

Jamie's Great Britain:
The Creation of a New British Food Identity

Bachelorarbeit im Zwei-Fächer-Bachelorstudiengang,
Anglistik/Nordamerikanistik
der Philosophischen Fakultät
der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel

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Kiel im September 2014

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1. Introduction

On 18th September 2014, the people of Scotland will vote in a referendum to decide whether the most northern part of Great Britain will become an independent country, being completely separated from Great Britain, or not. Since its initiation, this campaign, directly linked to the leader of the *Scottish National Party* (SNP) Alex Salmond, is one of the most-discussed subjects in Great Britain. On their website, the national newspaper *The Guardian* even conducts a separate section on the subject (cf. Guardian News and Media Limited).

In May 2014, the UK Independence Party (UKIP) became the strongest party in the UK's EU election with a gain of 11 Members of European Parliament (MEPs) compared to the last election (cf. British Broadcasting Corporation, 2014a). The party, with its leader Nigel Farage, clearly expresses on their website what they stand for:

“A vote for UKIP is a vote to leave the EU and recover power over our national life. [...] Regain control of our borders and immigrants – only possible by leaving the EU. [...] Make cuts to foreign aid that are real and rigorous [...] Prevent foreign criminals entering the UK – by re-introducing border control that the EU forced us to abandon. [...] UKIP is a patriotic party that believes in putting Britain first. Only UKIP will return self-government to the British people” (UKIP, 2014).

The statements read clear and the language reminds of an ultra-nationalism not known to Europe for a very long time. However, the movement goes hand in hand with other nationalistic and anti-European initiatives in various European countries.

Public figures express and help create a sentiment within the public opinion. A group of UK celebrities signed a letter which was part of the *Let's stay together*-campaign to prevent Scottish independence in August 2014 (cf. Topping, 2014). Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver has been expressing his anti-European views since he has become an important public figure. He did so in the show *BBC Morning News* on 19th January 2009, saying that British pig farmers' struggles had made him anti-EU (cf. Karner, 2011:143). In a video with the provocative title *Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver hates the European Union (EU)*, he told an official committee in a hearing that he had “nothing nice to say about the EU at all [...] and that, frankly, [he] only cared about Great Britain”

(*Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver hates the European Union (EU)*, 2008:00:20-01:50). UKIP published the video on their youtube-channel, a very important media outlet to particularly reach young voters. After an interview with *The Sunday Times* in May 2013, the newspaper published an article saying that “the celebrity chef Jamie Oliver showed a political side, saying he was disillusioned and frustrated with the government [...] and that although he did not support UKIP he loved the fact the party was ‘stirring it up’” (Griffith, 2014). Political scientist Christian Karner provides a good summary in saying that “[e]veryday politics in the UK [...] surrounding some of the necessities of daily life, including food and work also provide periodical insights into how so-called ordinary social actors respond to – [...] – the transnational flow typical of life in the twenty-first century” (Karner, 2011:143).

All in all, there seems to be a growing need for the British to define the boundaries of their national identity. As Susanne Reichl (2003) states: “Although the debate goes back as far as Daniel Defoe’s True-Born Englishman, it was given new impetus by devolution and other political developments in the late twentieth century, which seem to have made it important for the British to (re-)define themselves” (Reichl, 2003:177). This observation leads to the need to analyse the cultural artefacts that public figures, such as Jamie Oliver, produce. In the case of Oliver, all of his productions have food as their central subject. Doris Feldmann (2012) takes up Charles Camp (1980) when she states “that it [food] defines individual and group identities, the consumption of food is part and parcel of identity politics” (Feldmann, 2012:40). With the established link between food and a national or group identity, one of Jamie Oliver’s self-produced TV series comes into strong focus: *Jamie’s Great Britain* (2012). In this series “Jamie Oliver takes to the road, travelling the length and breadth of Blighty, in search of new ideas and inspiration for recipes and to find out what makes British food great” (*Jamie’s Great Britain*, 2012:back cover). This leads to the question in what ways does Jamie Oliver influence the British identity. The thesis of this paper states that Jamie Oliver, with his series *Jamie’s Great Britain*, creates a new British food identity by appropriating international influences. Before turning to an empirical analysis of the series to reassess this thesis, the theoretical background of this paper is to be shortly presented: First, the concept of ‘Cultural Appropriation’ will

be reviewed as it was discussed, among many others, by Ziff & Rao (1997) and later put into more concrete terms by Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012). It will then be applied directly to the TV series in a later step. Before that, however, the paper will look into the development of the discourse of *British Identity* and the relationships between national identity and food in general, as well as in the special case of Great Britain. These description can only cover the aforementioned topics to a certain extent and never wholly. The focus of each topic will be on issues that directly adhere to this paper. After a formal, introductory description of *Jamie's Great Britain*, the actual analysis of the TV series will make up the main part of the paper before finishing off with some conclusive paragraphs.

2. Cultural Appropriation

It appears to be obvious that the term 'cultural appropriation' consists of two elements: 'cultural' and 'appropriation'. These terms, in themselves stigmatized with a long history of multiple definitions and explanations by various scholars in as many fields of research, are to be defined in the sense of the following analysis: Firstly, a definition of appropriation is to be provided first for it is the central term of the concept. Ziff & Rao (1997) take a very fitting definition of the term from the *Resolution of the Writer's Union of Canada* (1992) which applies in the simplest way possible: It reads as "the taking – from a culture that is not one's own – [...]" (Ziff & Rao, 1997:1). Christian Huck & Stefan Bauernschmidt (2012) add a very enriching definition: "Appropriation [...] means that things, viewed as belonging to someone else, are now treated by others as their own, or at least, as if they were their own" (Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:233).

Turning to the second part of the concept, 'cultural', it becomes apparent that the "first reading turns the adjective 'cultural' into a descriptor of an actual actor in the process: *appropriation by a culture*" (Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:241).

A culture can be viewed as the acting force in the process of appropriation. The term 'actor', however, is to defined later in this chapter. For that reason, another definition of 'culture' has to be provided. Very suitable for the aim of this paper is the explanation established by Ziff & Rao (1997): "[C]ulture' connotes some type of creative product (whether tangible or otherwise): these are the objects of appropriation" (Ziff & Rao, 1997:2).

This argument already gives the impression that the concept of cultural appropriation is as easily defined as it is highly contested. This notion of uncertainty in defining the term has been already established very early by Bruce Ziff & Pratima V. Rao (1997): "It cannot, [...], be relied upon to set clear limits as to where the concept of cultural appropriation begins and ends" (Ziff & Rao, 1997:2). One possible reason for this is the fact that the concept of cultural appropriation "is a multidimensional phenomenon" (ibid.:1), the act of appropriation can happen from one culture to the other and vice versa. Also, the term "has come into common use in the discourse of many disciplines: [...]" (Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:229). According to Hans Peter Hahn, cultural appropriation and globalisation are deeply connected in that they both transform cultures. Cultural appropriation "has the particular capacity to reveal something about individual actors and the agency of those who redesign contexts and re-establish meanings of specific things" (Hahn, 2012:20-21). The connection to globalisation has also sparked media studies' interest in cultural appropriation (cf. Hahn, 2012:21). "Media studies comprise [...] the study of the reception of media [...] in order to give voice to local cultural articulations" (Hahn, 2012:21).

Ziff & Rao (1997) work out three general points that emerge in cultural appropriation: "(1) appropriation concerns relationships among people, (2) there is a wide range of modes through which it occurs, and (3) it is widely practiced" (Ziff & Rao, 1997:3). Considering the first point, Ziff & Rao (1997) state that there are insiders and outsiders within a community and "some test of group belonging seems required in discussions about cultural appropriation" (ibid.). An interesting question in the context of Jamie's Great Britain will be: Which groups are defined and who defines these parameters of belonging to these groups in the series? The second point suggests that there are various modes of appropriation: It can be stated that there is an exclusive appropriation which leads to the "deprivation of the appropriated groups" (ibid.:4) and a non-exclusive appropriation in which the appropriated groups are not precluded from the appropriated goods. Third, the wide ranging kinds of cultural appropriation turn it into a "pervasive phenomenon [...]" and "[a]cts of appropriation happen all around us in vast numbers of creative domains as cultural influences blend, merge and synthesize" (ibid:4-5). These blurry lines of cultural appropriation are very well summarised in a similar three-point structure by Huck &

Bauernschmidt (2012). Their approach with three leading categories is to be taken as the theoretical framework of this paper:

The first category goes hand in hand with the first point of Ziff & Rao (1997) and aims at the “[a]ctors of appropriation: who can appropriate?” (Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:235). In terms of culture it should be differentiated between natives and foreigners (cf. *ibid.*) According to Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012), Bauernschmidt stated in 2011 that this mutual relationship for “appropriation can be performed both by actors participating in the target culture and by actors participating in the culture of origin [...]” (Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:244). An important role in the array of actors is given to the mediators who can belong either to the side of the appropriator or to the side of the appropriated. The mediator’s main task is to transmit information between two strictly separated interacting parties and “social groups that are too large to act collectively” (*ibid.*:236) in the process of appropriation. “Often, mediators will use media in order to distribute information to large collectives across great distances” (*ibid.*). Narrowing down these specific actors allows breaking down the process of cultural appropriation to the level of individual acts (cf. *ibid.*:231).

