

Representing the Nation: How Food Documentaries Link Food with National Identity
A Comparative Study of Two Netflix' Food Documentaries

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Abstract and Keywords

The recent study on nationalism under modernist scholars highlights the practice of nationalism by ordinary people in the daily routine. Michael Billig (1995) and Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich (2017) formulate theories on banal nationalism and everyday nationalism which highlights the role of ordinary people and their experience with nationalism in daily life. An example of the routine activities that everyone does is eating. The act of eating and consuming a certain dish can bring nostalgic feelings and sense of belonging to a nation. For this reason, food is interwoven with nation-building and national identity. The point of departure of this study is the representation of the food as a symbol of a nation displayed by the media: how the narrative is constructed, which angle is displayed, and who is being represented. The center of analysis will be the representation of food as part of national identity in two Netflix Originals' food documentaries: *Ugly Delicious* (Capotosto et al., 2018 - present) and *Street Food* (Fried et al., 2019 - present). Multimodal Discourse Analysis helps the researcher grasp the meaning in the construction of food as part of national identity by looking at the textual and visual discourse represented in the food documentaries. The representation of food in documentaries has two layers. First, the competing representation of food as a cultural product considers how food documentaries construct food as part of national identity and food as mobile that moves from one national context to another. This point relates to the theory of banal nationalism and everyday nationalism and how food documentaries construct the movement of food is perceived as a consequence of globalization and can be associated with the theory of nationalism. Secondly, the food documentaries present the contemporary factors affecting food as a significant part of national identity. Different factors such as state intervention, modernization and globalization, and politics will be explained to understand the current changes in food as part of the nation.

KEYWORDS: *Banal nationalism, everyday nationalism, food, documentary, Netflix*

Preface

First of all, I would like to thank God for all the guidance every step of the way until I complete this master thesis.

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1 Introduction

Living abroad for almost five years makes me feel disconnected from my home country. One of the things that can make me reminisce the feeling of home is by eating Indonesian food. Eating and making foods that I grow up with from Indonesia, brings back some memories of being home and releases a little bit of the homesick feeling. I see this happens in most immigrants that the one thing that can help them reduce their homesickness by cooking the food that they associate with their country or home. This experience makes me wonder what role food has for society and how it connects the whole community member. Something is missing in the discussion on food as an object that people associate the most with where their nationality and almost everyone has a proud feeling about their national food. People often take things for granted in the discussion of food and the nation and believe that one dish has a root in one country and that should not be discussed. On one side, food is being seen to have a role in the creation of national identity. On the other side, on the daily basis, food can be solely seen as a basic necessity for human life. This contradiction in the different way people think about food is worth to be explored further.

1.1 Topic of analysis and research question

With the development of media technology and the diversity of media products, there has been an increase in the production of various content that is accessible for everyone. Moreover, globalization in the contemporary world has enabled the movement of cultural products to one place and another. As a consequence, people are being presented with different realities from around the world, without having to travel and experience it themselves. In this manner, it helps to open up their view by looking at a different perspective of the world and encourage the people to imagine themselves as part of a nation. These realities are being presented in an attractive and fun way to engage with the viewers. One of which is through the production of food documentaries that highlights food and dishes from different parts of the world.

Food is interwoven with nation-building and national identity. While nationalism is often a top-down discourse institutionalized by the state, the association between food and national identity is different because it takes place in the everyday life of citizens. The portrayal of food as national significant is sometimes neglected or taken for granted by the citizens unless it's threatened or claimed by other nations. The point of departure of this study is the representation of the food as a symbol of a nation displayed by the media: how the narrative is constructed, which angle is displayed, and who is being represented. The association between nations and food portrayed in the media is worth studying to develop a critical way of watching media content such as food documentaries. Moreover, popular culture participates in the construction of food as a national trait. By so doing, popular culture can reproduce, challenge, or transform top-down discourses of

nationalism.

The center of analysis will be the representation of food as part of national identity in two Netflix Originals' food documentaries: *Ugly Delicious* (Capotosto et al., 2018 - present) and *Street Food* (Fried et al., 2019 - present). The study aims to discover how the media link food with national identity through the production of documentaries that highlights cuisine from different parts of the world. However, these documentaries are produced and distributed by Netflix, an American company. Though the documentaries feature locals to tell the story of their national culinary history, I argue they also use the Western lens in constructing the narrative. In light of this observation, this thesis will analyze: How do food documentaries link food with national identity?

1.2 Scientific and social relevance

The study on nationalism began in the 18th century. One of the most recent studies on nationalism under modernist scholars highlights the practice of nationalism in the daily routine. Michael Billig (1995) and Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich (2017) bring out the theory on banal nationalism and everyday nationalism which highlights the role of ordinary people and their experience with nationalism in daily life. An example of the routine activities that everyone does is eating. The act of eating can connote several meanings as more than a simple act of consuming food. For instance, food is being prepared and sold by a street food vendor for 10 years can be seen as an act of surviving the business but can also be seen as an act of preserving the nation's tradition through serving the same dish every day. A dish made by an international student reminds his or her of their home country that releases some longing feeling and brings nostalgic feeling in living abroad. This research will take a look how the construction of food as part of national identity in the selected food documentaries. Moreover, as an alternative theory to banal nationalism and everyday nationalism, the concept of cosmopolitanism will be used to analyze the movement of food from one nation to another.

Studies of food concerning the nation are still limited in the academic discussion (Burns, 2016; Hiroko, 2008; Ichijo & Ranta, 2016). Existing studies of food and nationalism focus on the institutionalization of food by the nation-state and the industrialization of the food system (Burns, 2016; Lindenfeld, 2010; Ibid., 2011). This research aims to add to the discussion by focusing on food documentaries. This genre is becoming increasingly popular, but its construction of food and the nation has not been studied yet. This alternative narrative of a food documentary is perceived as an eye-opener for its viewers as it narrates the history behind a certain dish in a national context. The study will use the theory of banal nationalism, everyday nationalism, and cosmopolitanism to study the construction of the national significance of food.

In addition, this research will contribute to the discussion on cultural awareness and cultural

acceptance through food done by ordinary people. The selected documentaries highlight food culture from different parts of the world – the United States, Asia, Latin America, Middle East – thus, it adds a layer of diversity in the creation of a multicultural society. The construction of food as part of national identity is being done by featuring the locals as experts to explain the situation in each place. Moreover, the use of stereotypical characteristics in representing the nation promotes underlying assumptions the viewers have on a certain community. The availability of the documentaries on Netflix, one of the leading streaming platforms today, helps the spread of awareness on cultural appropriateness to the viewers. By highlighting these food documentaries, this research aims to add an understanding of the role of media in constructing the significance of food as part of national identity.

1.3 Chapter overviews

This thesis is divided into five chapters with a different point of issue that is important to answer the main research question. Now that the topic of the research and the main question of this study has been introduced in this chapter, the rest of the thesis aim to breakdown important matter for the research including the theoretical framework, methods of analysis, and the findings from the analysis process. The following chapter, chapter 2, will explain the theoretical bases used to analyze the food documentaries. This chapter includes three subsections: nation and nationalism, food and nationalism, and documentaries and the national/global tension. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive set of theories related to the topics mentioned in the research question. By taking into account previous academic studies done on each topic and making use of the important theories such as banal nationalism, everyday nationalism, and cosmopolitanism, will help this study to analyze how the food documentary constructs food as part of national identity.

The next chapter, chapter 3, focuses on the methods of analysis used in this study. The chapter starts with a comprehensive description of the documentaries: *Ugly Delicious* and *Street Food*. It is followed by an explanation of the chosen method, Multimodal Discourse Analysis. As this study is qualitative research, with a relatively big set of data, the chosen method is useful to reduce the data consistently and systematically. The last section in this chapter will explain the analysis process done by the researcher in answering the main research question of this study.

Chapter four moves on to present the findings from the analysis. Going back to the research question: “How do food documentaries link food with national identity?”, findings entail two sections. The first section will show a clear comparison between food as part of national identity and not. The first one explains the way food documentaries construct food as part of national identity. The following section explains the way food documentaries construct food as not a part of national identity by being mobile and moves from one national context to another. Lastly, the current factors

that affect food as part of national identity will be discussed. Each of the sections in the results chapter will present pieces of evidence from the transcript with analysis by using the analysis tools to support the argumentation.

The last chapter in the thesis will conclude the research by presenting the main conclusion of the analysis and the theoretical implication of the findings. Also, the researcher considers the limitation of the study and addresses suggestions for future research related to the topic of this thesis.

2 Theoretical Framework

To answer the main research question: “How do food documentaries link food with national identity?” this section starts with the discussion of nation and nationalism with a subsection of Michael Billig’s (1995) banal nationalism; everyday nationalism as an alternative theory to banal nationalism; and nationalism in the modern era, in relation to cosmopolitanism. This section is relevant in order to understand the current view of nation and nationalism in academic research and to grasp the theory of nationalism in relation to the research question. Then, I review the literature on food and nationalism. This section explores the role of food as a part of the nation and the different approaches the which food is used to define national identity in the everyday life. The last section explains the media-representations of food as a part of the nation. Here, I focus on documentaries as a genre and their realistic lens, which will be taken into account for the analysis.

2.1 Nation and nationalism

This thesis starts from the definition of nationalism as a form of discourse that underlies loyalties to one’s nation by emphasizing its principle and political legitimacy as opposed to other nations (Gellner, 2008; Kane, 2015; Özkirimli, 2007; Ibid, 2008). Nationalism proposes a vision of who belongs to the nation by separating people into groups with ethnic and political boundaries and ways to legitimize their claim to a particular territory. Nationalism claims that the nation or people share a common set of values, language, history, traditions, and practices. In this study, nationalism matters in the representation of food with national value as it creates a sense of belonging and being a part of a community.

While nationalism sees the nation as a natural group of people, scholars of nationalism differ in their definition of the nation. According to modernist scholars, the nation is a product of modern society or the modernization process (Özkirimli, 2007). Nationalism becomes a precondition in the modern world as the human and political units were not organized under nationalist principles in the pre-modern era. In this thesis, I adopt the modernist perspective and approach the documentaries as genres that re-construct the idea of the nation. In this way, I borrow from Anderson (2006) who describes the nation as imagined political communities that are imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. Imagined meaning even the smallest member of the nation will never know, meet, or barely hear most of their fellow members.

