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The British Film Industry and Hollywood: Joint Venture for British Heritage Films

With a Case Study of Joe Wright's

Pride & Prejudice (2005)

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1. Introduction

In the 1920s, falling British film production output and the predominance of Hollywood films on British screens led to a political discussion of why and how to support the British film industry. As a result, the first Cinematograph Films Act was introduced in 1927. The act was supposed to make the British film industry

both commercial – boosting British trade through its exposure of British goods to popular audiences worldwide – and anti-commercial, providing a cultural and moral alternative to the purely commercial cinema of Hollywood. (Napper 2009: 25)

Although Britain's political, economic and cultural conditions and values have changed since the 1920s, economic and cultural arguments still play an important role in supporting the British film industry. Hence, a recent House of Lords report on the situation of the British film and television industry names economic and cultural reasons to support these industries (cf. House of Lords, Select Committee on Communications 2010: 9). Ideally, Britain's national film production industry should thus be culturally beneficial and economically viable. This thesis investigates how British heritage films fulfil this role, with a case study of Joe Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* (2005).

In order to examine British heritage films' position in Britain's national cinema, I employ three approaches. First, I take a theoretical approach. I briefly recapitulate the academic heritage film debate of the 1990s and 2000s, which has revolved around topics largely detached from the films' industrial context until fairly recently. Then I examine British heritage films' relation to Britain's national cinema. Second, I approach British heritage films historically. I examine the cinematic relationship between Britain and Hollywood that affected heritage films' development. Third, I take *Pride & Prejudice* (2005) as a case study to examine the business strategy of a twenty-first century British heritage film.

This thesis draws on a range of academic and popular sources. For the first two main chapters, I researched academic texts concerned with heritage films, national cinema and US-American and British cinema history. Some governmental and journalistic texts supported my research on the most contemporary issues. For the case study, these sources were complemented by academic reviews of *Pride & Prejudice*. Moreover, I analysed a range of popular texts produced by tradespeople (for example

the official film trailer), journalists and audiences. In order to give concrete evidence of the underlying aesthetic and economic strategies of *Pride & Prejudice*, particular scenes were analysed in detail. Hence, this thesis combines results drawn from a range of sources in order to reach a multifaceted understanding of a British heritage film.

British heritage films have received substantial academic attention since the early 1990s. In the twenty-first century, Andrew Higson turned towards a more economic understanding of these films (cf. Higson 2003, 2011). This thesis is strongly influenced by his arguments and I build on Higson's finding that modern British heritage films¹ are usually Hollywood-British co-productions marketed as crossover films (cf. Higson 2011: 137, Higson 2003: 92). Also, I had to recognise that the multifaceted approach I take very much resembles Higson's approaches in 2003 and 2011. Thus, on the one hand, my thesis adds a detailed case study to Higson's arguments. On the other hand however, my interest differs from Higson's. Ultimately, Higson has mainly been interested in the image of England depicted in variously influenced films. In 2003 he concentrated on post 1980 heritage films, in 2011 he broadened the corpus examined to a range of culturally English films. I interpret modern heritage films as a means by which the British film industry can draw on American resources while still producing culturally specific films. In that respect I take a different angle on Higson's arguments and thus dwell on different aspects.

British heritage films employ the Hollywood-supported crossover strategy not only for economic success but also to cultural advantage. They are thus a useful part of Britain's national cinema. By embracing Hollywood's strategies and means and combining them with nationally specific characteristics, British heritage films have managed to reap cultural and economic benefits for Britain. This will be the subject of a detailed case study of Joe Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* (2005). Bearing in mind that the UK's film production industry is chronically underfinanced and struggling against Hollywood's dominance, modern British heritage films might have found a strategy that satisfies economic and cultural demands.

1 I use the term 'modern British heritage film' to differentiate British heritage films of the 1980s onwards from earlier production trends.

2. British Heritage Films

[P]eriod films and television dramas have come to be perceived by many – in the unavoidably globalised image market as much as in Britain itself – as *particularly* 'British', as *particularly* characteristic of British cinema and television. (Monk 2002: 176, emphasis in original)

There is ample reason to suggest that filmic adaptations of British literary classics and British historic characters are now widely associated with the British film industry. They have been a prominent British production strand of the past three decades and display the British countryside. However, the 'Britishness' of British heritage films is not as indisputable as it might seem. Indeed, British heritage films, although commonly understood as a particular type of British filmmaking from the 1980s onwards, have characteristically been international co-productions (cf. Monk 2002: 177). Nevertheless, much of the academic heritage film debate has concentrated on arguments removed from Hollywood's influence on these films. This largely prevented seeing the wider cinematic context heritage films permeate in. I concentrate on two related questions in this chapter. First, what have academic discussions about heritage films focused on and in which context have these discussions put these films? Second, what implications does this have for the concept of heritage films as British national cinema.

2.1. An academic view on British heritage films

Heritage films have been scrutinised by British academics for the past two and a half decades. Since the term has been applied to British costume films made from 1980 onwards, it has consistently been discussed in the context of what kind of national identity these films depict. However, the arguments of the heritage film debate have revolved so much around themselves that the industrial context has, until lately, been left unconsidered.

2.1.1. The beginnings

A terminological link between Britain's national heritage and a particular range of films was first made in 1986. The films to which it was applied though were not the costume dramas made in this decade, to which the term 'heritage film' now mainly refers. Rather, the film historian Charles Barr used it to categorise a number of popu-

lar British films made during the Second World War, the most exemplary of which was Olivier's *Henry V* (1944). He chose the term because these films used the national heritage as a source. The resulting “high-quality British product[s]” (Barr 1996: 12), together with a different but overlapping trend of realist films revived the British cinema. Significantly, they triggered high audience figures nationally as well as internationally, especially in the US (cf. *ibid.*: 10-12). Barr's attitude towards these heritage films was positive and contrasts starkly with the arguments about later heritage films.

In the early 1990s, the term 'heritage film' became known for a variety of films made from 1980 onwards. With these films, Barr's selection of heritage films shares Britain's cultural or historical heritage as a source for screenplays, often derived from literary classics, its prestige as 'quality' products and its exportability (cf. Hall 2009: 46). Yet, when Andrew Higson used the term in 1993 to label a number of British costume dramas made from 1980 onwards, he contributed to a discussion that initially saw its subject-matter in very critical terms. Interestingly, some of the films that were later to be known as heritage films initially generated very good critiques in the early to mid-1980s (cf. Monk 2002: 187). Their denouncement started only when “[a]nti-heritage-film criticism began to emerge journalistically in 1987-8” (*ibid.*: 187).

According to Higson², British heritage films of the 1980s have numerous characteristics in common. They are quality films between art-house and mainstream, likely to win prizes at festivals and targeted at a middle-class audience that is older than that for mainstream films. Furthermore, they are cultural rather than commercial products which differ significantly from mainstream Hollywood output. Heritage films often take classic literature or theatre plays as their source text, deliberately underscoring their source and thus profiting from its cultural capital (cf. Higson 2006: 93-97). Visually, cultural capital is borrowed from heritage properties like the “imposing country house seen in extreme long shot and set in a picturesque, verdant landscape [...] and the costumes, furnishings, *objets d'art* and aristocratic character-types that characteristically fill those properties ” (*ibid.*: 97). Indeed, camera move-

2 I read the edited version of Higson's influential article *Re-presenting the National Past: Nostalgia and Pastiche in the Heritage Film*, originally published in 1993. Although the version I read has a new introduction, Higson left the body of the essay, containing the characteristics he ascribes to heritage films and the argument he develops concerning these films “pretty much as it was” (Higson 2006: 92).

ment tends to highlight the *mise-en-scène* by “long takes and [...] long and medium shorts” (ibid.: 99) of rooms and landscapes rather than close-ups of characters (cf. ibid.: 99). Goal-oriented action is neglected in favour of “a greater concern for character, place, atmosphere and milieu” (ibid.: 99).

Higson's description clearly differentiates these British heritage films from mainstream Hollywood products. The latter are commercially motivated (cf. O'Regan 2002: 140) and predominantly target an adolescent, male audience (cf. Murray 2012: 165). Hollywood films do not presuppose much knowledge inaccessible to any domestic citizen (cf. Hipsky 1994: 103) and are designed to reliably affect our emotions (cf. ibid.: 101). All aspects considered, Higson describes a cycle of films that is clearly non-Hollywood in its constitution.

2.1.2. The heritage film debate

In 1993, Higson criticised three main points about heritage films. Firstly, he feared that “they transform the heritage of the upper classes into the national heritage” (Higson 2006: 96) because they enchant the audience with the properties and values of that class without critically contextualising them. Additionally, this image of a national heritage is necessarily invented and escapist, distracting from the problems of the present that would need to be faced (cf. ibid.: 96). Secondly, he identified heritage films as accomplices with the heritage industry in commodifying the past (cf. ibid.: 95). Thirdly, the persistent celebration of the *mise-en-scène*'s visual magnificence disallowed any social critique which might exist in the narrative and dialogue of the films. Drama and *mise-en-scène* contradict each other and because the latter enchants the audience and is backed by the “discourse of authenticity” (ibid.: 100), it always dominates the narrative (cf. ibid.: 100). I might add that film is a visual medium and thus might be expected to have the greatest impact through images.

However, the charges brought forward against heritage films extend beyond Higson and started before his influential article. In 1991, Cairns Craig published a review of numerous heritage films, including *A Room With A View* (1985), *Maurice* (1987) and *Where Angels Fear To Tread* (1991) in the BFI magazine *Sight & Sound*. According to him, there was a particular genre of films which envisioned a nostalgic sense of Englishness and shared “a certain incestuousness” (Craig 2001: 3) because they often employed the same actors. Moreover, these films apparently relied on a *mise-en-scène* too picturesque to admit post-imperialist criticism of the origin of the

splendour (cf. Craig 2001: 3-4). In 1996, Andy Medhurst bemoaned that a “slightness of narrative” in heritage films was disguised by visual “guarantees of quality” (both Medhurst 2001: 12). Thus, he not only disliked the carefully guarded “period authenticity” (ibid.: 12) but was actually concerned about narrative shortcomings. Also, while Higson equated the representation of an upper class world with an attempt to turn that world into the national heritage, Medhurst perceived the appearances of lower-class members in *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) as “dehumanised decor” (ibid.: 13). In his opinion, individuals not belonging to the higher social classes were therefore not only ignored in the creation of a national heritage but actually stripped off their human qualities and thus objectified.

These and similar charges have been repeated variously. But by the middle of the 1990s an articulate counter-response to traditional heritage film criticism had set in. One of the most outspoken representatives of this is Claire Monk. Concentrating more on the films' narratives, Monk stressed the “unpretentious humanity” (Monk 2001: 9) in *A Room with a View* (1985) and *Maurice* (1987). She praised the “overt concern with sexuality and gender” (ibid.: 7) evident in numerous heritage films from 1993 onwards, which she named post-heritage films (cf. ibid.: 7). Sarah Street emphasised that the social critique installed in the literary source text, here of Forster's novels, is also transferred to the films (cf. Street 1997: 104). On the other hand, Sheldon Hall defended even the uncritical enjoyment of heritage films' visual pleasures, as these are simply some of the reasons why spectators visit the cinema (cf. Hall 2009: 53). Thus, advocates of heritage films stressed their ability to discuss contemporary issues and bring forward the critique inherent in their literary source texts, as well as their entertaining qualities.

Monk also emphasised that heritage film criticism must be interpreted in its temporal context (cf. Monk 2002: 178). Politically, the 1980s were dominated by Thatcher's politics of privatisation and the free market. Like many other industries, the British film industry lost its state support, as the third chapter will show. In this economically difficult environment the British film industry experienced a renaissance, initiated by the international success of *Chariots of Fire* in 1981 (cf. Quart 2006: 22) and kept alive by numerous further British costume films. Critics linked these films' successes to Thatcher's unpopular free-market politics (cf. Leach 2004: 201) and thus might have been predisposed to dislike these films.

Thatcher's politics also fuelled a process of commodification of the national past that became known as the 'heritage industry', a term coined by Robert Hewison in 1987 (cf. Higson 2003: 51). Higson defines the 'heritage industry' as a "commodification of heritage" (Higson 1996: 234) and 'heritage' as something that "a particular individual or group takes from the past in order to define itself in the present" (Higson 2003: 50). Thus, a selective version of the past is objectified and put on the market. By introducing the forces of the market, this version of the national past is publicised and gains in importance. As heritage is used to define a group's (or nation's) identity, the heritage industry not only selects and disseminates a particular version of the past but it also uses this version to define the nation's identity.

Higson might not have chosen the term 'heritage film' had 'heritage' not been in general discussion at the time. Although it inevitably simplifies matters, the critique of the heritage industry was directly applied to heritage films (cf. Monk 2002: 188). Only later Ginette Vincendeau criticised that "the Thatcher-heritage correlation is an insular one" (Vincendeau 2001: XIX) because French heritage films produced in the 1980s were made in a socialist political environment (cf. *ibid.*: XIX). Additionally, Hall added that films which match the heritage film criteria were produced in earlier British film decades, especially the 1960s and 1970s. While they had been ignored in earlier decades due to their US funding and a lack of academic interest, they were elected to be the official representatives of 1980s cinema (cf. Hall 2009: 48-49). Even Higson acknowledged that filmmakers could have chosen more patriotic, capitalist narratives had they wanted to support Thatcher's policies (cf. Higson 2006: 107).

All in all, heritage films of the 1980s onwards have received considerable academic attention. Most of the arguments interpret British heritage films in the light of representing a certain image of Britain or the British past. Some criticised them for promoting a privileged, traditional version of the past. Others praised their ability to question contemporary cultural assumptions. These cultural arguments intermingle with economic arguments when heritage films are charged of complicity with the heritage industry. However, it took until the twenty-first century that Higson, arguably the most prominent representative of the heritage film debate, seriously took heritage films' international origins into account.

Higson recognised that the labelling of British heritage films as 'British' is a marketing strategy rather than an authentic indication of national origin. Indeed, international financing, target audiences and staff before and behind the camera indicate that heritage films often represent an outsider's view on Britain (cf. Higson 2011: 144). This is in stark contrast to the assumptions of the heritage film debate. It seems as if heritage films can be interpreted neither as propagating a conservative vision of Britain in complicity with the Thatcher government or the heritage industry, nor as indigenous advocates of a modern, liberal Britain. Rather, heritage films need to be interpreted as subject to international market forces which are, in case of the film industry of the Western hemisphere, dictated by Hollywood. According to Higson, the UK has long lost control of the global brand 'British heritage film' (cf. *ibid.*: 173). What remains is the belief that British heritage films depict Britain.

2.1.3. The heritage film genre

There is one more aspect of heritage film criticism which needs to be scrutinised in order to understand the relationship of these films with Hollywood and the British film industry. One of the central questions in the heritage film debate is whether there actually is a heritage film corpus in existence that constitutes a genre. Representatives of traditional heritage criticism tend to assume the existence of the genre while advocates of heritage films tend to question its existence. On the one hand, Craig called heritage films a genre as early as 1991 (cf. Craig 2001: 3). On the other hand, Monk questions the 'genre' validity of heritage films (cf. Monk 2002: 192) and Vincendeau points out the lack of a standardised iconography, narrative structure or effect of these films (cf. Vincendeau 2001: XVIII). Ultimately, there is no agreement whether the heritage debate is actually based on an existing genre.

The genre question is of importance because genre films are often associated with Hollywood's mass production. According to Steve Neale, genre definitions are nowadays applied to popular cultural products that are "conditioned by specific economic imperatives" (Neale 2000: 172). In particular, "regulated difference, contained variety, pre-sold expectations, and the reuse of resources in labor and materials" bring "financial advantages to the film industry" (both *ibid.*: 172). Therefore, the existence of a heritage film *genre* would put these films in an international, commercial rather than a domestic, independent context. Among others, the uses of literary

sources by a small number of authors and of a cast known for similar films second the suspicion that there is a commercialised genre of heritage films.

According to Neale, genres are defined not just by films but by films in combination with all kinds of industrial and journalistic texts published about these films. Thus, an analysis of these additional texts is necessary in detecting a genre and its characteristics (cf. Neale 2000: 160). While academics have so far analysed presumed heritage films and academic reactions to these, little study of industrial and journalistic texts has been conducted so far. An additional challenge is posed by Neal's identification of genres as processes which renders their historicising necessary (cf. *ibid.*: 165-167). In later chapters, examinations of British heritage films' historic development and of texts produced about these films support the assumption that a British heritage film genre exists.

