morale and reinforce the messages of government communication, in addition to generating goodwill and continued sales for firms that advertised'.[30] Therefore, 'advertising' meant something completely different to commentators on the left and, by definition, the operators of nationalised industries.

This 'propaganda' was to 'assist ministers to reach their ultimate goals of redressing the trade balance, maintaining full employment, and arresting inflation'.[31] The acceptability of advertising was thus heavily based on context – depending on which industry and for what 'national' purpose it followed. As one of the nationalised industries brought about by Attlee's Government, BOAC placed a high value on information and communication, but a comparatively low value, nay hostility, on advertising. This was part of a broader 'reluctance of sections of the Left to engage with a politics of affluent consumption, and the lack of opportunity for those consumer-oriented Labour politicians to put forward their ideas from 1951 to 1964 meant consumerism in the 1950s took off outside those organisations which had traditionally been associated with the consumer interest'.[32] The Labour Party strongly believed that nationalised industries, like BOAC, were seen to offer fairer deals for the consumer over the private monopolies that had existed before,[33] and therefore the messages they promoted

---

[28] Peter Gurney, "Voices of Civilisation: Advertising and Its Critics in Austerity Britain," ibid.24 (2018). 203.

[29] William Crofts, *Coercion or Persuasion?: Propaganda in Britain after 1945* (Routledge, 1989). 250.

[30] Philippa Haughton, "Justifying British Advertising in War and Austerity, 1939–51," *Twentieth Century British History* 28, no. 3 (2017). 407.

[31] Crofts, *Coercion or Persuasion?: Propaganda in Britain after 1945*. 251.

[32] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). 163.

[33] Ibid. 146.

were not 'advertisements', but information. This is why the BOAC example matters in particular, because it was essentially performing both roles, raising issues of moral importance and helping Capitalism along, but whilst arguing that it performed a politically advantageous role that hence needed to promote itself.

Symbolic and 'morale building' messages were a particularly common theme in poster advertising for BOAC, similarly echoing material from the design and rhetoric of wartime. Graphic artists, many with direct experience of working on graphic publicity throughout the Second World War, participated in designing graphics and posters for BOAC advertising materials, including noted transport designers like GR Morris, Abram Games, F.H.K Henrion and Beverly Pick,[34] all of whom were ex-MOI artists. Henrion, also having worked for the Ministry of Information, described the 1950s as 'the heroic age of the poster',[35] and Abram Games noted a belief in 'a dawning age of internationalism' that was 'underpinned by the universal nature of consumer products,' in which he had hoped that the posters' 'emerging new visual vocabulary could help build an international community able to withstand the apocalyptic pressures of the atomic age.'[36] (figure 3) In this manner, advertising sought to highlight an *opportunity* of travel and the opportunity *to* travel as an exemplification of the freedoms of the citizen in Britain, even if such travel would remain largely inaccessible. These posters made little of specific destinations or prices and opted to focus on abstract and artistic imagery and raising awareness of the 'Speedbird' symbol. Therefore, early advertising was not designed to generate sales, but as a continuation of the wartime 'morale building' process through constructing messages that implied that Britain was at the centre of the new global

---

[34] Paul Jarvis, *British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters* (Stroud: Amberly, 2018). No page numbers provided.

[35] Ruth Artmonsky and Brian Webb, *Fhk Henrion: Design* (Antique Collectors' Club, 2011). 8.

[36] Anthony and Green, *British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight*. *British Aviation Posters*. 124.

network of nations, well connected within this network, and to imply that the future of the organisation and by extension the nation was a bright and optimistic.
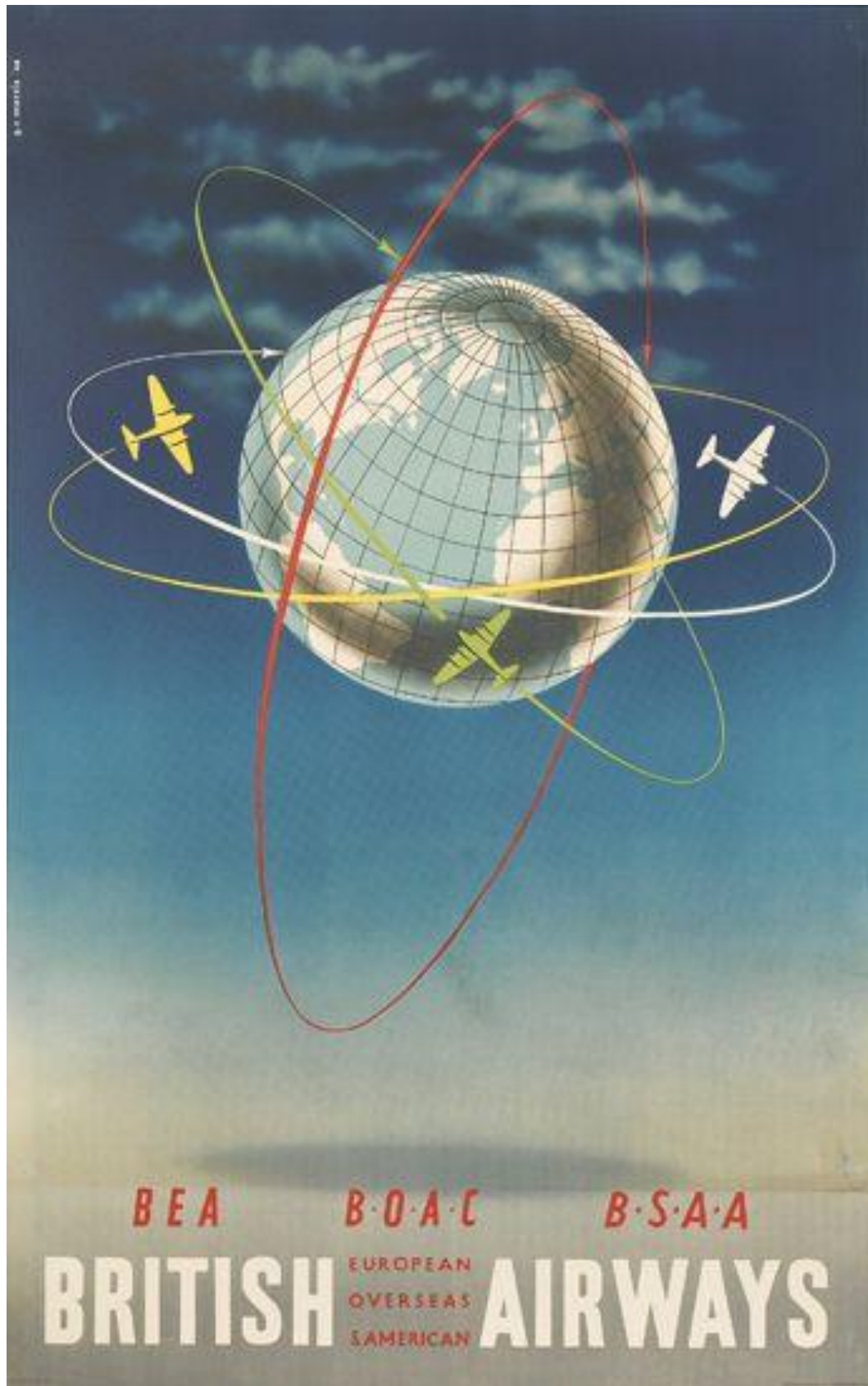
Figure 3:BEA BOAC BSAA – British Airways Designed by GR Morris in Anthony, S. and O. Green (2012). British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight. Farnham, Lund Humphries. P.109

This 'aviation optimism' persisted beyond (and often included) BOAC. The optimistic view of automobility and aviation came through in early films. In 1947, the young Pathé film star Dave and his trusty companion Dusty the terrier got a chance to fly in a BOAC Constellation aircraft. The narrator described 'it's Dave's first real adventure in the air, the dream every kid has. A dream plenty of grownups get too – to fly, to find adventure'.[37] Dave's rather modest looking appearance implied that the dream of travelling on board an aircraft was one that could be realised in Britain by even the most ordinary of citizen. In fact, BOAC had been involved with, and sponsored, a number of films with a similar message of stoic aviation optimism. This included *Transatlantic Airport* in 1945,[38] which was produced by the Crown Film Unit which told an optimistic story of a BOAC flight delivering medicine to the son of a British man as the narrator went on to add that 'flying will be the biggest factor in stopping future wars',[39] not just as a tool for spreading democracy, but that Britain could be at the centre of an agenda that brought about global peace.

The Ministry of Information (MOI) and subsequent Central Office of Information (COI), both created 'to function as a common service agency for government departments, advising on the technical aspects of information distribution',[40] published a series of films targeted at raising awareness of Britain's aviation industry. The 1950 film *Into the Blue*, described the vast expanse of the BOAC network and its sense of global responsibility:

> Already familiar as well throughout the great cities of the world are the initials
> BOAC British Overseas Airways Corporation. This is Britain's long-distance
> airline, now organised to keep more than 50 planes moving above the globe every
> minute of the day and night. To BOAC's chairman Sir Miles Thomas falls the task
> of supervising nearly two hundred thousand miles of routes, many of which did not
> exist before the war. First to fly the Atlantic regularly in both directions, BOAC
> captains now look down on the towers of New York as old familiar friends. Others

---

[37] British Pathé, "Dave and Dusty," (British Pathé, 1947).
[38] Michael S. Gordon, "Transatlantic Airport," (1945).
[39] Alan James Harding, "Evaluating the Importance of the Crown Film Unit, 1940 – 1952" (Nottingham Trent University and Southampton Solent University, 2017). 107.
[40] Mariel Grant, "Towards a Central Office of Information: Continuity and Change in British Government Information Policy, 1939–51," *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 1 (1999). 50.

skim the glittering Caribbean Courses set for the hard currency trade and tourism of the South American Republics. Others again sweep across the lakes of equatorial Africa, with a traffic of Commonwealth Relations and Colonial affairs. And yet others, touching down where the hills of Hong-Kong fall to the China Sea, carry to the farthest East the commerce of the Western world.[41]

The idea that BOAC had conquered space and time was reflected in early post-war films and advertising. The 1950 film *Tomorrow is Theirs* described that 'it is easy to see the world now that flight has conquered time. It is easy to know one's neighbours now that time has shrunk. Flying is no longer an adventure, but a matter of efficiency, of people who know their job, people thinking, working, and being responsible',[42] implying that the 'impossible' has become a simple matter of 'British' routine. The sense was that the early period was embodied by a sense of undeniable optimism for the future of Britain in an interconnected world of aviation and aircraft, and that better aviation connections would mean improved 'understanding' between powers.

Marking perhaps a turning point for both BOAC and the projection of Britain was the 1951 Festival of Britain, which undoubtably played into themes of prestige within advertising and flight. In line with the *Projection of England*, the festival 'sought to educate popular taste and encourage technical enthusiasms[…] the Festival's bold confidence in British design,' something which would fall in line with the Civil Servant and advocate of Britain furthering its public relations capacity, Steven Tallents, and his view that 'national prosperity depended on Britain's ability to reimagine itself as a pioneer of new industry'.[43] BOAC championed the festival, promoting its impact far and wide and promoting its optimistic fervour in the early 1950s. It described the Festival of Britain in a 1950 advertising leaflet specifically designed to promote the event, describing that it would 'undoubtably[…] be a landmark in Britain's

---

[41] Diana Pine, "Into the Blue," (Central Office of Information, 1950).
[42] John Spencer, "Tomorrow Is Theirs," (1950).
[43] Scott Anthony, *Public Relations and the Making of Modern Britain: Stephen Tallents and the Birth of a Progessive Media Profession* (Manchester University Press, 2018). 179.

history.'[44] It went on to outline that 'although the Festival has a serious purpose – to show our faith in Britain's future and commemorate her achievements in the past – it will also carry with it an air of gaiety. The visitor will see Britain full of hope and brightness'.[45] BOAC featured prominently in the pamphlets for the event, asking people to 'fly yourself, fly your freight' on BOAC and BEA services across the world.[46] The prominence of aviation and the airways suggested that there was an attachment between the destiny of Britain and its civil aviation industry. This association became particularly pronounced as new technologies provided evidence of these attitudes in the early 1950s.

3.4   Comet Optimism

The 1950s had somewhat regenerated Britain's interest in flying and aviation. Despite BOAC's largely unaffordable flights, it operated throughout a period of intense interest in civil and military aviation, typified by the 'glamour of aviation' and 'by the ambition of many adolescent girls to become air hostesses' and was 'seemingly matched by a vibrant, successful British aircraft industry.'[47] The historian David Kynaston quoted Panter-Downes, a columnist for the *New Yorker*, who argued that 'the ordinary English were enormously heartened by the feeling that the peculiar national inventive genius for machines, which had created so much wealth in the steam age, is as good as ever in this uncomfortable atomic one.'[48] Recreational activities associated with aviation such as the act of 'plane spotting', a phenomena emerging in the interwar period but took off as an activity after the Second World War and represented 'very much at the cutting edge of interwar popular involvement in science and technology.'[49] The

---

[44] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Festival of Britain 1951," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1950).

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ian Cox, "The South Bank Exhibition: A Guide to the Story It Tells," ed. The Festival of Britain (London: HMSO, 1951). iii.

[47] David Kynaston, *Family Britain, 1951-1957* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010). 123.

[48] Ibid. 123

[49] James Hinton, "Self Reflections in the Mass," *History Workshop Journal* 75, no. 1 (2013). 255.

intense interest in aviation meant that developments in the industry attracted huge attention, and BOAC was at the forefront of this.

The 'peculiar national inventive genius for machines' held particular weight in the post-war period as a result of the invention of the jet engine by Frank Whittle in 1928. Following the Second World War, jet technologies formed an important conceptualisation of Britain's modernity, penetrating popular representations of art, culture, politics and even Royalty. Being able to 'own' the modernity associated with the 'jet age' was seen as an important source of evidence of Britain's leadership, as 'the jet engine was seen not only as a great British success, but also as a potent symbol of a new British identity in which a claimed technological superiority was becoming a defining quality and a replacement for a now declining imperial power.'[50] The jet engine was symbolic of a British centred strive for modernity and global leadership, representing a sense of 'defiant modernism' in post-war Britain which was 'sustained by impressive, but spasmodic, technological aviation feats'.[51] This rhetoric of 'new technology' became a central theme of BOAC's message, and its openness to technology – particularly jets – helped to bolster an image of a forward thinking and futuristic organisation. Hence, BOAC and jet aircraft, for the early 1950s, became indistinguishable.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the British jet engine and its associated modernity had come to symbolise a sense of technological – and therefore political – leadership throughout the world. This was observable in many different areas of British culture; in 1948, an air correspondent for the *Times* described to his readers that they should 'Be British, think British, and stand up for British civil aviation. There is nothing we have to learn from other countries. We have the tools, the "know how" to lead the world'.[52] It was believed that the jet engine

---

[50] Andrew Lionel Nahum, "World War to Cold War: Formative Episodes in the Development of the British Aircraft Industry, 1943-1965" (The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 2002). 58.
[51] Ibid. 269.
[52] Air Correpondent, "Future of British Civil Aviation," *Financial Times*, 1948/06/14/ 1948. 4.

could revolutionise other transport modes, as the *Daily Mail* described in 1949 that the 'turbo-cars may arrive this year' in which the jet-engined motor car had 'reached an advanced stage' with a team that had been 'run by members of Whittle's old Power Jets team'.[53] As one enthusiastic reader to the *Daily Mail* wrote, 'the skies are vibrant with the hustle and hum of progress as the nation's vie with one another for aerial supremacy – a contest of quality in machines and men[…] And the men who design, build and fly British planes will continue the country's advance,'[54] and the front cover of the popular monthly publication *The Aeroplane* stated in 1952, 'the world is looking up to British Design',[55] picturing two experimental British jet fighters which captured a sense of leadership in technology. These were, of course, British perspectives and there is a clear sense of self-congratulation, but nonetheless, they reveal the persistence of an attitude in Britain's broader abilities as a manufacturer and technological leader.

Whittle had become a celebrity in his own right, with a tribute to the inventor in 1948 describing that 'the claim of any country to honour and respect among nations depended on its capacity to produce from time to time men and women of a quality so outstanding as to command the tributes of the whole world' describing that 'Sir Frank Whittle was a worthy addition to that number'.[56] Whittle had been specifically hired by BOAC in 1948 where he would become 'jet advisor' for BOAC, in which he would assist in the 'development and operation of gas turbine engined aircraft' and 'has accepted this invitation and will act in an honorary capacity',[57] resigning shortly after in 1952 as a result of the fact that 'the job he set out to do has been

---

[53] Courtenay Daily Mail Motoring Correspondent Edwards, "The Turbo-Cars May Arrive This Year," *Daily Mail*, 1949/01/19/ 1949. 3.
[54] "The Sky Is the Limit," ibid., 1951/09/01/ 1951. 1.
[55] "Front Cover," *The Aeroplane* August 1952.
[56] "Nation's Debt to Sir Frank Whittle," *The Times*, 1948/10/08/ 1948. 2.
[57] "Sir Frank Whittle to Be Jet Advisor," *BOAC Review* August 1948. 3

completed' upon the first civil aviation jet flights to Africa,[58] identifying him in the same light as other aviation pioneers.

This also had implications for the 'qualities' of being British: speaking in the *Daily Mail* in 1952, Miles Thomas described the character of the 'young people' BOAC was looking to recruit:

> Brains, imagination, pertinacity, and speed in the uptake[…] and I told him why[…] that if Britain were to hold her hard-won Riband of the Air in this highly technical and directly competitive world arena, nothing less would do[…] For this is the British jet age, and its rewards as we have already learned – not without some little satisfaction – are for the bold, the swift, and the confident. There is nothing in it for the sluggard or the dead-beat.[59]

This character of citizen was supposedly one which captured the optimistic identity of the jet age – defined by individuals of great tenacity and ingenuity, and which represented the finest qualities of Britishness in the jet age. This suggested that the 'jet age' went deeper than aircraft, and embodied an allegory of the status of Britain's technological and industrial strength. Modernity was therefore represented 'not only to the new technologies of the post-war era such as nuclear and space technology, but also to the idea of a society which is 'fair' with some form of rationality behind its structures and goals.'[60] As BOAC was intrinsically involved in the progression of both of these issues of British modernity – through its focus on new and increasingly technically complex aircraft *and* a very specific characterisation of what it meant to be 'British' and the subsequent values it entailed – meant that any communication of these themes would have served as an effective tool for use within the Cold War context and were in line with the values BOAC sought to communicate.

Films produced in this period also reinforced this technological optimism. The 1952 film *The Sound Barrier* which told a dramatized account of Britain's attempts to break the sound barrier

---

[58] Courtenay Edwards, "Sir Frank Whittle Resigns," *Daily Mail*, 1952/07/16/ 1952. 4.
[59] Miles Thomas, "The Sky's the Limit for Jet Age Youth," ibid., 1952/08/01/. 2.
[60] Barnett, *Britain's Cold War: Culture, Modernity and the Soviet Threat*. *Britain's Cold War*. 20.

was filled with references to Britain's technological modernity. Ann Todd's character, Susan Garthwaite, described on her trip to Cairo on board a de Havilland Vampire how the earth was 'beginning to look awfully small and insignificant' but that she should 'stop being old fashioned[…] why worry about the poor old earth. Look up there. There's our future, space. You can't make that insignificant. Down there's had it'.[61] This was a 'story of unbounding optimism at the start of the jet age[…] had all too brief moment in post-war Britain when modernity reigned: when scientists and engineers, designers and architects, really did believe swords could be turned into ploughshares[…]; when meritocracy still appeared attainable; when concepts of progress and planning were by no means discredited'.[62] It 'inspired other filmmakers to focus on aviation films and wave the flag for the apparent golden future of British aviation'.[63] The optimism of the day also came out in films like the 1955 *Out of the Clouds*,[64] which was produced in conjunction with London Airport and BOAC and with the full cooperation of the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, cheerfully recounted the operations at the recently opened London Airport, but above all charted the fact that it was the airports that were at the centre of technological progress.

Perhaps above all, the early sense of jet-age optimism was captured alongside the first commercial flights of the De Havilland Comet, the world's first civilian jet airliner made entirely in and by Britain. The Comet had been the product of discussions as early as 1944 by BOAC's Development Policy Committee as a project that 'should be produced at the earliest possible moment as a development/prestige policy' arguing that 'its commercial value and

---

[61] David Lean, "The Sound Barrier," (British Lion Film Corporation, London Film Productions, 1952).
[62] Adrian Smith, "The Dawn of the Jet Age in Austerity Britain: David Lean's the Sound Barrier (1952)," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 30, no. 4 (2010). 489.
[63] Michael Paris, "Promoting British Aviation in 1950s Cinema," in *History of Technology*, ed. Ian Inkster (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005). 75.
[64] Basil Dearden, "Out of the Clouds," (1955).

operational range are of secondary importance'.[65] Using jet engines on a civilian jetliner had important advantages: the first was speed, as the Comet promised to significantly cut journey times. In 1949 it set a record journey time from London to Sydney at 56 and a half hours, where the normal journey time to Sydney would take 84 hours.[66] As a result of this feat, the *Daily Mail* described it as the jet that 'halves the world'.[67] Secondly, it promised to make flying more comfortable by removing the vibrations caused by piston-engined aircraft.

Above all was its profound sense of 'British' achievement, as the Comet was seen to symbolise Britain's primacy in aircraft development – and more generally it was seen to burgeon perceptions of Britain's technical, economic and manufacturing competence. This was a landmark in the history of BOAC, and aviation production in Britain and the world over both from the aviation perspective, and from the perspective of national production and PR. Numerous MPs heralded the Comet's development in 1950, describing it in the Commons as 'the great saviour of British civil aviation' and that 'the Americans are shaken by its performance,'[68] as it had the ability to 'repay the British aircraft industry for its humiliations at American hands since the end of the war'.[69] In fact, the Comet had revealed conflicting interests between Britain and the United States the technology contained within the jet engines was far superior to the Soviet equivalent which 'risked altering the Cold War's delicate strategic balance' by allowing the Soviets to 'overcome technical difficulties which were[…] holding up the development of high-thrust engines for bombers'.[70] Thus buying Comets would have artificially advantaged Soviet civilian and, more importantly, military capabilities. Either way,

---

[65] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 1st Meeting Held 20th January 1944 Et Al. ," (N4042 BOAC Board Minutes Development Policy Committee 1944 – 1945, 1945). Recommendations for the Revision of Brabazon Programme, 2.
[66] "London-Sydney in 56½ Hrs," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1949/04/14/ 1949. 1.
[67] "Jet 'Halves the World'," *Daily Mail*, 1951/05/25/ 1951. 1.
[68] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 23rd March, 1950," (1950).
[69] "Gas Turbines in Aircraft," *The Economist*, 1949/08/06/ 1949. 311.
[70] Jeffrey A Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Harvard University Press, 2009). 141-2.

Britain could realistically claim to have pushed the boundaries of science and technology further without any international assistance and therefore promote it as a product of the economic and social systems in Britain.

The belief in these technologies was so great that the rhetoric that described these advances were portrayed in historic, religious and even supernatural ways. On a demonstration tour of the Comet in 1950, which helped Cairo become 'Comet conscious', the *BOAC Review* described the view that the 'jet aeroplane was felt to be as important a step forward as the railway had been over the stage coach or the steamship over the sailing vessel',[71] advances historically associated with great advances in British power.

A 1952 article in the *BOAC Review* titled 'the Day the Sun Stood Still', likening the Comet's advances to that of descriptions in the bible. It described 'in Chapter 10 of the Book of Joshua you may read of this phenomenon' referencing the sun standing still in the bible and making the comparison that 'today it is known that a Comet, whose path approached very near the earth, exerted such an influence that the rotation of our planet stopped, or at least slowed down considerably, and so gave the effect of the sun standing still for a day'.[72] Not only do these descriptions imply a more systematic and efficient reconnection to distant lands, it also demonstrated a profound exaggeration of Britain's ingenuity, implying that it had the power to overcome physics and nature.

The most prominent rhetoric was the way these new aircraft would reshape the temporality of the globe, often promising to shift and change geographies to bring the world 'closer'. Miles Thomas was a particular advocate of this kind of language, writing multiple times about how the Corporation would 'make the world seem a very shrunken globe',[73] and following on with

---

[71] "Comet to Cairo," *BOAC Review* June 1950. 10
[72] "The Day the Sun Stood Still," *BOAC Review* February 1952. 6
[73] Miles Thomas, "New Boac Jets Will 'Shrink' the Globe," *Daily Mail*, 1949/07/04/ 1949. 4.

an Operations Development Director predicting in 1952 'for the passenger of the future[…] it will no longer be appropriate to discuss a journey length in terms of days and nights – it will be a matter of hours only!'[74] The Comet was not just imagined as an aircraft, but as a tool which altered the geographies of the post-war period. These notions were obviously hugely exaggerated, but they nonetheless revealed a sentiment that the jet age would help to refocus global attention on Britain once again, and would, like previously advantages like the steam engine, redraw international boundaries and restore Britain's sense of leadership.

It also helped to optimistically frame Britain's economic prospects highlighting sales of the Comet abroad. The *Manchester Guardian* proclaimed in 1952 that world markets were at Britain's 'command', and that the aircraft 'may develop into a wider commercial and economic achievement which may affect everyone in these islands',[75] helping to justify the project economically to all sectors of the population. In 1954 a British minister argued in the commons that British aircraft have 'advanced the prestige of our people' quoting an edition of *Flight* which described a Canadian buyer's perspective, stated 'the fact is that because your aircraft are so outstanding Canadians are ready to say that your other manufactures must be good value too',[76] and that 'the propaganda value of these air services was, in fact, a help to British exports in the Canadian market.'[77] The 'propaganda' value of aircraft is an issue with far-reaching implications, especially in this post-war context, and as the sources suggested, was capable of capturing an industrious and economically competent Britain.

As the first airline to purchase and operate the Comet, BOAC took a leading role in publicity for services and initiated a global advertising campaign. This campaign was similarly saturated in Britain's newfound sense of technological optimism. In the 1952 special edition of the *BOAC*

---

[74] "Speedbird Diary - on the Sunny Side of the World," *BOAC Review* July 1952. 2.
[75] "New Era in Air Travel," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 05/07/1952 May 07 1952. 7.
[76] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 8th March, 1954."
[77] Ibid.

Review dedicated to the official introduction of the Comet spoke briefly about the advertising campaign and a series of 'prestige advertisements' which described the publicity:

> An advertising campaign which substantially exceeds any previous special campaign yet undertaken by the Corporation has been launched in connection with the introduction into service of the Comet[…] Similar campaigns are being conducted at places down the route to Johannesburg and throughout the territories served by the service. Prestige advertisements, based on the theme "BOAC, the first carrier to offer the public jetliner transport," are appearing throughout the world.[78]

The tagline 'world leader in air travel' epitomised a view and the technological progress of the Comet represented the broader success of British industry. Pathé news pictured Miles Thomas and the then Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation Lennox-Boyd – a man who had been very critical of BOAC for its wasteful and privileged position in Britain – describing how he had 'come along to tell Sir Miles and all who are sailing with him with what pride we watch this flight start, and in what immense hopes the future of the Comet in the years that lie ahead. I hope BOAC know of the pride we have in this splendid corporation'.[79] These publicity events positioned BOAC positively into the hearts and minds of the public and suggested that the nationalised industry had worked successfully in the British economy and had produced results that would affect everyone in Britain.

The Comet also had important implications for international politics; an advertisement published directly by De Havilland, the wholly private venture that had designed, developed and manufactured the Comet, in the *BOAC Review* which described that 'it is Great Britain that introduces this new facility to mankind' and 'the gap of several years in that essential partnership was one of the costs which Britain had to bear in the second great struggle to defend her sovereignty. It was almost enough to eliminate this country as a builder of airliners. The Comet, however, with the sufficiency of its technical advance, has closed the gap in a single

---

[78] "Announcing the Comet," *BOAC Review* June 1952. 5.
[79] British Pathé, "Boac Comet 11 Off to South America," (British Pathé, 1953).

stroke.'[80] Furthermore, an entry in the *BOAC Review* described the introduction of the Comet as 'far more than just a faster aeroplane[…] it has become the symbol to people abroad of Britain's resumption of leadership in world progress. Everywhere we went crowds of important officials as well as the public came to see this new British achievement.'[81] In the celebration of its centenary, the noted London Association of Engineers held a special dinner in which the president, Mr van Gelder, said in his speech 'nearly all the great developments of this age of ours have come from this small island. And with a magnanimous hand, we have given them to others to help develop for the benefit of mankind at large', which included references to shipbuilding and the Comet as 'leading the world'.[82] More importantly, it suggested that despite this endeavour being orchestrated almost entirely by a private enterprise, the achievement was purported to be one of *national* significance, and one which every Briton could hold some degree of responsibility.

It also contained important implications pertaining to military and defence capabilities. The same De Havilland advertisement argued how 'the hopeful outlook is endangered by the fresh threat to world security. Those responsible for the Comet are among the first to recognise the importance of the civil element in Britain's air strength and the need to consolidate the advance which has been made'.[83] This exertion of technological preparedness was particularly important within the context of the Cold War, where increased demilitarisation meant other forms of the scientific industrial complex meant that military prowess needed to be symbolised in different ways. The Comet sat alongside developments such as the hydrogen bomb which 'signalled the demilitarisation of Britain and would give way to emphasising more short term preparedness[…] There was no point in having industries ready to gear up for large scale

---

[80] De Havilland Aircraft Company, "Britain's Comet: A New Era in World Travel," *BOAC Review* June 1952. 9.
[81] "Comet to South America," ibid. October 1953. 17.
[82] British Pathé, "Engineers Celebrate Aka Engineers Dinner," (British Pathé, 1952).
[83] De Havilland Aircraft Company, "Britain's Comet: A New Era in World Travel." "Britain's Comet." 9.

military production when wars could be decided in quick and deadly H-Bomb exchanges'.[84]

Both the hydrogen bomb and Comet served as two key examples of projects designed to 'mask' any semblance of relative economic decline and military subordinance.[85] To many, it seemed as if the Comet was 'capable of retrieving a glorious imperial past',[86] and for the early 1950s, many felt that it had.

3.5 Symbolising Technologies

The phenomenon of 'Comet optimism' also had a much wider cultural impact. The perception that Britain's 'world leadership' was returning was a consistent theme. One notable exception was Nevil Shute's 1948 novel *No Highway*, that described experiences of scientific research into aviation manufacturing, focusing specifically on metal fatigue.[87] The novel traced Theodore Honey, an aircraft designer at Farnborough, and his research into pressure fractures in aircraft. It followed that the 'Reindeer' aircraft had developed pressure fractures within its hull which was resulting in sudden, explosive decompressions and killing all passengers and crew. Allegories in the novel are plentiful, none as much as how he characterised aircraft designers as 'both artists, engineers, and men of a powerful and intolerant temper'. [88]

The Central Air Transport Organisation, or CATO, was clearly meant to echo BOAC, and Shute's novel and subsequently released 1951 film *No Highway in the Sky*,[89] show a popular public interest in the subject of not only aviation, but technical specification and detail in the manufacturing process. CATO's decision to ignore Honey's expert warnings echoed an anxiety of a broader notion of the 'vastness of governmental power' and 'the scope of its activities,

---

[84] Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970*. 68.

[85] David Childs, *Britain since 1945: A Political History* (Bristol: Routledge, 1988). 72.

[86] Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy*. *Cold War at 30,000 feet*. 131.

[87] Nevil Shute, *No Highway* (Vintage, 2010 [1948]).

[88] Ibid. 54.

[89] Henry Koster, "No Highway in the Sky," (20th Century Fox1951).

especially those involving national security, the size of its budget, and the opportunities for corruption and self-aggrandizement breed anxieties about what is being done and why.'[90] Shute's novel revealed an anxiety about overconfidence and scientific advance, suggesting that only slow and measured progress was the path to technological success. It also revealed an anxiety about expertise – Honey was regularly described as the 'boffin' and marks a growth in science literature which is known for 'supplying drama when the hero is ridiculed, and a satisfying ending when he is vindicated'.[91] In Honey correctly articulating the issue, it vindicated the idea that it would be the British engineers that would eventually see to any engineered problems, still underpinning the message of British civil aviation as one of success and confidence. Technological optimism was underpinned by great anxiety and fear, but in spite of this there was a confidence that the 'British way' would ultimately endure.

For the most part, however, the success of the Comet seemed to reassure audiences in Britain that it was still a nation capable of world leadership, both in an aviation sense and as a broader norm outside aviation. Not only did BOAC appear in Cinema, but it also appeared in popular literature. BOAC was regularly referenced in Ian Fleming's *James Bond* novels, where Fleming described Bond's journey abroad, picturing 'from the moment the BOAC Stratocruiser taxied up to the International Air Terminal at Idlewild, James Bond was treated like royalty'.[92] Aviation had assumed its place as a space for expensive, high-status luxury, describing Bond's experience in the luxury of the Stratocruiser, flying it in *Diamonds Are Forever*.[93] The 1966 edition of Ian Fleming's *James Bond: The Man with the Golden Gun* published in Canada featured a BOAC calling card on the front cover.[94] If BOAC was good enough for James Bond,

---

[90] Steven L. Goldman, "Images of Technology in Popular Films: Discussion and Filmography," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 14, no. 3 (1989). 289.

[91] A Bowdoin Van Riper, "What the Public Thinks It Knows About Science: Popular Culture and Its Role in Shaping the Public's Perception of Science and Scientists," *EMBO reports* 4, no. 12 (2003). 1107.

[92] Ian Fleming, *James Bond: Live and Let Die* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954). 1.

[93] *James Bond: Diamonds Are Forever* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956). 60-62.

[94] *James Bond: The Man with the Golden Gun* (Ontario: Pan Books Ltd., 1966).

it would be good enough only for those of the highest social status. Fleming had used *James Bond* to respond 'to those political events of his time that led to Britain's loss of status as a major player on the world's stage,'[95] embracing many of the elements of the British character that were expressed by BOAC. More significantly, however, James Bond was seen to symbolise Britain's technological and political prestige across the world, often showing up the forces of both Capitalism and Communism, and the fact that both icons of Britain could be so easily coupled together suggested that they promoted an image of a successful Britain.

In addition to appealing to the masculinity of British world leadership, it also became interwoven with the fashion industry. Advertising regularly appeared in fashion-conscious publications in London and New York, including a 1949 cinema advertisement pictured the famous Grace Kelly and her Honeymoon fashions, picturing her ascending the steps of a BOAC aircraft,[96] implying that all fashionable Honeymoons start with BOAC. Publicity images in *Vogue* included a photograph of a suit by the English fashion designer Hardy Amies, known for working with Queen Elizabeth II on her outfits, with a focus on 'deceptive simplicity of his accomplished tailoring' and highlighting the Queen as an individual of 'tradition, representation, distinction, assimilation, and practicality'.[97] In 1953, advertising in *Vogue* that, with the Comet 'BOAC sets world styles in air travel' and that 'Comet jetflights[…] inspire new, Carolyn Schnurer, Comet fashions. And who wouldn't be inspired by such vibrationless super-speed?'[98] Designer fashion magazines like *Harper's Bazaar* and advertising 'fly right in fashion' writing 'She's here – she's there – she's continents away. And in between she's basking in the purring luxury of a BOAC Airliner' going on to describe her designer outfit.[99]

---

[95] Christine Berberich, "Putting England Back on Top? Ian Fleming, James Bond, and the Question of England," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 42, no. 1 (2012). 24.

[96] British Pathé, "Honeymoon Fashions in Bermuda," (British Pathé, 1949).

[97] Youn-Yung Cho and Sook-In Yang, "A Study on Queen Elizabeth Ii's Dress: Focusing on the Dress and Role Enactment," *The International Journal of Costume Culture* 13, no. 1 (2010). 14.

[98] "Advertisement: Comet (B.O.A.C)," *Vogue* 1953. 46.

[99] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Fly Right in Fashion," *Harper's Bazaar* March 1958.

BOAC made appearances in various copies of *Vogue*, describing their 'Fashions from Britain[…] in Fashion everywhere' describing 'wherever BOAC flies you, on 1000 routes around the world, you'll find British products in high fashion and high favour. For, just as British service and airmanship have made BOAC the world leader in air travel, products such as British Woollens, Tootal Linens, British Brevitts, Schweppes sparkling mixers, Yardley Toiletries have taken the international lead in good living'.[100] The aim, above all, was to appeal to the interests of both men and women, implying that the success and optimism embodied within jet aviation had reverberated across many different audiences in Britain.

Fashion in particular would serve to encourage more women to participate in imagining civil aviation. It also highlighted a competitive edge in broader international competition whereby 'dress was a means by which two opposing ideological systems could be contrasted' offering the example of 'the "dowdiness" of Russian women' that was often contrasted with 'images of American glamour and elegance' forming the 'subject of a moralistic discourse, often cast in Cold War terms. Debates in the East concerned with appropriate forms of 'socialist' dress attacked the sartorial codes of the West'.[101] Even within the fashion sector, the suggestion was that Britain's competitive position lay between US Capitalism and Soviet Communism.

3.6   Flying Above Politics

In addition to the aircraft epitomising 'world leadership', there was also careful attention to suggest that the people on board were also typical of the image of 'world leadership'. This included publicity featuring several British Prime Ministers flying BOAC on political duties, including Winston Churchill, flying in 1853 to 'Big Three' talks, 'accompanied by Mr Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary, Government staff, and the other members of their party[…] At

---

[100] "Fly Boac: World Leader in Air Travel," *Vogue* 1955. 42.

[101] Jane Pavitt, *Fear and Fashion in the Cold War* (V&A Publishing, 2008). 23.

Bermuda he met President Eisenhower and Monsieur Laniel, the French Premier,'[102] an event also covered by Pathé news.[103] Footage of a BOAC Stratocruiser taxiing with Churchill on board followed by Eden speaking with the aircraft behind him,[104] created an association between political leadership and the BOAC brand, suggesting that BOAC was a key institution of national service. Imagery would consistently promote the Prime Minister and his cohorts travelling including Churchill and Eden boarding their flights to the United States in 1954 'for talks with President Eisenhower'.[105] Prime Minister Harold Macmillan flew numerous times with BOAC to Washington, Indianapolis, and Ottawa,[106] and he was also pictured boarding a Britannia on his Commonwealth Tour, taking Mr Macmillan and Lady Dorothy Macmillan to 'India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.'[107] Finally Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home flew in a Comet in 1964 'for talks in Ottawa and Washington.'[108]

Given the frequency in which BOAC would fulfil the duty of moving Britain's political leaders around the globe, BOAC became part of a visual vocabulary of statehood and power. Whilst this was largely incidental, its frequency and the amount of press coverage associated with it, this service to the state could be rationalised as an extension of state power, therefore reflecting part of the imagery of the British state and its interests. BOAC was also careful in crafting an image of itself at the service of the British State and its institutions. BOAC constructed a visual vocabulary of state service which not only emphasised the airline's prestige and service quality, but it also positioned itself alongside the state and above the politics that had defined, and often stagnated, its cause. Often, BOAC's role as a state-owned airline meant that it could justify itself in terms of a 'national service', helping to facilitate the travel needs of key figures of the

---

[102] "Sir Winston Churchill Flies to "Big Three" Talks," *BOAC Review* December 1953. 6.

[103] British Pathé, "Sir Winston Flies Out," (British Pathé, 1952).

[104] "Selected Originals - Sir Winston in Bermuda," (British Pathé, 1953).

[105] "Premier Off to U.S.A. Aka Premier Off to Us," (British Pathé, 1954).

[106] "Prime Minister Flies Britannia to USA," *BOAC Review* July 1958. 6.

[107] "Britannia Carries Premier on His Commonwealth Tour," *BOAC Review* February 1958. 7.

[108] "In Brief," *BOAC Review* March 1964. 12.

British state. This helped to consociate the 'national' element in the 'national interest' with a broader conception of Britain's world role.

 This was also seen at the parliamentary level in which MPs and Peers also given the opportunity to be flown around by the airline for a demonstration flight. In 1952 a 'party of 32 members of both Houses' for whom were 'almost equally "paired" from the Conservative and Labour parties.'[109] Guests with political importance also featured alongside the BOAC brand, including the Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain who was pictured disembarking a BOAC aircraft in New York in 1952.[110] Pathé also pictured officials arriving in Kenya to discuss the Mau Mau uprisings, an issue discussed in greater detail later in this thesis, arriving into Nairobi and disembarking a BOAC aircraft as Pathé described Sir Evelyn Baring and Lt. Gen. Erskine waiting on the ground for SV. Walter Elliot and other M.P.s.[111] The imagery of BOAC as an apparatus of statehood meant that there was a direct association between BOAC and the 'state', not just the nation. It implied that BOAC held an important role in the functioning of political power, as well as its power to represent and enhance the image of the nation.

Perhaps more significant than its role in ferrying political figures was in its role in facilitating the mobility of the British Royal Family. BOAC's image was interwoven with a duty in transporting figures of British Royalty and featured heavily in advertising materials. No Royal figure featured more prominently than Queen Elizabeth II, as from the earliest days of her ascendancy to the throne, BOAC helped to establish her as a figure of international importance. In 1947, the then princess Elizabeth 'christened' BOAC's new airliner, in which she spoke of how the ceremony 'brings a new aircraft into the peacetime service of civil aviation, and is a landmark on the road away from war and destruction' proceeding to pour Champagne on the

---

[109] "Peers and Mps Travel in Comet," *BOAC Review* August 1952. 3.
[110] "Gromyko Takes over for Vishinsky Sic," (British Pathé, 1952).
[111] "The Shadow over Kenya," (British Pathé, 1954).

aircraft nose.[112] In her last event as Princess, in 1952 Pathé described the Princess departing on her tour to Africa, as the narrator described the King who had come to wave off his daughter that it was good to 'see his majesty looking so well' and 'in the past few months, their Royal Highnesses have logged up a lot of flying time as princess Elizabeth has already visited Africa and America, and will visit Asia upon arrival in Ceylon. By the end of the tour she will have seen something of all five continents' receiving good wishes from Mr Churchill on behalf of the government.[113] This trip would serve to be a defining moment for BOAC as it would be the journey that charted Elizabeth from Princess to Queen, a fact that held particular significance in the British Airways Heritage Centre.

This tour was cut short by the King's death in February 1952, and upon hearing the news BOAC was responsible for arranging Princess Elizabeth's return to the UK. In the first instance this required liaising with one of its closely associated partners, the East African Airways Corporation (EAAC), and then back to London on board a BOAC aircraft. As Pathé described, 'her tour of the Commonwealth cancelled[…] now the princess Elizabeth we knew and loved returns amongst us as our queen. Before her plane, her government and leaders of the other parties receive her greeting', whilst disembarking a BOAC aircraft to meet Churchill, Attlee, and various other ministers and dignitaries.[114] This is one of the key narratives purveyed in the archive and is often pointed to as a defining moment in BOAC's history. BOAC thus symbolised a vehicle of great continuity and secured its symbolism of Royal patronage. Following the events of 1952, the imagery and language of Royalty became key elements of BOAC's marketing, and the 'new Elizabethan Age' tone was frequently adopted in corporate communications and marketing materials. In conjunction with other great aviation advances like the Comet, BOAC itself came to symbolise the 'New Elizabethan Age' just as much as

---

[112] "Princess Elizabeth Christens New British Plane," (British Pathé, 1947).
[113] "Special - the Royal Departure," (British Pathé, 1952).
[114] "Long Live the Queen," (British Pathé, 1952).

Queen Elizabeth II herself, in so far as the 'new Elizabethan ambitions fermented in a culture where the pursuit of profit was balanced against the demands of national prestige'.[115] The first images of Queen Elizabeth II in the UK were with BOAC letters prominently in the background, bringing together the two institutions and cementing BOAC in service to not only the Queen and the Monarchy, but to the institutions of the British state.

This was particularly apparent in the events surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation, an event which played heavily into the Corporation's marketing. A 1953 advertisement described 'a rare event which has occurred only three times in the last hundred years. Its deep significance is accompanied by the most impressive ceremonial to be seen anywhere in the world',[116] marking the event with posters emblazoned with 'Coronation Year' and Royal iconography such as Royal Guards and Crown Jewels.[117] Branding in this way was clearly successful as it prompted 'an imbalance in traffic flows with the expected increase in passengers travelling to the UK, especially those from North America, not matched by those returning'.[118] BOAC played a leading role in facilitating celebrations of the Coronation in various different locations, as the Chairman wrote that 'staff overseas are taking a prominent part in many of the Coronation programmes which are being planned throughout the world,' including BOAC organised functions in Boston, Karachi, Montevideo, Johannesburg, Hong Kong, and Bahrain.[119] As an act of self-proclamation, 'the Coronation revealed the range of Empire and statement of power around the Dominions, colonies and territories which magnified the glory of Britain for her citizenry and potential enemies. The perspective from the Dominions was different, more ambivalent, because of growing aspirations for national status and internal

---

[115] Anthony and Green, *British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight*. *British Aviation Posters*. 144.
[116] British Airways Heritage Collection, "1953 Coronation Year: Fly by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1953). 1.
[117] Jarvis, *British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters*. *British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters*. Chapter 2, "Fly BOAC to BRITAIN in Coronation Year" by Adelman, 1953 and "Coronation Year" by Unknown, 1953. [no page numbers].
[118] Ibid. "Fly BOAC to Britain in Coronation Year" by Adelman, 1953. [no page numbers].
[119] "World-Wide Coronation Celebrations," *BOAC Review (Jubilee Edition)* May 1953. 10.

politics,'[120] providing an opportunity to utilise the global services offered by BOAC and helped bring together Commonwealth nations in celebration of the Queen.

The Coronation was also closely linked with the Comet and jet aviation, such that a review noted in an article entitled 'News from 10,000 miles (or 36 hours) away,' referenced the increases in speed provided an efficient means by which the film *A Queen is Crowned* could be distributed throughout Tokyo by Comet and followed by an expansive marketing campaign.[121] The film represented the 'most successful film at the British box office, was popular throughout the Commonwealth and was a surprise success in the United States' which 'was woven together of elements which were seen as timeless and traditional: Empire, Protestant Christianity, popular approval and the coronation confirmed the Monarchy as an integral, inevitable and desirable part of ongoing history'.[122] Therefore, it *literally* helped to bring together the world and, for those that could not afford flights, helped to provide publicity throughout the world as an act of national service and international unity (at least as far as the image went).

This extended into events which brought together Commonwealth nations in the 'esprit de corps' after the coronation. One 1954 leaflet entitled 'British Empire and Commonwealth Games' advertised flights to 'fly to Canada by BOAC' for the Commonwealth Games. This leaflet inconsistently switched between the words 'Empire' and 'Commonwealth' which progressively recognising the fact that the competitors 'differing widely in race, creed and colour, all subscribe to the same high code of sportsmanship and fair play,' yet offering a 'brilliant display of Imperial pageantry' and proclaiming that 'it's a pageant of the Queen's

---

[120] Kenneth Munro, "Canada as Reflected in Her Participation in the Coronation of Her Monarchs in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 14, no. 1 (2001). 22.

[121] British Airways Heritage Collection, *Boac Review (Speedbird)*, ed. British Overseas Airways Corperation (London: George Reneirs, September 1953). P.6.

[122] Jeffrey Richards, "The Monarchy and Film," in *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, ed. Andrzej Olechnowicz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). P.269-270.

whole realm'.[123] The British Empire and Commonwealth Games had frequently been associated with 'the imperial connection' in which 'the planned receptions for the arriving athletes, for example, also spoke to the unity theme—and in doing so highlighted the centrality of military power and a shared imperial culture.'[124] BOAC therefore tied its brand to the symbols of Commonwealth unity in such a way that implied a sense of unity and togetherness amongst all of the Commonwealth nations.

More broadly, the role of the Queen was particularly important in cementing BOAC's place as a *Commonwealth* airline. The Queen gave 'substance' to the idea of the Commonwealth through a variety of different engagements including visits, Multi faith observance, Commonwealth games, Christmas day messages, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Secretary-General, and the Commonwealth High Commissions, to help to manufacture sense of Commonwealth community and craft 'a tenuous link to the Crown to which even a republic could subscribe'.[125] As Pathé described the Duke of Edinburgh's tour of Guyana, Venezuela and Columbia in 1960, stating that 'the duke is not of course an ambassador of trade' but 'in his unique position as husband of the Monarch and above politics, his presence abroad cannot help but arouse further interest in Britain', helping to 'increase British awareness of foreign countries'.[126] Constructing the Coronation alongside BOAC gave it a symbolic appeal by providing the physical and emotional link between Commonwealth and Coronation. This was not the only way in which BOAC brought together issues of Commonwealth loyalty, an issue

---

[123] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Empire Games," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1954).

[124] Michael Dawson, "Acting Global, Thinking Local:'Liquid Imperialism'and the Multiple Meanings of the 1954 British Empire & Commonwealth Games," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 23, no. 1 (2006). 10.

[125] Philip Murphy, *Monarchy and the End of Empire: The House of Windsor, the British Government, and the Postwar Commonwealth* (OUP Oxford, 2013). 110.

[126] British Pathé, "Our Debt to the Duke Record A," (British Pathé, 1960-69).

which will be explored in later chapters of this thesis, but the association provided a symbolic connection between British institutions and international affairs.

Royalty and its connection with BOAC sought to imply not only the reach of British institutions, but also the strength and rigidity of those institutions. In particular, her international trips were completed with such regularity and speed were only possible as a result of the combination of these institutions. Queen Elizabeth II was the first British monarch to circumnavigate the globe, a political action only possible because of the aviation infrastructures available to her,[127] which resulted in the *Daily Mail* describing her in 1958 as 'The Jet-Age Queen' in which 'the Jet Age' had 'made it possible for the Queen to visit her overseas peoples more often and even to live among them and fulfil some of the constitutional duties of the Crown while maintaining her Court in London'.[128] BOAC was therefore the 'practical' tool in the Queen and Commonwealth toolbox which enabled and enhanced a message of a greater sense of communication and community, even though the reality was often completely different.

More importantly, Monarchy was directly linked to perceptions of modernity. It has been argued that 'the gradual conservative appropriation of the politics of nationhood which followed took a number of forms, from the deliberate identification of the Monarchy with the British nation to the rise of loyalist patriotic groups and the intellectual development of a conservative concept of the nation'.[129] Constructing and marketing an image in line with the Monarchy fostered an advantageous attachment to progress, loyalty and modernity. This broad association had a number of advantages; by branding BOAC in line with the Monarchy, they entered an apolitical discourse and helped to avoid, or at least attempted to avoid, contentious

---

[127] T. H. E. Times Special Correspondent By, "Queen Elizabeth and Her Peoples," *The Times*, 1954/05/31/ 1954. 14.
[128] George Murray, "The Jet-Age Queen ... And the Thirteen Capitals," *Daily Mail*, 1957/10/23/ 1957. 8.
[129] Philip Lynch, *The Politics of Nationhood: Sovereignty, Britishness and Conservative Politics* (Springer, 1999). 4.

political point making. Associating with the Monarchy allowed for 'the deep-rooted distinction between the partisan Prime Minister and impartial Monarch underlines the messages that beyond the feverish but often trivial warfare of day-to-day politics there is a shared focal point of communal identification' arguing that it was responsible for 'symbolising the nation itself, to which the most powerful politicians must, literally, bow'.[130] Monarchy therefore provided a political defence when it came to understanding the economic problems within the nationalised industry, and whilst these early images were ones of optimism, associating with Royalty became an important defence mechanism later on. Above all, it helped to tie BOAC to a rhetoric of the 'national interest' that was to provide propaganda that emphasised the strength and rigidity of the institutions of British power.

3.7   Conclusion

'Comet optimism' had embodied many of the political and economic objectives that had persisted in the late-1940s and early 1950s. Whilst its flight was still an expensive and an unreachable dream for most, marketing sought to engender an image that associated the progress of BOAC with the progress of the nation – and everyone in it. It represented the new-Elizabethan age, bringing many of Britain's long standing political institutions, both literally and figuratively into the jet age. Productivity in the creation and operation of the Comet suggested that all of Britain's endeavours were wholly forward thinking and technologically sound. Above all, it was just that – it was a *representation* of Britain that was *prospective* about the nation's competitive role in the future, fraught with insecurities, anxieties and assumptions. Nonetheless, the constructed narrative revealed how BOAC wanted to position Britain in competition with both the United States and Soviet Union. These optimistic messages about

---

[130] Jonathan Parry, "Whig Monarchy, Whig Nation: Crown, Politics and Representativeness 1800-2000," in *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, ed. Andrzej Olechnowicz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). 67.

science and technology represented a form of public relations that could be employed as part of a broader Cold War message. The emphasis was to suggest that Britain's middle way approach afforded technological and therefore economic success – and would continue to do so for its existence. This thesis will move to examine how the later messages had to shift and contend with challenges to these initial messages of tecno-modern optimism, particularly against the rise of the competitive forces of other nations throughout the 1950s.