Banal nationalism

Nationalism is not only being created by the state to communicate the idea of who or what belongs to the nation. Reproduction of nationalism through the daily and ordinary life of its citizens

also has a role in defining the nation. In line with the modernist school, Michael Billig (1995) introduces the term banal nationalism where nations consist of a complex set of beliefs, habits, and practices that are being reproduced in a “banally mundane way” (p. 6; Delanty & Kumar, 2006; Wade, 2011). Examples of banal nationalism include the use of flags in a daily context, national songs, and inculcate nationalistic feelings through education curriculum. These practices are systematically developed by the government and official entities to be performed and present in the day-to-day context. Moreover, one of the characteristics of banal nationalism represents the declining importance of territorial ideology and fixed boundaries of identities (Koch & Paasi, 2016; Loon, 1997). National identity is no longer defined only on territorial boundaries but the nation is embodied in the everyday experience of the people, for instance through national songs where we are constantly reminded of the presence of the nation and become a routine of remembering unconsciously. Banal nationalism is practiced in the daily routine where it becomes so familiar and habitual that they pass unnoticed by the citizen.

Following this argument, the thesis will use Billig’s banal nationalism as the theoretical concept to analyze how documentaries construct the banal reproduction of nationalism. The documentaries often depict mundane settings and use stereotypical statements about groups and foods. For instance, the way food is being prepared, ingredients used, and how dishes are served and eat could be particular to a specific tradition in one’s nation and linked to the nation’s history. In this way, the nation is being represented in the daily life of the citizen through the act of eating which food documentaries took as the focus of their narrative.

Everyday nationalism

In response to Billig’s banal nationalism, Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich (2017) bring forward the notion of everyday nationhood to explain the way individuals experience and self-consciously mobilize nationhood in everyday practices. Unlike banal nationalism, this approach of nationalism proposes that ordinary people do not merely reproduce nationalism unconsciously but also practice it consciously and creatively. The lived experience of the citizen has a role in the reproduction of nationalism by acknowledging an individual’s agency to perform nationalism. Everyday nationhood is associated with the experience, temporal and spatial category on the representation of the nation. For instance, watching a television show and listening to the presenter can bring out the feeling of nostalgia and a sense of belonging to one’s nation. National identity in the everyday settings can be recognized from the habits, routine, and or practical knowledge of the people where the nation is being reproduced, contested, and reaffirmed in everyday life (Edensor, 2002). Put differently, everyday nationhood is the routine way of being national and our sensory experience with the experience.

Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) explain nationalism is being produced and reproduced in everyday practice in four ways: talking the nation, choosing the nation, performing the nation, and consuming the nation. To start with, talking the nation includes talking *about* the nation and talking *with* the nation. Talking about the nation implies implicit nationhood where ordinary people explain their own understanding of the nation; while talking with the nation implies the reproduction of nationhood in daily life through identification and awareness of the member. Secondly, choosing the nation looks at how nationhood is performed through the decisions of ordinary people in making national choices and making choices national. Making national choices are done by the national institutions' power in reinforcing the nation's logic and ideology whilst making choices national is the non-national criteria where the decision is made by the people's choice. Thirdly, performing the nation consists of the use of national symbols and rituals in everyday life. National symbols such as flags, anthems, and landmarks are used to connect the people with the nation. Rituals also provide temporal and spatial symbolic attachment to the nation. Lastly, consuming the nation acknowledges the national distinction in the ordinary taste and preference of the people by looking at the everyday acts of consumption. This includes consuming national products or the commodification of the nation and consuming products nationally by making the nation an element of everyday life. In line with the notion of everyday nationhood explained by Skey & Antonsich (2017) these four ways of understanding the everyday practice of nationalism happen purposely and creatively by the ordinary people. In other words, people are creatively reproducing their idea of nationhood in concrete local experience in a more tangible way (Antonsich,2016).

Nationalism & cosmopolitanism

The term "borderless world" is best to explain the situation where the process of interaction and ideas goes beyond the local and national context (Skey, 2012, p. 471). The borderless world raises the question of whether people can build a collective identity that is not rooted in national identification, but also in a feeling of belonging to a global community. Such feelings can be associated with cosmopolitanism, which can be understood as a belief of being open to other cultures and willing to appreciate some elements of the 'other.' Szersynski & Urry (2002) set out seven cosmopolitan predispositions and practices, namely: extensive individual mobility or ability to travel; capacity to consume many places and environments; curiosity about many places, peoples, and cultures; willingness to take risk in experiencing 'the other'; ability to map their own culture amongst different cultures; semiotic skills to interpret images of 'others'; and openness to other cultures that they encounter. Skey (2012) argues that these characteristics of cosmopolitanism can positively be associated with the elite groups that have the ability and means to travel widely and be

engaged with various cultural groups. However, the existence of the internet and a variety of media content has changed the circumstance, where people can easily be exposed to other cultures and practices from different parts of the world.

This turns the discussion of banal nationalism into banal cosmopolitanism. Banal cosmopolitanism understood national appearance was in essence, transnational and goes beyond the national boundaries (Skey & Antonsich, 2017). Thus, banal cosmopolitanism can be an alternative to Billig's banal nationalism where the occurrence of cosmopolitan culture is being integrated into the everyday life experience. Cappeliez & Johnston (2013) define banal cosmopolitanism as a set of cultural practices which 'flag' different national commodities 'across national borders on daily basis, for example through the act of eating which will be discussed further in the coming section. This thesis will use the concept of banal cosmopolitanism to understand the consumption of food as national products in daily life in combination with the flow of people, commodities, and culture across territorial borders.

The relationship of the nation and the global has the potential to bring the society closer or detached from each other. Modernist scholars of nationalism (Özkirimli, 2007) view nation and nationalism as an element of modernity, which is inclined with the notion of globalization that challenges the idea of the nation-state (Roudometof, 2014). Globalization is increasingly perceived as an opposition to nationalism as it divides the world into different nations. However, the uniformity of nation-form or nation formation is a product of the global category, creating a "global social integration" of nation-states (Ibid., p. 20). In this manner, the nation-state is created with a set of guidelines on what the nation-state should be composed of, resulting in a homogenous form of nations. Historically, globalization enables cross-cultural interaction that not only led to a homogenization of culture but can also produce cultural heterogeneity or glocalization (Roudometof, 2014). Homogeneity can be understood as balancing cultural differences whilst heterogenization is the process of assertion of the differences (Ganis, 2019). In this manner, globalization creates synchronous comparison in the nation-forming process, but glocalization enhances the uniqueness and distinction of each nation. Moreover, another possibility of an outcome of globalization in the flow of culture is hybridization or the creation of new culture as a combination of different aspects of existing cultures (Ganis, 2019). Multicultural contact highlights differences among cultures and has a role in the construction of the identity of the people. In this manner, the mix of cultures in hybridization challenges the notion of nationalism as it erases cultural differences and promotes a homogeneous culture (Ganis, 2019). Here, hybridization functions as part of a power relationship between the hegemony and minority that can result in two different scenarios (Pieterse, 1995). First, the condition of "a state of homelessness" as a response to the

hybridity that gives the agency lacks the power to become hybrid (Ibid., p. 668). Second, a community-oriented model of hybridity was recognizing and acknowledging the hybrid past empowers the community and gives it agency. In this case, food documentaries give attention to the global flow of cultures through people's experience of their food culture and how the community response to the hybridization.

2.2 Food and Nationalism

Food is one of the many important components of the nation that has not been systematically addressed academically. Nationalism and food studies started in the 1980s with an interest in the role of gastronomy in nation-building (Porciani, 2019). Prior research on tradition and nationalism (Billig, 1995; Gellner, 2008) failed to mention food as a part of nationhood from below. In every culture, foodways constitute a system or a language that expresses meaning and contributes to the construction of national self-identity. Research on the role of food in the construction of the nation has grown to recognize the material and immaterial features in a community's food culture, including foods and recipes, kitchen utensils, table settings, and ways of eating together (Burns, 2016).

Semiotic analyses of cuisines suggest food is a medium of communication that could have multiple meanings or polysemy (Burns, 2016). In other words, food signifies the ways in which we express ourselves and at the same time which we are, are expressed through foodways. People have various experiences and understandings of the significance of food to their national identity. There are different ways in how food is being prepared and consumed which are closely related to the culture of the nation. For instance, Hiroko (2008) argues that in contemporary Japan, nationalism among the young Japanese is manifested in an innocent and everyday manner through the act of eating. Not only food is part of human's primary needs in life, historically, but food also has a significant role in a number of traditional and ceremonial practices as a unique characteristic of one's community and hierarchy (Lien et al., 2004). Food and taste convey the feeling of home, nostalgia, and the feeling of belonging together rooted in the culture in everyday life (Porciani, 2019).

Food also has an impact on how people view themselves and helps them to imagine themselves as a part of a nation. Each person has a different daily experience that is related to food and how food means to them differs for everyone. Consequently, a surplus of meaning is created where one can identify food as energy for the human body; while the media depicts food as a weapon in relation to people's access to food, or express worries related to eating habits (Lien et al., 2004). As multiple meanings are constantly being produced and reproduced through different angles

and circumstances, the following will discuss at least three fields where food is constantly referred to in Western societies: food as nature, food as a commodity, and food as culture (Ibid.). First, food is characterized as a part of nature: plants, animals, or nutrition. In this sense, food acts as an important factor for the human body as the physiological requirement for life. Second, food is represented as a commodity for a trade where food is produced, distributed, and sold in the market. Thirdly, food as culture can be understood as to how culturally defined categories are depicted through how food is sensed, processed, presented, and consumed in unique cultural settings.