Uncertainties about a genre's existence possibly derive from the ambiguity of the genre term itself. According to Rick Altman, film corpora can always be defined either inclusively or exclusively, making them wider or smaller in scope (cf. Altman 2000: 180). Definitions of heritage films have become increasingly inclusive over the last decades. Higson has revisited his definition of heritage films repeatedly. In 1996, he specified the name of the corpus he defined to be “bourgeois heritage films” (Higson 1996: 236) because he acknowledged that there are numerous versions of the national past. In 2003 he broadened the definition of this corpus considerably, maintaining the heritage label only because he “had to use some label” (Higson 2003: 10). Others also use the label for an “increasingly heterogeneous range of films” (Monk 2002: 182) and I hope to contribute to this discussion with my working definition of heritage films.

For the purpose of this paper, I use the terms 'British heritage film' or 'British heritage genre' to signify a range of films that tend to share the following characteristics: Their narratives deal with a privileged class of British, mostly English, people. The standards of living these people enjoy suggest a time between 1800 and the end of World War II, although films depicting earlier time periods are included if they match the other characteristics. The Britishness of these films tends to be highlighted by different means, such as stressing the British authorship of the – often literary – source text, by providing ample high-angle and establishing shots of British rural landscapes and grand buildings and by incorporating different cultural markers such as traditions, values or institutional systems. These films are (co-)produced by British

production companies but mostly include international creative and/ or financial input, most often from Hollywood. They target an international, especially US-American, audience and are often successful not only at the box-office but also at festivals and award ceremonies such as the Academy Awards. Finally, these films are perpetually associated with Britain and/or British cinema in academic and public discourses.

This inclusive definition includes films such as *Chariots of Fire* (1981) and *A Room with a View* (1985) traditionally associated with British heritage cinema, as well as for example the Austen adaptations also discussed as heritage films in academic discourse. Moreover, it does not exclude older heritage films such as those identified by Barr, as I specify no time frame of production.

There are definite indicators for the existence of a British heritage film genre but the national belonging of this genre is unclear. In the second part of this chapter, British heritage films' affiliation with Britain's national cinema is under scrutiny.

2.2. National cinema

Discussions about national cinemas are two-sided. Whereas a vivid national cinema can be a means of cultural resistance against the dominant (in this case Hollywood) film culture, the term also tends to imply a stable, official national identity (cf. Higson 2002: 133). Hence, examinations of national cinemas always need to be conducted with caution. However, it is useful here because if one accepts that the Britishness of British heritage films is a brand rather than an indicator of a film's origin, then one might wonder whether these films belong to a country's national cinema. In order to clarify this matter, one needs to define 'national cinema'.

According to Higson, there are four different conceptions of national cinema. Firstly, the term can be used to describe a specific type of the cinematic output of a country that seems to be most representative for this nation's film industry. Secondly, it can signify the representation of a nation in films. Thirdly, it might refer to national cinema audiences and their cinematic diet. Fourthly, it can signify a nation's film industry. Usually, two or more of these definitions are combined when one speaks of the national cinema (cf. Higson 1995: 4-5). I add a fifth definition to this enumeration, namely what kind of films nations adopt as representations of themselves. Contrary to Higson's first definition, this is not dependent on academic arguments but rather on popular, journalistic and economic texts. A brief discussion of British heri-

tage films in view of these five definitions shows that these films represent a part of Britain's national cinema in numerous ways.

2.2.1. Heritage films as representatives of Britain's national cinema

A specific type of films that are chosen to represent the national cinema is probably the most widely known definition of the term. An example for this are the British New Wave films of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Such movements are mostly characteristically different from Hollywood cinema and academically recognised as national film movements of a specific time.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the spread of US-American mass culture has been perceived as a threat to national cultures. Along this line, popular Hollywood films have seemed to threaten national cinematic traditions. Cinema seemed to be especially conspicuous of cultural brainwashing because audiences were believed to be highly influenceable by moving pictures (cf. Higson 1995: 19-20). These concerns explain the relevance of national cinemas, as they are supposed to be a means of resistance against a foreign, dominant cultural influence.

British heritage films were repeatedly identified as specifically characteristic of the UK's cinematic output. In the initial description of heritage films in the 1940s, Barr describes them as particularly representative of the national cinema, a characteristic they supposedly shared with realist films (cf. Barr: 1996: 11-12). Also, Higson referred to heritage films made from the 1980s onwards as one of the corpora identified as national cinema by academics of film studies (cf. Higson 1995: 8). Thus, whenever heritage films were identified as a significant production strand within Britain, they were also linked to the country's national cinema.

Taking into account that academic criticism is crucial to this definition of national cinema, an examination of this criticism further highlights heritage films' affiliation with national cinema. British academic film criticism tends to be dominated by issues concerning resistance to popular mass culture and national 'quality' products that draw their inspiration mostly from European art cinema. Moreover, national film culture is expected to attend to contemporary social issues or to depict a shared, imagined national past, based on indigenous traditions (cf. Higson 1995: 13-17). By definition, heritage films depict the nation's past and are often based on British literary classics or historic personalities. Iconographically, narratively and in terms of

their main target audience they differ from mainstream Hollywood products. As becomes evident in the heritage film debate, heritage films often discuss a liberal understanding of gender and sexuality which also makes them important ambassadors of contemporary social issues. Recapitulatory, British heritage films represent one kind of national cinema according to this first definition of the term.

2.2.2. Heritage films as representations of the British nation(s)

Academics on both sides of the heritage film debate implicitly agree on one assumption: That heritage films represent the British nation in one way or another. In most cases, English cultural markers are sold as British³. By definition, many of the films are cinematic adaptations of English classics written by famous authors such as E. M. Forster or Jane Austen. Most often, their protagonists belong to the privileged classes, spending most of their lives in the English countryside. Establishing and high angle-shots show the English landscape and manor houses. This is a very particular image of Britain, or predominantly England. Nevertheless, it is an image readily recognisable as British.

Some critics worry over the influence international interests in the productions of obviously British cinematic stories might have on the image of Britain that is depicted. Craig describes heritage films as “theme park[s] of the past” (Craig 2001: 4), implying that only pretty and exotic aspects of Britain's past are represented in these films. A discussion of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994) illustrates this concern. The British romantic comedy is set in the present but shares numerous features with heritage films⁴. The film was produced in Britain, relies heavily on British actors, was directed by an Englishman and written by a scriptwriter who has lived in Britain most of his life. Yet, the production was “criticised at home for providing a 'tourist's eye view' of [...] Britain” (O'Regan 2002: 151). Hence, the suspicion that the film was produced for international audiences and its affirmative international success led to the assumption that not even the British film industry produces an 'authentic' image of Britain.

3 I will continue to refer to these films as British though because that is what they are most commonly known as.

4 Street sees a trend according to which “[t]he heritage film genre has spilled over into representations of Englishness which are not necessarily set in the past” (Street 1997: 110). *Four Weddings and a Funeral* stars Hugh Grant, previously known from heritage films and depicts the clothes, properties and concerns of a privileged British class (cf. *ibid*: 110).

Meanwhile, many British heritage films display much greater international influences and this might have far reaching effects on the British nation. In general, Higson observes that “[t]he bigger the budget, in broad terms, the more conventional and conservative the ideologies of Englishness on display” (Higson 2011: 29). Furthermore, Elsaesser draws attention to the possible consequences of this development:

Like the natives in Third World countries who impersonate themselves for the sake of the tourists, Britain appears the victim of its own sophisticated media-making, the materialisation of its own imaginary. (Elsaesser 2006: 56)

Thus, Britain does not only sell an antiquated version of itself but is also in danger of becoming this version. The wish to succeed on the international film market might even hinder the nation's advancement.

However, one can also interpret international input positively. As Higson observes, filmmakers raised outside of Britain can take a much more distanced view of English culture and history and thus may question aspects that pass indigenous attention unnoticed (cf. Higson 2003: 28-29). Similarly, Hill views the dependence on international audiences and foreign investment in British film production as an advantage. According to him, national cinema can now explore a broader range of national identities because the notion of this identity is much less settled and the international market opens up more possible niche markets (c. Hill 2006: 109-111).

The image of Britain that is depicted in heritage films provokes various discussions. However, the notion that they depict an image of Britain is indisputable.

2.2.3. Heritage films from the audiences' perspective

National cinemas can also be analysed from the audiences' perspective. In this case, one of the central concerns is what kind of films national audiences watch (cf. Higson 1995: 5). According to Nielsen statistics, not a single typical British heritage film entered the collective British box-office top-twenty 1995-2004. *Titanic*, which heads this list, is officially an American production and *Bridget Jones's Diary* is a loose, modern adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (cf. UK Film Council 2005: 20). Therefore, heritage films did not constitute Britain's main cinematic diet in the mid-1990s to mid-2000s. However, this statistic does not illuminate what part, if any, heritage films played in the national consumption of films. The reverse approach to this definition seems more promising for my concerns. I will thus consider who watches heritage films.

Heritage films' main audience is generally considered to differ significantly from that of mainstream Hollywood films. Most popular mainstream Hollywood films, which apparently make up the majority of films exhibited in the UK, target an adolescent, mostly male audience (cf. Murray 2012: 165). On the other hand, academics tend to identify the target audience of heritage films as “middle-class, middlebrow, middle-aged and largely female” (Monk 2002: 180). Many 1980s heritage films were targeted to a niche audience interested in 'high' arts and 'quality' products. Meanwhile, many heritage films target more diverse audiences. They are marketed as crossover films that are exhibited in art-house as well as mainstream cinemas and attract not only the niche audience mentioned above but also a younger, more mainstream audience (cf. Higson 2003: 37). Although heritage films have not addressed the majority of cinemagoers, they have attracted audiences that might have otherwise shunned the cinema. Also, it is important to recognise that heritage films have broadened their target audience.

Heritage films' potential mass appeal becomes evident when one takes television into account. According to Hill, there are not just many more films available on television than in cinemas, but these are also watched by considerably more viewers. Especially serial television drama attracts more people than films do (cf. Hill 2006: 106-107). Moreover, a television production, the BBC adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* in 1995, initiated the boom of cinematic Austen adaptations in the 1990s (cf. Higson 2003: 17). Therefore, one could argue that television (heritage) drama such as the BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* is indeed very popular with British audiences. This suggests that cinematic heritage films might also be very popular, even though many potential spectators do not visit the cinema.

Heritage films are not only very successful on British television, they have also conquered US-American screens. This has had an impact on British audiences. Observing the phenomenon from an American perspective, Hipsky remarked very early that British heritage films show in art-house, as well as mainstream cinemas across the US (cf. Hipsky 1994: 98). Nevertheless, like in the UK, heritage films are enjoyed only by a US-American niche market. Especially liberal arts graduates who have accumulated the cultural capital apparently necessary to understand these films, seem to frequent heritage film exhibitions (cf. *ibid.*: 102-103). Yet, John Hill perceives the US as the main source of British heritage films' prestige and revenue (cf. Hill 2006: 104). His example of *Chariots of Fire* (1981) exemplifies that American

audiences can function as opinion leaders for British audiences. Only after the film had been shown successfully in America and won four Academy Awards, it was re-released successfully in Britain (cf. *ibid.*: 100).

An evaluation of Britain's national audiences casts a mixed light on heritage films. They are watched only by a cinematic niche audience in the UK and the US but seem to be massively enjoyed on British television.

2.2.4. Heritage films and the British film industry

The film industry traditionally comprises three distinct sectors, which are the production, the distribution and the exhibition sector. For an examination of British heritage films as national cinema, I concentrate on the local production industry only. Large parts of the UK's distribution and exhibition sector are controlled by or work in close collaboration with the Hollywood majors, thus exacerbating the problems faced by British film production (cf. Higson 1995: 9-10). The Australian film academic Stephen Crofts identified seven strategies of national film production industries to assert themselves against a dominant foreign cinematic presence in their own country. Two of these strategies might help to explain the role of heritage films in the UK's national cinematic output. Both of these strategies aim at an international market but while one tries to position its products as specialised art-house films, the second attempts to reach mainstream audiences accustomed to the products of the dominant film industry (cf. Crofts 2006: 44-45).

National cinemas might try to assert themselves by producing films deliberately different from dominant, mainstream products. According to Crofts, these films are exhibited nationally and internationally in dedicated art-house and independent cinemas and on film festivals, where they address and reach an audience different from mainstream films. Moreover, “[n]ational pride and the assertion at home and abroad of national cultural identity have been vital in arguing for art cinemas” (Crofts 2006: 45). Although this kind of a nation's cinematic output is usually state supported through means such as loans, awards and tariffs, it often takes cultural as well as economic requirements into account (cf. *ibid.*: 45-46).

There are several reasons why heritage films can be characterised as art-house films. Their subject matter links heritage films to British cultural products, thus arguably enhancing 'national pride'. They successfully show on film festivals and have a tradition of being shown in art-house venues. As the following chapters will show,

they are produced with relatively low budgets but have become 'surprising' box-office successes in many cases. Numerous British academics support the assertion that heritage films are art-house products. For example, Hill defines heritage films as art films because of their sources' association with the 'high arts' (cf. Hill 2006: 104). Higson persistently emphasises heritage films' cultural, rather than commercial significance (cf. e.g. Higson 1996: 233). Moreover, he identifies heritage films' emphasis on authorship in terms of source text and filmmakers as a characteristic strategy of defining against the mainstream (cf. Higson 2003: 42).

Hipsky is unsure about British heritage films' art-house qualities. Among the characteristics distinguishing heritage films from popular Hollywood movies, Hipsky lists their lack of sensationalism and their convincing portrayal of complex human characters. However, the camera's lingering focus on *mise-en-scène* which Higson identified as typically art-house, heritage film, is likened by Hipsky to Hollywood's ambition to show "stunning images for their own sake" (Hipsky 1994: 102). Furthermore, he notes heritage films' formulaic and repetitive qualities, which put them in the context of Hollywood's popular mainstream output (cf. *ibid.*: 100-102).

Indeed, the second of Crofts' strategies open to British heritage films is to compete with Hollywood on its own terms. This is an option open especially to English-speaking nations. However, Crofts believes that this strategy usually fails because the dominant cinema controls both the foreign and its own market and thus prevents competition to their own products. The key to direct competition is to imitate the style of the dominant cinematic products and try to export the result to the dominating industry's domestic market. The resulting films are thus less nationally specific in style but heavily influenced by the desire to succeed on the foreign market (cf. Crofts 2006: 50-51).

Even though much has been argued in favour of British heritage films' association with the art-house sector, there is no denying that they are also heavily influenced by the wish to succeed on the American market. *Chariots of Fire*, commonly referred to as the first heritage film of the 1980s, not only drew funding from Hollywood major 20th Century Fox but was also very successful at the US Academy Awards and the box-office. Additionally, it employed a narrative strategy very similar to popular Hollywood products (cf. Hill 2006: 100-101). Monk also found that heritage films tend to be identified as such only if they are internationally successful (cf. Monk 2002: 180). This implies that only those films which are liked by international audiences

are recognised as heritage films, whereas other British films that share heritage characteristics but do not comply to internationally familiar standards, are not identified as such.

However, Monk questions not only the address but also the national make-up of heritage films. She notices that heritage films “have *characteristically* been products of international funding, migrancy or collaboration” (Monk 2002: 177, emphasis in original). Hence, it is difficult to claim these products of international cooperation as specifically national produce. Earlier than Higson, Monk found that the labelling of heritage films as 'British' is a means of product differentiation necessary in the international market (cf. Monk 2001: 7). Thus, it is a commercial strategy that applies cultural markers for international success. 'British' might be a label of false pretence as the crew, cast and finance of production are not necessarily British.

Monk's claim applies to British heritage films in particular because they require substantial funding. The elaborate mise-en-scène these films are famous for relies on extensive research, numerous and expensive props and a variety of settings. Additionally, A-list directors, actors and cinematographers are often employed (cf. Vincendeau 2001: XVIII). Furthermore, the British cinema market is not big enough to sustain big budget productions single-handedly. Every film produced with more than a very tight budget will have to seek foreign markets in order to break even. The most important foreign market for British heritage films has been the US (cf. Higson 2003: 119). Hence, collaboration with US distributors is vital for the relatively expensive production of heritage films. All this helps to explain why international input, creative and financial, is mostly involved.

One has to keep in mind though, that national cinema production always includes foreign influences. Creative and financial resources from abroad, international developments in techniques and style and international audience tastes influence filmmakers (cf. O'Regan 2002: 147). Therefore, international influences on national cinema productions are normal and no argument to exclude heritage films from the UK's national cinema. The production of heritage films is part of Britain's national film industry. Apart from being an important national production trend, it is also a means of resistance against dominant Hollywood film culture. This means of resistance takes both strategies: The deliberate divergence from popular mass products as well as the specific adaptation of Hollywood devices, financially and creatively, in order to succeed on the national and international market.