4 A 'Contest of Quality in Machines and Men'

4.1 Introduction

The essence of BOAC's success relied on aircraft, a policy area in which BOAC's relationship with the Government was at its most abrasive and where successive Governments intervened in BOAC's strategic decisions more than any other issue. BOAC's 'Comet optimism' advertising persisted until the discovery of serious flaws in the design of the Comet. The ultimate failures of the Comet meant that the only reasonable course of action was the purchase of American airliners, a move which seriously undermined BOAC's 'national interest' rhetoric. This episode was wider than technology – it was about the rise of Americanisation fears of the 'decline' of Britishness. As the economic realities hit, BOAC was forced to adopt a defensive advertising message, focusing on defending the economic expense of its operations rather than advertising its services. It used marketing to defend its actions and highlight how it had brought together public and private industry and had made significant contributions to the economy. It also attempted to renew faith in British manufacturing by becoming increasingly involved in international relations – planning trips to the Soviet Union and convincing foreign markets of the advantages of British goods. In essence, the Comet issue and the need to resort to American aircraft, brought about a period of 'realisation' of economic and cultural decline from an organisation that had, only ten years before, championed being and buying British.

4.2 A Belief in Buying British

Writing in 1944 as part of the *Tribune*, George Orwell described his irritation with Britain's confidence in technology, a trend in terms of aviation and its ability to 'shorten' and 'shrink' the world:

> I do not know how often I have met with the statements that 'the aeroplane and the radio have abolished distance' and 'all parts of the world are now interdependent'. Actually, the effect of modern inventions has been to increase nationalism, to make travel enormously more difficult, to cut down the means of communication between

one country and another, and to make the various parts of the world less, not more dependent on one another for food and manufactured goods.[1]

The development of aviation technologies had, as Orwell described, served to increase Britain's nationalist belief and hardened its ability to join the world together. This was particularly priority for BOAC as it had an important role in the research, development and implementation of technology, and aircraft were central in the operation of an efficient and profitable airline.

The essence of a successful airline was its aircraft. Aircraft manufacturing was a sector that was central to Britain's interests in the early post-war period and served a key part of British scientific and industrial research, representing '57 per cent of the procurement budget in 1949/50' and 'in 1948 the manufacture of airframes, engines and parts, as well as guided weapons, but excluding electrical and electronic equipment, employed 172,000 workers compared to a 1935 figure of 35,000.'[2] Whilst it is true that only £8 million of the £120 million was dedicated to civilian outputs in 1948,[3] civilian aviation represented a significant part of the post-war economy.

As with many aspects of the post-war economic agenda, planning for Britain's aircraft requirements came under the control of the 'Brabazon Committee' in 1942, which sought to 'plan the creation of a civilian industry after the war' and was 'like many of the social aspects of post-war planning, "a tremendous act of optimism and vision" as a member of the Brabazon Committee called it.'[4] It concluded that Britain needed to put 5 aircraft into production; A large 'ocean-liner' aircraft, a smaller aircraft for European routes, a long range aircraft capable of transatlantic routes, a scientific 'prestige' project, and finally a Royal transport aircraft.[5] These aircraft broadly represented the key spheres in which British post-war policy would follow –

---

[1] George Orwell, "As I Please," *Tribune* Dec 31 1944.

[2] Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970. Warfare State*. 101; William P Snyder, "The Politics of British Defence Policy," *Ohio, Benn* (1964). 89;

[3] Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970. Warfare State*. 102.

[4] Peter Hennessy, *Never Again: Britain 1945-1951* (London: Penguin UK, 2006). 108.

[5] Ibid. 108.

long distance transatlantic profit, scientific prestige, Imperial connectedness and Royal enthusiasm – elements which were apparent in Comet optimism alone. Putting these aircraft into production was an early opportunity for BOAC to demonstrate support for the development of the British aircraft industry, as well as an opportunity to advertise British aircraft to a domestic and international market. In a 1944 statement of government policy, it was highlighted:

> the Corporations shall use the British aircraft as soon as they can be made available[…] In war, when resources are strained and Service demands are paramount the Government must place the orders for aircraft for civil aviation, because they must control and allocate the priority and distribution of all calls upon the resources of the aircraft industry.[6]

These purchasing decisions represented a general policy of the 1940s and 1950s where 'state purchases of manufactures were highly nationalistic' where 'the purchase of non-British equipment was not only rare but controversial' as a result of the fact that 'state agencies were keen to support national technical development with public money to supply new British machines to British nationalized and national industries,' a move 'away from internationalism and indeed imperialism towards nationalism'.[7] The idea of a nationalised industry operating foreign equipment would have caused grave doubts about the shape of the 'home' industry and manufacturing. BOAC was no exception to this, with the exception that their loyalty was written into law.

In the earliest days following the Second World War, BOAC's flights were operated by ex-military aircraft. These were described by passengers as uncomfortable and were highly uneconomic and often problematic and were often cited directly as a reason for the enormity of BOAC losses in the early period.[8] BOAC had initially attempted to correct this problem through

---

[6] "British Air Transport. Statement of Government Policy," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*. 10.
[7] Edgerton, "War, Reconstruction, and the Nationalization of Britain, 1939–1951." "War, reconstruction, and the nationalization of Britain." 36.
[8] "Boac's Challenge," *The Economist*, 1948/01/10/ 1948. 51.

the purchase of American Constellation aircraft which would have helped them take advantage of the growing Atlantic market quickly. The obligation to 'buy British' meant 'attempts to purchase US planes' in the 1945 – 1946 period were rejected and were 'compelled to operate converted bomber types', and the Labour Government insisted that BOAC should wait and use British aircraft when they became available.[9] Only one year later, the Government allowed the purchase of American Constellation aircraft as a means of making the most of the transatlantic market as a way of slowing down BOAC's enormous losses. This represented a point of contention with the Conservatives who argued that they 'would not quarrel with a deficiency grant were they running it with British aircraft', further arguing that it was important to 'draw attention to the fact that we have asked for and spent public money on services which, we had hoped, would have been supplied by British aircraft.'[10] This decision was reluctantly accepted as more important issues came to the fore under the expectation that it was followed by a huge British order.

BOAC however, remained deeply resentful of this intervention, and in a 1949 board meeting, BOAC's Deputy Chairman argued that 'the Corporations have no freedom of choice in respect of aircraft that is enjoyed by the airlines of all other countries' and that 'whether we like it or not, we, as an airline, are, in fact, subsiding the British aircraft industry' describing BOAC's actions as interwoven with matters of 'of national policy and that a more appropriate way of subsidising the British aircraft industry would be by direct assistance form the Ministry of Supply, which is the Government Department responsible'.[11] This represented such an important issue in post-war Britain, where the 'obsessive' nature of British policymakers meant that aviation was considered one of the 'last chance' industries. The economy would, certainly

---

[9] Martin Chick, *Industrial Policy in Britain 1945-1951: Economic Planning, Nationalisation and the Labour Governments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). 144.
[10] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 11th February, 1947."
[11] British Airways Heritage Collection, "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 225th Meeting Held on 1st July 1949," (N4059 BOAC Board Documents April 1949 - September 1949, Meetings 222-226, 1948). Financial Effects of the "Fly British" Policy, P.2.

from the impression of some Ministers and the press, rest solely on the success of aviation. Therefore, the British Government *literally* could not afford BOAC to go without British aircraft.

This held an important significance as the 1940s were a period in which Britain needed to bring in money and alter its balance of payments. In 1949, the *Aberdeen Journal* described 'industrialists say that the best hope of a revival for British industry in general is to step up the iron and steel exports[…] in 1950, writes our air correspondent, there must come indication of the world's acceptance or otherwise of the "jet-age," to which Britain has pinned her faith'.[12] This echoed a sentiment that in the mid-1950s that there existed 'a widespread notion in British government circles that aerospace was one of the few sectors of high technology manufacturing where Britain could compete with the United States', and that policymakers were 'obsessive about aviation projects and their prospects of success.[13]

This attitude was marked by a series of research and development initiatives known as 'prestige projects' which were designed to combine 'military style contracts for civil development' under an assumption that they would take 'Britain (and France) into a dazzling technological future'.[14] Such decisions meant that 'especially where defence-related industries were concerned' there was a 'disastrous laxity, with appalling cases of overspending in the aerospace industry. Vast overshoots[…] were later picked up by the Estimates Committee inquiries, to the Treasury's shame'.[15] The 'obsessive' belief in aviation was underpinned by economic despair and an assertion of nationalism, one which BOAC had a big desire to help with, but where their power

---

[12] "Steel Exports," *Aberdeen Journal*, 1949/12/31/ 1949.

[13] Peter Lyth, "Supersonic/Gin and Tonic: The Rise and Fall of Concorde, 1950-2000," in *Transport and Its Place in History: Making the Connections*, ed. David Turner, Routledge Studies in Modern British History (London: Routledge, 2020). 18.

[14] Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970. Warfare State*. 243.

[15] Keith Middlemas, *Power, Competition and the State, Volume Ii: Threats to the Post War Settlement, 1961±74* (London: Macmillan, 1990). 30.

to choose was under the complete veto of the Government. The Comet was the first prime example of this attitude.

Not only did this attitude influence politicians in this period, but it also interwove deeply with notions of the 'New Elizabethan Age'. Britain's aerospace industry had become 'steeped in the essential myths of that converged around the moment of Coronation, engaging simultaneously with optimistic formulations of modernity, technological adventure and the informing potential of an increasingly mythologised past' in which 'the flair for inventiveness deemed necessary for a productive future'.[16] Therefore, aircraft in the early post-war period represented significant symbols of economic and institutional success, especially before many had been invented, emphasised the overall stability and consistency of these institutions in spite of the dislocations of the war. They suggested that a 'return to the old order' was not only likely, but inevitable.

Aircraft manufacturing was seen as a part of a broader loyalty to upholding the British nation, particularly through notions of royalty and power. Particularly in the 1953 Coronation year, BOAC's leaflet detailed how 'the spirit of the Coronation Year has inspired British designers, manufactures and craftsmen to produce new and attractive goods for display to the world's buyers at the British Industries Fair[…] The Fair in Coronation Year will be exceptional for the range and quality of exhibits, which will include a major display of textiles'.[17] Monarchy was seen as an inspiration and motivation for aviation that Pathé described 'with craftsmen among us who are building a peaceful armada in the sky[…] no wonder that British pilots have Royal confidence as their inspiration', noting further that 'majesty on the ground, and now majesty in the air. Travel royally on your journey around the earth flying in the great ships of this new

---

[16] Tony Coult, "From Brabazons to Quatermass: New Elizabethans in Air and Space," in *The New Elizabethan Age: Culture, Society and National Identity after World War Ii*, ed. Irene Morra and Rob Gossedge (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016). 230.

[17] British Airways Heritage Collection, "1953 Coronation Year: Fly by Boac." 1953 Coronation Year: Fly by BOAC. 1.

Elizabethan age,'[18] and similar instances of industrial success in trade fairs were highlighted in the Queen Elizabeth II admiring a Comet at the British Industries Fair in 1952.[19] Aircraft can therefore be identified as products of *national* success in the period given the strength of the association between both Queen and technology. Aircraft represented broader notions of national success, especially given the scientific, military and cultural implications behind them.

4.3   Technology and the Commonwealth

Above all, the strength and consistency of economy and royalty was also echoed by continued notions of Imperial (and later Commonwealth) stability, which would help further stabilise the economy and help compete with the United States. Aviation had always been interwoven with Empire, and formed an important strategy. The original wartime civil aviation plan was an attempt to 'devise a Commonwealth approach to civil aviation policy as a way of countering US influence',[20] and this remained a clear motivation in the post-war period. The Brabazon Committee had clearly made this a priority, as there were specific designs for an aircraft designed for improved connectivity to the Empire. The Type III aircraft was designed for 'Medium range empire routes' or 'hops', which eventually became the Avro 693, of which BOAC cancelled its order in 1947, and eventually evolved into the Bristol Britannia.

It was clearly a political objective as well. In 1948 one Labour Minister insisted that the Commonwealth should select a 'chosen instrument' 'of the British Commonwealth' which would be not only an aircraft, but an *airline* to operate all Commonwealth services, with the hope that it would 'reduce and standardise the types [of aircraft] used by British and Dominions airlines', thus removing the need to buy American aircraft.[21] BOAC had hoped that increasing

---

[18] British Pathé, "Majesty in the Air," (British Pathé, 1955).
[19] "The Queen at B.I. Fair," (British Pathé, 1952).
[20] David R Devereux, "British Planning for Postwar Civil Aviation 1942–1945: A Study in Anglo-American Rivalry," *Twentieth Century British History* 2, no. 1 (1991). 26.
[21] Political Correspondent, "Cabinet to Decide Today on Airliners," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1948/07/15/ 1948.

aircraft sales to the Commonwealth would mean that 'orders may eventually be placed for a sufficient number of aircraft to permit construction of types specifically designed to meet these requirements,' as well as guaranteeing the 'simplicity of maintenance which will permit employment of local resources and low operating costs is most important to feeder line no less than to trunk route operators'.[22] Hence, the central idea was to pull the interests of the whole Commonwealth together as one unified technological bloc to maximise Britain's impact in aviation and to specifically counter the US internal aviation market.

Whilst a Commonwealth airline or aircraft never came to fruition, though BOAC came close as chapters 4 and 5 will indicate, the policy of using the Commonwealth as a unified network against US influence was a central policy in the formation and operation of International Aeradio Limited (IAL), which was set up by BOAC in 1948 as a subsidiary company to 'take over the provision of communications, flying control, and navigational facilities at a number of stations along the routes when the Royal Air Force Staging Posts were withdrawn.' IAL developed and expanded ex-military facilities and equipment for use in civil aviation and improved various radio facilities including 'communications and navigational aids, including radar.'[23] Despite BOAC's direct ownership of IAL, the *BOAC Review* described in 1947 that it was hoped that 'the airlines of other countries will participate in order to broaden its basis and make it a truly international company'.[24] By 1957, as the *BOAC Review* described how IAL acted 'as air radio consultants to 21 governments, administrations, and firms in the electronic industry,'[25] signalling a wide distribution of technical knowledge across the globe and imprinting a British standard of communication.

---

[22] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1950). P.16.

[23] "Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1948," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1948). 9

[24] "Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1947," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1947). 19

[25] "Ial's First 10 Years," *BOAC Review* August 1957. 12.

In addition to important passive political advantages, IAL's expansion was also a key part of Britain's wider aviation strategy, designed to slow the advance of American technologies across the world. As stated in the minutes for a 1947 meeting 'BOAC expressed their anxieties about the activities of American enterprise, particularly Aeradio IPC, in the Middle East and suggested that a limited liability company should be registered in the UK' and that this company would 'prevent Aeronautical Radio Inc from Americanising the world'.[26] IAL's worldwide reach was vast, noting that 'within a year of its founding, IAL was advising civil aviation authorities in Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Persia and was operating signals stations at a wide range of locations in Europe, Africa, and the Middle and Far East.'[27] This not only shows the significance of IAL's routes, but also that they maintained control of major areas of international aviation. Its expansion was highly politically motivated, but it could nonetheless frame this in developmental and communication terms.

Whilst IAL's core objective was to mitigate the practical issues presented by international aviation communication infrastructure, there were also key political and economic advantages to its operation. According to a report written for the Minister of Civil Aviation in 1947, IAL helped 'relieve the British air transport Corporation of the burden of providing their own technical ground services in a number of foreign countries which have so far proved unable to implement their international obligations in this respect', and was to 'actively to promote the marketing of British equipment and the introduction of British techniques abroad'.[28] IAL's central advantage was setting the international aviation standards to be the 'British' standard

---

[26] The National Archives (TNA), "International Aeradio Ltd: Need for British Commercial Organisations to Assist Foreign Countries in Provision, Installation and Operation of Radio Aids," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 217/497, 1947-1948). DGAO (thro' D. of Tels.). 1-2.

[27] Stanley-Price, "Flying to the Emirates: The End of British Overseas Airways Corporation's Service to Dubai and Sharjah in 1947." "Flying to the Emirates." 344.

[28] The National Archives (TNA), "Policy Towards International Aeradio Ltd (Non-Profit Making Concern to Provide Telecommunications Facilities in Colonial and Foreign Countries)," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 252/201). International Aeradio LTD. R31819/47 1.

across the world, and therefore guaranteeing coverage for British aircraft. Hence, IAL's success

was politically motivated, and allowed for increased influence in nations across the world.

IAL could therefore promote the expansion of British services, but under the pretence of

cooperation and technological charity. Particularly as post imperial nations started to develop

their own airlines, Britain could 'cooperate' by acting to equip the new airlines with the British

communication standards. The *BOAC Review* emphasised in 1947 the motivation behind the

installation of these infrastructures was a result of poor progress around the globe:

> A lack of financial or technical resources in some of the countries or
> administrations concerned is one of the major reasons for these facilities not having
> been provided[…] It is the aim of the new radio company to get all the main
> Dominion and foreign air operators to join the organisation and to provide their
> requirements as well as those of the British operators.[29]

This marked an instance where BOAC and Government objectives seemingly intersected,

especially given the specification of meeting the standards of 'British operators' to create a

uniform policy approach.

This is seen in BOAC's subsidiary company, IAL, which had helped to promote the advantages

of Commonwealth cooperation. Whilst only advertising in more specialist publications

specifically targeted at industry experts in publications like *Aeroplane* and *Flight* for

consultancy services for new airlines and industry personnel, advertising for a 1952

advertisement pictured various individuals that had been trained by IAL including 'the Radio

Engineer from Africa, the Radio Mechanic from India, the Air Traffic Controller from Malta,

the Fireman from Bahrain, the Wireless Operator from Burma are all trained members of

International Aeradio Limited',[30] implying that IAL provided opportunities for generations of

people in their countries throughout the Empire and Commonwealth. Advertising stated in 1954

how IAL was 'proud of the contribution it has been able to make in providing

---

[29] "What International Aeradio Will Do," *BOAC Review* April 1947. 9.
[30] International Aeradio Limited, "Ial's Airport Operation," *Aeroplane* August 1952.

Telecommunications and Air Traffic Control Services at the new Khartoum Airport' where 'IAL designed and installed the facilities and is responsible for their daily operation and maintenance'.[31] Advertising for IAL was therefore framed as part of a wider narrative of British 'charity' to nations throughout the Commonwealth and ex-Empire, a theme that would emerge in BOAC advertising in this period and will be examined at a later stage in this thesis.

This was a consistent message in IAL advertising throughout the 1950s, as a 1958 advertisement highlighted how 'Throughout the World – Planning Installation Operation Maintenance[…] IAL can relieve administrations of many worries'.[32] These advertisements directly echoed those of BOAC, constructing a view of the positive and altruistic influence British expansion had on the developing world, with a particular focus on its impact for non-white workers. BOAC was providing an advantageous global initiative through its operations. These advertisements represented not only IAL, but Britain's pursuit of post-imperial relationships. It portrayed Britain as a bringer of technology and opportunity that would benefit the globe and promoted a wider notion of British charity and humanitarianism as a weapon against the expansion of the interests of the United States. This would only last, however, for as long as the obsessive character of technology continued in the political sphere.

4.4 Rethinking the Aircraft Industry

Comet optimism was therefore underpinned by a feeling of 'last resort'. Marketing and images had suggested that the Comet would be an economic and political saviour of Britain. The reality was engendered by a number of concerns raised about the safety of the Comet. There were a series of accidents in which Comets had failed to climb on take-off, which were concluded to have been 'pilot error' accidents, arguing that these were simply pilots not grasping the intricacies of handling the new jets. These incidents were quickly brushed off by BOAC. A

---

[31] "International Aeradio Limited on the Airfields of the World," *Interavia*.
[32] "Throughout the World Planning Installation Operation Maintenance," *Aeroplane* July 1958.

more fundamental problem with the Comet's engineering was highlighted shortly after as three Comet aircraft had spontaneously broken apart at high altitudes, killing all passengers and crew on board.[33] These crashes were initially played down, and instead efforts were focused on ideas of sabotage and bombs: The *New York Times*, for instance, had run a report on the 'bomb theory' as it seemed fanciful to think that it was a wider design flaw - to the extent that early on 'not all Comets would be grounded'.[34] After the first serious crash of Comet G-ALYV, the *BOAC Review*, notably the Jubilee Edition of the publication, made brief reference to the 'expressions of sympathy' from newspapers across the world and quoting Miles Thomas calling it a 'spur to progress' before announcing his decision to continue Comet operations.[35]

In reality, and after extensive investigation it was found that 'a failure of the skin in fatigue at the corner of a window, originating at a small defect in the skin',[36] which had 'caused by structural failure of the pressure cabin, brought about by fatigue'.[37] This was an enormous shock to all stakeholders, including Britain, in the Comet. The De Havilland Company, and De Havilland himself, attempted to frame the discovery of the problem as a British victory. Echoing the same sentiment as Shute's *No Highway* in 1948, De Havilland himself wrote in 1999 that 'although we suffered disaster, it caused attention to be focused, not only on pressure cabin design, but on the whole subject of metal fatigue. It accelerated research in this country and throughout the world and this brought about greater knowledge of the problem'.[38] This episode was unsurprisingly devastating to BOAC which and the crashes would continue to affect the organisation over the course of the following ten years. It suffered huge financial

---

[33] Simons, *Comet! The World's First Jet Airliner. Comet!*. 125-6.
[34] The New York Times Special to, "Britons on Way to Inquiry," *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 01/11/1954 1954. 4.
[35] "Comet G-Alyv," *BOAC Review (Jubilee Edition)* May 1953. 26.
[36] Baron Cohen et al., "Report of the Court of Inquiry into the Accidents to Comet G-Alyp on 10 January 1954 and Comet G-Alyy on 8 April 1954," *Her Majesty Station of Office: London, UK* (1955). 11.
[37] Ibid. 41.
[38] Geoffrey De Havilland, *Sky Fever: The Autobiography of Sir Geoffrey De Havilland* (London: Airlife Publishing Limited, 1999). P.185.

problems and was unable to use a huge number of aircraft, putting the organisation in a significantly worse position than if they had not purchased the Comet at all.

The accidents also had more profound political consequences; in 1953 the *Daily Mail* argued that 'the US Aeronautics authority refuse to "recognise" the air worthiness certificates granted to Britain's turbine-engine airliners by the United Kingdom Air Registration Board',[39] only willing to deal with aircraft on 'an ad hoc basis',[40] which resulted in fierce criticism from authorities in Britain. The *Manchester Guardian* defiantly wrote that the 'British certificate of Airworthiness met all the requirements of the Air registration board' and that the Americans 'have no requirements by which to certify them because they know little about it.'[41] In so doing, these accidents revealed a new sense of vulnerability to the United States, shaking confidence in the mixed economy regime and sparking new doubts about Britain's capabilities against the United States. In refusing to recognise the Comet's airworthiness, it was refusing to acknowledge the standard of British bureaucracies of aviation safety. The episode struck at the heart of the insecurities around the rise of 'Americanisation' in this period, suggesting that Britain was no longer working at the standard BOAC marketing had indicated. This was a turning point in the histories of decline, Americanisation and international leadership.

The more significant problem for BOAC was the sudden need for new aircraft to fill the Comet gap. BOAC was left with no long-range airliners to operate its long-distance routes, the ones which generated the largest revenues, and no equivalent British aircraft was available for BOAC to purchase. Buying American aircraft had become the only sustainable option, and even this would require waiting until 1960. Speculation was enough to prompt severe doubts in the industry; *The Times* argued that the public were 'shocked' at the prospect of BOAC

---

[39] Courtenay Edwards, "Will the U. S. Buy the Comets?," *Daily Mail*, 1953/04/24/ 1953. 4.

[40] "Talks with U.S. On Comet Iii," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 03/12/1953 Mar 12 1953. 2.

[41] "American Bias against British Planes Alleged," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 10/28/1953 Oct 28 1953. 2.

purchasing American aircraft, leading to questions in the Commons about 'whether the corporation was justified in having doubts about the capacity of the British aircraft industry.'[42] Sir Richard Fairey, a leading expert in aviation, argued in *The Guardian* in 1954 that it was 'ironic that the dollars earned by the successful sale of [other British aircraft] to the United States should be spent on American aircraft to the detriment of the British industry[…] After the technical lead the British aircraft industry has given in two wars and in such pioneer efforts as the jet and turbo-prop air liners, it surely deserves a better fate.'[43] Echoing the *Manchester Guardian* in 1955, buying American aircraft was 'taken to imply doubts about the British aircraft industry,' and a leading Conservative, known for their expertise in aviation, described how the decision would 'kill British exports of civil aircraft for a long time to come'.[44] When this American order was officially confirmed in 1955, it was allowed by the press on the 'condition' that 'long range Britannia's come into service on the route the American aircraft should be sold'.[45]

What this episode had challenged most of all was the value of the economic relationship between nationalised producer and private manufacturer. The decision to purchase American aircraft profoundly undermined BOAC in two ways. Firstly, it undermined BOAC as a nationalised industry, going against its inherent design to support the 'interests of the nation' instead opting to support the interests of a foreign competitor nation. Secondly, it challenged BOAC's status as a wholly 'British' airline, ignoring the constellation incident in the late 1940s. It could not effectively champion 'Britishness' because it did not wholly embody it. Particularly in relation to the developing notions of the British nation, in 1954, the Conservative MP Gerald

---

[42] Correspondent By Our Parliamentry, "B.O.A.C. Aircraft Orders," *The Times*, 1954/11/16/ 1954. 6.
[43] "Critic of B.O.A.C," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 11/26/1954 Nov 26 1954. 2.
[44] Our Parliamentary Correspondent, "British Aircraft Orders in Danger?," ibid., 11/16/1954 Nov 16. 1.
[45] "U.S. Planes for B.O.A.C. But," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 02/26/1955 Feb 26 1955. 1.

Nabarro described how these actions would reflect on Britain across the whole world, undermining its ability to manufacture:

> The foreigner believes that the policy of British nationalised industries is inspired and endorsed by Her Majesty's Government, and that the practice which is developing, of nationalised industries purchasing large quantities of expensive engineering equipment-and now aircraft - overseas, is undermining British industrial prestige oversea, affecting our export trade, and having a very adverse effect upon our prospects?[46]

The press also shared these sentiments: *The Manchester Guardian* printed the Labour MP Frank Bestwick's position that 'no-one can expect British manufacturers to sell their products in the world markets if our own corporations do not buy them,'[47] further reinforced by a comment from the Conservative Air-Commodore A.V. Harvey, stating that he was 'astonished that BOAC should even be considering the purchase of American aircraft four or five years hence' and 'whether the aircraft are being ordered or not great harm is being done to Britain'.[48] Similarly, Mr Nabarro raised concerns and introduced a 'motion signed by some of hon. Friends and myself deploring any purchase of American aircraft for a purpose which can be very well fulfilled by existing British manufacturing facilities.'[49] The success of Britain's 'middle way' status was tightly bound with British aircraft manufacturing, and the adverse circumstances surrounding the Comet – perhaps permanently – undermined confidence in BOAC as an industry that had a sensitivity to the issues of the nation. None of this was BOAC's fault per se, but it was BOAC that had to give it publicity and undermined the idea that nationalised industries were an aid to the home economy.

Up to this point, 'Britishness' and the objectives of the 'national interest' by investing in British technologies had been a sufficient justification – now, it needed to outline explicitly what it

---

[46] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 23rd November, 1954," (1954).
[47] "Uneasiness over Plan to Buy American Planes," *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 11/16/1954 Nov 16 1954. 2.
[48] Ibid.
[49] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 3rd February, 1955," (1955).

was doing to aid Britain and its economy. In the meantime, Boeing in the United States had been developing the Boeing 707, and the official purchase of the aircraft in October 1956 was widely criticised. From this instance, BOAC marketing shifted partially towards defending its actions, emphasising the value BOAC added to the economic interests of the nation by highlighting various achievements. BOAC Boeing 707 advertising was primarily promotional, but it was also very defensive of BOAC and its use of the aircraft. One way this was achieved was through reframing marketing to emphasise BOAC's contribution to the British company Rolls-Royce, a private British organisation in the 1950s known for producing automobiles and jet engines. Up until 1956, Rolls-Royce had been producing equipment for military jets, but as a result of overshoots and overestimates, there were too few orders to keep Rolls-Royce going.[50] In so doing, it could argue that the 707 was still supporting a wider notion of British industry.

Rolls-Royce had received a 'relative lack of military orders' which was 'placing the British industry at a severe disadvantage, has provided support for civil projects since the war[...] unfortunately such help has too often been tied to the requirements of national airlines instead of being given to projects which meet the demands of the international market.'[51] Supporting Rolls-Royce served as a renewal of BOAC's loyalty to the 'middle way' economy as it could promote its actions as an example of the mixed economy working seamlessly and represent the fruitful collaboration between state and private mutual success. Rolls-Royce became a slogan for BOAC's advertising after 1957 and was included in many BOAC advertisements, particularly alongside the 707. Figure 4 shows an advertisement for the 'new 707 Intercontinental' made clear that it flew 'British' by supporting Rolls-Royce in their development, splitting up the image of a 707 into three sections, two thirds of which illustrated

---

[50] Robert Gray, *Rolls on the Rocks : The Story of Rolls-Royce* (London: Panther, 1971). 84-5.
[51] Ibid. 84-5.

a commitment to British interests.[52] BOAC described that it had specifically chosen Rolls-Royce engines to power its aircraft as it was 'the Rolls-Royce airline' such that they made consistent and sponsored efforts to include British Rolls-Royce expertise on board their aircraft. As the 1961 advertisement argued, 'the famous Rolls-Royce Company's vast experience, and long tradition of manufacturing perfection, has made it leader in the field of jet power. BOAC has always relied on the jet power of Rolls-Royce,'[53] even highlighting that passengers 'only pay Economy Fares for Rolls-Royce jet power on BOACs new 707s,' implying that it their support of Rolls-Royce cost no additional BOAC funds and could be enjoyed by all passengers flying on their aircraft,[54] suggesting that it was not just supported nationally, but represented a sound financial decision.

---

[52] British Overseas Airways Corporation, "Transatlantic Teamwork Brings You the New 707 Intercontinental," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1960/02/02/ 1960. 13.
[53] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac: The Rolls Royce Airline," (N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1962).
[54] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Starting June! Boac Opens the Finest, Fastest Big Jet Services Non-Stop to USA and Canada," *The Economist*, 1960/05/07/ 1960. 500.

Built by BOEING powered by ROLLS-ROYCE for B.O.A.C.
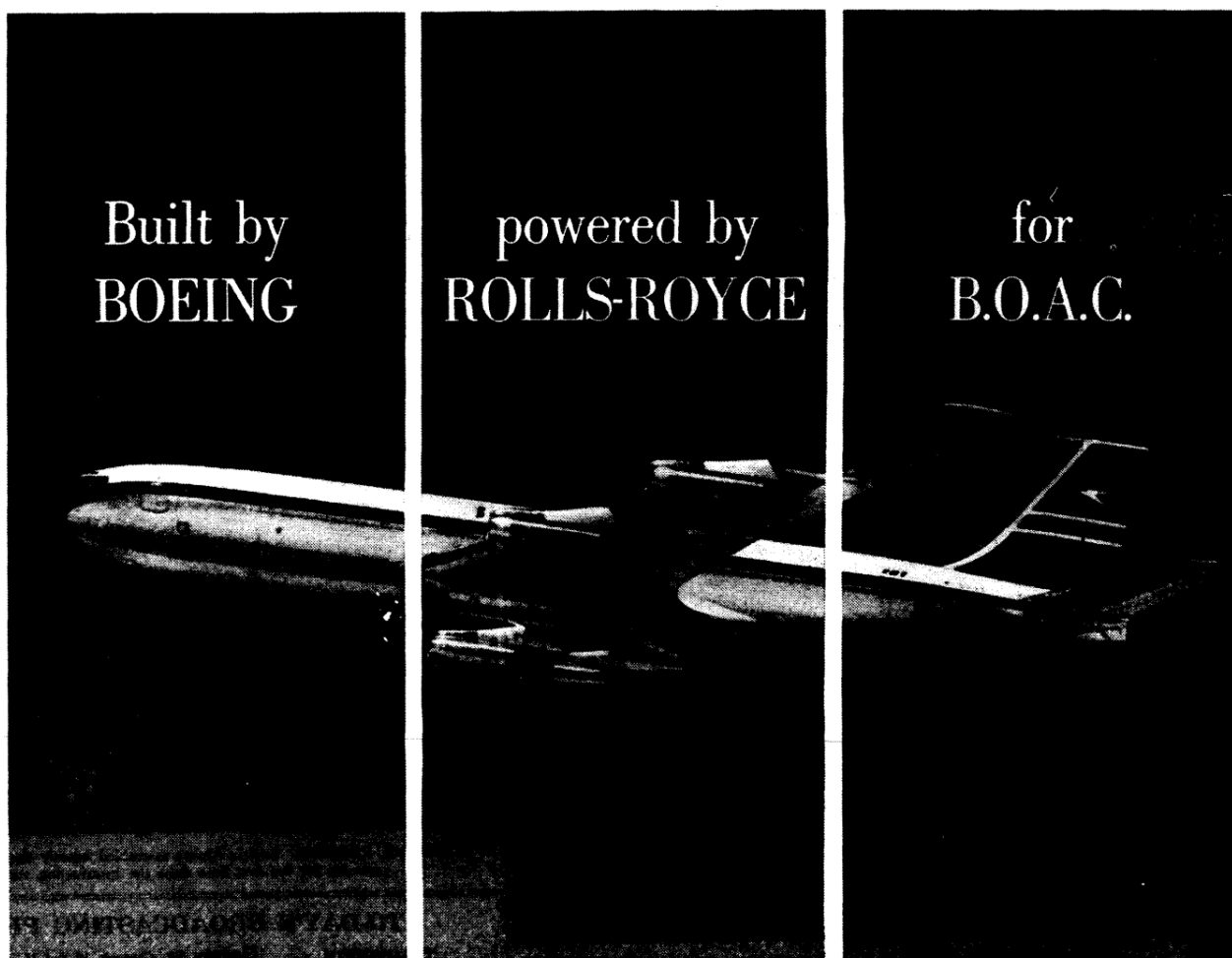
Transatlantic teamwork
brings you
THE NEW 707 INTERCONTINENTAL
world's fastest, longest-range jetliner

The new 707 Intercontinental, which British Overseas Airways Corporation will soon put into service, is a distinguished product of British and American partnership. This luxurious jetliner is powered by world-famous Rolls-Royce Conway engines.

BOAC's Intercontinentals will bring you the travel advantages of unprecedented speed and comfort. With a range of more than 5000 miles, Intercontinental jet-liners will carry you non-stop over the longest stages of BOAC's routes. You'll travel in restful, vibration-free comfort, at 600-miles-an-hour speeds. Adding to the pleasure of your flight will be superlative BOAC cabin service, renowned throughout the air-travel world.

You'll want to plan an early flight aboard a superb new BOAC Intercontinental!

B·O·A·C
BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION

BOEING 707 Intercontinental

Figure 4:British Overseas Airways Corporation, "Transatlantic Teamwork Brings You the New 707 Intercontinental," The Daily Telegraph, 1960/02/02/ 1960. 13.

The bottom line remained that BOAC had invested in American aircraft, and this was in the view that Boeing 'were convinced that their 707 would sell better outside America with a Rolls-Royce engine'.[55] Nonetheless, BOAC advertising insisted on the value of the mixed economy system, asserting that the British way – a mixed economy in which the state industries supported the private through orders – was working successfully, and BOAC could continue to argue its status as the 'guardian of Britishness'.

Over this period, energy in the Comet had not dissipated, and had eventually morphed into the Comet 4. This was a greatly improved version of the original that was larger, moderately faster and met improved safety standards. It was also followed by a huge boost in marketing energy as the December 1959 edition of the *BOAC Review* went on to describe that it was the 'Year of the Comet' including a special supplement to 'pay tribute to an outstanding aircraft' celebrating 'her superb good looks, her comfort, that breath-taking climb' which had 'become famous the world over'.[56] A 1958 advertisement in the *Times* described 'This is how BOAC is thinking and planning and acting[…] determined as always to lead the world in air travel – today and all the tomorrows to come'.[57] This was a continuation of the Comet optimism that had persisted before, but with a greater degree of caution, arguing in a 1958 advertisement that 'BOAC is not *only* the Comet,' offering a series of reasons why BOAC's status as a 'world leader in Jet travel' was unrelated to the Comet,[58] in an attempt to distance itself from the original optimism that wholly invested BOAC in the Comet's success.

By the late 1950s, BOAC had two big airliners for its operations, one British, one American. Advertisements put faith in their contribution to the future of civil aviation, noting that they would introduce to the 'BOAC Fleet of the De Havilland Comet IV and Boeing 707[…] Backed

---

[55] Gray, *Rolls on the Rocks : The Story of Rolls-Royce. Rolls on the rocks*. 85.
[56] "Year of the Comet," *BOAC Review* December 1959 - The year of the Comet. 17.
[57] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Comet 4 Breaks Transatlantic Commercial Record! Boac Streaks Ahead in Jetliner Travel!," *The Sunday Times*, 1958/08/24/ 1958. 4.
[58] "... But Boac Is Not *Only* the Comet," *Financial Times*, 1958/11/14/ 1958. P.9.

by BOAC's 200,000,000 passenger miles of jet experience and combining high speed with exceptional smoothness in flight, these magnificent jetliners will maintain the proud position of BOAC as a world leader in air travel'.[59] Marketing framed this as a consumer choice, presented passengers with the option of choosing which airliner the passenger could fly allowed for passengers to make their own choice as to which aircraft they supported, essentially offering a democratic choice between which nationality of aircraft to support. This can be seen to reemphasise the primacy of consumer power over their choice of aircraft as an effort to justify support for British service on American aircraft. Whilst little more than marketing, it suggested that it was not about the aircraft, but about giving consumers choice about whether their interests were nationalistic.

Despite the disenchantment with the decision to purchase and operate American airliners, the rhetoric of the jet age continued to define much of the language of the post war period. In 1958 the *Daily Mail* wrote that government improvements in education were 'to bring Britain's schools up to jet-age standards, giving future citizens the "intellectual flexibility" to cope with the swiftly changing patterns of modern life' in tackling inequalities between schools.[60] This involved aviation related improvements like bringing airports up to 'jet age' standards,[61] and into a new era of design and style,[62] but also other infrastructures like the opening of the 'first jet-age road' stating that 'for 67 miles of the London-Birmingham route across no fewer than 132 bridges, it signposts the way our roads will be going'.[63] In 1962 the *Sunday Times* described how Rugby was being made 'in the Jet Age' as the 'development of jet travel has contracted the world' and making the idea of shorter Rugby tours an increasingly likely possibility,[64] and

---

[59] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac Speedbird Fleet," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1956).

[60] T. F. Thompson, "Now Jet-Age Schools," *Daily Mail*, 1958/12/04/ 1958. 1.

[61] "Airports for the Jet Age," *Financial Times*, 1957/11/20/ 1957. 7.

[62] Bruce Peter, *Jet Age Hotels: And the International Style 1950 -1965* (Isle of Man: Lily Publications, 2020).

[63] Reporter Daily Mail, "First Jet-Age Road to Open Soon," *Daily Mail*, 1959/10/20/ 1959. 11.

[64] Brian Glanville, "Reshaping Rugby in the Jet Age," *The Sunday Times*, 1962/10/21/ 1962. 21

even how to combat the 'staleness' of gold when on a jet-age international tour.[65] These improvements in technology and infrastructure helped BOAC, and subsequently people in Britain, to conceptualise, and more often than not exaggerate, the social and political impacts of jet aviation. The only difference was the extent to which the jet age was a British invention, or whether it had been a phenomenon that had blurred over from the United States.

4.5   Aviation and Americanisation

Resisting the increasingly dominant forces of Americanisation had become an important objective, especially in light of the controversies around BOAC's decision to purchase American airliners. Particularly in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a special emphasis was made by BOAC to emphasise the economic and political advantages its operations brought for the 'nation', and in particular how it was helping to counter US influence through its support of the British economy. Particularly as competition for leadership in a technological sphere increased with the competitive advances made by the United States, mostly as a result of the enormous internal aviation markets that the US had at its disposal, attempts were made to leverage Commonwealth links in order counter Americanisation, especially given that the 'British warfare state broadly supported the attempts to "Americanise" Western defence in the late 1940s and early 1950s, but proved unwilling to adjust its own policies in line with such an objective'.[66]

The battle against Americanisation was typified by the rivalry between BOAC and PanAm, as a 1958 cartoon in the *Daily Express* pictured in figure 5 described the 'arms race' between both Pan American and BOAC pictured two window advertisers fighting over posters entitled 'Pan American – first jet across the Atlantic' and 'BOAC – first jet across the Atlantic' with the

---

[65] Correspondent From Our Golf, "How to Combat Staleness in the Jet Age?," *The Times*, 1963/10/22/ 1963. 3.
[66] Till Geiger, "The British Warfare State and the Challenge of Americanisation of Western Defence," *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* 15, no. 4 (2008). P.364.

tagline 'Well, al flicked a little paste at Joe then Joe flicked a little paste at Al'.[67] The fight was to be the 'first' airline in the world to achieve a technical goal over the other, and as the cartoon illustrates, Britain and the United States participated in a series of tit-for-tat exchanges to highlight technical prowess over the other. But this exchange symbolised BOAC's broader role at the forefront of an ideological battle with the United States, highlighting BOAC as one of the last remaining 'guardians of Britishness' that remained interwoven with the outcome of the nation.
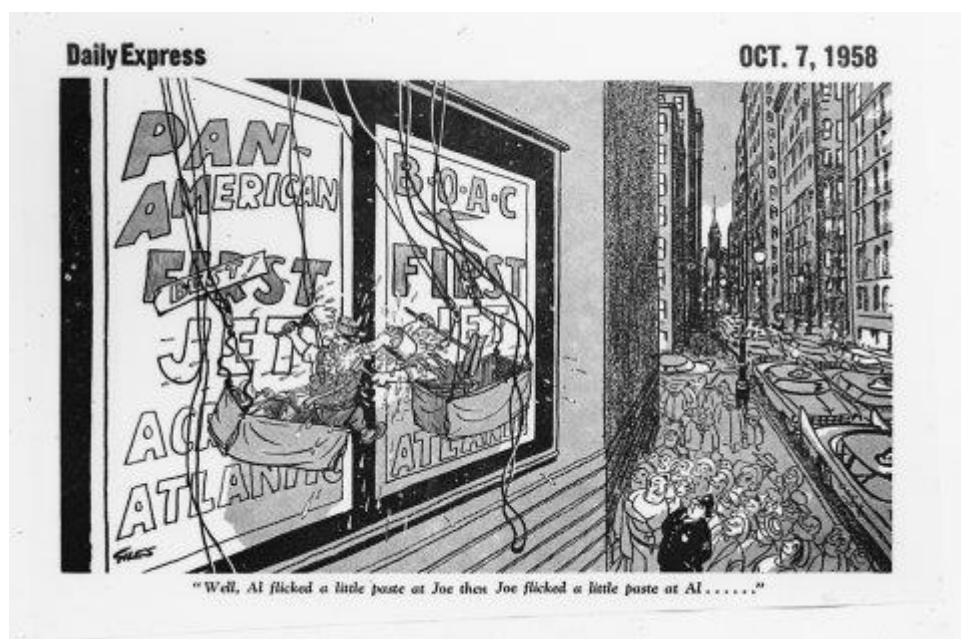
Figure 5:Ronald Carl Giles, 'Well, Al Flicked a Little Paste at Joe, Then Joe Flicked a Little Paste at Al...', Daily Express, (1958).

BOAC had become so interwoven with national progress that marketing agencies had to think carefully about the significance of taking on BOAC contracts. Advertising agency J Walter Thompson, for example, held advertising contracts with both PanAm and BOAC. The London office had concluded that 'amid concerns about American commercial power' that it should align with 'Britain's commercial and military interests' and argued 'that Britain's success in

---

[67] Ronald Carl Giles, "Well, Al Flicked a Little Paste at Joe, Then Joe Flicked a Little Paste at Al..." *Daily Express* 1958.

overseas air transport was vital to its security and was a major factor in maintaining its balance

of trade in competition with America'.[68] BOAC had been thrown into the centre of a debate

about the rise of 'Americanisation' in Britain, in which critics highlighted that the increased

influence of American culture, or indeed 'Americanisation' had been a cause of Britain's

decline. Famous critic Richard Hoggart described this process in great detail, outlining the 'juke

box boys' with 'drape suits, picture ties and American slouch,' as causes of decline in youth

culture,[69] and whilst the wider consequences of Americanisation were likely politicised and

exaggerated,[70] it nonetheless revealed fears about the increase in Britain's receptivity to

American culture.

The most significant counter to Americanisation was the decision to construct a new British

aircraft. As part of the renewal of Britain's aviation manufacturing industry in the 1960s under

Macmillan, the decision was made by BOAC to purchase a new, fully British made jet aircraft.

This had come together as the Vickers VC10, announced in the Commons in 1957 as 'a private

venture - no Government money being involved,'[71] to be followed shortly after in 1960 by a

statement that due to increased foreign competition - notably the United States - and 'in view

of the growing importance of the civil market, the Government have decided to provide

increased support where appropriate,'[72] specifically including the VC10 project.[73] The VC10

looked very different from any aircraft previously flown, locating its four-engines towards the

rear of the body supposedly to reduce engine noise in the cabin. In 1958, the *BOAC Review*

---

[68] Nixon, *Hard Sell: Advertising, Affluence and Transatlantic Relations, C. 1951-69. Hard Sell*. 48-9.
[69] Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (Transaction publishers, 1957). 248-50.
[70] Jim Tomlinson, "Economic 'Decline'in Post-War Britain," in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000*, ed. Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005). 170.
[71] "Written Answers (Commons) of Wednesday, 22nd May, 1957," (1957).
[72] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 15th February, 1960," (1960).
[73] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 11th July, 1960," (1960).

described the new aircraft as a 'a highly important step in providing for extremely fast and superbly comfortable air travel on Britain's long-distance routes in the 1960s.'[74]

Throughout the 1960s, it became increasingly evident that the politicised nature of the VC10 order had become increasingly burdensome to BOAC, describing in a 1962 letter that there was 'no question[…] that the order which had been placed was too large and that it had been placed too soon' and that 'it had been placed for political reasons,'[75] further describing in 1962 that the order was placed under an assumption that it would continue to enjoy specific route advantages, as it was 'part of a package deal under which BOAC had been assured that there would be no change in regard to their privileged position in regard to scheduled services.'[76] It more closely represented the Comet optimism of before, both in rhetoric and in acknowledging that Government action was a factor in pushing the development of these technologies. The politicised nature of the VC10 order had become a significant talking point in the press, as headlines described in 1964 how 'B.O.A.C. Must Take 17 of 30 Jets It Doesn't Want' and it was revealed by Julian Amery that 'the decision to go ahead with the Super VC-10 program was being made in the national interest. Curtailment would have caused havoc in the British aircraft industry'.[77] This drew attention to the practice of BOAC placing orders to guarantee the aircraft into production, even if there was no desire for these aircraft in the airline.

Much like the Comet, the VC10 was an important advertising symbol and was featured as part of a series of optimistic, nationalistic imagery. Both Vickers and BOAC emphasised in 1958 how the aircraft was capable of 'keeping Britain ahead in the air' and was described by BOAC

---

[74] "Vickers Vc10 Contract Signed," *BOAC Review* February 1958. 6.

[75] The National Archives (TNA), "Intentions by Cunard Eagle to Extend Their Operating Service and Frequency to London-Bermuda-Nassau-Jamaica: Possible Implications under the Civil Aviation Licensing Act 1960; Objections by British Overseas Airways Corporation; Includes Notes of Meetings and Discussions," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 245/1513, 1961-1962). E42 Letter from D. A. Lovelock dated 9th of April, 1962.

[76] Ibid. E42 Letter from D. A. Lovelock dated 9th of April, 1962.

[77] Special to The New York Times James FERON, "B.O.A.C. Must Take 17 of 30 Jets It Doesn't Want, Minister Rules," *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 07/21/1964 Jul 21 1964. 66.

in the same advertisement as a 'potential world beater',[78] which, much like the cooperation with Rolls-Royce demonstrated the effectiveness of the mixed economy, emphasised the successful partnership between public and private in the advance of Britain's aviation. These advertisements each sought to echo the success of the mixed economy, demonstrating the successful products produced by state and private industry working side by side.

The VC10 did make a more considered appearance internationally, particularly in the areas of the word with some level of strategic military and political value. It joined the BOAC advertising team at the 1961 Moscow Trade Fair attended by the then Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, as describing how many were fascinated by the VC10:

> Questioning would start with details of the VC10, and move to the structure of our civil aviation industry? Why did BOAC not fly to Moscow? Were we a nationalised or a private company? Thereafter questions would turn to vices, education and so forth. Political questions of the "needling" sort were conspicuously few, but people showed confidence in their social system and, for example, its capacity to produce better aircraft. We were always ready to concede that by the time the VC10 was operational, Tupolev might well have brought something new out of the bag.[79]

Trade fairs were key in this battle and served as an important arena in the Cold War, where they became 'another forum for ideological and cultural competition' and were used to highlight their economic, technical and cultural achievements.[80] The Tupolev, the USSR's alternative to the VC10, dubbed by critics as the 'VC10-ski' and at the centre of suspected espionage,[81] was a poignant symbol of the Soviet Union's advance in aviation development. Moreover, it demonstrates the connection between the production of aircraft and the successes of the 'social system' in which it was produced. Aircraft therefore had an important role in propagandising Britain's international system in the same way that propaganda did.

---

[78] Vickers Armstrongs (Aircraft) Limted, "Keeping Britain Ahead in the Air," *The Times*, 1958/01/17/ 1958. 5.
[79] Kyrill Alexeiev, "Boac in Moscow," *BOAC Review* August 1961. 13.
[80] Lowell Schwartz, *Political Warfare against the Kremlin: Us and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). 194.
[81] Jörg Thiel and Josef Krauthäuser, *Il-62: Airliner in Service*, vol. 2 (Germany: NARA, 2001).

In addition to Russia, it also appeared in China: Giles Guthrie wrote to the Minister of Aviation that the 'forthcoming visit of the President of the Board of Trade to Peking will furnish an excellent opportunity to further BOAC's desire to operate services into China' where 'the purpose of the British Trade Fair is of course to promote British exports to China and there can be no doubt that the introduction of a British air link could do much to foster trade relations between the two countries'.[82] The *Daily Mail* highlighted that 'some trade chiefs had hoped that the flight would win a new market for the aviation industry. China has decided to build up her own international air fleet and can expect no help from Russia or America[…] But behind the scenes there is strong opposition in the aircraft industry to anything which would give America the impression that Britain was wooing Peeking'.[83] Aircraft once again provided a powerful tool that could help to represent the economic and social systems of which they were a part, and the VC10 emphasised the appeal of the social systems in new markets.

The VC10 was accompanied by a publicity campaign in 1963 which would cost 'a total of £2 million[…] The massive world-wide campaign is said by BOAC's advertisement manager, Mr John Knox, to cover "every part of the world except China and Russia"'.[84] Other campaigns described the Vickers VC10 aircraft as 'Anything but silent!,' as well as details of its advertising campaign, noting that it was 'in nearly 50 languages, on hundred-foot hoardings on the banks of the Suez Canal and spectaculars in New York Times Square',[85] emphasising that it was 'triumphantly swift, silent, serene[…] With the VC10, BOAC moves a clear six years ahead of any other airline'.[86] These advertisements echoed the sentiment of the original Comet, suggesting that there was a broader notion of Britain's industrial capabilities, however

---

[82] The National Archives (TNA), "British Exhibition in China: President, Board of Trade, Visit to Peking," ed. Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966 (FO 371/175970, 1964). Letter to Roy Jenkins, M.P from Giles Guthrie dated 23 October 1964.
[83] Ellis Plaice, "Heath Is Refused Vc10 for China," *Daily Mail*, 1964/10/02/ 1964. 9.
[84] Air Correpondent, "£2m Boac Campaign for Vc10s," *The Sunday Times*, 1963/12/01/ 1963. 8.
[85] "Anything but Silent," *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue* April 1964. 42.
[86] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "The Boac Vc10: Triumphantly Swift, Silent, Serene," *Financial Times*, 1964/03/13/ 1964. 9.

unrealistic this conception may have been. Peter Masefield, Chief Executive of BEA, echoed this view:

> The fact is that aviation, in its many forms, is a "front industry" which has a wide influence on national prosperity and on the national image overseas[…] The VC10 in fact epitomises our whole national approach to our future in world technology. If we draw back now – after so much has been done, so much spent and so much learned – we draw back from a place in world markets for a much wider range of industrial products.[87]

Mansfield's sentiment implied that the success of the VC10 had important implications for the wider success of Britain as a nation, and that, only by investing in the aircraft as a 'front industry' could Britain see further industrial success. The fact that it represented a 'front industry' suggested that it held important implications for the broader conceptualisation of industry in Britain both domestically and globally.