Ichijo and Ranta (2015) introduce three approaches in which food is used to define national identity and nationalism in the everyday life. The unofficial or bottom-up approach investigates the development that is not controlled by the nation. On the other hand, the official or top-down approach explores forms of national branding that are mediated by the nation-state. Lastly on the global level by looking into international organizations and global economic and political forces in generating particular motion in respect to food. The existence of food in the global sphere has an impact on the diversity of taste. This revolutionary taste moves from the old, mixed distinct flavors and balance of nutritional coverage, to the new, distinctive flavor from one another (Porciani, 2019). However, this revolution does not happen everywhere, many changes took place in European eating habits and increase across the continent. The transformation and migration of food are inevitable, resulting in the clash, overlap, and merge with national or regional cultures. It is in the role of the new generations to manage the tension between the present and the past, the tradition, and change. The awakening of national consciousness through foodways can happen in two opposite ways: deeper inclusive feeling with the nation or exclusion of the other (Porciani, 2019). The old and traditional discussion of food's significance and nationalism is constantly being challenged in today's world with the current development in ways of cooking and eating along with the confrontation with other foodways.

An example of the top-down investment of national significance in food is through culinary diplomacy. The term culinary diplomacy or gastro diplomacy refers to the government, private, or public agencies' active use of subtle power or the power of attraction as the core of tourist policies (Porciani, 2019). In this manner, the recipes, ambiance of the restaurant, and eating experience were designed to sell traditional cooking while at the same time accommodate the taste of international tourists. Moreover, international organizations such as The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also play a role in forming on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage for the global settings, where countries can propose to include their national dishes to be recognized universally. This gives an opportunity to highlight the everyday cuisine of the people and show how one national food has a role to unite a country while at the

same time moving beyond the national context. This can also be seen as a defensive strategy in preserving one's national culture by claiming it as their own and differentiating or othering other nation's ownership of the cuisine.

Mediated narratives of food are important objects of analysis to grasp the significance of food in relation to the nation, culture, and ordinary life (Lin et al., 2004). For this reason, two food documentaries are selected as an example of such a mediated narrative worthy of investigation. By doing this, one could be more conscious of the role of media in selecting and presenting current discussions to the public.

2.3 Documentaries and The National/Global Tension

Media can work as a powerful instrument of nation-building but also as a platform to challenge nationalist discourses (Billig, 1995; Skey & Antonsich, 2017). Film and documentary are products of popular culture where the nation and nationalism are being mediated. Documentaries inform us about the world by presenting stories and images that become fixed and become a mirror of reality (Barker, 2011; Smaill, 2014). However, as explained by Stuart Hall (1997) television content is part of cultural artifacts which includes a selective construction of reality. The narrative goes through a process of selection, adjustment, and production to create a story to appeal to the viewers. It is important to acknowledge the constructed realistic lens of a documentary to interpret the way food is being represented in the documentaries. This study is interested in observing how the alleged realistic lens of documentaries contributes to investing food with national significance.

Blurring lines between the realistic and fictional lens of food documentaries are formed by the narrative and images (Darling-Wolf, 2015). It is the production of the imaginary world by using other's or outsider's perspectives in telling the story, or in other words, "the production of the transnational imaginary" (Ibid., p. 13). The production of a documentary involves a number of actors and agencies, with the goal of revealing the reality. However, in producing the narratives, documentaries not only aim to show the viewers the reality of a certain topic, issue, or subject but also produce a story that relates to the viewers. This story is filled with "ambivalence and contradictions", that are never completely successful (Ensel, 2019, p. 180). There will always be another side of the story, and it is impossible to capture the whole perspective. As a media artifact, documentaries link members of a community with their national values through the cinematic images as a construction of the collective national memory (Ashuri, 2007; Harvey, 2018). In this manner, the way that documentaries represent a story of a nation could not be separated from the real world but at the same time, the construction of images plays a crucial role in carrying the story.

The writing process of any screenplay, including documentaries, gives attention to the point of view on how they will tell the story from a certain perspective. The point of view allows the

producers to select the information that fits and best serves the storyline (Raynauld, 2019). Documentaries specifically approach the cinematographic and relational, meaning that the story is built through the knowledge, discovery, and understanding of the issue related to reality. As stated before, the creation of the objective documentary is utopian (Raynauld, 2019). A person watching their nationality being represented in a documentary might feel proud of the representation. However, the opposite can happen, when another community feels threatened or being misrepresented by the same story. The subject of a documentary is to make a story out of people or communities' real-life experiences. Thus, acknowledging the point of view, who is speaking, telling, or narrating, could help us understand the underlying story that wants to be shown. This study will take the importance of the point of view into account by looking at who is being shown as the center of the story, who is telling the story, and from which perspective is the narrative made.

Following the discussion above on the production process of a documentary, there has been a shift in the documentary industry from being a national sector to becoming an international or even global industry, with the rising construction of shared national memories. With technological and economic development in the industry, the tension between the national and the global are significant in the international co-production of the documentary. Ashuri (2007) illustrates two opposing approaches in the construction of share memory: the global approach and the national approach. The global approach highlights the creation of a global model of knowledge production and knowledge representation. In other words, the result of this approach is moving farther from the national as the national characteristics are being filtered out. On the other hand, the national approach emphasizes the upholding of national identity by preserving the national. The focus on representing the local communities sees the co-production as an instrument for national building. With the international co-production of documentaries, each nation-state has the responsibility in the representation of their nation, while at the same time producing content that contributes to the global flavor.

Both of the food documentaries in this paper: *Street Food* and *Ugly Delicious* are part of Netflix Original's product. However, these documentaries highlight the locals and include people's experiences and relationships with the food and there. This study expects to reveal how food documentaries present food as part of the nation by looking at the portrayal of the nation and food from the producers' perspective.

Existing research on food documentaries is closely related to food production and food consumption (Smaill, 2014). The study focuses on problems and issues in the US food system and industrialization (Barker, 2011; Lindenfeld, 2010; Ibid., 2011). The findings reveal documentary films' attempts to support change in US food consumption (Lindenfeld, 2011). Documentary images

associate food with national identity through the narrative and clips of the dishes in the national or local setting. This thesis would add to the discussion of food documentaries by evaluating the portrayal of food with national values, outside the US region.

3 Methods

This chapter explains the method used for the analysis of food documentaries. There is a shift in the production of food documentaries from the industrialization of the food system to the relation between food and the nation (Lindenfeld, 2010). This specific genre of food documentary is seen as an eye-opener for the viewers to seek the connection between food and the nation by highlighting people's everyday experience with food (Ibid.). In this project, I have selected two food documentaries with different approaches to the nation's representation by highlighting national or regional food and its significance to the nation and by making a connection to other nations in the global context. Media representations are a part of a selection of a constructed set of reality, that sometimes limits or highlights stereotypical assumptions about a nation. This is further complexified by the realistic lens of documentaries. In order to understand the representation of food and the nation in these documentaries, this study uses Multimodal Discourse Analysis as a method for the analysis, which will be explained further in the coming section. The result of the analysis will be organized based on the theoretical framework and will be used to put the results in an order based on the themes that are being constructed in the documentaries.

3.1 The documentaries

This study will analyze all the episodes from *Ugly Delicious* (Capotosto et al., 2018 - present) and *Street Food* (Fried et al., 2019 - present). Both documentaries are produced and distributed by Netflix, Inc. These food documentaries are chosen because of their recent release on Netflix, as well as their suitability with the focus of this study. The production of both documentaries was continued until the second season; this implies a positive assessment for the production company. The researcher acknowledges the limitation of the selection as there were no audience ratings and data on the viewership available for these shows.

Ugly Delicious premiered on February 23, 2018. Each episode features one dish or culinary concepts and explores how it is made in different countries or regions. The show features David Chang as a host. He is a Korean descent American restaurateur who owns a number of restaurants in the United States and other parts of the world. With his Asian-American cultural background, throughout the documentary, he challenges and explores the cultural, sociological, and culinary history of a specific dish. Together with his colleagues, fellow chef, and other famous people, they discuss the stereotypes and prejudices linked to food and the people (Morabito, 2018). The discussion involves some historical aspects of a certain dish and the connection with the people or culture in different places. The documentary makes a connection between food and the nation by featuring people's individual experiences with food, the community, and their nation. The

documentary has 2 seasons with a total of 12 episodes.

Street Food premiered on April 26, 2019. Each episode focuses on a specific town or country by looking specifically at street food. The first season explores countries in Asia and the second season focuses on countries in Latin America. Each episode picks one city as the center of the discussion. In this documentary, Netflix works together with local food journalists and writers to explore the culture of street food in these places. Moreover, footage of the street food is combined with face-to-face interviews with the street food chefs and reveals the history behind the local culture. “What makes Street Food different is how much time it spends explaining the connection between the food and the lives of the people” (VanArendonk, 2019). This study aims to reveal how *Street Food* makes a connection between food, particularly street food, and the nation, by linking it to the people. The documentary has 2 volumes with a total of 15 episodes.

Table 1. List of episodes of Ugly Delicious (2018) and Street Food (2019)

<i>Ugly Delicious</i> (± 45 – 55 minutes)		<i>Street Food</i> (± 30 – 34 minutes)	
Eps	Title	Eps	Title
	Season 1		Volume 1: Asia
1	Pizza: US (New Haven, Connecticut), Naples, Japan, Copenhagen	1	Bangkok, Thailand
2	Tacos: Los Angeles, Mexico, Copenhagen	2	Osaka, Japan
3	Home-cooking: Thanksgiving dinner in the US	3	Delhi, India
4	Shrimp and Crawfish: US (Houston, New Orleans, Louisiana), Vietnam, China, Japan	4	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
5	Barbeque: Korean BBQ vs. American BBQ + Copenhagen, China, Japan	5	Chiayi, Taiwan
6	Fried Chicken: US (Southern), Japan, China, India, Korea	6	Seoul, South Korea
7	Fried Rice: True Chinese Food vs. Western Takeout	7	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
8	Stuffed: Asian dumplings vs. Italian	8	Singapore

	stuffed pasta		
	Season 2	9	Cebu, Philippines
9	Kids Menu: School food in the US vs. Japan		Volume 2: Latin America
10	Don't call it curry: Mumbai and Indian curry in the US + Japan + Germany	10	Buenos Aires, Argentina
11	Steak: Japan, Australia, and the US, Spain + gender studies	11	Salvador, Brazil
12	As the meat turns: Lebanon, Turkey, Middle East, Berlin, Syrian food	12	Oaxaca, Mexico
		13	Lima, Peru
		14	Bogota, Colombia
		15	La Paz, Bolivia

3.2 Methodology

This study takes a qualitative approach as it seeks to uncover meanings and perceptions of food articulated by the documentaries. A total of 20 hours of the transcript will be included for the analysis. For each episode, the transcript will be extracted from the subtitles available on Netflix. In addition to the transcript, visual features on the documentaries such as moving images or clips and expressions would be included manually to deepen the data collection and analysis.