The second category to focus on is made up of the “[o]bjects of appropriation: what can be appropriated?” (*ibid.*:233). As was shown before, there is a great variety of things that can undergo the process of appropriation. It is not limited to material goods but also encompasses institution or traditions. All of them, however, share certain features. These objects are attached with meaning and are also of a certain value “which depends on its place within a specific cultural pattern, i.e. within both a set of practices and a horizon of norms and values” (*ibid.*:234). A second aspect is “that their value goes beyond individual attachment, and that they can be exchanged” (*ibid.*:234). According to Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012), this is represented by the price tag in modern societies. In the case of food, the connection between individual and common value is even more complex and not limited to the economic price but always comes with a symbolic value. The third and final aspect of things appropriated is that they are “deemed, at least at the beginning of the process, to be alien, whether because [they are] foreign, or because [they are] new, or both” (*ibid.*:234). It will be an interesting point to see whether the objects in Jamie’s

Great Britain undergo a process of “alienization” (Dechaine, 2009:1) and if so, in which direction it aims.

The third category to be mentioned is the role of contexts in the processes of appropriation. These contexts can be “social, spatial and temporal” and “are central to the production of meaning” (Huck & Bauernschmidt 2012:231). In the case of the analysis of a TV series, as it is attempted in this paper, the contexts in which the episodes are shot are of vital importance. What social groups are represented and how are they presented? What settings were chosen by the director and film crew? How does the series handle the aspect of time? These are central questions of media studies. Contexts, however, can also mean the political context that the group of people or individual on display belongs to.

With regard to this paper’s topic, the chapter on cultural appropriation would not be complete without a few words on the appropriation of food. Doris Feldmann (2012) writes that the “consumption of foreign food may be experienced as a performative act of identification, as a pleasurable form of affirming an identity [...]” (Feldmann, 2012:39). She adds that it “may even be an empowering act of nostrification: the ingestions – and, perhaps, the incorporation of cultural difference” (ibid.:39). A shared feature of food appropriation with all the other kinds of the concept is that it appears to be multi-directional. Food studies, being an interdisciplinary field, puts its main subject, food, in front of many different backgrounds, such as a cultural, sociological, gastro-political¹ or socio-economical areas (cf. ibid.:40). When talking about the categories that will be applied in this paper, attention has to be paid to the fact that “[i]f migration and cultural hybridity are old phenomena, and if food has always been involved in the daily practice of cultural translation, then, surely, the appropriation of foreign food has a (pre)history [...]” (ibid.:41). This (pre)history has to be studied very carefully when analysing the appropriation of food.

¹ The term ‘gastro-politics’ (Appadurai, 1981) is quoted by Feldmann (2012) and slightly changed here.

3. A fragmented British Identity

In order to answer the question about the British food identity – whether there is one and if so, how it can be described – the highly debatable issue of the British identity, in general, has to be addressed. The following few paragraphs are not meant as an attempt to provide a comprehensive definition and explanation of the history and current state of the 'British Identity'. This has been done for almost as long as the term 'British' is known and is too complex a subject for this kind of paper. Moreover, I would like to very briefly display developments in the discourse, especially after 1945. For this paper, it is essential to have a basic idea of how the British identity can be described in post-colonial terms.

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1995) gives an interesting definition of the term 'identity' in saying that the term can be described as "[...] the qualities and attitudes you have that make you feel you have your own character and are different from other people [...]" (LDE, 1995:706) The use of the word different is to be highlighted in this context. In this sense the building of an identity means to construct a picture of the self through the picture of the other. This binary concept "is perhaps one of the most basic theories of human consciousness and identity, claiming, [...], that the existence of an other, a not-self, allows the possibility or recognition of a self" (Schalk, 2011:197).

In the case of the British identity, there are several others that allow forming a picture of oneself. However, this also attributes to the difficulties of forming an identity on the British Isles. Robin Cohen (1995), who has done comprehensive research in the field of identity/alterity, gives a suitable example of this "impenetrability of a specifically British [...] identity [...]" (Cohen, 1995:1) by recognising "six categories of British nationality in Acts passed during the 1980s – British citizenship, British Dependent Territories citizenship, British Overseas citizenship, British Subject status, British Protected Person status and British National (Overseas) status" (ibid.). According to Cohen (1995), there are no clear boundaries of the British identity but various "fuzzy frontiers [that] can be 'internal' or 'external'" (ibid.:2).

The external fuzzy frontiers include, among others, the Celtic fringe (Scotland, Wales, Ireland), the Empire and the Commonwealth, as well as, the

European continent. The cultural contact with all three of these frontiers will form part of the following discussion of *Jamie's Great Britain*. The British plantations, colonies and settlements abroad, which later formed the Empire, are closely linked to the identity of the British. This hegemony of the British rule was slowly destructed after World War II when the “guiding vision of the post-1948 Commonwealth was that it was a multiracial association of states with a common historical link to Britain” (ibid.:9). This multiracial character also applies to the British homeland because with decolonisation and the migration of citizens from Commonwealth countries, such as India and the Caribbean, the concept of a white British identity, upheld mostly by a xenophobic right in the country, was very hard to maintain. Various Immigration and British Nationality Acts initiated between 1948 and 1983 give proof of the desperate attempt to conserve this “racially exclusive British identity” (ibid.).

These numerous influences created new “[i]nternal fuzzy frontiers [which] might exclude unpopular minorities from power and resources, or marginalise small national groups within a culturally hegemonising dominant group” (ibid.:2). The development results in a British identity that is immensely fragmented. As was seen in the introduction to this paper, the political landscape and therefore society are deeply divided between pro-European and anti-European forces.

Another fragment of a nation’s identity is its food culture. On the first look, food culture seems to provide a stable identity in our daily routines. Food is always around us, providing constant orientation. In what ways, then, does food create a nation’s identity? And what are current developments in the case of the British? These questions will be addressed in the following chapter.

4. Identity, Food and the British

Food and eating culture influence and shape a society on very many levels. First and foremost, food provides nourishment without which human beings could not survive. It “sustains us, we are what we eat, [...]” (Reichl, 2003:177). Unlike many other cultural artefacts that surround us it is a bare necessity. However, food has come a long way since the first mammoth steaks sizzled over a Palaeolithic fire place. It has accomplished many other features than just feeding the hungry. Döring, Heide & Mühleisen (2003) put this problem in a nutshell by asking:

“When the availability of food becomes a major issue of world politics and when, at the same time, local and regional cuisines are radically changing and intermingling, and are transformed towards international diversity and pluralism, our daily experience of ‘the kitchen’ has been so thoroughly politicized that every dish we consume and every meal we prepare raises the question [...]: how does food rule our homes today?” (Döring & Heide & Mühleisen, 2003:1)

In the most basic way, food structures our daily routines. It gives us time to rest, to refuel and to communicate with others. Apart from the fast food hastily eaten at the bus stop, eating is a very social activity and the shopping of groceries belongs to our daily life or is celebrated on the weekends. Supermarkets give a lot of thought into arranging products in a way that they tickle our sense when walking past the aisles. Cooking and eating are sensory activities that involve touching, smelling, sometimes hearing and, of course, tasting what is in front of us. The recent resurrection of public dinner parties hosted by non-professional cooks and with guests paying a fixed price to participate gives proof of a newly developing social factor of cooking, eating and food, in general. National newspapers, such as *The Observer*, have a monthly or weekly food issue which discusses different recipes, restaurants or developments in the area of food, in general. Chefs and food authors have become public figures. One of them, Jamie Oliver, is taken a closer look at in the context of this paper.

However, thinking and talking about new ways to experience food has also become part of academia. An increasing amount of research in history, social and cultural studies has shown that “[f]ood offers powerful ways to make and communicate cultural meaning” (ibid.:2). Eating is not only the mere (meta-) consumption of food products but also a way of expressing oneself. Reichl (2003) adds that “food should be used as an instrument of self-fashioning and identification is in itself nothing new” (Reichl, 2003:177). Whether one goes to an Indian restaurant or orders Chinese take-away on a Friday night delivers a message to the world outside and tells a story about one’s own personality when talking about these food experiences to others. What and where one eats is also an expression of one’s gender, class and race (cf. Counihan & van Esterik, 2008:5). An individual’s sense of national identity is also immensely influenced by the food habits that one grows up with and practices the whole life. “For immigrants, [...], the significance of food and drink

in their construction of a home away from home seems to be crucial [...]” (Reichl, 2003:178). And Margaret Mead (2008) adds that

“[f]ood habits are seen as the culturally standardized set of behaviors in regard to food manifested by individuals who have been reared within a given cultural tradition. These behaviors are seen as systematically interrelated with standardized behaviors in the same culture” (Mead, 2008:18).