This was echoed by the Chairman; in the introduction to the VC10 Issue of the *BOAC Review*, the Chairman Sir Giles Guthrie noted the significance of the introduction of the aircraft, describing it as the BOAC was 'proud to be the airline to initiate the era of the second-generation jet airliner' which was the 'world's most powerful long-range airliner and the largest aircraft yet manufactured in Europe', further describing it as 'of significance not only to BOAC and Great Britain; it is a notable event in the wider context of world-wide civil aviation'.[88] Aircraft hence formed important symbols of economic and political success (and failure) as they were identified as products of the economic and social systems in which they were produced. The emphasis on aircraft as a solution to economic and political woes would continue with Concorde, which was signed in 1962 'not a commercial contract but an international treaty' and would have resulted in cancellation fees 'in the region of £140 million.'[89] The obsessive belief in aviation as a solution persisted well beyond this period and was seen to

---

[87] Peter Masefield, "Fly British or Be Lost," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1964/07/16/ 1964. 12.
[88] Sir Giles Guthrie, "Introducing the Vc10," *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue* April 1964. 21.
[89] Lewis Johnman and Frances MB Lynch, "A Treaty Too Far? Britain, France, and Concorde, 1961–1964," *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no. 3 (2002). 254.

represent the solution of Britain's economic and social problems – even though these would face the burden of these decisions the most heavily.

Of course, this did not mark the end of using aircraft to represent and flout political and economic success. The VC10 would foreshadow a belief in the wider social, economic and political value of the next airliner in Britain's sights which would also be used to frame and curb the leadership of the United States through the development of a 'supersonic' aircraft, one which could fly faster than the speed of sound. The Supersonic Air Transport Syndicate, a research division of BOAC specifically designed to research the possibilities of supersonic jet travel, optimistically posited in 1959 that 'civil aviation is not an industry based solely on economic considerations' and that the 'desire to produce the first supersonic transport in the fear that another manufacturing nation may be first in the field is likely to accelerate development of supersonic transport.'[90] Sir Matthew Slattery, Chairman between 1960 and 1964, described in 1960 that 'if there was to be a supersonic airliner race, BOAC had to win it to remain competitive,'[91] emphasising a very similar rhetoric to the Comet which had preceded a supersonic aircraft 20 years prior, was the key to Britain's longer term success in industry and aviation. It did not disguise an overarching dislike for BOAC's decision to purchase against the nation, and well into the 1960s it continued to implement defensive advertising that emphasised precisely how valuable investing in BOAC was for the wider political, economic and social advancement of Britain.

---

[90] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Report on the Work of the Supersonic Transport Syndicate since Its Formation in September, 1959, until April, 1960. Mss.335/Ai/2/M15i-Ii," (University of Warwick: Modern Records Centre, 1961). Supersonic Transport Syndicate Note: Preliminary Impressions on Supersonic Air Transport. 2.

[91] Air Correpondent, "Study of Supersonic Airliner Design Urged by B. O. A. C," *Financial Times*, 1960/08/04/ 1960. 7.

4.6 Participating in the Nation

The VC10 did little to alleviate BOAC's initial rejection of US airlines, and advertising in the 1960s continued to mount a defence of BOAC's economic and political contributions in line with its history as an important national service. In showing that BOAC was an active participant in issues that affected the nation, it emphasised the advantages of the mixed economy by showcasing how state-owned enterprise could invest in an array of British economic projects. Advertising became an important tool in preventing systemic change in the industry, engaging with the political climate in post-war Britain by appealing to the public. Advertising was therefore an act of self-defence and self-preservation.

These advertisements each followed similar themes; a 1959 advertisement titled 'BOAC takes good care of you more than you think' and described 'have you ever stopped to think in just how many ways BOAC is taking good care of Britain's interests?'[92] and argued that it served an important role in 'linking the commonwealth – and the world[…] Earning foreign currency[…] Particularly dollars[…] Jet aircraft development[…] Helping Associate Airlines[…] British Aircraft Industry[…] Increased Volume of Air Traffic[…] Your airline shows the flag world-wide'.[93] Further advertisements, such as figure 6, followed a similar theme, describing 'Why it's good for you and good for Britain when you fly BOAC every time' which argued its case on two grounds; emphasising passenger needs through tailoring the flight experience to the customer and operating a cutting-edge business and; secondly that the airline 'built prestige for us abroad' which helped build the domestic economy.[94] Marketing therefore attempted to engage with consumers and readers on a political level to attempt to justify helping a national airline.

---

[92] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Boac Takes Good Care of You More Than You Think!," ibid., 1959/05/28/ 1959. 5.
[93] Ibid. 5.
[94] "Why It's Good for You and Good for Britain," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1962/01/08/ 1962. 15.

Figure 6: "B.O.A.C." Daily Telegraph, 8 Jan. 1962, p. 15.

This kind of defensive marketing also extended to BOAC's support of the broader economy.

The support for the development of various aeronautical projects was regularly iterated to staff

in the *BOAC Review*:

> BOAC and its associated airlines benefitted Britain to the extent of over £10m. in
> purchases of Comets, Britannia's, and spares. And in addition, they have Viscounts,
> VC10s and Avro 748s on order to the value of about £7½ m. Some 67 per cent of
> BOAC's own fleet is of British manufacture and 87 per cent is powered by British
> engines.[95]

BOAC effectively built on the Rolls-Royce narrative of public-private support it had made

earlier, and used its marketing and communications channels to offer justification for their

actions by highlighting its contributions to the private sector. This attitude is further

demonstrated in the *BOAC Review* which acquainted staff with 'BOAC's £150 million stake in

---

[95] "Annual Report 1960/61," *BOAC Review* September 1961. 7.

Britain's aircraft industry,' in which BOAC has been 'First Every Time' in their purchase and operation of aircraft.[96] In addition to recreating the strengths of the state enterprise, in effect it attempted to prove the industrial and economic value of Britain's mixed economy system.

Advertising also proved a counter to press perspectives, as a 1963 advertisement – clearly responding to the deeply critical Corbett Report commissioned by Macmillan in 1962 – argued that 'wide publicity has been given to BOAC's financial difficulties and the steps taken to correct them. Here are other facts, less widely known. How BOAC *profits* Britain at large', featuring specific people including 'the Shipping Manager', 'the Holiday-Maker' and 'The Travel Manager',[97] targeting the value of its services to various citizens of the private economy. BOAC continued to iterate that the nation did not supersede its role as a profitable airline. A 1963 advertisement asked readers to look beyond the 'nation' in their choice of airline:

> Should you fly BOAC just because you're British?... No! Fly BOAC for its 30-year record of taking good care of people. Because BOAC was first with jets. Because BOAC engineering standards and Rolls-Royce engines are the best in the world[…] NO! You help yourself when you fly BOAC – the *best* airline. And you help Britain. BOAC supports British industry. BOAC earns millions in foreign currency every year – last year it grossed £65m. (nett £30m.). And outside Britain, BOAC is an ambassador, creating confidence in Britain and the British goods you make and sell.[98]

What is noteworthy in these advertisements is their contrast to the earlier advertisements of the post-war period. Earlier advertisements relied heavily on nationalism and national loyalty, whereas these advertisements show BOAC having to make explicitly clear that its support for them meant a broader package of support for the nation. It had become necessary to explicitly highlight the economic value BOAC brought for wider Britain.

This was also emphasised at a point in which 'commercialisation' was becoming a key policy for staff. Such practices were also highlighted to staff in the *BOAC Review* which outlined

---

[96] "Boac's £150 Million Stake in Britain's Aircraft Industry," *BOAC Review* April 1964. 32.
[97] "How Boac Takes Good Care of You - and Britain," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1963/03/14/ 1963. 19.
[98] "Should You Fly Boac Just Because You're British?," *The Guardian (1959-2003)*, 05/31/1963 May 31 1963. 7.

BOAC's commercial objectives and highlighted that every staff member had a responsibility for ensuring profitability:

> BOAC's silent salesman – the posters and brochures which attract the eye, inform the reader and put him in touch with the Salesmen who will "finish the job." The cargo pamphlets are published in up to seven languages and will help to sell the extra freight space made available by the introduction of the 707s. The travel poster is one of an attractively-designed and colourful series advertising all our major routes and destinations.[99]

The growing effort of the airline to reaffirm to staff the importance of commerce, which was continually emphasised in further editions of the *BOAC Review* into the mid and late 1960s, especially relating to new and informative marketing materials. Similar articles informed staff of the '*BOAC Guide to Inclusive Tours*, which offered a selection of tours to tempt the most travel-weary,'[100] designed to appeal to new markets, including the non-travelling public. The new emphasis on commercial activity was culminated in the review as the 'Q for Quality' campaign, which was described as the phrase 'key to BOAC's future standing in international civil aviation – a future which must be built on our customers' conviction that when they deal with BOAC, they can expect to get value for money,'[101] and in a later *BOAC Review*, staff were asked 'how do you Q?' in which 'that little extra effort from each of us, whatever our jobs, adds up to all the difference in the airline world to the customer.'[102] This reinvention of staff attitudes to profit-seeking and commercialisation represent an attempt to modernise the airline in the new climate of the 1960s, focusing not on patriotism as a reason to fly but in a realisation that BOAC had to compete to survive. It also meant a final rejection of privilege as a sales construct, meaning that it had realised that it could no longer rely on nationalism alone for sales and that it had to make much broader appeals beyond this.

---

[99] "Selling Boac," *BOAC Review* October 1960. 13.
[100] "Pack up, Let's Fly Away!," *BOAC Review* January 1963. 11.
[101] "Q for Quality," *BOAC Review* October 1966. 9.
[102] "How Do You Q?," *BOAC Review* November 1966. 9.

In somewhat of a full circle, Harold Wilson brought about a renewed belief in the economic planning agenda, and whilst not explicitly turning to the programme of nationalisations The Labour Party had in 1945, saw a renewed focus on finding a place for public ownership that was 'neither so anodyne as to be useless, nor so prominent as to cause dissent,'[103] arguing in the 1964 general election that only 'a "more radical approach" could turn the country around'.[104] BOAC found a place in the new agenda as Wilson decided to clear BOAC's accumulated deficit, and the anniversary of the organisation in 1965 offered an opportunity to renew public faith in the organisation's financial abilities and tie Wilson's decision for the write off as an era of renewal for the airline. Guthrie postulated to his staff that the airlines anniversary marked the time to thank the government's contributions and to start afresh:

> The Government's intention to write-off our accumulated deficit will enable us to make a fresh start. We now have a chance to become self-sufficient by our own efforts like any other business. I hope that we need never again go to the British taxpayer for money save in really exceptional circumstances.[105]

His words, in addition to the Government's write-off, wiped the airline's economic slate clean. Guthrie used the *BOAC Review* in this light to reaffirm the commercial practices of the organisation and requested that there be a fundamental change in the culture of the organisation.

4.7   Conclusion

Over the course of the post-war period, Britain had evolved from a power that had 'a plethora of forward-looking plane makers' to a point where it 'scarcely has the ability to manufacture an airframe'.[106] This fact of manufacturing neglects important cultural and political shifts in the period. In essence, aircraft had used to suggest that Britain's economic (and hence, social) problems could be solved. The Comet crashes were a point of inflection, realisation and

---

[103] Catherine Ellis, "Letting It Slip: The Labour Party and the 'Mystical Halo'of Nationalization, 1951–1964," *Contemporary British History* 26, no. 1 (2012). 63.
[104] Ibid. 62.
[105] "A Flying Start to the New Boac," *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue* April 1965. 48.
[106] Nicholas Comfort, *Surrender: How British Industry Gave up the Ghost 1952-2012* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2012). 3.

contemplation about Britain and its role in a future global economy, and cemented the view that the greatest international challenge was the US. Aircraft were the products of the 'social systems' in which they were made, and by buying American, BOAC, which had spent years cultivating an image that promoted the progress of the nation, had seemingly forfeited its rights to this and needed to defend itself. It also represented a categorical change in rhetoric for BOAC marketing, shifting it to the realisation that it could no longer rely on nationalism alone to continue its agenda, and that it needed to fight a marketing battle on better grounds than optimism. However, BOAC's support of Britain was much broader than just the island of Great Britain – BOAC had an important connection to the rest of the world. It is this relationship that the remaining chapters of the thesis will now explore.

5   Conceptualising 'His Own Personal Territory'

5.1   Introduction

In order to effectively challenge the prevailing notions of Americanisation and American expansion, Britain would have been powerless in its abilities alone. In order to effectively challenge ideas of American expansionism, Britain conceptualised itself as acting as part of the broader network of the 'Commonwealth' by conceptualising it as one economic and political bloc, specifically as a counter to the US internal market. Conceptualising a common territory, with aviation as the infrastructure, Britain could appear as a larger, more powerful unified bloc. In addition to the broad political function, it also operated practically. Politicians therefore believed that aviation services were thus underpinned by a political belief that by investing in civil aviation, they were investing in positive global Commonwealth relations. This functioned in multiple ways – helping to imagine Britain as part of a broad economic bloc that was unified by common interests. It could also pull on its networks to market and sell its own aircraft, thus contributing to its own economic expansion, in many ways echoing a continuation of the Empire Marketing Board from the pre-war era. This was often framed in technological terms by showing that British technologies were, in contrast to American technologies, providing opportunities for indigenous populations, helping to spread notions of common welfare in the Commonwealth in an effort to resist colonies and Commonwealth partners joining allegiance with the United States and Soviet Union.

5.2   Mapping Post-war Geographies

In the 1946 edition of *Air Transport*, a publication focused on bringing readers up to date with the ins and outs of the aviation industry and which had some of the biggest names of aviation as long time readers such as Lord Brabazon and the Viscount Leverhulme,[1] published an article

---

[1] Ronald Walker, "The Natural Centre of Air Transport," *Air Transport* 1946. 10.

that described how Britain was at 'the very centre of world air transport.' The article, pictured by figure 7, went on to outline that the routes had been 'marked without regard for international boundaries or any of the restrictions which hampered commercial aviation before the war' and that 'the British Isles lie approximately in the centre of the land masses of the earth' questioning whether Britain would 'take full advantage of this favourable situation.'[2] Being the 'natural centre of air transport' had a number of advantages in aviation terms, for example aircraft travelling both East and West would make 'pit stops' in Britain for fuel and facilities, and all aircraft wishing to do so would have to adhere to British aviation law, which meant adhering to communications systems and paying relevant taxes.

---

[2] Ibid. 10.

The natural centre of air transport
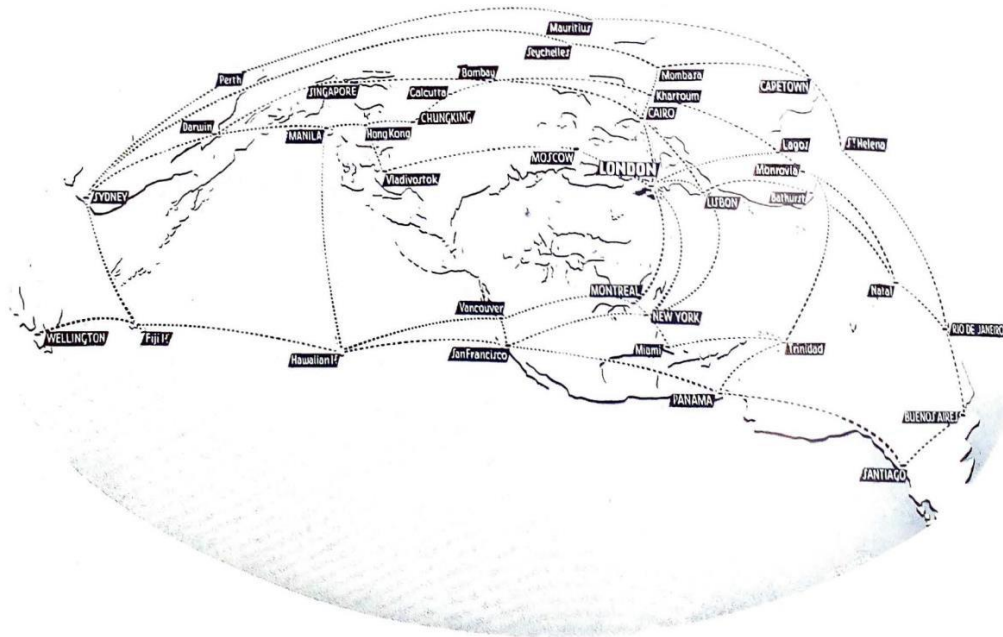
This unusual map was designed for *Air Transport* to emphasise the fact that the geographical position of the British Isles commands the very centre of world air transport. In the main the route network of 1939 is shown, but this will probably be altered with post-war development. The routes are marked without regard for international boundaries or any of the restrictions which hampered commercial aviation before the war. It will be seen that the British Isles lie approximately in the centre of the land masses of the earth. Will she be able to take full advantage of this favourable situation?

Figure 7:Ronald Walker, 'The Natural Centre of Air Transport', Air Transport, Vol.1, No.2 (1946).

However, the 'centre of air transport' was less about *aviation* and more about *mentality*. Above all, it represented an attempt to use a map to define, defend and reinterpret a reader's perception of geography, emphasising the 'human tendency to see one's own community as the natural centre of the world, and by implication superior to the communities arrayed around that centre'.[3] Whilst a dramatically skewed picture designed specifically for the readers of *Air Transport*, it illustrated an attempt to conceptualise Britain's place in the world outside. The construction of a metaphor of the 'centre' was particularly important in the post-war world as it signalled that Britain was at an 'experienced stage' or one with a high 'speed of development'

---

[3] James R Akerman, *The Imperial Map: Cartography and the Mastery of Empire* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009). 1.

thus suggesting that it was the centre of progression and development as a nation and citizenry, such that 'progress is often perceived to be possible only in such centres where the critical mass is large enough'.[4] BOAC maps did much the same, locating Britain at the centre of a global economic and political network, and this metaphor penetrated deeply throughout BOAC advertising.

Ironically, the 1963 Corbett Report explicitly described that the advances made in jet aircraft had meant the 'declining relative importance of London as a traffic centre' as Jets could fly over Britain without stopping to refuel and restock.[5] Nonetheless, the status of being at the 'centre' of this network was an important insight into how aviation planners imagined Britain in the wider global network of airlines and aircraft. Maps could ignore this detail, and helped to create 'an imaginary coherence out of the contradictions and disjuncture's of real relations, and thereby provides a stable sense of individual and national identity' helping to create 'a common sense about how the world functions as a system and offers implicit instruction in how to manoeuvre within that system.'[6] These materials could create effective metaphors and imagery of internationalism and cooperation, but that also placed Britain as a 'central' entity in the international systems. This was the essence of the nationalist internationalism that BOAC afforded in its own marketing materials.

In the wider discourse of nationalism, maps also held a powerful association with political geographies. For BOAC, its map had become a logo in and of itself, appearing widely in publicity materials. Imagining the Commonwealth network through maps held particularly significant political implications - Anderson described the 'map-as-logo' of which 'in this shape, the map entered an infinitely reproducible series[…] instantly recognisable, everywhere

---

[4] Stefan Nygård and Johan Strang, "Conceptual Universalization and the Role of the Peripheries," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 12, no. 1 (2017). 65.
[5] Corbett, *Politics and the Airlines*. *Politics and the Airlines*. 43.
[6] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Univ of California Press, 2003). 23.

visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anticolonial nationalisms being born'.[7] Being able to 'map' the spread of Britain's network was a key means to demonstrate the expanse of nationalism, particularly for newly emerging nations that had previously been under the control of another state or body and were an important evocation of national identity.

In fact, imagining the 'centre' in a post-war Imperial context suggested a hierarchy in which 'the mapping of the colonies as branches [stressed] the hierarchy inherent in the imperial relationship and suggests that the colonies heavily depend on their parent trunk' such that colonies seemed 'to exist only due to the powerful vitality of the mother country. The tree metaphor thus insists both on the bond - the Pax Britannica - between coloniser and colonised, and on the moral superiority of the imperial centre'.[8] Whilst often framed as an infrastructure that had the potential to improve and enhance the international system, it was designed first and foremost as an infrastructure to maintain the status quo and continue a Britain dominated global system. This was an important message to maintain as a means of upholding the Empire as much as possible with the limited military resources at Britain's disposal.

Whether lines on a map or systems of communication, the idea persisted that there was a community of British interests. Referencing Victorian imperial affairs, 'networks of British trade, the ideational tools of an imagined "global Britishness," and the various local enaction's of British society were all part of the material and conceptual apparatus by which large numbers of people sought to shape Victorian globalization according to their own individual and collective needs'.[9] Examining these networks but in a post-war context offers an insight into how conceptualising and communicating these networks helped to imagine the world outside.

---

[7] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. 175.
[8] Hanne Birk and Birgit Neumann, "The Tree and the Family: Metaphors as Discursive Supports of British Imperial Culture in Froude's Oceana," *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (2006). P.72.
[9] Tamson Pietsch, "Rethinking the British World," *Journal of British Studies* (2013). P.463.

This connection could also carry cultural implications, as the 'glue which held together this British world consisted not only of sentiment and shared institutional values but also of a plethora of networks. These ranged from the obvious family and community connections to business, religious, educational, scientific and professional associations, to trades unions, and to itinerant workers of all kinds – transported convicts, miners, seamen, indentured labourers, domestic servants, travelling players, soldiers and administrators,' particularly those left over from Empire.[10] Images of 'connection' were thus an important reminder, especially in the wake of the Second World War, that Britain was an active participant in world affairs. Whilst the image of Britain at the centre of a map, it remained at the top of a hierarchy, and symbolised consistency throughout the dislocations of the post-war period.

5.3   From Empire to Commonwealth

Between 1945 and 1965, Britain's international relationships within the Empire witnessed uprising, violence, political and economic change. Nonetheless, BOAC championed the Empire and Commonwealth. The origins of BOAC's support for the Empire and Commonwealth can be traced back to one of BOAC's precursors, Imperial Airways, which operated from 1924 until the passing of the British Overseas Airways Act in 1939. Imperial Airways, as its name suggested, was Britain's carrier of Imperial communications and, much like BOAC, was expected to operate as a 'commercially successful' organisation as well as 'a prestige flag-carrier in Europe' but foremost as 'a new force in communications to bind together the global interests of the British Empire.'[11] The expectation was that this objective would be continued in the post-war period by BOAC.

---

[10] Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, "Mapping the British World," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003). P.6

[11] Peter Lyth, "The Empire's Airway: British Civil Aviation from 1919 to 1939," *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 78, no. 3 (2000). 886.

As the official *Statement of Government Policy* issued in March 1945 outlined, BOAC's responsibilities would follow a direct continuation of Imperial Airways:

> The Commonwealth and Atlantic routes, together with the ultimate extensions to China and the Far East, will be assigned to the British Overseas Airways Corporation. This Corporation and their predecessor, Imperial Airways, have been responsible for the development and operation of these routes in the past. They are in close relations with the corresponding operators of other Commonwealth countries. They are therefore clearly the appropriate instrument for the operation and further development of these routes.[12]

Therefore it was naturally assumed that BOAC would continue to serve Imperial Airways' purpose. This continuity meant that it derived purpose, responsibility and morals directly from Imperial Airways. Above all, it carried forward a pre-Second World War mindset into the post-war period.

The evolution from 'Empire' to 'Commonwealth' represented a broader trend in Britain's post-war international relationship with Empire and its colonies. This change was evident in the language used to describe the airlines, as the essence of these attitudes were embodied within the shift from 'Imperial' to 'British Overseas', which placed more emphasis on the *nation* than the Empire. This was not an isolated shift, as it was in line with the broader vision enacted by the Labour Party in its Fabian vision of both domestic and international welfare provisions which placed a particular emphasis on the 'nation'. The shift of Imperialist language 'did not mean that imperial thinking ground to a halt' but rather that 'the relationship between Britain and the Empire had changed, placing the interests and prerogatives of the former at the heart of decision making'.[13] Despite any perceived visions of internationalism, the Commonwealth 'was very much a British creation for the promotion of British interests, and the participation of the monarchy in the experiment, as symbolic and non-functional head of the association,

---

[12] "British Air Transport. Statement of Government Policy." 4.
[13] Andrew Baker, "Divided Sovereignty: Empire and Nation in the Making of Modern Britain," *International Politics* 46, no. 6 (2009). 706.

strengthened its appeal,' one in which 'Britain gained in stature.'[14] Hence, BOAC evolved in tandem with the broader conceptualisations of Empire, Commonwealth and internationalist purpose.

At the same time, this was particularly important in the context that many in Britain believed that the future of Britain's prestige and success relied on an efficient and cooperative Commonwealth network. As the change from 'Imperial' to 'Overseas' suggested, an increased reliance on the Commonwealth echoed a belief that the 'old Dominions were central to the United Kingdom's economic and foreign policy; they contributed to its international prestige and influence; and they ensured the flourishing of the English language and British culture in the international arena,'[15] focussing on 'Britain overseas', focused on spreading British ideas. Many believed that 'since the end of the Second World War' it had 'selflessly rejected national economic benefits available in Europe in favour of a higher moral loyalty to the Commonwealth',[16] believing that the future of Britain's involvement in the international world was not through Europe, the United States or Soviet Union, but through expanding the existing connections within the Commonwealth, because they could be more easily identified as 'British' than other international links.

This reflected the Labour Party view which 'considered Commonwealth cooperation in defence, diplomacy and economic policy pivotal to sustained British great power status.'[17] Therefore, policy to improve Commonwealth cooperation was part of the Labour Government's vision of 'an expanding and multiracial grouping, closely bound to Britain

---

[14] Krishnan Srinivasan, "Nobody's Commonwealth? The Commonwealth in Britain's Post-Imperial Adjustment," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (2006). P.260.

[15] Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2000). 17

[16] Russell, "'The Jolly Old Empire': Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51." "The Jolly Old Empire." 10.

[17] Martin Thomas, Bob Moore, and Lawrence J Butler, *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States* (London: Hodder Education, 2015). 49.

politically, strategically and economically'.[18] It was therefore about *Britain overseas*, an exercise in nationalist internationalism, that motivated the establishment and improvement of these networks. This community mattered in significant political, economic and military terms and fostering the development of communications and connections was a top priority. The 'Commonwealth' was, at least in part, the manifestation of a new vision for post-war empire that would bring together nations politically and economically. Therefore, publicity would play a key role in helping to frame these changes.

These views were also underpinned by the practical realities of Britain's situation in the post-war world. The '1949 planners recognized that a bid for self-sufficiency, even with Commonwealth support, would mean "a sharp contraction of political influence and national prosperity".'[19] To help this process along, it was matched by an 'expansion of overseas publicity and information services' which reflected an 'awareness of diminished power and the need to convince the world that traditional prestige and skills could compensate for economic and military decline.'[20] The Commonwealth was as much a *representation* of cooperation as it was evidence of cooperation, and helped to represent Britain in terms more equal to the internal militaries and markets of the United States and Soviet Union.

The change in name – both from 'Imperial' to 'British Overseas' and from 'Empire' to 'Commonwealth' - reflected more than just a change in name, but a reflection of a shift in *mindset* away from imperialist ideas of domination and control to a more accepting vision of separate but theoretically equal nationalisms. This was matched by a growing feeling amongst civil servants and politicians that despite the prestige and global domination it captured, the 'empire' was an increasingly out of date conception of Britain's post-war Imperial relations,

---

[18] Ibid. 49.

[19] Anthony Adamthwaite, "Britain and the World, 1945-9: The View from the Foreign Office," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 61, no. 2 (1985). 231-2.

[20] Ibid. 231-2.

and a tremendous effort was put in place to attempt a re-orientation of the relationships Britain

had with colonies. The changes in language 'were intended to associate the Commonwealth

with modernity, democracy, and freedom as a "peoples Empire",' noting that using the term

Empire 'suggested militarism, despotism, and domination, and was inappropriate for the self-

governing Dominions.'[21] The mindset had changed in the minds of politicians and

policymakers, so all Britain needed to do was encourage others around the world to see the

change in the same terms. Much of the new thinking about Britain's place in the post-war world

was not about reducing power or influence, but in establishing the centrality of Britain within

a network to maintain influence where reasonably possible.

5.4 Aviation as Diplomacy

A reoccurring belief amongst politicians across the political spectrum was of a direct

relationship between the expansion of aviation services and the enhancement of political and

economic relationships between Britain and other nations. A long-time supporter of this idea

was Lennox-Boyd, who recognised this connection in 1946:

> We had looked to seeing a vast expansion of British air services in the United
> Kingdom and the Empire, and to Europe and overseas, carried by British crews and
> flying in British planes, and still further uniting the Empire along the lines Lord
> Swinton started, by joint parallel corporations, enabling people from the mother
> country who are living in the Empire to keep in touch with their homeland, and
> giving to people in this country, in ever widening numbers, chances of imperial and
> foreign travel which most of them have never enjoyed, and drawing for these
> services on all the youth, enterprise and zeal which this country can command.[22]

Lennox-Boyd's vision, supported broadly amongst politicians, was that increased development

of British civil aviation would help to keep Britain as a central hub within the imperial system.

---

[21] Wendy Webster, *Englishness and Empire, 1939-1965* (Oxford University Press on Demand, 2005). 62-3.
[22] "Commons Sitting of Monday, 6th May, 1946," (1946).

This was to imply that Britain's role in improving aviation systems was of strategic military and political importance, and would help maintain a network with Britain at the centre.

Politicians and political figures from both Labour and the Conservative Party reflected on the potential usefulness of civil aviation within the context of spreading the values of Britain and the welfare state. Labour MP and veteran pilot of the Second World War, Wing Commander Geoffrey Cooper stated in the Commons that it would help to capture a sense of understanding between nations:

> Civil aviation will aid[…] the development of our Colonies, and will link with a closer tie the bonds of union which already exist within the British Commonwealth[…] The air can no less, I feel, be the paramount instrument: for spreading and crystallising peace throughout the world. It can be the means of spreading the principles and spirit of democracy for which this country stands.[23]

Cooper's perspective revealed not only a practical perspective, but an ideological one as well. Expansion would help to provide a means to spread Britain's form of democratic leadership. Attlee's Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation argued in 1946 that BOAC should be used to 'keep in step with the Dominions', insisting that it needed to remain state owned because it allowed for an improved sense of connection with Colonial and Commonwealth partners, arguing that 'as in so many other matters, the Conservatives, while beating their Imperial tom-toms, have in fact lost touch with the Commonwealth',[24] and that the government 'cannot hope to get adequate development of the Colonies unless transport facilities are really adequate to do the task with which they are concerned.'[25] This represented a view that highlighted the need to use nationalised industries to cement the role and value of British institutions in the early post-war period.

---

[23] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 16th August, 1945," (1945).
[24] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 24th January, 1946," (1946).
[25] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 7th March, 1950," (1950).

Even after Labour's defeat in 1951 it continued to hold a 'very deep interest in aviation' insisting that it was a 'means whereby[…] trade be facilitated throughout the world' and 'as a means whereby the English-speaking people throughout the world can be brought together, and eventually, perhaps, all people will learn a greater toleration through closer personal contact.'[26] Whilst 'aviation' did not explicitly refer to BOAC, there was a view that the infrastructures it represented were a valuable political asset. Ministers like Frank Beswick, Labour MP highlighted examples of Commonwealth cooperation through infrastructural contracts throughout the Commonwealth, pointing out the cooperation between BOAC and the sharing of aircraft and ground facilities was an example of 'ideal Commonwealth co-operation at which we originally aimed' hoping that it would 'extend not only on that Commonwealth route but along all other Commonwealth routes.'[27] It therefore presented an opportunity to not only encourage political understanding, but to make the most of the economic opportunities.

In describing investigations into a possible 'round-the-world' route in 1952 Lennox-Boyd highlighted that Britain 'should not lose sight of further opportunities of Imperial integration that other routes may in the forthcoming years provide,'[28] and that it had been an 'encouraging process that has always been made in these inter-Imperial affairs will lead, through genuine co-operation, to the benefit of Imperial air transport development, and further widen the sphere of our existing Imperial co-operation'.[29] Other Conservative MPs echoed this sentiment. Conservative MP John Profumo, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport in 1953, said aviation had a role in helping to keep people in Britain efficiently connected:

> Aviation has a very important role to play within the Commonwealth itself. Both Corporations, particularly BOAC, have long-standing partnerships with other Commonwealth airlines[…] These partnerships all contribute to strengthening Commonwealth air links and to the strengthening of the Commonwealth in

---

[26] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 16th July, 1952."
[27] "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 23rd March, 1950."
[28] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 29th October, 1952," (1952).
[29] Ibid.

international air transport. It seems, nowadays, that it does not matter in what part of the world one lives; what matters more is where one lives in relation to the great trunk routes of the world.[30]

The fact that this was 'particularly BOAC' suggests that the role did not exclusively apply to BOAC, but that BOAC demonstrated the best example of this narrative. The strengthening of Commonwealth relations was a central feature associated with aviation, and as time went on this came to specifically include BOAC. These accounts reveal a somewhat of a consensus on the political advantages of expanding aviation for the purposes of Commonwealth development – a belief that increasing connectivity would provide implicit political and economic advantages for Britain's interests, and in particular the opportunity to tie together diverse nations under one network.

Of course, this network, whilst described positively, kept Britain at the centre. This idea of 'connecting' and 'improved understanding' was tied to the familial language of development, a noticeable linguistic feature of many aviation conversations. Often, aviation and Commonwealth relations were described with references to motherhood and birth. Profumo went on to describe in 1953 that 'inside the British Commonwealth we have a great family network of these routes. There is no place in the British Commonwealth today which is not accessible to any other part of the British Commonwealth by air transport'.[31] The use of the language 'family network' reveals an international system in which 'imperial rule is frequently legitimated as a defence of subordinate colonized women and an extension of national identity and power', and that, 'by extension, the maintenance of a post-imperial 'family' protects the patriarchal nation's boundaries, security and symbolic potency.'[32] As such whilst the language of Imperialism had changed to better reflect a more welfare-oriented mindset, the substance of

---

[30] "Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 27th October, 1953," (1953).
[31] Ibid.
[32] Alison Brysk, Craig Parsons, and Wayne Sandholtz, "After Empire: National Identity and Post-Colonial Families of Nations," *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 2 (2002). 274

power remained the same. The metaphor of the mother and the family were symbolic of a flexible and adaptable colonial policy that reinforced power and knowledge hierarchies, but added a dimension of responsibility. Familial metaphors were the persistent 'apologetic metaphor for the post-imperial British Commonwealth' often framed as a 'family of nations',[33] language very much a part of the rebrand in imperial attitudes which offered the image of the mother, one of care and intrinsic development, but one of authority and knowledge.

This relationship was poignantly captured within the relationships Commonwealth nations had with the Monarchy and, in particular, with Queen Elizabeth II and the role of the Monarchy:

> In so far as the survival of Monarchy into the twentieth century has depended on its success at embodying a patriotic mystique, it came to be important that the institution should be seen to be the family of families, at once dynastic and domestic, remote and accessible, magical and mundane.[34]

BOAC followed similar patterns of imperial branding, utilising the image of the Queen, familial metaphors and the passionate moralistic obligation helped to legitimise Britain's presence abroad. Not only were these powerful symbols in and of themselves, but they also revealed that the newly organised Commonwealth would focus on a moral element that would ensure a paternalistic view on colonies and their development. Imagining colonies in this way helped to conceptualise their economic purpose in the broader scheme of the network.

5.5 Imagining Economic Internationalism

These political views were consistently reflected in BOAC's commercial policies. BOAC's 1947 Annual Report outlined its vision of the obligations it held towards the Commonwealth. It described that BOAC had a serious role in maintaining and connecting to the Commonwealth as it would keep Britain politically and economically competitive:

---

[33]Simon Schama, "The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500-1850," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17, no. 1 (1986). 183.
[34] Ibid. 183.

> The progress made in establishing, in co-operation with our Commonwealth partners, a peacetime network of air communications between the United Kingdom and the Continents of North America, Asia, Africa and Australasia. Such a network is indispensable to the political and commercial well-being of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, and vital to our export market. In judging the ultimate effect of the Corporation's operations on the national expenditure, account must be taken of its primary responsibility for providing Commonwealth and Imperial communications under circumstances in which the commercial character of the service must often be subordinate to the national interest.[35]

This vision outlined BOAC's obligation to the Commonwealth. It suggested that the network of flights to and from Commonwealth countries helped to improve 'the political and commercial well-being' of Britain, and that this objective should be placed above all others. BOAC's role was therefore one of commercial and political utility in its role alongside the Commonwealth. For economic internationalism, the objective was to construct an image of the Commonwealth as a 'domestic' unit. This was then used to counter the 'domestic' markets naturally held by the USA and USSR.

More importantly, it was the persistence of the image of a 'British' economic network that was seen as the logical step to help to alleviate the balance of payments crisis. The *economic* function of the Commonwealth was of particular importance in this respect. As issues in economic growth stemmed from growing 'dollar based crises' which lead to an overall devaluation of sterling against the 'hard currencies of the dollar area',[36] resulting in 'an enormous weight of liquid liabilities overhung the balance of payments, threatening a flight from the pound, limiting the freedom of action of the government and contributing to the jerkiness of post-war growth'.[37] The acquisition of foreign currencies, in particular dollars, was therefore essential in the development of economic recovery.

---

[35] "Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1947." 24.

[36] Peter Frederick Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-1990*, vol. 9 (Penguin (Non-Classics), 1996). 229-230.

[37] Alec Cairncross, *Years of Recovery: British Economic Policy 1945-51* (Routledge, 2013). 8.

Economic visions of the BOAC network were a mainstay of the advertising materials, in no small part because of the class of travellers, many of whom travelled for business purposes, and would directly contribute to alleviating the balance of payments crisis. BOAC advertising materials drew attention to the profitability of the economic network available to British travellers, describing in 1946 that the network had 'shown plenty of pace in the early stages. Our exports are the men who bring back export orders: and never before have orders so large come back from so far so fast'.[38] Some materials implied British ownership and control of these routes, including advertising in 1948 that described how for businessmen using BOAC services, their 'territory is the world' and that there was 'a new sort of commercial traveller about. You'll meet him across the City boardroom table on Friday, run across him in Wall Street on Saturday, bump into him in Sydney the next week-end[…] the whole wide world has become his "personal territory".'[39] These advertisements highlighted the expanse of economic *territory* in which individuals could operate, and implied a right to operate business within this territorial expanse. These advertisements also reveal a broader responsibility for BOAC as a nationalised industry, where it would stand as a tool to support economic penetration and development, particularly for private business. This had important economic and political roots, as 'British companies were regarded as central to the British push towards colonial development, especially after 1947 when the Treasury came to see dollar-earning and dollar-saving empire production as the means to domestic economic rejuvenation'.[40] Thus, the task of bringing in external currencies was an essential element of economic recovery and represented the efficiency of the mixed economy. State agencies were thus providing support for private

---

[38] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Key Exports," *The Economist*, 1946/08/17/ 1946. 251.

[39] "My Territory Is the World: It's a Small World by Speedbird," *The Economist*, 1948/01/03/ 1948. 12.

[40] Nicholas J White, "The Business and the Politics of Decolonization: The British Experience in the Twentieth Century," *The Economic History Review* 53, no. 3 (2000). 550

economic development by making flight more efficient, and hence helping to encourage business to happen abroad and to help the whole British economy recover.

Economic and political integration centred around creating images of an integrated and cooperative Commonwealth network. This was done through communicating the value of 'connections', which were similar to earlier ideas of imperial connection. This echoed the 'British Connection' which had 'embraced an extraordinary range of constitutional, diplomatic, political, commercial and cultural relationships'.[41] There was also great emphasis on the 'reliability' of these connections. In 1950, an advertisement described that 'competition in today's rapidly changing markets waits for no man. Buyers and sellers with overseas interests know that a decision made today may well mean a flying trip there tomorrow'.[42] In so doing, BOAC conceptualised the Commonwealth as an economic centre in which operated within the 'fantasy of free movement of travel' whilst conveniently ignoring any qualifications of being 'class and ethnically specific, though theoretically it contains within it the fantasy of ready availability'.[43] In an era of restricted and government-controlled travel, marketed the world up to secure the *potential* of travel rather than the realities, showing that 'the impossible was now achievable, and that trips across the world that previously took weeks could now be covered in days' and that 'as technology became more reliable, and airline Empires expanded, so then maps staked claims on territory, promising regular flights to all manner of exotic destinations.'[44] Economic relations could therefore be built on a reliable, long term basis as a result of this network of trade, which helped to reassure and encourage international travellers

---

[41] John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). P.1.

[42] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "'Easily - I'll Fly at Once!'," *The Economist*, 1950/02/11/ 1950. 317.

[43] John M MacKenzie, "Empire Travel Guides and the Imperial Mind-Set from the Mid-Nineteenth to the Mid-Twentieth Centuries," in *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. X Guégan (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). 117.

[44] Ovenden and Roberts, *Airline Maps: A Century of Art and Design*. Airline Maps. 5.

to develop these connections further. Hence, advertising here was important as it highlighted the value of, and ease of access to, the economies across the world.

This was supported by a government policy which 'nourished the relationship by providing subsidies to boost emigration to the dominions. Trade and investment ties remained strong and were supported by imperial preference and the Sterling Area'.[45] This was informed by the view that the Commonwealth was 'an economic superpower, an assessment that was not implausible given the prominence of Britain, Canada and Australia in the BrettonWoods and commercial policy debates. On the basis of this world view, Commonwealth economic cooperation was both a duty and a programme that promised high rewards'.[46] Focusing on speed, reliability and efficiency suggested the ease by which international business could occur, thus showing that BOAC's role was highly propagandistic and designed to encourage the growth of international business to aid the balance of payments crisis.

These attempts to reframe British international businesses were often contained within advertising materials directly targeted at business travellers looking to expand to global markets, highlighting not only the ease of access into foreign markets, but the ease of travelling to and meeting with individuals within these foreign markets. Corporate and business interests across the world also had to respond to these changing contexts of the British Empire. Decolonisation and the renewed calls for nationalism in the 1950s had 'forced British companies to overhaul their entire operations, including their commercial and political strategies, their staffing policy, and their public-relations outreach. Improving their corporate images became essential, as they were determined to outstay the Empire'.[47] Businesses in operation in foreign territories were central in the maintenance of Britain's economic interests

---

[45] Hopkins, "Globalisation and Decolonisation." "Globalisation and Decolonisation." 735.
[46] Paul L Robertson and John Singleton, "The Commonwealth as an Economic Network," *Australian Economic History Review* 41, no. 3 (2001). 252.
[47] Stephanie Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950–1970," *Business History Review* 81, no. 1 (2007). 61.

and eventually allowed for the 'transfer of political power for British firms in territories such as Malaya, the Gold Coast, and Kenya' and was 'favourable as independent regimes remained in the sterling area and chose development strategies heavily reliant on foreign investment.'[48] Travel meant avoiding the risks of establishing a business operating in a territory as a manager could arrange a flight and be back within a few days.

The theme of advertising the persistence of the British global system continued well into the 1960s. BOAC continued to encourage the growth of exports and investments overseas by emphasising that 'What's the best way to get down to big export business *fast*? Take a look at the BOAC world map. Your people at all levels – chasing new business, following it up or seeing it completed – can fly *anywhere* in a matter of hours by BOAC and its associate airlines' using a map to illustrate that the route network offered unlimited possibilities for export.[49] This was similarly fostered as an international network of international businesspeople. BOAC encouraged people to travel with them because of the quality of the character of the individuals on the network, arguing in 1961 that 'Thousands of globe-trotting businessmen travelled BOAC First Class. Why was this? Ask any flight-minded busy man! Flying's faster for one thing. You're away from the office for the shortest-possible period with no long-days-wasted delays', proffering the idea that BOAC aircraft served as potential centres of further business deals, noting that 'there's always the thought that the seat next to yours may be the beginning of a ten-year contract!'[50] This idealised the airways as a community of economically focused business elites capable of striking further international business deals, suggesting that the 'British world' continued to flourish and present new opportunities for export and revenue generation. BOAC maintained in figure 8 that it was a 'direct link with every major market'

---

[48] White, "The Business and the Politics of Decolonization: The British Experience in the Twentieth Century." "The business and the politics of decolonization." 545.

[49] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Boac Routes Cover the Whole Wide Business World," *The Economist*, 1961/08/26/ 1961. 770.

[50] "A Boac First-Class Ticket Makes First-Class Business Sense!," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/05/18/ 1961. 21.

where 'people at all levels – chasing new business or seeing it through - can fly *anywhere* in a matter of hours by BOAC',[51] encouraging persistent use of international markets to alter Britain's balance of payments crisis.

Figure 8: "Get Down to Business Fast on Boac World Jet Routes," The Economist, 1962/01/13/ 1962. 113.

---

[51] "Get Down to Business Fast on Boac World Jet Routes," *The Economist*, 1962/01/13/ 1962. 113.

This was also represented in how Britain presented its economic links in the mid-1960s as it sought to present the Commonwealth as an international 'domestic' market:

> The domestic manufacturer is on the spot for sudden emergencies, at the centre of fickle changes in fashion. An overseas manufacturer has many factors against him, chief of which is distance. He can however, by using air cargo as an essential part of his marketing plan, overcome many of the difficulties and match the customer service of the domestic producer.[52]

These advertisements stressed the Commonwealth as a fully integrated domestic market, theoretically eradicating boundaries for economic activities with the view to increase the accessibility of international trade – an effort to stimulate the export market and make the idea of exporting goods more efficient and appealing to British businesses. These highlighted the value of exports to rebalance the economic instabilities through a period of increasing anxiety about trade. A further advertisement compared the different economies of trade, arguing that 'if the businessman only compares cargo rates 'dock to dock' versus 'airport to airport', he will never understand the real value of air freight – as a marketing tool[…] Delivery dates are an important sales weapon. In this context the short re-order cycle improves market control, particularly in such goods as fashions or perishables or in any field subject to style or customer requirements'.[53] The use of BOAC cargo as a 'marketing tool' to emphasise that there had been a change in image and perception of the international community, even if the realities remained largely the same. These materials helped conceptualise a network of international links designed to encourage British citizens to think international in their economic endeavours to aid the balance of payments crisis. BOAC helped to construct an image of a Commonwealth that was one, single, unified unit – the realities of which were extremely limited, but the power of the representation mattered more than the reality.

---

[52] "Vital to Exporters," *The Times*, 1964/08/21/ 1964. 7.
[53] "Setting the Pace around the World... Boac Vc10 Triumphantly Swift, Silent, Serene," *The Economist*, 1964/06/27/ 1964. 1448.

The idea of a 'domestic' market was partially true, as despite the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) heavy regulation of the price that airlines could charge for tickets, Britain's unique position in Imperial and Commonwealth affairs meant that it could treat 'British colonial territory as if it were part of Britain, despite not being contiguous' which enabled what were intrinsically 'domestic' services 'to, from and in its colonies and protectorates (not its self-governing dominions)' as part of the policy of 'Colonial cabotage'.[54] This meant that BOAC could offer a series of specific fare reductions for Commonwealth partners as it offered 'even lower "Skycoach" fares' which were only available to 'residents of the UK and of the British territories overseas concerned.'[55] Other advertisements highlighted the easily available 'New Economy Class Fares' in 1960 in which 'BOAC introduces lowest-ever fares between Manchester and British territories in Africa' which were available 'only to residents of the UK and of the British territories overseas concerned.'[56] Flying according to the BOAC map was not only economically advantageous, it was 'cheaper' because of the unique circumstances presented by the context. This echoed the rhetoric of the 'domestic market', helping to propagandise the Commonwealth as one contiguous economic and political unit used to equate the Commonwealth network to the internal domestic market of the United States and Soviet Union.

BOAC's 'commercial' responsibility to the Commonwealth represented one part of the larger belief in the Commonwealth as a solution to economic and political problems. By the 1960s, this obligation to the Commonwealth was seen to represent one of the broadest and most damning inefficiencies of BOAC's operations. As part of his criticism of modern Britain,

---

[54] Gordon Pirie, "Amplified British Aviation Authority in Africa, 1947–1960: Regulation of Low-Cost Overseas Airlines," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 4 (2020). 707.
[55] "Display Ad 55 -- No Title," *The Observer (1901- 2003)*, 09/11/1960 Sep 11 1960.
[56] "Display Ad 75 -- No Title," *The Guardian (1959-2003)*, 10/20/1960 Oct 20 1960.

Anthony Sampson's 1962 *Anatomy of Britain* described BOAC's conflict of interest between its commercial obligations and the Commonwealth:

> [BOAC] have had to show the flag in unprofitable places like Caracas for the sake of national pride, and to subsidise a cluster of associates, including Nigerian, West Indian and Middle Eastern airlines. 'My aim', said Sir Matthew Slattery, the chairman, 'is to try and keep the Commonwealth linked with Commonwealth airlines.' No other major airline has the same kind of commitment as BOAC has to the Commonwealth.[57]

Sampson sought to isolate causes of Britain's 'decline' in economy, politics and society by examining different sectors of the British economy in turn. Nationalised industries were one area in which Sampson pinned this 'decline', and whilst the actual influence of the work has been vastly overstated,[58] it represented that there was a connection between Britain's supposed 'decline' and its self-imposed obligations to the rest of the Commonwealth. Within this, BOAC's own decline was tied to its unprofitable obligations as a nationalised industry. It became clear that an overarching sense of 'declinism' had 'associated the Empire and Commonwealth with outdatedness, nostalgia, and lack of purpose' which reoriented critics to 'regard entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) as a key to reversing decline and modernising the British economy',[59] suggesting, at least in part, that BOAC's declined association with the Commonwealth was a reflection of a broader decline in interest in the Commonwealth as a solution to economic and political problems.

5.6 Conceptualising Political 'Goodwill'

Alongside creating a Commonwealth integrated economically was creating the conception that it was integrated politically. Part of BOAC's operations in the post-war period were conducted under the assumption that it should function as an extension of Britain's 'goodwill'. In John

---

[57] Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain. Anatomy of Britain.* 549.

[58] Matthew Grant, "Historians, the Penguin Specials and the 'State-of-the-Nation'literature, 1958-64," *Contemporary British History* 17, no. 3 (2003). 49.

[59] Tomlinson, "The Decline of the Empire and the Economic 'Decline'of Britain." "The decline of the empire and the Economic 'Decline' of Britain." 208.

Pudney's 1958 *study of BOAC and its forerunners since 1919*, he argued for the importance of

an airline establishing and maintaining 'goodwill':

> An airline depends ultimately upon friendly association, partnership and goodwill
> – with a measure of shrewd international bargaining as an ever-present ingredient.
> Though its purpose is essentially to act as a carrier, our way of life as a nation and
> as a Commonwealth is forever moulding the carriers task to new purposes and
> wider responsibilities. It's one constant and steady characteristic now is that it is
> never at rest, not for a moment at any hour of the day or night.[60]

A central responsibility was therefore in using BOAC to communicate values associated with

the nation – in this instance, communicating a sense of wider responsibility to the world. This

has been identified as an important function of publicity which emphasised the importance of

national service:

> Early publicity emphasised its role in alleviating famines and flooding, in the
> supply of medicines and in the transportation of athletes and explorers. More than
> this, BOAC strove to embed itself in the cultural fabric of the nation. By taking
> pressurised oxygen canisters to climbers on Everest, transporting a 7,000 year-old
> skull from the British School in Jerusalem or flying astronomers as close as possible
> to an eclipse over the Shetland Islands, BOAC presented itself as a national service
> aware of its wider responsibilities.[61]

Under the broad mantra of 'national service', BOAC helped to frame British involvement

overseas as part of a moral obligation. This idea of a wider responsibility is one that had been

core in this thesis – BOAC understood its role in the 'national interest' as displaying and

describing Britain's actions overseas in positive and encouraging ways to emphasise that the

'British' mixed economy included a strong emphasis on welfare and aid.

Emphasising this sense of 'goodwill' was a consistent objective throughout the period, as there

was a significant degree of emphasis from both political elites and from the media that the

Commonwealth was 'dependent upon British wisdom and direction' for its advancement.[62]

Consequently, the idea of 'goodwill' referred to isolated acts of humanitarianism in centres of

---

[60] John Pudney, *The Seven Skies: A Study of B.O.A.C. And Its Forerunners since 1919* (Putnam, 1959). 19.
[61] Anthony and Green, *British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight. British Aviation Posters.* 113.
[62] J. D. B. Miller, *The Commonwealth in the World* (London: Duckworth, 1958). P.116.

imperial disquiet and withdrawal, and helped to capture a sense of military interventionism without the show of military resources. BOAC continually helped to recapture the retreat from Empire by emphasising acts of 'goodwill' that were undertaken rather than the circumstances surrounding withdrawal.