Documentaries can invest food with national significance in different ways – via narration, footage, and sound. The content of the documentary includes textual and visual data; a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) will be used for the analysis. Meaning is created not only through languages or texts but also through images (Machin & Mayr, 2012). As a part of discourse analysis, this method aims to study the underlying system of meaning and the constructive role of language in creating those meanings. The way media narrative is made is not the reflection of reality, but the way it is constructed helps to shape our idea about it. Thus, for this study, food documentaries are perceived as a construction of reality and the analysis aims to describe the meanings of it. Moreover, critical discourse analysis exposes unneutral, absences, or taken-for-granted assumptions in the representation of the national significance of food (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The analysis in the thesis will use a combination of textual and visual material. The multimodality in this method will reveal how images contribute to the creation of meaning that sometimes could not be explained in

language.

The script of the documentaries will be analyzed using the textual critical discourse analysis by using the tools introduced by Machin and Mayr (2012). The analysis process will pay attention to word connotations, overlexicalization (an abundance of particular words and their synonym), suppression or lexical absence, and lexical choices and genre of communication (the use of imperatives and combination of every day with scientific language). By looking closely at the narrative used in the documentaries, the analysis would reveal underlying assumptions and denaturalize common-sense ideas by paying attention to the relation of power. Both of the food documentaries chosen were produced by American production companies yet it highlights food from the other parts of the world. A critical way of thinking will be important for the analysis to be able to break down the occurrence of power relations.

In addition, visual critical discourse analysis will look into the denotation and connotation, objects, settings, and salience in the clips (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The concept of connotation implies that there are many potential meanings within the images. This method explores how implicit meanings lie in the images and clips by paying attention to the visual detail. The visual components in food documentaries are important to be analyzed as some representations of the nation are not explicitly stated in the narrative but through clips of the people or communities from a specific area.

3.3 Data analysis process

In the first step of the analysis, all quotes and/or features will be labeled based on the significance of the research question and theoretical framework. All dialogues that are related to food, nation, or both are included during this phase. Here, I make use of the textual analysis tool explained above: word connotations, overlexicalization, suppression, and genre of communication. Before I start watching the series, I read the scripts and color-coded the dialogues by highlighting everything that is related to the research question. I used five colors to differentiate between: the speaker; description of the situation or sound description; anything related to food such as recipes, ingredients, way of cooking; anything related to nation or a specific place, such as traditions, specific mention of a particular country or city, or explanation about the people or community in one place; and the last category consist of anything that mentions food and the nation in one context. While reading, I make notes when I see some irregularities or interesting part of the quotes that I think is important to be analyze further. Then, while I watch the documentaries, I pay more attention to the visual details by using the visual analysis tools. The visual description is added manually on the side of the script. Again, I make notes on the important visual description that I would like to analyze

further, in comparison to other episodes.

In the second step, I make a report on a separate document with all the relevant dialogues that have been highlighted before. I use a table with three columns for each component: food, nation, and food and nation in the middle. I did this for every episode, and at the end of each episode, a short phrase will be extracted based on the group of themes that comes up in each of the components. For instance, I make a note on the way food is being displayed e.g., dishes, cooking techniques, and ingredients; how the nation is presented, e.g., strong pride of culture in Yogyakarta, the importance of rules and tradition in Osaka, and the historical importance in Delhi. In addition, for *Ugly Delicious* I added a list of places, cities, and/or countries, that are being featured in each episode because it always highlights more than one place. By doing this, it helps me to get a clear summary on what is being discussed on each of the episode, and easier to compare it to one another.

Lastly, I selected some important quotes from each episode that I will analyze in more detail and make a comparison with the other episodes. By doing this, I can make sense of the data by drawing links between the categories, episodes, and documentaries. As stated above, *Ugly Delicious* and *Street Food* have different approaches in making a connection between food and the nation. The result of this step then will be used as the sections for the results chapter along with direct quotes from the documentaries to support the argument. In this phase, I write down the points that are being repeated in the documentaries, in line with the list of topics from the previous phase. I always refer back to the research question to determine the relevant points to answer it.

After the analysis was completed, I grouped the findings into several topics that reflect the main ways in which food was presented. The first section of the results will discuss how documentaries construct food as part of national identity. The second section, opposite from the first part, will consider the way food documentaries construct food as mobile that moves from one national context to another. Lastly, the contemporary factors that affect food as part of national identity will be presented to show the current development of food culture as constructed in the food documentaries.

4 Results and Discussion

Looking back to the research question and the analysis process, the analysis resulted in two main findings: competing for representation of food as a national identity and as a mobile cultural product; and the contemporary factors that affect food as part of national identities. Firstly, the results will explain how the documentaries construct food as part of national identity by linking the role of families, the importance of food to the national culture, and food as a window to the past in connecting the national identity. The next section will explain how does the documentary construct food as a mobile cultural product that moves from one national context to another. This section will link food with historical circumstances and explore how it challenged the nationalist framing of food.

The last section will discuss contemporary factors that affect food as part of national identities, such as state intervention, modernization and globalization, and politics. Here, the findings focus on the transformation or changes that food incurs today, by taking into account the competing representations of food that were explained previously. Interestingly, the pieces of evidence from the first section are mostly taken from *Street Food* as it highlights the significance of food in a national context exclusively. In other words, the documentary represents different ways of how food is linked with one national identity. On the contrary, the evidence in the second section that relates food in a broader context is more visible in *Ugly Delicious* as the discussion of food as part of one specific nation is constantly being challenged throughout the episodes. Despite the different approaches in the construction of the narrative that links food with national identity, both *Street Food and Ugly Delicious* complement each other in giving the viewers a deeper understanding of the significance of food in the conception of national identity.

4.1 Competing representations of food as a cultural product

4.1.1 Documentaries construct food as part of the national identity

Role of families

Going back to the theoretical framework, food is invested with national meaning in different ways. Ichijo and Ranta (2015) introduce three approaches on how food is used to define national identity in the everyday life: unofficial, official, and global level. This section will address different ways on how food documentaries construct food as part of the national identity by making a link to the family, the importance of food for the national culture, and as the window to the past in the construction of national identity. Firstly, family is depicted as having an important role in maintaining the tradition, specifically, food culture. The narrative that is constructed by the food documentaries links stories from various families and forms it as a representation of the whole

nation. By doing this, food documentaries are creating a story that can be easily understood and more relatable for the viewers. For instance, Wayne Liew, the second generation of Keng Eng Kee Seafood, in Singapore stated:

Wayne: "It's my father's very own recipe. If I don't follow, I think he will kill me. It took me 15 years before my father hand over the wok to me. It takes years of experience. We are still learning how to progress.

("Street Food: Asia", volume 1, episode 8)

From his explanation above, one could notice that Wayne is talking about his father and his father's recipe. The mention of "wok" as an important object to the family that is sacred as he needs to wait for a long time for it to be passed down assumes that it is a common thing for Singaporean parents to pass down some object to their kids as a symbol of preserving the family tradition. However, there is no clear evidence of how this relates to the nation's culture per se. Moreover, not all Singaporeans families are aware of this situation or even continue this tradition for future generations. Furthermore, food documentaries form a story that is unfamiliar to their Western viewers and make it more natural by using an object that is more common to them, such as "wok". A wok is highly associated with the Asian way of cooking, thus by mentioning the object and adding a clip of it, viewers that have a small understanding of the way of cooking can see how it is being used in real-life circumstances. At the end of Wayne's explanation, he mentions that "we" are still learning how to progress.

The word "we" refers not only to himself as a second-generation restaurant successor but more to his generation and fellow restaurant successor who are still learning how to progress in following their parents' footsteps in continuing the business. Moreover, progress in this sense seems contradictive with his statement of following his father's recipe. "Progress" can also be understood as following the current trend in the restaurant business, with modernization, and the use of new technology and ways of cooking. By following the current trend and adjusting to modernization, it seems impossible to do so while at the same time following his father's recipe. In the clip we see his father standing next to him with a straight face, without any reaction to Wayne's statement. This supports the sense of authority that his father has on him, and by not responding, it gives an assumption that he agrees with what he is saying by "If I don't follow, I think he will kill me." The statement was also followed with a clip of Wayne cooking in the restaurant's kitchen with the wok, which represents his father's permission to continue the business.

According to Lien et al.'s (2004) discussion on three fields where food is constantly referred

to in Western societies: food as nature, food as a commodity, and food as culture, Wayne's experience can be put under the fields of food as a commodity and food as culture. His experience in the struggle to continue the family business represents food as a commodity where it is a commodity for a trade that is produced, distributed, and sold in the market. Moreover, as a culture, his experience in following his father's recipe and the family relation formed in the story constructs how culturally defined categories are depicted through how food is sensed, processed, presented, and consumed in unique cultural settings. The reason that Wayne should follow his father's recipe is to keep their regular customers coming as they expect to be served with the same dish with the same taste. This is to keep the business open, or in other words, keep making a profit out of it.