Culture does not equal nationality. However, Ingrid von Rosenberg (2007) states that “[e]xperts of food studies agree that eating and drinking habits are important signifiers of national identity” (Rosenberg, 2007: 186). And Ben Rogers (2003) adds that “national traditions of cooking represent the nation” (Rogers, 2003:3). National institutions use the mentioned standardised behaviours in a culture to create a national identity within and outside the respective country. Historically, this is a development “of the nineteenth and twentieth century, as nationalism developed into the predominant signifier of identity, [...]” (Panayi, 2008:12). This involved all aspects of daily life within a nation. In particular, this applies to Italy and France which are famous for their refined cuisines based on a long tradition. These identities are, of course, deeply inflicted with stereotypes as they exist for every country or group in the world. But what are the stereotypes that go along with the British cuisine?

The discourse of Great Britain’s food traditions leads in many directions. According to Panayi (2008) who quotes Gary Rhodes (1994), the reason why the culinary qualities of Great Britain were not among the most valued for many, many years is that the very simple ways of British cooking including terrific local ingredients were not strong or numerous enough and that the British did not have the same passion for the culinary arts that is connected to the French and Italians (ibid.:13). Therefore, “stereotypes of British food have tended to focus on two apparently endemic problems – its poor quality and its blandness – [...]” (ibid.:12). The particular concept of British food is a relatively new development.

Before World War II, it was rarely spoken of food as being particularly British. Panayi (2008) cites Anne Bowman’s *The New Cookery Book: A Complete Manual of English and Foreign Cookery*, published in 1867, which includes various dishes originating from all over the world and lays emphasis on the term ‘English’ and how the English cooking tradition is seen from the Continent (cf. ibid.: 14-15).

The 1930s brought a great development in the concept of British food with “the first cookbooks to specifically set out to eulogize the idea” (ibid.:15). During World War II, the British government released several publications to make the war-related rationing more bearable but did not lay emphasis on developing a clear British style of cooking during these times of war. Panayi (2008) correctly adds that during World War II, “food was simply too irrelevant to matter in concepts of national identity. [...] [O]nly after 1945 did foods in Britain become a major signifier of national identity” (ibid.:21).

Again Panayi (2008) points out a publication by Philip Harben from the 1950s, called *Traditional Dishes of Britain*, through which Harben became one of the best-known celebrity chefs in Great Britain, best represented by his television appearances. “For believers in the concept of British food, this is a must-read book. [...] The central chapter covers fish and chips, for it is here that every stereotype about British food (and indeed, about food and nationality generally) reveals itself” (ibid.:16). Harben lists a number of international stereotypical dishes, like rice for Asia, noodles for Italy, sausages for Germany, and concludes with the national dish of Great Britain: fish and chips. However, he apparently is not interested in the origins of fish and chips which evolved from Jewish traditions of frying fish and originally French chips (cf. ibid.:17).

What Panayi (2008) calls the ‘post-war nationalism’ brought a new argument into the discourse of British food. For it, “like everything else, must have a nationality, it is certainly possible for ‘traditional’ British food to have foreign origins but, ultimately, there comes a time when the food itself has to become naturalized, just like the foreigners, [...]” (ibid.:18). This point of view sparked a new movement in the writing of cookbooks. Panayi (2008) observes that Theodora Fitzgibbons, in her 1965 edition of *The Art of British Cooking*, “makes the simple observation that ‘foreign dishes, such as curry...have been adapted to suit British tastes’” (ibid.:19). Panayi (2008) adds that the starting acknowledgment of foreign influence on the British cuisine continued in the 1970s with Elizabeth Ayrton “admitting that ‘many dishes came to England from the colonies and came to stay’, including ‘curries, pepperpot, kedgeree and turtle soup’, Ayrton also accepts the concept of a native cuisine” (ibid.:19-20).

More recently, the subject of British food has come up in an increased manner. The situation at the beginning of the twenty-first century is that corporations and food writers have established the idea that food is linked with a nationality and that the consumption of Ethnic food is seen as a freedom and a move away from the 20th century austerity. After 2001, the world faces a different challenge: Multiculturalism and a heterogenic society make up the common scene of our daily lives. The fear of losing what seems to be an essentially British identity is becoming more and more popular. There appears to be an obligation for British food writers and chefs to re-establish the concept of a national British cuisine by neglecting origins of ingredients or connecting artificially created British regions and certain foods (cf. *ibid.*:20). One institution to reflect on old and create new traditions of cooking is still television with its cooking series. In the following chapter I would like to give a brief introduction into recent British cooking series dealing with British food before turning to Jamie Oliver's series *Jamie's Great Britain* in more detail.

5. British Food and Television

As already stated, the re-establishment of British food and a national culinary identity primarily takes place on the screen. Recently, there have been several series that attempt to form a concept of 'British food'. They do so in various different ways. This chapter aims at shortly presenting three of the aforementioned cooking series: *Great British Menu*, aired on BBC2, *Heston's Great British Food* and *Jamie's Great Britain*, both of them aired on Channel 4. The first two TV series are included to reveal the great differences in approaching the topic of a British food identity. Jamie Oliver's series will be explained in more detail due to its importance for this paper.

Great British Menu was first aired 14th April 2006 and is currently² in its ninth series. The format of the series changed over the time. However, the main idea is that different chefs from the same region³ within Great Britain compete in a tournament over the course of one week. The decision is made on a Friday by

² The research was conducted in August 2014.

³ It can be argued, as Panayi (2008) did, that the regions are completely artificial, for they are changed from one series to the other. For example, in series 2, there are North, Scotland, Northern Ireland, South West, South East, Wales, Central Region. In Season 3 this changed to North, Scotland, Northern Ireland, South West and London/South East.

a panel of judges to whom the complete menu of each chef is presented. The winner of each week and region goes on to the final to cook his or her menu for a truly British event. They get the opportunity “to serve lunch for the Queen’s 80th birthday”, “to cook for the British ambassador to France”, “to prepare their dishes at a homecoming banquet for armed forces personnel”, “to cook for an Olympic banquet” or “to cook at a banquet marking the 70th anniversary of D-Day” (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2014b). This list of events shows the patriotic side of the show. All events are deeply connected to a traditional British identity. It is already a well-known format in culinary television that different chefs compete against each other. The new twist, however, is that *Great British Menu* tries to form a British identity by naming specific British regions, leaving out others, and by adding a patriotic connotation to cooking: The chefs in the series do not just cook for winning a prize but they do it for their country. It becomes an honour to prepare a meal for an official national event.

Celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal has a completely different approach on the subject of British food. His series *Heston’s Great British Food*, which started to air on Channel 4 in 2014, “reveals the secret history of some iconic British dishes and then transforms them, as only Heston can” (Channel 4, 2014). Each one of the seven episodes⁴ takes up one typical British dish. Blumenthal gives short lessons on the history of each meal and then explores how he can put a clever twist on dishes like fish and chips, roast beef dinner, puddings, pies, curries, chocolate and afternoon tea. Equipped with his black-rimmed glasses, Blumenthal adds a very technological, geeky aspect to cooking. He uses various non-culinary gadgets to find new ways of preparing food and to find the ultimate way of making the Great British food even greater. In doing so, he always creates very big meals, not in the amount of food but in the sheer size of each ingredient. Each episode ends in a big party with a lot of guests who are directly associated with the particular dish of the episode. Despite of delivering the ‘secret’ history of each dish, the show also works with a lot of stereotypes that come with a certain meal. This becomes very apparent in the case of curry. The final scene shows a big celebration with traditionally-clothed people of Indian descent. The modern, Western life-style that most British, with roots on

⁴ This is was the case on 7th August 2014.

the Indian subcontinent, lead is of no interest in delivering the message where curry really came from and what it is still mostly associated with.

Both *Great British Menu* and *Heston's Great British Food* are tale-telling names for the respective TV series. In the first case, the chefs really deliver a great meal including starters, main dish and dessert for a great event deeply rooted in the British national identity. The latter, Heston Blumenthal simply creates a traditionally British meal that is great in size and feeds a lot of people. Both series do not deliver any directions on preparing the meals that they display, as traditional cooking shows do. However, the audience has the possibility of looking up the recipes. There was a cook book associated with *Great British Menu*. Additionally, the website of Channel 4 offers the opportunity to “[f]ind out how to make Heston’s take on these iconic British dishes” (Channel 4, 2014) and provides most, not all, of the recipes of the show. The difference of the two shows is, of course, the competitive character of *Great British Menu* which also works with a variety of chefs and only a few celebrity ones in the judging panel. *Heston's Great British Food* does not work with a competition but comes with a humorous approach and has Heston Blumenthal, as a well-known celebrity chef, as its display figure. The TV series *Jamie's Great Britain* combines some of the features mentioned above. A more detailed description and an exemplary analysis are to follow.

6. Jamie Oliver and ‘his’ Great Britain

“Jamie Oliver's latest food-filled series features the world-famous chef on the road to find out what makes British food great” (Dean, 2012). In *Jamie's Great Britain* (2012), Oliver is the presenter and voice-over of the show. Before turning to the series in detail, Jamie Oliver is to be shortly introduced.