This 'wider responsibility' mantra was consistently emphasised throughout the *BOAC Review* was the recounting of BOAC's role in various different humanitarian and aid crises of the post-war period. In 1947 the story of BOAC's role in 'Operation India' was recounted, describing the 'mercy evacuation charter organised by the Corporation at the request of the Indian Government[…] evacuated thousands of non-Muslims, officials and refugees from centres in Western Pakistan over the troubled frontier areas.'[63] It further emphasised its role in broader British operations, as it described in 1964 looking back on the events of the airlift that it was the 'key to Pakistan' which stated 'after partition in 1947 BOAC helped in the transfer of the populations in and out of Karachi'.[64] These endeavours were subsequently published by the BOAC Public Relations Department as books called *Operation India: A World's Record Air-Lift* which re-told the event through the perspective of BOAC, which was removed enough from the direct involvement of government, proclaimed the success was a result of the 'skill and experience brought to bear by all concerned, who fully merited the generous thanks accorded them by the Indian Government for their work',[65] demonstrating BOAC's desire not just to act, but to publicise its actions.

In fact, airlifts formed an important narrative of wider work in the world in the *BOAC Review*, providing regular descriptions of corporate heroism and responsibility. Airlifts throughout the 1950s and 1960s were framed as attempts to recapture military actions to better display them

---

[63] "Operation India," *BOAC Review* December 1947. 10.
[64] "The Key to Pakistan," *BOAC Review* August 1964. 10.
[65] Department British Overseas Airways Corporation. Public Relations, *Operation India. A World's Record Air-Lift. [on the Repatriation of Indians from Pakistan and of Moslems from India, in October and November 1947. With Illustrations.]* ([London], [1947], 1947). 23.

in terms of morality and goodwill, often justifying them using the language of humanitarianism. This was presented foremost in the role played by BOAC in the Berlin Airlift, in which the *BOAC Review* described in 1948 that it had 'made available to the civil component of the airlift seven Dakotas and twenty-four personnel.'[66] The Berlin Airlift was strategically important for Britain as planners were 'worried about the political consequences of severe economic hardship, and whether the Germans would remain true to democracy,'[67] where it represented 'the greatest and largest air supply operation ever attempted, or ever likely to be attempted again',[68] helping to showcase BOAC as a key player in the government's strategy for military intervention without military power. As described in an advisory to US Foreign Policy, the 'moral, emotional, and physical courage provided the clear delineation between the systems',[69] and BOAC's interventions in this key early Cold War confrontation showed an act of goodwill and humanitarianism rather than military intervention – particularly as it was framed as a moral duty.

Similar sentiment was captured by BOAC's involvement in the Abadan Air lift in June 1951 after the Iranian Parliament made the decision to nationalise its shares of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in March 1951. Under instructions from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company as part of an operation to move families to 'make Abadan ready for any emergency which might occur in the oil dispute with the Persian Government'.[70] The *BOAC Review* described in 1951 that 'this simple act put new heart into a community deprived of their families and subjected to unsettling events. To those of us of BOAC it was a fitting climax to efforts which grew

---

[66] "We Take Part in Berlin Air-Lift," *BOAC Review* November 1948. 4.

[67] Emma Peplow, "The Role of Britain in the Berlin Airlift," *History* 95, no. 318 (2010). 223.

[68] H.M.S.O., Berlin Air Lift (1949),6. Cited in B. Humphreys, K., "Nationalisation and the Independent Airlines in the United Kingdom, 1945-51," in *Air Transport*, ed. Peter Lyth (Abington and New York: Routledge, 2016). 273

[69] Robert Fenton Jr, "The Berlin Airlift and the Use of Air Mobility as a Function of Us Policy," (AIR WAR COLLEGE, AIR UNIVERSITY MAXWELL AFB United States, 2016). 21.

[70] John Durrant, "Abadan Air Lift," *BOAC Review* August 1951. 4.

increasingly strenuous as the deadline approached.'[71] This presents a dichotomy between military humanitarian intervention and civilian corporate intervention; the events surrounding the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company was comparable to Suez as Britain needed to be conscious of keeping the United States, Commonwealth and UN on side.[72] BOAC was much less controversial than sending in military resources, and therefore demonstrated a form of military intervention without military resources. Furthermore, the dispute represented an event that typified the end of formal colonial occupation, so much so that 'each of the major oil companies relied upon their close links to their respective primary government' where it was 'active in the structuring process, promoting certain developmental paths, and enabling in that government provided a safety net for oil companies in times of stress'.[73] In the subsequent subpoena served to a US court which dealt with the case, it was described that for the purposes of the case that the oil company was 'indistinguishable from the Government of Great Britain,'[74] and therefore the airlift was an action committed to a non-military approach to a crisis, and thus presented BOAC as a version of British power less directly associated with military ambition and more explicitly focused on the provision of welfare and safety of citizens throughout the world.

To an extent, the benefit of these actions was underlined by the Drogheda Report in 1954, which emphasised that Britain needed to improve its information distributing services around the world. The report argued that 'the British role in the Western Alliance required effort to promote our case behind the Iron Curtain, to fortify weak nations, and to prevent misunderstanding and promote relations of confidence between ourselves and our Allies', and emphasising the need to 'strengthen the bonds of understanding between the UK and the

---

[71] Ibid. 4.

[72] Ian Speller, "A Splutter of Musketry? The British Military Response to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Dispute, 1951," *Contemporary British History* 17, no. 1 (2003). 60.

[73] Carlo Morelli, "Dundee Discussion Papers in Economics 166: The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company 1945-54: Government Business Relationships in Conflict?," (2004). 8.

[74] Washington Correspondent, "Secrecy of Oil Documents," *The Times*, 1952/12/16/ 1952. 8.

Dependencies'.[75] Therefore, especially from 1954, the need to improve and enhance communications played a significant role in ensuring cooperation and agreement between nations.

Further airlifts echoed similar themes. The *BOAC Review* described its actions as part of the 'airlift of Hungarian refugees from Vienna to London' in 1957 in response to the Hungarian Revolution. It outlined how 'nearly 2,800 refugees were carried, of whom two-thirds were men, the remainder having been infants, children and women,' in which they were met by Red Cross staff at London Airport.[76] These actions presented BOAC as an organisation underpinned by moral duty and humanitarian service within the wider world, and highlighted that 'welfare' was an intrinsically important feature of the British mixed economy. Whilst the contexts of these interventions were intrinsically political, BOAC carefully positioned themselves away from then politics and focussed on the success of the operation and emphasised the people involved in the airlift that were grateful for their support.

Describing in 1959 that 'BOAC is often able to earn the goodwill of various communities by doing some slight service, perhaps unconnected with air travel[…] 14 dolls in traditional costume for Johannesburg; 30 lbs. of haggis for Nassau and smaller quantities for Singapore and Kuala Lumpur,'[77] insisting its core feature was in its ability to advocate global goodwill. The utility of 'goodwill' became a substitute for ideological influence, and in spreading a sense of British goodwill, BOAC became a champion of a moral 'character' behind economic interests. Describing concurrent operations with the UN in Gaza in 1963 it described how 'BOAC became a symbol of the world outside' arguing further that 'it was little wonder that the men cheered when their Britannia flew overhead with the sun glinting on its wings. A life

---

[75] H. C. P. Earl of Drogheda, "Miscellaneous No. 12 (1954). Summary of the Report of the Independent Committee of Enquiry into the Overseas Information Services," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1954). 8.
[76] "Britannias in Hungarian Airlift," *BOAC Review* January 1957. 5.
[77] "Goodwill to All Parts of the World," *BOAC Review* January 1959. 12.

of families and homes and neighbours was about to be realised again',[78] suggesting that it was attempting to symbolise a system of values within a social system reflective of the principles of freedom, democracy and charity embedded within the structures of the organisation, showing that British interventions were celebrated and appreciated. These actions ensured the development of a positive international and domestic image in which it described in 1965 could become 'an international airline, the second largest in the world, in which the staff, the travelling public and the people of Britain can take unqualified pride',[79] a euphemism to describe an airline that spread the *values* of a nation on behalf of the citizens of the nation itself.

Britain has a long history of 'networks' used to advantage its own economic position. There are noticeable parallels to draw between the similarities in imagery, symbolism and language reminiscent of the Empire Marketing Board, which was designed to promote inter-Empire trade between 1926 and 1933, which ran campaigns that evoked a message 'of a common humanity and invoking a visual language of interdependence between Britain and its colonies' and which established 'an ethos of care and responsibility towards people in the Empire overseas as a means to encourage the British public to buy Empire-grown produce'.[80] Such campaigns were designed to elicit consumer loyalty by evoking a wider sense of communication and collaboration within the British Empire. The Empire Marketing Board 'worked to create an imperial brand that consumers could readily identify, allowing Empire producers to keep pace with foreign brands. However, this also caused conflicts with domestic producers, blurring the line between imperial and national concerns, and further privileging British interests over those of the Empire'.[81] By encouraging travellers to 'fly British by BOAC', marketing inspired a

---

[78] "With the Un in Gaza," *BOAC Review* July 1963. 10.
[79] "From This Day... Forward," *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue* April 1965. 25.
[80] Uma Kothari, "Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign," *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2014). 44.
[81] Bower, Ashley Kristen. "Rebranding Empire: Consumers, Commodities, and the Empire Marketing Board, 1926-1933." (2020). 95.

nationalist internationalist consumer loyalty. In the same way that the Empire Marketing Board attempted to inspire loyalty in the British institution of the Empire, BOAC fostered a sense of loyalty to the new vision of Empire and imperial relations by encompassing the linguistic and mindset changes that were present in this period.

Advertising played an important role in holding together the foundations of the Empire, as it has been recognised that 'advertisers and propaganda boards played a neo-colonial role and tried to hold together an empire that no longer existed in reality.'[82] Understanding post-war, post-Imperial brands was not isolated to BOAC as the tea industry, which held similar imperial connections to BOAC in the post-war period, meant 'nationalising tea's consumer culture' from an 'imperial product to a national drink' had helped to maintain these connections well into the 1970s.[83] BOAC advertisements functioned in much the same way, functioning in a neo-colonial way which attempted to hold together imperial connections that had long since expired, but under the guise of a 'nationalised' product.

The focus on advertising, imagery and ideology has similarly been assessed in the historiography of the British Empire. Scholars have identified similar themes in advertising for Empire related advertisements, campaigns and goods in the late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries as part of the New Imperial expansion. If advertisers 'billed themselves as "Empire builders" and flattered themselves with lithe responsibility of the historic imperial mission'[84] in the Eighteenth century, then in the post-war period, advertisers, particularly ones working with BOAC, were the 'network builders' that billed themselves as the messengers of a new, moral world order with Britain at its centre. This was especially significant as 'those who deplored jingoism were often the most fervent exponents of a "moral" imperialism, and it was

---

[82] Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017). 337.
[83] Ibid. 361.
[84] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (Routledge, 2013). 211.

just such people who controlled the levers of propaganda between the two wars, a time indeed when the professions of marketing, public relations, and propaganda (including censorship) all came of age.'[85] The parallels between the Eighteenth-century conceptualisation of Empire and the post-war conceptualisation of the post-Empire have remarkable similarities. The difference was in the core messages of morality and the value of these messages within the wider political economy, and they were more nationalist in their appeal. These advertisements suggested a passive involvement in Empire – when it came to companies that worked directly with BOAC across the world, these themes of cooperation and paternalism were made clearer.

5.7   International Partnerships

Commonwealth cooperation was emphasised through economic and political collaboration between BOAC and its partner airlines. These were not officially designated by BOAC, but instead referred to airlines within which BOAC had long standing histories, no financial ownership, but often referred to airlines that had 'pooled' resources with BOAC. The 'pooling' arrangement represented a policy which consisted of the 'pooling of revenue in a common fund to be allocated in proportion to the mileage flown, agreement on flight frequencies and schedules, with the consequence that commercial and financial services are performed in each country by the national airline on behalf of the associate company'.[86] Pooling agreements meant that tickets could be sold by any member of the pool, and that these profits would be combined and shared between those members of the pool. This effectively meant that any member of the pool agreement could operate services for the other. These agreements provided 'against competition, co-ordinated selling of frequencies, ports of call, and departure timers to attract to the pool more revenue than would otherwise be obtainable by the parties separately. Pooling

---

[85] John M MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion (1880-1960)* (Manchester, UK; Dover, NH, USA: Manchester University Press, 1984). P.10.
[86] "Memorandum on International Ownership and Operation of Air Transport" submitted to ICAO by France, A4-WP/8 EC/3 Appendix D March 1950, p. 16. Cited in Walter H Wager, "International Airline Collaboration in Traffic Pools, Rate-Fixing and Joint Management Agreement," *J. Air L. & Com.* 18 (1951). P.193.

completely eliminated competition among the participants and at the same time increased their combined strength against other carriers,'[87] as such became representative of the height of commercial cooperation between international airlines. Being 'Pooled' by BOAC meant, almost literally, the interweaving of routes and economic interests. More importantly, it highlighted the economic nature of Britain's international interests and, in so doing created a legal economic framework for its network

In addition to economic advantages, pooling arrangements carried with them political advantages; The 'scheme articulated Britain's wish to protect its pre-War Empire air routes and to keep post-War Commonwealth air routes "All-British" or, at least, "All-Red". Recourse to colonial cabotage may be regarded as the dividend from a "special relationship" in Commonwealth aviation, and as compensation for failure to negotiate a more regulated global airway system.'[88] Pooling agreements and interactions with partner airlines typified formal methods by which BOAC remained embedded in the international airways system.

After the Second World War, BOAC's most prominent partner airlines were QANTAS and South African Airways (SAA), by far the largest and most significant partners in BOAC's history. Over the course of the period, the quantity of pooling agreements increased, and as associated and subsidiary airlines began to claim independence from BOAC, several African Regional airlines including Central African Airways and East African Airways along with Trans-Canada Airlines, Air India, Pakistan International Airways and Air New Zealand were brought under the ambiguous 'partner' label. For QANTAS and South African Airways, these airlines were wholly independent entities from BOAC, aside from the aforementioned pooling

---

[87] John Gunn, *High Corridors: Qantas, 1954-1970* (john gunn, 1988). 243-4.
[88] Gordon Pirie, "Colonial Cabotage: Low-Cost Scheduled Passenger Services by British Independent Air Transport Companies in Africa, 1952-1960," *Revisita de la Historia de la Economica de la Empresa* XII (2018). P.68.

agreements, but were integrated into a rhetoric of 'partnership' that emphasised the long and cooperative relationships between the airlines.

Many of these partner airlines shared economic and military interests with Britain and the nations they represented. These partners, reflecting the 'white dominions', represented 'a critical element in British world power. The remarkable loyalty of the "overseas British" and their economic efficiency made them the most reliable overseas part of the whole British world-system'.[89] Notably concurrent with Dominion airlines, were often exemplified as the ideal post-imperial working relationships above any others in the network, and 'the scope of military co-operation between Britain, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and to a lesser extent with Canada, was possible because their governments acknowledged that their views of the world were compatible and that their future security remained interconnected'.[90] These airlines were often used to typify the success of cooperating with BOAC and, by extension, Britain, and emphasised that these were nations that were compatible in their interests. The importance of the Australian and South African partnerships, especially for the early Cold War period, were important centres of aviation power for Britain and were the 'main support bases in the event of a global war,[91] extending technical cooperation on nuclear matters. Therefore, their strategic and military importance matched the way BOAC spoke about them as partners.

As described by the UK High Commissioner in 1953 referred to South Africa and Australia 'aptly called the twin sisters of the Southern Seas. They stand closer than most counties since they are linked by a common policy of preserving white civilisation'.[92] Thus economic cooperation via nationalised airlines provided a link that helped to conceptualise a 'white

---

[89] Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970*. *The empire project*. 11

[90] Francine McKenzie, "In the National Interest: Dominions' Support for Britain and the Commonwealth after the Second World War," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, no. 4 (2006). 569.

[91] Wayne Reynolds, "Planning the Defences of World War Iii: The Post-War British Empire and the Role of Australia and South Africa, 1943-1957," *Historia* 43, no. 1 (1998). 73.

[92] Ibid. 73.

dominion' economic network. These factors suggested that there was an element of race involved in the rhetoric surrounding these aviation partnerships. A focus on race within these networks was not wholly unusual – the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire (FCCBE) which was designed to promote inter-Empire trade through centralising business in the Empire, was described as 'essentially a white man's club' and 'despite the expansion of the Commonwealth after 1945, the FCCBE failed to develop a multi-racial body representative of the modern Commonwealth' and had 'clung on to its original "British" identity.'[93] This contributed to development of a conceptualisation of a 'British world' which was represented by 'our people' and questions of what and how Britishness would come to be represented through BOAC,[94] an issue that the subsequent two chapters will attempt to understand in greater detail, especially given that QANTAS and SAA were practical (and racially acceptable) examples of the success of the promotion of the British mixed economy, and BOAC presented them as open and accepting of Britain's expansion efforts (even integrating them economically). The presentation of this cooperation remains the focus of the analysis here.

QANTAS, an initialism of "Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services" began operations in November 1920 operated, and in 2022 continues to operate, services between Australia and New Zealand, Britain, the United States and Asia and Africa.[95] Following on in January 1934 upon the termination of government contracts in 1933,[96] Qantas Empire Airways was formed alongside Imperial Airways, which each owned 49 percent shares.[97] Returned to its original namesake and nationalised by the Australian government in 1947,[98] BOAC argued

---

[93] David Thackeray, *Forging a British World of Trade: Culture, Ethnicity, and Market in the Empire-Commonwealth, 1880-1975* (Oxford University Press, 2019). P.111.
[94] Wendy Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, Race and National Identity, 1945-1964* (Routledge, 2005). Xix.
[95] John Gunn, *The Defeat of Distance: Qantas 1919-1939*, vol. 1 (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1985). 23.
[96] Ibid. 166.
[97] Ibid. 184.
[98] *Challenging Horizons: Qantas 1939-1954* (john gunn, 1987). 221.

that it had 'disposed of' its shares to the Australian Government,[99] though this phrasing suggested BOAC had relinquished control without external influences.

QANTAS worked with BOAC on the prestigious 'Kangaroo Route' typified by Australia's most recognisable animal and the nature of the short 'hops' that characterised its journey. More importantly, QANTAS shared remarkable parallels with BOAC and Imperial Airways, most notable of which was in how it saw for itself 'a national role in projecting the prestige of Australia, in the development of British Commonwealth and foreign trade relations, and in providing a valuable role in the country's defence infrastructure'.[100] Hence, QANTAS sought to fulfil similar political and economic objectives as BOAC, representing somewhat of an Australian parallel with BOAC, following similar foundations and expansion programmes.

Cooperation was a particularly prominent theme throughout the joint operations in the post-war period. In 1947 the partnership was described as the 'Empire Builder' working with the associated 'Qantas Empire Airways' to flag their efforts in fostering and developing national links.[101] Similarly in 1947 QANTAS described how its association with BOAC helped 'to make Australia a neighbour to the world',[102] and constructed the BOAC-QANTAS relationship as beneficial for both Britain and Australia's pursuit of a mutually successful world system.

An implication of this partnership was that both BOAC and QANTAS were British, and that supporting one of the airlines would mean supporting Britain's aviation. Passengers could 'fly around the world by British airlines' in 1952 where the three major Australian operators QANTAS, British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines (BCPA) and Tasman Empire Airways Limited (TEAL) 'can circle the globe – East to West or West to East – on British airlines all

---

[99] "Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1947." 19.

[100] *Challenging Horizons: Qantas 1939-1954. Challenging Horizons.* 242.

[101] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Empire Builder," *Financial Times*, 1947/11/20/ 1947. 5.

[102] QANTAS Empire Airways, "Qantas Empire Airways: Australia's International Airline," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1947/06/03/ 1947. 5.

the way', all airlines of which were in some part owned by BOAC and determining Qantas a 'British' airline.[103] Determining QANTAS as a 'British' airline was especially significant given that Australia was bound by a view that a 'prosperous Australia provided important markets for British industry and contributed to the vitality of the Commonwealth' which would bolster Britain's 'international political prestige and influence. QANTAS was therefore an uncontroversial partner, and the essence of nationalist internationalism was choosing which partners echoed cooperation and implying that *all* nations were cooperating.

Therefore, Australian interests, "properly conceived", were ultimately indistinguishable from the interests of the British world.'[104] The relationship between BOAC and QANTAS was captured by the Anglo-Australian economic relationships which 'remained a powerful sentimental assumption that the interests of Australia and Great Britain ought properly to coincide. It was widely understood that Australia and the mother country were mutually bound by blood and sentiment to treat each other's interests as part of a wider, organic whole'.[105] The sentimental relationship expressed by BOAC and their descriptions of Qantas capture this ideal. Advertising therefore helped to picture an ideal image of international cooperation, which could reflect a broader sense of British internationalism within the broader remit of the Commonwealth network.

BOAC's other significant partner, South African Airways (SAA), was formed in 1934 after the South African Government acquired Union Airways, a private commercial airline. Throughout its life, it continued to operate as a state-owned venture and SAA continue to operate services to and from South Africa.[106] Both the route and partnership were referred to as the 'Springbok',

---

[103] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Fly Round the World by British Airlines," *The Economist*, 1952/04/12/ 1952. 92.

[104] Stuart Ward, "Sentiment and Self-Interest: The Imperial Ideal in Anglo-Australian Commercial Culture," *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001). 100.

[105] Ibid. 100.

[106] Oswald Mhlanga and JN Steyn, "The Aviation Industry in South Africa: A Historical Overview," (2016). 2.

an antelope found in Southern Africa and a recognisable symbol of SAA. The airline served for a significant period of its history and notably through the controversies of the Apartheid regime in 1948 and becoming a republic in 1961.

BOAC's relationship with SAA reflected a similar predisposition as QANTAS, though given the political context of South Africa in the post-war period, the BOAC and SAA partnership held a significant set of racial and political implications. South Africa's Apartheid regime, initiated in 1948 by the newly elected Daniël Malan of the national party, legally codified informal segregationist policies in South African society. This regime faced little criticism from the British Government as the National Party's election victory did not 'trigger an immediate falling out with a British government which was motivated by a wish to maintain the Commonwealth and protect its interests, and had no urgent desire to take a stand for South Africa's black majority'.[107] Apartheid and the lacklustre response was therefore, in part, an effort to demonstrate a unified network of commonwealth agents. Rejecting this regime would have meant severing a very important political connection and would have stunted the objective of spreading sympathy to the British ideology.

As the Apartheid regime had little effect on the outlook of the British Government on South Africa, so too did the Apartheid regime have little impact on BOAC. Through the majority of the period as services to and from South Africa continued. It 'took some fourteen years before international distaste for Apartheid began to affect airline operations' and it took until 1964 for BOAC to finally withdraw its flights 'allied to the onset of decolonisation and political independence in black Africa as well as to South Africa's concurrent withdrawal from the Commonwealth and her adoption of Republican government.'[108] BOAC was not alone in its

---

[107] Gavin Schaffer, "The Limits of the 'Liberal Imagination': Britain, Broadcasting and Apartheid South Africa, 1948–1994," *Past and Present* 240, no. 1 (2018). 240.
[108] Gordon H Pirie, "Aviation, Apartheid and Sanctions: Air Transport to and from South Africa, 1945–1989," *GeoJournal* 22, no. 3 (1990). 232.

indifference to the Apartheid regime as 'at least until the mid-1970s', many organisations within the tourism sector were found that the discriminatory policies were 'not so pervasive that it served as a significant barrier to tourists, many of whom seemed to have had few qualms in visiting the country'.[109] However, joint advertisements based after South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth continued to reflect cooperation and partnership between the two airlines.

These controversies certainly did not alter the depiction of cooperation and mutual support, as joint advertisements were a long running staple between BOAC and SAA. In 1952, it was noted in an extract from *Interavia* which described the potential value in collaboration with SAA:

> Close observers in the Union are certain that SAA's participation in the "Comet" service has definitely been agreed upon, but that it will not consist of actual purchase by the South African carrier of de Havilland's jetliner. They claim that the Springbok partnership "Comets" will be operated jointly, with the names of SAA and BOAC both appearing on the fuselage.[110]

What remained clear was the effort to continue to use aviation to demonstrate political unity throughout periods of difficulty, even to the extent that BOAC would purchase aircraft for SAA. It was more important to be considered a part of a Commonwealth of aviation in image as a prompt for purchases, rather than the purchases themselves, and made for convincing rhetoric to describe that South Africa was 'less than a day by Comet jetliner'.[111] It implied a

---

[109] Albert Grundlingh, "Revisiting the 'Old'south Africa: Excursions into South Africa's Tourist History under Apartheid, 1948–1990," *South African Historical Journal* 56, no. 1 (2006). 107.

[110] The National Archives (TNA), "Boac Trunk Route Operations in Africa (Excluding Quadripartite Pool Operations)," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 245/1067, 1950-1953). Extract from Inter Avia Air Letter No.2570 Friday, 17th October, 1952.

[111] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "South Africa in Less Than a Day by Comet Jetliner," *The Times*, 1954/03/25/ 1954. 11.

direct and mutually beneficial trade relationship between Britain and South Africa and contributed to an efficient and effective technological relationship between the two nations.

In May 1961, South Africa declared its independence from Britain in a referendum which removed the Queen as head of state. However, the referendum had little impact on BOAC's route, as 'despite initial fears at the time of South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth, international travel from the Republic increased significantly'.[112] What followed this event was a significant change in rhetoric – particularly through how the relationship between SAA and BOAC was described. One of the most significant changes in rhetoric through the 1960s was that advertising became more explicitly focused on the business links between Britain and South Africa. One joint advertisement highlighted that 'much travelled businessmen appreciate and rely on the regular two-way flight service between London and South Africa'.[113] Advertising reflected, as figure 9 shows, a 1964 joint advertisement for SAA and BOAC in the *Financial Times* that South Africa had been experiencing 'a new wave of prosperity' which had been 'sparked off by a potent combination of massive foreign investments (mostly from Britain) a *huge* influx of new immigrants and an impressive round of wage increases for all African workers.'[114] Subsequently, 'South Africa continued to work with Britain. South Africa had few friends and many critics in the international community, especially after 1948.'[115] Despite South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth and its declaration of republic status, SAA and BOAC continued to promote a positive relationship between Britain and South Africa, actively promoting the economic ties between the two nations. Shared ideologies and a commitment to capitalism even outside the formalities of the Commonwealth demonstrated the

---

[112] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1962." 62.

[113] South African Airways, "There Goes Another Flight by South African Airways," *The Economist*, 1963/10/05/ 1963. 23.

[114] "Discover the World's Fastest-Growing Business Future in South Africa," *Financial Times*, 1964/07/23/ 1964. 17.

[115] McKenzie, "In the National Interest: Dominions' Support for Britain and the Commonwealth after the Second World War." "In the national interest." 558.

robustness of Britain's international relationships with the furthest reaches of the global network.

DISCOVER THE WORLD'S FASTEST-GROWING BUSINESS FUTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world. Business opportunities are unlimited. Fly South African Airways to investigate the golden chances this rich, sunshine land holds for you —and enjoy the holiday of a lifetime while you're there.

THE FACTS South Africa has a large and prosperous population — 16,000,000 people enjoying far and away the highest standard of living on the African continent — that forms a rich market for products of every kind.

This is especially true of late, since a new wave of prosperity has been sparked off by a potent combination of massive foreign investments (mostly from Britain), a *huge* influx of new immigrants and an impressive round of wage increases for all African workers.

South Africa is, by U.N.O. standards, *one of the only three developed countries in the Southern Hemisphere* — and the only one in Africa. The U.S.A. already has investments of £500-million in South Africa (General Motors and the Ford Motor Company are currently building engine plants there — total cost £16-million). Britain has £1,000-million invested. South Africa has a fantastic growth rate — the average yield on the top 50 industrial shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1960 was 7.54%. The U.S. equivalent was 3.36%, the U.K. 4.71%.

THE FUTURE In this bounding, vigorous country there's almost certainly a profitable field for your business activities. You owe it to yourself to investigate the possibilities as fully as possible — on the spot.

South African Airways Boeing 707 Stratojets leave London Airport regularly, wing you over to this land of prosperity and opportunity lapped in the splendid ease of true South African hospitality. Combine business with pleasure, and make the most of your chance to enjoy the holiday of a lifetime.

GETTING AROUND SOUTH AFRICA The South African Railway Administration operates a vast, co-ordinated network of rail, road and air services throughout the Republic and to neighbouring territories.

By using this modern, comfortable transport service, you can be sure of seeing and enjoying all that South Africa has to offer, even on quite a brief visit — especially if you plan your itinerary in advance.

The South African Railway Office, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2, can advise you on the easiest way of getting around the country.

SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS WITH B·O·A·C

S.A.A. IN ASSOCIATION WITH B.O.A.C. & C.A.A. OFFER DAILY JET SERVICES BETWEEN LONDON & JOHANNESBURG
For further information consult your travel agent or South African Airways, 107 New Bond Street, London W.1. Telephone HYDe Park 3424 or, after office hours, VICtoria 2323. For full details of the fascinating and varied tourist attractions of sunny South Africa, contact the South African Tourist Corporation, 70 Piccadilly, London W.1. Telephone GROsvenor 6235/6.
Come ... see for yourself.
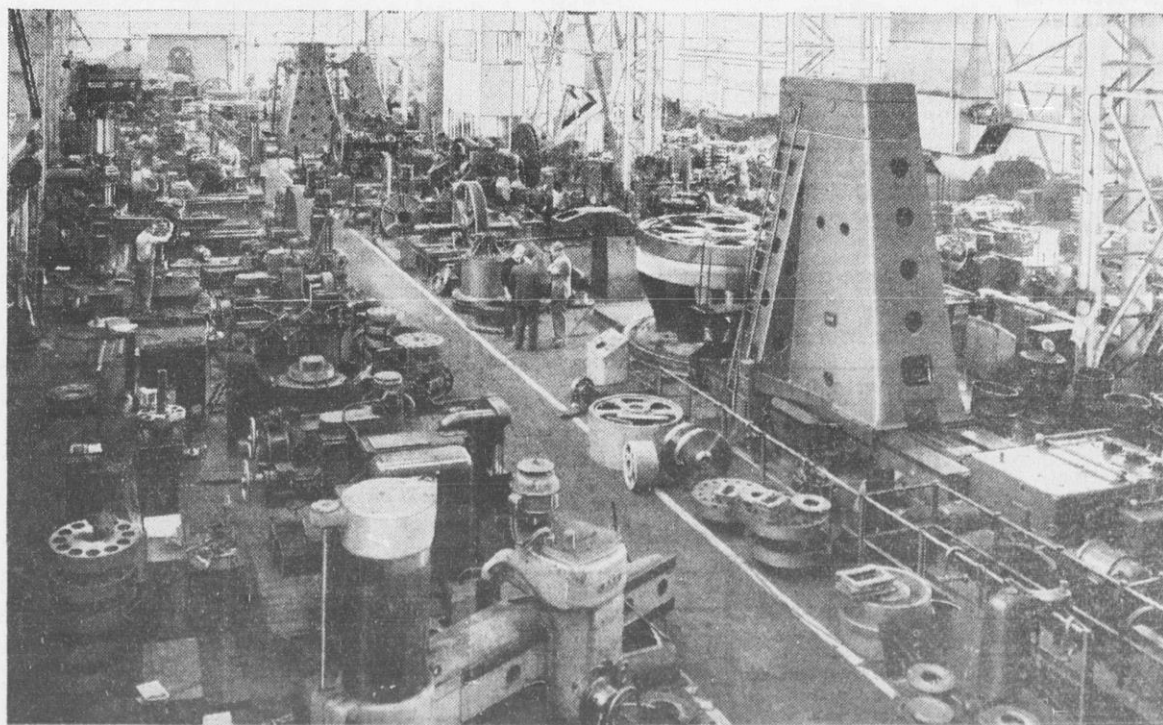
A heavy bay at the works of DAVID BROWN PRECISION EQUIPMENT (Pty) Ltd., Johannesburg

Figure 9:"Discover the World's Fastest-Growing Business Future in South Africa," Financial Times, 1964.

All of this was seen to encourage international trade and the exploitation of resources in South Africa. Joint advertisements offered 'an agreeably pre-war price structure' for produce like wine, grapes, pineapples, peaches and cigarettes, and that travellers could 'bask in welcome warmth and warm welcomes'.[116] As SAA celebrated '30 years of progress' in 1964, recounting how it was 'hard to realise that this journey of 6 ½ thousand miles was once an arduous air adventure', but how evolution and innovation meant that 'now passengers on business or pleasure bound, climb abord a SAA Boeing – and in just over half a day, they are in Johannesburg'.[117] One of the more subtle nuances contained within this advertisement was in its presentation of race as it depicted a crew of men and women, all of whom were white South Africans, a presentation which would have led viewers to believe that SAA was a white organisation tailored to the white settler community, and not to South Africans, where these relationships were dependent on the promotion of the network as one which was led by whites.

The idea of a business exchange was encouraged in similar cooperative advertisements, as SAA went on to further describe in another 1965 advertisement that 'the prosperous South Africans will import goods worth over £713 millions!' where 'You, or a key man from your company, can be in Johannesburg – the heart of industrial South Africa – in a matter of hours, to see in person where your product will fit into the market'.[118] This served to indicate ethnic cooperation between not only the airlines, but the corresponding cooperation between the nations as well. The significance of race will be analysed in greater detail in subsequent chapters, but this further reinforced the perception that the expanse of the British world was one in which race held a considerable weight. When conceptualising the 'ideal' cooperation between airlines, the

---

[116] South African Airways, "Discover the Incredible Beauty of South Africa," *The Times*, 1964/09/30/ 1964. 8.
[117] South African Airways, "Welcome Aboard Africa's Most Experienced Airline!," *The Sphere*, March 1964 1964. 330.
[118] South African Airways, "This Year, the Prosperous South Africans Will Import Goods Worth over £713 Millions!," *The Economist*, 1965/06/12/ 1965. 1351.

implication was that the highest and most equal degrees of cooperation were between white airlines.

In spite of increasing racial and political tensions, there was a great strength in ensuring that Anglo-South African trade relations continued to be effective and mutually beneficial. Indeed the example of South Africa revealed that 'Britishness, in this sense, is better seen as a field of cultural, political and symbolic attachments which includes the rights, claims and aspirations of subject-citizens as well as citizen subjects',[119] and the successful expanse of these networks represented an expanse of British values. Perhaps more pertinently, however, is the persistence of this formulation of racism within BOAC's networks of cooperation, suggesting that the British ideology had a component of racism within it. Nonetheless, the relationships BOAC had with QANTAS and SAA were used to represent stability in the white dominions, demonstrating Britain's success in the Commonwealth project and determining that full cooperation and engagement would result in mutual political and economic benefits.

These attempts at a broader notion of cooperation were described in 1965 as the 'miniature' experiment in creating a Commonwealth airline 'in circumstances of the best goodwill, the minimum of political complications, the maximum of historical affinity between the participating countries' that 'still failed'.[120] This description suggested that everything had been done on Britain's part to secure these partnerships – failure in the end product therefore lay elsewhere. It went on to outline that 'while some of these partnerships may, for good commercial or unfortunate political reasons, wither, the inherent sense of most of them promises durability and further development.'[121] The great emphasis on the celebration of different partnerships between BOAC and other long-established 'dominion' airlines

---

[119] Saul Dubow, "How British Was the British World? The Case of South Africa," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 1 (2009). 3.
[120] "Above the Seven Seas: Boac and Its Commonwealth Partners," *The Round Table* 55, no. 220 (1965). 350.
[121] Ibid. 357.

emphasised the advancement of these international relations. Echoing their pre-war expansion, 'just as 'indirect rule' and 'trusteeship' were words implying the style of government that prevailed before the war, the term 'partnership' became the post war symbol of advance,'[122] thereby suggesting that Britain's relationships had matured and represented ideal Commonwealth cooperation, something which other nations would do best to emulate. Centrally, the Commonwealth helped to symbolise ideal cooperation within the white dominions, suggesting a network of mutual and beneficial trade. However, outside the white dominions, this kind of support was framed differently to put greater emphasis on Britain's moral and altruistic motivations.

5.8   Conclusion

The Commonwealth was considered an extremely valuable political and economic asset, often seen as the central means by which Britain could maintain, or at least develop, a position of global dominance and influence. Imagery which reflected the cooperative nature of the Commonwealth was therefore essential in the maintenance of the network itself. BOAC would encourage the development of economic and political links across the world in an effort to bring the network together and, in so doing, rhetoric would emphasise that being a part of the Commonwealth network would result in huge advantages, and that nations choosing to cooperate fully with the network were brought into wealthy 'pooling' agreements. It also suggested that being a part of the network would result in receiving a great deal of 'goodwill' from the airline. BOAC idealised the imagery of Commonwealth cooperation in order to suggest that it was a unified, advantageous bloc, even if the realities of such an assertion were primarily misleading. It helped characterise Britain at the centre of a network which prioritised internationalism against competition with the US. This characterisation depended heavily on

---

[122] John Michael Lee, *Colonial Development and Good Government: A Study of the Ideas Expressed by the British Official Classes in Planning Decolonization 1939-1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). P.18.

which organisation was being targeted. 'Goodwill' often helped to frame Britain in a way which suggested the value of its great capacity for moral intervention overseas across the Commonwealth, issues which will form the basis of the final two chapters.

6   The 'Limiting Factors in World Development'

6.1   Introduction

Cooperation with 'white dominion' airlines implied that BOAC was prepared to cooperate with all global airlines on an equal footing. However, this was not the case, and many airlines, particularly those which were airlines of previous colonies, were treated in paternalistic and neo-colonial ways. Much as before, this was justified using the language of humanitarianism and, in particular, tied to the prevailing notions of 'Colonial development' of the late 1940s. Following this line of policy, BOAC promoted Britain's perceived moral and paternal obligation to the 'welfare' of colonial nations and citizens that were seen as disadvantaged. Building on notions of 'goodwill' established in the previous chapter, this chapter examines BOAC's reflection of the policies of 'development' in the context of the post-war world, suggesting that BOAC's marketing helped to bolster the British Government's welfare agenda abroad. Particularly in representations of Africa and Asia, domestic advertising for business destinations helped to visualise the positive results of Britain's intervention abroad.

In addition to promoting the 'development' agenda, it also actively participated in it by investing in 'associated and subsidiary' airlines, passing on expertise and aircraft to help new nations set up their own airlines. These relationships often represented the awkward continuities of prior imperial relationships before the Second World War. These themes of development, paternalism and eventual 'graduation' from Imperial rule had helped to rationalise Britain's culture of intervention, helping to characterise Britain as an 'altruistic' nation capable of great international leadership that had successfully encouraged other nations to grow and develop their own international airlines – even though in many cases, by helping airlines to develop there was an informal expectation that they would remain loyal to Britain. This ultimately failed, but the attempt helped showcase BOAC's attention as a nationalised

industry, as it was focused on the welfare and development of citizens at home and abroad. By extension, this helped showcase the values of Britain's economic and social system.

6.2 Projections of Development

In the October 1948 edition of the *BOAC Review*, an article described the then Chairman of BOAC Harold Hartley on a visit to Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, South Africa. On his visit, he delivered a paper on the 'Limiting Factors in World Development: Or What is Possible' to the Associated Scientific and Technical Societies of South Africa. The article went on to describe the paper in greater detail:

> The theme of this paper was that world prosperity now depends on the intensive and balanced economic development of every part of the world, and especially the more backward or still thinly populated regions. Africa, in Sir Harold's view, is a continent offering tremendous possibilities of development, possibilities which depend on air transport for their full realisation.[1]

Hartley's focus was that Britain and its aviation capabilities represented a means to wider global prosperity. Readers of the *BOAC Review* were encouraged to understand that, more than a travel and transport operator, it owed something back to communities across the world.

This echoed a wider political sentimentality, that given the enormity of Britain's power and influence, it had a moral obligation to facilitate a sense of global 'development' and that its power could be used beyond a military force, and used to inspire positive humanitarian change throughout the world. This was the view within the political establishment known as economic 'development', a policy which consisted of funding and operating a series of industrial projects across the Colonial Empire. This was a policy deriving from the principles instilled by the Attlee's Labour Government which believed that it could facilitate engagement with the colonies 'justified within the Fabian and socialist ideologies underpinning the Labour Party in

---

[1] "The Chairman in South Africa," *BOAC Review* October 1948. 11.

this period'.[2] A key part of this reconstruction of the Empire relied on the development of colonial aid policies, of which, aviation was seen by many in the political realm as a key tool for expanding access into development. Colonial development policies particularly emphasised metaphors through the provision 'technical assistance' as a euphemism to maintain the structures of imperialism but under a different name.[3] Bulmer-Thomas, a key figure in the Attlee Labour Government, argued in the Commons in his capacity as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 1945, who would later serve as and as Under-Secretary for the Colonies in 1946, advocated the value of cooperation with of the value in cooperating with other national airlines in the colonies as it 'gives to the oversea companies the benefit of vast experience and saves them from many costly errors',[4] suggesting at least a conception of paternalist responsibility towards sharing advances in science and technology with other national enterprises.

However, 'development' was also a term frequently used in the imperialist lexicon to justify further dominance and expansion, one which, like BOAC, evolved to reflect the growth of nationalist sentiments in the post-war period. This period was the 'age of neo-humanitarianism' which typified a more centralised and bureaucratised system of aid and humanitarian intervention that was fundamentally underwritten by a paternal desire that had typified the pre-war imperialists, but cited 'humanity than God to explain why they cared', a penchant to 'infantilised language' and used 'expert knowledge and utilised quasi-technocratic language to justify their interventions' which was 'still something done for and to others, not with them.'[5] As the political shifts in Empire policy meant that new conceptions of 'imperial responsibility' were understood in Britain to focus on 'adequately – and thoroughly – preparing them to adapt

---

[2] Charlotte Riley, "The Winds of Change Are Blowing Economically: The Labour Party and British Overseas Development, 1940s-1960s," in *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa*, ed. Andrew W.M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen (London: UCL Press, 2017). 51.
[3] Ibid. 54.
[4] "Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 26th June, 1946," (1946).
[5] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Cornell University Press, 2011). 105.

to modernity'. This version of modernity 'as westernisation writ large had become part of the new meaning of trusteeship, one in which metropolitan and peripheral society were no longer seen as being in conflict, but a partnership'.[6] These policies helped to reshape the Imperial relationship in order to continue imperialistic activities abroad, and reflected a change in *motivation*, but a continuation of imperialist structures of power.

These policies were formalised under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, a series of acts in 1929, 1940 and 1945 which served to make increased finances available for industrial projects overseas. With a particular focus on the 1945 Colonial Development and Welfare Act, this Act was one advocated by the Labour Governments and allowed for funds 'to be funnelled towards education and welfare', and in 1951 after the Labour Party left government, 'it advocated funding for Africa on a more ambitious scale, on the model of the Marshall Aid',[7] and the Acts made £1,635,257 available for Civil Aviation between 1949 and 1950, second only to the development of roads.[8]

The Act also helped to fulfil an international version of the Labour Party's welfare agenda as a way of defending colonies from Communism, as the influential pamphlet *Challenge to Britain* highlighted that 'unless we can persuade the colonial peoples that they can fulfil their aspirations in co-operation with the West, no amount of atom bombs or tanks will prevent Communism.'[9] The Act also captured Britain's moralistic cause, described in 1957 as legislation which would 'enable the Colonies to help themselves towards a higher standard of living' and which could

---

[6] Vernon Hewitt, "Empire, International Development & the Concept of Good Government," in *Empire, Development & Colonialism: The Past in the Present*, ed. Mark Duffield and Vernon Hewitt (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2013). 33.

[7] Paul Kelemen, "Planning for Africa: The British Labour Party's Colonial Development Policy, 1920–1964," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 7, no. 1 (2007). 93.

[8] "Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. Return of Schemes Made under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the Concurrence of the Treasury, in the Period from 1st April, 1949, to 31st March, 1950," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1950). 1949, to 31st March, 1950. P.70.

[9] Labour Party, 1953. *Challenge to Britain*. London: Labour Party. Cited in "Planning for Africa: The British Labour Party's Colonial Development Policy, 1920–1964." 94.

represent 'for the people concerned' it 'symbolised centuries of human progress compressed into one brief decade'.[10]

Much like the BOAC map evoked Victorian notions of colonial centrality, so too did these prevailing notions of colonial morality and humanitarianism derive from Victorian ideals, as 'Victorian notions of betterment, improvement, progress, prosperity and civilisation where perceived to be savagery, chaos, despotism, poverty and slavery. In this sense, the British Empire was always a *Victorian* empire with an umbrella of broad welfare benefits at the heart of its self-promoting ideology'.[11] These attitudes reflected the ideologies that had preceded decades before: the reflections of BOAC's humanitarian intentions suggested an ideology that echoed a 'liberal' desire to act paternally with concern over Colonies and Commonwealth blocs, suggesting that it was a 'British' version of the welfare agenda that was expanding. This helped capture an ideology that was designed to emphasise 'racial liberalism' which was 'employed as part of the Cold War arsenal to represent the West as the upholder of human rights and freedom'.[12] In the same way BOAC changed its name and rhetoric to reflect the limit of what was deemed 'acceptable' intervention measures abroad, so too did the principles of 'humanitarian tradition' evolve from the limits of what was acceptable in the 'colonial empires'.[13] BOAC must therefore be seen as part of this shift in attitudes away from direct Imperialism to a form of moral welfarism – a role inherently tied to its perceived responsibilities as a nationalised industry and as an echo of the welfare state.

---

[10] John Godwin, "Centuries of Human Progress Compressed into a Single Decade: Achievements Made Possible by Britain's Colonial Development and Welfare Act," *World Affairs* 120, no. 1 (1957). 21.

[11] James Midgley and David Piachaud, *Colonialism and Welfare: Social Policy and the British Imperial Legacy* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011). 26.

[12] Ramamurthy and Wilson, "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers: Racism, Appropriation and Resistance in Advertising." "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers." 74.

[13] Emily Baughan, "Rehabilitating an Empire: Humanitarian Collusion with the Colonial State During the Kenyan Emergency, Ca. 1954–1960," *Journal of British Studies* 59, no. 1 (2020). 59.

This rhetoric could be used throughout the process of decolonisation as a 'defence strategy where theories of economic development became influential in the African political economy during decolonization' and as 'the focus on development and modernization revived imperial aspirations in the British and French colonies, however unsuccessful'.[14] BOAC's moral leadership would place an emphasis on a positive form of economic development in an attempt to legitimise the case for continued British involvement abroad. The expansion of BOAC's influence within these independent airlines must therefore be identified in line with Britain's broader 'quest for favoured post-colonial relationships - neo-colonialism in the eyes of its critics, essential aid, advice, and investment to its defenders' and which would help in the process of 'the cultivation of preferred elites before independence'.[15] Airlines were inherently elite institutions, as well as natural centres of nationalism, which therefore implied that helping to get a 'national airline' would have cultivated a set of 'preferred' elite institutions with the new nations. The implication was to blur the lines between Britain and Commonwealth through a unity in aviation, and indeed sought the suppression of individual national airlines, advocating Commonwealth imperial communications over those of national airlines.

Post-war projects were primarily based in the Colonial, later in 1964 Commonwealth, Development Corporation (CDC), which was 'as much an ideological (to give future hope to the amalgam of new middle and working class voters which put Labour in power) as a material urgency.'[16] The CDC was designed 'primarily to operate big ad hoc development schemes in the Colonies on a "break-even" basis,'[17] and whilst these projects would encounter a significant expense, government officials argued that the 'increase in colonial production would be helpful

---

[14] Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950–1970." "Corporate legitimacy and advertising." 61.

[15] Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson, "Empire and Globalisation: From 'High Imperialism'to Decolonisation," *The International History Review* 36, no. 1 (2014). 159.

[16] Mike Cowen, "Early Years of the Colonial Development Corporation: British State Enterprise Overseas During Late Colonialism," *African Affairs* 83, no. 330 (1984). 64.

[17] Michael McWilliam, *The Development Business: A History of the Commonwealth Development Corporation* (Springer, 2001). 5.

to the UK's balance of payments',[18] helping to greatly integrate the network of industrial partnerships with Britain across the world. There were numerous similarities between CDC and BOAC, similarities that were ideological, practical and circumstantial. Ideologically, both organisations were formed under the 1945 Labour Party as part of an assessment of wider social needs (though BOAC was formed in 1939, the post-war Swinton Plan set the tone for much of its operations in the period). Often, this led to the problem of what it meant for the organisations financially, whether they should function commercially, break even, or operate at a loss. From a practical sense, both were involved within the geographical problems associated with international, and particularly, colonial authorities – as well as the practical issues of getting staff and supplies out to these places. Finally, both organisations were subject to the circumstances in which they were based, suffering as a result of political challenges such as the prevailing sense of 'decline' in Britain and the rise of Americanisation, and as a result both had to fight to prove value as an organisation funded by the British state.

BOAC and CDC also shared many people in positions of authority. Throughout his time in the CDC in 1947, Miles Thomas served as deputy Chairman and a board member for CDC before becoming Chairman of BOAC in 1947, went on to describe in his autobiography that 'in view of my knowledge of Africa I was allotted to paying special attention to projects in that area[…] the idea of building up British business overseas appealed greatly to me. While there was nothing jingoistic in my mind, I like the word "Empire". Imperial unity had a solid ring about it.'[19] Similarly, Alan Lennox-Boyd, who served initially as Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation in 1952 to 1954, became Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1954. In Lennox-Boyd's biography, he was described as believing that 'the notion that by securing the cooperation of colonial leaders "power" could be exchanged for "control" was at the heart not

---

[18] Ibid. 8

[19] Miles Thomas, *Out on a Wing: An Autobiography* (London: Michael Joseph, 1964). 252.

only of Lennox-Boyd's approach to constitutional reform.'[20] The shared staff, ideologies and objectives suggest that there was a degree of operational overlap between both organisations; both were described as the 'chosen instrument' of the respective policy areas, and both had great publicity machines for Colonial development projects.

These transport-related infrastructural improvements were posited as positive changes to colonial lands; however, the outcomes of these policies reveals that they were often instigated for Britain's advantage. These improvements were described as means to enhance 'local' transport in colonies, but civil aviation generally did more for Britain's export market than for local transport infrastructures and economies. Transport infrastructures were developed in ways that would eventually cause economic burdens on colonies later on;

> Much of the transport and communications system was built mainly to facilitate the export industries of the colonies and while this was important in stimulating the development of exports it left the colonies with a system which was lopsided in that transport links which served to integrate the domestic economy were generally assigned a lower order of priority or simply ignored. Just as colonial rule tended to build up the strong trading links between the colony and the metropolitan centre, but to inhibit regional integration, so the export-oriented transport systems concentrated on the movement of goods between the export sectors and the ports, while failing to provide a network of communications which would serve the entire country and encourage diversification.[21]

Development was centred on developing export and trade industries within colonies rather than developing regional and functional transportation systems. The international transportation systems developed by BOAC was not completed specifically for local populations or moral obligation, but to the advantage to *Britain's* international import and export industries as well as locating Britain's economy at the centre of an economic network as per the previous chapter. The focus was on 'export oriented' transportation systems designed not to connect regions within countries but rather to connect 'developed' economic centres with 'developing'

---

[20] Murphy, *Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography. Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography*. 105.
[21] Michael A Havinden and David Meredith, *Colonialism and Development: Britain and Its Tropical Colonies, 1850-1960* (Routledge, 2002). P.315.

economic centres was exactly the rhetoric emphasised by BOAC's economic networks. Nonetheless, communications materials placed emphasis on framing transport and economic networks in a moral and altruistic light.

6.3 Marketing Development

Themes of development and the positive impact of these policies on the wider world was a substantial theme in marketing. These themes were primarily featured in materials for business travellers, though they were still present in tourist materials. Particularly for the period between 1950 to 1955, advertising would emphasise how infrastructural developments, often in line with CDC policy, had brought about economic and social advantages for local populations, which were then framed as an economic resource for British business travellers. BOAC's role as an advertiser meant creating the impression of economic development and aligning British businesses with the improvements in colonial and ex-colonial economies. Advertising helped readers in Britain – primarily business readers – to understand how Britain's policies of development working 'on the ground' and how being British meant an intrinsic concern for those across Britain's networks. These advertisements help us understand how policies of development were consumed within Britain and how they framed British interventionism as a product of a nation invested in the welfare of citizens abroad, even if this was clearly motivated by the great economic advantage it provided for Britain at the centre.

Historians have noted that advertising in the 1960s was 'seen largely in terms of economic development and thus almost entirely in a positive light' particularly through 'a time of considerable difficulty for many Third World countries, whose primary produce exports were

experiencing a long-term decline in value'.[22] However, and particularly within the context of BOAC and other nationalised industries, these themes were present much earlier.

Policies of development within the remit of the CDC were focused on large scale infrastructural and industrial projects in the West Indies (15 projects), West Africa (12 Projects), East Africa (12 projects), Central Africa (6 projects), Far East (4 Projects), denoting the importance of Africa in infrastructural development investments.[23] What this demonstrates is the focus on Africa as a region of development attention. Furthermore, particularly under Conservative administrations, development was focused on bringing in private businesses into complete work for the infrastructural projects. This reflected the core of the British economic approach as it promoted state sponsored private expansion policies as this thesis has noted before, using nationalised industry as a way of encouraging private investment but making it easier with state support.

