

# “Paul and Mary Would Like You to Bake”: Heritage Television, Englishness, and an Idealized Multicultural National Identity

Caroline Kjærulff 

## Introduction

It has been six years since the 2016 referendum on Britain’s continued membership of the European Union, the referendum commonly known as ‘Brexit’. The ten years or so leading up to the referendum saw an increased focus on what has been described as a ‘nostalgic rhetoric ... emphasising particular tropes around the Second World War, Empire, and the “reinstatement of British Sovereignty”’ (Gaston and Hilhorst 16). As well as in the rhetoric leading up to the Brexit referendum, these tropes feature(d) heavily in popular culture, and are as popular as ever, with films such as *Darkest Hour* (2017), *Victoria and Abdul* (2017), and *Emma* (2020) (the latest in a long stream of Jane Austen adaptations), and series such as *Downton Abbey* (2010-2015), *Victoria* (2016-2019), and *Bridgerton* (2020-) centred on (or in) Britain’s imperial past. It becomes quite clear that the divorce from the European Union has been accompanied by films and TV series that both portray a glamorous take on imperial achievements, and celebrate the role of Britain in the Second World War and the myth of British courage and exceptionalism (Clini 704).

As it has been established by Benedict Anderson, the construction of the ‘imagined community’ of a nation, and thereby national identity, rests upon a mutual understanding of a shared past (196). Therefore, cultural contributions such as *The Great British Bake Off* (BBC 2010-2015, Channel 4 2017-) play a vital part in the renegotiation of national identity. In a time of devolution and fragmentation in the UK, the TV show plays into the elements of heritage film and imperial nostalgia and especially all things considered ‘English’: however, the show also attempts to include a more diverse representation of the British people, and recreate a national identity that leaves more space for ethnic minorities. The popularity of *The Great British Bake Off* indicates that it has an important influence on how the British people perceive their past, and subsequently how they perceive their present and themselves. In this article, I argue that the TV show *The Great British Bake Off* resembles heritage television visually and in content and that it portrays an idealized form

of British multicultural national identity. This identity, it is further claimed, is based on a post-imperial nostalgia that is linked to an emergent sense of English identity, or Englishness, in the context of Brexit.

### Methodology

This article will focus on season 6 (2015) of *The Great British Bake Off*. I chose this particular season because the ethnic minority contestants of this season stayed in the competition the longest which increased the amount of source material. To examine how *The Great British Bake Off* resembles heritage film and how it portrays an idealized multicultural national identity, I have initially focused on Benedict Anderson's definition of national identity as an 'imagined community', and Paul Gilroy's definition of postimperial nostalgia in Britain, as well as introduced background information on multiculturalism in Britain. I have linked these theories on national identity with theories on heritage film by Claire Monk, Jerome de Groot, and Andrew Higson, and concluded that heritage film works as a medium of reconstructing national identity, in particular English national identity. Secondly, I have analysed *The Great British Bake Off* as heritage TV with a focus on the setting, the cast, and the baking challenges. Additionally, I have analysed how the contestants with an ethnic minority heritage are combining their heritage with the English baking challenges, and how the show portrays an idealized version of multiculturalism. I have especially drawn on ideas proposed by Peri Bradley and Jorie Lagerwey in the articles 'More Cake Please – We're British! Locating British Identity in Contemporary TV Food Texts, *The Great British Bake Off* and *Come Dine With Me*' and '*The Great British Bake Off*, joy, and the affective potential of Nadiya Hussain's amateur celebrity' respectively. Lastly, I have discussed the connection between food culture and multiculturalism, and how *GBBO*<sup>1</sup> tries to combine the past 'glory' of England with the present (multicultural) reality of Britain. It would have been interesting to compare with other countries' versions of *GBBO* but that is beyond the scope of this article.

## Literature and theory

### *The Great 'British' Bake Off* or *The Great 'English' Bake Off*

This nostalgic rhetoric in popular culture plays into an overreaching theme of constructing a British national identity in a country where the 'traditional pillars of Britishness have collapsed' (McQuaid 230) in the wake of the end of the Empire and political devolution. An increasing number of people define themselves as 'English', 'Scottish', 'Irish', or 'Welsh' over 'British' (McQuaid 230) but

---

<sup>1</sup>This shortening will be used interchangeably with the full title.

interestingly, a 2018 YouGov poll suggests that English people are more likely to identify strongly as both British and English (Easton). Additionally, ethnic minorities in England are less likely to identify as English and more likely to identify as British (Easton). Traditionally, ‘Englishness’ and ‘Britishness’ have been intertwined, and the English themselves ‘have a hard time distinguishing between what might be considered a British and an English identity’ (Thomson 147). ‘Many would argue that the distinction itself is impossible to make’ as the English have a history of imposing their culture on the rest of the UK (Thomson 146). A great deal of what continues to define the English appears to be rooted in history and cultural heritage; ‘Englishness is often argued to be expressed most clearly in Romantic literature ..., landscape gardening, country cottages and villages ..., five-o’clock-tea, and Jane Austen-inspired renditions of country manor life’ (Thomson 147). Many of these elements are also featured heavily in heritage film, a ‘genre’ that is said to be particularly English, as well as in the TV show *The Great British Bake Off*, which I will return to later. The name of the show, *The Great British Bake Off*, indicates that it is linked to a British identity, but I would argue that it is more English than anything else as there are no elements of Scottishness or Welshness included in the format (except for a Scottish contestant), and because of the strong links between Englishness, Britishness, and the heritage film format. Additionally, the English have an incentive to (re-)construct an English national identity in the face of devolution and fragmentation within the UK and in relation to Brexit, but also try to make it appear British because of the same reasons; to unite the country in the wake of these divisions.

### **National identity, multiculturalism, and postimperial nostalgia**

Benedict Anderson is central to a discussion of the theoretical framework behind national identity. He established, as mentioned earlier, in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) that the construction of the ‘imagined community’ of a nation rests upon mutual understanding of a shared past (Anderson 196). As he puts it, the nation is ‘imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Anderson 6). This all situates to what is described as a ‘horizontal comradeship’ (Anderson 6-7) in which all members share a certain set of features, establishing a bond of national coherence. The ‘horizontal comradeship’ embodies a shared language, shared traditions and values, and a shared history; some of which can be quite difficult to attain in a multicultural society as seen in the political debate on integration and multiculturalism that has taken place in Britain over the last 20 years (Mason 23). Important factors in the ‘creation’ of national identity are, among others, the spread of mass vernacular literacy and the emergence of printing press capitalism (Anderson 40). According to Anderson, media makes the people of a nation aware of their fellow citizens’ shared

experiences and heritage, and it reinforces this imagined community through representation and repetition – which is why there have been ‘heated debates about the lack of representation of minorities on British TV and in British film’ (Rahbek 135). It is the media that has the ability to present Britain with what ‘appears to be a cohesive and unified national identity’ (Bradley 13).