A similar incident is experienced by Aisha Hashim, the new owner of *the putu piring* stall in Haig Road, Singapore, who is the successor of the family business. She stated:

Aisha: "In my culture, my tradition, we don't normally say no to our parents. When she [mom] said that, I understand that I have to leave what I'm doing"

(*"Street Food: Asia"*, volume 1, episode 8)

Aisha's experience in continuing her family business can be seen as part of preserving the tradition. In this manner, her experience highlights the role of food in the construction of national self-identity (Burns, 2016). On the contrary to Wayne's experience, Aisha was able to continue the business by making use of modern technology to make the same dish. However, she also explained the struggle she has in combining technology and use big machinery to help the business because of her parent's refusal to do so. The traditional method is still seen as the only way to produce authentic traditional food and thus needed to be preserved. Her statement above contains different meanings and connotations that can be understood by the viewers. The use of "my", "we-our", and "I" at the end refers to a different subject. "My" culture and "my" tradition can either talk about the family's culture and tradition, or the nation's culture and tradition. On the other hand, the use of "we" and "our" in the following sentence refers back to the first sentence's subject. To give more context, Aisha was already working at Boston Harbor Hotel after she finishes her culinary school in the US. Then, she was forced to go back to Singapore and help the family businesses that were declining. "We don't normally say no to our parents" refers to her family's situation in surviving the *putu piring* business. For this reason, the documentary constructs family as an important part of the nation, who are, in practice, preserving the nation's culture. At the end of the sentence, she refers back to herself as "I" implying that the tradition and culture that she mentions may be solely from her family. In this manner, the documentary constructs the importance of family tradition and

culture to become a part of the national identity. Lastly, the similar family struggle shown from Aisha's and Wayne's experience underlies Asian stereotypical assumptions for the non-Asian audience, where Asian parents are often seen as strict and tough towards their children and at the same time constructing a story that relates to the Asian audiences.

National culture

Another way that food documentaries construct food as part of national identity is through linking food to the national culture. The national culture here refers to culture and tradition that is being shared with the whole nation as something that is preserved and important for the creation of national identity. As an example, Mana Kumagai, Osaka's food historian stated:

Mana (in Japanese): "In Japan, good table manners are drilled into us. The most important one is to say "I humbly receive" [in Japanese: "*Itadakimasu*"] before a meal. We sit and eat properly to show respect to the life which we consume as food. In Japan, rules and order are very important. It's the idea that we must suppress our true intentions to do things properly"

(*"Street Food: Asia"*, volume 1, episode 2)

Here, the documentary constructs Japan as a country where the citizen adheres to the rules and order with the help of stereotypical national traits such as saying "*Itadakimasu*" every time before a meal. The food documentary makes use of common phrases that most people will associate with Japan and the Japanese people as a whole. However, by stating "In Japan" it gives an understanding that it is only being done in Japan, by the Japanese people, and does not apply to other people that do not belong to the nation. In other words, by saying "*Itadakimasu*" before a meal, it becomes a part of a person's national identity, it becomes a way of saying they belong to the Japanese community. This practice is linked with the theory of banal nationalism as it is practiced in the daily routine and becomes so familiar and habitual that they pass unnoticed by the Japanese people. Furthermore, this supports the characteristics of banal nationalism where national identity is no longer defined on territorial boundaries but through the daily experience of the people. The use of pronouns such as "us", "we", and "our" implies the Japanese nation as a whole and all the people who identify themselves as Japanese. This goes in line with what Lien et al. (2004) discuss on food as culture, where culturally defined categories are depicted through how food is presented and consumed, especially in a unique cultural setting. Moreover, food has a significant role in Japanese culture that is seen as a unique characteristic of the Japanese community (Ibid.). This statement was

intensified with the display of footage of stereotypical Japanese settings such as a Japanese woman dancing in front of a temple wearing a traditional costume and another woman making *matcha* – Japanese green tea – with traditional equipment inside a cubicle while also wearing traditional costume. By doing this, the documentary constructed Japan with the use of stereotypical national characteristics that can be easily identified with the viewers.

The only example that is taken from *Ugly Delicious* which shows how the documentary constructs food as part of national identity is experienced by Rosio Sanchez, of Mexican descent who owns a Mexican restaurant, Hija de Sanchez, in Copenhagen. Her feeling of disconnected from her nation as an immigrant in the US motivates her to know more about the culture and the community, through food.

Rosio: “A few years into Noma [the restaurant where she works in Copenhagen], I told my dad, “I’m gonna go to Mexico and work in Mexico. He’s like “I don’t support that at all.” And this is coming from an immigrant father. His idea that “I came to the [United] states so you can have a better life. You don’t have to go back.” Things like that. But my point is, I wanna learn about the culture, I wanna cook.”

(“Ugly Delicious”, season 1, episode 2)

From her statement, the documentary links the nation and the culture through food. Rosio’s statement of “I wanna learn about the culture, I wanna cook”, shows the connection between cooking and learning about the Mexican culture. Her experience shows the importance of food and taste convey the feeling of home, nostalgia, and the feeling of belongingness to the community (Porciani, 2019). Moreover, the connection between food, culture and the nation are constructed through Rosio family's experience as an immigrant in the US. Her father’s statement of moving to the US to have a better life and disapproval of her decision to move back to Mexico suggest most immigrant family’s motivation in moving away from their home country, to have a better life. Moreover, from Rosio’s motivation to go back to Mexico and learn the culture through food, the documentary constructs the idea that learning to cook Mexican food in Mexico, would give the person more understanding about the nation. For this reason, the food, ways of cooking, and recipes are part of the national identity. Her experience can also be seen as a practice of banal cosmopolitanism where the set of cultural practices, in this case, making Mexican food, goes beyond national borders on the daily basis in combination with the flow of people, especially with her family’s experience as an immigrant.

The past

The construction of food as part of the national identity can also be seen through the connection the food that exists today has with the past. The presence of food in the daily lives of the people has higher meaning rather than merely as human's primary needs in life. Moreover, it helps people to imagine themselves as a part of a nation. This can be done by preserving the gastronomic culture by making the same recipes, in the same way, from generation to generation. This is present in different parts of the world, for instance, in Indonesia, explained by Kevindra P. Soemantri, author of *Top Tables*:

Kevindra: "When you come to Yogyakarta, it is like a window to the past. The older women, especially, embrace the recipes from their grandmother and their mothers with their heart and soul. Using the exact ingredients, and the same method each and every day, for many years. They don't mess with that kind of recipe. It's like blasphemy to your culture if you are doing that."

(*"Street Food: Asia"*, volume 1, episode 4)

For the same reason, Sandra Ortiz, owner of *Empanadas del Carmen* in Oaxaca, Mexico, continues her grandmother's business for over 20 years. She stated:

Sandra: "Our recipes have remained the same to preserve the tradition, the flavor."

(*"Street Food: Latin America"*, volume 2, episode 3)

From the examples above, one could recognize the role of food to the nation's cultures, where sometimes it is so sacred and even blasphemy to change the recipes. An individual's decision to preserve the culture and be consistent with the old tradition is an act of respect for the ancestors and something that is not done by a large number of the population. The overlexicalization mention of the older generation such as: "older women", "grandmother", and "mother" implies the current condition where older generations were the ones who are still preserving the tradition. It moves away from the idea of becoming modern by still making the same dish with the same recipe and techniques. This aspect was also constructed visually by including clips of the older women cooking with traditional equipment, inside a traditional house, or in a street food stand on the side of the road. These images generate an understanding of the reality of people who decide to preserve the tradition that being consistent in cooking and making food in a traditional way, will not lead to success, financially. In a bigger picture, constructing these images as part of the national identity

implies that the nation, Indonesia and Mexico, is still laid back and far from becoming modern. Moreover, the high representation of the older generation suggests that there are not a lot of younger generations who want to preserve the tradition by selling authentic and traditional food. With the modernization and current lifestyle of the new generation, it is in the hand of these “old women” to preserve the tradition and keep on selling traditional food.

4.1.2 Documentaries construct food as moving from one national context to another

The second approach that comes up in the analysis is the construction of food as moving from one national context to another. In relation to the concept of globalization as an opposite to nationalism, cross-cultural interaction can produce cultural heterogeneity or glocalization (Roudometof, 2014). The flow of culture could also lead to hybridization or the creation of new culture and created a multicultural society (Ganis, 2019). In this manner, the documentaries represent how multiple meaning of food is produced and reproduced from different angle and point of view. By doing this, the documentaries give the viewers alternatives to the nationalist framing of food.

Historical circumstances

Moreover, by drawing attention to the mobility of food and how food travels from one nation to another, the documentary gives an illustration of becoming cosmopolitan (Szerszynski & Urry, 2002). Along with the movement of people all over the world, the way food travels from one place to another and gets in contact with the existing food culture in the nation has various consequences. For instance, this section will explain how the movement of food culture resulted in the assimilation of the gastronomic culture as a result of the high number of immigrant families in the country. The food tradition that was brought with the people are being included in the nation’s culture because of the people’s experience and it becomes more significant for the people. The historical circumstances can bring more than one nation together, resulting in a multicultural society. The documentaries formulate this multiculturalism in the food culture by featuring chefs, immigrant families, immigrant chefs, and food historians as experts to tell their experience and knowledge about the transformation of food culture in the country. One example of the construction of multiculturalism appears in Mexico, as explained by Gustavo Arrelano, author of *Taco USA*, and Jonathan Gold, Los Angeles Times food critiques:

Gustavo: “Anyone who comes to Mexico, they put in their little bits and pieces of their

culture. The Germans, The Czechs, The Poles, they gave us beer. Uh, Lebanese gave us al pastor with tacos Arabes that were gonna eat soon.”

Jonathan: “You go to Merida [City in Mexico], and you go into the mercado [market], where there are giant mounds of Edam cheese in the red wax because they always had like a big trade with Holland”

Gustavo: “You know, all these different cultures are bringing their cuisines. that what’s make Mexican food so delicious and again, so long-lasting”

(“Ugly Delicious”, season 1, episode 2)

Here, the documentary constructs the mobility of food by making a specific link to different cultures and explain the historical perspective where different nations go to Mexico, and what type of cultural product they bring with them. “The Germans, The Czechs, The Poles, they gave us a beer” implies that these are the places where beer comes from, and they were the ones who introduce beer to Mexico. The word “gave” is used twice, connotes that the other nation who comes to Mexico in the past bring their culture on purpose and voluntarily make it a part of the Mexican culture.