Asia represented an important early focus of such advertising: despite the process of decolonisation generally completed by 1950 and the relatively small number of development projects, Asian destinations were described in a way which implied the promotion of increased economic and industrial exploitation of the continent. Both Britain and the USA noted the advantages of increased exploitation of Indian natural resources, with a US Mission to India in 1942 which 'underlined the necessity of developing her natural and human resources' for increased industrial production.[24] Hence, BOAC's role was in showcasing the ease of access to these markets and highlighting that it was economically advantageous to make use of the links in India. Furthermore, the growing force of Americanisation meant there was a renewed interest in ensuring that Britain's economic interests took as much of the market as possible.

---

[22] Malcolm Crick, "Representations of International Tourism in the Social Sciences: Sun, Sex, Sights, Savings, and Servility," *Annual review of Anthropology* 18, no. 1 (1989). 314.
[23] McWilliam, *The Development Business: A History of the Commonwealth Development Corporation*. *The development business*. 15.
[24] Jagdish Sinha, *Science, War and Imperialism: India in the Second World War* (Brill, 2008). 64.

Advertising for India, for example, evoked notions of the wealth of natural resources and native industries available for British businesses. A 1952 advertisement described this in great detail:

> In recent years India's vast natural resources have been increasingly exploited and the products of such great industries as the textile centres of Bombay, Madras, Bangalore; the jute mills of Calcutta; the wool and leather factories of Kanpur; the steel plants at Jamshedpur; the tea gardens of Assam; the gold, manganese and coal mines respectively of Kolar, Nagpur and Jharia, are in demand throughout the world.[25]

Of particular note was the Indian textile market, which represented a historically significant market for Britain. As a surge in demand in the early 1950s meant that Indian and Japanese textile businesses had largely taken over business and limited exports to these areas, this was a move to encourage British investments in Indian markets, in so doing they would take advantage of burgeoning Asian businesses to compensate for the decline in traditional Lancashire Textiles, which were usually exported from England overseas.[26]

These claims to British businesses were also made in the context of insistence from the newly independent Indian National Congress and its policy of 'Indianisation' which meant a concerted approach to recruiting more native Indians, companies based in India still 'made great efforts to continue to recruit Europeans throughout the 1950s and 1960s, despite the increasing difficulties of finding suitable people who were willing to embark on a career in India', where policies of Indianisation would 'reduce the prestige and influence' of British companies.[27] Thus

---

[25] British Airways Heritage Collection, "India: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

[26] Susan Wolcott, "British Myopia and the Collapse of Indian Textile Demand," *Journal of Economic History* (1991). 378-9.

[27] Maria Misra, *Business, Race, and Politics in British India, C. 1850-1960* (Clarendon Press, 1999). 202.

it was essential to make it easy for British businesses to enter the market in India to continue to promote British expertise in these industries and to prevent hiring US experts.

Development played a significant part in these advertisements, as in the same advertisement, described some of the advancing infrastructural developments that had occurred in India's recent history:

> Today, India is embarking on a new phase in her long history and great undertakings, such as the Damodar Valley Project and the Bhakra Dam, are under construction. Modern India is characterised by a spirit of enterprise and a determination to maintain and improve the country's position as one of the world's great industrial and trading centres.[28]

Both of these projects held a political value - the Damodar Valley Project originated from the American Tennessee Valley Authority which 'offered America a foothold in India from here she could articulate her economic cooperation into a diplomatic device to deal with the lurking problems and harness the opportunities of the post-war world.'[29] This worried policymakers in Britain as 'despite London's alarm and repeated protestations' and the Government of India continued its embrace of American 'expertise and equipment, signalling clearly that the previous influence and leverage of certain British business' in this period[…] was being curtailed and undermined in some respects,'[30] and in an effort to dispel the 'caste of shirt-sleeved diplomats would help to push out the frontiers of American influence, confronting the world with another brand of imperialism'.[31] This was an attempt to reassert British economic expansion by encouraging British businesspeople to go to India and take advantage of the economic and infrastructural developments, even if they did not strictly emanate from British development projects. Asia was a key arena for which Britain could intervene in the continent

---

[28] British Airways Heritage Collection, "India: Fly There by Boac." India: Fly there by BOAC.

[29] Sinha, *Science, War and Imperialism: India in the Second World War*. *Science, war and imperialism*. 64.

[30] Rohan D'Souza, "Damming the Mahanadi River: The Emergence of Multi-Purpose River Valley Development in India (1943-46)," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 40, no. 1 (2003). 101.

[31] J. M. Powell, "The Empire Meets the New Deal: Interwar Encounters in Conservation and Regional Planning," *Geographical Research* 43, no. 4 (2005). 339.

to ensure security from Americanisation, but since Britain's removal from the region against the background of partition, its focus on Asia (specifically India and Pakistan) had generally waned over time, as had interest in development projects in Asia overall.

6.4   Advertising Opportunity in Africa

The primary target of the images of trusteeship and racial liberalism was primarily targeted at the African region. Developments in Africa were a prominent focus of BOAC advertising which, much like descriptions of Asia, implied the utility of Africa for British business. The key difference with Africa was that the messaging was much more explicit about the region being used for Britain's advantage. This was reflected in the attitudes of the management as Miles Thomas wrote in the *Financial Times* in 1948 to later become Chairman in 1949, argued that 'the economic position in Britain[…] stood between the stubborn ideologies of the East and the dynamic industrialisation of the West; and their differences had not yet been resolved'.[32] The economic position between the 'East' and the 'West' echoed Britain's middle way approach, suggesting that its unique position within the Commonwealth offered an alternative to the political systems that had dominated the early Cold War. He went on to describe how useful Africa had the potential to be for Britain:

> The whole of that vast African territory – so much of it fortunately at high altitude enabling white men to live in reasonable comfort even in the tropical – is simply asking to be turned into both treasury and armoury, a source of dollar reserve in peace-time, a steadfast fortress in time of war[…] My vision is of a United State of Africa, criss-crossed with railway lines; with road developments in keeping with modern needs; and with British air-lines feeding down both her Eastern and Western corridors, interlinked by local cross-over services[…] The economic potentialities of such a vision give scope for us Britishers still to do what the early Americans did in their pioneering old days – go out into the still sparely inhabited areas and develop the agriculture and the industries.[33]

---

[32] "United State of Africa," *Financial Times*, 1948/10/13/ 1948. 548.
[33] Ibid. 548.

The implication that Britain would benefit from a greater utilisation of Africa revealed a motivation behind the expansion of services and infrastructures around the world. The belief that Africa was a reserve, and one that was owned and used by Britain but served by British transportation infrastructures, meant that developing Africa would be advantageous for both the African continent in terms of economic and infrastructural expansion and for Britain's own economic needs. Themes of a 'developing' Africa justified further intervention, but also provided a view of the 'utility' of the African region, implying that businesses and economic interests should make investments in Africa.

Using transport to take greater advantage of African resources was a policy absorbed in imperialist thought. The history of economic development, particularly in relation to transportation and infrastructure, originated before both world wars reflected the persistence of ideas that 'governments had long supported initiatives to "open" Africa – especially railway, road, and port construction. But more explicit and ambitious schemes in the 1920s were rejected.'[34] Cecil Rhodes had originally envisaged the construction of a railway from 'Cape-to-Cairo,' a North-South railway spanning the whole of the African continent,[35] and whilst the form of transport changed, the overarching principle remained the same – constructing and improving transport infrastructure in Africa to enhance overall utilisation of the region. In 1936, the writer Lois Raphael noted that such infrastructural visions within Africa were 'closely bound with both economic needs and imperial aspirations. It is this relationship between gigantic economic undertakings and the shaping of imperial policies which makes the story of the influence of Cape-to-Cairo ideas on British expansion such a significant chapter in the history of British imperialism'.[36] Miles' view of the expansive network of aviation covering

---

[34] Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).P.65

[35] Robert Williams, "The Cape to Cairo Railway," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 20, no. 80 (1921).

[36] Lois AC Raphael, *Cape to Cairo Dream: A Study in British Imperialism* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1936). P.24.

the whole African continent symbolised not simply the continuation of an imperialist ideology, but a continuation of the means to achieve it. The vision was principally the same as 'Cape to Cairo', but with a more modern form of technology better equipped for the job, with much obtrusive infrastructure.

This was echoed by the fact that one of the key words repeated through advertising materials for Africa is the term 'opportunity' used to signify the implications of development, expansion and the growth of the African economies to the advantage of British businessmen. The implication of many of these advertisements was that the history in the region reinforced the conception that Britain's influence had a positive impact on the overarching development of locations throughout Africa. In a 1952 leaflet entitled *West Africa: Fly There by BOAC*, it described West Africa as a region on the way to great infrastructural progress;

> The last fifty years have seen great progress in the construction and installation of modern amenities – roads, railways and airports: electricity and piped water supply in the towns; post, telephone and cable services; schools and hospitals. Post-war constitutional changes have brought about an increasing measure of local self-government in all four territories. The tremendous task of building them into progressive nations with balanced economies is being tackled with vigour.[37]

Economic and infrastructural development had begun the process of bringing West African nations into new states of modernity, but to imply that Africans had ascended beyond backwardness and primitiveness to achieve their position, and that the 'tremendous task' of improving the society was still being undertaken. This was trusteeship at its core as it suggested that, in the West African region specifically, had evolved from previous British interventionist measures to become a country of economic growth.

The advertisement also referenced the growth in opportunities for African citizens as a developing workforce, arguing that 'professional careers are open to the rising generations of

---

[37] British Airways Heritage Collection, "West Africa: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

Africans, while every year increasing numbers of skilled engineers and technicians are being trained ready to take their places in the many new industries which are being established',[38] implying that the development effort was having a human impact, improving the lives of many newly trained African workers. This is consistent with historical interpretations that have noted that 'representations of Africans in corporate ads evolved in parallel with events, and they came to be shown not just as bystanders and consumers but increasingly as also occupying positions of responsibility.'[39] This suggested that development policies were having a striking effect on both economies and people in Africa, and emphasised the sense of belief in the success of development policies. This also demonstrated the positive paternal influence behind the policies Britain were attempting to have on the region, reinforcing a view that Africans had been positively influenced by Britain and its imperial past, and that Africa provided an opportunity for British businesspeople to take advantage of this newly skilled workforce. This was also to suggest that the spread of British welfare policies was successful in picturing the 'West African' market as the 'modern, moving-with-the-times market' that modern international businessmen 'can't afford to miss. BOAC and Associates now offer you the fullest and most comprehensive service to key cities in West Africa.'[40] These advertisements reinforced the view that Africa was a place of financial opportunity that could provide British industries with a significant economic advantage, and in-so-doing economic opportunity flowed both ways, for British business and the African citizen.

South Africa, home of partner airline SAA, which as the previous chapter highlighted its interests in symbolising cooperation, also found itself presented as a land of industrial capitalism; despite burgeoning racialised policies in the 1940s, the Apartheid regime had little

---

[38] Ibid.
[39] Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950–1970." "Corporate legitimacy and advertising." 63.
[40] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "West Africa: The Market You Can't Afford to Miss," *Financial Times*, 1962/03/29/ 1962. 16.

impact on BOAC and its representations and hence advertising continued to promote economic

development opportunities. A 1952 advertisement that it was:

> A land of great industrial opportunity and the country's expanding economy presents a challenge to the enterprising man of business[…] The high proportion of the national income now derived from industry is indicative of South Africa's phenomenal industrial expansion[…] Seventy years ago scarcely more than a mining camp, today Johannesburg is a thriving modern city of multi-storied apartment houses, luxury hotels and fine public building, whose 880,000 inhabitants form one of the most enterprising and prosperous business communities in the world.[41]

The reference to the development from a 'mining camp' explicitly pulled on notions of the

legacy of British colonial exploitation which suggested that, over time, South Africa had hugely

expanded as a result of historic interventions and presented an excellent opportunity for British

economic expansion. BOAC asserted in 1963 that 'today, Africa means business. Your best

way[…] 38 flights a week direct to Africa',[42] and in 1964 that 'South Africa calls you, with

booming business, seasonal sightseeing, and the finest way there[…] Take the opportunity

now',[43] looking to increase business associations with the country, particularly in its post-

independent statehood. The focus was on export-oriented goods centres which offered

businesses an excellent opportunity to maximise profits.

Similar descriptions applied within an East African context, an area that had been a prominent

target for British development projects, advertising offered similar interpretations of the land

and promoted the benefits of increased expansion. Advertising in 1952 described East African

land:

> The most fertile and productive areas of the African continent and in recent years great progress has been made in the development of its natural resources. For example, the Kilembe copper mines in Uganda are now in production, the Williamson Diamond Mine at Shingyanga in Tanganyika produces large quantities of gem and industrial stones; while great projects such as the Owen Falls Hydro-

---

[41] British Airways Heritage Collection, "South Africa: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

[42] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Business in Africa?," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1963/06/14/ 1963. 17.

[43] "South Africa Calls You," *Daily Mail*, 1964/07/23/ 1964. 9.

> Electric Scheme on the Nile, from which the electricity supply for the whole region will be drawn, are under construction.[44]

Both of these infrastructural developments were implicated within British development policies. In 1955, the CDC owned 20 percent shares in Kilembe Mines and prepared to 'lend £500,000, if called on, to assist extensive mechanisation of mine',[45] and the Kilembe copper mines were becoming a centre of colonial nationalism and resistance in the late 1950s.[46] BOAC's promotion helped businessmen observe the commitment Britain had given and the security of the opportunity to those interests.

Furthermore, in reference to the Owen Falls Hydro-Electric Dam was formed as a 'symbol of colonial development during the 1950s and 1960s,'[47] a project opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1954 and described in an edition of *The Standard* which pointed out 'let us not forget that economic development and the building up of industries are not ends in themselves. Their object is the raising of the people's standards of living. We welcome this great work because, by increasing the wealth of this country, it enables people – and above all, the African people – to advance'.[48] East Africa's economic assets, particularly the natural reserves and raw industrial resources, were central in encouraging British business to utilise the improved access available via air travel. Advertisements reflected the idea that Britain had invested highly in infrastructural developments throughout the African continent presented 'a vision of both the British state's desire to maintain a sphere of influence, as the world adjusted to a new balance of power, as well as the desire of major British corporations to do the same'.[49] BOAC's

---

[44] British Airways Heritage Collection, "East Africa: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

[45] "Colonial Development Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year 31.12.55," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1956). 43

[46] Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Uganda: A Nation in Transition: Post-Colonial Analysis* (New Africa Press, 2013). 19.

[47] Anandi Ramamurthy, "Images of Industrialisation in Empire and Commonwealth During the Shift to Neo-Colonialism," in *Visual Culture and Decolonisation in Britain* (Routledge, 2019). 51.

[48] Christopher Gore, "Electricity and Privatisation in Uganda: The Origins of the Crisis and Problems with the Response," in *Electric Capitalism: Recolonising Africa on the Power Grid*, ed. DA McDonald (London: Routledge, 2009). 369.

[49] Ramamurthy, "Images of Industrialisation in Empire and Commonwealth During the Shift to Neo-Colonialism." "Images of industrialisation in Empire." 46.

advertising implied the ready availability of these economic assets available in African lands, highlighting them for the explicit benefit of British business.

This attitude was one that persisted throughout later campaigns for African missions which had developed an 'imagery and discourse *about* Africa addressed *to* Britons' which 'have served to contribute to a process of the construction of British self-perception and even self-esteem'.[50] The imagery surrounding African development was designed to help promote an identity of British individuals themselves about the positive and moral nature of its character. This was part of the ideological view that Britain championed human rights and how the expansion of such ideology would bring increased influence within its network, which was channelled through BOAC as an organisation that championed this form of moral international leadership. This represented somewhat of a commonality in the 1950s where the corporate imagery of Western industries 'the black man was no longer the worker serving the interests of Europe, but rather framed as a worker reaping the benefit of Western science and development or as a simple, leisured individual dependent on Western productivity for his/her needs.[51] This echoed a wider attempt to re-legitimise Britain's presence and survive the decolonising Empire, as British businesses attempted to re-legitimise their operations in the context of the developing world by weaponizing a rhetoric under the policy of 'development' and reasoning that contained presence would be beneficial to the native populations. It is therefore observable that through these advertisements that BOAC refocused their efforts on the language of development to distance itself from previous imperial legacies, but to remain under policy broadly unchanged. As the popularity of the CDC waned in the mid to late 1950s, attention

---

[50] Graham Harrison, *The African Presence: Representations of Africa in the Construction of Britishness* (Manchester University Press, 2015). 1.

[51] Ramamurthy and Wilson, "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers: Racism, Appropriation and Resistance in Advertising." "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers." 74.

turned to other ways in which BOAC could support national and international development abroad under its own capacity.

6.5   The 'Midwife' and 'Other Airlines'

BOAC's policy of 'development' was most prominent with its attitudes and policies towards its associated and subsidiary airlines. Much like the 'partner' airlines, these airlines had been an important business development in the post-war decades, to the extent that BOAC was the first airline to formalise these relationships under one corporate entity. Often, these organisations were the airlines of other nations, which were often new nations. However, regardless of the arrangement or type, BOAC often held a significant degree of influence, and these inter-airline relationships came to typify the experiences of the end of empire.

Firstly, subsidiary airlines were largely owned by BOAC and were directly controlled by BOAC. This included airlines like Aden Airways, Bahamas Airways Limited, British West Indian Airways limited and Gulf Aviation Limited. Associated companies were similar, but often involved multiple variations of ownership and a varied level of influence – all subsidiaries were associates, but not all associates were subsidiaries. These were organisations in which, as the Annual Report and Statement of Account described that 'Subsidiary Companies are associated, either financially or through advisory and other agreements',[52] which included but was not limited to East African Airways, Iraqi Airways, Malayan Airways Limited and Tasman Empire Airways Limited. By late 1950, BOAC was 'associated' in some way with 18 different companies, commanded huge budgets, and held integral positions of influence in these companies.

---

[52] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1954," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1954). 30.

BOAC would regularly update the government on the current status of each of these organisations in the *BOAC Annual Report and Statements of Accounts*, detailing changes in ownership, political circumstances, and hopes for the future. In 1957, this system of airlines was formalised under 'BOAC Associated Companies Limited' which was specifically set up to manage the shareholdings in BOAC's other enterprises, assessing that 'a stage had been reached which required an organisation to undertake the separate responsibility for continuously watching the interests of the Corporation in the companies, deciding the appropriate policies towards individual companies in changing conditions and advising and assisting the companies'.[53] Of course, many of these governments were Dominion and Colonial Governments in which the British Government held the final authority, and therefore represented null arrangements with only token power.

Working with these organisations was a vast and complex exercise, often chaotic and extremely vulnerable to political changes. The activity of working with associate and subsidiary airlines came with inevitable and heavy financial costs. Upholding these relationships was one of the most expensive and all-consuming endeavours committed by BOAC which included financial investment and a reported loss of £7,843 in 1950,[54] to a loss in 1959 at £2,532,207.[55] However, despite the enormity of the cost to uphold these relationships, the investment offered political and commercial advantages; this was an advantageous project because 'BOAC could well argue that the losses on these companies were more than offset by the business they generated, the route rights preserved, the competition they restricted, and the British aircraft they bought'.[56] BOAC maintained that continuing these activities was important as it would help to

---

[53] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1958," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1958). 7

[54] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950." 36.

[55] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1959," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1959). 1

[56] Higham, *Speedbird: The Complete History of Boac*. *Speedbird*. 182.

enshrine a sense of 'local British goodwill' and ensure 'that adequate connecting services are available for the Corporation's world-wide route network'.[57] The interests in these companies was mixed, but it is clear that Imperial relationships contained within these airlines impacted operations and cooperation considerably.

Thus, the political and economic advantages brought about by the use of these companies greatly outweighed any cost implications, even if some of the impact was harder to quantify. BOAC argued that 'the development of Colonial air communications is of the utmost importance not only to the Colonies themselves, but also to the Corporation' and 'these Companies are building up networks of local services which will feed the Commonwealth trunk routes and they will also serve as the Corporation's agents in their areas, to the advantage of all.'[58] Furthermore, these networks would share 'advice on technical and operational matters' and 'assistance on policy matters[…] provided through the Corporation's representatives on their Boards',[59] ensuring both in a technological and managerial sense, maintained managerial and technological influence, helping to unify the network together but keep Britain as a central economic and policy hub.

As already suggested, the language used to describe these relationships revealed much about the perceived moralistic motivation in helping to build and, eventually, to leave having provided Colonial Authorities with a better economic and political future. This was a particular focus within the *BOAC Review*: Keith Granville, head of BOAC Associated Companies in 1963 and future Chairman of BOAC in 1971, published in *The Times* and further reprinted in the

---

[57] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1955," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1955). 24.

[58] "Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1947." 8.

[59] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950-51," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1951). 23.

BOAC Review an article entitled 'Help for Other Airlines,' which explored their history of

BOAC and its assistance granted throughout the world to other airlines:

> Other British airlines[…] have played their part in the growth of Commonwealth aviation, but Imperial Airways and BOAC have done most to answer the call first made at an Imperial Conference in 1922 for the establishment of air communications to and within the British Empire and Commonwealth. And certainly no other airline has been the "midwife" at the birth of so many other airlines as BOAC/Imperial Airways.[60]

Granville's argument suggested that BOAC had significantly aided the development of the

infrastructures of national airlines abroad. Not only does this echo a sentiment that reflects the

broader policies of development, it also offers an insight into how development policies were

represented and justified.

What matters is the *way* it is said; he went on to argue that BOAC's assistance was 'similar to

the altruistic, though often rewarding, aid given by a mother to her young or a mother country

to its colonies – in which BOAC have specialised,' and argued that the losses incurred by

BOAC Associated Companies was far outweighed by the number of British aircraft that were

purchased by these airlines.[61] The metaphor of the 'midwife' offered a powerful insight into

the culture of the organisation's expansion policies throughout the post-war period and

attempted to frame post-imperial relationships in terms of a global 'family' of different aviation

systems, brought together under the influence of BOAC. It reaffirmed a belief that Britain was

a bastion for technological and social improvement, a moral power with an interest in using its

advanced state to improve the world around it. This was obviously a dramatically exaggerated

claim, but the persistence of this belief continued throughout the minds of planners in post-war

Britain and showed a corporate desire to continue the 'welfare' agenda as established years

before.

---

[60] Keith Granville, "Help for Other Airlines," *BOAC Review* August 1963. 16-17.
[61] "Help for Other Airlines." xi.

The view that BOAC represented a force of positive global development through its relations with associated and subsidiary companies is a view that echoed into the whole history of BOAC and BA. In a 2013 article from Captain Watson, a retired British Airways pilot, described in the *Journal of Aeronautical History* that the relationships established with post-colonial airlines was part of a broader reflection of the 'colonial altruism' that had continued from the British Empire:

> There is a case to be made that the main beneficiaries of BOAC's post imperial activities were the many subsidiary airlines, some of which would develop into the flag carriers of newly independent countries, perhaps a fitting reversal of the relationship established under Imperial rule; fledgling national airlines such as Singapore and Tasman Empire Airlines were able to exploit the benefits of BOAC's expertise, infrastructure and assets to create a blueprint for continued success into this century[…] one of the best examples of colonial altruism and one which has been an enduring gift from a fading Empire.[62]

This perspective is one of the only analyses of BOAC's associated and subsidiary operations, and which implied that BOAC's actions derived from a very specific sense of 'colonial altruism'.

British imperialism had many characterisations and descriptions, but fundamentally, and particularly throughout decolonisation, it was 'characterised by decency, moderation, lofty liberal ideals, racial tolerance, and noble plans for a future in which partnership, welfare and development initiatives, and a roadmap for planned self-government were all in the cards,'[63] elements clearly present in Watson's analysis. The 'lofty liberalism' that drove BOAC's expansion throughout the post-war period, and Watson's defence of BOAC's policy is one step in identifying an underlying tension within the culture of BOAC's global operations. It is therefore important to assess this view in reference to BOAC operations and what it reveals about the placement BOAC had in a broader picture of liberal, post-imperial Britain.

---

[62] Watson, "British Overseas Airways Corporation 1940-1950 and Its Legacy." "British Overseas Airways Corporation." 158.
[63] Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture*, vol. 51 (Cambridge University Press, 2016). 40.

Characterising the nation was thus to suggest that altruism was a core part of the British middle way approach and that would persist and endure throughout the Twentieth Century.

6.6 Associates, Development and Decolonisation

The realities of working with associate airlines were almost always less clear cut than the metaphors of family and midwifery suggested. Associate airlines were often embedded within the imperial pretension, and decolonisation and national independence movements only complicated matters further. Many Associate airlines, as direct symbols of new nationalisms, became absorbed in the emerging statehoods of the nations they sought to represent, often severely limiting BOAC's influence. These matters were assessed fairly regularly by political leaders – the Attlee Government published 'BOAC Priority of Associated Enterprises Existing and Projected' in 1947 which described how East African Airways Corporation (EAAC) was the first priority, followed by the West African Airways Corporation (WAAC), International Aeradio (IA), Malta, Middle East Airways (MEA), Hong Kong Airways, Newfoundland and Eagle Airways,[64] and airlines across East African and the Middle East continued to reflect the key priorities later in 1955.[65] Each of the areas – Central and Eastern Africa and the Middle East – represented regions in which it was valuable to maintain positive political relations. The pertinence on airlines focused on Africa and the Middle East reflected a convergence of both corporate and political interests, so much so that by 1959, the *Select Committee on Nationalised Industries* had concluded that 'although some of the BOAC investments have been accompanied by political considerations, political and commercial interests have so far

---

[64] The National Archives (TNA), "British Overseas Airways Corporation: Priorities to Be Given for Participation in Airline Companies Overseas," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 217/1630, 1947). Note of Meeting held in Mr Vincent's Room. Ministry of Civil Aviation, on Tuesday, March 25th. To discuss respective priorities to be accorded to projects for BOAC participation in Airline Companies Overseas. Appendix A.
[65] "Boac: Relations with Associated Companies," ed. Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies (BT 245/330, 1956-1962). Select Committee on Nationalised Industries Brief for Ministry Representative. BOAC Associated and Subsidiary Companies. 2.

coincided. No case is in prospect where political considerations might call for BOAC to make an investment against its own judgement'.[66] This blurring of the boundaries between the government and BOAC was strained particularly in the later 1950s, and this association was a core reason why BOAC lost influence in many of its associate and subsidiary companies.

Perhaps one of the most interesting relationships BOAC had with an associate organisation was with East African Airways Corporation (EAAC): founded on the 1st of January 1946 as a result of the 1943 'Conference of Governors of Britain's East African Territory' which assessed the needs of East African aviation with a view to improving connectivity to and within the region. EAAC 'was very much a Kenyan airline' in which its 'instincts[…] remained proudly British', having rejected the purchase of American aircraft in 1946, and it 'stood poised to play a small but not insignificant role in the grand design of colonial development and modernization'.[67] EAAC was jointly owned by the governments of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika (modern day Tanzania) and Zanzibar, and whilst BOAC did not own shares in EAAC it did provide an extensive amount of management and technical expertise, describing them as an associated company in which BOAC had 'no financial interest' in 1950,[68] which often consisted of staff, engineering teams and services and aircraft. Control ultimately rested in Britain as 'invested with regulatory and licencing functions with respect to civil aviation in East Africa but these powers were exercisable with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Air in the United Kingdom.'[69] Therefore, EAAC offered much in line with Britain's image of cooperation, but ultimately held a large degree of influence in its affairs.

---

[66] Ibid. Select Committee on Nationalised Industries Brief for Ministry Representative, 28 January 1959. BOAC Associated and Subsidiary Companies. 2.

[67] Robert L McCormack, "Imperialism, Air Transport and Colonial Development: Kenya, 1920–46," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 17, no. 3 (1989). 388.

[68] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950." 18.

[69] Frederick Ochieng-Obbo, "East African Airways: A Case Study of Problems of a Transnational Aviation Enterprise," (1981). 388-9.

One of the reasons EAAC was also looked upon so positively by BOAC was a result of the circumstances of Queen Elizabeth II's return to England after the death of her father. EAAC were in 1952 the first airline to 'carry a reigning British monarch when RMA Sagana flew HM Queen Elizabeth from Nanyuki to Entebbe, following the death of her father, the late King George VI,'[70] and a story of particular importance to the BAHC. As explored earlier in the thesis carrying principal nationalist figureheads held a particular importance for many airlines; by carrying the Queen, EAAC took on an association of cooperation and loyalty to the British world system in an hour of need. It gave EAAC evidence of its loyalty to the Crown – a common symbol of unity throughout the Commonwealth – and it symbolised EAAC's loyalty to the Commonwealth embodied through the Queen herself. EAAC was described as 'the exotic mixture of races from Africa, India and Arabia, the traveller found himself entering an exciting, different but comfortably familiar atmosphere' that was created by EAAC and that it was the 'personification of the old Empire ideal',[71] which implied that within the operation of EAAC was a memory of Imperialist paternalism and Empire idealism. It was as its namesake suggested 'the friendly airline' with an image of loyalty to British institutions and formed to 'continue the development of air communications with the main object of providing an efficient network between the four territories of East Africa- Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar,'[72] and additionally noted that 'not a few of EAAC's staff are people who have previously been with BOAC,'[73] showing a direct exchange of staff and information as central to the EAAC operation.

EAAC had clearly been influenced by the technical support provided by BOAC, using British aircraft including Comets and VC10s - notably coined to have been the saviours of British aviation – which had EAAC iconography and title applied to them and echoing a striking

---

[70] "Opening-up Africa from the Air," *BOAC Review* March 1964. 20.
[71] Peter J. Davies, *East African: An Airline Story* (Surrey: Runnymede Malthouse Publishing, 1993). 289.
[72] C. D. Ditton, "The Friendly Airline," *BOAC Review* January 1956. 12.
[73] Ibid. 21.

consistency with BOAC. It specifically chose to operate the Comet 4 aircraft in the 1958, 'to come into operation on their routes from Nairobi to London and to Karachi in July 1960' and that the aircraft would be 'to the same specification as the BOAC Comets,'[74] showing the degree of influence in the transferability of the British example. The completion of a deal with De Havilland, where it was 'announced that East African Airways have ordered two Comet IV's, which with spares will cost about £2,500,000. They will be delivered within two years and be used between Nairobi and London. This brings the total ordered to 33, of which 19 are for BOAC and six each for British European Airways and the Argentine Airline' in 1958,[75] symbolising the idealism of the Imperial and Commonwealth network for Britain – overall friendly to Britain, but ultimately prepared to participate in the purchasing of aircraft.

The *BOAC Review* described how the aircraft had 'opened up' Africa 'to an impressive degree' and that it acted 'as hosts for to parties of overseas agents', suggesting that it further expanded activities to further places over Africa in march 1964,[76] similarly crediting itself for the 'discovery' of Africa noting that 'both BOAC and EAAC have contributed vigorously and generously to the "discovery" of East Africa by the rest of the world, both by their own direct efforts and by the distribution of promotional materials.'[77] The policy of 'developing' overseas airlines with technical and financial assistance had a positive impact on the tourist trade in East Africa and, one which suggested that improved and increased cooperation would be profitable to continue. Even the context of the Mau Mau rebellion in which 'caused such an outflow of investment funds that British officials were compelled to involve the large British banking houses and agribusinesses working in Kenya in the ongoing discussions over power sharing and the eventual transfer of authority',[78] did little to alter the presentation of East Africa.

---

[74] "Eaac's Jet Plans," ibid. October 1958. 21.

[75] Correspondent an Air, "Comet Hope of First Atlantic Jet Airliner," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1958/08/29/ 1958.

[76] "The East African Tourist Reserve," *BOAC Review* March 1964. 18-9.

[77] Ibid. 18-9.

[78] Robert L Tignor, *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonizing Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya, 1945-1963* (Princeton University Press, 2015). 11.

Referencing the East African Tourist Travel Association, the *BOAC Review* described in 1964 that only 'only temporary political crises – Mau-Mau, Suez and the Congo – have checked the rise in numbers of overseas visitors since the East African Tourist Travel Association (EATTA) began work with the whole-hearted cooperation of BOAC and East African Airways, and figures for the last three years suggest that the upward curve is steepening'.[79]

However, BOAC's strong association with the Government eventually led to questions about its interests in East Africa. The strong associations between BOAC and EAAC had been recognised in a confidential note from the Commonwealth Relations Office that featured 'one or two oblique digs at BOAC's paternalistic relationship to EAAC, but there were no real challenge or demagogy on this score'.[80] Officials had recognised in 1962 that there was 'much to be gained if BOAC could fade out before there is nationalist pressure' and that 'the sooner EAAC becomes a fully independent "national" airline, freely operating in close partnership with BOAC, the better'.[81] These discussions marked a beginning of a process of making EAAC become 'fully "East Africanised" and that they regard a major contribution in this respect as the withdrawal or removal of the BOAC representation on the board'.[82]

Even more significantly was the implication of the government's involvement with EAAC, particularly in a context of great reflection about colonies and self-government. The assessment was made in 1962 that 'although the decision to ask for repayment is a matter for the commercial judgement of the BOAC management, we recognise that as many people overseas think of BOAC as identical with HMG, a demand for repayment of the loan may be regarded locally as an act of meanness on the part of HMG',[83] suggesting that BOAC management

---

[79] "The East African Tourist Reserve." 18-9.

[80] The National Archives (TNA), "Future of East African Airways," ed. and of the Commonwealth Relations and Foreign and Commonwealth Offices Records created or inherited by the Dominions Office (DO 160/7, 1962-1963). Civil Aviation Debates in the Central Legislative Assembly, dated 10th May, 1963. 2.

[81] Ibid. Letter from HSH Stanley to RC Barnes dated 26th June, 1962.

[82] Ibid. Letter written by Keith Granville dated 16th April, 1962.

[83] Ibid. Copy of Colonial Office letter CM 217/43/01 dated the 26th April, 1962 addressed to Governor, Kenya

should consider how their decision reflected Government policy. This close association between BOAC and government was in a context of increasing calls for independence and political uncertainty, factors likely to have been key in the decision to decrease BOAC's involvement in EAAC. In a BOAC Board Meeting between key figures in the Corporation in 1963, it was stated that 'the political situation in Kenya, with impending elections in May and a date for independence imminent but as yet unknown, continues to create uncertainty and a lack of confidence',[84] and that 'many people in the Governments believe that BOAC to a great extent controls the affairs of EAAC, an impression that may not be to our advantage in the long run'.[85] Decolonisation forced BOAC and government interests to assess the implications of these relationships and often resulted in huge financial losses.

These attitudes reveal a paternalistic attitude to Africa in a way which reflected the literature of humanitarianism. In many ways, the interaction with EAAC suggests an act of self-definition, implying that being British meant 'being tolerant, at least more tolerant than white Americans; it meant a paternalist stance that helped people of colour to "develop" and eventually "earn" their independence. But that independence was always seen as involving a Commonwealth of Nations – that is retaining a political tie to Britain.'[86] The reality of these policies meant tough financial rearrangements and the act of withdrawing support in a broader colonial context resulted in 'the leaders of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda' being left 'ill-equipped — colonialists had run the colonies with control and extraction in mind, not sustainable profitability'.[87] Above all, the paternalistic vision of EAAC suggested that BOAC's

---

[84] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Minutes of the Three Hundred and Eighty Sixth Meeting of the Board Held on 9 May 1963," (N4090 BOAC Board Documents May 1963 - August 1963, Meetings 386-389, 1963). Board Meeting – 9th May, 1963. II – Commercial and Financial Matters. 1.

[85] Ibid. Board Meeting – 9th May, 1963. II – Commercial and Financial Matters. 2.

[86] Sonya O Rose, *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). 262.

[87] Taylor Mayol, "The Rise and Demise of East Africa's Pride in the Sky," Ozy, https://www.ozy.com/flashback/the-rise-and-demise-of-east-africas-pride-in-the-sky/66689.

policies of development had succeeded and had built East Africa a successful international airline.

Other examples of associates were used to highlight idealised cooperation and successful paternalistic policies of nations 'earning' independence. The West African Airways Corporation (WAAC) had been used to mark a similar set of circumstances as it was established in 1946 by BOAC and was jointly owned by the governments of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. BOAC management were deeply fearful of the changes that independence would bring to West Africa, describing in 1956 that 'in view of the independence of the Gold Coast which is likely to be implemented in March 1957 and the possibility of a similar future status for Nigeria, urgent action would be necessary if the British national interest in West Africa was to be maintained, particularly as it was known that PAA and KLM were both extremely active in their contacts with Gold Coast Ministers.'[88] The nations of the WAAC; Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and The Gambia declared independence from Britain in 1957, 1960, 1961 and 1965 respectively, and BOAC remained acutely sensitive to this development, as in 1957 the Corporation offered a 'gift to mark independence' consisting of 'silver inkwells and stand and the tooled leather visitors book pictured here to the Prime Minister of Ghana during the independence celebrations of that State',[89] suggesting a clear effort to engage in the process of building positive foreign relations across the world.

BOAC's board insisted that 'British interests must forestall foreign infiltration in West Africa' and that BOAC 'should not attempt to dissuade either the Gold Coast or Nigeria from establishing an airline',[90] as a result of the fact that BOAC could remain closely tied to the new

---

[88] British Airways Heritage Collection, "305th Meeting of the Board Held on 28 June 1956," (N4073 BOAC Board Documents June 1956 - October 1956, Meetings 305-311, 1956). Minutes of the Three Hundred and Fifth Meeting of the Board held at Stratton House, London, W1 on Thursday, 28 June, 1956. 3.
[89] "Boac's Gift to Mark Independence," *BOAC Review* April 1957. 5.
[90] "305th Meeting of the Board Held on 28 June 1956." Minutes of the Three Hundred and Fifth Meeting of the Board held at Stratton House, London, W1 on Thursday, 28 June, 1956. 3.

airline without any official influence. WAAC was eventually dissolved in 1958 to make way for national airlines which included Ghana Airways, with the Ghana government owning a 60 per cent share and BOAC holding the rest and 'partly because the WAAC was associated with colonial rule and its negative impact on Africa', as well as Sierra Leone Airways, and Gambia Air Shuttle.[91] One edition of *BOAC Review* indicated that 'in accordance with the wishes previously expressed by the Ghana government, with which BOAC is in sympathy[…] relinquished its 40 per cent shareholding in Ghana Airways',[92] and another stated how 'BOAC offered to dispose of their shareholdings to the Nigerian Government,'[93] despite the initiation of deeply rooted 'Africanisation' policies ongoing throughout the period and both of these accounts suggest that BOAC was the party responsible for giving up the shares, and in both cases presents this action as an act of paternalism towards the country and that the interests of the state took precedence over BOAC's drive for expansion.

The newly formed Ghana Airways, along with Ghana itself, underwent sweeping nationalist changes. The first Prime Minister and President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah initiated a policy of 'extreme "Ghanaisation" which extended beyond the airline industry into nationalisation of foreign-owned firms and the extending powers of the state' in which 'the link with BOAC quickly became an obstacle to Nkrumah's ambitious projects of 'Ghanaisation' of the airline and the wider society and industries'.[94] This also means they held particular importance for the development of a neo-colonial discourse. Nkrumah described the significance of transportation in 1965, highlighting them as a focal point for these changes:

> Transport and communications are also sectors where unified planning is needed.
> Roads, railways, waterways, air-lines mist be made to serve Africa's needs, not the

---

[91] Joseph Amankwah-Amoah and Yaw A Debrah, "The Evolution of Alliances in the Global Airline Industry: A Review of the African Experience," *Thunderbird International Business Review* 53, no. 1 (2011). 43-4.

[92] "Shareholding in Ghana Airways Is Given Up," *BOAC News*, February 17 1961.

[93] "Sharehoding in Nigeria Airways Relinquished," *BOAC News*, April 7 1961.

[94] Joseph Amankwah-Amoah, "Against All Odds!: A Strategic Analysis of the Failures of Three State-Owned Firms," in *The Rise of Multinationals from Emerging Economies*, ed. Palitha Konara, et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). 121.

requirements of foreign interests. Communications between African States are quite inadequate. In many cases it is still easier to travel from an airport in Africa to Europe or America than to go from one African State to another.[95]

Ghana used its aviation services as a counterweight to issues of decolonisation and independence, utilising Ghana Airways as an outlet for renewed nationalism. BOAC's involvement was symbolic of the imperial possession and control from the outside that Nkrumah discussed.

Advertisements for Ghana Airways typically rejected notions of Commonwealth and Imperialism that WAAC had embodied before, would highlight the new Ghanaian flag on the aircraft tail, arguing that 'successful business trips to Africa start with Ghana Airways,'[96] and many advertisements described crew as 'African'[97] with some advertisements that described in 1965 that Ghana Airways service was 'augmented by the unique charm of the Ghanaian hostesses who attend your every need',[98] and another advertisement in 1973 described how 'when a Ghanaian hostess says 'Welcome', she really means it. It isn't a matter of training, either. You can't instil genuine warmth into a stewardess by training. In our case, we're lucky. It's a national characteristic.'[99] This indicates a parallel – using a national airline to construct a sense of national identity, particularly by defining the crews by their nationality and how this contributed to the quality of service, something which none of the regional CAA or EAAC could offer. Another advertisement in 1965 in the Economist offered businessmen the 'ideal springboard for your West African Campaign',[100] suggesting that the only way to enter the Ghanaian market was through the national carrier, symbolising use of nationalism to defend its

---

[95]Kwame Nkrumah, "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1965). 30.

[96] Ghana Airways, "Successful Business Trips to Africa Start with Ghana Airways," *The Economist*, 1963/10/19/ 1963. 211.

[97] Ghana Airways, "Ghana Airways Non-Stop Express Now! By Day- or by Night," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1962/06/26/ 1962. 9.

[98] "Listen to the Sunshine in a Ghana Airways Vc10," *The Sunday Times*, 1964/11/22/ 1964. 21.

[99] "With All the Competition around How Come Ghana Airways Are Still on Top?," *The Economist*, 1973/03/24/ 1973. 44.

[100] "Business in West Africa Centres on Accra and Starts on a Ghana Airways Vc10," *The Economist*, 1965/10/30/ 1965. 492.

newly emerged economy. This example is particularly valuable as 'Nkrumah's use of symbolic nationalism to give the Gold Coast an identity and to achieve nation-building was unique in that there was virtually no precedence or model in sub-Saharan Africa'.[101] The airways were thus a key target for Ghana to determine their sense of nationalism and independence from Britain.

As part of the 'Help for other Airlines' article in *The Times* in 1963, Granville looked back at BOAC's history of aid to developing national airlines where he described that BOAC's support was 'proffered – and accepted – for diverse reasons.' He argued 'sometimes, it is said, help is given grudgingly and then only in the face of real or implied political pressure. Politics bedevil the airline industry, for national prestige is often considered of greater importance than commercial and financial considerations.'[102] Indeed as politics did bedevil the airline industry, particularly as a result of the close association between BOAC and HMG. BOAC associated and subsidiary enterprises were dramatically affected by changes in international political power and each organisation reveals the bumpy nature of strategic power. Associated and Subsidiary organisations were particularly valuable for the political and economic influence they secured, and the relationships established with some key players in Africa and the Middle East held a particular political value, and at times were labelled specifically because of their political implications.

Underlining these notions of political power was the Commonwealth vision and the ultimate ambition that Britain's aviation could serve as the single link between the constraints of the world and London. In a sober extract from the 25th Anniversary Issue of the *BOAC Review* in 1965, in which the Technical Director Beverley Shenstone, a wartime Aeronautical Engineer

---

[101] Harcourt Fuller, *Building the Ghanaian Nation-State: Kwame Nkrumah's Symbolic Nationalism* (Springer, 2014). 21.
[102] Granville, "Help for Other Airlines." Help for other airlines. 16-17.

who perfected the elliptical wing of the Supermarine Spitfire, later to become Technical Director with BOAC in 1964,[103] assessed the Corporation's 'next 25 years':

> The question of national sovereignties and the desire of every emerging country to own and operate its own airline may or may not have been modified. If many of these emergent airlines cost their governments far too much money, it is quite possible that larger airlines serving several countries having similar backgrounds may emerge and this would certainly be more efficient from the public point of view and would probably result in better airlines. If I assume that national pride and national susceptibilities are unlikely to be modified in twenty-five years, there is a great likelihood that we may have even more small airlines, practically all of which will lose money. It is a sad thought, but it might well be true.[104]

Shenstone's tangible disappointment at the prospect of increased competition with national airlines was, in this account, bad for the consumer, a managerial mindset in many nationalised industries. Shenstone centrally argued that smaller airlines should pool with BOAC to increase the size of its network in order to compete with larger international operators. There was, however, a similar tone of paternalist sentiment within this account and his view of the developing circumstances was clearly pessimistic, noting that as the growth in population increased there would be an expansion of other airlines. The number of independent nations calling BOAC's operation into question marked an opportunity to reorient these BOAC withdrawals not as failures, but as symbols of success. These experiences reveal the complexities of expanding BOAC in line with the state. BOAC's political associations with HMG were enough to raise issues of political interference with subsidiaries.

This was similarly echoed by Duncan Cumming, adviser on African affairs to BOAC 1959 to 1964 and author of *The Gentleman Savage: Mansfield Parkyns* in 1988.[105] He argued in a 1962 joint meeting of the Royal African Society and the Royal Commonwealth Society that 'one of the first things a newly independent nation wants to do is to demonstrate its independence by

---

[103] Lance Cole, *Secrets of the Spitfire: The Story of Beverley Shenstone, the Man Who Perfected the Elliptical Wing* (Casemate Publishers, 2012).

[104] Beverley Shenstone, "The Next 25 Years..." *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue* April 1965. 51-2.

[105] Duncan Cumming, *The Gentleman Savage: The Life of Mansfield Parkyns, 1823-1894* (Vintage, 1987).

having its own airline and to show its national colours on the independent countries' aerodromes,' where it was common for the 'former colonial power to come to agreement with the newly created African states for providing their national airlines with capital and technical assistance'.[106] Fearful this was putting too great economic pressure, he described 'an outside observer cannot but wonder whether the cost of 'political aviation' is not too high for some countries that need their resources for more urgent needs,'[107] and that pooling agreements with larger European airlines offered the only reasonable solution. This framed BOAC as 'saving' independent national airlines from the burdensome costs associated with operating an international airline, thus reaffirming the trusteeship message. This suggests that the ultimate ambition of the project was to gift new nations their own national airlines, but liberate them from costs. This was paternalism at its most acute, done 'for' and 'to' nations.

6.7 Conclusion

In the post-war period, the idea that Britain was characterised by an international political agenda that was 'altruistic' was central in BOAC's marketing. Not only did it serve to reaffirm a belief in the value of Britain's interventions abroad and implying that these actions were not only just, but advantageous for both Britain and the nation in focus. Much like other measures abroad, it helped to promote Britain's value in a wider global context, suggesting that it was Britain who would share its wealth with nations as part of a broad familial metaphor. However, where infrastructural developments had grown less popular, more emphasis was placed upon BOAC's associated and subsidiary enterprises, each of which existed within a context of post-imperial international relations and helped to maintain some degree of influence and control, even if, in reality, these were centres of post-imperial rebellion and resistance. In essence, paternalism drove decisions.

---

[106] "Aviation in Africa." 35.
[107] Ibid. 36.

Furthermore, BOAC's interaction with its associate and subsidiary airlines was akin to statecraft. The fact that it was dealing with 'national airlines of new nations' meant that BOAC was engaging directly with the issues of decolonisation, and became indistinguishable from the state. In the end, the pressures of BOAC's association were too great for the tensions of decolonisation. Perhaps one of the subtle undercurrents of the notions of development and decolonisation was the conceptualisation of 'race' in which, by assumption, BOAC encouraged its network to equate to the 'white' dominance of the British world. Therefore, it is important to understand how race and racism were conceptualised in these national terms via BOAC.

7 People 'Bred from Pioneering Stock'

7.1 Introduction

As the policies of 'development' were based on assumptions about national characters, so too were BOAC's development efforts highly racialised. This thesis has reiterated the importance of the 'nation' in BOAC rhetoric where the concept of building and operating 'British' was mobilised as a way of selling BOAC services. When looking at tourist advertising, it becomes clear that 'Britishness' evoked racialised themes about citizenship, empire and power. Operating in tandem with business advertising materials – which emphasised Colonial and Commonwealth cooperation, industrialisation and development – tourist advertising materials represented the opposite. Often, depictions of race and people helped justify the *need* for continued measures by implying that the populations were incapable of self-rule and were primitive and juvenile for their own power. As interest in colonial development initiatives declined over the course of the 1950s, messages shifted more aggressively towards reinforcing the 'power' of Britishness, particularly through racialised and sexualised imagery of Asian staff. Consistent throughout, though, was the emphasis on the need for Britain's continued 'altruistic' attitude throughout the world, and that this altruistic trait was one unique to 'Britishness'.

These elements helped to conceptualise Britishness as 'whiteness', and its role in the post-war period as a powerful intermediary between government, commercial enterprise and travel operator, each of which gave the organisation authority and ability to portray the world outside Britain in any manner it chose with little resistance or correction. Its obvious vested interest in Britain's post-war social, economic and political expansion meant that these images helped contextualise domestic attitudes to immigration, helping to further 'border' Britain through perceptions of race.

7.2 Tourism, Knowledge and Power

In 1946 as part of one of the first post-war advertisements, BOAC described how its men had 'been pioneering, organising and gluing the Empire routes since the first line from Britain to India was opened. That was in 1929: which gives us 17 years of learning how.'[1] This was a sentiment was reflected continuously throughout the 1950s and 1960s, often targeted at specific regions: in a 1952 advertisement BOAC described how it had originally 'pioneered the Air routes between Great Britain, Pakistan, India & Ceylon',[2] similarly for an advertising campaign in 1962 for Africa 'for over thirty years, BOAC has been opening up the air routes of Africa to the world' describing itself as 'the airline that knows Africa'.[3] For individuals looking to travel across the world in the 1940s, there were few institutions that could make such grand claims about experience and service as BOAC. Its rhetoric was frequently used to illustrate that the organisation held a special level of knowledge about the world outside Britain.

In addition to the business sense of being the most knowledgeable tour operator, this rhetoric – especially from a nationalised industry, implied power. The politics of using knowledge in this way held important implications for the wider advertising messages which characterised other nations and nationalities. Particularly in reference to Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century Imperial missions to Africa, the Middle East and Asia, the ability to claim knowledge over others was known as Orientalism, the belief that there existed fundamental differences between 'the West' and 'the East'.[4] These fundamental differences were leveraged in cultural representations like novels, plays and paintings, to portray individuals from the 'Orient' in stereotypical ways, often to display these individuals as primitive, juvenile and powerless. In

---

[1] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Our Part of the Job," *The Times*, 1946/07/23/ 1946. 7.

[2] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Pakistan, India and Ceylon to Britain," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, n.d, c.1952).

[3] "Boac Serves Africa: Spreading Its Influence Worldwide," (N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1962).

[4] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vingtage, 1979).

the Nineteenth Century, 'Orient idioms became frequent, and these idioms took firm hold in European discourse,'[5] and hence, the representations put forward by these idioms played an integral part in an imagination of the realities and, perhaps more importantly, derived from 'an area of concern defined by travellers, commercial enterprises, governments, military expeditions, readers of novels and accounts of exotic adventure, natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the Orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and civilisations.'[6] In this sense, the construction of the world was, for most people, equitable with what they saw as reality. This was the tourist 'gaze' which is represented by a series of 'performances' in which 'tourists are not just written upon, they also enact and inscribe places with their own stories and follow their own paths'.[7]

Tourism also had a historically significant role in helping people to conceptualise the world around them in political ways, and it has been recognised that tourism advertising in the Twentieth Century had consisted of the 'objectifying, reifying, homogenizing, and naturalizing peoples are widely used by all kinds of tourism shareholders[…] staking claims of imagined identity and cultural belonging on strong notions of place and locality'.[8] Within this, Imperialism has had a particularly important relationship to tourism as 'the British Empire was built not only on the sword and the gun, the Bible and the flag, Christianity and commerce but also the guide and the map,'[9] one which formed a 'schizophrenic' purpose where travel 'appeared to seek other cultures, of both past and present, other climes, other landscapes, other flora and fauna, sometimes other morals', but also as a 'comforting extension of what they saw

---

[5] Ibid. 203.

[6] Ibid. 203.

[7] Michael Haldrup and Jonas Larsen, *Tourism, Performance and the Everyday: Consuming the Orient* (Routledge, 2009). 5.

[8] Noel B Salazar, "Imagineering Otherness: Anthropological Legacies in Contemporary Tourism," *Anthropological Quarterly* (2013). 672.

[9] John M MacKenzie, "Empires of Travel: British Guide Books and Cultural Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries," *Histories of Tourism: Representation, identity and conflict* 6 (2005). 22.

as their own achievements and their own mores'.[10] Tourism, from an Imperialist's perspective, represented an important product of the intervention and therefore represented a way in which the positive impact of European colonialism could be not only highlighted for the world to see, but enjoyed by those rich enough to afford it.