Multiculturalism itself is difficult to define but Andrew Mason argues that it is ‘best characterised as the public recognition or accommodation of minority cultures’ (24). British national identity has long been intertwined with the idea, or reality, of multiculturalism, and a central characteristic of ‘modern’ British culture is the celebration of multiculturalism (Rahbek 115, 135). However, even though Britain’s non-white population is highly visible; one could argue that the ‘celebration’ of multiculturalism is an ideal rather than reality. This links back to the debate on the lack of representation in film and TV; but also to the political debate on how multiculturalism in Britain has supposedly failed as ‘different cultures [have been encouraged] to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream’ (Cameron) instead of integrating into mainstream British culture.

The wave of immigration most relevant for this article – which is one of many – is the immigrants who arrived after the Second World War between 1948 and 1962 during the period of the open-door policy in the UK (Rahbek 131). In reality, they were not actual immigrants but ‘people from Britain’s (former) colonies in the Caribbean and South Asia and holders of British passports, secured for them through the British Nationality Act (1948)’ (Rahbek 131). Consequently, multiculturalism and diversity is largely a product of Britain’s long imperial and international history, and, while modern British culture celebrates multiculturalism, it is also largely associated with the loss of Empire and the decline and gradual break-up of the UK (Fish 64). Paul Gilroy argues in *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (2004) that postimperial Britishness is melancholic as the nation never could face or mourn the profound change in circumstances and moods that followed the end of the Empire and imperial prestige (98). He argues further that ‘the shock and anxiety that followed from a loss of any sense that the national collective was bound by a coherent and distinctive culture’ has led to ‘postimperial nostalgia’ (Gilroy ‘After’ 98) to which he adds in the article ‘From a Colonial Past to a New Multiculturalism’ that

unable to adjust to the presence of semi-strangers who, disarmingly, knew British culture intimately as a result of their colonial education, and who represented a vanished pre-eminence ... the country developed a melancholic attachment to its lost imperial past (Gilroy 2).

This failure of mourning and subsequent difficulties reconciling with the uncomfortable parts of history has allowed space for a deep nostalgia for the Empire, which Clelia Clini argues can be seen embedded in both pre- and post-Brexit politics and British popular culture (707). Thus, it is not surprising that *The Great British Bake Off* ‘gained its popularity at a time when the English sense of ethnicity suffers from a “loss and mourning for the cultural unity and centrality they once had”’ (Baena and Byker 261).

### **National identity and heritage film**

As with national identity, history is constructed and reconstructed time and time again (de Groot 2). It is commonly accepted that heritage film is a particularly English way of reconstructing the past though it is often of international origin. In fact, Claire Monk argues that they have ‘characteristically been products of international funding, migrancy or collaboration’ (‘The British’ 77) and they are, more often than not, ‘a saleable product, a national cultural brand that would be marketable outside of the UK’ (de Groot 224).

Heritage TV draws on the concept of heritage film, first defined by film critic Charles Barr in 1986, with reference to certain patriotic British films of the 1940s. Barr identifies these films as not necessarily being set in a specific historic past but instead as constructing a narrative that drew upon aspects of ‘national identity’ in order to emphasize a British identity that was capable of supporting the war effort (Monk ‘The British’ 187, Monk ‘Heritage’ 11). Later definitions of this concept from academics, particularly Robert Hewison and Patrick Wright, focused on critiquing it, heavily inspired by the criticism of Margaret Thatcher’s ideological imperatives in the 1980s that saw the National Heritage Acts of 1980 and 1983 (Bradley 10) which ‘set in statute Thatcherism’s wider official national promotion of a heritage industry defined by the preservation of the landscapes and private-built properties of the past’ (Monk ‘The British’ 187). The Thatcher years also coincided with an international capitalist recession that ‘accelerated Britain’s decline as a world economic power’, as well as ‘the growth of multinational enterprises, including the European Community’, and an increasingly multicultural British society (Higson 93). The ‘heritage films’ were seen as supporting a British identity firmly rooted in the past and notions of Empire (Bradley 10), and were perceived by its critics to operate in connection with other strategic organisations such as the National Trust, which by,

preserving the private property of the upper classes had a hegemonic effect of constructing and maintaining a particular dominant conception of the national past – and national heritage – which, it was argued, worked to naturalise public acceptance of

the values and interests of the propertied classes as national values and the national interest (Monk 'Heritage' 11).

By presenting a romanticised and idyllic representation of British identity, which related back to a time when Britain was a powerful global force, heritage films became part of political and ideological discourse. This discourse was designed to convince a dissatisfied voting public – not unlike the voting public at the beginning of the 21st century – that a return to the values of an earlier and more prosperous era would mean a return to the same prosperity and global status (Bradley 11). For this reason, heritage films have often been seen as offering a 'psychological remedy for a Britain characterized by an acute sense of old values slipping away' (Rix 44).

Andrew Higson, the academic most consistently cited in relation to the heritage film debate, argues in his seminal essay 'Re-Presenting the National Past: Nostalgia and Pastiche in the Heritage Film' (originally from 1993 but updated and republished in 2006) that heritage film often centres around a range of 'tropes' that promotes an upper- (or in some cases, middle) class vision of 'the national past' organised around 'Englishness' (91). Additionally, the 'manor aesthetic', attention to period detail and use of splendid landscape scenes add to this notion of 'quality', as heritage films 'turn away from modernity toward a traditional conservative pastoral Englishness' as well as the 'hi-tech, special-effects dominated aesthetics of mainstream popular media' (Higson 95). They prefer the 'intimacy of the period piece', although with added 'visual splendour' (Higson 95). Heritage films are, in compliance with the Thatcher ideology, 'fascinated by private property' and the 'cultures and values' of the propertied class (Higson 96). This fascination converted into an ideological function is what transforms the 'heritage of the upper class into national heritage' and 'nostalgically construct an imperialist and upper-class Britain' (Higson 93, 96).