Born in 1975, the British chef has become one of Britain’s best-known celebrities and public figures with appearances in front of the British parliament and meetings with the British prime minister. His TV career started out when he was part of a TV documentary about *River Café*, working with the famous British chefs Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers. In 2000, Jamie Oliver presented his first own TV series *Naked Chef* on the BBC. With this show, Jamie Oliver made cooking and food popular with young people and showed that preparing a meal is not a piece of magic but a simple, enjoyable and modern activity. In the

following years and with growing popularity, Oliver explored food from abroad and trained struggling youths in his restaurant chain *Fifteen*. He published and sold many, many cook books, opened restaurants on almost every continent and became a political figure when fiercely, more or less successfully campaigning for farmers' rights and healthier school food in Great Britain and beyond. Most of these projects were commercialised and turned into TV series, as well. Oliver has become one of the most influential spokespeople in the culinary world and in food politics (cf. Jamie Oliver Enterprises Limited, 2014).

After his very successful cook books *Jamie does...* and *Jamie's America*, accompanied by two TV series in which Oliver goes on a culinary exploration of a selection of European countries and the U.S. respectively, he initiates a similar publication for Great Britain resulting in *Jamie's Great Britain* (2012). The series was first broadcasted on Channel 4 on 29th November 2011 and is made up of six episodes, featuring various regions of Great Britain. Again, this supposedly comprehensive selection of regions⁵ appears very artificial and random, plus it ignores large parts of Great Britain, such as Northern Ireland. Each episode is approximately 47 minutes long and all of them are still available to UK residents on Channel 4's internet platform 4oD⁶. A two-disc DVD version of the series is only available in Australia and will be used for the following analysis of the series. The DVD packaging design shows almost the same cover⁷ as the accompanying cook book: Beneath the title and subtitle, printed in white letters, Jamie Oliver is sitting on an armchair, comparable to a throne, in front of a massive Union Jack, holding a plate of a classic Sunday roast dinner consisting of beef with roasted potatoes. He is slightly leaning forward, smiling at and looking directly into the camera. He is dressed in jeans and a shirt that resembles the colour of the Union Jack by a well-known company that is closely associated and very popular with young people in the Western world. His outfit is very traditional and an everyday appearance.

The back cover of the DVD case gives a first impression of what is to be expected: "Throughout the series, he [Jamie Oliver] discovers that many of the dishes we think of as British classics aren't 'British' at all, but full of influence

⁵ The mentioned regions are: The East End and Essex, Yorkshire, The Heart of England, The West Country, South Wales, West of Scotland.

⁶ Again, this was the case on 7th August 2014.

⁷ See App. 1.

from around the world through invasion, exploration, colonisation and immigration” (*Jamie’s Great Britain*, 2012:back cover). Also there are “some delicious examples of what makes this country’s cuisine great including Bubble & Squeak, Steak & Kidney Pie, Charming Eccles Cakes, Crumbliest Scone and surprises like Retro Artic Rolls” (ibid.) listed on the back cover. After a standardised beginning, Jamie travels a certain part or visits one of the bigger cities in the respective region, meeting local chefs or other culinary people. Alternating with these parts that are very similar to a travel documentary, Jamie Oliver prepares a meal that is influenced by the experiences he made before. These parts resemble the concept of a classic cooking show with almost step-by-step instructions of how to make the dish.

6.1 Methodology

The following critical audio-visual and semiotic analysis of still images from three episodes can only represent the series *Jamie’s Great Britain* to a certain extent. Analysing each and every episode would be beyond the limits of this paper and a closer look at three out of the six episodes will provide sufficient examples to discuss the thesis given in the introductory chapter. Another crucial point has to be mentioned: There is always a certain bias to the analysis of any cultural product. The biological and cultural backgrounds of the researching recipient make this attempt a very subjective endeavour. On the one hand, the fact that the researcher was born and brought up and that he still lives in the Western hemisphere is reason enough that certain details of cultural appropriation could be unintentionally ignored. On the other hand, not being British and not being completely immersed in British customs and food habits allows the researcher to look at the series from a different perspective.

A similar study by Xin Liang (2014) correctly divides the conceptualisation of the series’ episodes into five different parts or thematic units: The opening, the foreign food, the local food, the feast at the end of each episode and the recipes that Jamie Oliver creates in combining foreign influences and local ingredients. In the context of cultural appropriation, the series’ binary concept of local products, representing the self, and foreign influences, representing the other, are of special interest. When Jamie Oliver creates his own recipes using

cooking techniques and ingredients inspired by foreign influences and combining them with locally sourced ingredients, he decides on what can and cannot go into a “New British Classics” (Oliver, 2011:136). This canonisation of culinary items may lead to the creation of a new British food identity by appropriating from other cultures.

The standardised opening which is similar in style and form in every episode of the series and in which the main story line of the episode is displayed will be analysed only for the first episode. First, the sections on foreign influences are designed to show the interaction between Jamie Oliver and the people who supposedly brought the foreign influences to Great Britain (cf. Liang, 2014:21). Secondly, the sections on local produce explore “something native and therefore ultimately British, to be combined with the foreign, the fusion of which represents the contemporary Britishness in food culture [...]” (Liang, 2014:26). Finally, there are the sections on recipes created by Jamie Oliver from his ‘foreign’ and ‘native’ experiences throughout the show. These will be analysed for three of the six episodes. The theoretical background with the concept of cultural appropriation, as outlined above, will provide the leading questions for the analysis. The three categories under observation will be actors/mediators, objects and contexts.

After analysing the standardised beginning of each episode, the focus in analysing the first episode in which Jamie Oliver travels the East End of London and his home-county Essex is to be on actors/mediators. This is to be followed by paying special attention to the appropriated objects using the third episode of the series in which Oliver travels to the Midlands, including Leicester. Finally, the sixth episode, which takes Jamie Oliver to the west of Scotland, will be analysed against the backdrop of different contexts of appropriation.

6.2 *The Opening*

In the opening sequence which functions as a kind of appetizer to the series, Jamie Oliver prepares a particular dish that is supposedly a classic British recipe and that every British person knows. In the first episode, it is an apple pie with custard. The shots of preparing the food are mixed with shots that re-appear throughout the whole series showing different foods and the British

countryside or cities that Jamie Oliver visits throughout the series. Oliver, as the presenter and voice-over narrator of the show, states his mission: He is travelling “this gorgeous and crazy island, called Britain, [...]”- in search for the history of this “glorious food Britannia”. In the end, he returns to the apple pie explaining that something simple as an apple pie, everybody thinks of as being British has no British background at all: “The whole concept of a pie emerged from the Egyptians. The Great British eating apple – not British – came from Western Asia and the cinnamon...not a single bit of that apple pie has ever come from Great Britain.” As a result of this observation, Oliver argues that it tasted so good and it was theirs now, the British’s. In his announcement, Oliver focuses primarily on his own recipes that would later appear as “New British Classics” in the accompanying cook book. This gives a large amount of importance, focus and high value to his very interpretation of classic British dishes throughout the series (00:00-01:36)⁸.

After this sequence⁹, the opening ends with a Union Jack that grows out of a St. James’s Cross. The camera zooms out to show the British flag as a plate between cutlery surrounded by other dishes. This puts emphasis on the culinary topic of the series. It then zooms back into the flag on full screen and the Union Jack slowly transforms into a potpourri of different national flags, e.g. the flags of Jamaica, India, Israel, Iran, and China. They are arranged in the pattern of the Union Jack replacing its traditional blue, red and white. The old, neat order of the Empire is slowly transfigured into a new, wild, and colourful array of foreign influences. However, these influences still have to be put in the proper frame of what once was the British flag strongly associated with the Empire. This new version of the Union Jack is then broken up by two tears, one announcing the series’ title, the other the title of the episode. Jamie Oliver, with his series *Jamie’s Great Britain* (2012), scratches under the surface of this multi-national Great Britain. He rips through the Union Jack and the foreign influences, represented by the national flags, to establish his own culinary program (01:37-01:52).

⁸ In the following chapters, only the time frame for the mentioned sequence of the primary source *Jamie’s Great Britain* (2012) will be provided.

⁹ See App. 2.

The first episode of the series will now be used to establish the first of the aforementioned categories of appropriation: The actors and Jamie Oliver as the mediator in the process of appropriation.

6.3 The East End and Essex

Oliver is travelling in a converted army truck, his kitchen-on-wheels and mobile pub equipped with the British flag as a front bumper sticker, barrels of beer, a wood-burning stove and enough room for a party. It is called the *Cock in Cider*. Xin Liang (2014) rightly observes that the military background, the function and the name of the vehicle is “implying careless entertainment and sexualized rough sense of humour associated with masculinity” (Liang, 2014:18). This sexualized, chauvinistic kind of humour follows through the whole series. Another interesting fact to add is that throughout the show the majority of guests invited into this motorised pub are male. The military truck with which Oliver is travelling the country seeking new flavours and influences on the British cuisine provokes the image of a “tool and the driving force to actively and diligently take in what is good from the foreign, just like in the old times when the empire conquered the world” (Liang, 2014:17).

For the first episode, Jamie Oliver starts his journey in two familiar and personal surroundings: The East End, a part of London where he has lived for some time at the beginning of his cooking career and Essex where he grew up. Over the last centuries, the East End has seen many waves of immigration. This part of the episode is introduced with a lot of very quick cuts and short shots to show the turmoil that is part of life in the streets of the East End. Most people on display have a migratory background. “A more recent story is the arrival of the Vietnamese” (02:35-04:12). This is the first foreign influence that Oliver discovers.