However, there are several reasons why and how these cultures come together that are related to the colonialization age and international trade. As Jonathan explained on the situation in Merida, where we can still see proof of past relation with Holland. The way he explains this situation suggests that the cooperation and trade with Holland no longer exists but still left some evidence to prove the importance of the trade for the nation today. However, his statement fails to explain the reason why the giant mounds of Edam cheese are still there and how it affects the people in Merida today. At the end of the discussion, Gustavo explains how these different cultures have a role in the creation of delicious and long-lasting Mexican food. This goes back to the explanation of how these cultures come to Mexico and for what reason their culture is being included as part of the Mexican culture, specifically Mexican food. It implies the same connotation when “different cultures are bringing in their cuisines” suggests these cultures are purposely bringing their national cuisine to be introduced to Mexican people and even more be included as part of Mexican food. The meaning of “long-lasting” can also have a different connotation. The statement implies that in order for food culture to become long-lasting, it needs to be open to other cultures and merge these other cultures into the national culture. It is a contradictory statement where to preserve one’s national culture, they need to be open for other culture to be included in the nation’s culture. As a consequence, the national culture is a combination of different nation’s cultures, is no longer exclusive of the nation’s culture. For this reason, the documentary constructs the movement of food roles in the

development of the national food culture and promote cosmopolitan beliefs to its viewers to become more open to other national culture.

Borderless world

The transnationalization of food can challenge the ways we perceive a nation and blur the relationship between food and nationality. This representation of food as mobile may support the notion of cosmopolitanism or being open to other cultures and willing to appreciate some elements of the 'other'. It also illustrates Skey's (2012, p. 471) "borderless world" where the process of interaction and ideas goes beyond the local and national context. The following evidence will show how territorial boundaries no longer clearly define what belongs and do not belong to a nation. In this manner, food is seen as a bridge for different cultures and nations to come together. The feeling of belongingness to one's nation is replaced with the feeling of belongingness to the global world with a multicultural background. Silvina Reusmann, food journalist & author illustrate how territorial boundaries does not limit the feeling of belongingness for the people in Buenos Aires:

Silvina: "We (Buenos Aires) are much more similar to Europe than we are to the other Latin American countries. There aren't many native people. That population was decimated during the Spanish conquest. What remained was the culture of the immigrants. The European influence in Buenos Aires can be seen in the architecture, in the culture, art, music, and especially in the food"

("Street Food: Latin America", volume 2, episode 1)

The statement above was also supported with old historical clips of what is framed as a European ship that brings a lot of European people coming to Buenos Aires. These people were shown as the elite, working people with neat style and a suitcase in their hand, looking ready and happy to work in a foreign country. "The architecture" was followed by clips of buildings with European-like architecture, with Argentina's flags in front of it, highlighting the location of the building. Silvina's statement introduced Buenos Aires as part of Europe because of its similarity in architecture, culture, art, music, and food. Moreover, the remains of Spanish culture that still exist in Buenos Aires today have become a part of their identity. It constructs the openness that Buenos Aires has to other cultures, in this case, Spanish culture, that has a role in the creation of their culture today. Moreover, the construction of their deep relation with Europe shows a proud feeling to be related to Europe instead of other Latin American countries. It helps to elevate their position in the global context, even as simple as having a similar cultural identity with Spain. This example also

illustrates the practice of being open with other cultures is seen as a positive thing to do and food is one of the important parts of the culture that mobilize from one place to another.

The realistic and fictional lens of food documentaries is produced through an imaginary world by using other's or outsider's perspectives to tell the story (Darling-Wolf, 2015). Christian Puglisi, the owner of BÆST, has first-hand experience as an immigrant chef who owns an Italian restaurant in Copenhagen. His experience is constructed as part of the process where food travels around the world and his background as an immigrant chef influences his decision to open the restaurant. Moreover, he is depicted as not part of the Italian community because of his half-Italian background, and the way that he is making and selling pizza that is different from what ordinary Italian people would do. The following is part of his discussion with David Chang, owner of Momofuku noodle bar and host of *Ugly Delicious*:

David: "I always make fun of my friends that are Italian chefs that you can't fuck up with anything that's Italian"

Christian: "That tradition, that, like, fear of doing something that is not really Italian, which, as an immigrant, for me was a big deal. I so wanted to be Italian, wanted to feel Italian. I want... I was like, "You know what? I'm mixed. my mom is Norwegian. I'm born in Italy; my father is Italian." [...] This idea of everything is in a certain way and it should be kept that way, has really been like, provoking me to tinker, to say, "I think this can be done better"

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 1)

For a little bit of context, David and Christian were discussing how he ended up opening a Pizza restaurant in Copenhagen. There has been a lot of discussion in the creation of Italian pizza, on the strict rules that the Italian has to make the authentic Neapolitan pizza. Christian tried to challenge that notion of "authentic Italian pizza" does not have to come from Italy and made in the same way as everyone else does. He challenges this by making his own buffalo mozzarella in Copenhagen and created his own pizza recipe that is different from the "authentic" ones. Moreover, the fact that he has a mixed nationality background, he has insights from different cultures and thus creates a cosmopolitan way of thinking where he is more open towards differences. This construction of food to become mobile and moves from one part of the world to another is influenced by the willingness to make things better, regardless of the national background of the people. In this manner, Christian is telling his story in trying to become Italian outside Italy, and at the same time challenge the nationalistic discourse that Italian has in being exclusive and biased towards other culture, in this case, other ways of making pizza.

Movement of food culture

Another reason that food promotes openness or cosmopolitanism is through the mobilization of a dish to different parts of the world, and become a part of another country's culture because of the acceptance of the dish. Moreover, it can also be included in the tradition or become a new tradition for the people through eating a specific dish. For example, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) became increasingly popular in South Africa, Japan, and China. The original recipe that was popular in the US gain popularity in other parts of the world. Lolis Eric Elie, food writer explains how Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) becomes part of the tradition in different parts of the world:

Lolis: "Even though the idea of cooking chicken in grease certainly cannot be just one country's invention, KFC... and even Chicken Licken, a chain I think is dead in the US but very much alive in South Africa. These places have helped inform culinary tastes in other parts of the world."

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 6)

His statement above was said before David's travel to Japan where he met with Zaiyu Hasegawa, chef at Den, a well-known Japanese chef that has a popular dish that is inspired by Kentucky Fried Chicken.

David: "Chef, what it is about America and fried chicken that you gravitate towards?"

Zaiyu: "Japanese people love KFC. All Japanese people eat KFC at Christmas"

Sous-chef: "When they think of KFC, they think of Christmas. That's the association"

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 6)

From Lolis' explanation, KFC is constructed to belong to the US, because of its origin in Kentucky. However, their declining existence in the place of origin and popularity in other parts of the world proves the mobility of food to the different national context. Moreover, it was followed by clips of KFC's advertisement in Mandarin, illustrating the existence and popularity of KFC in different parts of the world. However, his statement fails to explain KFC as a fast-food chain that, like any other multinational company, aims to gain a high number of profits. By being present in different parts of the world, these companies are able to gain higher revenue and maintain their existence. It was not their intention to become a representation of their nation through serving food that origins from their country. Zaiyu's explanation of the tradition to eat KFC at Christmas was followed by photos of the Instagram posts with the #KFCchristmas. It constructs the significance of KFC for the

Japanese tradition. Interestingly, KFC moved from the US – as food that low- and middle-class people eat because it is cheap and economical – to parts of Asia and become food that is valuable to the nation’s tradition and being consumed on a special occasion. In this manner, the documentary constructs the mobilization of food from one national context to another that can have various significance for the people. The existence and popularity of KFC in the US have different implications with the popularity in Asia, but this still constructs the ability of food to travel and blend with different cultures.

The last example on the construction of food as mobile that moves from one national context to another deals with Chinese food and the movement to different parts of the world.

Jennifer 8. Lee, a Chinese food historian stated:

Jennifer: “Chinese food is the most pervasive food on the planet. It is served on all seven continents, even Antarctica, cause Monday night is Chinese food at night at McMurdo Station - there is Chinese food in space. NASA serves sweet and sour pork to astronauts. So, there are more Chinese restaurants in America than McDonald's, BK, Wendy’s, KFC combined. These dishes like General Tso chicken and egg rolls are completely indigenous to America”

(“Ugly Delicious”, season 1, episode 7)

This was the opening statement on the episode of *Ugly Delicious* where they discuss fried rice. The discussion starts with the monolithic assumption of Chinese food and the existence of “American-Chinese” food that is distinct from what Chinese food in China. The discussion aims to denaturalize common ideas people may have about Chinese food and construct a story that represents another version of reality. Moreover, Jennifer’s explanation fails to mention the reputation of Chinese food for the people. Similar to the association of fried chicken with low- and middle-class consumers, Chinese food also has a similar association because it is available almost everywhere and becomes a communal food for society. Being cheap and accessible becomes a reason why these foods are able to travel and maintain their existence in different parts of the world. However, the documentary constructed this reality as something that is progressive to the food culture, and thus more people should have a better understanding of it. In another discussion, Fuchsia Dunlop, a Chinese food expert explains:

David: “Would you say that most of America and western Europe think of as Chinese food is Chinese food at all?”

Fuchsia: "Because Chinese was one of the earliest immigrant cuisines, I think it adapted to American and also British taste at a time when people were maybe less cosmopolitan. And they came out with a formula that kind of worked. But since then, everyone's got more globalized in their taste certainly in the big cities."

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 7)

From Fuchsia's explanation, Chinese food is constructed as an adapted dish that bridges people to be more open to other cuisines. Even though, there has been a number of changes and Chinese food is being adjusted to the taste that is more familiar to the American and Western European society, it does not lose the sense and identity of Chinese in it. Moreover, the globalization and movement of people are being taken for granted here, where it suggests that Chinese food is a crucial part of the process of acceptance and openness to other culture but at the same time it also hinders the movement of authentic Chinese food because of the modification and being in contact with other culture. Following the discussion on hybridity in globalization through global cultural flows, the adaptation of Chinese food and its creation to "American-Chinese" food exemplifies the creation of new culture as a combination of different aspects of existing cultures (Ganis, 2019; Pieterse, 2019). Moreover, this is being constructed through electronic media in the form of documentaries where the movement of the cultural artifacts is becoming more effortless.