Whilst the underlying conservatism is evident, Jerome de Groot argues that heritage film is, in their later manifestations, 'flexible and innovative' and that 'the dramatic representation of the past can emphasize a comfortable, easy set of recognisable "heritage" tropes; at the same time, it can also be problematic or challenging' (223). This broader approach to heritage films allows a more nuanced understanding of the models of the past which are being consumed. Claire Monk has also repeatedly defended the genre ('Heritage', 'The British', 'Sexuality'), and in the article 'Sexuality and Heritage', she argues that heritage film often gives more centrality and screen time (and thereby agency) to female and gay characters than mainstream cinema (33).

This idea of political and ideological discourse being dispersed through media is hardly new (and it fit perfectly as a continuation of Anderson's theory of imagined communities), and *GBBO*, which could otherwise be 'easily overlooked as both harmless and ineffectual' (Bradley 11), can be

revealed as working in the same manner as heritage films; as ‘heritage films ... share common ideological and “national” traits’ and so it ‘seems more useful to conceive of these “heritage” characteristics as pan-generic, potentially present across a range of period genres’ (Monk ‘The British’ 192). Most importantly, with regard to this article, this raises the possibility that heritage film and their ideological functions – per Charles Barr’s original intent – ‘are not specific to films set in the past’ (Monk ‘Heritage’ 192). As a continuation of this argument, it is certainly possible to argue that *GBBO* in many ways acts as a heritage TV and that the show in terms of it being a form of heritage TV, closely related to heritage film, operates in a cultural and socio-political manner.

### ***The Great British Bake Off* as heritage television**

*The Great British Bake Off* is a televised baking competition, where twelve amateur bakers compete against each other in a series of ten rounds, attempting to impress the judges, Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood. The show was produced by Love Productions for the BBC (2010-2016) where it aired first on BBC Two and the three latest seasons on BBC One<sup>2</sup>. One contestant is eliminated in each round and the winner is selected from the three who reach the final. The creator of the show, Anna Beattie, was inspired by traditional English village fêtes and old-fashioned baking competitions (Carpenter). The series is presented by the giddy comedic duo Sue Perkins and Mel Giedroyc, and it is wildly popular in the UK as well as abroad. The concept had been licensed to 20 territories and the UK version of the show sold to 196 territories in 2015 (Plunkett ‘Great’), and it is even more popular today with American distribution sold to Netflix (*The Great British Baking Show*) (Arthur). To put it briefly, *GBBO* has been hugely successful in selling ‘Britishness’ to the world – a distinctive characteristic of heritage film – and it has often been described as the new *Downton Abbey* (Whyman, Bradley 10, Nguyen). The popularity of the show might be directly related to its success in cultivating a particular kind of nostalgia in its British viewers and even in its wider international following, which is why I will argue that it acts as heritage TV. The fact that other countries wish to produce their own version of the show is also very interesting as it indicates that the format has the potential to be modified into an arena of recreation of national identity in an array of countries.

Heritage film and TV have over the years become ‘part of the key televisual furniture for the BBC, a cornerstone of its drive to “quality” and central to its scheduling’ (de Groot 225). The notion of ‘quality’ generally refers to the production value of a televisual product and can in many instances include potential as ‘heritage export’ (de Groot 225).

---

<sup>2</sup> The format was sold to Channel 4 in 2017.

### Location and set design

*The Great British Bake Off* fosters the aforementioned postimperial nostalgia in its audience in many ways, and initially, its location and setting will be explored as central to the classification as heritage TV. The show presents an idyllic picture of land-owning, upper-class England, one that immediately links back to heritage film and a ‘national identity that upholds traditional values and a stable national economy’ (Bradley 10). Jerome de Groot argues that ‘[h]istory as a backdrop and setting for comedy and lightweight drama is a minor, although influential, strand of television programming’ and that ‘[t]hese shows have an ability to create and sustain received ideas, caricatures, and visual imagination of a historical period’ (237). It is definitely possible to argue that *The Great British Bake Off* works as a comedy with lightweight drama. Regular viewers know that the show is famous for its puns and innuendos; one of the most famous ones being the constant dread of the ‘soggy bottom’ (Romeo). The presenters, Mel and Sue<sup>3</sup> are in charge of always keeping the atmosphere light-hearted even in the wake of a baking crisis. Jerome de Groot further argues that ‘historical comedy and light drama are more influential than adaptation or serious docudrama’ as ‘they have a wider reach’ and ‘a very much broader demographic audience’ (de Groot 237).

While the show is a reality TV show and not fiction, it still has a sort of anachronistic historical setting. All of the seasons (except the first two) are set in a historical space with links to the English heritage tradition. The geographical location is not directly mentioned, perhaps to encourage a sense of timelessness. However, the sixth season is set on the grounds of Welford Park in Berkshire (Vincent), and the grand estate is shown off in numerous establishing shots throughout each episode, communicating the ‘visual splendour’ element vital to heritage film. The audience is invited to indulge in the period setting and enjoy its nostalgic value. Aesthetically, the production value is high, in line with the ‘quality’ aspect of the heritage drama. The visual polish sets it apart from the ‘surveillance footage’ and handheld camera aspect of some reality TV (Lagerway 450).

The mise-en-scène of the show is designed to emphasize a strong sense of English national identity rooted in the past; the visual aesthetic of the large white marquee on the grounds of a stately home immediately invokes a sense of luxury and class. It allows the audience to return to a time when ‘Britain was “Great” and British identity was structured and stable’ (Bradley 19). Inside the baking tent, the nostalgic theme of imperial Englishness is also evident. There is Union Jack bunting all around the windows, the ‘retro’ appliances are all in pastel colours and have the old-school, mid-century rounded corners and horizontal chrome handles, and china sets decorate the shelves in the background. The mise-en-scène of the tent has more of an ‘English village aesthetic’

---

<sup>3</sup> The presenters, contestants and judges will be referred to by their first names as they are on the show.



whereas the location has more of a ‘manor aesthetic’. The mix of ‘styles’ within the heritage film contributes to the sense of timelessness and invokes the sense of an undefined English past.