The camera zooms out to a medium long shot¹⁰ to show a street parlour, also to be seen in the still image¹¹, selling the traditional Vietnamese “dish *Bánh mì*, a street food sold all over Vietnam” (04:13-04:17). In the background, there are several pictures of Vietnam attached to a wall and a London style street

¹⁰ Terms related to media studies are taken from Borstnar, Nils & Eckard Pabst & Hans Jürgen Wulff (2008).

¹¹ See App. 3.

sign that reads “Vietnam Streets” in bold black letters and “City of Food Lovers” in small red letters. The street’s actual name “Whitecross Street”, where the food market is situated, changes as well as the borough’s name. The consumer and recipient are to be completely immersed into the food culture of this particular food stand. Slightly to the left, there are two women of Asian, most likely Vietnamese, descent. They speak fluent English with a slight accent that can be interpreted as Asian and make few grammatical mistakes. Placed next to an iron stove and in front of some bowls of ingredients, they are wearing an apron which clearly indicates them as the cooks in this instance. One of the women is wearing plastic gloves. This can be seen as a sign that she is the one in direct contact with food. Both women obviously prepare the food according to British hygiene standards. Jamie Oliver approaches them from the left moving towards the centre of the still image and is presented in a medium close up from the back. “[T]he spectator is on the outside in much more of an observer role” (Phillips, 1999:151). The camera moving at the level of Oliver’s shoulders and directly at Jamie Oliver’s side puts the presenter above the observer but suggests a greater affiliation with the presenter than with the two female chefs. Oliver’s hand gestures demonstrate precision and persistence in discovering “absolutely everything about the dish”, as he says. A series of shots shows the preparation of Bánh mì with the background voice of Jamie Oliver, not the two chefs, explaining how to make the dish. Oliver summarises Bánh mì to be a “Vietnamese French-style dish in England [...]”, taking credit away from the Vietnamese and starting to appropriate the dish (04:20-06:13).

The product is then tried by Jamie Oliver who is wearing casual clothing including a trucker hat featuring the colours of the Union Jack and an older woman¹², representing the white natives of the country. Both are presented in a medium close-up shot. The coat that the woman is wearing perfectly fits the background in colour. She blends into her surrounding of yellow brick stone houses that are interpreted to be just as typical for this part of Great Britain as the woman. At the same time, she represents the common people of traditional Great Britain and resembles the Queen, as the highest authority of the country. The product of the two supposedly new immigrants to the country is consumed

¹² See App. 4.

and rated by two opposing white natives of Great Britain. The old woman rates it with a mumbling “bloody lovely” which has to be repeated and is confirmed by Jamie Oliver. Both natives approve the foreign food (06:14-06:45). This establishes another important step in appropriating the dish which will be completed in a recipe section later on.

Oysters are the East End-episode’s experience of local food. Jamie Oliver discovers the history of the seafood in an old pub that comes with some personal history. The pub was owned by Oliver’s “great-great-grand father” and is presently owned by a man who has done some research on the pub’s history. In the still image from this sequence¹³, there is the bar of a classic British pub which is a recurrent motif in Jamie’s Great Britain. The bar features several national and international brands of beer on tap. The current land-lord of the establishment, a white male, is seen from the front, dreamily gazing outside of what can be supposed to be the pub’s entry or windows. The spectator’s position is very similar to the one in App. 3. Both, Jamie Oliver and the other man are presented in a medium close up, again. If you compare this to App. 4, Jamie Oliver and the people of the same, Caucasian, race are presented the same way, occupying the majority of the screen. Standing behind the bar counter, the owner has the authority to provide Jamie Oliver and the spectator with the historical background of the pub and the food that was once served there. Oliver is seen from the back. He has respectfully taken off his trucker cap and is looking at a picture from the pub’s past. In this picture within the picture, one can see the building in which the pub is located in the top right corner surrounded by a busy street with horse wagons and barrels of beer, as Jamie Oliver observes. The sequence shows Jamie Oliver doing historical research on classic British pub food giving his recent and following attempts to create new British classics a high, almost academic credibility. He comes to the conclusion that oysters, once known as the pigeons of the sea, were an everyday meal for the common British people and a classic local British ingredient. However, they have now become the food of the upper classes, a “luxury” (07:00-09:05).

In the following recipes section, Jamie combines the Vietnamese ingredients used in *Bánh mì* to create a dressing to put on the locally sourced

¹³ See App. 5.

oysters. In this way he wants to “create his own East End -street food favourite, a recipe that would have been cherished during the late nineteenth century. But [he is] going to give it a gorgeous modern spin” (09:15-09:25). In the still image¹⁴, Oliver is presented in a medium long shot sitting and preparing the food on the porch of a boat house by a river or the sea. The ingredients are surrounded by various maritime items and sit next to Jamie Oliver with the different oyster dressings on a simple wooden table in front of him looking at an imaginary person next to the camera. All these items make up the centrepiece of the picture. In the background, there are two men sitting on an anchored boat and talking to each other. Oliver is wearing a shirt with his sleeves rolled up and wellingtons to blend into the surrounding. The whole atmosphere of the scene in the picture is relaxed and maritime. The things that surround Oliver and his cooking deliver a rustic-style impression. The Vietnamese influence of this recipe is not in the focus of this recipe but only an addition to the traditional oyster dish (09:25-13:50).

For the remainder of the first episode, the storyline takes Jamie Oliver out of the East End and into Essex, in the same movement his family had undergone two generations before him. Essex with its long coastlines is introduced in a series of extreme long shots and slow cuts in order to present the beautiful, calm nature and landscape. The sea and the varieties of food it offers are presented as the main characteristics for this part of Britain. Very briefly, Jamie Oliver introduces the piers of South End-by-sea in Essex as a very lively, loud and colourful area in opposition to the aforementioned nature. Oliver associates this lifestyle with his youth spent in Essex by telling an anecdote from his adolescence. This impression from the pier in Essex, however, changes quickly back to the calm countryside when Oliver is meeting an old friend with whom he is collecting periwinkles, seafood common to the shores of the county. The still image¹⁵ shows a long shot of Jamie Oliver and his male friend at the beach. The picture is split with the sea on the top left and the land on the bottom right side. The sea is dotted with anchored sailing boats and, due to the cloudy, foggy weather, in grey colour. The beach is in a brown colour with some darker boulders on it. Simultaneously to the action of collecting periwinkles, the

¹⁴ See App. 6.

¹⁵ See App. 7.

atmosphere of the picture kept in brown and grey colours is very calm and soothing, almost mystic due to the fog. Jamie Oliver and his friend are bordering the realms of sea and land at the centre of the still image, carrying away their collection of periwinkles. Also dressed in brown and grey, the two men perfectly blend in with their surrounding. This picture stands in stark contrast to the bright and noisy atmosphere of London. It symbolises the time standing still, here, in the countryside, in Essex; whereas the constant flow of people, most of them immigrants, as the series suggests, are a reminder of the quick changes there in the big city, in the East End (27:52-32:10). It is interesting how the series works with the juxtaposition of harmonising colours, whenever the local, native food is the topic, and the bright colours which protrude during the sequences when the foreign food is on display.

To conclude the first episode, Jamie Oliver is following the series' script in preparing a feast at the end of the episode to celebrate the new, international, culinary influences that he has experienced. However, he undermines the usual storyline by not inviting the people that he has met throughout the first episode to this last sequence. The spectator, of course, does not yet realise this for it is the first episode of the series. However, this is when the series' identity concept of self and other becomes the most apparent for this trip down memory lane, as Jamie Oliver calls it, is not to be shared with anyone other than his own family. His grandmother, his mother and father are accompanying Jamie Oliver for a barbecue at an Essex beach. Oliver shares some childhood memories with his family, and the spectator. The still image¹⁶ shows an almost exact picture of the sea and the beach as the one before, but in a completely different manner. Again the sea is dotted with anchored boats and the background is filled with beach houses. The sunset creates a very warm atmosphere. Jamie Oliver and his family are presented in a medium long shot at the centre of the image. The picture of a happy family is shown with the grandmother framed by the mother and father. All of them are smiling and dressed in bright, summer-style clothing. Their style of clothing, together with the plates and wine bottles in front of and next to them, suggest a happy, festive family affair. The beach chairs, on which they are sitting, match Jamie Oliver's shirt providing a visual connection

¹⁶ See App. 8.

between him and his family. He is in front of them, occupying slightly more space in the picture, and preparing the dish. It is sea bass, cooked in aluminium foil. The props and kitchen utensils are, again, very basic and rustic-style. Interestingly, this time Oliver does not provide any historical background of the food or the cooking techniques used in the recipe. For example, he uses “British rapeseed oil”, as he mentions, but does not explain any other culinary background. Even though, there would have been plenty of possibilities given the use of lemons, vegetables, herbs and white wine not all of which, with great probability, are truly British. Apparently, at the very heart of his personal identity, his own home and family, it is not important which cultural background the food and techniques he uses belong to. In that way he appropriates experiences and recipes which he has collected throughout the series to bring them home to his family and make them their very own not providing the sources of this knowledge (38:06-45:10).