Such motivations were similar in a post-war context; however, a greater emphasis was placed on highlighting where British interventions abroad had added value and had thus helped to contribute to the 'altruism' narrative. The tourist industry had held an important function in the broader issue of colonial development policies as it had 'allowed Britons a glimpse of modernisation under British or European administration, and to make comparisons between British colonial rule and that of other imperial nations.'[11] In other words, much as previously described in the context of Imperialism before the Second World War, tourism helped to provide a comforting extension of the nation's 'own mores and achievements'. However, coupled with the implicitly racialised character of these programmes, travel and tourism helped to perpetuate 'difference' between people in Britain by helping to characterise British whiteness as a morally just force for global welfare. Whilst international travel and tourism represented a very class-specific activity, advertisements were distributed widely and with little limitation. Therefore, these representations mattered more than the realities because 'people are tourists most of the time whether they are literally mobile or only experience simulated mobility through the incredible fluidity of multiple signs'.[12] This chapter will therefore attempt to understand how BOAC helped to 'simulate' the world outside by creating illustrations which perpetuated the need for intervention and development policies abroad that framed not just

---

[10] Ibid. 20.

[11] Hsu-Ming Teo, "Wandering in the Wake of Empire: British Travel and Tourism in the Post-Imperial World," in *British Culture and the End of Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001). 165.

[12] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1990). 17.

Britain in a positive moral light, but used race as a core means of distinguishing civility and moral international awareness.

7.3   Conceptualising Race

In a 1955 BOAC marketing brochure titled 'Fly by BOAC around the world' a full-page graphic depicted a white family looking out of an aircraft window pointing and smiling at a group of six individuals dressed in colourful outfits. These six individuals, only one of which was white, resembled some of the people that could be 'met' on a BOAC tour around the world.[13] Tourism and the advertising that emerged from it served as a useful source with which to understand Britain's post-war conceptualisation of race. Sensationalised constructions of the world and people outside Britain helped citizens to conceptualise not just an external people, but helped to understand 'Britishness' in a context of ex-imperial migration, immigration and perceived economic decline. Along similar lines, the 1950s represented a dramatic turning point for the 'understanding of nationhood' as the mindset of the Second World War was 'to confront the loss of Empire "abroad" and the arrival of non-white British subjects "at home" within a domestic context of a modicum of social security, first in an atmosphere of austerity and then in the ambience of the birthing years of the affluent society'.[14]

In order to understand the cultural implications of race, it is important to outline the legislative attitude to the colonies, race and empire. A key part of this narrative is located within the 1948 British Nationality Act, which granted British citizenship to people residing in dominions and formed an important part of the process of bringing together the Commonwealth network by emphasising a community of 'Greater Britain' and was, in one sense 'motivated by a desire to

---

[13] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Fly by Boac around the World," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1955).

[14] Sonya O Rose, "From the "New Jerusalem" to the "Decline" of the "New Elizabethan Age": National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1945-56," in *Histories of Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010). 232.

shore up this relationship'.[15] This was an idealistic vision of the Act, and in reality the Act placed 'practical divisions within a theatrically universal subjecthood' which introduced 'competing definitions and communities of Britishness which reflect separate spheres of nationality' which consisted of 'an inclusive formal nationality policy and an exclusive informal national identity[…] The informal national identity imagined a different community of "Britishness" which included only white residents of the United Kingdom and privileged middle and upper-class men within that.'[16] In other words, the act created a set of borders which would separate citizens from non-citizens. In the same way that immigration and nationality legislation created conceptual 'borders' to define and defend citizenship in terms of whiteness, so too had BOAC created a conceptual 'border' to outline a wider, often explicitly racialised community. Particularly with reference to the 1948 Act, 'the principal beneficiaries of the British Empire's system of subjecthood were white Britons, who could move and settle throughout the Commonwealth'.[17] The Act therefore created a unified network of dominion citizens, but placed restrictions that ultimately benefitted British citizens over all others – as this thesis has highlighted over the course of its argument.

Whilst the 1948 Nationality Act insisted upon the construction of a fully integrated Commonwealth network, the Act was 'intended to buttress Britain's global identity as a colonial power and as "first among equals" in the Commonwealth. Equal rights to enter Britain for all British subjects was accepted in principle insofar as this was deemed necessary to maintain the Empire.'[18] This was underpinned by the notion from political and Government figures that were each motivated 'by an atavistic notion that the British 'race' wherever located remained a single constituency' and 'British policy-makers assumed that they would remain

---

[15] Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain. Citizenship and immigration in postwar Britain*. 18
[16] Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (Cornell University Press, 1997). 13.
[17] Nadine El-Enany, *(B) Ordering Britain: Law, Race and Empire* (Manchester University Press, 2020). 79.
[18] Ibid. 79.

integral to a British-dominated global system.'[19] Race formed an important qualifier as part of the Act, as 'the significance the political elite attached to skin colour in the post-war period cannot be overstated' as it was 'the determining factor in deciding which migrants could be assimilated and which would always be perceived as an outsider group'.[20] This aided in continuing interwar racial structures that signified those who were a part of an exclusive version of Britishness and those that were not – themes consistent within the advertising messages.

BOAC followed a similar trajectory to the 1948 Nationality Act, though in less formal and explicit terms. It emphasised not only a racialized and gendered hierarchy within a wider rhetoric of 'equals', but it also implied that it was a utility that concerned the furthest boundaries of the 'British' world. The idea that BOAC perpetuated such attitudes is not necessarily new. Its predecessor, Imperial Airways, had a similar corporate mantra and its corporate newsletters had 'throughout the 1930s and well into the 1940s[…] projected a series of textual and visual images that supported a notion of white superiority and supremacy' and 'contributed to a view of the everyday life of the company as composed of white, upper- and middle-class men and women.'[21] This attitude continued after the Second World War after a tone shift from 'explicit' racism to a tone of 'racial liberalism' which professed more paternal images of race in which 'racial images of the 'non-white' man contributed, by contrast, to a notion that the white British man was controlled, scientific, and unemotional, and served to maintain the exclusion of people of colour from the mainstream of British Airways.'[22] This assessment focused on internal communications alone and suggested that there is a gap which highlights the general notions

---

[19] Stephen Constantine, "Waving Goodbye? Australia, Assisted Passages, and the Empire and Commonwealth Settlement Acts, 1945–72," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26, no. 2 (1998). 180.
[20] Kathleen Paul, "From Subjects to Immigrants: Black Britons and National Identity, 1948-62," in *The Right to Belong: Citizenship and National Identity in Britain*, ed. Richard Weight and Abigail Beach (London: I.B.Tauris, 1998). 233.
[21] Albert J Mills, "Man/Aging Subjectivity, Silencing Diversity: Organizational Imagery in the Airline Industry. The Case of British Airways," *Organization* 2, no. 2 (1995). 256.
[22] "Cockpits, Hangars, Boys and Galleys: Corporate Masculinities and the Development of British Airways," *Gender, Work & Organization* 5, no. 3 (1998). 184.

of race that were displayed throughout the Corporation. In reality, the continuance, indeed expansion, of this notion of racial liberalism speaks more to the post-war period than the interwar, where the power of the 'nation' was in decline and justifications and 'excuses' were an important element in conceptualising Britain as a nation.

The context of racial liberalism was also important from an advertising perspective. Indeed, in the US context, a common goal amongst advertisements was, and to a large extent still is, to 'mitigate status anxiety among whites',[23] and hence reaffirming the status of a particular race or group, particularly in the context of immigration. Immigrants, particularly those from newly formed nations and current Colonial nations came to be considered 'bearers not only of the colonial past, but also of the decolonising present.' [24] BOAC imagery helped to create a consistency between the world and the network, and 'Britain', creating a well-defined racial border which illustrated a clearly defined separation between race that was located at 'home' in Britain and race that was located 'abroad', which required BOAC's assistance to travel to.

The increased prominence of this specific notion of race was developed throughout the 1950s, and helped to conceptualise and idealise notions of Britain and the Empire. These images were increasingly pertinent in the construction of Britain's national identity:

> In the context of the reversal of the colonial encounter through migration to Britain from colonies and former colonies, this version of national identity was increasingly mobilized to construct both "family" and "home" as white. In the 1950s, oppositions between the "immigrant" and Englishness were gendered as well as raced-the immigrant generally represented as a black man and Englishness frequently embodied in the figure of a white woman. The black man was often seen as transient and adrift, rarely represented as having family or a settled home, and characterized in terms of an incapacity for domestic and familial life.[25]

---

[23] Anthony Joseph Paul Cortese, *Provocateur : Images of Women and Minorities in Advertising* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008). 92.
[24] Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire*. *The Afterlife of Empire*. 24.
[25] Wendy Webster, "" There'll Always Be an England": Representations of Colonial Wars and Immigration, 1948-1968," *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001). 574.

Above all this was an attempt to classify and portray British citizens in specific and racialised ways that served to highlight 'values' which could be arbitrarily connected to nations. BOAC conceptualised a 'home' territory and an 'everywhere else' territory in much the same way. The construction of what a 'British' person looked like in comparison to an 'immigrant', or by the BOAC definition an 'outsider', formed an important base by which Britishness could be measured. As part of this shift in Britain's understanding of race, the 'construction of black and Asian people as primitive acquired new meanings when the colonial encounter was reversed through migration to the metropolis, and was no longer represented in terms of colonizers bringing civilisation to the primitive, but of "immigrants" bringing physical and moral decline to the civilised'.[26] British nationality was being constructed on increasingly racialised grounds, and in understanding how BOAC was projecting an image of altruism and productivity throughout the 1950s, it is essential to extrapolate how they dealt with issues of race, especially given how central BOAC's image was typically associated with nationality and citizenship.

This was a significant conceptualisation of race given the relative consistency of the portrayals of whiteness in BOAC's internal communications and advertising. All core staff members with significant responsibility on board aircraft were always portrayed as white, with some notable exceptions to be addressed later in the chapter. There was a notable hierarchy of gender and race, which was centred first and foremost by the 'pilot'. The 'pilot' formed an important part of the broader characterisation of staff and represented an important figure in the organisation. A 1947 advertisement outlined the process of 'choosing the captain' which described '*How does a pilot qualify* for command of a Speedbird?' indicating that 'he must satisfy an exacting selection board' and 'theory, thorough and widely ranged; detail, with emphasis on relevant aircraft types' where 'flying procedure of every kind becomes a matter of skilled routine'.[27]

---

[26] *Imagining Home: Gender, Race and National Identity, 1945-1964. Imagining home*. Xv.

[27] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Choosing the Captain," *The Economist*, 1947/06/21/ 1947. 983.

Pilots embodied 'experience, scientific and technical knowledge, careerism, and the contradictory notions of professionalism and organizational commitment',[28] which fuelled 'the dream of luxury and aerial style,'[29] and represented individuals with tried and tested technical and managerial experiences.

Pilots were also exclusively and explicitly masculine. The first female commercial pilot was Yvonne Pope Sintes in 1972 for Dan-air,[30] and hence BOAC never employed a female pilot - it was not until the relaxation of the discriminatory policy in 1987 that the newly privatised British Airways employed Lynn Barton as their first female pilot.[31] Therefore, a structural hierarchy of individuals based on race, gender and role existed within BOAC advertising, placing technical and scientific masculinity at the top.

The next level on the hierarchy was the Cabin Crew, which despite being an echelon down from pilots, could continue to be promoted in 'national' terms. In the 1950s, advertising described that BOAC crew provided a service based on 'the British tradition', a notion that 'Britishness' was a descriptor of quality. For example, a 1950 advertisement in the *Economist* claimed, as part of a campaign led by the title 'experienced Travellers Fly British', that the act of travelling British gave 'a sense of complete confidence that is felt by everyone in the presence of British Airmanship',[32] further described in 1952 'when you fly by BOAC, you are sure of the finest possible attention – efficient, courteous and tempered with that hard-to-define quality of friendly ease which is traditionally British'.[33] Characterising staff as 'efficient',

---

[28] Mills, "Cockpits, Hangars, Boys and Galleys: Corporate Masculinities and the Development of British Airways." "Cockpits, hangars, boys and galleys." 175.

[29] Erica Durante, *Air Travel Fiction and Film: Cloud People* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). 120.

[30] Yvonne Pope Sintes, *Trailblazer in Flight: Britain's First Female Jet Airline Captain* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Aviation, 2013). 7.

[31] BALPA, "Female Pilots Then and Now: Lynn Barton," https://blog.balpa.org/Blog/March-2020/Female-pilots-then-and-now-LYNN-BARTON#. Accessed 02 March 2022.

[32] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Experienced Travellers Fly British," *Financial Times*, 1950/10/02/ 1950. I.

[33] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac the World-Wide Airline," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

'courteous' and 'tempered' was designed to elicit a reflection of an 'English national character'. These qualities of character are notably present within various different media, most notably of which are British wartime film which were 'underpinned by varying national identity stereotypes about the English, the most tractional of which are a sense of unflappability, gentlemanly conduct, emotional self-control, cheerful but self-effacing humour, stoicism and devotion to duty',[34] elements clearly featured within BOAC advertising.

The fact that these crewmembers were seen as embodiments of a national character held particular purchase in the early post-war period in which it represented a continuation of the history of British 'exceptionalism' and helped to raise the profile of the British throughout the Cold War,[35] carrying on a belief that by virtue of being 'British', there followed specific character traits. These sentiments were repeated throughout several campaigns, including an advertisement that argued how BOAC provided 'every attention from a cabin staff trained to wait on you with traditional British efficiency, courtesy and friendliness'.[36] These advertisements embraced the idea that being 'British' offered specific traits useful for BOAC's marketing, and was complemented by advertisements which pictured both Stewardesses (figure 10),[37] and Pilots in the mid-1950s looking heroically into the sky like paintings, describing how 'all over the world, BOAC takes good care of you',[38] individuals pictured as white, clean and dressed smartly in BOAC uniform.

---

[34] Jeremy Havardi, *Projecting Britain at War: The National Character in British World War Ii Films* (McFarland, 2014). 6

[35] Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (Yale University Press, 2006). 198-9

[36] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Fly by Boac Coronet Tourist Class Services between Britain - Africa & the Far East," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1954).

[37] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "All over the World Boac Takes Good Care of You (Stewardess)," *The Tatler* 25 April 1956. Iv.

[38] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "All over the World Boac Takes Good Care of You (Pilot)," *The Sketch* 06 June 1956. 52.

Figure 10:British Overseas Airways Corporation, "All over the World Boac Takes Good Care of You (Pilot)," The Sketch 06 June 1956. 52.

This image was consistent, and whilst the 'image of the steward continued to draw on male reference points (e.g., the uniform, the title) but the qualities associated with the job, such as attentiveness and service, were readily transferable to women'.[39] Despite the rising of themes

---

[39] Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture. Sex, strategy and the stratosphere.* 124.

of the 'sexualisation' of crew that would occur in the later 1950s and 1960s, an issue that will be addressed in a subsequent section of this chapter, advertising would stress the characteristics of being *British* as taking precedence over any other, including gender, arguing in 1959 that it would 'insist on giving you *British* treatment which no other airline can provide' where travellers would be 'waited upon by Chief Stewards, Stewards and Stewardesses who are "career" men and women' who were 'each determined to uphold the *British* tradition of cheerful, instant, individual attention'.[40] The gendering of the stewardess still highlighted the hierarchical nature of the representations of people in BOAC, but there were still reminders that the British, and by assumption, white, stewardess were consistent and representative of the 'stoic' and 'dutiful' character.

This dedication to duty was part of a package of sentiments expressed within the early Twentieth Century and the idea that 'for convinced imperialists[…] being a "man of character" implied[…] the possession of older virtues such as a sense of public duty, often expressed in military terms, and an ambition to serve the good of the Empire rather than act simply for oneself,' and that the British 'character' would persist in the pursuing of the British nation.[41] This sense of pre-war imperialistic 'character' is a feature that persisted within BOAC's depictions of staff, obsessed with a sense of duty in a self-perpetuating conception of the national interest. The BOAC brand relied on carefully presenting whiteness and Britishness in tandem. Over the 1950s, the informal hierarchy between pilots and crew remained virtually unchanged, but the focus on sexuality became an increasingly targeted feature of BOAC. As a result of 'various recruitment practices, training, advertising and reporting of the activities of male and female employees through associations of maleness with experience, skill and

---

[40] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Two Jets... With a Choice of 4 Fares!," *The Leader-Post* Monday, February 9, 1959. 22.

[41] Peter J Cain, "Character,'Ordered Liberty', and the Mission to Civilise: British Moral Justification of Empire, 1870–1914," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 4 (2012). 559.

knowledge, and womanhood with either personal characteristics or physical appearance'.[42]

This sense of 'British' authority mattered in particular when considered alongside how

knowledge and experience had been constructed historically.

7.4 Technological Distinctions

In no such area was a cultural distinction between Britain and other nations than in technology;

one theme consistently emphasised throughout the period was the significance of aviation as a

technology that defined, and therefore justified, the advance of not just British civilisation, but

of Western civilisation more generally. The American aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh

described in a 1939 edition of the *Readers Digest* that aviation would be an indicator of the

West's advanced status and its overarching right to moral and physical expansion:

> Aviation seems almost a gift from heaven to those Western nations who were
> already the leaders of their era, strengthening their leadership, their confidence,
> their dominance over other peoples. It is a tool specially shaped for Western hands,
> a scientific art which others only copy in a mediocre fashion, another barrier
> between the teeming millions of Asia and the Grecian inheritance of Europe - one
> of those priceless possessions which permit the White race to live at all in a pressing
> sea of Yellow, Black, and Brown.[43]

This status of aviation was thus one means by which Western nations conceptualised leadership

– in ways which were often attributed to race. Aviation represented, to the West, an invention

only possible through an advanced state of technological and economic development – sharing

it would therefore amount to an act of sharing civilisation more broadly.

This was often outlined in less explicit ways in Britain – though its nuances were very evidently

still there. In a 1947 entry to the *BOAC Review*, in an article written by Station Superintendent

in Kano, H. H. White, described the arrival of newer, faster airliners to help the 'long hop'

across the Sahara. He noticed that it was 'strange, scarcely one day's flight from London, to be

---

[42] Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture*. *Sex, strategy and the stratosphere*. 140.

[43] Charles A Lindbergh, "Aviation, Geography, and Race," *Reader's Digest* 35 (1939).

seeing the near-nude young black girl run out of her mud house, her face daubed in white as a sign of mourning, or to be listening to tales of the "leopard men" and their night prowling'.[44] BOAC services could bring different cultures side by side in what were relatively short periods of time. Many further graphical illustrations used to advertise BOAC was framed in ways which implied power imbalances and dominance. A 1948 advertisement highlighted the disparity of technology as well as the representations of native individuals, titled 'Fly to the Far East by BOAC' which deliberately contrasts with native individuals topless working on a traditional Junk ship with a BOAC Short Sandringham flying boat aircraft in the background.[45] In the 1952 information pamphlet *BOAC: The World-Wide Airline* travel leaflet depicting mostly unclothed images of natives including a boatman in Thailand used to draw a stark contrast between 'native' Thailanders and the advanced technologies of Britain.[46]

This was particularly common in advertising of the late 1950s. In 1958, an advertisement pictured a Comet – which was always used to symbolise Britain's advanced status as a civilisation – next to individuals riding Camels, presenting a deliberate and striking technological contrast between the jetliner and the perceivable form of Middle Eastern Travel (figure 11).[47] This image clearly attempted to capture and define a technological imbalance between Britain and the Middle East, offering a direct 'contrast' between high and low technology states. This form of technological distinction was a potent symbol of the disparity of the two civilisations as 'the airplane, arguably the archetypal form of "high technology", has no organic connection to the technological and scientific history of the Arab East, it is necessary to investigate the process of technological translation from "Europe" to pre-revolutionary Egypt[…] By examining who brought the airplane to Egypt and how it was "consumed" locally,

---

[44] H. H. White, "24 Hours to West Africa," *BOAC Review* October 1947. 5.

[45] Friedrich Schiff, "Fly to the Far East Boac," Hong Kong Baptist University Library Art Collections, http://bcc.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/artcollection/91512504h757t4/.

[46] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac the World-Wide Airline." BOAC The World-Wide Airline.

[47] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "The Shortest Distance between Two Points Is a Jet Line," *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 8 1958. 4.

we substantiate our understanding of "technological translation" and map the outlines of the non-Western aeronautical tradition'.[48] Aircraft therefore became potent symbols of technological civilisation which helped to turbo charge Britain's understanding of its status as a civilisation.

---

[48] Yoav Di-Capua, "Common Skies Divided Horizons: Aviation, Class and Modernity in Early Twentieth Century Egypt," *journal of social history* (2008). 918.

Figure 11: British Overseas Airways Corporation, "The Shortest Distance between Two Points Is a Jet Line," The Pittsburgh Press, September 8 1958. 4.

This also had an important impact on wider representations of BOAC – including within the

history of its own development. The prolific writer and wartime poet John Pudney wrote *The*

Seven Skies in 1959, in which he described the contrast between African and British civilisation in the earliest days of aviation:

> Before the Speedbird emblem of BOAC became a reassuring, punctual presence in remote places, the first airliners to come lumbering down to alight in Africa frequently caused awe and consternation to the tribal peoples who gathered from great distances to witness the wonder of these gigantic man-made birds. On one of these occasions, an elderly chieftain, impressed but shrewdly thoughtful of the future, sought an audience with a member of Imperial Airways staff and asked if he might acquire one of the eggs of the great bird for propagation in his territory. At the time the old man was dismayed by a polite refusal. It is on record, however, that he lived to acknowledge that a far greater boon than a mere egg was his own passage, years later, to a conference in London. This he accomplished, to the wonder and benefit of his people, borne by one of the Speedbird services which to his sons are as familiar as any bird of the forest.[49]

Aviation was therefore akin to a 'status' of civilisation. This poetic description of BOAC's operations and the images of wonderment described helps to reveal how aviation helped entrench a mindset of a civilisational hierarchy. The entry revealed how Britain conceptualised its technological achievements alongside its development of national – and indeed racial and imperialistic – expansion in the post-war period. The frame of "world leadership" in a technological sense was therefore underpinned by notions of race.

This was reflected in advertising for the VC10, which was notably described as designed to 'help keep BOAC pre-eminent on the air routes of the world in the mid 1960 period and beyond.'[50] It was used to depict the advantages of developing and enhancing the aviation infrastructures over the African continent and highlighted the ease of an efficient and continued presence in Africa. The aircraft was further described in 1964 as a continuation of the 'aim of the early route pioneers' which was 'to lay an aerial path across the "dark" continent to the cape,' creating the imagery that the VC10 was a continuation of Imperial objectives and aided in the conquering of lands overseas, particularly in Africa.[51] In a 1965 entry in the *BOAC*

---

[49] Pudney, *The Seven Skies: A Study of B.O.A.C. And Its Forerunners since 1919. The Seven Skies*. 19.
[50] "35 Vickers Vc10s Will Join Our Fleet," *BOAC Review* July 1957. 11.
[51] "West African Inaugural on 29 April," *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue* April 1964. 24-5.

Review revealed a sense of charitability alongside the progressive need to develop, entitled 'through fighting and famine to the VC10,' where the 'attractive young stewardess' named Pat detailed her experiences with Oxfam and their relief work in North Africa, in which she described 'conditions in England were so different from the primitive ones I experienced in North Africa that it took me a good six months to readjust myself.'[52] The VC10 was used to symbolise not just technological distinctions between Britain and other cultures, but as a tool which could bring about further acts of civilisation, producing technologies for its own benefit and for a broader social benefit. Advertising and corporate materials therefore reveal a complex interplay between technology and civilisation.

7.5   The Persistence of the Primitive

The descriptions applied to white staff members did not apply universally. Non-white staff members were consistently portrayed under a rhetoric of primitivism, where 'it was a long time before British airlines depicted people of colour as "normal" members of their company's community of employees'.[53] This was observable in internal communications which, captured perhaps most pertinently as part of a special feature in the Cabin Crew Newsletter, the *Jungle Telegraph*, where 'it was suggested that a series of cartoons should be run on the "sayings" of Aircrews[…] here's hoping *he* hasn't PUT UP A BLACK!,' further caricaturing two characters, one big and one small, with stereotypical tribal dress, large lips and the caption 'putting up a big black' and 'small black'.[54] The phrase 'to put up a black' is to 'make a blunder',[55] and the racial implications of the caricature as a 'common phrase' with these implications suggests that race formed no small part in an internal construction of race.

---

[52] "Through Fighting and Famine to the Vc10," *BOAC Review* September 1965. 35.
[53] Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture*. 159.
[54] Anne (Ed.) Parkhouse, "Editorial, Sayings Illustrated," *The Jungle Telegraph: Serving All Air Stewards and Stewardesses* September 1951. 4-5.
[55] John R Stabler and Faye J Goldberg, "The Black and White Symbolic Matrix," *ERIC Institute of Education Sciences* (1973). 3.

The view that BOAC (and hence, Britain's) technological status implied something about the 'character' of race was further evident in more detailed descriptions of peoples and cultures. In 1951, an article in the cabin crew newsletter, the *Jungle Telegraph*, published Jean Mottram's 'graphic' description of her Transvaal wedding. She described the kind of people she met on her honeymoon:

> We travelled nearly 500 miles. For a good part of the way we passed through territory reserved for the natives. I had imagined them to be much more warlike, but no – they couldn't be more peaceful, and although they live in small round mud huts, they see, reasonably civilised, and some of them are disgustingly wealthy. I must say I was fascinated by the naked bodies and queer hair styles of the women and the numerous necklaces they wear. Here on the farm, of course, our natives are quite European in dress and ways.[56]

These attitudes captured a broader sentiment about post-war travel and the legacies of imperial fantasy. The idea that tourists could travel to far-flung places abroad to witness what were 'primitive natives' formed a key part of the marketing materials in the early 1950s. This notion of 'primitivism' was profoundly racialised, often drawing direct comparisons between white tourists and native populations. Often, this could be observed alongside business materials and helped to justify development policies by suggesting that these 'natives' were incapable of self-rule, implied in this instance by the fact that the society these individuals had were based on wealth inequalities. Often, imagery would suggest that non-whites were, compared to BOAC and Britain, primitive and unscientific.

Within these ideas of 'contrast' was the idea that, much like in the pre-war period where the European traveller could 'live within his or her own culture, with only the climate and the colour of the servants as a reminder of location, and make comfortably brief forays into the neighbouring oriental territory,'[57] one could 'become native' and participate in the novelistic

---

[56] Anne (Ed.) Parkhouse, "For Stewardesses Only," *The Jungle Telegraph: Serving All Air Stewards and Stewardesses* September 1951. 'Transvaal Wedding', 10-11.
[57] MacKenzie, "Empires of Travel: British Guide Books and Cultural Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries." "Empires of travel." 25.

traditions of other cultures, but within the feeling of comfort provided by the fact that Britishness was firmly established and persistent in the background. This paradox epitomised BOAC advertising, as tourist advertising implied an authentic 'primitive truth', whereas business advertising implied an economic investment opportunity. Therefore, language was a key part in the conceptualisation of contrast within BOAC, particularly in attempts to reflect imperial fantasy; this was reflected in the repetition of advertising that referred to Africa as 'no longer the dark continent'. In a series of advertisements which featured famous historical individuals like Charles Dickens and Charles Darwin being flown across the world, one version of these advertisements in 1952 featured a fictitious conversation between Henry Stanley and David Livingstone, reminiscent of works like *How I Found Livingstone*, which featured the line "Dr. Livingstone, I presume you remember Sir Henry Stanley?" which imitates a conversation between the two figures, noting 'Yes, you'll soon be enjoying a Speedbird's-eye view of the Darkest Africa on which you shed the first real light. Africa's now in the centre of BOAC's world-wide network, linked by Speedbirds to four other continents'.[58]

The use of the 'dark continent' metaphor was repeated throughout BOAC advertising. In a 1958 advertisement for travel to Africa proclaimed it was 'no longer the Dark Continent' describing that it was 'still the most exciting continent in the world. It's a land of untold resources where rapid commercial development is everywhere afoot, a land offering limitless scope for adventurous open-air holidays'.[59] Such rhetoric constructed the view that Africa had moved beyond the hostile and unknown environment similarly portrayed in Stanley's 1871 *How I Found Livingstone* and his 1878 *Through the Dark Continent*,[60] towards a progressive land open to business. Referencing Stanley's work highlighted 'the metaphor of the Dark Continent'

---

[58] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "'Dr. Livingstone, I Presume You Remember Sir Henry Stanley'," *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 08/08/1948 1948. 4.

[59] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Fly to Africa by Boac," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1958).

[60] Henry M Stanley, "Through the Dark Continent " *London: George Newnes* (1899 [1878]).

within the 'discourse of economic development in British and American mass media accounts of large scale development projects' which were often used to 'justify, or even celebrate, dominant international and national political and economic agendas'.[61] The use of 'Dark Continent' to refer to the economic and social change, working in tandem with notions of economic development in the previous chapter, created a binary interpretation of Africa as representing both the authenticity of the 'primitive' way of life for the tourist, but one which was a rapidly industrialising 'opportunity' for businessmen.

Poster advertising implied similar notions of primitivism through its references to tribalism. In a 1952 leaflet called *This Winter Find the Sun*, BOAC published a plethora of images and descriptions which attempted to reflect 'traditional' cultures, often specifically targeting the contrast between white and black skin. The leaflet described South Africa with the opportunity to 'meet the proud Zulus of Natal, capture the memory of some tribal gathering when the traditional finery adds barbaric splendour to this magnificent race', depicting a tribe of warriors in a traditional dance as white tourists look on in fascination.[62] This imagery emphasised a sense of sensationalised primitiveness and tribalism which played down the agency of individuals in Africa. The implication was that African Tribes were an authentic representation of African culture and helped to create associations that Africa itself was 'wild' and untamed, symbolism which was typically associated in advertising with a 'stereotypical image' which was 'deeply anchored in the public imagination and largely taken for authentic by tourists and local communities,' where 'the tourism industry in South Africa (as much as elsewhere) has been thriving on highly stereotypical representations of local cultural identities.'[63] More

---

[61] Lucy Jarosz, "Constructing the Dark Continent: Metaphor as Geographic Representation of Africa," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 74, no. 2 (1992). 108.

[62] British Airways Heritage Collection, "This Winter Find the Sun! Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, nd. C.1952). 'South Africa, for so much that is different'. 5-6.

[63] Sabine Marschall, "Commodifying Heritage: Post-Apartheid Monuments and Cultural Tourism in South Africa," in *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, ed. C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker (Oxon: Routledge, 2004). 108.

broadly, it suggested that these individuals were a part of the political establishment and thus served as a means of removing political agency from Africans as it suggested a lack of civilisation.

These themes of 'wildness' and the lack of 'civility' were represented in a 1953 leaflet which described that, in East Africa, 'vast herds of wild animals roam the haunts of their ancestors, proud warrior tribes follow their ancient ways[…] Imagine the thrill of going on "safari" in a big game hunters paradise. The careful organisation of parties led by professional hunters makes sure of your 'bag' whether you shoot with a gun or camera'.[64] Beyond simply a tourist activity, hunting had developed alongside the period of 'European world supremacy' and constituted an activity and 'became a ritualised and occasionally spectacular display of white dominance,'[65] and constituted an important part in how imperialists would exercise power in addition to re-emphasising the prevalence of tribalism. This directly echoed policies that had existed throughout the early Twentieth Century in which 'the tourist economy was dependent upon the legacy of imperialism both for its organisational infrastructure and for its promulgation of cultural fantasies of exotic travel'.[66] Not only does this offer evidence of an extension to the imperial economies that had dominated Africa through the period of imperialism, it signified the construction of Africa as 'wild' lands without civility and implied an incapability to determine self-rule and to take advantage of the lands themselves. These were part of a package of representations which sought to remove agency and authority from native populations. In so doing, it reminded readers that the British remained the centre of this global network, authoritative in knowledge and economy.

---

[64] British Airways Heritage Collection, "This Winter Find the Sun! Fly There by Boac." East Africa, will give you thrills and adventure.
[65] John M MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester University Press, 2017). 7.
[66] Teo, "Wandering in the Wake of Empire: British Travel and Tourism in the Post-Imperial World." "Wandering in the wake of empire." 166-7.

This was similarly reflected in imagery which pictured nakedness of various African peoples. In a 1953 Guide leaflet for Africa depictions of near topless 'Ndebele girls' making dolls which were 'delightful souvenirs', and on the following pages show cartoon images of bare chested West African natives working in their native villages.[67] Removing the clothes of these native individuals was to confer both a sexualised and tribal image on Africa, removing not only any representation of civility but also stripping the individuals of any power. African tourism, well before the Second World War, consisted of 'images of wild and darkest Africa, complete with roaring lions, trumpeting elephants, semi naked and bare-breasted natives, are used to lure Westerners keen for exoticism and adventure'.[68] In so demonstrating this parallel, the 'viewing the other was made both familiar and exotic at the same time. The images provided fascination and wonder, while simultaneously setting up the dichotomies of light against dark, order against violence, and the European world as the carrier of civilization against the savagery of primitive and wild Africa'.[69] Conceptualising the land as 'wild' meant that there was something that could be tamed and controlled, and which could eventually be utilised for Britain's advantage, something which echoed earlier conceptions of Britain being able to make the most of the resources the African continent possessed.

Photography made the depictions of marginalised communities more explicit, particularly within the context of the increasing availability of photography and that 'traditional poster advertising with painted images was being overtaken by photography as part a more unified, corporate approach to publicity'.[70] In the September 1959 edition of *National Geographic*, an

---

[67] N4518 British Airways Heritage Collection, "Africa: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1953).

[68] John S. Akama, "Neocolonialism, Dependancy and External Control of Africa's Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Wildlife Safari Tourism in Kenya," in *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, ed. C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker (Oxon: Routledge, 2004). 147-8

[69] Neal Sobania, "But Where Are the Cattle? Popular Images of Maasai and Zulu across the Twentieth Century," *Visual Anthropology* 15, no. 3-4 (2002). 323.

[70] Jarvis, *British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters. British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters*. No page numbers.

advertisement titled 'Jets bring your Africa tour nearer!' described 'the short time it takes you to reach Africa makes a photographic safari or touring vacation *so easy*! New York to Britain, Britain to the heart of Africa, in under 24 hours flying time. And there you are, *seeing for yourself* the fascinating races of Africa[…] the lives the natives lead[…] the animals in their game reserves', which also pictured three bare chested African women.[71] Depicting people as naked served to represent them as politically and socially inept and to remove political agency, as the symbolism reflects the significance of portraying natives as naked as a means to relates to the ways in which depictions of nakedness 'justified colonial rule in important cultural and political ways,'[72] similarly removing political agency and power as part of the broader package of representations.

This highlighted the oscillating relationship with the changing nature of Empire, insisting not just on Britain's own moral achievements, but insisting on its power and 'need' to intervene in the first place. As other chapters have suggested, 'blackness' and its associations as part of these representations could be interpreted as specific to 'blackness' itself. The representations of other races drew different distinctions in marketing, some of which offered a higher degree of 'acceptability' within the constrained definition of Britishness. The racial distinctions persisted as a metaphor to support the prior themes of development.

7.6 Asian Crew

'Primitivism', which was almost exclusively targeted at Africa, implied that it was *Africans* that were economically and socially incapable. This did not apply consistently outside Africa, as other races and cultures were treated differently depending on their levels of 'acceptability'.

---

[71] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Jets Bring Your Africa Tour Nearer!," *The National Geographic Magazine* September 1959.

[72] Philippa Levine, "Naked Natives and Noble Savages: The Cultural Work of Nakedness in Imperial Britain," in *The Cultural Construction of the British World*, ed. Barry Crosbie and Mark Hampton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016). 17.

Determining race as 'acceptable' in certain contexts of British nationality was particularly prominent in the mid-1950s where Asian crew were hired on some BOAC routes. Characterisations of staff varied dramatically depending on race – with a recruitment drive instigated in the 1950s targeted at individuals from China, Japan, India and Pakistan, which presented these staff in ways which further reinforced notions of power and control. In a 1953 information leaflet entitled *Experience Counts*, it was described that 'to give extra service on BOAC's Eastern and Transpacific Services, a Japanese, Chinese, Indian or Pakistani Stewardess is a member of the cabin crew'.[73] As part of the initiative, crew were specifically chosen to serve 'orient' routes for BOAC.

Pathé publicity described in 1956 that 'the new Chinese and Japanese trainees are currently leading the field in the glamour stakes. The girls are distinguishable to westerners by their opposite, yet equally attractive dress. The 8 Chinese girls wearing sophisticated high neck blouses and skirts or dresses, while the five from Japan favour the exotic kimonos that might have been worn in the east centuries ago'.[74] Other publicity films in 1956 showed 8 Chinese women in traditional dresses at BOAC's Hostel near Sunningdale, describing 'Between Calcutta, Hong Kong and Singapore, they'll assist British hostesses[…] The girls will be very useful attending to passengers in the far east who don't understand a word of English', and one of the women was pictured trying on the BOAC uniform.[75] In both films, British BOAC stewardesses highlight the differences between Asian and British dress, a particular target of Orientalists who were 'confected from Western Desire and imagination' as expressed within the Orient's 'sumptuous wardrobe'.[76] This represented a broader theme of isolating individuals

---

[73] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac: Experience Counts," (N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1958). 19.

[74] British Pathé, "Oriental Air Hostesses," (British Pathé, 1956).

[75] "Chinese Girls to Be Boac [British Overseas Airways Corporation] Stewardesses Recruited for Service on Far Eastern Routes, Chinese Air Hostesses Come to England to Be Appointed," (British Pathé, 1956).

[76] Richard Harrison Martin and Harold Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994). 11.

by race and making clear, though implicitly, that Asian crew were *not* British and should be understood as non-British crew. There are many distinctions within the language here of interest, describing them as 'assisting' British crew, suggesting that there was a distinction of authority between these individuals.

The 1958 *BOAC Review*, notably coinciding with the decline in interest in Asian development projects, detailed the policy in an article on the new recruits, noting that 'the principle is accepted that with the growing industrialisation of Asia living standards will improve, intra-Asian trade will flourish and more and more business men, with their families, will want to travel by air to neighbouring countries.'[77] It went on to describe BOAC's attempt to appeal to more Asian travellers:

> This policy of paying attention to the growing potential of Asia calls for facilities that are attractive to the Asian traveller. Already a start has been made in this direction with the appointment of Japanese and Chinese stewardesses on the Far Eastern sections of our rotes and with the introduction of Indian and Pakistani stewardesses, who between them cover the routes from Beirut to Singapore via both Delhi and Colombo.[78]

The 'growing potential' of Asia referenced a multitude of historical changes in the region, ranging from increased industrialisation in Pakistan and India to the growing economies of China and Japan.

Particularly in the 1960s, BOAC advertisements became more aggressive in targeting the race of crew more directly, particularly through emphasising sexuality. These advertisements would specifically objectify and racialize Asian crewmembers, describing in 1961 that 'a Chinese stewardess serves oriental delicacies. You will certainly acquire a taste for sake when it is so charmingly presented by your Japanese stewardess' as part of BOAC's 'jet bridge to the Orient' campaign.[79] Asian crew were depicted as a novelty on board flights from America across the

---

[77] "The Route to the East," *BOAC Review - The year of the Comet* December 1958. 12-13.
[78] Ibid. 12-13.
[79] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Boac Jet Bridge to the Orient," (N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1961).

'Jet Bridge to the Orient' described the 'intimate way to see the orient' in 1962, which was characterised by the 'tour planned by experts' with 'world famous British Cabin service plus Japanese and Chinese stewardesses' that was a 'luxurious beginning of a truly memorable experience'.[80] As in the 1950s, this was presented through clothing via traditional Asian dress, as advertisements would picture British tourists wearing a traditional outfit, describing how 'Chinese, Japanese and British Stewardesses serve you with traditional BOAC care' and offering 'Continental, Chinese and Japanese delicacies',[81] offering a 'charming blend of the traditionally British and delicately Oriental'.[82] This hybrid construction of service and nationality suggest a conflict between wanting to experience Asian cultures and being willing to interact with them, but within the safety of a more rigidly defined 'Britishness' in ways that were only to appeal to Asian travellers.

The sexualisation of Asian crew was part of a broader trend in the aviation industry to use young women to sell more seats. In the early post-war period, there was an 'apparent equity between male and female flight attendants,'[83] captured by an initial reluctance to hire women as cabin staff which over the course of the 1950s had evolved into a focus on eroticism and physical attractiveness.[84] This period saw a growth in advertisers emphasising the 'demonstration' role of women and technology designed to 'capitalize more on the youth and sex appeal' of female staff in publicity images for new technologies.[85] However, what makes the racial distinction interesting is the intersectional nature of the hierarchy that made a clear distinction between female white crew and female Asian crew. Underpinning the themes of

---

[80] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "The Intimate Way to See the Orient! 29 Day Tour Via Boac," *Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963)*, 07/23/1961 1961. 2.

[81] "Boac Offers You Stopovers in San Francisco Honolulu and Tokyo En Route to Hong Kong," *New York Times (1923-)*, 06/10/1963 1963. 24.

[82] "Cheers! Cheers! Cheers! Cheers! Cheers!," *New York Times (1923-)*, 04/01/1963 1963. 47.

[83] Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture*. *Sex, strategy and the stratosphere*. 116.

[84] Ibid.157.

[85] Marie Hicks, "Only the Clothes Changed: Women Operators in British Computing and Advertising, 1950–1970," *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 32, no. 4 (2010). 10.

cooperation between crewmembers was an authority granted solely by virtue of nationality and race.

This was more significant when considering the tensions created by the racial balance between crew on board BOAC services. Responses to this method of crew selection were also contested by British crew as noted in a 1961 article to the *Telegraph*, it was reported that the 'British stewards and stewardesses say that on some routes the ratio of Asians to Britons is two to one. One stewardess told me: "on the Tokyo-Hongkong route we find we are often flying supernumerary crew. We say there should be two British girls and one Asian".'[86] The implication was that a discomfort amongst white staff about the number of Asian crewmembers suggested deep rooted anxieties about the role of 'whiteness' within BOAC, and implying that 'Britishness' could only be appropriately represented by white crew.

Contrast continued to play an important role among staff. In attempting to distinguish BOAC from other airlines by focusing on the qualities of its staff, in 1964 a campaign with the tagline 'All airlines are alike. Only people make them different,' BOAC sought to typify the qualities and qualifications of particular crewmembers, featuring both British and Asian crew. One of these advertisements was for 'Rodney Berkley' who was described as 'not a Senior Captain. Nor a million-mile pilot. Nor a World War II RAF veteran. He's had a mere ten years' experience[…] And only flown 950,000 miles. At 30, He's a Co-pilot. His Captain's the fellow with all that other experience',[87] pitching him in line with the pilot characterisation from earlier in the 1950s. Rodney was pitched as a technical expert on the way to becoming a very experienced, confident and senior aviator for the organisation. Another advertisement described 'Eric Morrell', 'head chef for BOAC' who 'won a medal in every cooking competition he's entered since 1927. At a recent international exhibition, he won 21 out of 24 medals including

---

[86] Reporter Daily Telegraph, "Air Girls' Plea on Asians," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/08/11/ 1961. 20.
[87] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Rodney Berkley," *Harper's Magazine* January 1964. 13.

the Grand Prix challenge trophy. Prime Ministers, Princes and scores of other dignitaries have dined a la Morrell and marvelled at it. You will too.'[88] Similarly, 'Robert Dove', who 'began his career as a waiter at London's famous Savoy. He first served Royalty at the age of 17. Since then he's waited on Counts, Earls, Dukes, Duchesses and even a Sheik complete with harem. Now at 43, he's a Senior Steward in First Class for BOAC. If you want to find out what the words "first class" really mean, let Robert show you. He's English. And after all, they invented the phrase'.[89] These profiles captured a particular sentiment about what it meant to be the 'best' of British culture by associating it with specific character traits, many of which echoed the earlier conception – technical ingenuity in both engineering and service, experience at high levels, and in this campaign, masculinity. In essence, to be 'white British' crew was to show skill and quality, scientific meticulousness and technical ability.

These associations were in direct contrast to Asian crewmembers as part of the same campaign. One of these advertisements profiled Yasuko Nakamura (figure 12):

> Can't pronounce her full name? Try "Suki." Suki's more than beautiful. She speaks Japanese and English fluently. Understands modern jazz and customs forms. Can serve you sake, sushi, and teriyaki steak with ancestral grace, and say thank you so nicely you'll know she means it. She does.[90]

She was also pictured biting a piece of paper with her name written on it, carrying overt themes of sexuality. Another variation of this advertisement was similar in the way they objectified female Asian crew – another advertisement pictured the crewmember Lancy Lee, describing her as 'an artist' which continued:

> When she's not flying, she's painting and writing poems on bamboo. Or studying Chinese abstracts. Or teaching children how to draw. Whether she's decorating a house, or cooking Moo Goo Gail Pen, the result is always beautiful. If Lancy's

---

[88] "Eric Morrell," *Harper's Magazine* February 1964. 36.
[89] "Robert Dove," *Town & Country*, Sep 1964 1964. 155.
[90] "Boac Takes Good Care of You: Yasuko Nakamura," *The San Francisco Examiner* Monday, May 18, 1964. 12.

> abord your next BOAC flight to the Orient, watch every move closely. She's an art in herself.[91]

Similarly presenting her in a sexualised way, it encouraged passengers to look upon her and other Asian crew with intrigue and fascination. Finally, another Asian crewmember was overtly sexualised and trivialised as the profile of Stewardess Tamako Ishii described her as 'two people' noting:

> One Tamako travels around the world, speaks Japanese, English and French fluently, reads books on economics and politics. The other Tamako plays the Koto (a lovely 13-stringed instrument), studies flower arranging and Japanese dances, and performs the difficult 1000-year-old tea ceremony with incredible grace and beauty. You're lucky. When you fly with BOAC, you get both of her.[92]

Marketing directly targeted the race and sexuality of certain crewmembers, overtly sexualising and objectifying nationality in order to appeal to the western consumer market. This echoed a trend in the representations of Asia and the fantasies of the Empire, particularly fantasies of Asia, were marked by 'the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality,'[93] thereby illustrating a parallel in the images of imperial thought. Consistently in parallel with the aforementioned portrayal of British crew, Asian crew were artistic not scientific, historical, not modern, female and feminine, bordering on sexual.

---

[91] "Lancy Lee," *New York Times (1923-)*, 03/15/1965 1965. 23.
[92] "Tamako Ishii," *New York Times (1923-)*, 02/03/1965 1965. 20.
[93] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule* (Springer, 1986). 6.

Figure 12: "Boac Takes Good Care of You: Yasuko Nakamura," The San Francisco Examiner Monday, May 18, 1964. 12.

The images of Asian women in the context of their 'native' lands operated in tandem with the

perspective that they were presented in the media as 'sexually erotic creatures, full of Eastern

promise, and on the other as completely dominated by their men, mute and oppressed wives

and mothers'.[94] The Asian continent and, subsequently Asian peoples were portrayed as sexualised and feminine, which was a key component of British representations of the East which 'often imagined a feminised or emasculated opponent.'[95] This imagery was, therefore, not new, but the themes of the 'acceptable' and 'amenable' Asian had been appropriated as part of a function of a nationalised industry. This suggests that that the characterisation was given a sense of 'national' legitimacy and helped to entrench views of which individuals 'qualified' as British and those that did not. In suggesting that Asians were 'acceptable' in certain contexts of Britishness depended on being female, a focus on artistic, emotional and sexual intelligence, and in limited numbers. Asian crews were enough to suggest cooperation with traditional notions of Britishness, but not enough to be placed on the same level.

7.7 Immigration, Work and the West Indies

The distinction between individuals being 'acceptable' in certain contexts also applied to other regions, particularly those tied to narratives of immigration. Immigration provided a small but substantial income for BOAC's activities, for example, it had witnessed a 'falling-off in the number of Indian and Pakistan migrants to Britain, following changes in British law, and by stringent Indian Government currency restrictions' resulting in lower than normal profits for 1963.[96] This mattered particularly for advertising for the West Indies, as responses to migration were distinct from those 'at home' in the West Indies, and those 'at home' in Britain. Individuals from the West Indies were almost never presented as acceptable alongside this conceptualisation of Britishness. Perceptions of West Indian travel continued to promote imagery that removed political agency: however these destinations tended to reflect anxieties about immigration. The first colonial immigrants to arrive in 1948 were the Caribbean

---

[94] Pratibha Parmar, "Hateful Contraries: Media Images of Asian Women," in *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Amelia Jones (Routledge, 2002). 290.
[95] Barnett, *Britain's Cold War: Culture, Modernity and the Soviet Threat*. *Britain's Cold War*. 5.
[96] "British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1963," in *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* (1963). 30.

migrants, who 'suffered under a racialised discourse of "difference",'[97] and which highlighted race as a quality which justified their 'alien' status. This notion of difference persisted throughout advertisements for the region, often accompanied by themes of laziness and inability. This was directly reflected in advertising which presented the Caribbean as a land of relaxation, fascination and difference.

Development was seen as a major solution to the immigration issues being experienced in Britain. It was stated by the Lambeth's Mayor, Councillor White, in 1955 argued that the solution to increased immigration was 'the development of the West Indies themselves' as the narrator went on to describe 'the travel brochures tell one, are gay sunlit islands, a tourist paradise. The West Indian who works in the sugar plantation for a few shillings a day thinks differently. True his music is gay and his homeland sunny, but hundreds of his friends have no work and there is no dole'.[98] The history of the West Indies, particularly in the context of Windrush and Immigration, were important narratives for these advertisements. This was seen in somewhat of a contrast to how advertising functioned within the West Indies and BOAC was seen as a central channel of migration. In 1955, of the 17,536 migrants from Jamaica, 3,209 of them flew on BOAC flights.[99] An advertisement in the *Kingston Gleaner* in 1958 described how it was 'just ONE day to London – by BOAC'.[100] BOAC offered 'a special rate' that 'applied to sponsored workers only and was still expensive, although it was the preferred route for London Transport, the corps of sponsored workers'.[101] Before the changes in legislation under the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, however, newspapers reported a series of

---

[97] Caroline Bressey, *New Geographies of Race and Racism* (Routledge, 2016). 56.
[98] British Pathé, "Our Jamaican Problem," (British Pathé).
[99] Laurence Brown, "Afro-Caribbean Migrants in France and the United Kingdom," in *Paths of Integration: Migrants in Western Europe (1880-2004)*, ed. Leo Lucassen, David Feldman, and Jochen Oltmer (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006). 180.
[100] "It's Just One Day to London - by Boac," *Kingston Gleaner*, June 13 1958. 27.
[101] Mary Chamberlain, *Narratives of Exile and Return* (Routledge, 2017). 46.

'Beat-the-ban' jets,[102] and featured imagery of immigrants that had 'Beat the Act'.[103] The *Daily Telegraph* described in 1961 that there was 'almost a panic urgency about the efforts to reach Britain before any specially selective tests are applied. Time to get a passport has been reduced from about three weeks to as many days. A "skycoach to Britain" by BOAC Britannia is generously advertised.'[104] This is observable as BOAC upholding its original duties as described by the 1940s Labour Government, making good on the promises of the original version of the 1948 Nationality Act.

The Caribbean had always been presented as a destination of high status and expensive luxury for the British traveller. Depictions of the Caribbean in a 1952 advertisement depicted white figures being served by a black figure with the caption 'Caribbean background to the good life – an irresistible combination!', further describing 'the characteristic manners, costumes and way of life of their many different races offer the visitor the excitement of an ever-changing scene against a background of historic charm and tropical beauty common to them all'.[105] Another 1952 advertisement in the *Times* depicted an Afro-Caribbean woman serving white tourists, reminiscent of the black mother, serving drinks and prompting 'where would you like to be – just this minute?'[106] These images implied that the Caribbean represented a 'paradise', both of geography and scenery, and a return to the racial civility that preceded in the generations before. This would echo a recurrent theme of BOAC advertising.

On several counts it had been argued that 'migrants of the 1950s constituted an unprecedented expansion in the population of Caribbean and South Asian British subjects, thus inevitably generating a spectrum of responses among Britain's indigenous population from hostility,

---

[102] "Beat-the-Ban Jets," *Daily Mail*, 1962/03/23/ 1962. 15.
[103] "Immigrants Beat the Act," *The Times*, 1962/07/02/ 1962. 24.
[104] Norman Riley, "Dilemma for the West Indies," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/12/13/ 1961. 12.
[105] British Airways Heritage Collection, "This Winter Find the Sun! Fly There by Boac." This Winter Find the Sun! Fly there by BOAC, P.5.
[106] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Where Summer Spends the Winter," *The Times*, 1952/11/26/ 1952. 3.

rejection and denial to sympathy, curiosity and sexual desire',[107] responses which occur regularly and thematically within BOAC's descriptions of other national cultures and people. Immigration represents an interesting counternarrative to the tourist advertisements as it deliberately reverses the direction of citizen mobility. These images helped to conceptualise Britishness in racial terms and were a feature of overtly visible in the advertisements. Many of these descriptions were also sexualised, offering descriptions and depictions of West Indian individuals Artistic prints of the Caribbean were thematically similar, highlighting colour to highlight difference and otherness by picturing a dark skinned woman in colourful dress, including prints like the 1952 'The Caribbean, Fly there by BOAC' which displayed a Caribbean woman dancing with a dress flaring up in the wind.[108] Difference formed a heavy part in the advertising of destinations, emphasising themes of 'tradition,' 'colour,' 'charm' and 'romance', each of which formed integral ways of presenting 'otherness'. Advertisements highlighted that 'the variety of traditional customs, songs and dances, of local food, colourful native dress and ways of life of the many different races which inhabit these lovely islands, offer an ever-changing scene against the background of historic charm and tropical beauty common to them all',[109] offering a commodification of the 'traditional' cultures of the continent.