The philosopher and writer Tom Whyman writes that ‘[a]t first glance, “The Great British Baking Show” seems as though it must be a recruitment video for membership in some twee and cutesy new reboot of the Empire’, and Potter and Westhall have similarly pointed out that *The Great British Bake Off* relies heavily on ‘an amnesia-inducing pastiche of imperial mythology and wartime nostalgia’ and ‘Britain’s saleable version of pastoral Englishness’ (158, 161). The show emphasizes the nostalgic notion of Englishness and the sanitised notion of Empire to a degree that place it securely within the framework of the heritage film.

### **The cast of *The Great British Bake Off***

The permanent cast of *The Great British Bake Off* (2010-2016) consists of judges Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood, and presenters Sue Perkins and Mel Giedroyc. The elderly Mary Berry ‘stands in as a signifier of the monarchy’ with her ‘received pronunciation’ and ‘similar bearing of power and authority, albeit in the field of cooking rather than sovereignty’ (Bradley 19). Paul Hollywood brings in a touch of the common people to the show with ‘his tempered Merseyside accent’ (Bradley 19). Mel and Sue are a comedic duo with kind and innuendo based humour that perfectly fits the ‘light-hearted, middle class address of the programme’ (Bradley 19).

The contestants are carefully cast to encompass a diverse and authentic portrayal of a multicultural Britain with contestants offering a range of national and regional accents as well as ethnic, racial, and sexual identities: the season six contestants are of English, Scottish, Lithuanian, Caribbean, Philippine, Bangladeshi and Indian descent. This is consistent with Claire Monk’s claim that although heritage film is traditional and conservative, ‘modern’ heritage film will often engage with the stories of ‘minorities’, which I will return to later. In the sixth season, the contestants are spread across the middle class with little representation of the upper class and no representation of the working class. The contestants are either self-employed, employed, studying, retired, or a stay-at-home-parent.

One of the most recognisable signifiers of heritage film is the portrayal of class society. Chris Behan argues that the traditional village fête was an English tradition, not a British tradition. The traditional English fête was an outdoors public charity arrangement, and typically a middle- or upper-class endeavour as it was arranged by women who volunteered their time and resources (Behan). The fêtes often included games and baking competitions, and *GBBO* greatly resembles the phenomenon it was inspired by as the cast is mainly middle-class people who have the time and resources to participate. This is also seen in the ingredients used; Ian for example, a travel

photographer, often includes ingredients such as guinea fowl eggs ('Pastry'), calvados ('Pastry'), and homegrown rosemary ('Biscuits'), ingredients that emphasize economic resources and time to spare. Baking, which has long been part of middle-class institutions such as the Women's Institute, has come to signify domestic skill, quality, and leisure time (Bradley 20). Everything in the show, from setting to cast, indicates that in *GBBO*, baking is meant to be associated with pleasure and pastime.

Another marker of the upper- or middle class and the 'quality aesthetic' is the absence of prizes. The winner does not receive a cash prize, a TV deal, or any other form of offer of professionalization. The lack of prizes underlines that participation in *GBBO* is a leisure activity for the contestants and that they do not want anything other than the experience. The emphasis is instead on community and the friendship that is built among the contestants and the presenters as they go through the trials and challenges of the season. This is highlighted at the end of each episode, as the contestants hug each other, '[reconstruct] the community and [console] the often-tearful losing baker' (Lagerway 451). Although they compete against each other, the contestants are portrayed as members of a unified group who have great respect for each other and work towards the same goal. Peri Bradley argues that the 'essence of the show therefore emulates an earlier time in British history when the war effort required everyone to try their best and overcome difference in order to function effectively as a nation' (22). This again restates how the notions of heritage and national identity operate in the show, where a 'sense of nostalgia returns the audience to an era that upheld the delineation of the classes as a proficient means of reproducing a cohesive British identity that was closely allied to the idea of Empire' (Bradley 22).

### **The baking challenges**

Each episode of the show has a specific theme and is divided up into four segments; three baking challenges, and a historical documentary interlude that explains the history of one of the bakes in depth. The challenges consist of the signature, the technical, and the showstopper, and the challenges often centralise Englishness. The signature challenge should express 'the baker's personality' and look 'cute, rustic, and home-made', while the technical is an unknown challenge, and the showstopper calls for a 'professional standard in taste and appearance' ('About the Show'). Especially in the signature and showstopper challenges, the contestants are supposed to express their individuality and personality to impress the judges.

In episode one of season six, Paul and Mary ask the contestants to bake a Madeira cake in the signature; a traditional English sponge cake from the mid-1800s (Ayto). Mary Berry states that their cakes should not differ too far from the classic ('Cakes' 00:03:40), emphasising that personality

and individuality are important, but it is more important to uphold (baking) traditions. Another example of a theme that centralises Englishness was the second episode of the season where the theme was ‘Biscuits’, an essential part of the ‘humble teatime tradition’ (Frost) which is still a big part of British culture. The afternoon ‘cuppa’ is ‘a uniquely British idea’ that – as the Madeira cake – gained popularity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Frost). However, the episode with the most English theme is episode seven; ‘Victorian’. At the beginning of the episode, the era is described as ‘the age that defined modern baking’ by Sue (‘Victorian’ 00:01:30). This week, the contestants have to bake a wild game pie with ornaments as in Victorian times. Mel explains that ‘for the Victorian middle classes, game pies were a dinner-table status symbol; a way for upwardly mobile families to emulate their social superiors’ (‘Victorian’ 00:03:30). Mel and Sue further clarify that ‘ornate pie-moulds were all the rage amongst the Victorians as advances in mass productions made them more affordable’ (‘Victorian’ 00:05:00). Thus, the game pie becomes a symbol of upper-class culture and constructs a sense of historical authenticity.

The technical challenge of the ‘Victorian’ episode was a ‘tennis cake’, a light fruitcake covered with marzipan and icing to look like a tennis court, again highlighting an element of British upper-class culture (‘Victorian’ 00:20:00). The showstopper challenge was a Charlotte Russe, a French cake that was very popular among the Victorian upper class (Ayto). In the final episode, the showstopper challenge, and thereby the final cake of the season, was a ‘classic British cake’ where the cake itself was up to the contestants’ interpretation. This final cake again kept the focus on British national identity and culture and the contestants would be judged on how well they incorporated the theme of Britishness. Apart from the theme of Britishness and Englishness, the challenges also have strong European, and particularly French, influences, with themes such as ‘Bread’, ‘Pastry’, and ‘Pâtisserie’. The French connotations have strong connections to British upper-class culture and fine dining culture in general.