2.2.5. Britain's appropriation of heritage films

Heritage films envision a controversial image of the British nation. They address international audiences and they are made with international financial and creative resources. Whether archetypically British or not, these films certainly boost the UK's national economy. Apart from constituting a portion of Britain's film production output, they also promote further national industries. According to Neil Watson, "it is generally assumed that for every job created on a film, a further 1.7 jobs are created indirectly" (Watson 2000: 82). Additionally, from the export of heritage films, "tourism, the publishing trade, luxury cars, or British quality knitwear and leather goods" (Elsaesser 2006: 50) all benefit. The films' prestige, officially recognised through awards and nominations, rubs off on the nation as a whole. Thus, numerous indicators suggest that at least the British economy has embraced these films as truly theirs.

The most obvious appropriator of heritage films is the British tourism industry. Nationally and internationally, heritage films promote Britain's heritage sites. Apart from appearing in the films, these places are implicitly promoted in the films' marketing campaigns and implicitly, as well as explicitly in the general media attention given to these films. This promotional advantage pays off in increased visitor numbers. The tourism industry consciously uses the increased attention to these places and ties the films to their promotional activities. Competitions and special offers are further marketing tie-ins linked to heritage films (cf. Higson 2003: 57-60). I explore the film-tourism link in the case study in chapter four.

Other industries profit from heritage films as well. The often-noted focus on mise-en-scène and costumes of a time gone by encourage the cross-promotion of interior design, fashion, furniture and fabrics. Magazines report about the stars, making-offs and design of heritage films. The publishing industry releases new editions of the films' literary sources and books about the films themselves (cf. Higson 2003: 60-62). All these industries profit from the notion that heritage films show an exotic but familiar Britain.

2.2.6. Heritage films as national cinema

According to the analysis above, heritage films can be classified as one type of Britain's national cinema. They are (co-)produced by the indigenous film industry in an attempt to assert itself next to Hollywood. They are consumed by national cinema

audiences, they represent a privileged class of the British population in the past and they are a representative strand of the UK's cinematic output. Moreover, the British economy embraces them as truly British and uses them to promote British products and tourism sites.

One must keep in mind however, that heritage films are not the only type of film-making that constitutes Britain's national cinema. According to Higson's definition of national cinema as a nation's film industry, any film produced by a British company could be classified as British cinema. As it becomes evident in the next chapter, government legislation tended to encourage such an interpretation for decades. Furthermore, the notion of heritage films as specifically representative of British cinema is contested, as is its limited representation of the population. The need to succeed on the US market and international financial as well as creative input further affect the internationalisation of this particular type of Britain's national cinema.

Higson provides two answers to the question, whether British heritage films can be considered British national cinema. He asserts that it is difficult to say what constitutes Britishness and he explains that Britishness, in terms of heritage films, is best understood as a specific brand attached to these films, so as to make them easily identifiable (cf. Higson 2003: 142). According to him, "Hollywood has 'Americanized' the 'British' heritage film" (ibid.: 143) while retaining the films' cultural 'Britishness'. In the next two chapters, I suggest that it is not the US 'Americanizing' British film but rather the British embracing Hollywood, cherry-picking what they need to market British heritage films successfully worldwide.

3. The British Film Industry and Hollywood

This chapter traces the development of British heritage films since the beginning of British cinema. It investigates the history of Britain's film production industry and its dependence on US-American investments and markets, especially in view of British heritage films. As becomes clear, British and American audiences have had a liking for films depicting the British countryside, well-known British personalities and stories and the British upper-classes from very early on. Simultaneously, I summarise the most important developments of America's most commercially oriented film industry, Hollywood. Developments in the US affected Britain, as the British film dis-

tribution and exhibition sectors have been dominated by Hollywood studios and products for the last one hundred years.

My main interests in historicising the development of the British heritage film genre is how these films have learned from Hollywood's popular films and why Hollywood is involved with this production trend. As this chapter shows, British heritage films are indeed joint ventures between the British film industry and Hollywood.

3.1. The first three decades

British filmmakers' talent for 'realistic' films and their interest in the upper classes has shown from the first days of British cinema. US-Americans have been interested in British films from the start but American companies have also started dominating the British film market in the second decade of cinema history.

On 20 February 1896 the first British public screening of moving pictures took place in London (cf. Ryall 2001: 15). Among the first British moving pictures produced were films of the Derby and the boat race between Oxford and Cambridge in 1895, as well as *Rough Sea at Dover* (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 2-3). Whereas the French produced fictitious films from very early on, the British tended to concentrate on actualities and topicals, such as the films produced at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 (cf. Barnes 1996: 178). These films are very early examples of British filmmakers' fascination with British upper-class culture and the English countryside. Notably, *Rough Sea at Dover* was the only foreign made film shown at the first public screening of moving pictures in the US in April 1896 (cf. Ryall 2001: 15), which hints at the Americans' linking for such Anglophile products.

By the beginning of World War I, American companies dominated first their domestic and then also the international market. From 1908 to 1915, the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC), a joint venture of US-America's most influential film entrepreneurs, dominated the American film industry (cf. Cook 2006: 160-161) and largely excluded foreign film imports (cf. Ryall 2001: 21-22). Simultaneously, independent American producers revolutionised the film market by producing very popular, narrative multi-reel films with stars actors. In the 1910s, these producers settled in southern California and became what is still known as Hollywood (cf. Cook 2006: 160-161). Once the US controlled their domestic market, they turned to seizing foreign markets. The UK became an important export market and Hollywood's European base to sell films to other countries (cf. Ryall 2001: 24). British producers

had difficulties to finance longer narrative films and dealing with foreign films was far more lucrative (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 9-11). These early development determined the British film industry's fate for the next one hundred years. While the British exhibition market profited from showing US pictures and the British distribution sector boomed, British film producers suffered from America's dominance (cf. Ryall 2001: 24).

During World War I British cinema audiences more than doubled (cf. Hanson: 47) and Hollywood strengthened their international hegemony in film trade. While European film producers struggled due to various political and financial reasons during the war (cf. Bakker 2003: 583), Hollywood established their star-supported feature films as the most popular type of moving picture entertainment. These films were produced by vertically integrated businesses⁵ that set economic and creative standards which European film industries could hardly rival after the war (cf. Ryall 2001: 83). In 1918, 80% of the films shown in the UK came from the US (cf. Hanson 41). Thus, whereas the British production industry was in decline, the exhibition sector profited from Hollywood productions.

In the 1920s, British film production dwindled to only 26 feature films in 1926. Hardly any British films were screened with commercial success in the US in the first half of the decade (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 18). American companies dominated the British distribution sector and thus British producers struggled to obtain film production finance and exhibition space (cf. Ryall 2001: 25, 33). Meanwhile, leading Hollywood studios had founded the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) as their collective PR agency. The MPPDA also negotiated with national and international state representatives on their behalves (cf. Glancy 1999: 38-42). Hollywood thus had an eloquent representative which the scattered British production industry lacked.

Simultaneously, Hollywood became interested in the UK as a production base. In the mid-1920s, American films earned more than a third of their foreign revenues in the UK and these revenues were vital for the Hollywood studios (cf. Miskell 2007: 218). Representations of the British people in films should be as authentic as possible for both, American and British audiences and “[d]irector Hugh Ford suggested that although American audiences were interested in British subject-matter, American

⁵ Film businesses were vertically integrated when they had controlling interests in the production, distribution and exhibition sector of the film industry.

filmmakers were failing in their attempts to render the relevant indigenous detail convincingly.” (Ryall 2001: 29). For this and other reasons, the Hollywood studio Famous Players-Lasky (later Paramount) established a British production base in 1919. There, an Anglo-American staff produced eleven films until 1922. Some of these films were critically applauded for their depiction of the English landscape. In general however, the Anglo-American films disappointed Famous Players-Lasky and so the British company was dissolved in 1924 (cf. *ibid.*: 25-31).

There is little evidence that these early American ventures into British film production produced anything resembling British heritage films. However, Higson analysed a British production, *Comin' Thro' The Rye* (1923) as an early example of the British heritage film genre. As it becomes clear in his description, *Comin' Thro' The Rye* shares many characteristics with modern British heritage films. It is based on a best-selling Victorian novel, set in the nineteenth century and deals with a gentry family. Moreover, it displays England's beautiful countryside and the approach of its director, Hepworth, was consciously non-Hollywood (cf. Higson 1995: 28-44). However, Hepworth's conscious neglect of Hollywood's stylistic and narrative conventions was also specified by US-American trade papers as a reason why the film was received poorly in the US (cf. Higson 76-78). Thus, *Comin' Thro' The Rye* is an example of an early British heritage film which had not yet found a way to balance American conventions and national characteristics.

In 1927 talking pictures revolutionised the film business and the British government passed the first Cinematograph Films bill. Both developments strengthened Hollywood's position and the cinematic relationship between the two countries. Sound and the resulting importance of language consolidated the British-American film relationship rather than the British-European one (cf. Ryall 2001: 86). Furthermore, many smaller European cinemas closed because they could not afford sound equipment. Sound films were expensive and thus fewer films were screened in fewer, bigger cinemas and with longer distribution deals (cf. Maltby, Vasey 1999: 44). By the early 1930s, eight studios dominated Hollywood (cf. Cook 2006: 163).

The Cinematograph Films Act 1927 came into force 1 January 1928 and, among other changes, introduced a quota for British films. In 1928, the quota for British films was 7.5% for distributors and 5% for exhibitors. Both quotas gradually increased to 20% in 1936, at which level they remained until the act expired in 1938. For quota regulation purposes, the Britishness of a film was defined in industrial

terms (cf. Street 2009: 185). As many Hollywood studios had distribution firms in Britain, they had to get involved with British film production as a result of the act. Otherwise, they could not have met quota regulations. Moreover, the new legislation generated increased financial investments in the production industry (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 25).

The arguments brought up in the discussions preceding the act were culturally and economically motivated. Economically, one of the most potent arguments was that “trade follows the film” (Napper 2009: 21). One blamed Hollywood's constant advertisement of American goods for Britain's declining role as an export nation, especially in its Empire. Conversely, a successful British film production industry should promote British goods at home and abroad, thus supporting domestic manufacturing industries (cf. *ibid.*: 21). Culturally, one argued that British films should promote British values instead of the American way-of-life associated with consumption. Also, one wanted to “rais[e] audience tastes, by teaching them to discriminate” (*ibid.*: 24). Like the BBC, British films were expected to be of superior cultural value than their commercial competitors (cf. *ibid.*: 23-25).

The 1927 Cinematograph Films Act had positive and negative consequences for the British film industry. Hollywood studios became increasingly involved with British film production by buying into existing firms, establishing their own production bases in Britain or financing British films (cf. Ryall 2001: 38-39). Optimistically examined, the act “unlock[ed] American finance for the uncertain business of British film production and stimulate[d] a mushroom growth of indigenous film companies” (Chibnall 2007:2). It employed and trained British production staff and facilitated the production of some outstanding British films (cf. Glancy 1999: 21-22). Additionally, it spurred on an indigenous form of film-production that depicted a very distinct way of the British way-of-life. Especially the new trend of literary and theatrical adaptations concerned with class and tradition won new, suburban, middle-class audiences (cf. Napper 2009: 28-30). Film production increased to over 200 films in 1936. However, many of these films were made with minimal budgets and thus in very poor quality, only to fulfil quota requirements (cf. Ryall 2001: 45). The cheap 'quota quickies' produced in this time had the “net effect [...] to give British films a bad name at home and abroad” (Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: xii).

One can learn several things from these early years. First, audiences favour long narrative films, preferably with star actors. Second, the strength and interests of Bri-

tish filmmakers were in the documentary tradition of actualities and topicals rather than fictitious films from the start. Chosen topics were often elitist (upper classes, monarchy) or the British landscape (*Rough Sea at Dover*). The Americans have had an interest in these British topics from early on and this developed in the 1920s with the production of British-themed films. Third, the American film industry was successful because it united first in the MPPC and later in the MPPDA, while the British producers fended for themselves. Furthermore, it controlled the British distribution sector and won the British audiences which made it excessively difficult for British producers. Fourth, the British government finally intervened because of cultural and economical reasons but the first Cinematograph Films Act catered to monetary rather than cultural arguments and encouraged American investments.

3.2. The 1930s and 1940s

The period between 1930 and 1950 was a landmark in Anglo-American cinematic relations. According to H. Mark Glancy, Hollywood studios produced more than 150 'British' films between 1930 and 1945. Glancy defines this production strand as films produced by American companies with British source material or settings. These films involved significant shares of British staff and depicted a patriotic, culturally rich and historically great Britain, full of privileged people and grand buildings (cf. Glancy 1999: 1-3). Some of the films of this production strand clearly were US versions of British heritage films. Examples of these 'British' heritage films include *Jane Eyre* (1934, 1944), *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1936), *Mary of Scotland* (1936) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1940). British government measures and rising attendance figures supported the growth of the British film production sector which also celebrated some successes at home and abroad, especially with heritage films. Thus, British and 'British' heritage films played an important role in these two decades.

In the 1930s and 1940s, Hollywood was in its classical studio era and proved to be outstandingly Anglophile. The American film industry was dominated by Hollywood's eight largest studios, the top five of which were vertically integrated. Films were produced in Hollywood's highly organised studio system and largely relied on on-screen star appeal (cf. Gomery 2005: 71-73). The most successful studio at the time was MGM (cf. Ryall 2001: 52) which produced 'British' films from 1934 onwards. It started with adaptations of literature and historical subjects, although the

stories became more contemporary in the late 1930s. These 'British' films were characteristically expensive prestige⁶ films, based on the “most immediately recognizable British stories” (Glancy 1999: 74). A host of British talents were usually joined by Anglo-American scripts and American directors (cf. *ibid.*: 74-81). Furthermore, “MGM's international approach to 'British' films centred on a romantic and idealized view of Britain” (*ibid.*: 75). Generally, Hollywood used British source material rather freely and subjected it to its own narrative conventions. Historical verisimilitude was less important than narrative or aesthetic requirements (cf. Ryall 2001: 113-119). Ultimately, the “aura' of the original work” (*ibid.*: 123) was responsible for selling the film.

Hollywood had cultural and economic incentives to produce 'British' films. Many Americans in the 1930s and 1940s had a nostalgic idea of England and their shared heritage (cf. Glancy 1999: 4-5). Their common language was a further advantage (cf. Ryall 2001: 122). Nevertheless, Glancy notes that “Hollywood's love for Britain stemmed primarily from box-office considerations rather than ardent Anglophilia.” (Glancy 1999: 6) Due to various reasons, the US-American film industry lost many of its international markets in the 1930s, which rendered the remaining markets ever more important. Throughout the late 1930s and early 1940s Hollywood prospered largely due to its success on the growing British market. Britain provided more than half of Hollywood's foreign revenue in the 1930s (cf. *ibid.*: 8-20) and 'British' films like *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935) were very successful in the UK (cf. *ibid.*: 26).

However, these films also needed to appeal to American audiences who were sceptical about real British films. Thus, Hollywood needed to find its own approach to British source material (cf. Glancy 1999: 72). Tom Ryall observes that Hollywood addressed an educated, discriminating middle-brow audience with adaptations of “canonical literature from the nineteenth century and before, and the historical biographies which formed the bases of many prestige films” (Ryall 2001: 111) in the 1930s. Hollywood's adaptations of British sources, such as *Wuthering Heights* (1939), exemplify that these prestige films could combine critical with commercial success (cf. *ibid.*: 111-112).

Encouraged by the 1927 Cinematograph Films Act, the British film industry boomed but in the late 1930s, the British government encouraged increased Holly-

⁶ Ryall defines 'prestige' films as expensive films that profit from the cultural capital of their source texts (cf. Ryall 2001: 129).

wood influence. In 1937, British investors lost their faith in the domestic film production industry and withdrew their money. The British Board of Trade hoped for Hollywood support for the ailing industry and agreed on very American-friendly conditions for the second quota act (cf. Street 1997: 10-11). The 1938 Cinematograph Films Act set the distribution and exhibition quota relatively low, at 15% and 12.5% respectively. Both of which were to double over the next decade. Films could count twice or three times for quota purposes if their British labour costs reached certain levels and distributing British films in the US also gained quota credits. Hollywood thus maintained large market shares of the British market while being rewarded for investing more money into fewer British films. During the 1930s, the growing British production industry had begun to threaten Hollywood's hegemony on the British market. Gaining control of British production by financing the most prestigious projects secured Hollywood's dominance (cf. Glancy 1999: 22-23). Additionally, the 1930s saw the rise of Rank, who had established a vertically integrated British film business by 1941 (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 32-33).