Various actors fulfil different roles and perform different acts in the process of appropriation. A more detailed description of this category will follow in the last conclusive chapter of this paper. For now, the focus is to be on the second category of appropriation: object and things that are appropriated. An array of still images from the third episode of *Jamie’s Great Britain* will be used for this purpose.

6.4 The Heart of England

The third episode of the series brings Jamie Oliver to the “heart of England, [...] famous for pork pies, Stilton cheese, Shakespeare and Black Sabbath” (02:15-02:25). Oliver associates the Midland’s identity with two culinary items, as well as with one item of high culture, Shakespeare, and one item of pop culture, Black Sabbath. Already, he sets the tone that this part of Great Britain is not directly associated with migratory influences. In contrast, one of the bigger cities in the Midlands, Leicester, “is predicted to be the first city [in Great Britain] with a non-white majority” (02:45-02:55). The first stop of the episode is a bastion of British life and a place he revisits time and time again during the series: a pub.

This sequence is highly interesting for it is a representation of the multi-directional quality of the concept of appropriation. The first still image¹⁷ from the pub with the classic name of *Paddy's Marten Inn Bar & Grill* shows a close-up of a plate of a traditional Indian dish and a pint of beer. As Jamie Oliver informs the spectator, the genius concept of the pub is to combine two things that the British love most: A good old lager and a cracking curry. These build the centre of the image. The pictured plate made of metal gives a traditional Indian impression. This goes hand in hand with the food on the plate: traditional flatbread and a curry with some lettuce, onion rings and tomatoes. Next to the plate is a pint of beer, as already mentioned. On the glass there is the trademark. It belongs to a British beer company originally founded in Burton, England. Nowadays, the ale is sold by a beer company from Chicago, Illinois in the United States. However, it is still merchandised as a traditional British trademark - another interesting aspect of the cultural appropriation of food or drink (cf. Tenth and Blake Beer Company, 2014). In front of the pint of beer, there is a modern mobile phone. The active process of eating and drinking is represented by the hand eating the food in a traditional, Indian way without cutlery and the pint of beer not being completely full. The mobile phone in front of the glass of beer offers the possibility to interpret the male customer to be a businessman or in some other position in which he would have to be reached at lunch or dinner. Beer and the concept of a pub, certainly not directly associated with India, are appropriated by the Indian-born owner of the establishment serving the traditional Indian food. The quick cuts in the restaurant show that the majority of customers are of Indian descent.

The other direction of appropriation is represented by Jamie Oliver looking around the pub's kitchen, stopping waiters to smell and taste different dishes. He is accompanied by the female owner who came to Great Britain at the age of 12, as the spectator is informed in a later part of the episode. Jamie Oliver is in the centre of the still image¹⁸, presented in medium shot. He is mixing herbs and spices to prepare a dish he is about to be taught by the female owner of the pub who is standing to Oliver's right. She is observing and correcting Jamie Oliver in the amount of spices used and the way of mixing them together. There

¹⁷ See App. 9.

¹⁸ See App. 10.

is another male chef in the right part of the picture. He inhibits no apparent role in the presented scene but in combination with the quick cuts that make up the kitchen sequence he represents the chaotic nature of the establishment that is also confirmed by Jamie Oliver's commentary. Oliver very briefly mentions that British palates are so distinguished now that they demand regional Indian dishes instead of just the national culinary concept of India. Coming back to the objects in the picture, there are a lot of plastic containers with a broad range of ingredients. They are not labelled which suggests that the chefs have to have a profound knowledge of the spices and where to find them. Also there are some fresh ingredients that are not covered. The empty plastic containers could give a hint at the establishment also having a take-away or delivery option. Jamie Oliver is using the spices and other ingredients available to create his own mixture using the advice of the knowledgeable owner. However, it is interesting to see that he is the one preparing the food and the Indian chefs are watching him, not the other way around (03:00-05:50).

In the following recipe section, Jamie Oliver is combining "beautiful British roast dinners and gutsy Asian spices" inspired by the knowledge of the British's "Indian love affair" learned in the pub in Leicester. He calls it "Empire Roast Chicken, Bombay Roasties and Amazing Indian Gravy". In this instance, Oliver expresses a point of view typical for colonising societies: The Indian sub-continent is sexualised and represented as a "love affair" and connoted with animalistic, "gutsy" features (07:15-07:33). The still image¹⁹ shows Oliver sitting at a wooden table in his converted military truck. In the back, there is the wood-burning stove where the meal has been prepared. In addition, there are burning candles, two retro water or milk cans, several books, a traditional barrel of beer, a leather bag and a lumberman's coat. All these items suggest a very natural, rustic lifestyle and communicate cooking as a romantic, masculine craft. The table carries the different parts of the meal he has just prepared: First, there is the chicken as the centre piece. It was rubbed with Indian-inspired spice mixture. There are the "Bombay Spuds", as he calls them – roasted potatoes, again with an Indian-style mixture of spices. As another Indian influence to the meal, there are several pieces of papadam to the lower left of the chicken, a

¹⁹ See App. 11.

kind of flatbread that is served with traditional Indian dishes. The chicken is served with a bowl of gravy including some Oriental spices. Plus, there are some yoghurt, vegetables and a fresh salad which are not explained in greater detail. Next to the wooden table, there are some bottles of beer. The knowledgeable spectator is able to identify a classic Central Asian beer brand and some other, internationally distributed brands. In the process of cooking, Jamie Oliver does neither explain the origins of the various spices he uses nor does he mention the Indian pub in Leicester as his big influence. The testing and eating of the newly created dish is also done first by Jamie Oliver and, later, by his film crew. The objects acquired in the chaotic, modern, urban British surrounding of the Leicester pub have now become part of Jamie Oliver's culinary repertoire and his romantic, old-fashioned, countryside environment (07:34-13:55).

6.5 The West of Scotland

The sixth and final episode of Jamie's Great Britain is of perfect use to show the different contexts the series' producers are working in and with. In three different examples the various social, spatial and temporal circumstances in which the episode takes place are to be presented.

In the sixth episode, Jamie Oliver is on a journey through parts of Scotland, an area of Great Britain that is "proud of its independent traditions [...]" (02:15-02:25). Despite the fact that Scotland is certainly not the epicentre of Great Britain, Oliver states that "even here, there are major foreign food influences" (02:26-02:33). Interestingly, there are no first-, second- or third-generation immigrants portrayed in this episode. However, it is in this of all episodes that Jamie Oliver is "proving that there is no such thing as purely British food" (02:45-02:55). In the first sequence of the episode, Oliver visits a restaurant in Glasgow introducing the restaurant's crew as "sharing his passion for taking traditional local recipes and evolving them with a twist" (03:25-03:33). In this case it is the traditional Scottish dish 'haggis'. Jamie Oliver, mentioning the Scottish independent pride very briefly, puts the meal in the Scottish cultural tradition by connecting it to the national poet Robert Burns and his poem "Address to a Haggis" (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2014c). The annually

celebrated Burns' night in order to commemorate the poet and the dish, likewise, is a central date in the Scottish cultural calendar and makes up an important part of Scottish national identity. As usual, Oliver gives a short historical introduction by explaining that the word haggis stems etymologically from the Viking invaders who might have brought the dish to Scottish shores. The temporal context for the following scene is set: It's a very traditional dish whose roots can be sourced back to "800 AD" and therefore "it is no surprise that you can still see their influence on local cooking today" (04:00-4:15). Haggis can be taken to be truly Scottish, or British in Jamie Oliver's case. In the still image²⁰, there are the restaurant's owner, who is bearing some similarities to a Viking, and Jamie Oliver, in the establishment's kitchen. It is very clean and tidy. The ingredients used in the dish are placed just next to the centre of the image: the main ingredients are the offal of the young deer lying on the kitchen counter and another "very important ingredient": the "dried berry of an allspice tree from the West Indies which is about as Scottish as reggae" (04:55-05:10), as Oliver explains. The West Indies are generalised to Jamaica which is directly connected with its most popular cultural. There is, however, no further explanation of the exact historical or spatial roots of allspice or how it came to Britain. It is taken for granted as an addition to the British cuisine. Except for the ingredients used in the haggis recipe, there is no further food in the picture. The neat kitchen stands in contradiction to the barbaric arrangement of the ingredients with a headless, wild animal presented not being typical for this series. The arrangement of the spatial setting in the picture, the very well-arranged, comparatively small meals and the atmosphere in the eating area of the restaurant are clues that this could be considered to be an upper middle-class restaurant. Jamie Oliver supports this view by illustrating how a dish, such as haggis, that was once considered to be the food of the lower classes, has evolved into a meal demanded by the upper classes for its taste, and its potential for creating a national identity (03:00-05:45).

In the next still image²¹ Jamie Oliver joins a family on a fishing boat. There are the grandfather, Jamie Oliver, the younger son, the father and the older son to be seen in the picture. The older son is wearing a wetsuit as it is used for

²⁰ See App. 12.