As well as casually examining the historical context of each bake, each episode contains a ‘historical documentary interlude’ where the origin of one of the bakes is ‘examined for its emergence, the class who cook it, those who consume it and its foreign influences’ (Bradley 18). Through the baking of British national dishes and those taken and adapted from other countries, *GBBO* manages to portray a cohesive British national identity. For example, in the episode ‘Biscuits’, the history of the biscuit is explored. Mel narrates the black and white interlude that explains that biscuits originally were a wartime food as it keeps well and is cheap to produce (‘Biscuits’ 00:17:40). The scene shifts from footage of industrial factories to scenes of carriages and fancy dressed people, as she explains further that with the addition of sugar and vanilla (and later cocoa powder), biscuits became an upper-class favourite (‘Biscuits’ 00:18:35). In the short, three-

minute interlude, *GBBO* has linked biscuits both to the British war effort, Victorian upper-class living, and an essential part of British national identity. In each episode, the audience is encouraged collectively to buy into the seemingly wholesome portrayal of the authentic past embedded with postimperial nostalgia as *GBBO* accentuate the ‘rediscovery’ of the ‘heritage’ foods of ‘a non-identified culinary golden age’ (Potter and Westhall 161).

### **Idealized multiculturalism in *The Great British Bake Off***

As a reality TV competition, *The Great British Bake Off* stood out from other TV shows when it was first aired, as it was one of the first programmes to foreground ‘positive affects like love, friendship, and joy, emphasising them even over plot, character and competition or conflict’ (Lagerway 443). Not to say that *The Great British Bake Off* does not have tension and drama, but the drama is kept to the cake level, and never develops to a personal level. The show is produced so that all contestants are portrayed sympathetically and the only antagonist is the clock. It stood in sharp contrast to other TV shows in the early 2010s; especially, the hugely successful *The X Factor* (2004–2018) where Simon Cowell’s cruel and mocking judging was often at the centre. In the post-recession political climate, with a discourse frequently dominated by hate, rage, and disgust, *GBBO* instead recreates an imagined nation that is inclusive and kind and promotes a vision of friendship and community in Britain (Lagerway 443).

The range of contestants demonstrates a multicultural Britain which Peri Bradley argues is ‘representative of the racially integrated culture and society that the contemporary UK has become’ (20) and she further argues that *The Great British Bake Off* manages to do so in a ‘manner that allies this to the nostalgic view of British identity as reasonable, liberal, calm, and sensible’ (Bradley 18). However, although, I agree with the claim, I would argue that *The Great British Bake Off* manages to combine the nostalgic view of British identity with the British multicultural society *because* the contestants with an ethnic minority heritage are participating on British terms.

### **The baking challenges gone ‘multicultural’**

In the aforementioned Madeira cake challenge, the British Bangladeshi Muslim Nadiya Hussain bakes a Madeira cake flavoured with cardamom, a spice Paul Hollywood says that she needs to ‘be careful with’ as too much can make the cake taste ‘medicinal’ (‘Cakes’ 00:04:35). Nadiya herself says in her solo interview that with cardamom, ‘it’s about finding a balance’ (‘Cakes’ 00:04:50), perhaps not so unlike balancing her British and South Asian identity.

In the Victorian Week game pie challenge, the ethnically British contestants all bake traditional Victorian pies while Tamal, who is of Indian descent, and Nadiya, who is of Bangladeshi

descent, are going down what Sue describes as a ‘flamboyant’ route (‘Victorian’ 00:04:54). Tamal bakes a middle-eastern flavoured game pie with minced lamb cooked in ras el hanout; a traditional Arabic spice. The mentioning of ras el hanout prompts the elderly Mary Berry to exclaim ‘beg your pardon’ in her received pronunciation (‘Victorian’ 00:06:10), as she has not heard of the spice before. Tamal further explains that he will stray from the Victorian theme by decorating his game pie with dough ornaments inspired by the Arabian Nights tale. Paul and Mary love his middle-eastern take on the traditional pie, and in their judgement, they mention that it has spiciness (‘Victorian’ 00:16:35) but not too much – unlike Nadiya’s Chinese five-spice pie (‘Victorian’ 00:15:40). Paul even exclaims – sounding a bit surprised – that the pie is ‘fantastic’ and Tamal receives one of Paul’s famous handshakes that symbols his sincere admiration of a bake (‘Victorian’ 00:16:42). In the eyes of Paul and Mary, Tamal successfully integrated his ethnic culture while still respecting English traditions.

In the final episode, the ‘classic British cake’ is also interpreted differently. Ian made a multi-layered carrot cake, Tamal constructed a Chinese fishing village out of sticky toffee pudding, and Nadiya made a lemon drizzle wedding cake. The cake, which she called ‘My Big Fat British Wedding Cake’, was designed as such because in Bangladesh, where she and her husband had married, they do not have a wedding cake. So, she reimagined what the combination of British and Bangladeshi wedding traditions would look like with her three two-tiered lemon drizzle cakes decorated with jewels and wrapped in blue saris with red borders (The Final’ 00:37:00). The red, white and blue cake matched the Union Jack bunting in the tent, perfectly illustrating her integration into British culture.

These examples are a few of many. *The Great British Bake Off* recognizes the diversity and multiculturalism of Britain, which can be seen as the majority of Britain’s ethnic immigrant population and their contributions to Britain’s cuisine are represented. However, hardly any of the challenges originate outside Europe. The contributions of the ethnic immigrant population are only represented in the contestants’ interpretations of the challenges rather than in the challenges themselves. Additionally, all of the permanent cast are ethnically English in a programme celebrated for celebrating diversity. The themes and bakes of the season often have strong English (or French) roots, and as the contestants are meant to include something of themselves and their individuality in the cakes, this poses an opportunity to include their heritage and traditions. Thereby, they project a seamlessly well-integrated, postcolonial subject that integrates into Britain on British terms. This also emphasizes that while multiculturalism is a vital part of British society and national identity, immigrants are participating on British terms and thereby portraying idealized multiculturalism in the context of British national identity.