Some British films, like *Victoria the Great* (1937) and Korda's *The Private Life of Henry the Eighth* (1933) also sold well on the American market (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 36-37). The titles of the films above indicate that both are related to the British heritage film tradition. *Henry VIII* was financially supported by United Artists that also distributed it in the US (cf. *ibid.*: 37) and won an Academy Award for Best Actor (cf. Ryall 2001: 89). Moreover, *Henry VIII* has numerous characteristics in common with Hollywood's 'British' films. It provides an outsider's view on British subject-matter, sacrifices some authenticity for box-office appeal and relies on a protagonist who is readily recognisable as British. The film was the first British commercial success in the US and together with an early 'British' film from Fox, Glancy credits it with initiating Hollywood's run for 'British' films (cf. Glancy 1999: 72-73).

The 1940s became known as “the golden age of British cinema” (Ryall 2001: 59). During World War II British cinema attendance increased dramatically. In 1939 roughly 19 million people visited the cinema per week. This number rose to a record-high of 31.4 million in 1946 (cf. Glancy 1999: 25). Roughly half of Britain's studio space was used for the production of propaganda films or as storage space during the war and so less films were produced than in the 1930s (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 48). However, the British production industry finally developed strands of national cinema that have come to be considered as such. These were 'quality' productions

that blended Britain's documentary tradition with serious drama, such as *Fires Were Started* (1943) (cf. Ryall 2001: 59) and the heritage films identified by Barr. Rank owned an international distribution system and successfully distributed some of his films in the US. Among them were *Henry V* (1944) and *Hamlet* (1948), others failed overseas, like *Great Expectations* (1946) (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 55-56). This is an early example of the success British heritage films could have on the US market if they were distributed adequately. It also shows that historical films dealing with the upper classes were more likely to be successful than those dealing with poverty. However, even upper-class British heritage films required a carefully targeted distribution strategy in the US. According to the American Paul Swann, high budget productions like *Henry V* were successful in US art-house cinemas but they could not compete with the Hollywood majors (cf. Swann 2000: 30-34).

American film production decreased during the war but British-themed films became even more important as Hollywood turned to support the British war effort. American film production decreased, while average Hollywood film budgets increased (cf. Hall, Neale 2010: 122). As Hollywood relied on British box-office revenue, they not only produced 'British' films but also sided with the British war cause. The MPPDA tried to superficially sustain and represent Hollywood's neutrality until 1941 but when pressured, Hollywood openly admitted their anti-Nazi propaganda (cf. Glancy 1999: 53-66). Films about British culture, history, heritage and the British war effort attracted audiences in the UK and the US (cf. *ibid.*: 96). *Mrs Miniver* (1942) was one of the 'British' films and MGM's biggest box-office success in the 1940s. It won six Oscars and was praised by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill (cf. *ibid.*: 67). *Mrs Miniver* was set in the present and is the first 'British' film to depict the British middle-class. However, the Miniver family enjoys a very high standard-of-living in rural England (cf. *ibid.*: 142-149). Thus, Glancy comes to the conclusion that "Hollywood's fascination with Britain's upper classes continued unabated throughout the war years." (*ibid.*: 156). After the war Hollywood largely stopped producing 'British' films as US audiences' interests dwindled and international markets diversified again (cf. Glancy 1999: 96-97).

The newly elected British Labour government supported Rank's plans of competing with Hollywood and introduced new measures to assist the British film industry (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 53). However, some of their measures impeded Rank's plans. In order to counter a foreign exchange crisis, the British government intro-

duced an ad valorem tax of 75% on the estimated earnings of American film imports in August 1947. This resulted in a Hollywood boycott of the British market. Rank sought to fill the future lack in film supply and started an ambitious production programme. When the British government gave in and the boycott ended in March 1948, American films flooded the British market. This left Rank with a huge loss (cf. Ryall 2001: 61-62).

Other government measures were more film industry friendly. The 1948 Cinematograph Films Act set the exhibition quota at 45%. It was reduced to 30% in 1950 and stayed unchanged until 1983 (cf. Street 1997: 15). In 1949, the National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC) was founded and lasted until the mid-1980s. It was intended to support British independent producers by lending them up to 30% of their production budget but it also established deals with bigger companies such as Rank's (cf. Ryall 2001: 64). In 1950 the Eady Plan was introduced. Exhibitors paid a levy on every sold ticket into a fund. Half of the money raised this way was paid directly to the producers. It was thus a direct subsidy for production (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 60-61).

On the other side of the Atlantic, the US Supreme Court ended the major Hollywood studios' vertical integration. As a result of the following consent decrees, also known as Paramount decrees, the majors had to part from their exhibition enterprises. Thus, film production became much more risky (cf. Cook 2006: 164) and Hollywood's studio system was effectively put to an end (cf. Schatz 2002: 186). On the whole, the conditions for the British production industry thus looked good in the late 1940s.

The 1930s and 1940s show that there is a potential market for British, especially British heritage, films on both sides of the Atlantic. Hollywood was commercially and critically successful with their 'British' films and some of the British films that were distributed in the US also found audiences. For these British films it was helpful to have American financiers and distributors, to target an educated niche-audience and to basically look like a 'British' heritage film. Plans to mass market British films in the US failed even though the British celebrated a distinct 'national' cinema for the first time. Government measures like the quota acts supported the British film industry but also encouraged increased American involvement.

3.3. The 1950s, 1960s and 1970s

British heritage films of this period have received extremely little academic attention, even though they were produced especially in the 1960s and 1970s (cf. Hall 2009: 49). Among other films, Hall names *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (1960), *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1967), *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1969), *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969), *Macbeth* (1971) and *Young Winston* (1972) as examples. Usually, US-American firms were involved with these films (cf. *ibid.*: 49). Indeed, the British film industry's dependence on Hollywood became extremely obvious in these three decades. Nevertheless, in the late 1970s, the stage was set for a new wave of British heritage films.

The major components of British state support for the film production industry had been established in the late 1940s. In the 1950s, the industry's main problem was falling cinema attendance (cf. Street 1997: 16-17). In Britain, weekly attendance more than halved in the 1950s (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 63). Hollywood struggled with the same problem and introduced various new techniques to attract audiences (cf. Hall, Neale, 140-149).

“Hollywood has been increasingly hit-driven since the early 1950s” (Schatz 2002: 184), which stems from the competition for exhibition space as well as for audiences. As Hollywood produced less but more expensive films, smaller cinemas looked for other sources to fill their screens. The art-house market developed which was an advantage for the British. British films were usually mainstream products in the UK but art-house films in the US. As they were aesthetically between European art cinema and Hollywood's commercial cinema, they had great cross-over potential. Also, British films were culturally close to the US and did not need subtitles. In the US, Rank still targeted the mainstream market with his expensive films but his lower budget products were actually more successful because they competed on the less competitive art-house market (cf. Ryall 2001: 97-100).

British film production output was relatively stable throughout the 1950s (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 70) but British producers increasingly relied on American finance and Anglo-American co-productions. The 170 Anglo-American films produced in this decade (cf. Harper, Porter 2003: 114) “Americanize[d] the content of British films” (*ibid.*: 115). US independents and Hollywood majors liked producing in the UK due to political and financial reasons. The degree of US control in Anglo-

American co-productions varied between the studios. However, the director, leading actors, script and producer were usually being decided upon in the US (cf. *ibid.*: 114-115). In the end of the 1950s these co-productions dominated British film production (cf. *ibid.*: 135). Many of the American-British films were promoted as British in the UK and American in the US (cf. *ibid.*: 126), which hides their part in the nation's cinema. The kind of films produced also changed. From the middle of the decade onwards, less American-British productions were costume dramas and more British independent producers received American finance (cf. *ibid.*: 130). The 'British' or British heritage film trend of the previous decade faded. Films like *The Mudlark* (1950) which dealt with Queen Victoria after Albert's death, was Oscar-nominated and produced by Twentieth Century Fox (cf. *ibid.*: 125), were rare in the late 1950s. Hollywood tended to make bigger budget American films in the UK that appealed to international audiences and were not overtly British (cf. Murphy 2011: 257).

In the 1960s, the British film industry was caught in a vicious circle of falling cinema attendance. Television led to falling attendance figures in cinemas and thus many cinemas closed. Less people went to the cinema due to a lack of access, producers earned less in exhibition and the demand for new features declined as there were less screens. Both led to a decline in production which again did not encourage people to go to the cinema. British financiers' risk-aversion increased the shortage in production money (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 83-84 and 89). Inevitably, the British relied on Hollywood investment even more than before.

The Hollywood studios increased their investments in Britain in the 1960s. Their own strong currency made productions abroad cheaper, British studios were well-equipped, British labour cheap and the trade unions less troublesome than in the US (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 84-85). Ryall believes that the American-financed British films of the 1960s contributed more to Britain's national cinema than in the 1950s. More British directors were involved and while in the 1950s, Ryall clearly differentiates between the films Hollywood made in the UK and British productions, these developments were more intertwined in the 1960s (cf. Ryall 2001: 73-75). The above mentioned heritage films are part of this production trend. American support was vital for the ailing British film production industry but it also left the British in complete dependence on Hollywood. However, Hollywood retreated in the late 1960s because the films produced in Britain were not successful enough and maintaining studios in two countries was too expensive (cf. *ibid.*: 102). Murphy blames a

number of expensive costume dramas for Hollywood's retreat from the UK (cf. Murphy 2011: 274). Hollywood certainly did struggle with a series of expensive flops in the late 1960s and so reduced investment in the UK, which signalled the next crisis in British film production (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 90).

In the 1970s, Britain's film industry's main problem was not attendance but film funding. While attendance figures recovered and reached 138 million in 1974 (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 97), the number of British films produced fell to 31 in 1980 (cf. Barber 2013: 35). Hollywood concentrated on the production of blockbusters and retreated from British production while the NFFC's resources also declined. British producers had to look for new funding strategies.

Apart from government subsidies, Hollywood's new financing strategies were pre-sales agreements with television, cable and ancillary markets, which included for example the music, publishing and toys industry. As Hollywood studios increasingly belonged to large conglomerates, they could franchise their products and cross-market them in other media and industries (cf. Cook 2006: 165). In 1975, the success of *Jaws*' blockbuster strategy marked Hollywood's conversion towards a new business strategy (cf. Schatz 2002: 190-192). Schatz describes blockbusters as “multi-purpose entertainment machines” (ibid.: 185) which produce various off-spins in other industries. Due to US government legislation, US independent production declined in the late 1970s and thus the established art-house audience was left largely unattended (cf. ibid.: 193).

With Hollywood investment and NFFC support in drastic decline, the British film industry had to look for different funding sources. The Conservative government of the early 1970s wanted to encourage the NFFC to raise more private money for film production and reduced the amount of government subsidy. This curtailed the NFFC's possibilities for financial support dramatically (cf. Barber 2013: 26-28). Films were widely discussed by British governments in the 1970s and their cultural value was recognised but no concrete help introduced. Instead, more production companies were founded for single films only (cf. ibid.: 35-36). New funding sources came from the domain of popular youth culture, especially the music industry. Additionally, low-budget cinematic television spin-offs profited from television creatively and financially. The US was involved in films with high production values, like historical and literary adaptations (cf. Smith 2008: 74-77). Indeed, Justin Smith observes that “the costume film was a more significant strand in British international

pictures of the 1970s than has been thought.” (ibid.: 77). British producers did not target the unattended American art-house sector on a grand scale but tried to enter the US mass market again. There, the biggest British producers tried their luck with expensive blockbusters and flopped catastrophically. The worst example is *Raise the Titanic* (1980) with a budget of \$35 million (cf. Street 1997: 20-21).

An examination of the 1950s to 1970s shows just how much the British film industry has been dependent on US-American support. Even though government subsidies existed, the British film industry was comparably well only as long as Hollywood invested in Britain. This naturally affected the films produced, which became increasingly Americanised. British heritage films were produced in this time, even though academic research has largely ignored them. Hollywood's franchising strategy from the 1970s onwards is a good example of how film producers can increase their profits. Even though one might argue that this is a strategy open only to media conglomerates, the process of conglomeration had only begun in the 1970s. Advertising deals to mutual benefit, of which product placement is as good an example as the link between modern British heritage films and the tourism industry, are possibilities open to smaller companies, too. The quest for new funding sources linked the British film industry to television and other culture industries. In the end of the 1970s, the US-American art-house market was largely unattended and thus open to British films. The next sub-chapter will show that modern British heritage films were not only able to enter the US-American art-house market successfully but also spread from there to more mainstream exhibition places. Arguably, this was possible because the American art-house market was comparably empty in the early 1980s.

3.4. The 1980s

The 1980s could have been a bleak decade for the British film industry. Cinema admission reached a record low of 54 million in 1984 (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 105) and most forms of state subsidy were abandoned. However, the demand for films increased, new cinemas were built and American companies invested in the British film industry. Moreover, British heritage films such as *Chariots of Fire* (1981) and *A Room With A View* (1985) conquered the American art-house market, crossed over to the mainstream market, and became known as a form of Britain's national cinema. Higson stresses that Britain's film production industry was still frag-

mented (cf. Higson 2003: 107) but it seems as if at least one part of Britain's film production industry had found a strategy to combine national cinema with international success.

The film industry experienced a massive increase in film demand in the 1980s, which affected all three film industry sectors. According to Prince, the rise in demand was due to increased revenues from ancillary markets, which stimulated film production. As more films were available, the distribution sector boomed which prompted cinema construction (cf. Prince 2000: 43). Due to the new multiplexes, the number of screens available increased dramatically. Moreover, the Hollywood majors moved back into exhibition, which they had lost in the late 1940s. In combination with their mergers with other media companies, the major Hollywood studios became vertically integrated to far greater extent than they ever had been (cf. *ibid.*: 79-89).

The British film industry profited from new developments in the industry, too. In 1985, the first multiplex opened in Britain and admission rose to 94.5 million in 1989 (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 107). The newly launched Channel 4 started investing in independent film production in 1982. The BCC had funded films since the previous decade and these funds from television have been very important for the British film industry (cf. Street 1997: 22). Furthermore, British films like *Chariots of Fire* (1981) conquered the largely unattended American art-house market and crossed from there to more mainstream cinemas. This encouraged American investments in the British film industry.

Since films such as *Chariots of Fire* (1981) had managed to attract not only art-house audiences but also a more mainstream American audience, Hollywood distributors had put more attention to distributing such films in the US. As Hollywood's major distributors could not market these films effectively, the field was taken by American independent distributors in the mid to late 1980s (cf. Higson 2003: 124-126). During this time the crossover strategy was developed in the US. Crossover films' marketing advertises certain elements of art-house films to mainstream audiences (cf. *ibid.*: 92-93) to appeal to a broad range of audiences.

In Hollywood's urge for expansion, it also invested in Britain again. Investments in foreign productions gave Hollywood greater shares of foreign markets. Additionally, indigenous productions were relatively cheap but could become hugely successful, as *Chariots of Fire* had shown. Investing small amounts of money was thus also always a gamble for the profitable crossover hit. Further incentives were local

subsidies and the wish to broaden the range of films on offer by their distributors in order to cater to many different audiences (cf. Higson 2003: 119-123). Moreover, Hollywood depended increasingly on export income. In 1980, 30% of their revenue came from abroad, in 1989 it was 38% and in 1994, export revenue exceeded domestic revenue (cf. *ibid.*: 107).

Hollywood's interest in the British film industry was very important as Britain's Conservative government abolished most forms of subsidised film funding in the 1980s. In 1981, the NFFC was encouraged to improve its collaboration with the private sector and it was abolished together with the Eady Levy in 1985 (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 105-107). Hill compares the situation of British cinema in the 1980s to the situation in the 1920s. After quota regulations had been abandoned in 1983, the percentage of British films on British screens declined to similar numbers as in 1926, when the first quota act was discussed (cf. Hill 2006: 102-103). Moreover, the tax status of films was changed and capital allowances phased out. As a consequence, British investors withdrew in the late 1980s (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 117).

Hall argues that British heritage films have been produced throughout British cinema history but that academics have recognised them only as 1980s' and to lesser extent 1990s' national cinema (cf. Hall 2009: 49). *Chariots of Fire* (1981) has been commonly identified as the first (modern) British heritage film (cf. *ibid.* 46) and has been associated with the revival of British cinema in the 1980s (cf. Hill 2006: 100). What kind of British film triggered a boom in British film production at such difficult times, cleared the way for further heritage films and attracted American audiences? According to John Hill, *Chariots* costed £3 million which was expensive for an early 1980s British film. Its international investors included 20th Century Fox (Hill 2006: 100). Moreover, the film has “a relatively straightforward narrative structure, [...] goal-oriented action and positive heroes” (*ibid.* 101). After its success at the Oscars 1982, it was re-released in Britain to commercial success (cf. *ibid.*: 100). Furthermore, *Chariots* “offers an image of Britain which generally conforms to the expectations of an international, and especially American, audience” (*ibid.*: 102). Thus, *Chariots* does not self-consciously differ from mainstream Hollywood products. Instead, it employs numerous techniques in order to resemble Hollywood films. Even the image of Britain is Americanised and attuned to American expectations.