Imagery of the West Indies continued to present sensationalised imagery of individuals made to look more servile. In 'Fly Away-Far Away to NEW holiday hunting grounds' in 1963 described 'Today lively people are looking to the holiday places just over the horizon. Un-tripper-ish places like the Caribbean with the sun guaranteed. Places with bright strange new images. A holiday like this will give you tales to tell for years ahead', which photographed

---

[107] Mica Nava, "Thinking Internationally: Gender and Racial Others in Postwar Britain," *Third Text* 20, no. 6 (2006). P.672.

[108] British Airways, *The Caribbean: Fly There by Boac,* 1950s. The Advertising Archives.

[109] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Caribbean: Fly There by Boac," (N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952).

Caribbean individuals performing the traditional limbo dance,[110] a form identified to have been part of a form of 'cultural entrepreneurship' which ignored 'profound ambiguities about cultural authenticity, ambivalence regarding international recognition, and contested ideas about national identity in a complex multi-ethnic, multicultural, postcolonial state,'[111] and the formation of stereotypical images was presented to BOAC travellers.

This was reflected in advertisements across the period. One 1961 guide to the Caribbean islands described one of the defining characteristics of the island of Martinique in the Caribbean that 'one if its chief claims to fame is the outstanding beauty of its women',[112] and describing Bermudians as the cultural mix between the Americans and the West Indians. They were described as 'both white and coloured, are relaxed and cheerful',[113] and 'Small-built, wiry, dark or fair haired but all equally tanned a golden brown, they keep their individually beneath the half American accent and all the other influences which press in on the Colony from the outside'[114] These descriptions determine an association between West Indians and the portrayal of overtly sexualised women and lazy men in an attempt to portray the West Indies as a place of carefree luxury which began the process of cultural dependency within nations in the West Indies.[115] These accounts maintain a separation between Britishness at home and these individuals abroad – the West Indies, and therefore West Indians, were depicted as acceptable only in the context of the tourist destination and not on the same level as the British.

---

[110] British Overseas Airways Corperation, "Boac Takes Good Care of You: Fly Away-Far Away to New Holiday Hunting Grounds," *Punch*February 13 1963.

[111] Garth L Green, "Marketing the Nation: Carnival and Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago," *Critique of Anthropology* 22, no. 3 (2002). 283.

[112] British Airways Heritage Collection, "Fly Boac to the Caribbean and Bermuda, Nassau, Florida," (N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1961).

[113] British Overseas Airways Corporation., *Bermuda. Presented with the Compliments of B.O.A.C. ... Fourth Edition. [with Illustrations.]* (London: Inter-Continental Air Guides, 1963). P.11

[114] Ibid. P.19

[115] H Michael Erisman, "Tourism and Cultural Dependency in the West Indies," *Annals of Tourism Research* 10, no. 3 (1983). P.359.

7.8   Conclusion

Advertising helped to chart how images evolved in tandem with a conceptualisation of race. It helped Britons extract a notion of supremacy and consistently through a period of great change. Throughout the 1950s, as Britain faced challenges related to Britishness and identity, the rigidity of the image of Britishness presented by BOAC revealed its deep rooted insecurities. BOAC never actively set out to discriminate or continue imperialist notions of race, however, its status as a nationalised industry and its continued emphasis on the 'nation' helped to give these messages legitimacy and authority. This was not simply rhetoric, but suggested that Britain's policies of international development in the colonial regions had been profoundly positive and reflected the virtuous nature of the national character – even if this did derive from racist assumptions about whiteness, imperial technology and the 'civilisation' aviation represented. In examining the imagery and language of both Britain and the rest of the world, the subtle notion of power emerges and reveals that the essence of imperialist power still reverberated through the industry and notions of international travel.

8   Conclusion: The 'World's Favourite Airline'?

In April 1950, the chairman Sir Miles Thomas recounted his tour of Australia, New Zealand and the Far East in an article in the *BOAC Review*. Optimistic for the future of both his organisation and for the aviation industry in Britain, he described the value he thought it would have for peoples around the world:

> In spite of the disturbed political and strategic situation out East, there is a great expansion of civil aviation. Peoples of all nationalities are beginning to appreciate the benefits that swift air travel provide and, on the question of cost, are beginning to realise that the absence of incidental expenditure such as is common in other forms of transport and can amount to considerable sums on a long journey (long, that is, in terms of time) is a factor to be considered.[1]

Thomas' evocation of the wider political and social value of aviation captured the essence of this thesis. 'People', an imagined audience of individuals that fitted the 'British' banner, white, middle class people; including politicians, the general public, aviators and commentators; believed that aviation would help not only to shape the new world order, but to help shape the new world order for Britain's betterment. Speed was not just pitched as a gimmick for reducing flight times, but as the removal of a great barrier to face to face communication – and therefore mutual understanding – between national entities that could have inevitably reshaped the way nations viewed and interacted with each other. Perhaps more specifically, it could help to shape and spread political philosophies, helping to introduce new ways of thinking about society. However, within this account was the assumption of Britain's leadership, an assumption based on a careful blend of both optimism and obsession within the aviation industry.

For all of the political and social advances aviation was posited to make, it was limited by the political realities of running a nationalised industry. Thomas went on to describe some of these nationalised limitations:

> My impression on the routes I recently travelled – as on others in the past – is that the name of BOAC stands high in the public estimation. Naturally, as a nationalised

---

[1] "Chairman's 30,000 Miles Air Tour," *BOAC Review* April 1950. 3.

undertaking, we shall get the limelight of public enquiry constantly probing for points that can be criticised. Therefore we must avoid inefficiencies and extravagances. But we are in a better position nowadays to do that than ever before.[2]

The post-war period, especially concerning BOAC and civil aviation, was typified by ideological tensions between the potential of the impact of aviation, and the realities of technology, economics and politics. BOAC *functioned* within Britain's broader political economy by projecting an image of a Britain, both for domestic and overseas interests, as a nation of great technical ingenuity, moral good and, centrally, of power and influence. It believed that it served the purpose of a 'midwife' – in the way that it helped to build other airlines and provide economic advantages to nations throughout the world. Despite its optimistic and altruistic vision, it sought to construct an image of power derived from the view that 'Britishness' had very specific, racialised and paternalistic meanings.

Perhaps BOAC's most important role was in its ability to characterise and advertise Britain to itself, helping to define its own place within the uncertainties of the post-war period. The ability to project a specific national image held an important political power that helped to both define and redefine Britain's role through the identities pushed through the BOAC message. As Edgerton argued, the British nation was 'made' in the years following the Second World War in the wake of the questions surrounding Imperial Citizenship and Economic Liberalism.[3] These questions were central to the construction of British citizenship *and* the construction of BOAC imagery, both of which had to buy into and operate within these arbitrary definitions.

In many ways, this marketing was *defensive*, and helped to project this image against a wave of challenges. The post-war period presented many new and difficult challenges: warfare had been a heavy burden on the economy, and a new government regime focused on welfare and distribution meant an economy under immense strain and by 1965 had, in a strictly relative

---

[2] Ibid. 4.

[3] Edgerton, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth-Century History. The Rise and Fall of the British Nation*. Xxix.

sense, fallen behind other nations in Europe. Before the Second World War, Britain's Empire had spanned one quarter of the globe, by 1965 had been reduced to a handful of colonies. These challenges were observed not simply as comments in and of themselves, but comments on the very nature of the strengths and values of Britain as a nation in the world and the institutions that championed this view. These were challenges that fundamentally altered the confidence in *being* British. This is where BOAC was at its most valuable but equally where it was at its most vulnerable: it branded itself as a believer in the character of the nation and the values it stood for (or at least its own interpretation of these values).

These held significance with the formation of new national identities, which are 'formed and transformed within and in relation to representation. We only know what it is to be "English" because of the way "Englishness" has come to be represented, as a set of meanings, by English national culture.' Subsequently, 'a nation is not only a political entity but something which produces meanings - a system of cultural representation. People are not only legal citizens of a nation; they participate in the idea of the nation as represented in its national culture.[4] Thus these 'national identities' had been formed and informed by the ways in which they have come to be represented, and therefore 'Britishness' could only be defined by the ways in which cultural institutions had come to represent it. As a respected institution of international travel, its largely self-imposed authority on 'Britishness' and its place in the world, BOAC's messages were a persistent but powerful cultural force of understanding the nation. It was itself an institution that sought to provide meaning to the nation and provide assurances to 'Britishness'. Throughout periods of uncertainty about what represented this identity, BOAC offered a consistent and reassuring image of what the nation *was* and what it *could be* – a source of moral

---

[4] Stuart Hall, *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Blackwell Publishing, 1996). 612.

influence, a source of innovation, a source of great influence and power, values of a particular strength in the battle of ideological social systems in the Cold War.

In many ways this is not a surprising conclusion given the importance that states have historically attached to their respective national airlines. However, the way in which BOAC's image as a nationalised carrier and the political economy of this image marks a sharp change in the direction of literature which often suggested that aviation in the post-war world was used as a way of *constructing* nationalism and, by logical inference, rejecting external influence. In the context of BOAC's post-war operations, Britain's nationalised airline was used to try to *maintain* the status quo and to perpetuate power and belief in the British state.

It is important not to isolate the British example - there is little doubt that BOAC was not the only state airline that afforded this kind of power projection. Other major contemporary European airlines, many with long histories of national service like BOAC including Air France, KLM and Lufthansa, as well as some defunct airlines like Sabena, each helped France, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium respectively create national imagery and connect their respective imperial missions, and racialised imagery of colonial possessions was not *just* a British invention, and attempting to claim power without direct military power was done by many European powers. What is particularly unique and interesting about the British case was the centrality of BOAC throughout this period of decline and self-doubt. The incessant belief in the aircraft industry and its supposed ability to 'save' Britain was channelled throughout all of BOAC's rhetoric and suggested that Britain was a nation without boundaries in any objectives it set its mind to.

8.1 *The BOAC Project*
BOAC offered a visual vocabulary that aided in the conceptualisation of Britain as a nation in the post-war period. It helped to chart a path, imaginary though this may have been, against the

tensions of the post-war period. Given BOAC's formation under the 1939 government, under a presumption of service to the government, it is easy to see how this arrangement would confuse policymakers, the public and the organisation itself as to the nature of how it worked and who it worked for. Its nationalisation in 1939 was agreed by both Labour and Conservative alike, but Labour's amendments to the Swinton Plan and subsequent 1946 Civil Aviation Act were an attempt to push BOAC on a further political agenda within a planned economy that saw it as a political agent, fulfilling aviation services in the 'public good' and operating aviation services 'for the nation' rather than for a pursuit of profits. BOAC held a privileged position in Labour's vision for the post-war world, representing an opportunity to provide the sense of internationalism in a world where the nation had become an increasingly potent symbol. Its nationalised status only added to the authority contained within this rhetoric.

From this foundation, and regardless of the dominating political party, it continued to operate under policies framed in the 'national interest'. Often supported by the structures of its formation, it operated in a similar capacity to a government department, often represented by a minister-like Chairman that would perform many duties reminiscent of political showmanship. Chairmen themselves also remained focused on their ability to support the 'national interest' in the capacities they could – buying British and promoting Britain, touring the world, negotiating traffic rights with foreign governments – and these roles experienced little change. Whilst Conservatives protested the extraordinary sums requested by BOAC, many continually acknowledged the functional value of BOAC in keeping Britain connected. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, BOAC continually defended its policies and failures under the rhetoric of what it did *other* than the income it brought in. As key shifts in the economy prioritised private industry and technological modernisation, sights were shifted away from the kind of structures and symbols that arose.

Not only was BOAC politically privileged, it was culturally privileged, and represented an increasingly admired and desired industry consumed by the 'glamour of aviation' which was 'typified by the ambition of any adolescent girls to become air hostesses'.[5] BOAC and its brand occupied a popular status in the culture of 1950s and 1960s Britain. One of its most famous fliers was the Royal Family and, specifically, Queen Elizabeth II, who used BOAC as her tool for international trips which in turn gave BOAC more political significance. Partly necessitated by the fact that Britain had no other apparatus with which to fly important political figures around, BOAC basked in its association with the Royal image and the political exemptions that came with it. In the way that the Queen symbolised an enduring connection between Britain and the rest of the world, so too did BOAC. In the early 1950s, this advertising attempted to reflect a sense of British exceptionalism underpinned by an unwavering optimism about the character of 'Britishness' that had helped to create and innovate technologies.

Technology was one element that BOAC believed it could aid in order to challenge the real threat of Americanisation in the 1950s. In maximising the networks and channels that existed as part of the Empire, it could sell the idea of British aircraft throughout the world and realistically compete against an American market that had the advantages of not having to look outside its borders for sales. Technology formed one of the most important things BOAC imagined it could do to fight this market, seeking to make the Commonwealth into one sphere of British technological influence. Whilst this ultimately failed, it revealed that there was deep anxiety about maximising Britain's technological status in the early 1950's in combination with the Commonwealth network. These anxieties were realised with the Comet crashes, which shifted the confidence in Britain's ability to manufacture aircraft and hence to operate at the centre of the network.

---

[5] Kynaston, *Family Britain, 1951-1957. Family Britain*. 123.

This has a lot to offer historians of the decline of Empire, as the decolonisation process regularly required careful corporate and political navigation. Whilst it is indeed true that the question of 'how far airlines still operated specific routes for diplomatic or strategic (rather than commercial) purposes is hard to determine',[6] as this thesis has shown, attitudes reminiscent of Nineteenth Century imperialism were ingrained within BOAC's corporate persona. Referring to the history and development of the British Empire, 'Pitt was its midwife, Lord Mountbatten its sexton and Winston Churchill its chief mourner in Britain. Its ghost lives on in the form of the Commonwealth; its sole remains are in the handful of United Kingdom Overseas Territories, from Bermuda to the Pitcairn Islands.'[7] The familial metaphor of Empire was strong in BOAC's descriptions and references to Empire, Commonwealth and the network they sought to maintain, something which has been noted as part of the way that 'the European powers have invested in their "families", via a feminist reading of the construction of nationalism through empire' representing how 'the nation is commonly described in familial language, usually coded as a woman/mother' where 'nationalist discourse defines security as defence of the boundaries of the (female) nation by (male) citizens — often with explicit analogies to patriarchal defence of the boundaries of female family members',[8] empire thus formed a gendered identity in politics.

Language and metaphor continually emphasised the political and economic value of the Commonwealth and Empire in the post-war period, whether it be 'midwife at the birth', the 'invisible bridges', the 'global centre' or the objective of 'goodwill', this language helped BOAC to imagine a role within the change around them and subsequently conceptualised a moral role which helped to imagine itself, and the Commonwealth as a unit that had devolved

---

[6] Staniland, *Government Birds: Air Transport and the State in Western Europe*. *Government birds*. 133.

[7] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, vol. 59 (Cambridge University Press, 2000). 2.

[8] Brysk, Parsons, and Sandholtz, "After Empire: National Identity and Post-Colonial Families of Nations." "After Empire." 274.

out of Imperial ties, against the immoralities of Capitalism and Communism. The rhetoric of the family was particularly important when considered alongside the ways in which BOAC worked with its associated and subsidiary airlines. These connections, whether legally owned or otherwise, represented a chance to demonstrate the success of post-Imperial cooperation. Advertising, both from BOAC and from the airlines themselves, spoke of the highly advantageous relationships ex-Empire countries had with Britain, many of which would note highly prosperous economies as a result of Britain's interventions. Other airlines spoke of paternalistic interference from BOAC, prompting political hesitance. In so examining these images and the ways in which they came to be represented within Britain, this thesis has examined a domestic response which helps to understand how the 'British public imagined both their place in the decolonising world and their responsibilities towards it',[9] distilled by the essence to provide a definition of Britain that balanced its role between post-imperial military power with paternalistic loyalty to areas which had endured loyalty to Britain.

These interactions with other national airlines suggested a continued need to demonstrate Britain as a paternal force that offered material advantage to those in its family. This was an attempt to secure a sense of national character. This characterisation formed an important part of the development of British nationality and was best determined by representations of racialised individuals throughout the BOAC network. Discourses of nationalism often find ways to define not only who members of a nation are, but whom they are *not*. BOAC's definition of 'Britishness' left little room for non-white individuals, often portraying deeply racialised and stereotypical imagery of people in their homelands. Functioning in a similar capacity to humanitarian campaigns, these images and rhetoric 'presented the British public and government with issues concerning Africa's lack of modernity; prognostically, campaigns

---

[9] Bocking-Welch, *British Civic Society at the End of Empire: Decolonisation, Globalisation, and International Responsibility. British civic society at the end of empire*. 53.

have posed the agency of the British government and people as the solution to these lacunae; motivationally, campaigns have appealed to a sense of British national virtue'.[10] These images helped to define and conceptualise 'Britishness', and almost exclusively, 'whiteness' as the moral superior to promote and justify the centralised control in aviation, and consequently, further political and social life as a response to immigration.

8.2 From BOAC to BA

Amongst many things, this thesis has attempted to understand the implications of BOAC's relationship to the British nation, and the day to day realities of working with the British state. Being nationalised meant an attachment to the political interests of the state as well as a focus on policies that reflected the 'national interest'. This abstract connection to the interests of the state and nation is valuable for understanding the political, economic and cultural significance of BOAC's contemporary, British Airways (BA). Formed in 1971 after the merger of BOAC and BEA, throughout the late Twentieth Century to present day BA has held similarly conflicted relationship to the state and nation. In 1983, four years ahead of its privatisation, as a result of the fact that it had carried more passengers than any other airline, BA used the slogan 'the world's favourite airline' which served as a 'reflection of its improved financial position during the privatisation process and hope for the future'.[11] A line of both boldness and arrogance, it implied that BA presented an image of professionalism and service that the whole world, supposedly, greatly admired. It implied that it had grown more than any other airline and that it held an enormous degree of international respect and influence in the community of both airlines and passengers.

---

[10] Graham Harrison, "Campaign Africa: Exploring the Representation of Africa and Its Role in British Identity," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 15, no. 4 (2013). 542.

[11] Adrian Cozmuta, "Selling 'the World's Favourite Airline': British Airways' Privatisation and the Motives Behind It," *Business History* (2021). 1-2.

Many individuals, airlines and political figures had, and still would, fervently disagree, but the attitude contained within this tagline demonstrates how entrenched BA's powerplay was, and represents a natural evolution from the rhetoric prevalent throughout BOAC's post-war life. This tagline also remains representative of its context as well – the obsessive notion that the 'World's favourite airline' was a British airline suggested an appeal to recapture a status of Britain engendered with great power, influence and independence – elements which captured the essence of then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her endeavours to re-centralise Britain in global politics and, was accompanied by a surge of nationalism. Both BOAC and BA can be observed as symbols of British success and, more importantly, stability through times of crisis. Both airlines championed the successful traits of the nation in contexts where these were seen to be in challenge.

Its history as a nationalised airline still plays an important part of modern BA's characterisation, particularly in the context of neoliberalism. As a product of the welfare state, BA has historically struggled to adjust to neoliberal economic practices, often reverting to its 'national' status as a marketing strategy. For example BA's nearest rival, Virgin Atlantic, which was a wholly private venture and prototypical example of a successful business venture in the neoliberalism of the 1980s, challenged its status as 'Britain's Flag Carrier' in 1984. Virgin Atlantic was BA's 'most persistent, vocal and highly publicised source of competitive pressure'.[12] Virgin Atlantic regularly argued that political forces had tended to supress Virgin Atlantic in favour of BA resulting in many libel cases and supposed 'dirty tricks' on BA's part to eliminate them from the market.[13] An example of this is observable in the proposed merger between BA and American airlines in 2008, an attempt to *remove* competition rather than participating in it. Virgin Atlantic responded and formed the 'No way BA/AA' campaign,

---

[12] Nigel Piercy, *Tales from the Marketplace: Stories of Revolution, Reinvention and Renewal* (Routledge, 2000).
[13] Martyn Gregory, *Dirty Tricks: British Airways' Secret War against Virgin Atlantic* (Random House, 2010).

which argued that the merger threatened to drive costs for consumers up and to price out smaller airlines like Virgin Atlantic.[14] BA's struggle to deal with this kind of pressure from an airline tyring to go for a similar status shows a difficulty, almost expectation, that BA's status as a flag carrier was enough to guarantee its survival into the future. The episode demonstrated that BA were attempting to remove Virgin Atlantic by means other than the competitive free market system, rather, eliminating them by means which were based on a self-justified right to operate in the name of the nation. More specifically, there is an assumption that BA was alone in serving the nation, and that, much like its attitudes in the 1950s and 1960s, used its size and influence to eradicate smaller competitors as 'competition' was seen as 'wasteful' rather than beneficial for the global economy.

This speaks to a broader understanding of organisations that survived the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s, and suggests that charting an organisation's transition from welfare to neoliberalism is a useful frame of reference, particularly for the study of civil aviation in the post-war period. This has seen popularity in scholarship, for example, Heathrow was an interesting case of a shift in economic principles and shows the challenges that are faced when 'when a corporatist welfare state introduces practices of economic liberalization within or around nationalized enterprises like Heathrow it suggests we need to historicize more carefully the forms of capitalism it sponsored rather than to assert that the brief life of social democracy was even briefer than we thought'.[15] Observing how companies endured the process of neoliberalism can reveal their original priorities, as well as how organisations can be designed to last radical sweeping economic change.

Perhaps conversely, BA's failure to represent Britain appropriately in the context of the neoliberal state has often been the target of critics. As part of the 1997 redesign of the BA

---

[14] Virgin Atlantic, "No Way Ba/Aa," *Financial Times*, 2008/10/08/ 2008. P.9.
[15] James Vernon, "Heathrow and the Making of Neoliberal Britain," *Past & Present* (2021). 216.

corporate brand, 'project utopia' sought to bring the airline's design up to date by removing the Union Flag design from the tails of BA's aircraft, replacing them with patterns reflecting some of BA's top destinations. One of its most notable critics – Margaret Thatcher - famously placed a tissue over the tail of a model aircraft at the 1997 Conservative Party Conference to express her dislike of the design. An article of the *Daily Telegraph* described her saying 'tartly: "we fly the British flag, not these awful things." The design from the Ncoakhoe tribe of the Kalahari, was "terrible", she protested'.[16] As part of the same campaign, the *Daily Telegraph* published an article entitled how ''Aloof' BA stewardesses' needed to 'learn to be less British', which described how staff were being sent on courses to 'encourage them to lose some of the British reserve', meeting hostility from staff and describing the move as 'all about becoming more American'. The then BA chief executive Bob Ayling responded and said 'We want to be seen as a global airline and not simply British. We are immensely proud to be British but 40 million people a year fly with us and very many of them are not British'.[17] The 'British' in BA continued to hold a significant level of national importance regardless of the overarching changes in structure, and its unique appeal to a character of British nationalism has retained its potency over time.

What has therefore been seen is an organisation that, for the most part, represented private interests whilst at the same time upholding an image of national exceptionalism. This can be observed most recently throughout the celebration of the airline's centenary celebrations. On the 25th of August 2019, BA celebrated 'BA100' which included a number of different appeals to history. These included the setting up of an official website for BA100 which consisted of archival material from the BAHC which displayed advertisements, pictures of royalty, old

---

[16] Robert Chief Political Correspondent Shrimsley, "Fly the Flag, Thatcher Tells Ba," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1997/10/10/ 1997. 2.

[17] Michael Fleet, "'Aloof' Ba Stewardesses Learn to Be Less British," ibid., 1998/07/06/ 1998. 3.

aircraft, uniforms, CEO's and foreign travels,[18] a Royal visit to the BA headquarters where the Queen paid a visit to the BAHC and looked at a ticket she herself used back in 1953,[19] and painted four of its aircraft in retro liveries.[20] Advertising was, unsurprisingly, central in raising awareness of the celebrations and much like BOAC made direct appeals to the history of the airline and a similar sense of national character. The advertisement entitled 'Aviators', which recounted the past 100 years of the airline and highlighted its evolution from its earliest days before the First World War through the jet age in the 1960s and into the modern era of travel, stating the airline's motto 'to fly, to serve'.[21] What is most notable in this advertisement is how it selected specific eras of the airline's history and, most notably, chose to skip the immediate post-war era – and much of the controversial political manoeuvres examined within this thesis – implying that BA's troubled period after the Second World War has been systematically ignored, seeking to defend itself from the state (and its competitors) by using the narrative of the nation.

This campaign also featured advertising with twee messages that sought to further describe and characterise a British consciousness. One of the best examples of this is in an advertisement entitled *Made By Britain* which is features a host of quintessentially British personalities such as Gary Oldman, Olivia Coleman and Winne the Pooh intersected with members of BA staff making sentimental comments 'to' Britain including 'Dear Britain, we love you,' which goes on to describe the nation's resilience by stating 'the way you pick yourself up when things get

---

[18] British Airways, "Celebrating 100 Years of Flying with Pride," https://www.britishairways.com/100/. Accessed 02 March 2022.

[19] "Her Majesty the Queen Visits British Airways' Headquarters to Mark the Airlines Centenary," https://mediacentre.britishairways.com/pressrelease/details/86/0/11113#:~:text=Thursday%20May%2023%2C%202019%3A%20Her,of%20the%20airline's%20centenary%20celebrations. Accessed 02 March 2022.

[20] "All Four British Airways Hertiage Liveries Come Together to Mark the 50,000th Customer Flight," https://mediacentre.britishairways.com/pressrelease/details/86/0/10921. Accessed 02 March 2022. "Looking Back at Our Most Memorable Liveries," https://www.britishairways.com/100/story/heritage-liveries. Accessed 02 March 2022.

[21] "Aviators," (YouTube, 2019). URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4JdQi60an0. Accessed 02 March 2022.

tough' 'and dust yourself off' 'where you follow your own paths' 'how you tell it like it is'
'politely of course' 'you've led revolutions' 'but you won't shout about it' 'it's just not in your
nature' 'instead, you'll quietly make history' 'of all kinds'.[22] This advertisement was a
strikingly similar characterisation of Britishness reminiscent of the attitudes contained within
this thesis. BA's attempts to characterise a positive and altruistic vision of 'Britishness'. A
feature of this rhetoric is that very little has changed since BOAC: the advertising still presented
a very strong picture of Britain as not only resilient, but undivided, kind, talented and receptive.
Much like BOAC's advertisements, the appeal to an imagined collective identity remains not
only consistent, but fundamentally entrenched.

This rhetoric particularly conceptualised an image of stability through political crisis: BA's
chief marketing officer Hamish McVey argued 'We're focusing very much on the story we
want to tell in this moment in time, which is confident one about Britain and what it means to
be part of modern Britain today.'[23] In other words, it was part of a campaign to offer a sense of
stability, consistency and confidence in the character of the British. This was an especially
powerful rhetoric as, much as Britain's global role throughout the 1950s and 1960s was
changing, so too was Britain's role in the world changing as of 2020 – Brexit and the move
away from Europe into a global network, the rise of right-wing populism and a challenge to
known political consensus. As a national airline, its attempts were to represent a positive
national stereotype, particularly in a time of 'crisis' in Britain's history. As BOAC did
throughout its early history, BA served to provide a consistent, unifying semblance of a global
Britain at a time of a crisis in character. This 'selection' of certain elements of history that
provide a sense of stability which show how 'the modern past often has the idealised air of the

---

[22] "Made by Britain," (YouTube, 2019). URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2w2bCMhc9k. Accessed
02 March 2022.
[23] Rebecca Stewart, "British Airways Turns 100 with 'a Love Letter' to Britain That Definitely Isn't About
Brexit," The Drum, https://www.thedrum.com/news/2019/02/01/british-airways-turns-100-with-love-letter-
britain-definitely-isnt-about-brexit. Accessed 02 March 2022.

golden age: it is formed according to the well-developed perspectives of a romantic orientation which responds to modernity by asserting that the true potentialities of human development must be seen in the light of the traditional and deeply settled communities that have already been destroyed'.[24] Characterising Britain was an appeal to a mythologised nostalgia that helped people observe and better understand the contexts in which they lived. BA, much like BOAC provided a sense of cultural and characteristic stability through marketing images that paraded the value of the British national character above all else.

By its nature as a large corporation operating from hundreds of different locations overseas, the history of the British Overseas Airways Corporation is convoluted and messy; no other organisation in British history had as much government funding and international exposure. Given its role as a nationalised carrier, much of its history it inevitably faced a degree of subservience to political powerdom. This thesis has shown how BOAC became an instrument in projecting a tenacious, powerful and altruistic nation capable of leading the world. In using business records alongside established histories, this thesis has attempted to show that there is a valuable conversation to have between business archives and established historians, and that honest and productive collaboration helps to shed light on historical issues for both parties. BOAC was an instrument of both uncompromising power and moral superiority, offering imagery that presented Britain as a positive political force. Passengers were encouraged to 'Fly British by BOAC' not just for the quality of 'British' service that it offered, or its connectivity throughout the world or for its convenience, but for reasons of patriotism. In a mass appeal reminiscent of wartime values, choosing to fly British was pitched as a pathway towards guaranteeing the strength and security of the British nation itself, however fanciful a vision this may have been.

---

[24] Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country* (London: Verso, 1985). 5.

9 Bibliography

"35 Vickers Vc10s Will Join Our Fleet." *BOAC Review*, July 1957, 1.

"Above the Seven Seas: Boac and Its Commonwealth Partners." *The Round Table* 55, no. 220 (1965/09/01 1965): 348-57.

Adamthwaite, Anthony. "Britain and the World, 1945-9: The View from the Foreign Office." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 61, no. 2 (1985): 223-35.

Addison, Paul. "Clement Attlee, 1945–1951." In *From New Jerusalem to New Labour: British Prime Ministers from Attlee to Blair*, edited by Vernon Bogdanor, 9-22. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010.

"Advertisement: Comet (B.O.A.C)." *Vogue*, 1953, 46.

Aeronautical Correspondent. "B.O.A.C. Chairmanship." *The Times*, 1947/03/27/ 1947, 4.

———. "B.O.A.C. Hope to Show Profit of £3m." *The Times*, 1963/11/07/ 1963, 12.

———. "B.O.A.C. To Be Made to Pay Its Way." *The Times*, 1963/11/22/ 1963, 12.

"Air Corporations [H.L.] a Bill Intituled an Act to Consolidate the Enactments Relating to the Constitution and Functions of the British Overseas Airways Corporation, the British European Airways Corporation and the British South American Airways Corporation." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1949.

Air Correpondent. "£2m Boac Campaign for Vc10s." *The Sunday Times*, 1963/12/01/ 1963, 8.

———. "Future of British Civil Aviation." *Financial Times*, 1948/06/14/ 1948, 4.

———. "Study of Supersonic Airliner Design Urged by B. O. A. C." *Financial Times*, 1960/08/04/ 1960, 7.

Air World Books. *Airlines at War: British Civil Aviation 1939–1944.* Barnsely: Air World, 2018.

"Airports for the Jet Age." *Financial Times*, 1957/11/20/ 1957, 7.

Airways, Ghana. "Business in West Africa Centres on Accra and Starts on a Ghana Airways Vc10." *The Economist*, 1965/10/30/ 1965, 492.

———. "Ghana Airways Non-Stop Express Now! By Day- or by Night." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1962/06/26/ 1962, 9.

———. "Listen to the Sunshine in a Ghana Airways Vc10." *The Sunday Times*, 1964/11/22/ 1964, 21[S].

———. "With All the Competition around How Come Ghana Airways Are Still on Top?" *The Economist*, 1973/03/24/ 1973, 44.

Airways, South African. "Discover the Incredible Beauty of South Africa." *The Times*, 1964/09/30/ 1964, 8.

———. "Discover the World's Fastest-Growing Business Future in South Africa." *Financial Times*, 1964/07/23/ 1964, 17.

———. "There Goes Another Flight by South African Airways." *The Economist*, 1963/10/05/ 1963, 23.

———. "This Year, the Prosperous South Africans Will Import Goods Worth over £713 Millions!" *The Economist*, 1965/06/12/ 1965, 1351.

Akama, John S. "Neocolonialism, Dependancy and External Control of Africa's Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Wildlife Safari Tourism in Kenya." In *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, edited by C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker, 140-52. Oxon: Routledge, 2004.

Akerman, James R. *The Imperial Map: Cartography and the Mastery of Empire.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Alexeiev, Kyrill. "Boac in Moscow." *BOAC Review*, August 1961, 1.

Alioth LLC. "Uk Inflation Calculator." https://www.officialdata.org/1860-GBP-in-2017?amount=1.

Amankwah-Amoah, Joseph. "Against All Odds!: A Strategic Analysis of the Failures of Three State-Owned Firms." In *The Rise of Multinationals from Emerging Economies*, edited by Palitha Konara, Yoo Jung Ha, Frank McDonald and Yingqi Wei, 115-32. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Amankwah-Amoah, Joseph, and Yaw A Debrah. "The Evolution of Alliances in the Global Airline Industry: A Review of the African Experience." *Thunderbird International Business Review* 53, no. 1 (2011): 37-50.

"American Bias against British Planes Alleged." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 10/28/1953 Oct 28 1953, 2.

an Air, Correspondent. "Comet Hope of First Atlantic Jet Airliner." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1958/08/29/ 1958, 7.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Verso Books, 2006.

"Announcing the Comet." *BOAC Review*, June 1952, 1.

"Annual Report 1960/61." *BOAC Review*, September 1961, 1.

"Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1947." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1947.

"Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the British Overseas Airways Corporation for the Year Ended 31st March 1948." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1948.

Anthony, Scott. *Public Relations and the Making of Modern Britain: Stephen Tallents and the Birth of a Progessive Media Profession.* Manchester University Press, 2018.

Anthony, Scott, and Oliver Green. *British Aviation Posters: Art, Design and Flight.* Farnham: Lund Humphries, 2012.

"Anything but Silent." *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue*, April 1964, 1.

Armitage, David. *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire.* Vol. 59: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Artmonsky, Ruth, and Brian Webb. *Fhk Henrion: Design.* Antique Collectors' Club, 2011.

Bailkin, Jordanna. *The Afterlife of Empire.* London: University of California Press, 2012.

Baker, Andrew. "Divided Sovereignty: Empire and Nation in the Making of Modern Britain." *International Politics* 46, no. 6 (2009): 691-711.

BALPA. "Female Pilots Then and Now: Lynn Barton." https://blog.balpa.org/Blog/March-2020/Female-pilots-then-and-now-LYNN-BARTON#.

Barnett, Correlli. *The Lost Victory: British Dreams, British Realities 1945-1950.* London: Macmillan, 1995.

Barnett, Michael. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism.* Cornell University Press, 2011.

Barnett, Nicholas. *Britain's Cold War: Culture, Modernity and the Soviet Threat.* Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

Barry, E Eldon. *Nationalisation in British Politics: The Historical Background.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1965.

Baughan, Emily. "Rehabilitating an Empire: Humanitarian Collusion with the Colonial State During the Kenyan Emergency, Ca. 1954–1960." *Journal of British Studies* 59, no. 1 (2020): 57-79.

Bean, Charles, and Nicholas Crafts. "British Economic Growth since 1945: Relative Economic Decline... And Renaissance?". Chap. 6 In *Economic Growth in Europe since 1945*, edited by Charles Bean and Nicholas Crafts, 131-72, 1996.

"Beat-the-Ban Jets." *Daily Mail*, 1962/03/23/ 1962, 15.

Berberich, Christine. "Putting England Back on Top? Ian Fleming, James Bond, and the Question of England." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 42, no. 1 (2012): 13-29.

Bernstein, George L. *The Myth of Decline: The Rise of Britain since 1945.* Random House, 2011.

Bhimull, Chandra D. *Empire in the Air: Airline Travel and the African Diaspora.* NYU Press, 2017.

Bingham, Adrian. "The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians." *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 2 (2010): 225-31.

Birk, Hanne, and Birgit Neumann. "The Tree and the Family: Metaphors as Discursive Supports of British Imperial Culture in Froude's Oceana." *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (2006): 63-79.

"'Blazing the Trail for the Comet'." *BOAC Newsletter*, March 1950, 1.

"Boac's £150 Million Stake in Britain's Aircraft Industry." *BOAC Review*, April 1964, 1.

"Boac's Challenge." *The Economist*, 1948/01/10/ 1948, 51+.

"Boac's Gift to Mark Independence." *BOAC Review*, April 1957, 1.

Bocking-Welch, Anna. *British Civic Society at the End of Empire: Decolonisation, Globalisation, and International Responsibility.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019.

———. "Ghost Hunting: Amateur Film and Travel at the End of Empire." In *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century, Volume 2*, edited by Xavier Guégan and Martin Farr, 214-31: Springer, 2013.

Booth, Charles, Peter Clark, Agnes Delahaye, Stephen Procter, and Michael Rowlinson. "Accounting for the Dark Side of Corporate History: Organizational Culture Perspectives and the Bertelsmann Case." *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 18, no. 6 (2007): 625-44.

Bowman, Andrew. "An Illusion of Success: The Consequences of British Rail Privatisation." *Accounting forum* 39, no. 1 (2015): 51-63.

Bray, Winston. "The History of Boac." Camberley Surrey: Wessex Press, Unpublished - No Year.

Bressey, Caroline. *New Geographies of Race and Racism.* Routledge, 2016.

Bridge, Carl, and Kent Fedorowich. "Mapping the British World." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003): 1-15.

"Britannia Carries Premier on His Commonwealth Tour." *BOAC Review*, February 1958.

"Britannias in Hungarian Airlift." *BOAC Review*, January 1957, 1.

"British Air Transport. Statement of Government Policy." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1945.

British Airways. "All Four British Airways Hertiage Liveries Come Together to Mark the 50,000th Customer Flight." https://mediacentre.britishairways.com/pressrelease/details/86/0/10921.

———. "Aviators." YouTube, 2019.

———. "The Caribbean: Fly There by Boac." The Advertising Archives, 1950s.

———. "Celebrating 100 Years of Flying with Pride." https://www.britishairways.com/100/.

———. "Her Majesty the Queen Visits British Airways' Headquarters to Mark the Airlines Centenary." https://mediacentre.britishairways.com/pressrelease/details/86/0/11113#:~:text=Thursday%20May%2023%2C%202019%3A%20Her,of%20the%20airline's%20centenary%20celebrations.

———. "Looking Back at Our Most Memorable Liveries." https://www.britishairways.com/100/story/heritage-liveries.

———. "Made by Britain." YouTube, 2019.

British Airways Heritage Collection. "305th Meeting of the Board Held on 28 June 1956." N4073 BOAC Board Documents June 1956 - October 1956, Meetings 305-311, 1956.

———. "1953 Coronation Year: Fly by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1953.

———. "Africa: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1953.

———. "Boac Jet Bridge to the Orient." N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1961.

———. *Boac Review (Speedbird).* Edited by British Overseas Airways Corperation. London: George Reneirs, September 1953.

———. "Boac Serves Africa: Spreading Its Influence Worldwide." N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1962.

———. "Boac Speedbird Fleet." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1956.

———. "Boac the World-Wide Airline." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

———. "Boac: Experience Counts." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1958.

———. "Boac: The Rolls Royce Airline." N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1962.

———. "British Empire Games." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1954.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 1st Meeting Held 20th January 1944 Et Al. ." N4042 BOAC Board Minutes Development Policy Committee 1944 – 1945, 1945.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 207th Meeting Held on 8.1.48." N4056 BOAC Board Documents October 1947 - March 1948, Meetings 205-210, 1948.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 210th Meeting Held on 11th March 1948. No.44." N4056 BOAC Board Documents October 1947 - March 1948, Meetings 205-210, 1948.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 225th Meeting Held on 1st July 1949." N4059 BOAC Board Documents April 1949 - September 1949, Meetings 222-226, 1948.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation Board Documents, 234th Meeting Held on 11th May 1950." N4061 BOAC Board Documents May 1950 - November 1950, Meetings 234-239, 1948.

———. "Caribbean: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

———. "East Africa: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

———. "Festival of Britain 1951." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, c. 1950.

———. "Fly Boac to the Caribbean and Bermuda, Nassau, Florida." N4520 BOAC Marketing Materials 1959-1962: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1961.

———. "Fly by Boac around the World." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1955.

———. "Fly by Boac Coronet Tourist Class Services between Britain - Africa & the Far East." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1954.

———. "Fly to Africa by Boac." N4519 BOAC Marketing Materials 1954-1958: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1958.

———. "India: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

———. "Minutes of the Three Hundred and Eighty Sixth Meeting of the Board Held on 9 May 1963." N4090 BOAC Board Documents May 1963 - August 1963, Meetings 386-389, 1963.

———. "Pakistan, India and Ceylon to Britain." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, n.d, c.1952.

———. "South Africa: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

———. "This Winter Find the Sun! Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, nd. C.1952.

———. "West Africa: Fly There by Boac." N4518 BOAC Marketing Materials 1947-1953: British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1952.

"British European Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1959." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1959.

British Overseas Airways Corperation. "All over the World Boac Takes Good Care of You (Stewardess)." *The Tatler*, 25 April 1956, 1.

———. "Boac Can Now Fly You without a Government Priority To..." *The Times*, 1946/08/06/ 1946, 6.

———. "A Boac First-Class Ticket Makes First-Class Business Sense!" *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/05/18/ 1961, 21.

———. "Boac Offers You Stopovers in San Francisco Honolulu and Tokyo En Route to Hong Kong." *New York Times (1923-)*, 06/10/1963 1963, 24.

———. "Boac Routes Cover the Whole Wide Business World." *The Economist*, 1961/08/26/ 1961, 770.

———. "Boac Takes Good Care of You More Than You Think!" *Financial Times*, 1959/05/28/ 1959, 5.

———. "Boac Takes Good Care of You: Fly Away-Far Away to New Holiday Hunting Grounds." *Punch*, February 13 1963.

———. "Boac Takes Good Care of You: Yasuko Nakamura." *The San Francisco Examiner*, Monday, May 18, 1964, 12.

———. "The Boac Vc10: Triumphantly Swift, Silent, Serene." *Financial Times*, 1964/03/13/ 1964, 9.

———. "Business in Africa?" *The Daily Telegraph*, 1963/06/14/ 1963, 17.

———. "... But Boac Is Not *Only* the Comet." *Financial Times*, 1958/11/14/ 1958, 9.

———. "Cheers! Cheers! Cheers! Cheers! Cheers!" *New York Times (1923-)*, 04/01/1963 1963, 47.

———. "Choosing the Captain." *The Economist*, 1947/06/21/ 1947, 983.

———. "Comet 4 Breaks Transatlantic Commercial Record! Boac Streaks Ahead in Jetliner Travel!" *The Sunday Times*, 1958/08/24/ 1958, 4.

———. "'Dr. Livingstone, I Presume You Remember Sir Henry Stanley'." *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 08/08/1948 1948, 1.

———. "'Easily - I'll Fly at Once!'." *The Economist*, 1950/02/11/ 1950, 317.

———. "Empire Builder." *Financial Times*, 1947/11/20/ 1947, 5.

———. "Eric Morrell." *Harper's Magazine*, February 1964, 1.

———. "Experienced Travellers Fly British." *Financial Times*, 1950/10/02/ 1950, [i].

———. "Fly Boac: World Leader in Air Travel." *Vogue*, 1955.

———. "Fly Right in Fashion." *Harper's Bazaar*, March 1958.

———. "Fly Round the World by British Airlines." *The Economist*, 1952/04/12/ 1952, 92.

———. "Get Down to Business Fast on Boac World Jet Routes." *The Economist*, 1962/01/13/ 1962, 113.

———. "How Boac Takes Good Care of You - and Britain." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1963/03/14/ 1963, 19.

———. "India, Pakistan, Ceylon." *The Times*, 1948/06/18/ 1948, 2.

———. "The Intimate Way to See the Orient! 29 Day Tour Via Boac." *Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963)*, 07/23/1961 1961, Part 6, p.2.

———. "It's a Small World by Speedbird." *The Economist*, 1948/08/07/ 1948, 228.

———. "Jets Bring Your Africa Tour Nearer!" *The National Geographic Magazine*, September 1959, 428.

———. "Key Exports." *The Economist*, 1946/08/17/ 1946, 251.

———. "Lancy Lee." *New York Times (1923-)*, 03/15/1965 1965, 23.

———. "My Territory Is the World: It's a Small World by Speedbird." *The Economist*, 1948/01/03/ 1948, 12.

———. "Our Part of the Job." *The Times*, 1946/07/23/ 1946, 7.

———. "Report on the Work of the Supersonic Transport Syndicate since Its Formation in September, 1959, until April, 1960. Mss.335/Ai/2/M15i-Ii." University of Warwick: Modern Records Centre, 1961.

———. "Robert Dove." *Town & Country*, Sep 1964 1964, 155.

———. "Rodney Berkley." *Harper's Magazine*, January 1964, 1.

———. "Setting the Pace around the World... Boac Vc10 Triumphantly Swift, Silent, Serene." *The Economist*, 1964/06/27/ 1964, 1506.

———. "The Shortest Distance between Two Points Is a Jet Line." *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 8 1958, 4.

———. "Should You Fly Boac Just Because You're British?" *The Guardian (1959-2003)*, 05/31/1963 May 31 1963, 7.

———. "South Africa Calls You." *Daily Mail*, 1964/07/23/ 1964, 9.

———. "South Africa in Less Than a Day by Comet Jetliner." *The Times*, 1954/03/25/ 1954, 11.

———. "Speedbird Routes across the World." *The Economist*, 1947/05/10/ 1947, 729.

———. "Starting June! Boac Opens the Finest, Fastest Big Jet Services Non-Stop to USA and Canada." *The Economist*, 1960/05/07/ 1960, 500.

———. "Tamako Ishii." *New York Times (1923-)*, 02/03/1965 1965, 20.

———. "Two Jets... With a Choice of 4 Fares!" *The Leader-Post*, Monday, February 9, 1959, 22.

———. "Vital to Exporters." *The Times*, 1964/08/21/ 1964, 7.

———. "West Africa: The Market You Can't Afford to Miss." *Financial Times*, 1962/03/29/ 1962, 16.

———. "What Is a Speedbird?" *The Times*, 1947/01/21/ 1947, 9.

———. "What Price a Holiday in N.America?" *The Daily Telegraph*, 1960/12/29/ 1960, 9.

———. "Where Summer Spends the Winter." *The Times*, 1952/11/26/ 1952, 3.

———. "Why It's Good for You and Good for Britain." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1962/01/08/ 1962, 15.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation." *The Sunday Times*, 1947/12/14/ 1947, 5.

British Overseas Airways Corporation. "Transatlantic Teamwork Brings You the New 707 Intercontinental." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1960/02/02/ 1960, 13.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1952." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1952.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1952-53." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1953.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1954." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1954.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1955." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1955.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1958." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1958.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1959." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1959.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1961." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1961.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1964." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1964.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1965." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1965.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1962." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1962.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1963." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1963.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1950.

"British Overseas Airways Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March, 1950-51." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1951.

British Overseas Airways Corporation. Public Relations, Department. *Operation India. A World's Record Air-Lift. [on the Repatriation of Indians from Pakistan and of Moslems from India, in October and November 1947. With Illustrations.].* [London], [1947], 1947.

British Pathé. "Boac Comet 11 Off to South America." British Pathé, 1953.

———. "Chinese Girls to Be Boac [British Overseas Airways Corporation] Stewardesses Recruited for Service on Far Eastern Routes, Chinese Air Hostesses Come to England to Be Appointed." British Pathé, 1956.

———. "Dave and Dusty." British Pathé, 1947.

———. "Engineers Celebrate Aka Engineers Dinner." British Pathé, 1952.

———. "England: Flights to Far East Via Russia." British Pathé, 1956.

———. "Gromyko Takes over for Vishinsky Sic." British Pathé, 1952.

———. "Honeymoon Fashions in Bermuda." British Pathé, 1949.

———. "Long Live the Queen." British Pathé, 1952.

———. "Majesty in the Air." British Pathé, 1955.

———. "Oriental Air Hostesses." British Pathé, 1956.

———. "Our Debt to the Duke Record A." British Pathé, 1960-69.

———. "Our Jamaican Problem." British Pathé, 1955.

———. "Premier Off to U.S.A. Aka Premier Off to Us." British Pathé, 1954.

———. "Princess Elizabeth Christens New British Plane." British Pathé, 1947.

———. "The Queen at B.I. Fair." British Pathé, 1952.

———. "Selected Originals - Sir Winston in Bermuda." British Pathé, 1953.

———. "The Shadow over Kenya." British Pathé, 1954.

———. "Sir Winston Flies Out." British Pathé, 1952.

———. "Special - the Royal Departure." British Pathé, 1952.

"Broadcasting Policy." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1946.

Brown, Laurence. "Afro-Caribbean Migrants in France and the United Kingdom." In *Paths of Integration: Migrants in Western Europe (1880-2004)*, edited by Leo Lucassen, David Feldman and Jochen Oltmer, 177-97. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Brysk, Alison, Craig Parsons, and Wayne Sandholtz. "After Empire: National Identity and Post-Colonial Families of Nations." *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 2 (2002): 267-305.

Buettner, Elizabeth. *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture*. Vol. 51: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Bureau of Aircraft Accidents Archives. "Death Rate Per Year." https://www.baaa-acro.com/statistics/death-rate-per-year.

Burkart, A.J. "The Regulation of Non-Scheduled Air Services in the United Kingdom 1960 to 1972." *The Journal of Industrial Economics* 23, no. 1 (1974): 51-64.

Butler, David. *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts, 1900-2000*. Springer, 2016.

By Our Parliamentry, Correspondent. "B.O.A.C. Aircraft Orders." *The Times*, 1954/11/16/ 1954, 6.

By, T. H. E. Times Special Correspondent. "Queen Elizabeth and Her Peoples." *The Times*, 1954/05/31/ 1954, 14+.

Cain, Peter J. "Character,'Ordered Liberty', and the Mission to Civilise: British Moral Justification of Empire, 1870–1914." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 4 (2012): 557-78.

Cairncross, Alec. *Years of Recovery: British Economic Policy 1945-51*. Routledge, 2013.

Capon, Noel. "Marketing Strategy Differences between State and Privately Owned Corporations: An Exploratory Analysis." *Journal of Marketing* 45, no. 2 (1981): 11-18.

Carlton, James. *De Havilland Comet: The Plane That Changed the World*. London: Burnt Ash Publishing, 2020.

Cawson, Alan. "Pluralism, Corporatism and the Role of the State." *Government and Opposition* 13, no. 2 (1978): 178-98.

"Chairman's 30,000 Miles Air Tour." *BOAC Review*, April 1950, 2.

"The Chairman in South Africa." *BOAC Review*, October 1948, 1.

"Chairman of B.O.A.C." *The Times*, 1947/04/03/ 1947, 4.

Chamberlain, Mary. *Narratives of Exile and Return*. Routledge, 2017.

Chick, Martin. *Industrial Policy in Britain 1945-1951: Economic Planning, Nationalisation and the Labour Governments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Childs, David. *Britain since 1945: A Political History*. Bristol: Routledge, 1988.

Cho, Youn-Yung, and Sook-In Yang. "A Study on Queen Elizabeth Ii's Dress: Focusing on the Dress and Role Enactment." *The International Journal of Costume Culture* 13, no. 1 (2010): 12-22.

Clarke, Peter Frederick. *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-1990*. Vol. 9: Penguin (Non-Classics), 1996.

"Coal Industry Nationalisation Bill." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1946.

Cohen, Baron, W Farren, W Duncan, and A Wheeler. "Report of the Court of Inquiry into the Accidents to Comet G-Alyp on 10 January 1954 and Comet G-Alyy on 8 April 1954." *Her Majesty Station of Office: London, UK* (1955).

Cole, Lance. *Secrets of the Spitfire: The Story of Beverley Shenstone, the Man Who Perfected the Elliptical Wing*. Casemate Publishers, 2012.

———. *Vc10: Icon of the Skies: Boac, Boeing and a Jet Age Battle*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2017.

Coller, Kristene E, Jean Helms Mills, and Albert J Mills. "The British Airways Heritage Collection: An Ethnographic 'History'." *Business History* 58, no. 4 (2016): 547-70.

"Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. Return of Schemes Made under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the Concurrence of the Treasury, in the Period from 1st April, 1949, to 31st March, 1950." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1950.

"Colonial Development Corporation. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year 31.12.55." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1956.

"Comet G-Alyv." *BOAC Review (Jubilee Edition)*, May 1953, 1.