### **The mainstream success of Nadiya Hussain**

Nadiya Hussain, the season six winner, has become quite the success after her stint on *The Great British Bake Off*. Nadiya's persona is based both on her skills as a home baker and her identity as a second-generation immigrant who is part of an arranged marriage, and what is framed as her 'progressive confidence' that brought her from stay-at-home mother of three to *The Great British Bake Off* winner, author, and TV presenter with her own Netflix show (Lagerway 446). In a *Radio Times* interview with the four semi-finalists, Nadiya said that she was worried that 'people would look at me, a Muslim in a headscarf, and wonder if I could bake' (Plunkett 'Bake'). She further adds that 'just because I'm not a stereotypical British person, it doesn't mean that I am not into bunting, cake and tea' and emphasizes that she is 'just as British as anyone else' (Plunkett 'Bake'). This is clear on the show, as she makes tea flavoured Crème Brûlée and bubble-gum flavoured French pastry ('Desserts', 'Pâtisserie') as well as bakes inspired by her heritage. Jorie Lagerway argues that she is an

English Muslim of Bangladeshi heritage who wears a headscarf and loves candy, projects an image of a happy postcolonial subject living a seamlessly multi-cultural life made possible by a narrative of personal confidence building that fits comfortably with seemingly benign versions of neoliberalism that claim equal opportunity and meritocracy for all (447).

Lagerway further argues that 'the appeal of such a positive collective idea of nation, regardless of how constructed, is reflected in the *Bake Off*'s massive popularity' (447). Whereas characters of colour are often supporting characters in the white men or women's self-discovery journeys or narrative fulfilment (Hughey 548), Nadiya is the 'central figure of her own star text' (Lagerway 447). She has her own narrative within the show and does not serve as a tool for character development for anyone else. While Nadiya's hybrid identity as a Muslim British Bangladeshi is central to her function of bearer of a collective national fantasy, she does not become a 'token minority character' in the show (Thibodeau 482). In fact, 'Muslim memories are rarely interwoven into general historical programmes about Britain, clustering instead in 'special' programming' but 'when television grants British Muslims the time and space to reminisce and reflect on the formation of their own identities' it challenges the "'them/us" polarity' in British society (Macdonald 425). Despite the fact Nadiya initially represents elements of Muslim society that are so negatively looked down upon, she gets the opportunity to shine and quickly became an audience favourite with her kindness and expressive face (Lagerway 446).

## Discussion

### **'Food colonialism' or integration?**

One of the most non-threatening forms of multiculturalism is the integration of food culture. The notion of 'food colonialism' and 'culinary imperialism' (Narayan 63) is interesting as it looks into the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. The Victorian British 'naturalized and nationalized curry' (Narayan 64) and the most convincing evidence of that is the fact that curry recipes were found in the sections devoted to 'British Cooking' and not in the 'Foreign Recipes' sections (Zlotnick 60). However, the curry powder so popular in British cooking does not exist in India, instead, it is a "fabricated" entity ... of colonial commerce' (Narayan 65). Susan Zlotnick argues that when the English incorporated curry into British cuisine, they were incorporating the Other into the Self but on the Self's terms (54). It was not Indian food that was incorporated, but the English' 'invention' of Indian food. Narayan argues that 'while curry may have been incorporated with ease into British cuisine' it 'did not extend to actual people of Indian origin' (Narayan 69). One could ask that if Indian cuisine and flavours had been completely absorbed into British home cooking, why is it such a big deal every time a contestant mixes 'exotic' flavours with traditional British (or French) baking traditions on *GBBO*? The answer to this question could be that Indian cuisine (or the British version of Indian cuisine) is part of British food culture but separate from other 'traditionally British' food; just as it is argued ethnic minorities are.

This might be why *The Great British Bake Off* is being celebrated for its diversity and vision. In the show, the ethnic minority contestants participate in the process of incorporating the Other into the Self. Even though it is on British terms, as the challenges are inherently British, they have a much higher degree of say in the creation of hybrids between what is seen as 'traditionally British' and 'Foreign'. Additionally, if the creation of hybrids is a continuation of what has already happened since Victorian times perhaps that is why it feels 'natural' for the British audience of *The Great British Bake Off*. Suddenly, 'Victorian week' gains a deeper meaning.

### **'White past, multicultural present'**

*The Great British Bake Off*'s examples of ethnic minorities participating on British terms falls into an ongoing debate on whether or not and to what extent a host country should accommodate and incorporate elements of its ethnic minority population's culture. David Cameron said in a speech on immigration given at the Munich Security Conference in 2011 that '[w]e've failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong.' I will argue that the purpose of this celebrated diversity on *The Great British Bake Off* (Rahbek 136) is an effort to provide a vision of a society that is more inclusive. According to Tariq Modood, '[w]hat distinguishes assimilation from

integration is fundamentally that assimilation is a *one-way process* ... In contrast, integration is a two way process which involves *mutual* adjustment and adaptation' (as cited in Mason 25-26). The way things are done on *GBBO* indicates that as the ethnic minority contestants live up to standards set by the British; speaking the language, abiding by the law, respecting the values of the country (Mason 26), then their culture can be accommodated and integrated. However, to what extent this idealized multiculturalism portrayed in *GBBO* portrays the realities of multiculturalism are difficult to say.

In that speech given in Munich, David Cameron envisioned that a shared national identity based on distinctively British values would be the solution to the problems with divisions in multicultural Britain. He suggests that values such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, democracy, equal rights, the rule of law, would be the pillars of British national identity. This is possibly the reason for Cameron's support for TV shows such as *The Great British Bake Off*; he publicly supported Nadiya Hussain when she was a contestant on *The Great British Bake Off* (Merrick), and even held a charity bake-off at Downing Street with her and Paul Hollywood as fellow judges ('PM judges charity "Bake Off" for Sarcoma UK'). The 'participation' in a show like *GBBO* that is embedded with English history and values such as fair-play and respect is emphasized as a sign of 'good' and 'active' citizenship (Potter and Westhall 161) and is the epitome of what Cameron means when he argues for the need 'to encourage meaningful and active participation in society' (Cameron). *The Great British Bake Off* becomes an arena of national identity with space to include a diverse cast and create a sense of belonging together in a Great Britain fractured by devolution and multicultural debates, and in doing so, it becomes part of what Littler and Naidoo suggest are the propagation of Britain's 'white past, multicultural present' (as quoted in Black 788) which also was highly visible in the 2012 London Olympic Games and the Diamond Jubilee. They argue that

'The white past, multicultural present' formation occurs simultaneously as a lament and a celebration – a celebration of our nation being modern, young, hip and in tune with the globalised economy as well as harbouring a nostalgia and lament for a bygone contained, safe and monocultural world (as quoted in Black 788).