In the 1980s, several factors advantageous for British heritage films came together. *Chariots of Fire* adopted Hollywood strategies such as goal-oriented narratives based on positive heroes. Like *Henry VIII* (1933), it catered to international expectations of Britishness. It was marketed to largely unattended, educated American niche audiences and crossed over to a wider audience. It raised extra attention with its success at the Academy Awards. All this was attained with American finance and distribution. *Chariots* thus profited from past lessons in British heritage film production and raised massive attention for this film trend, which had arguably been in development for several decades. This coincided with Hollywood's urge to conquer new markets, for which modern British heritage films were superbly suited. They were obviously British, targeted niche audiences, were comparably cheap to produce and could turn out as huge box-office successes. Even though Hollywood needed a while to adjust their strategies to these films, it comes as no surprise that they have increased their investments in British heritage films in subsequent decades.

3.5. The 1990s

The 1990s were a relatively good time for the British film industry and the Anglo-American collaboration on British crossover films was consolidated. Examples of the British heritage film production trend include *Howards End* (1992), *The Madness of King George* (1994), *Emma* (1996), *Mrs. Brown* (1997), *Elizabeth* (1998) and *Mansfield Park* (1999). In the UK, an average of 83 films were produced per year, more than in the previous two decades (cf. Higson 2011: 15). The average production budget of these also increased (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 126). Cinema attendance reached levels unseen since 1970, which encouraged American companies to further invest in British distribution and exhibition. Hollywood continued controlling both these sectors (cf. *ibid.*: 124-125). Cinema attendance not only increased but also changed in its composition, with more females, older and upmarket spectators coming to the cinema. These are the audiences which heritage films traditionally address (cf. Higson 2003: 106). As the Hollywood studios wanted to increase their market share on foreign markets, investing in British heritage films was a logical decision. These films were indigenous on the British market and attracted audiences different from Hollywood's mainstream films.

In Britain, new governmental financial support mechanisms were an important addition to increased funding from the television industry. Moreover, the government

finally attempted to measure the economic benefits of a healthy film production industry. The BBC and Channel 4 increased their involvement with film finance and were joined by BSkyB in their endeavours. ITV was also involved with film production (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 129-130). According to Baillieu and Goodchild, British Screen Finance, a public-private partnership that had replaced the NFFC in 1986, was a further important funding source (cf. *ibid.*: 134). In 1992, the government introduced a new tax-relief scheme for film production. Two years later the National Lottery was introduced, whose profits also benefited the film industry (cf. Higson 2011: 41). The latter increased film production markedly and in 1998, three British film companies got six-year contracts for guaranteed Lottery money to produce films of cultural and commercial value (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 135). In 1997, a new Labour government was elected, which introduced a Films Minister and a Film Policy Review Group in 1998 (cf. Higson 2011: 41). The Creative Industries, of which film is one part, were first defined in 1998, when also first efforts were made to measure the economic benefits of these industries (cf. Department for Culture, Media & Sport 2001: 4-5). In a follow up report in 2001, it was estimated that the film and video industries created £3.6 billion revenue and 45000 jobs in the UK (cf. *ibid.*: 10-11). The increased official attention for the film industry also encouraged more private sector investment again (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 140). In Baillieu's and Goodchild's opinion, the British government finally appreciated films' importance in "promoting the country abroad" (*ibid.*: 138) in the late 1990s.

Nevertheless, independent film production and distribution were still very fragmented. It was difficult to raise finance and the lack of vertically integrated companies meant that marketing, distribution and exhibition were managed by others so that producers did not earn much with their films nor did they have secure distribution outlets (cf. Watson 2000: 82). Some few independent producers, like Merchant Ivory, prospered but on the whole it was still very difficult for them (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 149). Merchant Ivory are famous for their British heritage films and indeed 10% of Anglo-American co-productions in the 1990s were accounted for by British heritage films (cf. Higson 2011: 137). Whereas before, UK film production had largely consisted of small-budget British films and big-budget American films, more mid-budget films were produced in the 1990s (cf. Baillieu, Goodchild 2002: 127-128). Notwithstanding, Britain was still popular as a production base for Holly-

wood blockbusters such as *Star Wars Episode One* (1999), which were not culturally British (cf. Dyja 2010: 121).

In Hollywood, demand and costs for films increased in the early 1990s. This and the merger movement increased their interest in British film production. In the first half of the 1990s, Hollywood's production costs rose massively. Moreover, most films got a wide release which led to relatively short exhibition runs and increased the demand for film. Theatrical revenues accounted for only roughly a third of Hollywood's earnings, the rest coming from ancillary markets in the mid-1990s (cf. Cook 2006: 168-169). Moreover, the major Hollywood studios continued merging into huge media combines. These expanded vertically, in order to profit from various funding sources and cater to more diverse audiences, and horizontally, in order to reach markets worldwide (cf. Balio 2002: 206). In order to reach non-mainstream audiences, Hollywood also moved back into art-house and especially the crossover markets (cf. Higson 2003: 127). In 1993 for example, Disney struck a product development deal with Merchant Ivory. Thereby, Disney gained distribution rights for art-house films in the US and provided some of the finances for Merchant Ivory projects (cf. Balio 2002: 211-212).

It is clear that Hollywood has understood British heritage films as crossover, rather than pure art-house films. Higson has written about this phenomenon extensively. According to him, recent British heritage films must be understood as Anglo-American crossover films that mostly rely on British subject matter and Hollywood finance and distribution (cf. Higson 2011: 153). He identified romance, a similarity with Anglo-American romantic comedies, Englishness and an outsider's view on Englishness as important characteristics of these films (cf. *ibid.*: 137-144), which are often identified as “quintessentially British” (*ibid.*: 144) by reviewers. By the end of the decade, Hollywood deliberately tried to attract the traditional British heritage film niche-audience, as well as a more mainstream audience with these films (cf. Higson 2003: 123). In the 1990s, nearly twice as many British heritage films as in the 1980s were produced (cf. Higson 2011: 154) and many of them were Austen adaptations.

The 1990s and 2000s were the time of Austen on screen in the US and the UK. *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) was the first in a long run of feature film Austen adaptations (cf. Higson 2011: 125) and according to Dyja it had “‘Made in England’ stamped all over it” (Dyja 2010: 228) even though it was made by a Taiwanese

director and with US (Columbia) finance (cf. *ibid.*: 228). Higson observes that these Austen adaptations have become increasingly Hollywood-like even though he stresses that some filmmakers have deliberately tried to steer away from Hollywood conventions. Nevertheless, he maintains that most of them have been marketed as romantic comedies and Austen adaptations (cf. Higson 2011: 131-132). Chapter four will investigate this matter with the example of Joe Wright's *Pride & Prejudice*.

The 1990s show that American investments are important for the British film industry even if more domestic finance is available. As Hollywood had good reasons to invest in British crossover films, and British heritage films had proven to be successful, cooperation on these films consolidated and turned towards even more profitable models. Also, the British government officially turned its attention to the economic benefits of a solid British film production industry.

3.6. The twenty-first century

In the twenty-first century's first thirteen years, British heritage films have continued to be an important part of Anglo-American co-productions. Films exemplary of the British heritage film trend include *Gosford Park* (2001), *Pride & Prejudice* (2005), *Becoming Jane* (2007), *The Duchess* (2008), *The King's Speech* (2010) and *Jane Eyre* (2011). The most recent romantic comedy *Austenland* (2013) is a good example of how the British heritage film genre merges with contemporary American romantic comedies. The major Hollywood studios have become parts of mega media conglomerates which use films to create and advertise other commodities. In this trend of ever-growing commercialisation of film, the British government has tried to advantage culturally British films by means of a cultural test.

Hollywood's power structure in the early twenty-first century is not much different from that in Hollywood's classical studio era. There are still eight major studios, although Disney has taken RKO's place and MGM and United Artists have become affiliated. As Cook notes however, the studios are now parts of "seven huge global media conglomerates" (Cook 2006: 158). The film producing parts of these companies are still referred to as 'studios' represented by the MPPDA, which was renamed to Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) (cf. *ibid.*: 158). For these mega media conglomerates, the production of franchises has become ever more important and Hollywood films create and advertise the products necessary for these franchises (cf. *ibid.*: 169).

The British film industry is still dominated by foreign-owned companies. The interests of the distribution and exhibition sector still overpower the domestic production sector (cf. Higson 2011: 19). Nielsen statistics show that eight films in the UK's top-20 box-office list for 1995 to 2004 are Anglo-American co-productions. Not one of them is a typical British heritage film and no film listed was produced without US involvement (cf. UK Film Council 2005: 20). In 2005, a third of the UK's box-office revenues were officially earned by British films. However, this number arose through the success of for example *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* and *Pride & Prejudice*, both of which were produced in Britain but largely financed by Hollywood studios. The two examples above were based on well-known British literature and set in the UK, which made them easily recognisable as British films. Others, like *Batman Begins*, lack this obvious connection (cf. James 2006: 3).

The British government's interest in the film industry persisted in the 2000s and a “commitment to distinctively British filmmaking was gradually enhanced in the mid-2000s” (Higson 2011: 49). In 2000, the Film Council was founded and renamed to UK Film Council in 2003. It supported the commercial as well as the more culturally and socially oriented end of the film industry. It lobbied the government for the industry, promoted the UK for runaway productions and generated a genuine sense of financial stability (cf. *ibid.*: 41-42). In the wake of the cultural industries, it argued that a healthy British film industry was culturally and economically beneficial to the UK, contributed to the UK's balance of payments, created jobs in the film industry and adjacent industries, promoted British tourism and encouraged the export of non-film related goods and services (cf. *ibid.*: 49-50). The UK Film Council closed in March 2011 because of funding cuts instructed by the Conservative-Liberal Democratic Coalition Government elected in 2010. Most of its responsibilities were given to the British Film Institute (cf. Child 2011), which itself has had to deal with substantial cuts since 2011 (cf. James 2013: 5).

Whereas most official government definitions had defined the 'Britishness' of British films in economic terms, a more culturally oriented definition was introduced in 2007. In 2007 the new tax-relief scheme for British film production contained the so-called Cultural Test designed to determine the 'Britishness' of a film project. According to Higson, the test was an attempt to reclaim Britain's control over representations of its culture (cf. Higson 2011: 56-57). The test did not discourage Hollywood's involvement in British heritage and Austen films that have been produced to this day.

Where there is a profitable product, there is Hollywood. Or, in Glancy's words, "where there is a shared cultural and financial interest, Hollywood and Britain soon become natural bedfellows" (Glancy 2005: 540).

Selling Britain's culture is a profitable business strategy, even though the profits are not comparable to that of Hollywood blockbusters (cf. Higson 2011: 25). Higson notes that Hollywood has become increasingly important for mid-budget heritage films in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century (cf. Higson 2003: 142). However, he is at pains to stress that culturally British films are a British production strand, mainly targeted at a niche market. Even if they rely on Hollywood finance, Higson emphasises that the British film business is discrete from Hollywood. Curiously, he makes an exception for Working Title, which is owned by Universal (cf. Higson 2011: 26). I agree with Higson on the Britishness of culturally British productions but I would not exclude Working Title productions from this. Even though Working Title is an affiliate of Hollywood major Universal, it produces culturally British films in Britain and the case study in chapter four shows that the most important creative decisions are also made in the UK.

In the 2000s, further British heritage films were produced and the British government paid further attention to the British film production industry. The Cultural Test has tried to regain control of the image of Britain depicted and thus made a step towards acknowledging the cultural importance of film at cost of its economic role. More importantly methinks was the creation of the UK Film Council, which for a while lobbied extensively for the British film industry. The Hollywood studios have truly turned into mega media conglomerates which use films to market their franchises. As the next chapter will show, Austen has been turned into a franchise, too. Austen adaptations thus combine the economic advantages of the British heritage film trend with Hollywood's franchising trend, which explains Hollywood's special interest in these films. The case study in chapter four will show how *Pride & Prejudice* draws on the lessons learnt in the previous one hundred years of British cinema, British heritage films and Anglo-American co-productions.

4. *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)

Pride & Prejudice is based on Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, which was first published in 1813. Its famous first sentence “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife” (Austen 1994: 5) sets the tone for the whole novel. Its main protagonist is Elizabeth Bennet, second oldest of five sisters of a lower gentry family. Their mother's main concern is to marry her five daughters off to preferably wealthy young gentlemen, as Longbourn, the family's estate, is entailed to a distant cousin. Elizabeth, refusing any marriage for convenience, finally makes the most prestigious match. She marries Mr. Darcy, a man with good fortunes and high social standing, whom she has despised for his pride for great parts of the novel. Only when he changes his attitudes and she learns to think better of him, she accepts his proposal. Her youngest and older sister also become engaged or even married, under very different circumstances but both with the help of Mr. Darcy.

Pride and Prejudice was adapted for the wide and small screen repeatedly. It was first adapted for the cinema by MGM in 1940. Typical for a 'British' film of the era, the film was only little concerned with literary fidelity and historic accuracy, a commercial and critical success and won an Academy Award (cf. Parrill 2002: 49-56). In 1949, a US television station adapted the novel for a live television play and the BBC adapted it in 1967, 1980 and 1995 (cf. *ibid.*: 56-60). Many have considered the 1995 version to be the best possible *Pride and Prejudice* adaptation. Sue Parrill lists among the latter's prime characteristics its “faithful rendering of the story, charismatic actors and excellent performances in all of the main roles” (*ibid.*: 79). According to Higson, this version prompted the coinage of the term 'Austenmania' by the British press (cf. Higson 2011: 133), a term which describes viewers' enthusiasm for Austen adaptations. From 1995 onwards, Austen's novels have been adapted for television and film repeatedly and numerous spin-offs, such as *The Jane Austen Book Club* (2007) were made (cf. *ibid.*: 125). Loose, modern adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* include *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001), *Pride and Prejudice – A Latter-Day Comedy* (2003) and *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) (cf. *ibid.*: 166). Joe Wright's adaptation in 2005 has been the first period costume feature film adaptation of the novel since 1940.

Wright's adaptation lends itself to analysis in view of this thesis for four reasons. First, as a commercially and critically successful period adaptation of an Austen novel, it is a representative example of a recent Anglo-American British heritage film. Second, *Pride & Prejudice* is recent enough to have produced an abundance of texts related to the film on the internet, be it by fans, journalists or the distribution and production companies of the film. Third, Wright's adaptation is old enough to have generated academic analyses which serve as reference points for this chapter. Fourth, as a British heritage film shot entirely on location, the film was an excellent advertiser for the British tourism industry and thus benefited the British economy beyond the film and immediately adjacent industries.

Wright's film, based on Deborah Moggach's screenplay, strives towards fidelity to the source text. However, it is also influenced by the need to address crossover audiences. Moggach's screenplay focuses on Elizabeth as the main character. Owing to the limited time frame of a feature film, Moggach simplified some of the subplots, such as the history of Mr. Darcy's adversary Mr. Wickham or some of the Bennets' further family relations. Instead, the film concentrates on the coming-of-age and romance story of Elizabeth and, to a lesser extent, her older sister Jane (cf. Palmer 2007). This very much follows the familiar pattern of finding-losing-finding of Hollywood's romantic comedies. Secondary characters such as Mrs. Bennet and the distant cousin, Mr. Collins, provide for the more comical moments. Retaining the novel's title as the film title links the cinematic adaptation to the novel at first sight. The film thus profits from the novel's prestige and addresses a specific audience. It also indicates that it wants to stay true to the novel. This latter claim is only disturbed by the change of the word 'and' in the novel's title for the ampersand in the film's title, which, according to Dole, indicates the film's hybrid status between classic adaptation and teenage romance (cf. Dole 2007).

There are many academic analyses of the film and their attitudes towards the film vary. Most academic texts about *Pride & Prejudice* deal with the (in)fidelity of the film to the novel. A common opinion is that many deviations from the source text are incurred by exploiting the story's romantic elements (e.g. cf. Palmer 2007). Others highlight the hybrid nature of the film (e.g. cf. Dole 2007, Durgan 2007). Negative critiques concentrate for example on a feminist reading of Lizzie (cf. Camden 2007) or on apparently superficial deviations from the novel. Laurie Kaplan concerns herself with changes in settings from interior to exterior and vice versa, which according

to her are inconsistent and highlight the film's narrative drive, as well as its obsession with spectacle (cf. Kaplan 2007). However, most observations can be interpreted both positively and negatively as Mary M. Chan's example shows. She interprets the changes in settings more neutrally, arguing that the settings distinguish characters but ultimately romanticise the story (cf. Chan 2007).