4.2 Contemporary factors affecting food as part of national identity

State intervention

Current development in globalization and modernization has consequences on the importance of food as part of national identity. In this section, changes in the gastronomic world will be explained by mentioning several factors that affect the position of food culture for the nation. The process of interaction and ideas that goes beyond the local and national context can lead to changes in the construction of one's national identity. In relation to gastro diplomacy explained by Porciani (2019), another outcome of state intervention can be seen as undermining the national tradition when the state wants to make the country more modern. As a consequence, a number of street food vendors and old shops are being forced to shut down to be replaced with a more modernized and stylish building to boost the country's economy. According to Ichijo and Ranta's (2015) approaches in which food is used to define national identity and nationalism in the everyday life, state intervention can be put under the official or top-down approach where the forms of national branding are mediated by the nation-state. For instance, in Bangkok, the government restricted street food for some time because street food vendors were encroaching on taxpayer's

space and the government wanted to make the city become more modern. But over time, the people kept demanding street food stalls to be kept open because it has become an important part of the community. The status of street food changes when one street food stall owned by Raan Jay Fai becomes famous with her crab omelet become well-known in Thailand and got one Michelin star. Michelin star is a well-known rating system to grade restaurants all over the world in their quality, and it is mostly won by five-star fine dining restaurants with a well-known chef. Winning the awards has changed the perception of street food in Bangkok, as explained by Chawadee Nualkhair, the author of Bangkok's top 50 street food stalls:

Chawadee: "That [Raan Jay Fai's] success surprised the government because they continuously underplay how important street food is. Not just to Thai people, but in Thailand's image."

("Street Food: Asia", volume 1, episode 1)

Street food vendors in La Paz also had a similar experience when street stands were prohibited by the police. Emiliana Condori, one of the street food vendors in La Paz, tells her story in her struggle to keep her business open:

Emiliana: "At that time, street stands were prohibited. Whenever someone set up a stall, the town hall would immediately knock it down [...] The police didn't allow me to sell. Some days, I was arrested for the whole day."

("Street Food: Latin America", volume 2, episode 6)

From the explanations above, the government is depicted as a barrier for street food businesses to grow or even exist in Thailand and La Paz. In connection with the importance of food in a nation, "in Thailand's image", the responsibility to preserve the food culture is also in the hand of the governments, who make rules in allowing or restricting street food to exist. From the statement above, the documentary constructs the food culture, linked to "Thai people", as an opposition to the nation-state where they have a distinct goal for the country. On the one hand, the government wanted to make the city to become more modern, and having street food throughout the city, hinders the process of modernizing the country. On the other hand, Thai people see street food as an important part of their life, of their national identity, thus it is important to be preserved even if it makes them further from being modern. For this reason, the documentary constructs a narrative where a part of a nation sees modernization as the end-goal for the country but another

part sees modernization as an obstacle to preserve the food culture as part of their national identity. For this reason, state intervention has a significant role in the inclusion of food as part of national identity.

Modernization and globalization

Street food vendors in South Korea have a different sentiment on the state's modernizing efforts than those in Bangkok and La Paz. Daniel Gray, food journalist & restaurateur explains:

Daniel: "With modernization and globalization, the vendors in South Korea are constantly trying to innovate because there is so much competition. And so, what they might do is tweak a familiar sort of food"

(“Street Food: Asia”, volume 1, episode 6)

Daniel constructs modernization and globalization as the main reason why innovation was able to happen in South Korea. In this case, it moves away from government intervention to allow or limit the existence of street food vendors in South Korea. It constructs the idea that the process comes naturally as modernization and globalization enter the country, the street food vendors were voluntarily changed in accordance to the changes that they see around them. The adaptation to the new way of cooking and the creation of a new type of “Korean food” can be seen as a practice of everyday nationalism where the citizen reproduce nationalism creatively (Skey & Antonsich, 2017). For this reason, modernization and globalization happen to be the main factor for the country to evolve but at the same time is an expression of official nationalism. However, the statement undermines the previous development that the country had been through where traditional food gains its popularity in the country. Moreover, it also implies that traditional cooking is no longer preferred by the people and the position is being replaced with the modern style of cooking or street food. This goes in line with Porciani's (2019) observation where the revolutionary of taste moves from the old, mixed of distinct flavor, to the new, distinctive flavor from one another. However, other street food vendors that are being featured in the episode such as Yoonsun Cho, Guunsok Jung, and Sangmi Chu experience the opposite where they have succeeded in maintaining their business in selling traditional Korean food. Thus, the process of modernization and globalization has influenced the changes in Korean food culture as part of the national identity.

Similar instances occur in Indonesia where modernization is constructed as something that hinders the process to preserve the nation's culture. In other words, the old and traditional discussion of food's significance and nationalism is constantly being challenged in today's world with the current development in ways of cooking and eating along with the confrontation with other

foodways. The episode on Indonesia features a number of traditional street food vendors and one business that sells modern-style street food. Here, the documentary forms a narrative where maintaining tradition and becoming modern can lead to success for the street food business. However, the following statement by Kevindra P. Soemantri, author of *Top Tables*, explains the consequences of modernization for the nation's tradition:

Kevindra: "Some people, nowadays, they want new technologies, new methods for making food. Especially, when they are business people. But if modern technology overshadows the traditional way of cooking in the next 10, or 20, or 30 years, it will affect the genuine and authentic quality of Yogyakarta food culture."

(*"Street Food: Asia"*, volume 1, episode 4)

On the contrary, his statement was followed by a clip of the traditional way of making noodles in Yogyakarta, with big wooden machinery and an ox to go around the pressing machine over and over. His statement implies a concern with the growth of modernization in the city, that it endangers the existence of local and traditional food culture. "Technology" is often being associated with "businesses" as stated by Kevindra, implying the requirement for businesses to use technology to be more successful. However, "technology" can have several different connotations. The use of big wooden machinery as shown in the clip can also be seen as technology as it helps the noodle-making process easier and more efficient for the people. But, the documentary constructs "technology" as something that is far more advance than the machines that have been used in the clip. Thus, it implies that the business is not modern enough and needs to be more modern if they want to be more successful. Yet, the main takeaway from the statement implies that modernization is dangerous and thus can lead to the disappearance of the traditional culture, the traditional way of making food. Here, the traditional process is constructed as the only way to serve the "authentic quality" of the food culture.

Food and politics

Some episodes of *Ugly Delicious* make a link between food and political issues, where people's decision to eat a certain type of food is influenced by their political beliefs or underlying racial assumptions they have about the other nation. However, some instances also construct the notion that most people do not think about politics or any higher matter when they eat. The documentary constructs this issue as something that most people are unaware of but should be more recognized. For instance, in the discussion about Chinese food, Serena Dai, editor at *Eater*,

New York stated:

Serena: "I've met people before who have said, "I don't like Chinese food, and I don't know if I can hang out with you." But I've also just seen around people saying online, on Twitter, whatever, reviews, "I'm scared of Indian food, I'm scared of Chinese food." When people say that, I just think, 'What are you scared of? Are you scared of pork rib or a dumpling? And is it really about the food or are you scared of the people?"

David: "There are some pretty vile things associated with food that no one ever wants to talk about"

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 7)

This discussion was done while they were eating Chinese food, along with three other people: Alan Yang, creator of *Master of None*, a Netflix series, Joe Ng, a chef, and Ed Schoenfeld, a restaurateur. All of them has different experience and opinion about Chinese food that was being discussed and become the center of the episode. The way that Serena explains her statement was with a little bit of an angry tone, implying her disagreement with the reality of how people think about Chinese food and Chinese people. The other people at the table seem to agree with her statement by nodding, especially with David's reply above. From her statement, we can see a lot of association between food and the people that underlies a number of stereotypical assumptions. However, there is a detachment in these associations where it is unclear on what and how these assumptions come about and why it has a negative connotation on it. The negativity was intensified with Serena's tone of speaking and the choice of words such as: "don't like" and "scared". These words connote different meanings and can be seen as hyperbolic, to create a sense of seriousness and urgency for the viewers to become aware of the situation.

In another episode, food and its association to politics or racial assumptions are constructed in a different manner, where people are assumed to not think about it when they eat. For some groups of people, food is merely a necessity in their life and they need to consume food to survive. However, the association between food and the people formed in the documentary also highlights the same issue as before where it is constructed as something that the viewers need to know and think about more even though it is a necessity in human life to survive. This concern was raised by Gustav Arellano, author of *Taco USA*, and Peter Meehan, co-host and co-author of *Momofuku* cookbook:

Gustav: "I just want people to understand that taco is not just a taco. A taco is a culture. A taco is a history. A taco is a migration. A taco is, you know, resistance, politics, all that stuff.

But it is hard because, too often in foodie culture, people just want to eat. They do not want to think about what they eat”

[...]

Peter: “There is a lot of food transitioned over time, and it is about cultural awareness and it is about cultural acceptance”

(“Ugly Delicious”, season 1, episode 2)

Arellano’s statement was a personal opinion where he raised his concern on the lack of awareness that most people have on the taco and the history that is related to it. Here, the documentary suggests the viewers in becoming more aware of the food that they eat by paying attention to the culture, history, and politics that are linked with the food. Peter’s statement can also be linked to the notion of cosmopolitan taste, where “cultural awareness” and “cultural acceptance” are key for the creation of cosmopolitan taste. By being aware of and accept other cultures and the changes that come with them, people are open to new things that come from other cultures. Their statement also challenges people’s conception of food, especially taco, and the significance it has for the people eating it and making it. The contemporary factors that affect food as part of national identity here are formed by making a link to things and words that are more familiar to the viewers, such as: “culture”, “history”, “resistance”, and “politics”. Nevertheless, it fails to explain the sort of link that should be associated with tacos and which way people should understand it. This can lead to several different assumptions depending on the underlying cultural background that the viewers have about the “culture”, “history”, “resistance”, and “politics” of the nation. By being aware of these topics, the documentary implies that these people can be more understanding and more receptive to learn about food and the history behind it. It gives an optimistic sense for the future where more people will become more open, acceptable, and pays more attention to the food that they are eating.

Response to foreign culture

The last topic that comes up in the analysis on the contemporary factors that effects food as part of national identity is the situation for new restaurant businesses and how the local reacts to immigrant-owned restaurants. Depending on the response of the local community, it influences the future of the business and the direction of the business itself. It can either lead to cultural assimilation where two different food culture comes together and strive the business for the longer term, or the local reject the coming of “new” taste to their place and thus put down the restaurant.