I would argue that the 'white past, multicultural present' very much embodies the ambivalence of the heritage film format of *The Great British Bake Off* – with the English village aesthetic in a grand estate park, the postimperial set design, the traditional and nostalgic bakes – and the diverse and multicultural cast. Collective nostalgia can promote a feeling of community that works to downplay



potentially divisive social differences such as class or race (Baena and Byker 261) and it becomes clear that the past forms an important part in the renegotiation of a coherent national identity in Britain, and specifically in England. However, the ambivalence lies in the fact that ethnic minorities from countries suppressed by the Empire are taking part in a TV show that celebrates and reminisces about that same Empire as well as the colonial connotations 'British values' still hold. When that is said, the inclusion of a diverse cast in a format one could traditionally assume to be predominantly white has the positive effect that ethnic minorities are being written into the cultural history of Britain.

## Conclusion

The *GBBO* portrays both an idealized past and an idealized present, and combined, it results in an idealized multicultural national identity based on nostalgic notions of Englishness. As established in the analysis, *The Great British Bake Off* resembles heritage film, a genre rooted in notions of Englishness and Empire, visually and in content. The English have an incentive to (re-)construct an English national identity in the face of devolution and fragmentation within the UK and in relation to Brexit, but also try to make that national identity appear British because of the same reasons; to unite the country and convince the British that a return to the values of an earlier and more prosperous era would mean a return to the same prosperity and global status.

The popularity of the show indicates that it has an important influence on how the British people perceive their past, and subsequently how they perceive their present and themselves. Consequently, the idealized multiculturalism presented in *The Great British Bake Off* makes the British audience aware of their fellow citizens' shared experiences and heritage, and it reinforces this 'imagined community' through representation and repetition. However, it is emphasized that while multiculturalism is a vital part of British society and national identity, it fails to recognize the way in which the ethnic minority contestants are expected to make their own space in the seemingly conservative heritage format.

Yet, *The Great British Bake Off* does serve as a positive example of how to include diversity in mainstream TV without making it feel forced or 'too progressive' for a potentially conservative audience. This is further established in Nadia Hussain's success both on *GBBO* and after. Additionally, the contestants have the ability to control when and how they would like to include their heritage, and if they want to do it at all.

Does multiculturalism challenge the nostalgic vision of England, and as a continuation, Great Britain? I would argue that the show renegotiates the past and participates in the ideology of the 'sanitised' version of Empire – perhaps even implying that multiculturalism has always had a valued

place in British national identity. The notion of the 'white past, multicultural present' revealed at other big events in modern British history further indicates that this is a recurring way of 'solving' the ambivalent divide between the nostalgia of the Empire and the celebration of multiculturalism.

## Works Cited

- ‘About the Show’. *The Great British Bake Off*, [thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk/about-the-show/](http://thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk/about-the-show/).
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. 1983. Verso, 2016.
- Arthur, Andrew. ‘Netflix Acquires US Rights for the Great British Bake Off.’ *Independent*, 23 Aug. 2018, [www.independent.ie/entertainment/netflix-acquires-us-rights-for-the-great-british-bake-off-37246563.html](http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/netflix-acquires-us-rights-for-the-great-british-bake-off-37246563.html).
- Ayto, John. *The Diner’s Dictionary: Word Origins of Food & Drink*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Baena, Rosalía, and Christa Byker. ‘Dialects of Nostalgia: Downton Abbey and English Identity.’ *National Identities*, vol. 17, no. 3, Oct. 2014, pp. 259–69, doi:10.1080/14608944.2014.942262.
- Behan, Chris. ‘The English Village Fête.’ *The History Press*, [www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/the-english-village-f%C3%AAt/](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/the-english-village-f%C3%AAt/). Accessed 30 Dec. 2021.
- ‘Biscuits’. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 12. Aug. 2015.
- ‘Bread’. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 19. Aug. 2015.
- Black, Jack. ‘Celebrating British Multiculturalism, Lamenting England/Britain’s Past. *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 22, no. 4, Mar. 2016, pp. 786–802, doi:10.1111/nana.12164.
- Bradley, Peri. ‘More Cake Please — We’re British! Locating British Identity in Contemporary TV Food Texts, the Great British Bake off and Come Dine with Me.’ *Food, Media and Contemporary Culture*, edited by Peri Bradley, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, doi: 12048/10.1057/9781137463234\_2.
- ‘Cakes’. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 5. Aug. 2015.
- Cameron, David. *PM’s Speech at Munich Security Conference*. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference). Munich Security Conference.
- Carpenter, Louise. ‘Behind the Scenes at the Great British Bake Off’. *The Guardian*, 20 July 2013, [www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2013/jul/20/bake-off-behind-the-scenes](http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2013/jul/20/bake-off-behind-the-scenes).
- Clini, Clelia. ‘(Post)Colonial Friendships and Empire 2.0: A Brexit Reading of Victoria & Abdul’. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 56, no. 5, 2020, pp. 703–15, doi:10.1080/17449855.2020.1823054.
- de Groot, Jerome. *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*. 2009. 2nd ed., Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.
- ‘Desserts’. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 26. Aug. 2015.
- Easton, Mark. ‘The English Question: What Is the Nation’s Identity?’ *BBC News*, 3 June 2018, [www.bbc.com/news/uk-44306737](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-44306737).
- Fish, Andrew. ‘Culture and Living.’ *Britain Today: Uncertain Pathways to the Future*, edited by Sara Dybris McQuaid and Robert C. Thomsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2017, pp. 51–86