Higson attends to filmic adaptations of Austen's novels in two consecutive chapters of his latest monograph and looks into ways in which these adaptations address audiences other than ardent Austen fans (cf. Higson 2011: 130). According to him, Austen adaptations of the last two decades constitute a franchise or brand which includes films, television adaptations and books as well as a host of fan articles such as fridge magnets and stationeries (cf. *ibid.*: 127). He observes that many of the films cater to two distinct audiences: The traditional heritage film audience and the fans of Hollywood romances and romantic comedies. Therefore, several characteristics of these adaptations apart from their deviations from the source text need to be analysed. These include the authorship of the films, the films' receptions by different audiences and the marketing strategies employed for these adaptations (cf. Higson 2011: 132). I follow his approach in this chapter. Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* is among the films briefly analysed by Higson but his four to five pages are too little space to go into detail and he does not, for example, provide detailed scene analyses.

I will look into the ways in which this film caters to different audiences and what image of Englishness it promotes in order to do so. A brief overview of the main financial and creative resources of this adaptation identifies the stakeholders and creative approaches which affect this film. Interpretations of different aspects of the film and its conscious deviations from the source help to understand what changes were made in order to address a range of cinema audiences. Analyses of its distribution and reception may support the suspicion that this film specifically addresses the traditional heritage film audience as well as a younger, Hollywood-romance trained audience. Like Higson, I also look into the link between the film and the British tourism industry as an example of the film's economic importance.

The promotion of the film clearly collaborated with the British tourism industry for mutual benefits. This supports the heritage film debate's suspicion that heritage films support the promotion of a commercialised version of the national past. However, far from condemning it, I think that this twenty-first century business approach finally fulfils what politicians and tradespeople demanded as early as the 1920s.

Pride & Prejudice is an excellent example of a film that internationally successfully promotes certain versions of Englishness that are admired worldwide and advertise English mores, products and tourism.

4.1. Creative and financial resources

A film's creative and financial resources influence its final outlook. *Pride & Prejudice*'s most basic creative resource is Austen's novel but the author is credited only in the film's end titles. Others receive more prominent credit. Of all the different stakeholders who affected this film, I only examine the four most prominent companies, the director and the two leading actors.

Four different company names feature prominently in *Pride & Prejudice*'s credits. These are the Hollywood studio Universal, Focus Features and Working Title which are both affiliates of Universal, and StudioCanal (cf. *Pride & Prejudice* 2005). Of these companies, Universal and Focus Features have their headquarters in the US, while Working Title is a British company. StudioCanal is based in France and has been closely linked with Universal, especially in Working Title productions (cf. "StudioCanal. History."). All of these companies have a stake in *Pride & Prejudice*, although it is difficult to decipher which company has which part in the film, especially as academic and popular sources provide contradictory information. As Working Title most probably is the sole company involved in production, the others must have been involved with financing and distribution. Focus Features hosts one of the official film websites of *Pride & Prejudice* and was commonly named as the film's distributor in the US by US reviewers. The US DVD cover indicates that Focus Features owns the rights for DVD distribution in the US (cf. appendix). The British DVD cover bears the logo of Universal and the opening credit of the European DVD version reads "Universal Pictures presents in association with StudioCanal a Working Title Production" (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005), which hints at a distribution role of StudioCanal.

Relatively indisputable is Working Title's role as the production company of the film, especially as it was shot entirely in Great Britain. The film's opening credits announce "A Working Title Production" and all producers and executive producers listed in the end titles work for Working Title or were associated with the company (cf. *Pride & Prejudice* 2005). Working Title had not produced a heritage film before but had successfully concentrated on mainstream films with crossover potential in the

US. Their company record includes for example *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) and *Love Actually* (2003). The company's popular approach clearly influenced *Pride & Prejudice* (cf. Durgan 2007).

The complex credit politics above show that twenty-first century media companies are highly interlinked globally and that financial risks for films can be shared. Companies from at least three different countries have interests in the film, smaller European companies as well as a major Hollywood studio. This hints at the crossover appeal of a costume Austen adaptation and at the profit which was expected from the film. In order to fulfil these expectations, a broader audience than the narrowly defined heritage film audience had to be addressed. However, in how far Working Title, and thus the UK, benefited from box-office profits is unclear.

Pride & Prejudice was the first feature film for its English director Joe Wright, who has been known for his realist approach. According to Carol M. Dole, “[t]he attempt to reach a wider and more youthful audience was no doubt one reason for selecting Joe Wright as director” (Dole 2007). Although he was known for the BBC historical drama series, *Charles II: The Power and the Passion* (2003), Wright has his roots in social-realism (cf. Hoggard 2005). Wright repeatedly stated that he perceived Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* as a piece of British realism and tried to convey this in the film. This quote from Focus Features' website is just one example:

I saw that she [Jane Austen] was one of the first British realists. [...] I wanted to treat it [*Pride & Prejudice*] as a piece of British realism rather than going with the picturesque tradition, which tends to depict an idealized version of English heritage [...]. I wanted to make *Pride & Prejudice* real and gritty [...]. (qtd. in: “*Pride & Prejudice*.” *Focus Features*)

The director influences the outlook of a film in numerous ways. One small but very obvious example is Wright's aversion to Empire line dresses which led to the setting of the film in the late eighteenth, instead of early nineteenth century (cf. *ibid.*). Another way in which the director influences a film are his casting decisions.

The film comprises a predominantly British cast. Apart from Mr. Bennet (Donald Sutherland) and Lydia (Jena Malone), who are from Canada and the US respectively, all main roles were taken by British actors. Unlike many other heritage films, *Pride & Prejudice* abstains from an American star for US appeal. Keira Knightley presumably takes this role, as she has been known in the US since featuring in Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003).

The casting of Keira Knightley as Lizzie Bennet was controversial and raised the film's celebrity status considerably. Sue Parrill notes that “[i]f a studio is going to invest in a star, it had better justify the expense by making a film which will appeal to a large or broad audience” (Parrill 2002: 11). The casting of Knightley thus facilitated and necessitated the film's broad audience appeal. Knightley became known with *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002) and rose to star status with Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003), a status which *Pride & Prejudice* very much exploits (cf. Camden 2007). At the time of production, twenty-year-old Knightley was Lizzie's age which makes her casting unique in the history of filmic *Pride and Prejudice* adaptations (cf. Stewart-Beer 2007). However, academics as well as journalists noted that Knightley was too beautiful for the role of Lizzie (cf. e.g. Kaplan 2007). The debate about casting Knightley, as well as her relative famousness were helpful in promoting the film. Like the production company, Knightley indicates that this adaptation was designed for commercial success.

Matthew Macfadyen is much less well-known than Knightley and his performance as Mr. Darcy was compared to that of Colin Firth in the 1995 BBC series by journalists and academics. For example, according to the journalist Alexa DeGennaro, Macfadyen's Mr. Darcy is “the antithesis of the perennial favorite, fumbling, lake-diving Colin Firth” (DeGennaro 2005). For Catherine Stewart-Beer, the most striking characteristic of Macfadyen's Mr. Darcy is his physicality which is repeatedly emphasised through effective cinematography (cf. Stewart-Beer 2007). Compared to Knightley, Macfadyen has a much smaller role in the film and the film's promotion. His secondary role further highlights Knightley's predominance.

The companies behind the film and the casting of a Hollywood-known star in the leading role show that *Pride & Prejudice* was designed for commercial success from the beginning. Although the film is a faithful adaptation of Austen's novel, the author's name appears only in the end credits. The following sub-chapters will show which other measures were taken to broaden the audience appeal of this British heritage film, while retaining its Britishness.

4.2. The film's romanticised representation of an England gone by

The director Joe Wright emphasised repeatedly that he wanted to depict a realist version of England in the late eighteenth century, which in fact is very much in the tradition of British filmmaking. Nevertheless, the analysis of various aspects indicates

that his dramatic choices are heavily influenced by the wish to cater to diverging audiences. Thus, the living conditions of the Bennets, Bingleys and Darceys owe much to various idealised versions of the past. All three homes are depicted differently in terms of cinematography and mise-en-scène and all cater to particular audience needs. Wright's catering to different audiences also shows in Mr. Darcy's two proposal scenes. These are romantically and emotionally charged by numerous filmic devices and remind of conventional romantic films much more than of heritage films. Heritage film fans are gratified with beautiful English countryside shots.

4.2.1. Three representations of idealised living conditions

Joe Wright wanted to shoot a realist picture of the living conditions during Austen's time. He clearly saw the need to deviate from earlier modern British heritage films' period authenticity. Wright did not, however, abstain from typical heritage shots and methods. Especially in his attempts to contrast different living conditions, he reverts to typical heritage film images. Additionally, Wright's presentation of the Bennets' home is not only indebted to realism but at least as much to a nostalgic imaginary of an idyllic rural family home.

A 3:55 minutes long sequence in the film's beginning, which introduces the Bennet family, is exemplary of Wright's realist approach as well as its romantic pitfalls. In the first part of this sequence the camera follows Lizzie Bennet⁷ as she approaches Longbourn from the back. The typical establishing shot of the mansion, principal element of many heritage films, comes only in the end of this first sequence. As the audience approaches the home from the back, it immediately feels admitted into the Bennets' confidence. This feeling is strengthened by following Lizzie through white linen and underwear that hang outside to dry. When the camera stops following Lizzie and enters the house, it does not linger on formal objects on display. Instead, it captures Jane crossing the corridor with her embroidery equipment, Lydia and Kitty running down the stairs and Mary playing the piano. It seems as if the audience has just entered a bustling family home.

Three means of cinematography assist the feeling of entering a real family home. First, everything from Lizzie's walk through the sheets until her joining her youngest sisters in eavesdropping on her parents is shown in one long take. During this ninety-seconds-take, the movable camera moves towards the house, enters it, moves through

⁷ Following the conventions of the film and other reviewers, I will henceforth refer to her as Lizzie.

the corridor and the dining room, exits through another door and rejoins Lizzie, spies with her through a window at her parents and re-enters the house. By not combining numerous takes, Wright ignores the possibilities of film and draws the viewer's attention to the setting instead of the medium. Second, the aforementioned take was filmed with a hand-held camera that shakes slightly and thus enhances the impression that the spectator walks through the house him- or herself. Third, inside the house the camera perspective is at breast height at most. Although the camera pans one quadrant through the dining room, the low perspective does not provide a good overview of this part of the room. Instead, attention is drawn to dirty dishes, books and piles of ribbons on the dining table. As Dole observes, “[t]he camera looks at *things*, but it looks at different things than might be expected in a heritage film” (Dole 2007, emphasis in original). Obviously, the family spends a lot of time in this room. Additionally, the fact that nobody has cleaned up the place yet suggests two things. The Bennets do not have many servants and there is some work in progress. The members of the family are real individuals who spend their lives doing something, regardless of whether they are filmed or not. These cinematographic devices have little in common with Higson's initial description of heritage film cinematography.

Longbourn's *mise-en-scène* also deviates from conventional heritage film images. The dining room is not spacious and richly decorated but a walk-through room which serves multiple purposes. The piano stands here but the family also dines and does needlework in this room. The room is crammed with household articles, not art. Although the sun shines in from windows on the right and through numerous doors, the room is comparably dark. This room does not display the museum aesthetic criticised in the heritage film debate. Rather, it is a place that is used by its inhabitants and looks accordingly. However, this depiction is not necessarily indebted to realism. Austen, who wrote about her own time, envisioned a more spacious home for the Bennets. In the novel, the characters frequently move from one room to another and thus inhabit more than a multi-purpose dining room and a parlour. Wright downsizes the space actually available to the Bennets.

The depiction of the parlour, Longbourn's most representative room, neglects heritage film conventions, too. The parlour is spacious, tidy and pastel-coloured. Nevertheless, it is also full of life.



All female Bennets in their parlour (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:03:50)

The screenshot above shows all female Bennets in their parlour, quizzing Mr. Bennet about their new neighbours. At this point in the film, all family members have been introduced and the film's central theme, finding the right spouse, moves centre stage. The room is more representative than the dining room but the characters, not the room, retain the viewer's attention. The six female Bennets are arranged in the front, middle, back, left and right of the frame. Their positions are indicative of their relationships to each other and their importance in the film. On the whole, the narrative function of this scene greatly surpasses its value in displaying the material riches of an upper-class family.

The introductory sequence ends with a long shot of Longbourn's front. The camera zooms out gradually, revealing the surroundings of the house and distancing from the family home. The shot lasts twenty seconds and is thus long enough for the audience to reflect on the former sequence and memorise the idyllic picture of the house. This shot, as well as numerous others, feels relatively long and thus slows down the narrative drive of the film. This is one of the aspects differentiating this British heritage film from mainstream Hollywood products.



Longbourn, the Bennets' home (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:04:57)

Illuminated by warm sunlight and surrounded by old trees, Longbourn gives the impression of an idyllic family home. A pronounced entrance door and numerous windows suggest a friendly openness of the home and family. Acoustically, bird twitter

and the amiable piano music that accompanies most of the introductory sequence support Longbourn's idyllic impression.

Pride & Prejudice shows Longbourn not only as the Bennets' home but also as a working farm. Chickens and geese in the introductory sequence indicate this but it becomes much more pronounced in later scenes. One sequence shows the passing of the seasons in Longbourn's backyard. The sequence begins with a long shot of Lizzie on a swing. The swing hangs in a gateway in the frame's background. In the foreground, a dungheap mounts up next to the house wall and behind it a female servant feeds the chickens. In this shot, the backyard is clearly more important than Lizzie. A medium long shot of Lizzie on the swing follows and zooms in on her. Afterwards, the camera takes Lizzie's perspective and spins round on the swing with her, showing a blurry 360° image of her surroundings. Lizzie stops when she sees her best friend Charlotte. After a dialogue between the two, Lizzie carries on spinning round.

Now we see the seasons going by. The speed of the spinning is slowed down considerably and everything moves in slow motion. This allows full appreciation of the happenings. First, the yard is a jumble of chickens, farm tools and a boat, which stands fully rigged in a puddle. Second, five cows are being rounded up in the yard. Third, the hay harvest is stored and finally, the yard is drenched in rain, with geese swimming in the puddles. Lizzie's childlike activity of spinning round on a swing, the slow motion, the peaceful piano music and the warm sunlight that illuminates the yard most of the time encourage a positive, romantic reading of the sequence. However, these are images of a working farm that has cows, chickens and geese but no money to floor the backyard. People who cross the yard walk through mud most of the time. Moreover, judging from the animals and dungheap, the place must be smelly. Would a family like the Bennets have experienced similar living conditions? The 1995 BBC version, which took extra care to be faithful to the novel and Austen's times (cf. Durgan 2007) does not characterise Longbourn like this. In the novel, Longbourn is described as “an estate of two thousand a-year” (Austen 1994: 24) but chickens or a muddy backyard are never mentioned. Surely, Lady Catherine would have commented on the family's peasant living conditions.

Wright wanted to show the Bennets' living conditions as realistically as possible. The first sequence's cinematography is a good example of how he avoids museum aesthetic and foregrounds the family home and the characters living in it. However, as the film progresses, it becomes increasingly evident that Wright substitutes a ro-

romanticised, rural farm life for glorified upper-class living conditions. He replaces one much criticised idealised past with another, not-yet-criticised but similarly romanticised past. From the beginning, the spectator feels drawn to this family, which is depicted positively throughout. Longbourn is a home where its inhabitants can be themselves. Chickens and geese move around freely but the family members do not need to get their hands dirty or concern themselves with the farm⁸. Pleasant piano music accompanies many of the scenes, which are often bathed in sunlight. This is an idealised, romanticised image of lower gentry life in late eighteenth century rural England. There is not much space but the inhabitants are happy, the land is green and fertile and people live in harmony with nature.

The depictions of Netherfield and Pemberley differ from Longbourn both in mise-en-scène and cinematography. This becomes apparent in the very first impression of Netherfield's interior. The display of the room is given preference over characters.



First impression of Netherfield's interior
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:17:43)



The room from Lizzie's perspective
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:18:05)

Initially, the static camera is situated behind Miss Bingley and Mr. Darcy. As the characters turn their backs on the audience, they do not capture the viewer's attention. Instead, the viewer is free to admire the room, which is spacious and pastel-coloured. The silverware on the table, the screen in the background and the crystal candelabra on the left and right are all at least as admirable as they are useful. The paintings behind the two characters' heads and the marble columns remind of neoclassicism and are thus readily associated with superiority (of taste, education and achievement). This feeling of superiority is later indirectly reaffirmed by Miss Bingley who comments that Lizzie looks “positively medieval” (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:18:40). Contrasted with the neoclassicism of the room, this is certainly no compliment, as neoclassicism coincided with the Age of Enlightenment and thus clearly favoured ancient classics over the Middle Ages.

⁸ Contrary to the novel, the farm is not even mentioned as a potential reason for denying Jane the carriage to Netherfield.