²¹ See App. 13.

diving. It is a masculine environment and the male who works outside to bring home the food and money. Scallops, small seafood which is harvested by diving, are the family's business. Again, Oliver makes the connection to the Vikings "who may well have caught scallops by hand and that is exactly what Hector Stuart and his family are doing" (06:55-07:05). This time, the temporal context of identity formation is not based on the national memory but on a family tradition. At least three generations, as they are pictured here, are part of this business and culinary tradition. The youngest generation, represented by the diving son, has already taken over the active act of harvesting the resources. The spatial context is different to that of a restaurant kitchen, as well. The picture is taken on an open fishing boat surrounded by the nature of the Scottish west coast. By wearing yellow wellingtons, the family is visually separated from Jamie Oliver who is handing around a bottle of Scottish whiskey. The boxes, pictured below the people are authentic proof of the boat being used for fishing and the improvised kitchen, to be seen in the lower right corner, has been installed by the film crew in order to prepare the scallops right on the boat. This emphasises the local and fresh ingredients being part of the Scottish, and therefore British, national cuisine. The romanticised surrounding of the occupation of a fisherman is used to form an identity and sense of belonging to a certain space. The social context is also created by the occupation on display. Fishermen are usually considered to be lower-middle or working class. Their occupation is associated with long hours of very strenuous work and a low salary (07:05-12:03).

The third picture from the sixth episode is taken in the home of a woman who is part of a local church group. The group of women meets to show Jamie Oliver how to prepare an "almost indestructible cannonball of dried fruit", "the Godfather of Scottish puddings" (25:10-25:17) in the form of a dumpling. Again, Oliver provokes a military connotation. The context of international influence is created by informing the spectator that preserving fruit by drying them originated in the Middle East. That the other key ingredient of the dish, treacle, could not be an addition to British kitchens without the former slave triangle which brought sugar from the West Indies to Britain, is of no concern this time. The temporal context is represented by the woman pictured above Jamie Oliver. When she tells the story of how she was hearing the plates rattle in the

kitchen when she came home from school as a girl, she would already know that they would have dumpling. She tells this story very cheerfully, clapping her hands. The way of forming an identity through a culinary item happens on a very personal level this time. The spatial context of the picture is set in a living room with the adjoining kitchen in the background. The women all gather there to have a glass of whiskey and a piece of the dumpling which they prepare for a charity event at the local church. The social context is marked by two features. The house and its interior give the impression of a middle-class home. Therefore, a third social class is presented in this sequence compared to the previous images from this episode. In addition to that, the Christian religious aspect is not to be neglected. The woman above Jamie Oliver is directly associated with the church and Christian religion by wearing a clerical collar. With some contextual background information, an attempted connection with the Church of Scotland is not improbable. The Church of Scotland is independent from the state and therefore, “[u]nlike the Church of England, [it] does not have to take orders from Parliament.” (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2011) The independent and national character of the church contributes to another aspect of identity formation (25:17-28:25).

7. Conclusion

In order to conclude this paper, a few thoughts on the concept of appropriation are needed. Further more, a short summary of the findings in *Jamie’s Great Britain* is to be given. Finally, there will be an outlook provided for further research possibilities in the field of food in the context of cultural studies. As could be seen in the chapter on cultural appropriation, the concept is a very open one. Many directions, modes and participants are possible in the process of appropriation. In order to find some structure for analysing the TV series *Jamie’s Great Britain*, a way of conceptualising three main categories of appropriation, as proposed by Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012), was attempted: actors/mediators, objects and contexts.

The category of contexts showed to be essential to the creation of identity in *Jamie’s Great Britain*. The spatial features of the presented contents, whether it is an urban area or the countryside, evoke connotations within the spectator

which can be intensified by the motion picture's technology. The temporal issue, no matter whether the family history or past events in a person's life, are an important influence on current everyday occurrences. The social belonging to a church group, for example, or the identification with a social class, as well as historical events, are identity-forming. For the identity of an individual or a group, it is inevitable to observe the contexts given. The established identity, henceforth, is the groundwork of appropriation for the process always takes place from one cultural context to another or the other way around. In the case of Jamie Oliver, it is not so much the religious context he pictures himself in but a working class one. Throughout the series, Oliver is trying to convince the spectator that he still is part of the working class. "However, if Jamie's fame and fortune has left him out of touch with the common man, it's hard to tell from this series [...] and it's clear he has still got the gift of the gab (or he's very good at faking it)" (Dean, 2012).

The appropriated objects are very telling about the process itself. They are the visible evidence which can be detected when searching for cultural appropriation. The movement of culinary items from one culture to the next can be researched by analysing historical menus, recipes or other cultural artefacts. In the case of Great Britain and its culinary history, Panikos Panayi (2008) has done marvellous work in this field with his publication *Spicing up Britain*. Again, it is important to note that appropriation is multi-directional as was seen in the case of the Leicester pub which offers Indian curry and British beer in the same establishment.

The actors are conducting and undergoing the process of appropriation at the same time. One possibility is that they are the ones moving from one cultural context to another, forced or voluntarily, taking their food habits with them and introducing them to a new group of recipients. They, then, have the possibility of appropriating the new influences for their own culinary and cultural routine. A second possibility is appropriation through mediators, such as Jamie Oliver in the presented series. He actively explores other food cultures within Great Britain in search for his version of a British food identity. The findings within the three episodes analysed support this view. The methodological split of the three categories expresses its usefulness only in providing the paper with a coherent structure. The analysis itself showed that the three categories

intermingle to a very great extent within the images analysed and can hardly be observed in a strict division from each other.

A clear result of the analysis, however, is that Oliver is taking different foreign experiences making them part of his own food culture and therefore food identity. In another step, he declares these newly created recipes, a melange of foreign and local ingredients and habits, to be relevant for a Great British food identity. Therefore, the thesis introduced in the first chapter of this paper can be substantiated. Jamie Oliver makes the successful attempt to create a new British food identity within his series *Jamie's Great Britain*.

The research on the topic of Great British food has been manifold and very often aims into the same direction as this paper has done. In the case of this particular series it is a valid question when Feldmann (2012) states whether “[t]he claim that foreign influences on ‘national cuisines’ were strong even in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is in itself convincing – but was food really perceived as having a nationality at that time, or is this an anachronistic projection” (Feldmann, 2012:40)? It would be a mistake to deregulate the analysis of food-related cultural product to the sphere of (national) identity. The approach of combining different fields of research into a wider area of food studies can only be supported. Another possible step would be to do a comparative analysis of either different cooking series with the subject of British food or different series created by Jamie Oliver. The first option would lead deeper into the topic of the British cuisine and its representation. The second option would be a critical analysis of how Jamie Oliver forms a certain discourse about food in combination with different concepts, such as gender, within his productions.

No matter whether Great Britain will turn away from the European Union or Scotland will gain independence from the United Kingdom, the continuing process of globalisation is going to produce more and more fuzzy boundaries. There is certainly no turning away from the multicultural influences of the former colonies and beyond. Appreciating and, at the same time, acknowledging the cultural sources of these contributions are the first steps towards a more open and pluralistic society. Public figures, such as Jamie Oliver, can influence this process to a great extent.

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Deutschsprachige Zusammenfassung

Im Jahr 2014 kulminierten bisher die britischen Bestrebungen zur Definition einer deutlicheren Identität in zwei Ereignissen: Zum einen erzielte die europafeindliche Partei *UKIP* bei den Europawahlen im Mai 2014 einen Wahlsieg gegen die etablierten Parteien im Vereinigten Königreich. Dieses Ergebnis verleiht der wachsenden Europaskepsis der Briten einen besonderen Nachdruck. Zum anderen wird im September 2014 die Bevölkerung Schottlands über einen möglichen Austritt aus dem Vereinigten Königreich per Referendum entscheiden. Die klare Definition der britischen Identität ist seit jeher ein stark diskutiertes und schwieriges Thema (vgl. Cohen, 1995:1). Festzustellen ist, dass es nach der Einwanderungswelle aus ehemals britischen Kolonien während der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts nicht länger möglich ist von einer weißen, britischen Identität zu sprechen, wie es zum Teil heute noch gerne von der xenophoben Rechten des Landes betrieben wird. Diese vielschichtigen Veränderungen der Gesellschaft rufen einen gesteigerten Bedarf nach klaren Grenzen innerhalb und außerhalb Großbritanniens hervor. Dass diese Grenzziehungen nicht nur politisch, sondern auch kulturell motiviert sind und in kulturellen Produkten Ausdruck finden, zeigt u. a. die Fernsehserie *Jamie's Great Britain*, die im Jahr 2011 vom privaten Fernsehsender *Channel 4* ausgestrahlt wurde. Öffentliche Figuren haben durch ihre Medienpräsenz einen starken Einfluss auf den Diskurs der nationalen Identität. Jamie Oliver ist seit seiner ersten, eigenen Fernsehendung im Jahr 2000 zu einem der einflussreichsten Köche Großbritanniens avanciert. Neben der Produktion zahlreicher Kochsendungen und den dazugehörigen Büchern engagiert sich Oliver aktiv für politische Themen, wie etwa eine gesündere Verpflegung an öffentlichen, britischen Schulen und die Rechte der britischen Bauern im Zusammenhang mit einer von der Europäischen Union (EU) regulierten Landwirtschaftspolitik. Zuletzt fiel Oliver bei seiner Arbeit immer wieder durch Äußerungen gegen die EU auf. Vor diesem Hintergrund wird der Untersuchungsgegenstand der vorliegenden Arbeit noch interessanter. Der zuweilen kontrovers diskutierte Fernsehkoch Jamie Oliver bereist in der