- Frost, Vicky. 'Crunch Time: Why Britain Loves a Good Biscuit.' *The Guardian*, 6 June 2012, [www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/jun/06/crunch-time-britain-loves-biscuits](http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/jun/06/crunch-time-britain-loves-biscuits).
- Gaston, Sophie, and Sacha Hilhorst. *At Home in One's Past: Nostalgia as a Cultural and Political Force in Britain, France and Germany*. Demos, 2018, [www.demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/At-Home-in-Ones-Past-Report.pdf](http://www.demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/At-Home-in-Ones-Past-Report.pdf).
- Gilroy, Paul. *After Empire: Multiculture or Postcolonial Melancholia*. Routledge, 2004.
- . 'From a Colonial Past to a New Multiculturalism.' *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, vol. 51, no. 18, 2005, pp. B7-B10. *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/lt-h3-gt-colonial-past-new-multiculturalism/docview/214680679/se-2?accountid=14468>.
- Higson, Andrew. 'Re-Presenting the National Past: Nostalgia and Pastiche in the Heritage Film.' *Fires Were Started: British Cinema and Thatcherism*, edited by Lester D. Friedman 1993. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Wallflower Press, 2006.
- Hughey, Matthew W. 'Cinethetic Racism: White Redemption and Black Stereotypes in "Magical Negro" Films.' *Social Problems*, vol. 56, no. 3, 2009, pp. 543–77, doi:10.1525/sp.2009.56.3.543.
- Lagerwey, Jorie. 'The Great British Bake Off, Joy, and the Affective Potential of Nadiya Hussain's Amateur Celebrity.' *Celebrity Studies*, vol. 9, no. 4, Aug. 2018, pp. 442–54, doi:10.1080/19392397.2018.1508964.
- Macdonald, Myra. 'British Muslims, Memory and Identity: Representations in British Film and Television Documentary.' *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 14, no. 4, Aug. 2011, pp. 411–27, doi:10.1177/1367549411404617.
- Mason, Andrew. 'The Critique of Multiculturalism in Britain: Integration, Separation and Shared Identification'. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, vol. 21, no. 1, Nov. 2017, pp. 22–45, doi:10.1080/13698230.2017.1398444.
- McQuaid, Sara Dybris. 'The Political Landscape'. *Britain Today: Uncertain Pathways to the Future*, edited by Sara Dybris McQuaid and Robert C. Thomsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2017, pp. 205–34.
- Merrick, Jane. 'David Cameron Has Revealed Who He's Backing to Win the Great British Bake Off.' *The Independent*, 5 Oct. 2015, [www.independent.co.uk/news/people/great-british-bake-off-david-cameron-reveals-he-wants-nadiya-to-win-final-a6680026.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/great-british-bake-off-david-cameron-reveals-he-wants-nadiya-to-win-final-a6680026.html).
- Monk, Claire. *Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the UK*. Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- . 'Sexuality and the Heritage.' *Sight and Sound*, vol. 5, no. 10, 1995, pp. 32–34.
- . 'The British Heritage-Film Debate Revisited.' *British Historical Cinema*, edited by Claire Monk and Amy Sargeant, Taylor & Francis Group, 2002, pp. 176–98, doi:10.4324/9781315011424-18.

- Narayan, Uma. 'Eating Cultures: Incorporation, Identity and Indian Food.' *Social Identities*, vol. 1, no. 1, feb. 1995, pp. 63–86, doi:10.1080/13504630.1995.9959426.
- Nguyen, Hanh. 'Why "the Great British Baking Show" Could Be PBS' Successor to "Downton Abbey."' *IndieWire*, 16 June 2017, www.indiewire.com/2017/06/the-great-british-baking-show-pbs-downton-abbey-1201843134/.
- 'Pastry'. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 9. Sep. 2015.
- 'Patisserie'. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 23. Sep. 2015.
- Plunkett, John. 'Bake Off's Nadiya Feared Being Dismissed as "Muslim in a Headscarf."' *The Guardian*, 28 Sept. 2015, www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2015/sep/29/great-british-bake-off-2015-nadiya-jamir-hussain-muslim.
- . 'Great British Bake Off: New Contestants Poised to Serve up Sixth Series.' *The Guardian*, 28 July 2015, www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2015/jul/28/great-british-bake-off-contestants-series-six.
- 'PM Judges Charity "Bake Off" for Sarcoma UK.' *Sarcoma UK*, 26 Jan. 2016, sarcoma.org.uk/GBBO.
- Potter, Lucy, and Claire Westall. 'Neoliberal Britain's Austerity Foodscape: Home Economics, Veg Patch Capitalism and Culinary Temporality.' *New Formations*, vol. 80, no. 80, Nov. 2013, pp. 155–78, doi:10.3898/newf.80/81.09.2013.
- Rahbek, Ulla. 'Multicultural Britain Today: Dilemmas and Disputes.' *Britain Today: Uncertain Pathways to the Future*, edited by Sara Dybris McQuaid and Robert C. Thomsen, Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2017, pp. 113–42.
- Rix, Robert W. 'Media on the Move: Current Debates and Future Prospects.' *Britain Today: Uncertain Pathways to the Future*, edited by Sara Dybris McQuaid and Robert C. Thomsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2017.
- Romeo, Claudia. 'The Funniest Puns and Double-Entendres from "Great British Bake Off."' *Business Insider*, 17 Sept. 2016, www.businessinsider.com/great-british-bake-off-funniest-puns-and-double-entendres-from-2016-9?r=US&IR=T.
- 'The Final'. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 7. Oct. 2015.
- Thibodeau, Ruth. 'From Racism to Tokenism: The Changing Face of Blacks in New Yorker Cartoons.' *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 53, no. 4, 1989, pp. 482–94, doi:10.1086/269168.
- Thomsen, Robert C. 'National and Other Identities.' *Britain Today: Uncertain Pathways to the Future*, edited by Sara Dybris McQuaid and Robert C. Thomsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2017, pp. 143–74.
- 'Victorian'. *The Great British Bake Off*. BBC, 16. Sep. 2015.

Vincent, Alice. 'Welcome to Welford Park: The Stunning Berkshire Location Where the Great British Bake off Is Filmed.' *The Telegraph*, 29 Oct. 2019, [www.telegraph.co.uk/tv/0/where-great-british-bake-off-filmed-welford-park-location-berkshire-uk/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/tv/0/where-great-british-bake-off-filmed-welford-park-location-berkshire-uk/).

Whyman, Tom. "'The Great British Baking Show' Is the Key to Understanding Today's Britain - the New York Times." *The New York Times*, 29 May 2016, [web.archive.org/web/20160529013121/www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/magazine/the-great-british-baking-show-is-the-key-to-understanding-todays-britain.html](http://web.archive.org/web/20160529013121/www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/magazine/the-great-british-baking-show-is-the-key-to-understanding-todays-britain.html).

Zlotnick, Susan. 'Domesticating Imperialism: Curry and Cookbooks in Victorian England.' *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2/3, 1996, pp. 51–68, doi:10.2307/3346803.