The impression that the room is more important than the characters is affirmed when the camera takes Lizzie's perspective. Although the audience now sees Mr. Darcy and Miss Bingley from the front, the camera is at greater distance to them than before. They are shown in a long shot and so the room is at least as important as they are. Although this shot transmits Lizzie's feeling of inferiority and awkwardness, it also represents many elements which heritage film critics bemoan. For example, it favours visual splendour over character and it objectifies humans of lesser social rank. For, the two servants in the back right have no duty in this scene. Just as in later ball scenes at Netherfield, they stand in the background, immobile and hardly visible, as their costumes merge with the walls' colours. Servants at Netherfield often are “dehumanised decor” (Medhurst 2001: 13) as Medhurst once criticised about other heritage films.

This is in stark contrast to the cinematic treatment of servants at Longbourn. At Longbourn they do have meaningful duties and personal lives, as one scene clearly shows. When the Bennets get ready for the ball at Netherfield, the camera follows a young, humming maid who distributes washed clothes to different rooms. The servant is characterised as a human being with an own life and receives the viewer's full attention. The maid's scene at Longbourn indicates that Wright is sensitive to the arguments of heritage film criticism but employs traditional images nevertheless.

Later scenes at Netherfield affirm this first impression of heritage spectacle over narrative purpose. Stressing the material superiority of Netherfield is meaningful, as it transmits Lizzie's unease there. Furthermore, it stresses the difference in social rank and wealth which separates the Bingleys from the Bennets. However, some directions and lines of dialogue point to the beauty of the place and thus distract from the scenes' social criticism. For example, Mrs. Bennet's first remarks to Mr. Bingley at Netherfield are “What an excellent room you have, Sir. What expensive furnishings” (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:24:02), while Miss Bingley's facial expression clearly shows that she feels superior. Lizzie and Jane also comment on the splendour of the place when they attend the ball at Netherfield. When Lizzie later walks through the rooms in her search for Mr. Wickham, the audience is not treated to long shots of the decorated rooms because the movable camera has taken the perspective of a guest amidst the crowd. Nevertheless, we see Lizzie admiring the ceiling. Thus, although the spectator is refused some long shots, acting and dialogue stress the visual splendour of the place.

To conclude, the depiction of Netherfield is clearly influenced by earlier heritage films. Apart from the ball, long shots and a mostly static camera highlight the interior design of rooms, whereas characters are often of secondary importance. Servants appear to be part of the decoration and emphasise the Bingleys' material advantage over the Bennets. However, Wright does not always allow the spectator to revel in unlimited visual splendour. The ball is not depicted in long shots which would best display the dances and rich decorations. Also, the whole film lacks an establishing shot of Netherfield. The audience sees details of the manor's front but no impression of the whole house. Only the depiction of Pemberley grants the viewer the full stately home experience traditionally associated with heritage films.

At Pemberley, cinematography and interior design combine elements from Longbourn and Netherfield. They foreground wealth, grandness and material objects but neither reliably in the traditional heritage film style, nor at the expense of the place's homeliness. The sequence at Pemberley starts with an establishing shot of the house, which is very typical for heritage films. Once Lizzie enters the house, a more unconventional cinematography intermingles with typical heritage film elements. For example, Lizzie looks up at the entrance hall's ceiling. Unlike at Netherfield, the camera adopts her perspective and the viewer can admire the richly painted ceiling as well. However, as in most other scenes at Pemberley, the camera moves constantly. While this provides the spectator with a good overview of the ceiling painting, marble statues and other works of art without appearing too conservative, it disallows a prolonged admiration of the rooms. Also, most objects are shown in medium to close-up shots. This does not only reflect Lizzie's perspective but also hinders the audience from taking a distanced view of these objects. The statues' beauty overpowers the viewer who cannot emotionally distance from the objects on display. Lizzie is enchanted and so is the audience. Although the camera's display of and lingering focus on these objects is thus narratively meaningful, it is also showing off cultural artefacts associated with the 'high' arts.

The room in which Lizzie is formally introduced to Mr. Darcy's sister differs markedly from rooms at Longbourn and Netherfield as it represents old money. Whereas the colours at Netherfield are predominantly pastel, this room is decorated in red and gold. A huge, dark painting and wooden furniture make the room appear smaller than it actually is. This is underlined by the camera perspective which is shorter than it could be. The cinematography suggests that Mr. Darcy is so self-as-

sured and comfortable at his home that his wealth does not need to be displayed to full advantage. In the following, different perspectives of the room show his riches but they do so almost incidentally. Like at Longbourn, the camera perspective is too low and short for a good overview and foregrounds characters in their surroundings. This facilitates conveying the feeling of a comfortable home at the expense of heritage film display.

The different strategies for displaying the three homes characterise the respective inhabitants. The Bennets are a happy lower gentry family who really lives at Longbourn, rather than just displaying it to visitors. Netherfield is only the temporary home of the Bingleys and is equipped and displayed to function and impress. It is much less homely than Longbourn or Pemberley. In terms of its cinematography and *mise-en-scène*, Pemberley impresses through its grandeur but it is a comfortable home, too. It is furnished in much warmer colours than Netherfield and although the cinematography displays artwork much more than anywhere else in the film, this serves a narrative function and is done with innovative camera work.

All in all, Netherfield and Pemberley clearly gratify heritage film fans' need for visual spectacle. In both houses, the display of beautiful objects and interior design serves narrative functions but it also celebrates the living conditions of late eighteenth century upper-class Englishmen. Typical heritage film criticism, like the celebration of heritage spectacle and the dehumanisation of people of lower social rank, can be applied especially to Netherfield. However, one can also interpret these heritage film characteristics positively. Cinematography and interior design in all three houses characterise the respective inhabitants. Additionally, images of manor houses and their interior design are an inherent part of British heritage films and thus expected by fans of this genre. In a wider context, these shots are economically useful as they promote the real settings and thus the British tourism industry.

For all the virtues Wright's display of the three homes has, his claim for realism is hardly qualified. As Stewart-Beer observes, the film's Pemberley (Chatsworth) is considerably grander than Mr. Darcy's Pemberley in the novel, as the original owner of Chatsworth, the Duke of Devonshire, was much richer than Mr. Darcy (cf. Stewart-Beer 2007). By choosing Chatsworth as the Darcys' home and showing Longbourn as a working farm, Wright thus exaggerates the social and material differences between the two families. By exaggerating their relative poverty and wealth, Wright falls short of his claim for realism. Instead, he conjures up different idealised worlds.

Pemberley and Netherfield represent the idealised, upper-class past which is typical for traditional modern British heritage films. Pemberley combines this image with Longbourn's atmosphere of a family home, which makes it especially endearing. Longbourn depicts a romanticised version of rural England where a happy family lives in harmony with nature but without any of the difficulties farm life entails. This also is an idealised image of the past and it might be an image that is especially alluring for twenty-first century city dwellers. Whereas British viewers are able to contrast this image with the English countryside they know, many US-Americans might permanently associate it with Britain. Moreover, Britain is the country of many of their forefathers and thus necessarily associated with the past. Wright thus creates an idealised, nostalgic image of Britain, just as 1930s 'British' films did.

4.2.2. Marriage proposals designed for maximal emotional effect

Mr. Darcy's two proposals are the film's most romantic scenes involving Lizzie. Wright maximises their emotional impact on the viewer by using numerous filmic devices. Far from being realistic or true to the novel, the acoustic, cinematographic and editing decisions taken, as well as the choice of setting all serve a single purpose: to affect the audiences' emotions. This is very much in Hollywood's tradition. According to Hipsky, "Hollywood products impact our bodies quite as reliably and physically as any over-the-counter pharmaceutical" (Hipsky 1994: 101). The specific look of these scenes is thus indebted to Hollywood's strategy for international success.

Mr. Darcy's first proposal exhibits some changes from the novel. This scene represents the novel's climax and Austen situated it exactly in the middle of the story (cf. Austen 1994: 146-151 of 299). In the film, it is delayed to the beginning of the second half (cf. *Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:07:40-1:11:37 of 2:01:26). Also, it takes more time in the film (roughly one thirtieth of screentime) than in the novel (one fiftieth of pages). Simultaneously, the first proposal scene is one of the film's most text-laden scenes. According to Chan, it largely draws on the original text (cf. Chan 2007). This fidelity to the text might be explained by the relative famousness of Lizzie's rejection of Darcy's proposal. Lovers of the novel might be waiting for specific quotes. On the other hand, the first proposal scene's setting was shifted from the interior of Mr. Collins' cottage to the exterior of a park. Thus, the first proposal scene largely draws on original dialogue but is given more prominence and a different set-

ting. An analysis of the scene suggests that it is designed to achieve maximum emotional effect.

The first proposal takes place in what looks like a classicist temple, where Lizzie seeks shelter from a thunderstorm. The temple seems to be situated in a huge park but it is difficult to locate as it does not feature in the film again before or after this scene. Indeed, one cannot even recognise it as a temple before the scene's end, when the setting is shown in a long shot. Mostly, the camera shows Lizzie and Mr. Darcy in medium close-up to medium long shots and thus provides only fragmented images of the location. The majority of the text-laden proposal scene is edited in conventional over-the-shoulder shot-reverse-shot dialogue style. The camera zooms away from the temple in an extreme long shot only when Mr. Darcy leaves Lizzie. One might equate the old but beautiful structure of the temple with Mr. Darcy's social status. Lizzie cannot enter the inside of the temple but remains between the outer columns and exterior walls. She stays an outsider of the ancient structure and thus only half-sheltered from the rain. Similarly, Lizzie just renounced the possibility of getting access to the shelter and protection a marriage with Mr. Darcy could have provided for her. This interpretation however is the result of in-depth scene analysis. At first glance the temple might just look like a romantic place for a marriage proposal.

The thunderstorm provides a dramatic background for the proposal scene. As described above, it highlights Lizzie's exposedness to external forces. Furthermore, it is the narrative reason why Lizzie and Mr. Darcy are both soaking wet and thus far from adequately dressed. This visual neglect of the rules of conduct facilitates Lizzie's uncivil reaction to the proposal. Most importantly, the weather reflects the moods of the characters and thus intensifies the emotional impact of the scene. Additionally, thunder highlights important statements of the characters twice. The first time, Mr. Darcy criticises the Bennets' "lack of propriety" (*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:10:02). When the camera shows Lizzie in an over-Darcy's-shoulder medium shot, it thunders as the information sinks in. The same method is employed when Lizzie tells her suitor that she would never marry him. Kaplan criticises the use of this very obvious device (cf. Kaplan 2007) but in the end it works very well. It even renders the use of extradiegetic music, which is employed very often in the film, unnecessary.

So far, the place, the weather and the thunder all enhance the emotional impact of the proposal scene. However, the film adds one more aspect to the scene which is not in the novel. Just after Lizzie has made her final rejection unmistakably clear, the two

antagonists almost kiss. Mr. Darcy draws back before they kiss but this moment heightens the emotional tension of the scene and certainly is among the reasons why American reviewers comment on the sexiness of this adaptation.

Mr. Darcy's second proposal begins as 'sexy' as the first one ended and is equally unconventional in terms of social conduct. The proposal itself remains unspoken in the novel as well as in the film. In the film however, it does not take place during a shared walk but in the early morning hours, when Lizzie leaves the house because she cannot sleep. Darcy marches towards her unexpectedly through a misty meadow. Again, Lizzie and Mr. Darcy are alone in the countryside. Although it does not rain, Mr. Darcy's dress is socially as inappropriate as during the first proposal. In the words of the film's costume designer Jacqueline Durran, Darcy is “completely undressed by 18th-century standards” (qtd. in Robey 2006). Again, this is a cinematic deviation from the novel which can be attributed to the wish to address a younger, romance-trained audience.

The sunrise which provides the scene's backdrop is as indicative of the characters' emotions as the thunderstorm in the first proposal scene. As the sun rises, so do the hopes and emotions of the characters and the audience. The sunrise is soundless however, and diegetic sounds amount to little more than birdsong. In order to acoustically support the emotionality of the scene, non-diegetic music is used throughout. As in the rest of the film, Dario Marianelli's score is very amiable. The composer admitted that he “abandoned historical correctness for a more intimate and emotional treatment of the story” (qtd. in Goldwasser 2006). In this scene, the music is most conspicuous in the beginning and the end and also accompanies the second almost-kiss between Lizzie and Mr. Darcy. Again, the two (and the audience) are deprived of a kiss but the situation is much more explicit, and lasts longer than in the first proposal scene.



Lizzie and Mr. Darcy almost kiss after they have agreed to marry
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:52:52)

The sun symbolises quite literally the glowing love between Lizzie and her fiancée.

Wright employs diegetic and extradiegetic sound as well as the weather and the setting of the two proposal scenes to affect the audience's emotions. Furthermore, the two almost-kisses and Mr. Darcy's dress eroticise the scenes markedly. All these devices, as well as the conventional shot-reverse-shots familiar from Hollywood films, intensify the audience's emotions. Far from striving for realism, this highlights the film's romantic qualities in Hollywood's tradition.

4.2.3. Romanticised landscape shots

There are four different scenes in which Lizzie is shown in extreme long shots, surrounded by England's vast countryside. They represent the film's most memorable type of display of landscape and according to Sarah Ailwood, these countrysides also support the identification of Lizzie and Mr. Darcy as Romantic heroes (cf. Ailwood 2007). The lengths of these scenes varies from five to thirty-one seconds, although all of the scenes in which Lizzie walks are less than ten seconds long. Apart from Mr. Darcy in the final proposal scene, Lizzie is the only character displayed in such a way. Indeed, Lizzie is hardly visible in these shots. Be it through the earthly colour of her dress or the lighting, she fits in with the surrounding environments. Lizzie purposefully moves in three of the shots and the scenes thus carry the narrative meaning of changing place. However, the extreme long shots suggest that Lizzie is not the most important aspect of these scenes. Rather, England's countryside is the main protagonist.



Lizzie on the way to Netherfield
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 0:17:38)



Lizzie runs away from church, having just heard that Mr. Darcy prevented Mr. Bingley from marrying Jane
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:07:35)



Lizzie on holiday with her aunt and uncle
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:17:17)



Lizzie walks away from Pemberley
(*Pride & Prejudice* 2005: 1:25:08)

In the three walking scenes, it either rains or the sky is full of clouds. The weather is uninviting and still we know that it is Lizzie's free choice to be outside. These scenes confirm the cliché of England's bad weather while simultaneously showing that this is not necessarily bad. Lizzie's blending in with the surrounding environment can be interpreted as her good relationship with nature. If the viewer identifies with Lizzie, it can also indicate that mankind is one with nature, that we are part of it.

The two screenshots without signs of civilisation support the image of England's countryside as unharmed by human intervention. Although especially the third screenshot shows a vast countryside, no signs of human life are visible. According to Stewart-Bear, the scene represented by the third screenshot is narratively meaningless (cf. Stewart-Bear 2007) and thus exists solely for the beauty of the image. The countryside on display is empty and idyllic. It must seem exotic especially to urban city dwellers. These city dwellers were the ones who predominantly had access to this film in US-American specialised cinemas.

Two of the screenshots show landscapes with signs of human intervention but these interventions blend in naturally. In the second screenshot, the bridge provides a safe pathway over the river. It looks strong but simple and is of such a familiar shape that the viewer hardly notices it as unnatural. Apart from symbolising Lizzie's flight from Darcy, which leads to his first proposal and thus a very different episode of her life and the film, the bridge thus symbolises a respectful manipulation of nature. The bridge is built not to intrude on nature but to safely live in harmony with it. The last picture shows the ruins of a house and thus bears signs of a past human settlement. However, the people have long left the place and nature overgrows the old walls. This indicates that the English are an old civilisation with a rich history. They have been here for so long that even after they left, nature had enough time to reconquer

the place. Moreover, the fact that people left the place might establish ties to US-American audiences. After all, many of their forefathers were originally British.

All four scenes glorify the English countryside and are thus in the tradition of British heritage films' display of the country's landscape. The scenes show a romantic, even Romantic, image of England in which nature is grander than man. Mankind has learned to overcome natural hindrances respectfully and safely where necessary and nature recaptures its space when people leave. Wright did not shoot beautifully sun-lit landscapes, but the atmosphere and places he chose are romantically beautiful just the same. Additionally, they are not only in the tradition of British heritage films, but they also carry a nostalgic image of England. In this respect, they bear a similarity to earlier 'British' heritage films.