Sendung *Jamie's Great Britain* verschiedene Regionen der britischen Insel, auf der Suche nach der kulinarischen Identität Großbritanniens und die durch Kolonialisierung, Einwanderung und Globalisierung neu gewonnenen Einflüsse auf die Küche des Landes. Die sechs Folgen der Serie sind dabei in Titel und Thema an diese verschiedenen Regionen gebunden. Die Auswahl und Benennung der Regionen ist durchaus kreativ, kann aber auch in einer kritischen Betrachtungsweise als willkürlich und künstlich bezeichnet werden. Innerhalb der Folgen ist ein klarer Erzählstrang erkennbar. Jamie Oliver gibt zunächst eine kurze Einführung in die Sendung und die aktuelle Folge. Er begibt sich im weiteren Verlauf auf die Suche nach den internationalen, neuen Einflüssen auf die britische Küche. Dies geschieht meist in den Großstädten, die in der Darstellungsweise der Sendung fast ausschließlich von Immigranten geprägt sind. In einem weiteren Abschnitt erkundet Oliver die lokalen, mit dem Land verwurzelten Zutaten und kulinarischen Traditionen des jeweiligen Landstrichs, zumeist in einer ländlichen, romantisieren Umgebung. In einem dritten Schritt führt Jamie Oliver die gewonnen Erkenntnisse und Inspiration in einem von ihm kreierten Rezept zusammen. Im finalen Abschnitt bereitet Oliver eine Art Festessen für alle Beteiligten der jeweiligen Folge vor. Hier kommen die verschiedenen Kulturen, internationale und ‚typisch‘ britische zusammen, verkosten und bewerten Jamie Olivers neue Kreationen (vgl. Liang, 2014). Ein erster Eindruck der Sendung ruft die These hervor, dass Jamie Oliver mit seiner Sendung *Jamie's Great Britain* einen Versuch unternimmt, die britische kulinarische Identität durch kulturelle Aneignung neu zu definieren.

Die Literatur zum Thema *Essen* erstreckt sich über die verschiedensten Fachbereiche und ist mittlerweile zahlreich vorhanden. Auch die Kulturwissenschaft und Medienwissenschaft verschreiben sich diesem Untersuchungsfeld mit zunehmendem Interesse. Den kulturellen Produkten des Fernsehens, im Allgemeinen, und Jamie Olivers, im Speziellen, kommt dabei aufgrund des relativ gesehen noch recht jungen Mediums ein kleiner, aber wachsender Anteil der Forschungsliteratur zu.

Die vorliegende Arbeit möchte die formulierte These an einer Auswahl einzelner Bildern zeigen, die drei der sechs Folgen der Serie entnommen sind. Diese werden einer kritischen audio-visuellen und semiotischen Analyse unterzogen. Bei den verwendeten Folgen handelt es sich um die erste, dritte

und sechste Folge. Somit soll erreicht werden, dass eine vielseitige Darstellung möglicher Ergebnisse geschehen kann. Eine Analyse aller sechs Folgen ist aufgrund des begrenzten Rahmens der Arbeit nicht möglich. Die Auswertung der Ergebnisse zeigt jedoch, dass die Beschränkung auf drei Folgen bei der Untersuchung der These kein Hindernis darstellt. Zusätzlich werden weitere Ereignisse, die die jeweilige Szene begleiten, beschrieben und einer kritischen Betrachtung unterzogen.

Der theoretische Hintergrund der Arbeit ist durch die Arbeit von Ziff & Rao (1997) gegeben. Diese beschreiben hier den Vorgang der *Cultural Appropriation*, bei dem kulturelle Objekte aus einer Kultur übernommen werden, die nicht die eigene ist (vgl. Ziff & Rao, 1997:1). *Cultural Appropriation* ist dabei ein wechselseitiges und sehr offenes Konzept. Die transferierten Objekte können vielzählig und -seitig sein: Es handelt sich nicht nur um Objekte im eigentlichen materiellen Sinne, sondern auch um Handlungsweisen, Techniken, Organisationsprinzipien u. ä. (vgl. Ziff & Rao, 1997:1ff.). Konkretisiert wurde das Konzept von Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012). Teile ihrer theoretischen Überlegungen sollen auch in der vorliegenden Arbeit Verwendung finden. Huck & Bauernschmidt (2012) finden für den Vorgang der *Cultural Appropriation* drei verschiedenen Kategorien. Erstens sprechen sie von *actors/mediators*, den am Prozess beteiligten Akteuren. Den *mediators* kommt, da sie sich in beiden Kulturen bewegen, dabei die besondere Funktion der Übermittlertätigkeit zu. Zweitens beschreibt die Kategorie der *things* oder *objects*, wie oben beschrieben, die transferierten Objekte, wie oben beschrieben. Drittens geschieht der Prozess der *Cultural Appropriation* in bestimmten *contexts*. Diese Kontexte können lokaler, temporaler oder auch soziologischer Natur sein (vgl. Huck & Bauernschmidt, 2012:232ff.).

Die Analyse des Materials zeigt, dass Akteure, Objekte und Kontexte in der Sendung bewusst oder unbewusst eingesetzt werden, um die britische kulinarische Identität zu hierarchisieren. Die Darstellungsweise ist dabei eurozentrisch. Beispielsweise bekommen Akteure mit weißer Hautfarbe und somit traditioneller britischer Abstammung eine größere Bildschirmpräsenz zugesprochen als britische Bürger, die ehemaligen Kolonien entstammen. Zutaten und Traditionen, die eindeutig nicht dem Boden oder der Geschichte der britischen Insel entspringen, werden zwar in ihrer Herkunft erläutert aber

automatisch durch Jamie Oliver und andere weiße Akteure vereinnahmt und zu britischem Eigentum erklärt. Dies geschieht in den verschiedenartigen Kontexten. Wie schon erläutert, werden die Immigranten oft mit dem lauten Durcheinander der Großstadt in Verbindung gebracht, währenddessen die klassischen, britischen Akteure und Objekte oft mit einem ruhigen, romantisierten Landleben assoziiert werden. Die temporalen Kontexte berufen sich meist auf Anekdoten oder historische Erläuterungen der Akteure oder des *mediator* Jamie Oliver. Diese können auf einer nationalen, regionalen oder persönlichen Ebene stattfinden. Die soziologischen Hintergründe beschränken sich verstärkt auf die Klassenzugehörigkeit. Dabei werden alle sozialen Klassen, von der *upper class* bis zur *working class*, abgebildet. Jamie Oliver, dessen Eltern eine Gastwirtschaft im Südosten Großbritanniens betreiben, ist ursprünglich wohl der *middle class* zuzurechnen. Aufgrund seines sozialen Aufstiegs kann er mittlerweile jedoch als Mitglied der *upper class* bezeichnet werden. Durch Kleidung und Sprache als zwei audio-visuelle Distinktionsmerkmale, inszeniert er sich allerdings vorzugsweise als *working class*.

Die gewonnenen Erkenntnisse führen zu einer Bestätigung der eingangs formulierten These. Jamie Oliver vereinnahmt die internationalen Einflüsse der ehemaligen Kolonien Großbritanniens für seine Kochrezepte und für die Kreation einer neuen britischen kulinarischen Identität. Weitere Forschung könnte im Kontext der kulinarischen Identität noch weitere zusätzliche Produkte des Mediums Fernsehen und Kino analysieren. Es ist jedoch auch denkbar, dass die kulturellen Erzeugnisse Jamie Olivers auf andere Mechanismen von Repräsentation hin untersucht werden. Ein breites Feld würde sich hier beispielsweise für die *Gender Studies* ergeben.

Appendix

App. 1 (DVD cover, front)



App. 2 (Episode 1, 01:50)



App. 3 (Episode 1, 04:32)



App. 4 (Episode 1, 06:31)



App. 5 (Episode 1, 08:58)



App. 6 (Episode 1, 13:42)



App. 7 (Episode 1, 32:05)



App. 8 (Episode 1, 39:30)



App. 9 (Episode 3, 05:45)



App. 10 (Episode 3, 05:16)



App. 11 (Episode 3, 13:39)



App. 12 (Episode 6, 04:12)



App. 13 (Episode 6, 11:39)



App. 14 (Episode 6, 28:07)



Erklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbstständig und ohne fremde Hilfe angefertigt und keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet habe.

Die eingereichte schriftliche Fassung entspricht der auf dem elektronischen Speichermedium.

Weiterhin versichere ich, dass diese Arbeit noch nicht als Abschlussarbeit an anderer Stelle vorgelegen hat.

01.09.2014 Hermann Dzingel