Chen P. Ren, the owner of New China Palace in Knoxville, explains the situation in his restaurant dealing with American Chinese food with Serena Dai, editor at Eater, New York.

Serena: "Your own food here isn't Sichuanese"

Chen: "This is all American-Chinese"

Serena: "American-Chinese?"

Chen: "Yeah. If I make 100% Chinese... no business"

[...]

Chen: "Because here, 98% is American people. Just a few Chinese [...] I cannot prepare all the [Sichuan-style] Chinese food waiting for Chinese to come in"

("Ugly Delicious", season 1, episode 7)

In his explanation, it is clear that he had to adjust to the local taste in order to for the restaurant to survive. The situation depicted in his restaurant suggests that American food and Chinese food are distinct in the taste, way of cooking, and the ingredients that are used. However, it is unclear on what type of food can be put under "American-Chinese" and to what extent does he needs to change the way he cooks to fit in with the local taste. In these settings, his focus was to survive in the business and support his family by selling delicious food based on the demand of the customers. His intention was not to introduce Chinese food for the customers as a whole as he realizes that it is still something that is unfamiliar and alien for the American people, thus it is hard for him to push the boundaries even further. In this manner, the documentary constructs American people as far from being cosmopolitan or open to other cultures, with the support of Chen's story and his experience in being "forced" to change his way of cooking.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

This thesis focuses on how food documentaries link food with national identity. As seen from the previous chapter, the answer to the research question is divided into two parts that explain how the documentaries construct food as part of national identity: competing representations of food as a cultural product and the contemporary factors affecting food as part of national identity. The first topic that comes up in the analysis compares the representations of food as a cultural product as part of national identity and as moving from one national context to another. In the documentary, food is constructed as part of national identity through association with families, national culture, and as a window to the past for the nation. On the contrary, food is also constructed as a mobile cultural product that moves from one national context to another. In this section, the food documentaries link food with different nationalities through the association with history, the notion of a borderless world, and the movement of food culture. In this manner, the first topic reveals an opposite association of food with national identity: exclusivity and inclusivity. Constructing food as a part of national identity gives the idea of exclusivity in the role of food as a part of national identity. In this way, food is constructed as to exclusively belong to one nation only, and the association shown in the food documentaries are visible mostly on *Street Food* with one exception from *Ugly Delicious*. The reason for this can be traced to the plot of the documentary that highlights the street food in one city, one country. On the other hand, the construction of food as moving from one national context to another implies an inclusive manner where different food cultures get in contact and resulted in a multicultural society. Interestingly, there is a similarity in the way that the food documentaries link food with one or more nations through the association with history. In this case, the historical circumstances have a different outcome for the food culture, where the people wanted to preserve the tradition by making the same recipe and the colonial age brings culture together resulted in the food culture that we see today.

The last topic explains the contemporary factors affecting food as a part of national identity. In this topic, there is ambiguity on the role of state intervention in relation to modernization where it is seen as both hinders and promotes food as part of the national identity. Even though the situation happens in different parts of the world, the food documentaries construct the state to have a significant role to incorporate food as part of the national identity. Interestingly, these occur only on *Street Food* where it highlights the existence of street food in the country. This situation implies how street food vendors are regulated by the government, and even though it has its significance to the people, the existence of food as part of national identity is in the hand of the government. Furthermore, the relation between food and politics and the response to foreign culture are

correlated with the previously mentioned topic on the movement of food culture and borderless world. The movement of food culture creates the situation where a borderless world can be seen in the culinary field and also has effects on the contemporary situation that can be seen in the discussion on food and politics. Again, even though the situations happen in different parts of the world, as seen from both of the documentaries on different episodes, it suggests the current discourse on food and nationalism is affected by the past.

All in all, this study reveals how food documentaries, such as *Ugly Delicious* and *Street Food* have a role in the representation of a nation in the global sphere. The narrative and story that were constructed in these documentaries aim to reveal the importance of food for one nation, and the consequences it may have to the people, the culture, and the community. Moreover, the use of stereotypical assumptions about food and a nation was an important aspect of the documentaries that were analyzed in this study to understand the construction of reality that is shown in the narrative and visual aspects of the documentary. The specific links of food to one or more nation helps the viewer to have a better understanding on the history, tradition, and/or culture of one nation as it relates to something that people experience every day, eating. By doing this, these documentaries are constructing a narrative that might be unfamiliar to the viewers with something that relates to them in a daily context. Moreover, the availability of these documentaries on Netflix, as one of the leading streaming platforms today, allows the content to reach a wider audience.

5.2 Theoretical implications

Following Michael Billig's (1995) and Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich's (2017) theory on banal nationalism and everyday nationalism, this study concentrates on the role of ordinary people and their experience with nationalism in daily life. As seen in the findings, there is an alternative definition of nation and nationalism that is no longer merely defined through fixed territorial boundaries but also through the everyday practice of the ordinary people. In this sense, individual agencies are given the power to define their nation and nationalism as seen in the act of preserving tradition through the culinary world. The food documentaries selected for this study highlight the act of eating and cuisines from different parts of the world. By doing so, it constructs the production and reproduction of nationalism in the daily life of the community. In analyzing the documentaries, multimodal discourse analysis was used. The research combines textual discourse analysis and visual discourse analysis to grasp the narrative and clips that are constructed by the documentaries. The analysis tools introduced by Machin and Mayr (2012) were used to analyze the script and visual content. Moreover, this thesis acknowledges the tension between the realistic and fictional lens of the documentary, where the viewers of the documentary often believe as the truth. Thus, this study

takes into account the Western point of view that these documentaries used, in order to analyze the representation of other countries, especially the countries in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

The study that links food with nationalism has not been widely discovered academically. Though, food plays a significant role in people's daily life which has multiple meanings that can be discovered more. Moreover, the role of media today has higher implications in showing reality to the viewers. In relation to the theories of nationalism that are used in this study: banal nationalism, everyday nationalism, and cosmopolitanism, the results of this study show how everyday practices such as eating can have bigger meaning than just fulfilling human life necessities. As seen from the data and analysis of this thesis, discussion about food can lead to various world problems such as racial and ethnic discrimination, political discussion, intolerance, and inequality. The discussion constructed in the documentaries stimulates critical thinking to its viewers by linking it to something that people see every day, food.

The trend of cosmopolitanism is also visible in the analysis through the construction of the movement of food from one national context to another. This was mostly visible in *Ugly Delicious* where the show moves to different parts of the world on each episode to explore and allow the audience to see the "reality". As discussed in chapter 2, cosmopolitanism is often associated with the term borderless world, which can be understood as a belief of being open to other cultures and willing to appreciate some elements of the 'other' (Skey, 2012). In this manner, food documentaries put out different instances where a certain society has open-minded thinking and accepts different cultures to come together through the act of eating. In relation to Szerszynski & Urry's (2002) seven cosmopolitan predispositions and practices, food documentaries have a role in promoting this cosmopolitan belief for its viewer to be more open towards other cultures. Specifically, the notion on cosmopolitanism as something that is associated with the elite group's ability to travel and experience different culture are visible on *Ugly Delicious*. The documentary constructs the idea of openness through the personal knowledge and experience of the host, David Chang. His understanding of different food cultures allows him to have a cosmopolitan attitude especially with his curiosity about many places, peoples, and cultures and willingness to take risks in experiencing 'the other'.

The construction of cosmopolitan culture on these documentaries embraces the notion of nationalism and suggest that different nationalism could coexist peacefully. In this sense, food can belong to more than one nation. Even when *Street Food* highlights one specific nation or place in each episode, it also discusses how other nations have an influence on the food culture that we see today. However, this cultural acceptance is not an absolute thing. As mentioned above, the

discussion on food and nationalism can lead to other issues. Accepting one's food culture or eating dishes from different parts of the world has a different context with tolerating towards the people from the other nation. For instance, one person could love and eat Chinese food once a week, and at the same time still has racial judgment towards the Chinese people. Altogether, discussing food in a national context is the beginning of more crucial and relevant discussions that could be done by ordinary people in everyday conversation.

5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

The findings of this study contribute to the existing research on the media representation of food and the nation. As stated above, academic research on food documentaries is not yet being discovered where food is being linked to a nation's culture and national identity. Thus, this study touch on the realistic lens of food documentaries as a media product, that highlights food as a cultural product that is often associated with one's national identity. Prior research on how ordinary people reproduce nationalism in their daily live failed to mention food and the act of eating as an important part of national identity. Thus, this study fills the gap by analyzing the association between food and national identity constructed in food documentaries: *Ugly Delicious* and *Street Food*.

Despite the academic relevance of this study, the researcher acknowledges there are some limitations in the analysis that should be taken into account. Firstly, as qualitative research on media content, cultural bias may influence the analysis process in understanding the construction of a nation. For instance, the food documentaries selected in this study discuss different nationalities and the stereotypical assumptions around them that may or may not be familiar for the researcher to acknowledge. Future research on food and nationalism can look more into detail to one or two countries to be able to produce a more in-depth analysis. The choice of media product, food documentaries, could also be explored further to other popular platforms that produce similar content. The trend on food documentaries that relate food and nationalism through travel and leisure can be another unit of analysis. For instance, video platforms such as YouTube and Instagram allow the production of content that highlights cuisines from different parts of the world, such as food vlogging (video blogging) and travel videos made by ordinary people. This expresses people's experience with food can be seen as an eye-opener in being more open towards different cultures.

Another limitation in this study is related to the scope of research on food documentaries. This thesis focuses on content analysis and the construction of reality in documentaries. Content analysis is important to understand the construction and reconstruction of reality done by the media. As stated before, media has an important role and will have a more significant role in society.

The media is seen as an accountable source of information. Research on food and nationalism could move forward to other subject matter such as audience research. By doing this, the analysis could grasp the real-life consequences of the content. This different scope of analysis can add to the discussion of the media's representation of a nation in the global context. As part of the reproduction of nationalism in the everyday experience, audience research could add another layer of ordinariness in the analysis.

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