"Comet to Cairo." *BOAC Review*, June 1950, 2.

"Comet to South America." *BOAC Review*, October 1953, 2.

Comfort, Nicholas. *Surrender: How British Industry Gave up the Ghost 1952-2012.* London: Biteback Publishing, 2012.

"Commons Sitting of Monday, 6th May, 1946." 1946.

"Commons Sitting of Monday, 8th March, 1954." 1954.

"Commons Sitting of Monday, 11th July, 1960." 1960.

"Commons Sitting of Monday, 15th February, 1960." 1960.

"Commons Sitting of Monday, 19th March, 1951." 1951.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 3rd February, 1955." 1955.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 6th July, 1950." 1950.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 16th August, 1945." 1945.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 23rd March, 1950." 1950.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 24th January, 1946." 1946.

"Commons Sitting of Thursday, 31st October, 1946." 1946.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 7th March, 1950." 1950.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 11th February, 1947." 1947.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 13th December, 1949." 1949.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 23rd November, 1954." 1954.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 26th June, 1962." 1962.

"Commons Sitting of Tuesday, 27th October, 1953." 1953.

"Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 5th February, 1964." 1964.

"Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 16th July, 1952." 1952.

"Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 26th June, 1946." 1946.

"Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 29th June, 1949." 1949.

"Commons Sitting of Wednesday, 29th October, 1952." 1952.

Constantine, Stephen. "Waving Goodbye? Australia, Assisted Passages, and the Empire and Commonwealth Settlement Acts, 1945–72." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26, no. 2 (1998): 176-95.

Cooper, Frederick. "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept." In *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, edited by Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, 64-92. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Corbett, David C. *Politics and the Airlines.* University of Toronto, 1965.

Corperation, British Overseas Airways. "All over the World Boac Takes Good Care of You (Pilot)." *The Sketch*, 06 June 1956, 1.

Corporation., British Overseas Airways. *Bermuda. Presented with the Compliments of B.O.A.C. ... Fourth Edition. [with Illustrations.].* London: Inter-Continental Air Guides, 1963.

Cortese, Anthony Joseph Paul. *Provocateur : Images of Women and Minorities in Advertising.* Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008.

Coult, Tony. "From Brabazons to Quatermass: New Elizabethans in Air and Space." In *The New Elizabethan Age: Culture, Society and National Identity after World War Ii*, edited by Irene Morra and Rob Gossedge. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016.

Cowen, Mike. "Early Years of the Colonial Development Corporation: British State Enterprise Overseas During Late Colonialism." *African Affairs* 83, no. 330 (1984): 63-75.

Cox, Ian. "The South Bank Exhibition: A Guide to the Story It Tells." edited by The Festival of Britain. London: HMSO, 1951.

Cozmuta, Adrian. "Selling 'the World's Favourite Airline': British Airways' Privatisation and the Motives Behind It." *Business History* (2021): 1-20.

Crafts, Nicholas. "British Relative Economic Decline Revisited: The Role of Competition." *Explorations in Economic History* 49, no. 1 (2012): 17-29.

Crick, Malcolm. "Representations of International Tourism in the Social Sciences: Sun, Sex, Sights, Savings, and Servility." *Annual review of Anthropology* 18, no. 1 (1989): 307-44.

"Critic of B.O.A.C." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 11/26/1954 Nov 26 1954, 2.

Crofts, William. *Coercion or Persuasion?: Propaganda in Britain after 1945.* Routledge, 1989.

Cumming, Duncan. "Aviation in Africa." *African Affairs* 61, no. 242 (1962): 29-39.

———. *The Gentleman Savage: The Life of Mansfield Parkyns, 1823-1894.* Vintage, 1987.

D'Souza, Rohan. "Damming the Mahanadi River: The Emergence of Multi-Purpose River Valley Development in India (1943-46)." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 40, no. 1 (2003): 82-105.

Daily Mail, Reporter. "First Jet-Age Road to Open Soon." *Daily Mail*, 1959/10/20/ 1959, 11.

Daily Telegraph, Reporter. "Air Girls' Plea on Asians." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/08/11/ 1961, 20.

Darwin, John. *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970.* Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Davies, Peter J. *East African: An Airline Story.* Surrey: Runnymede Malthouse Publishing, 1993.

Davies, R.E.G. *A History of the World's Airlines.* London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Davies, Sarah. "The Soft Power of Anglia: British Cold War Cultural Diplomacy in the Ussr." *Contemporary British History* 27, no. 3 (2013): 297-323.

Dawson, Michael. "Acting Global, Thinking Local:'Liquid Imperialism'and the Multiple Meanings of the 1954 British Empire & Commonwealth Games." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 23, no. 1 (2006): 3-27.

"The Day the Sun Stood Still." *BOAC Review*, February 1952, 1.

De Groot, Joanna, Catherine Hall, and Sonya O Rose. "Metropolitan Desires and Colonial Connections: Reflections on Consumption and Empire." In *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, 2006.

De Havilland Aircraft Company. "Britain's Comet: A New Era in World Travel." *BOAC Review*, June 1952, 1.

De Havilland, Geoffrey. *Sky Fever: The Autobiography of Sir Geoffrey De Havilland.* London: Airlife Publishing Limited, 1999.

Dearden, Basil. "Out of the Clouds." 1955.

Decker, Stephanie. "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950–1970." *Business History Review* 81, no. 1 (2007): 59-86.

———. "The Silence of the Archives: Business History, Post-Colonialism and Archival Ethnography." *Management & Organizational History* 8, no. 2 (2013): 155-73.

Deighton, Anne. "Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1955." In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, edited by Melvyn P Leffler and Odd Arne Westad: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Devereux, David R. "British Planning for Postwar Civil Aviation 1942–1945: A Study in Anglo-American Rivalry." *Twentieth Century British History* 2, no. 1 (1991): 26-46.

———. "State Versus Private Ownership: The Conservative Governments and British Civil Aviation 1951–62." *Albion* 27, no. 1 (1995): 65-85.

Di-Capua, Yoav. "Common Skies Divided Horizons: Aviation, Class and Modernity in Early Twentieth Century Egypt." *journal of social history* (2008): 917-42.

"Display Ad 55 -- No Title." *The Observer (1901- 2003)*, 09/11/1960 Sep 11 1960, 10.

"Display Ad 75 -- No Title." *The Guardian (1959-2003)*, 10/20/1960 Oct 20 1960, 12.

Ditton, C. D. "The Friendly Airline." *BOAC Review*, January 1956, 3.

Divall, Colin, and George Revill. "Cultures of Transport: Representation, Practice and Technology." *The journal of transport history* 26, no. 1 (2005): 99-111.

Dover, CJ. "The Three Eras of Management Communication." *Journal of Communication* 9, no. 4 (1959): 168-72.

Drogheda, H. C. P. Earl of. "Miscellaneous No. 12 (1954). Summary of the Report of the Independent Committee of Enquiry into the Overseas Information Services." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1954.

Dubow, Saul. "How British Was the British World? The Case of South Africa." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 1 (2009): 1-27.

Durante, Erica. *Air Travel Fiction and Film: Cloud People.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

Durrant, John. "Abadan Air Lift." *BOAC Review*, August 1951.

"Eaac's Jet Plans." *BOAC Review*, October 1958, 1.

"The East African Tourist Reserve." *BOAC Review*, March 1964, 2.

Edgerton, David. *England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines.* London: Penguin Books, 2013.

———. "The Prophet Militant and Industrial: The Peculiarities of Correlli Barnett." *Twentieth Century British History* 2, no. 3 (1991): 360-79.

———. *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth-Century History.* London: Allen Lane, 2018.

———. "War, Reconstruction, and the Nationalization of Britain, 1939–1951." *Past & Present* 210, no. suppl_6 (2011): 29-46.

———. *Warfare State: Britain, 1920–1970.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Edwards, Courtenay. "Sir Frank Whittle Resigns." *Daily Mail*, 1952/07/16/ 1952, 4.

———. "Will the U. S. Buy the Comets?" *Daily Mail*, 1953/04/24/ 1953, 4.

Edwards, Courtenay Daily Mail Aviation Editor. "Mps Will Inquire into Boac Loss." *Daily Mail*, 1948/01/06/ 1948, 4.

Edwards, Courtenay Daily Mail Motoring Correspondent. "The Turbo-Cars May Arrive This Year." *Daily Mail*, 1949/01/19/ 1949, 3.

El-Enany, Nadine. *(B) Ordering Britain: Law, Race and Empire.* Manchester University Press, 2020.

"Electricity Bill." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1947.

Eley, Geoff. "Corporatism and the Social Democratic Moment: The Postwar Settlement, 1945-1973." In *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, edited by Dan Stone, 37-60. Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2012.

Ellis, Catherine. "Letting It Slip: The Labour Party and the 'Mystical Halo'of Nationalization, 1951–1964." *Contemporary British History* 26, no. 1 (2012): 47-71.

Engel, Jeffrey A. *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy.* Harvard University Press, 2009.

English, Richard, and Michael Kenny. "British Decline or the Politics of Declinism?". *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 1, no. 2 (1999): 252-66.

Erisman, H Michael. "Tourism and Cultural Dependency in the West Indies." *Annals of Tourism Research* 10, no. 3 (1983): 337-61.

Fenton Jr, Robert. "The Berlin Airlift and the Use of Air Mobility as a Function of Us Policy." AIR WAR COLLEGE, AIR UNIVERSITY MAXWELL AFB United States, 2016.

Financial Times, Reporter. "Sir Matthew Slattery to Head B.O. A.C." *Financial Times*, 1960/06/21/ 1960, [1].

Fleet, Michael. "'Aloof' Ba Stewardesses Learn to Be Less British." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1998/07/06/ 1998, 3.

Fleming, Ian. *James Bond: Diamonds Are Forever.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1956.

———. *James Bond: Live and Let Die.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1954.

———. *James Bond: The Man with the Golden Gun.* Ontario: Pan Books Ltd., 1966.

Fletcher, Winston. *Powers of Persuasion: The inside Story of British Advertising: 1951-2000.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

"A Flying Start to the New Boac." *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue*, April 1965, 4.

Fox, Jo. "Careless Talk: Tensions within British Domestic Propaganda During the Second World War." *Journal of British studies.* 51, no. 4 (2012): 936-66.

Frankel, Joseph. *National Interest.* London: Pall Mall Press, 1970.

From Our Golf, Correspondent. "How to Combat Staleness in the Jet Age?" *The Times*, 1963/10/22/ 1963, 3.

From Our Own, Correspondent. "African Air Routes." *The Times*, 1945/03/22/ 1945, 3.

"From This Day... Forward." *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue*, April 1965, 1.

"Front Cover." *The Aeroplane*, August 1952.

Fuller, Harcourt. *Building the Ghanaian Nation-State: Kwame Nkrumah's Symbolic Nationalism.* Springer, 2014.

Gaitskell, Hugh. *Socialism and Nationalisation.* Vol. 300: Fabian society, 1956.

"Gas Turbines in Aircraft." *The Economist*, 1949/08/06/ 1949, 311+.

Geiger, Till. "The British Warfare State and the Challenge of Americanisation of Western Defence." *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* 15, no. 4 (2008): 345-74.

Ghana Airways. "Successful Business Trips to Africa Start with Ghana Airways." *The Economist*, 1963/10/19/ 1963, 211.

Giles, Ronald Carl. "Well, Al Flicked a Little Paste at Joe, Then Joe Flicked a Little Paste at Al..." *Daily Express*, 1958.

Gilroy, Paul. *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack.* Hutchinson, 1987.

Gladden, Graham P. "Post Second World War Trans-Atlantic Travel for Business and Pleasure: Cunard and Its Airline Competitors." *The Journal of Transport History* 41, no. 2 (2020): 160-83.

Glanville, Brian. "Reshaping Rugby in the Jet Age." *The Sunday Times*, 1962/10/21/ 1962, 21.

Godwin, John. "Centuries of Human Progress Compressed into a Single Decade: Achievements Made Possible by Britain's Colonial Development and Welfare Act." *World Affairs* 120, no. 1 (1957): 21-23.

Goldman, Steven L. "Images of Technology in Popular Films: Discussion and Filmography." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 14, no. 3 (1989): 275-301.

Goodman, Giora. "The British Government and the Challenge of Mccarthyism in the Early Cold War." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 1 (2010): 62-97.

"Goodwill to All Parts of the World." *BOAC Review*, January 1959, 1.

Gordon, Michael S. "Transatlantic Airport." 1945.

Gore, Christopher. "Electricity and Privatisation in Uganda: The Origins of the Crisis and Problems with the Response." In *Electric Capitalism: Recolonising Africa on the Power Grid*, edited by DA McDonald, 359-99. London: Routledge, 2009.

Grant, Mariel. "Towards a Central Office of Information: Continuity and Change in British Government Information Policy, 1939–51." *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 1 (1999): 49-67.

Grant, Matthew. "Historians, the Penguin Specials and the 'State-of-the-Nation'literature, 1958-64." *Contemporary British History* 17, no. 3 (2003): 29-54.

———. "Historicizing Citizenship in Post-War Britain." *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 4 (2016): 1187-206.

Granville, Keith. "Help for Other Airlines." *The Times*, 1963/06/06/ 1963, xi.

———. "Help for Other Airlines." *BOAC Review*, August 1963, 2.

Gray, Robert. *Rolls on the Rocks : The Story of Rolls-Royce.* London: Panther, 1971.

Green, Alix R. "'Secret Lists and Sanctions': The Blacklisting of the John Lewis Partnership and the Politics of Pay in 1970s Britain." *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 2 (2019): 205-30.

Green, Alix R. "'Secret Lists and Sanctions': The Blacklisting of the John Lewis Partnership and the Politics of Pay in 1970s Britain.". *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 2 (2019): 205-30.

Green, Garth L. "Marketing the Nation: Carnival and Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago." *Critique of Anthropology* 22, no. 3 (2002): 283-304.

Gregory, Martyn. *Dirty Tricks: British Airways' Secret War against Virgin Atlantic.* Random House, 2010.

Grundlingh, Albert. "Revisiting the 'Old'south Africa: Excursions into South Africa's Tourist History under Apartheid, 1948–1990." *South African Historical Journal* 56, no. 1 (2006): 103-22.

Gunn, John. *Challenging Horizons: Qantas 1939-1954.* john gunn, 1987.

———. *The Defeat of Distance: Qantas 1919-1939.* Vol. 1, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1985.

———. *High Corridors: Qantas, 1954-1970.* john gunn, 1988.

Gurney, Peter. "'Co-Operation and Communism Cannot Work Side by Side': Organized Consumers and the Early Cold War in Britain." *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 3 (2019): 347-74.

———. "Voices of Civilisation: Advertising and Its Critics in Austerity Britain." *Contemporary British History* 24, no. 2 (2018): 190-208.

Guthrie, Giles. "The Chairman Writes..." *BOAC Review*, October 1964, 2.

Guthrie, Sir Giles. "Introducing the Vc10." *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue*, April 1964, 1.

Haldrup, Michael, and Jonas Larsen. *Tourism, Performance and the Everyday: Consuming the Orient.* Routledge, 2009.

Hall, Stuart. *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies.* Blackwell Publishing, 1996.

Hampshire, James. *Citizenship and Belonging: Immigration and the Politics of Demographic Governance in Postwar Britain.* Springer, 2005.

Hansen, Randall. *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain.* Oxford University Press, USA, 2000.

———. "The Politics of Citizenship in 1940s Britain: The British Nationality Act." *Twentieth Century British History* 10, no. 1 (1999): 67-95.

Harding, Alan James. "Evaluating the Importance of the Crown Film Unit, 1940 – 1952." Nottingham Trent University and Southampton Solent University, 2017.

Harrison, Graham. *The African Presence: Representations of Africa in the Construction of Britishness.* Manchester University Press, 2015.

———. "Campaign Africa: Exploring the Representation of Africa and Its Role in British Identity." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 15, no. 4 (2013): 528-47.

Hartley, Anthony. "The Lost Vocation." *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 1 (1980): 67-79.

Haughton, Philippa. "Justifying British Advertising in War and Austerity, 1939–51." *Twentieth Century British History* 28, no. 3 (2017): 390-413.

Havardi, Jeremy. *Projecting Britain at War: The National Character in British World War Ii Films.* McFarland, 2014.

Havinden, Michael A, and David Meredith. *Colonialism and Development: Britain and Its Tropical Colonies, 1850-1960.* Routledge, 2002.

Headrick, Daniel R. *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Heller, Michael, and Michael Rowlinson. "The British House Magazine 1945 to 2015: The Creation of Family, Organisation and Markets." *Business History* 62, no. 6 (2020): 1002-26.

Hennessy, Peter. *Never Again: Britain 1945-1951.* London: Penguin UK, 2006.

Heuser, Beatrice. "Stalin as Hitler's Successor: Western Interpretations of the Soviet Threat." In *Securing Peace in Europe, 1945–62*, 17-40: Springer, 1992.

Hewitt, Vernon. "Empire, International Development & the Concept of Good Government." In *Empire, Development & Colonialism: The Past in the Present*, edited by Mark Duffield and Vernon Hewitt. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2013.

Hicks, Marie. "Only the Clothes Changed: Women Operators in British Computing and Advertising, 1950–1970." *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 32, no. 4 (2010): 5-17.

Higham, Robin. *Speedbird: The Complete History of Boac.* London and New York: IB Tauris, 2013.

Hilton, Matthew. *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement.* Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Hinton, James. "Self Reflections in the Mass." *History Workshop Journal* 75, no. 1 (2013): 251-59.

Hoggart, Richard. *The Uses of Literacy.* Transaction publishers, 1957.

Hopkins, AG. "Globalisation and Decolonisation." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 5 (2017): 729-45.

"How Do You Q?". *BOAC Review*, November 1966, 1.

Humphreys, B., K. "Nationalisation and the Independent Airlines in the United Kingdom, 1945-51." In *Air Transport*, edited by Peter Lyth, 103-20. Abington and New York: Routledge, 2016.

"Ial's First 10 Years." *BOAC Review*, August 1957, 1.

"Immigrants Beat the Act." *The Times*, 1962/07/02/ 1962, 24.

"In Brief." *BOAC Review*, March 1964.

International Aeradio Limited. "Ial's Airport Operation." *Aeroplane*, August 1952.

———. "International Aeradio Limited on the Airfields of the World." *Interavia*, July 1954.

———. "Throughout the World Planning Installation Operation Maintenance." *Aeroplane*, July 1958.

"It's Just One Day to London - by Boac." *Kingston Gleaner*, June 13 1958, 27.

Jackson, Frank. "The New Air Age: Boac and Design Policy 1945-60." *Journal of Design History* 4, no. 3 (1991): 167-85.

James FERON, Special to The New York Times. "B.O.A.C. Must Take 17 of 30 Jets It Doesn't Want, Minister Rules." *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 07/21/1964 Jul 21 1964, 66.

Jarosz, Lucy. "Constructing the Dark Continent: Metaphor as Geographic Representation of Africa." *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 74, no. 2 (1992): 105-15.

Jarvis, Paul. *Better by Design: Shaping the British Airways Brand.* Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015.

———. *British Airways: 100 Years of Aviation Posters.* Stroud: Amberly, 2018.

———. *British Airways: An Illustrated History.* Gloucestershire: Amberly Publishing, 2014.

———. *Mapping the Airways.* Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2016.

Jenkins, Gilmour. *The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation.* Allen & Unwin, 1959.

Jenks, John. *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.

"Jet 'Halves the World'." *Daily Mail*, 1951/05/25/ 1951, [1].

Johnman, Lewis, and Frances MB Lynch. "A Treaty Too Far? Britain, France, and Concorde, 1961–1964." *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no. 3 (2002): 253-76.

Julios, Christina. *Contemporary British Identity: English Language, Migrants and Public Discourse.* Ashgate, 2008.

Kabbani, Rana. *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule.* Springer, 1986.

Kandiah, Michael D. "The Conservative Party and the Early Cold War: The Construction of 'New Conservatism'." In *Cold War Britain, 1945–1964*, 30-38: Springer, 2003.

Kelemen, Paul. "Planning for Africa: The British Labour Party's Colonial Development Policy, 1920–1964." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 7, no. 1 (2007): 76-98.

Kelf-Cohen, Reuben. *Nationalisation in Britain.* New York: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1962.

Kenny, Michael, and Martin J Smith. "Discourses of Modernization: Gaitskell, Blair and the Reform of Clause Iv." *British Elections & Parties Review* 7, no. 1 (1997): 110-26.

Kerr, Peter. *Postwar British Politics: From Conflict to Consensus.* London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

"The Key to Pakistan." *BOAC Review*, August 1964, 1.

Kirby, Maurice W. *The Decline of British Economic Power since 1870.* Routledge, 2013.

Klein, Christina. *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961.* Univ of California Press, 2003.

Knudson, Jerry W. "Late to the Feast: Newspapers as Historical Sources." American Historical Association, https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october-1993/late-to-the-feast.

Koster, Henry. "No Highway in the Sky." 20th Century Fox, 1951.

Kothari, Uma. "Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign." *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2014): 43-64.

Kynaston, David. *Family Britain, 1951-1957.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010.

Lancaster, Geoff, and Gerry Brierley. "A Comparative Study of the Emergence of Marketing Culture within Three Formerly Nationalised Companies." *International Journal of Public Sector Management* (2001).

Lean, David. "The Sound Barrier." 1h 58min: British Lion Film Corporation, London Film Productions, 1952.

Lee, John Michael. *Colonial Development and Good Government: A Study of the Ideas Expressed by the British Official Classes in Planning Decolonization 1939-1964.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

Levine, Philippa. "Naked Natives and Noble Savages: The Cultural Work of Nakedness in Imperial Britain." In *The Cultural Construction of the British World*, edited by Barry Crosbie and Mark Hampton. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.

Levitt, Theodore. "Marketing Myopia." In *Marketing: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management*, edited by Michael John Baker, 58-82. London: Routledge, 2001.

Lewis, John Spedan. *Fairer Shares: A Possible Advance in Civilisation and Perhaps the Only Alternative to Communism.* London: Staples Press, 1954.

Lickorish, Leonard J, and Carson L Jenkins. *Introduction to Tourism.* Routledge, 2007.

Limted, Vickers Armstrongs (Aircraft). "Keeping Britain Ahead in the Air." *The Times*, 1958/01/17/ 1958, 5.

Lindbergh, Charles A. "Aviation, Geography, and Race." *Reader's Digest* 35 (1939): 64-67.

"London-Sydney in 56½ Hrs." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1949/04/14/ 1949, [1].

Lynch, Philip. *The Politics of Nationhood: Sovereignty, Britishness and Conservative Politics.* Springer, 1999.

Lyth, Peter. "The Changing Role of Government in British Civil Air Transport, 1919-1949." Chap. 4 In *The Political Economy of Nationalisation in Britain, 1920-1950*, edited by Robert Millward and John Singleton, 65-87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

———. "Chosen Instruments: The Evolution of British Airways." In *Flying the Flag*, 50-86: Springer, 1998.

———. "The Empire's Airway: British Civil Aviation from 1919 to 1939." *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 78, no. 3 (2000): 865-87.

———. "Supersonic/Gin and Tonic: The Rise and Fall of Concorde, 1950-2000." In *Transport and Its Place in History: Making the Connections*, edited by David Turner. Routledge Studies in Modern British History, 15-33. London: Routledge, 2020.

Lyth, Peter J, and Marc LJ Dierikx. "From Privilege to Popularity the Growth of Leisure Air Travel since 1945." *The Journal of Transport History* 15, no. 2 (1994): 97-116.

Lyth, Peter J. "'A Multiplicity of Instruments': The 1946 Descision to Create a Separate British European Airline and Its Effect on Civil Aircraft Production." In *Air Transport*, edited by Peter Lyth, 120-35. Abington and New York: Routledge, 2016.

Mackenzie, David. *Icao : A History of the International Civil Aviation Organization.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010.

MacKenzie, John M. *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism.* Manchester University Press, 2017.

———. "Empire Travel Guides and the Imperial Mind-Set from the Mid-Nineteenth to the Mid-Twentieth Centuries." In *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century*, edited by X Guégan, 116-33. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

———. "Empires of Travel: British Guide Books and Cultural Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries." *Histories of Tourism: Representation, identity and conflict* 6 (2005): 19.

———. *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion (1880-1960).* Manchester, UK; Dover, NH, USA: Manchester University Press, 1984.

"The Man—and the Plane—at the Heart of the Storm." *Daily Mail*, 1964/09/09/ 1964, 7.

Mandler, Peter. *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair.* Yale University Press, 2006.

Marschall, Sabine. "Commodifying Heritage: Post-Apartheid Monuments and Cultural Tourism in South Africa." In *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, edited by C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker, 95-112. Oxon: Routledge, 2004.

Martin, Richard Harrison, and Harold Koda. *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress.* Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994.

Masefield, Peter. "Fly British or Be Lost." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1964/07/16/ 1964, 12.

Mattern, Janice Bially. "Whysoft Power'isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics." *Millennium* 33, no. 3 (2005): 583-612.

Mayol, Taylor. "The Rise and Demise of East Africa's Pride in the Sky." Ozy, https://www.ozy.com/flashback/the-rise-and-demise-of-east-africas-pride-in-the-sky/66689.

McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest.* Routledge, 2013.

McClory, Jonathan. "Love from Above: The Soft Power of Aviation." In *2014 Report Essays*, 30-32: Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders, 2014.

McCormack, Robert L. "Imperialism, Air Transport and Colonial Development: Kenya, 1920–46." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 17, no. 3 (1989): 374-95.

McKenzie, Francine. "In the National Interest: Dominions' Support for Britain and the Commonwealth after the Second World War." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, no. 4 (2006): 553-76.

McKim, Frank. *The Whispering Giant: The Story of the Bristol Britannia: The History of the Western World's First Turboprop Long-Range Airliner (Aircraft of Distinction S.).* Ponteland: Scoval Publishing Ltd, 2007.

McWilliam, Michael. *The Development Business: A History of the Commonwealth Development Corporation.* Springer, 2001.

Messaris, Paul. *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising.* Sage, 1997.

Mhlanga, Oswald, and JN Steyn. "The Aviation Industry in South Africa: A Historical Overview." (2016).

Middlemas, Keith. *Power Competition and the State, Volume 1: Britain in Search of Balance, 1940-61*. London: Macmillan, 1986.

———. *Power, Competition and the State, Volume Ii: Threats to the Post War Settlement, 1961±74*. London: Macmillan, 1990.

Middleton, Victor TC, and Leonard John Lickorish. *British Tourism: The Remarkable Story of Growth.* Routledge, 2007.

Midgley, James, and David Piachaud. *Colonialism and Welfare: Social Policy and the British Imperial Legacy.* Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011.

Miller, J. D. B. . *The Commonwealth in the World.* London: Duckworth, 1958.

Mills, Albert. *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture.* Springer, 2006.

Mills, Albert J. "Cockpits, Hangars, Boys and Galleys: Corporate Masculinities and the Development of British Airways." *Gender, Work & Organization* 5, no. 3 (1998): 172-88.

———. "Man/Aging Subjectivity, Silencing Diversity: Organizational Imagery in the Airline Industry. The Case of British Airways." *Organization* 2, no. 2 (1995): 243-69.

Misra, Maria. *Business, Race, and Politics in British India, C. 1850-1960.* Clarendon Press, 1999.

Mitchell, WJ Thomas. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation.* University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Morelli, Carlo. "Dundee Discussion Papers in Economics 166: The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company 1945-54: Government Business Relationships in Conflict?". (2004).

Morgan, Kenneth O. *Britain since 1945: The People's Peace.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Munro, Kenneth. "Canada as Reflected in Her Participation in the Coronation of Her Monarchs in the Twentieth Century." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 14, no. 1 (2001): 21-46.

Murphy, Philip. *Alan Lennox Boyd: A Biography.* London and New York: IB Tauris, 1999.

———. *Monarchy and the End of Empire: The House of Windsor, the British Government, and the Postwar Commonwealth.* OUP Oxford, 2013.

Murray, George. "The Jet-Age Queen ... And the Thirteen Capitals." *Daily Mail*, 1957/10/23/ 1957, 8.

Mwakikagile, Godfrey. *Uganda: A Nation in Transition: Post-Colonial Analysis.* New Africa Press, 2013.

Nahum, Andrew Lionel. "World War to Cold War: Formative Episodes in the Development of the British Aircraft Industry, 1943-1965." The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 2002.

Nasar, Saima. "Commonwealth Communities: Immigration and Racial Thinking in Twentieth-Century Britain." In *Commonwealth History in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Saul Dubow and Richard Drayton, 101-22: Springer, 2020.

"Nation's Debt to Sir Frank Whittle." *The Times*, 1948/10/08/ 1948, 2.

Nava, Mica. "Thinking Internationally: Gender and Racial Others in Postwar Britain." *Third Text* 20, no. 6 (2006): 671-82.

"New Era in Air Travel." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 05/07/1952 May 07 1952, 7.

Nixon, Sean. *Hard Sell: Advertising, Affluence and Transatlantic Relations, C. 1951-69.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.

Nkrumah, Kwame. "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism." London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1965.

Nsubuga, Eria Solomon. "Uganda Airlines." University of Southampton, 2020.

Nye, Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics.* Public affairs, 2004.

Nygård, Stefan, and Johan Strang. "Conceptual Universalization and the Role of the Peripheries." *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 12, no. 1 (2017): 55-75.

O'Shea, Paddy. "From Interior to Brand: The British Overseas Airways Corporation, 1939-1974. A Case Study of Post-Second World War British Commercial Design." Kingston University, 2015.

Ochieng-Obbo, Frederick. "East African Airways: A Case Study of Problems of a Transnational Aviation Enterprise." (1981).

Office for National Statistics (ONS). "New Earnings Survey (Nes) Timeseries of Gross Weekly Earnings from 1938 to 2017."

https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/adhocs/006301newearningssurveynestimeseriesofgrossweeklyearningsfrom1938to2016.

"Opening-up Africa from the Air." *BOAC Review*, March 1964, 1.

"Operation India." *BOAC Review*, December 1947, 1.

Ord-Hume, Arthur W. J. G. *Imperial Airways, from Early Days to Boac.* Catrine, Ayrshire: Stenlake Publishing, 2010.

Orwell, George. "As I Please." *Tribune*, Dec 31 1944.

Our Parliamentary Correspondent. "British Aircraft Orders in Danger?" *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 11/16/1954 Nov 16 1954, 1.

———. "U.S. Planes for B.O.A.C. But." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 02/26/1955 Feb 26 1955, 1.

Ovenden, Mark, and Maxwell Roberts. *Airline Maps: A Century of Art and Design.* London: Particular Books, 2019.

"Pack up, Let's Fly Away!". *BOAC Review*, January 1963, 1.

Page, Robert M. "Attlee Versus Blair: Labour Governments and Progressive Social Policy in Historical Perspective." In *Social Policy Review 16: Analysis and Debate in Social Policy*, edited by Nick Ellison, Linda Bauld and Martin Powell, 143-66. Bristol: The Policy Press, 2004.

Paris, Michael. "Promoting British Aviation in 1950s Cinema." In *History of Technology*, edited by Ian Inkster, 63-78. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005.

Parkhouse, Anne (Ed.). "Editorial, Sayings Illustrated." *The Jungle Telegraph: Serving All Air Stewards and Stewardesses*, September 1951, 3.

———. "For Stewardesses Only." *The Jungle Telegraph: Serving All Air Stewards and Stewardesses*, September 1951, 4.

""Parliament of Airlines" Held in London." *BOAC Review*, October 1951.

Parmar, Pratibha. "Hateful Contraries: Media Images of Asian Women." In *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Amelia Jones, 287-93: Routledge, 2002.

Parry, Jonathan. "Whig Monarchy, Whig Nation: Crown, Politics and Representativeness 1800-2000." In *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, edited by Andrzej Olechnowicz, 47-75. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Pattie, David. *Modern British Playwriting: The 1950s: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations.* Vol. 1: A&C Black, 2012.

Paul, Kathleen. "From Subjects to Immigrants: Black Britons and National Identity, 1948-62." In *The Right to Belong: Citizenship and National Identity in Britain*, edited by Richard Weight and Abigail Beach, 223-48. London: I.B.Tauris, 1998.

———. *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era.* Cornell University Press, 1997.

Pavitt, Jane. *Fear and Fashion in the Cold War.* V&A Publishing, 2008.

"Peers and Mps Travel in Comet." *BOAC Review*, August 1952, 1.

Peplow, Emma. "The Role of Britain in the Berlin Airlift." *History* 95, no. 318 (2010): 207-24.

Peter, Bruce. *Jet Age Hotels: And the International Style 1950 -1965.* Isle of Man: Lily Publications, 2020.

Piercy, Nigel. *Tales from the Marketplace: Stories of Revolution, Reinvention and Renewal.* Routledge, 2000.

Pietsch, Tamson. "Rethinking the British World." *Journal of British Studies* (2013): 441-63.

Pine, Diana. "Into the Blue." Central Office of Information, 1950.

Pirie, Gordon. "Amplified British Aviation Authority in Africa, 1947–1960: Regulation of Low-Cost Overseas Airlines." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 4 (2020): 706-35.

———. "Colonial Cabotage: Low-Cost Scheduled Passenger Services by British Independent Air Transport Companies in Africa, 1952-1960." *Revisita de la Historia de la Economica de la Empresa* XII (2018): 65-86.

Pirie, Gordon H. "Aviation, Apartheid and Sanctions: Air Transport to and from South Africa, 1945–1989." *GeoJournal* 22, no. 3 (1990): 231-40.

Plaice, Ellis. "Heath Is Refused Vc10 for China." *Daily Mail*, 1964/10/02/ 1964, 9.

Political Correspondent. "Cabinet to Decide Today on Airliners." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1948/07/15/ 1948, [1].

Potter, Simon J. *Broadcasting Empire: The Bbc and the British World, 1922-1970.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Powell, J. M. . "The Empire Meets the New Deal: Interwar Encounters in Conservation and Regional Planning." *Geographical Research* 43, no. 4 (2005): 337-60.

"Prime Minister Flies Britannia to USA." *BOAC Review*, July 1958.

Pudney, John. *The Seven Skies: A Study of B.O.A.C. And Its Forerunners since 1919.* Putnam, 1959.

"Q for Quality." *BOAC Review*, October 1966, 1.

QANTAS Empire Airways. "Qantas Empire Airways: Australia's International Airline." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1947/06/03/ 1947, 5.

Raguraman, Kannan. "Airlines as Instruments for Nation Building and National Identity: Case Study of Malaysia and Singapore." *Journal of Transport Geography* 5, no. 4 (1997): 239-56.

Ramamurthy, Anandi. "Images of Industrialisation in Empire and Commonwealth During the Shift to Neo-Colonialism." In *Visual Culture and Decolonisation in Britain*, 43-69: Routledge, 2019.

———. *Imperial Persuaders: Images of Africa and Asia in British Advertising.* Manchester University Press, 2003.

Ramamurthy, Anandi, and Kalpana Wilson. "Come and Join the Freedom Lovers: Racism, Appropriation and Resistance in Advertising." In *Colonial Advertising and Commodity Racism*, edited by Wulf D. Hund and Michael Pickering, 69-96. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2013.

Raphael, Lois AC. *Cape to Cairo Dream: A Study in British Imperialism.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1936.

Rappaport, Erika. *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.

Reynolds, Wayne. "Planning the Defences of World War Iii: The Post-War British Empire and the Role of Australia and South Africa, 1943-1957." *Historia* 43, no. 1 (1998): 72-90.

Richards, Jeffrey. "The Monarchy and Film." In *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, edited by Andrzej Olechnowicz, 258-80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Riley, Charlotte. "The Winds of Change Are Blowing Economically: The Labour Party and British Overseas Development, 1940s-1960s." Chap. 2 In *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa*, edited by Andrew W.M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen, 43-61. London: UCL Press, 2017.

Riley, Norman. "Dilemma for the West Indies." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1961/12/13/ 1961, 12.

Robertson, Paul L, and John Singleton. "The Commonwealth as an Economic Network." *Australian Economic History Review* 41, no. 3 (2001): 241-66.

Rose, Sonya O. "From the "New Jerusalem" to the "Decline" of the "New Elizabethan Age": National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1945-56." In *Histories of Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, edited by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, 231-47. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010.

———. *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939-1945.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

"The Route to the East." *BOAC Review - The year of the Comet*, December 1958, 2.

Russell, David. "'The Jolly Old Empire': Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51." Chap. 2 In *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to Join the European Communities*, edited by Alex May, 9-29. Chippenham: Palgrave, 2001.

Rutherford, Paul. *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods.* University of Toronto Press, 2000.

Rutherford, Tom. "Air Transport Statistics." *UK House of Commons Library* 5 (2011): 2018.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism.* New York: Vingtage, 1979.

Salazar, Noel B. "Imagineering Otherness: Anthropological Legacies in Contemporary Tourism." *Anthropological Quarterly* (2013): 669-96.

Sampson, Anthony. *Anatomy of Britain.* London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962.

Sanders, David. *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy since 1945.* London: Macmillan, 1990.

Schaffer, Gavin. "The Limits of the 'Liberal Imagination': Britain, Broadcasting and Apartheid South Africa, 1948–1994." *Past and Present* 240, no. 1 (2018): 235-66.

Schama, Simon. "The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500-1850." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17, no. 1 (1986): 155-83.

Schiff, Friedrich. "Fly to the Far East Boac." Hong Kong Baptist University Library Art Collections, http://bcc.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/artcollection/91512504h757t4/.

Schwartz, Lowell. *Political Warfare against the Kremlin: Us and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Schwarz, Bill. "'The Only White Man in There': The Re-Racialisation of England, 1956-1968." *Race & Class* 38, no. 1 (1996): 65-78.

Schwarzkopf, Stefan. "They Do It with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics." *Contemporary British History* 19, no. 2 (2005): 133-50.

Scott, David. *Design in Airline Travel Posters 1920-1970: A Semiology and Sociocultural History.* Anthem Press, 2021.

SELÇUK, ORÇUN. "Turkish Airlines as a Soft Power Tool in the Context of Turkish Foreign Policy." Boğaziçi University, 2012.

Self, Robert. *British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945: Challenges and Dilemmas in a Changing World.* Macmillan International Higher Education, 2010.

"Selling Boac." *BOAC Review*, October 1960, 2.

"Sharehoding in Nigeria Airways Relinquished." *BOAC News*, April 7 1961.

"Shareholding in Ghana Airways Is Given Up." *BOAC News*, February 17 1961.

Shenstone, Beverley. "The Next 25 Years..." *BOAC Review - 25th Anniversary Issue*, April 1965, 2.

Shrimsley, Robert Chief Political Correspondent. "Fly the Flag, Thatcher Tells Ba." *The Daily Telegraph*, 1997/10/10/ 1997, 2.

Shute, Nevil. *No Highway.* Vintage, 2010 [1948].

Simons, Graham. *The British Overseas Airways Corporation: A History.* Yorkshire and Philadelphia: Pen & Sword Ltd., 2019.

———. *Comet! The World's First Jet Airliner.* Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2013.

Sinha, Jagdish. *Science, War and Imperialism: India in the Second World War.* Brill, 2008.

Sintes, Yvonne Pope. *Trailblazer in Flight: Britain's First Female Jet Airline Captain.* Barnsley: Pen & Sword Aviation, 2013.

"Sir Frank Whittle to Be Jet Advisor." *BOAC Review*, August 1948, 1.

"Sir Gerard D'erlanger." *The Times*, 1962/12/17/ 1962, 12.

"Sir Harold Hartley Joins B. O. A. C." *Financial Times*, 1945/12/22/ 1945, [1].

"Sir Miles Gets Air Post: Will Run Two Jobs." *Daily Mirror*, 1948.

"Sir Winston Churchill Flies to "Big Three" Talks." *BOAC Review*, December 1953, 1.

"The Sky Is the Limit." *Daily Mail*, 1951/09/01/ 1951, [1].

Smith, Adrian. "The Dawn of the Jet Age in Austerity Britain: David Lean's the Sound Barrier (1952)." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 30, no. 4 (2010): 487-514.

Smith, Lewis Charles. "Marketing Modernity: Business and Family in British Rail's "Age of the Train" Campaign, 1979–84." *The Journal of Transport History* 40, no. 3 (2019): 363-94.

Smith, Lyn. "Covert British Propaganda: The Information Research Department: 1947-77." *Millennium* 9, no. 1 (1980): 67-83.

Snyder, William P. "The Politics of British Defence Policy." *Ohio, Benn* (1964): 27.

Sobania, Neal. "But Where Are the Cattle? Popular Images of Maasai and Zulu across the Twentieth Century." *Visual Anthropology* 15, no. 3-4 (2002): 313-46.

South African Airways. "Welcome Aboard Africa's Most Experienced Airline!" *The Sphere*, March 1964 1964.

Special to, The New York Times. "Britons on Way to Inquiry." *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 01/11/1954 1954, 4.

"Speedbird Diary - on the Sunny Side of the World." *BOAC Review*, July 1952, 2.

Speller, Ian. "A Splutter of Musketry? The British Military Response to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Dispute, 1951." *Contemporary British History* 17, no. 1 (2003): 39-66.

Spencer, John. "Tomorrow Is Theirs." 1950.

Srinivasan, Krishnan. "Nobody's Commonwealth? The Commonwealth in Britain's Post-Imperial Adjustment." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (2006): 257-69.

Stabler, John R, and Faye J Goldberg. "The Black and White Symbolic Matrix." *ERIC Institute of Education Sciences* (1973).

Staniland, Martin. *Government Birds: Air Transport and the State in Western Europe.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.

Stanley-Price, Nicholas. "Flying to the Emirates: The End of British Overseas Airways Corporation's Service to Dubai and Sharjah in 1947." *The Journal of Transport History* 39, no. 3 (2018): 333-54.

Stanley, Henry M. "Through the Dark Continent ". *London: George Newnes* (1899 [1878]).

"Steel Exports." *Aberdeen Journal*, 1949/12/31/ 1949, 1.

Stewart, Rebecca "British Airways Turns 100 with 'a Love Letter' to Britain That Definitely Isn't About Brexit." The Drum, https://www.thedrum.com/news/2019/02/01/british-airways-turns-100-with-love-letter-britain-definitely-isnt-about-brexit.

Supple, Barry. "Fear of Failing: Economic History and the Decline of Britain." *The Economic History Review* 47, no. 3 (1994): 441-58.

"Talks with U.S. On Comet Iii." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 03/12/1953 Mar 12 1953, 2.

Tanacković, Sanjica Faletar, Maja Krtalić, and Darko Lacović. "Newspapers as a Research Source: Information Needs and Information Seeking of Humanities Scholars." Paper presented at the Digital Transformation and the Changing Role of News Media in the 21st Century, IFLA Newspapers Section Pre-Conference, 2014.

Taylor, Philip M. "Cultural Diplomacy and the British Council: 1934-1939." *British Journal of International Studies* 4, no. 3 (1978): 244-65.

———. "The Projection of Britain Abroad, 1945-51." In *British Foreign Policy, 1945-56*, edited by Michael Dockrill and John W Young, 9-30. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989.

Teo, Hsu-Ming. "Wandering in the Wake of Empire: British Travel and Tourism in the Post-Imperial World." Chap. 9 In *British Culture and the End of Empire*, edited by Stuart Ward. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.

Thackeray, David. *Forging a British World of Trade: Culture, Ethnicity, and Market in the Empire-Commonwealth, 1880-1975.* Oxford University Press, 2019.

The Conservative Party. *Who Voted for This? - the Nationalisation of Air Transport*. BFI Player, 1948.

The Labour Party. "1945 Labour Party Election Manifesto." PoliticalStuff.co.uk, http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1945/1945-labour-manifesto.shtml.

The National Archives (TNA). "Air Transport Licensing Act 1960: General Papers." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 245/1064, 1963.

———. "Boac Trunk Route Operations in Africa (Excluding Quadripartite Pool Operations)." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 245/1067, 1950-1953.

———. "Boac: Relations with Associated Companies." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 245/330, 1956-1962.

———. "Boac: Report for the Minister of Aviation by John Corbett, Financial Control Authority (Fca)." edited by Records created or inherited by HM Treasury: T 319/126, 1963.

———. "British Exhibition in China: President, Board of Trade, Visit to Peking." edited by Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966: FO 371/175970, 1964.

———. "British Overseas Airways Corporation: Priorities to Be Given for Participation in Airline Companies Overseas." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 217/1630, 1947.

———. "Civil Aviation Act 1946: Progress Reports on the Three Corporations." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 217/1304, 1946-1947.

———. "Development of Co-Operation between Airlines of Europe and Commonwealth. Code Ga File 23." edited by Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office: FO 371/141649, 1959.

———. "Development of Joint Airline Company between Arab States." edited by Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office: FO 371/158693, 1961.

———. "Edwards Committee: Report into Civil Air Transport." edited by General records of the Air Boards and Air Ministry: AIR 2/18454, 1968-1969.

———. "Enforcement of Licensing Provisions Made under the Civil Aviation (Licensing) Act 1960 (Not Including Tariff Enforcement): Includes Examples of Illegal Charters and Advertisements and Related Correspondence." edited by Records created or inherited by the Civil Aviation Authority: DR 3/182, 1960-1971.

———. "Future of East African Airways." edited by and of the Commonwealth Relations and Foreign and Commonwealth Offices Records created or inherited by the Dominions Office: DO 160/7, 1962-1963.

———. "Intentions by Cunard Eagle to Extend Their Operating Service and Frequency to London-Bermuda-Nassau-Jamaica: Possible Implications under the Civil Aviation Licensing Act 1960; Objections by British Overseas Airways Corporation; Includes Notes of Meetings and Discussions." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 245/1513, 1961-1962.

———. "International Aeradio Ltd: Need for British Commercial Organisations to Assist Foreign Countries in Provision, Installation and Operation of Radio Aids." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 217/497, 1947-1948.

———. "Policy Towards International Aeradio Ltd (Non-Profit Making Concern to Provide Telecommunications Facilities in Colonial and Foreign Countries)." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 252/201, 1947-1950.

———. "Proposed New Circular to Colonies on Traffic Rights." edited by Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies: BT 245/998, 1950-1965.

———. "Ussr-Uk Air Service Agreement: Route Amendments; Boac Services Beyond Moscow, Negotiations with Russian Authorities." edited by Ministry of Civil Aviation and successors: Air Services and International Relations Group: Minutes and Papers: BT 245/1244, 1961-1965.

Theaker, Alison. "Internal Communications." Chap. 11 In *The Public Relations Handbook*, edited by Alison Theaker, 131-46. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Thiel, Jörg, and Josef Krauthäuser. *Il-62: Airliner in Service.* Vol. 2, Germany: NARA, 2001.

Thomas, Martin, Bob Moore, and Lawrence J Butler. *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States.* London: Hodder Education, 2015.

Thomas, Martin, and Andrew Thompson. "Empire and Globalisation: From 'High Imperialism'to Decolonisation." *The International History Review* 36, no. 1 (2014): 142-70.

Thomas, Miles. "New Boac Jets Will 'Shrink' the Globe." *Daily Mail*, 1949/07/04/ 1949, 4.

———. *Out on a Wing: An Autobiography.* London: Michael Joseph, 1964.

———. "The Sky's the Limit for Jet Age Youth." *Daily Mail*, 1952/08/01/ 1952, 2.

Thompson, Andrew. "Social Life and Cultural Representation: Empire in the Public Imagination." In *Britain's Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Andrew Thompson, 251-97. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Thompson, T. F. "Now Jet-Age Schools." *Daily Mail*, 1958/12/04/ 1958, [1]+.

"Through Fighting and Famine to the Vc10." *BOAC Review*, September 1965, 1.

Tignor, Robert L. *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonizing Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya, 1945-1963.* Princeton University Press, 2015.

Tiratsoo, Nick, and Jim Tomlinson. *The Conservatives and Industrial Efficiency, 1951-1964: Thirteen Wasted Years?* London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

Tomlinson, Jim. "The Decline of the Empire and the Economic 'Decline'of Britain." *Twentieth Century British History* 14, no. 3 (2003): 201-21.

———. *Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy: The Attlee Years, 1945-1951.* Vol. 3, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

———. "Economic 'Decline'in Post-War Britain." In *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000*, edited by Paul Addison and Harriet Jones, 164-79. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

———. "Inventing'decline': The Falling Behind of the British Economy in the Postwar Years." *Economic History Review* 49, no. 4 (1996): 731-57.

———. "Thrice Denied:'Declinism'as a Recurrent Theme in British History in the Long Twentieth Century." *Twentieth Century British History* 20, no. 2 (2009): 227-51.

"Transport Bill." In *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers*, 1947.

Turner, David. ""Making the Connections" - Introduction." In *Transport and Its Place in History: Making the Connections*, edited by David Turner. Routledge Studies in Modern History, 1-12. London: Routledge, 2020.

Turner, Malcolm. *Boac and the Golden Age of Flying: Britain's Iconic Global Airline.* London: Burnt Ash Publishing, 2019.

Turner, Michael J. *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position?* : Lexington Books, 2009.

"Uneasiness over Plan to Buy American Planes." *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*, 11/16/1954 Nov 16 1954, 2.

"United State of Africa." *Financial Times*, 1948/10/13/ 1948.

Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies.* London: Sage Publications, 1990.

Van Riper, A Bowdoin. "What the Public Thinks It Knows About Science: Popular Culture and Its Role in Shaping the Public's Perception of Science and Scientists." *EMBO reports* 4, no. 12 (2003): 1104-07.

Vernon, James. "Heathrow and the Making of Neoliberal Britain." *Past & Present* (2021).

"Vickers Vc10 Contract Signed." *BOAC Review*, February 1958, 1.

Virgin Atlantic. "No Way Ba/Aa." *Financial Times*, 2008/10/08/ 2008, 9.

Von Tunzelmann, Alex. *Blood and Sand: Suez, Hungary and the Crisis That Shook the World.* Simon and Schuster, 2016.

Wager, Walter H. "International Airline Collaboration in Traffic Pools, Rate-Fixing and Joint Management Agreement." *J. Air L. & Com.* 18 (1951): 192.

Walker, Ronald. "The Natural Centre of Air Transport." *Air Transport*, 1946.

Ward, Paul. *Britishness since 1870.* Routledge, 2004.

Ward, Stuart. "The End of Empire and the Fate of Britishness." In *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, edited by Helen Brocklehurst and Robert Phillips, 242-58. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

———. ""No Nation Could Be Broker": The Satire Boom and the Demise of Britain's World Role'." In *British Culture and the End of Empire*, edited by Stuart Ward, 91-110. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.

———. "Sentiment and Self-Interest: The Imperial Ideal in Anglo-Australian Commercial Culture." *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001): 91-108.

Washington Correspondent. "Secrecy of Oil Documents." *The Times*, 1952/12/16/ 1952, 8.

Waters, Chris. ""Dark Strangers" in Our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947–1963." *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997): 207-38.

Watson, Captain Dacre. "British Overseas Airways Corporation 1940-1950 and Its Legacy." *Journal of Aeronautical History*, no. 03 (2013): 136-61.

"We Take Part in Berlin Air-Lift." *BOAC Review*, November 1948, 1.

Webster, Wendy. *Englishness and Empire, 1939-1965.* Oxford University Press on Demand, 2005.

———. *Imagining Home: Gender, Race and National Identity, 1945-1964.* Routledge, 2005.

———. "" There'll Always Be an England": Representations of Colonial Wars and Immigration, 1948-1968." *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001): 557-84.

"West African Inaugural on 29 April." *BOAC Review - Special VC10 issue*, April 1964, 2.

"What International Aeradio Will Do." *BOAC Review*, April 1947, 1.

White, H. H. "24 Hours to West Africa." *BOAC Review*, October 1947, 2.

White, Nicholas J. "The Business and the Politics of Decolonization: The British Experience in the Twentieth Century." *The Economic History Review* 53, no. 3 (2000): 544-64.

Whiteside, Noel. "Creating the Welfare State in Britain, 1945–1960." *Journal of social policy* 25, no. 1 (1996): 83-103.

Wilford, Hugh. "The Information Research Department: Britain's Secret Cold War Weapon Revealed." *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (1998): 353-69.

Williams, Robert. "The Cape to Cairo Railway." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 20, no. 80 (1921): 241-58.

Williamson, Judith. *Decoding Advertisements.* Vol. 4: Marion Boyars London, 1978.

"'…with My Bow and Arrow'." *Daily Mail*, 1961/11/24/ 1961, 10.

"With the Un in Gaza." *BOAC Review*, July 1963, 1.

Wohl, Robert. *The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950.* Yale University Press, 2005.

Wolcott, Susan. "British Myopia and the Collapse of Indian Textile Demand." *Journal of Economic History* (1991): 367-84.

"World-Wide Coronation Celebrations." *BOAC Review (Jubilee Edition)*, May 1953, 2.

Wright, Patrick. *On Living in an Old Country.* London: Verso, 1985.

"Written Answers (Commons) of Wednesday, 22nd May, 1957." 1957.

"Year of the Comet." *BOAC Review*, December 1959 - The year of the Comet, 1.