4.3. Distribution strategies in the UK and the US

Distributors are responsible for a film's marketing campaign as well as its release strategy (cf. Murray 2012: 161). Both tasks require a clearly defined target audience. Like most British heritage films since the 1990s, *Pride & Prejudice* was designed as a Hollywood-British crossover film. Crossover films employ a distribution and promotional strategy between Hollywood mainstream and art-house films and target audiences from both of these spheres. Their budgets are higher than those for art-house films but also considerably lower than for mainstream Hollywood films. Crossover films seek to attain cultural value as well as commercial success (cf. Higson 2003: 89-93). Higson identifies art-house and multiplex cinema visitors with a love for Austen, Knightley, English literature and costume dramas as *Pride & Prejudice*'s target audiences (cf. Higson 2011: 170). I would add (American) Anglophiles to this list. This broad range of audiences is typical for a crossover film which needs to attract mainstream as well as niche audiences (cf. Higson 2003: 105). An examination of the release and marketing strategy indicates that the two main target audiences were heritage film fans and younger, more mainstream-oriented fans of romances.

4.3.1. Release strategy

As they address different groups of audiences, crossover films need to play in both, art-house and multiplex cinemas to be successful (cf. Higson 2003: 100-101). In the

US, their initial exhibition patterns usually resemble that of specialised films. They open on a small number of screens instead of employing Hollywood's expensive wide release strategy. After some weeks, crossover films then get a wider release (cf. Higson 2003: 133).

Pride & Prejudice followed this release pattern although it was clearly more commercially oriented than 1990s' crossover films. This shows in its release numbers and box-office takings. Higson classifies 1990s British heritage films as successful when they earned more than \$20 million at the US box-office (cf. Higson 2003: 94). Many British heritage films of that decade opened on less than ten screens in the US and rarely exceeded a wide release of one-thousand screens (cf. *ibid.*: 99). On 11 November 2005, *Pride & Prejudice* opened in 215 US cinemas and gradually increased to 1335 cinemas. It earned more than \$38 million in the US (cf. "*Pride and Prejudice.*" *Box Office Mojo*). *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), with a US box-office gross of a little more than \$43 million, opened on seventy screens. Its widest release were 1054 cinemas (cf. "*Sense and Sensibility.*"). Its release strategy was thus more tentative than that of *Pride & Prejudice* a decade later.

Pride & Prejudice's data indicate that its American distributor aimed for considerable box-office takings. Nonetheless, *Pride & Prejudice's* crossover status is incontestable. In 2005, US-America's commercially most successful film was *Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith*, which opened in 3661 cinemas and grossed more than \$380 million (cf. "*Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith.*"). The top nineteen films in the 2005 US domestic grosses ranking earned more than \$100 million each. *Pride & Prejudice* ranks 72nd in this list (cf. "2005 Domestic grosses.").

The US release and box-office figures are determinants for the film's crossover status but *Pride & Prejudice* actually opened in the UK early than in the US. Obviously, the distributor did not consider US success necessary for UK success. This is an important change from for example *Chariots of Fire's* release pattern. *Chariots* had to be re-released in the UK after US success, in order to earn profits in the UK (cf. Hill 2006: 100). In the UK, *Pride & Prejudice* opened in 397 cinemas on 16 September 2005. Its widest release were 412 cinemas (cf. "*Pride and Prejudice.*" *Box Office Mojo*). *Star Wars: Episode III* opened in 490 cinemas (cf. "*Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith.*"), indicating that *Pride & Prejudice* had a fairly

wide release in the UK. Its distribution companies clearly considered the film to have wider appeal in the UK than in the US.

Pride & Prejudice was not only nationally specifically distributed but also screened with two different endings in the UK and the US. The British and continental European film version ends with Mr. Bennet inviting potential suitors for Kitty or Mary into his library after he has declared his approval of Lizzie's engagement. The US version adds one more scene which takes place after Lizzie's wedding. The scene comprises two shots and begins with an establishing shot of Pemberley at night. Four white swans swim on a lake in front of Pemberley and the estate reflects on the water's surface. The establishing shot sets the romantic tone for the whole scene which is reinforced by romantic string music that accompanies both shots and builds up towards the final kiss. The second shot is a long shot which shows Mr. Darcy and Lizzie in nightgowns on a balcony, with the lake in the background. The setting is bathed in the warm glow of two open fires. While the two characters talk about the terms of endearment Mr. Darcy might use for his wife, the camera slowly pans towards them. They kiss in a medium close-up before the picture fades out. This last scene is heavily romanticised and has no counterpart in the novel. Apparently, it was included to provide the film with a visually romantic ending and a kiss, which could not have been included earlier if the filmmakers wanted to stay true to the novel.

The US ending represents the film's original ending and was only cut from the European film version when Working Title's executives found it inappropriate (cf. Camden 2007). This indicates that *Pride & Prejudice* was initially conceived as a predominantly romantic film and that the British producers backed away from this mainstream reading of the source only in the very last moment. Instead, they emphasised the film's stress on happy family relations, as the final focus on a laughing Mr. Bennet shows. The two endings are also a good example of a compromise which satisfies Hollywood and British film traditions.

Popular and academic attitudes towards the US ending vary. Academics tend to perceive it very critically. According to Chan, the final American scene epitomises the "fairy-tale nature of the film's latter half" (Chan 2007). Whereas space in *Pride & Prejudice* initially characterises people, it increasingly becomes a transmitter of romance (cf. Chan 2007). Camden's feminist reading of the US ending stresses the objectification of Lizzie through the terms of endearment she suggests for herself (cf.

Camden 2007). These negative readings are in line with the academics' generally more negative attitude towards attempts to romanticise *Pride and Prejudice*.

Popular opinions are reported to be more positive. A *USA Today* article indicates that many American viewers expected a kiss and perceived it as an appropriate ending. Moreover, there was a British online petition asking for the American ending to be released in the UK (cf. Wloszczyna 2005). The petition was signed by almost 1000 people and argues that European viewers are denied one of the sweetest scenes of the film and the final culmination of a tension built up throughout *Pride & Prejudice*. The text of the petition itself and the comments of numerous supporters stress that *Pride & Prejudice* was watched primarily as a romance by many (cf. "Bring Back the Kiss! *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)"). The US ending was included on the British DVD and *Pride & Prejudice* was re-released with the US ending in selected British cinemas (cf. "Pride & Prejudice – US ending to be released in UK").

To conclude, at least parts of the audience perceived *Pride & Prejudice* as a predominantly romantic film. They preferred the US ending, which was originally planned as the general ending of the film. In the UK, this ending was cut, which reduces the film's romantic elements. Nevertheless, *Pride & Prejudice* got a wide release in the UK. In the US, the film's romantic elements were highlighted but the film released as a crossover film. This indicates that *Pride & Prejudice* was perceived as a British rather than typical American film by distributors.

4.3.2. Promotion

Promotions for films before and during their releases are manifold and include means such as official trailers, press releases, interviews and promotional tie-ins with other industries such as tourism, fashion or publishing. As the initial release of *Pride & Prejudice* is more than eight years ago and many promotional activities difficult to retrace today, this chapter deals with three advertising tools only. These are the official trailer, the two official film websites and the official film poster in comparison with the British and American DVD covers.

According to Higson, the marketing strategies for crossover films are closer to those for art-house films than for mainstream films. They are targeted very specifically and tend to rely on PR and reviews rather than on advertising. Mainstream advertising campaigns such as television spots are rare (cf. Higson 2003: 134-136). However, as indicated in the exhibition chapter, the handling of *Pride & Prejudice*

was heavily influenced by mainstream film strategies and according to Charles Gant, a television advertising campaign definitely existed in the UK (cf. Gant 2005: 8). Short examinations of the film's official websites and promotional material stress that *Pride & Prejudice* was marketed to three distinct audiences: Traditional heritage film audiences, fans of romances and fans of Keira Knightley. Some film promotions also advertised the adaptation's shooting locations.

The official trailer is one important advertising tool and should lure the film's target audiences into cinemas. Thus, the trailer provides evidence of intended audiences and those elements of the film which the distributor judges to be most valuable in attracting audiences. *Pride & Prejudice*'s official trailer is colourful, fast-paced in terms of its editing and accompanied by extradiegetic, brisk orchestra music which is not from the film's soundtrack. These factors affiliate *Pride & Prejudice* with modern romantic comedies targeted at a youthful audience, rather than with traditionally slow moving British heritage films. Nevertheless, the trailer's opening with a carriage ride even before the fade-in of Focus Features' logo as well as the costumes cannot deny *Pride & Prejudice*'s heritage film background. Additionally, the trailer credits Jane Austen, which again highlights the film's affiliation with the British heritage film genre. On the other hand, the trailer establishes very early on that the film is about true love and young girls in want of men. Further elements highlight the timeliness of the film. Thus, the story is about a “modern woman” (“*Pride & Prejudice*” Focus Features) and the film's producers reportedly also made *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Love Actually*. Extracts from *Pride & Prejudice*'s US ending emphasise the film's romantic components. Contrary to previous assumptions, the trailer does not highlight Knightley's leading role. Most scene cut-outs feature a host of characters. Although Knightley appears often, she is not specifically emphasised (cf. *ibid.*).

There are two official *Pride & Prejudice* websites, maintained by Working Title and Focus Features respectively. By now, Working Title only provides a reduced version of the original content. Both websites feature a synopsis, a cast and crew list and photographs and link to social media platforms. Working Title has a separate category for news which Focus Features' website lacks. Focus Features website additionally provides the official trailer, film clips and other videos, links to online stores which sell the film and its soundtrack, and information on awards, reviews and *Pride & Prejudice*-related topics. The pictures on the two websites' photo galleries differ but all photos focus on characters. Not a single picture shows an establishing shot of

one of the manor houses. Both websites use one screenshot as a header, both of these pictures show Lizzie and Mr. Darcy in medium to medium close-up shots. However, while on the American website the lovers almost kiss, Mr. Darcy only approaches Lizzy from behind on the picture used by Working Title. Thus, while Working Title foregrounds Lizzie (and Knightley), Focus Features highlights romance. The topics chosen by Focus Features for additional information are the film's real settings, Jane Austen and the production. Hence, while the first impression of the website highlights romance, the background information cater to heritage film fans (cf. "*Pride & Prejudice*" by Focus Features and Working Title respectively). A search of Working Title's website hints at the content once provided. Former news included information on locations, premiers, awards, contests and behind the scenes reports. Moreover, the website must have provided more background information, videos and promotional material such as screensavers (cf. "Search Results. *Pride & Prejudice*."). Therefore, Working Title's website originally provided heritage film related content, too. Furthermore, news and contests indicate that the website tried to encourage repeat visits and a reciprocal relationship with its visitors. The latter, as well as the links to social media platforms on both sites indicate that the websites target younger audiences.

The official film poster and the European and American DVD covers look very similar which indicates that the distributors did not change their target audiences or promotional strategies after the film's release⁹. Images of the poster and the two DVD covers, as well as the sources of these images, are included in the appendix. As these images show, the two DVD covers and the poster feature very similar pictures of Lizzie and Mr. Darcy. Lizzie is clearly foregrounded. This highlights Knightley and indicates that the film tells a story from a young woman's perspective. Knightley's star status is reinforced by prominently placing her name above the film title. Showing Mr. Darcy striding towards Lizzie hints at the film's romance plot. This is reinforced by the poster's tagline "Sometimes the last person on earth you want to be with is the one person you can't be without." The *Daily Mail* quote on the British DVD cover "... beyond any doubt the romantic comedy-drama of 2005" performs the same function.

Each of the three promotional materials has a second picture in its lower half. These photographs always show the same scene, even though they are slightly differ-

⁹ This happened for example when *Mansfield Park* (1999) failed at the box-office. Originally, the film's innovativeness was advertised but the DVD cover emphasises its qualities as a period Austen adaptation (cf. Higson 2011: 161-162).

ent. The pictures show a character in extreme long shot walking from left to right over a meadow. The sun rises behind a huge tree in the pictures' left, bathing it in warm sunlight. The character is too small to be recognised as Lizzie, which suggests that the setting is more important. Therefore, the second photo points to the heritage elements of the film. A comparison of the three bottom pictures chosen for the poster and two DVD covers reveals one interesting difference. The bottom picture on the American DVD cover shows a bigger character than the other two and the sun is more pronounced. This stresses the romantic qualities of the film more than the more landscape-oriented bottom pictures on the poster and the British DVD cover. Once again, the US-American distributor stresses romance at cost of the film's British heritage genre qualities.

Jane Austen's name features only in the poster's bottom line and is easily missed. It does not feature on the front covers of the two DVD versions. If one does not know that *Pride and Prejudice* is an Austen novel, one will probably not recognise this film as a literary adaptation. Hence, the distributors of *Pride & Prejudice* were not interested in stressing the literary source text beyond the film's title. Potential spectators who are not into classical literature should be attracted by Knightley, the female heroine, the period costume, the landscape and the romance elements.

Dole argues that “*Pride & Prejudice* was clearly produced and marketed to have crossover appeal – even at the risk of losing some of the traditional heritage audience” (Dole 2007). Indeed, the trailer and the website foreground romance rather than the adaptation's traditional heritage film qualities. However, these qualities show for example in costumes and background information. It seems as if the distributors take the film's appeal to heritage and Austen fans for granted and thus concentrate on attracting more mainstream audiences. Thus they highlight the romance as well as Knightley's star appeal. The trailer also concentrates on selling the mainstream romance story. This backs Higson's thesis that romance was the film's element most advertised in the marketing campaign (cf. Higson 2011: 171).

4.4. Reception in the UK and the US

In accordance with *Pride & Prejudice*'s crossover strategy, an analysis of the film's reception shows that it was (re)viewed as a British heritage film as well as a romance. Its worldwide gross as well as awards and nominations prove its commercial and critical success. Moreover, numerous fan activities on the internet show that it

found permanent entrance into viewers' hearts as a romantic film. Contemporary journalistic reviews in the UK and the US highlighted both the film's heritage and romantic elements. Regardless of the two endings, an analysis of a random sample of these reviews indicates only small, but telling, differences between American and British receptions of the film.

Pride & Prejudice was commercially and critically successful. It grossed \$121,147,947 worldwide, 31.7% of which in the US. The second biggest share of its total gross came from the UK, Ireland and Malta where together it earned more than \$26.5 million¹⁰. These were the two most lucrative markets by far (cf. “*Pride and Prejudice*.” *Box Office Mojo*). With an estimated budget of \$28 million (cf. Higson 2011: 174), the film recouped more than four times its production costs. It was the most commercially successful art-house film¹¹ released in the UK in 2005 (cf. Gant 2006: 8). Its US-American commercial success is comparable to *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (2004), which grossed just over \$40 million in the US (cf. “*Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*”). Wright's adaptation was also critically acclaimed. It was nominated for four Academy Awards (Best Actress, Direction, Costume Design, Original Score) and two Golden Globes (Best Motion Picture and Best Leading Actress). It was nominated for numerous other awards and won for example the Empire Award for Best British Film (cf. “*Pride & Prejudice*. Awards.”).

The internet reveals fans' enthusiasm for Wright's adaptation. There are numerous fan-made videos on youtube, which use images from the film to illustrate popular love songs. Two recent examples are videos which use “Still” by Daughter and “Let Her Go” by Passenger (cf. jcgthunder 2013 and ely4114ever 2013 respectively). These videos are considerably more recent than their source film but they have both been watched more than 1300 times each and have received very positive comments. This indicates that Wright's adaptation is not only still popular enough to generate this kind of fan activity but that the results are also still looked for on the internet. Moreover, the use of *Pride & Prejudice*'s images to illustrate love songs highlights the predominantly romantic perception of the film. The film is also discussed on numerous cinema, period drama and Austen themed blogs. A fan blog purely created for the movie, the “*Pride & Prejudice* Blog” is still active. It holds extensive information

¹⁰ Box Office Mojo does not provide separate data for these three countries but only this one figure which is assigned to the United Kingdom.

¹¹ The film's British distribution strategy questions its British art-house status. Nevertheless, it was listed as art-house in official statistics.

on the novel, film, its creative staff and locations and on later classic adaptations such as *Anna Karenina* (2012) and the 200th anniversary of *Pride and Prejudice* (cf. “*Pride & Prejudice* Blog”). The “Devoted Fans of *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)” facebook page had 9233 'likes' on 19 March 2013, at which date the last post was not one day old (cf. “Devoted Fans of *Pride & Prejudice*.”). All these fan activities show that more than seven years after the film's release, it still is an important part of many people's cultural activities.

To get an overview of journalists' opinions, I analysed twelve journalistic reviews of the film, six each from the US and the UK. All of them were published near the release dates of the film and thus represent contemporary opinions. The British reviews were published by *TimeOut London*, the *BBC*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and *Sight & Sound*. The US-American reviews were published by *SFGate*¹², *Box Office Mojo* and *Entertainment Weekly*, as well as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*. These were the first articles I found from those two countries which were contemporary and written by natives¹³. They were not chosen for their content. Nevertheless, the reviews are predominantly positive and have numerous characteristics in common. References to heritage films and romantic comedies can be found in most reviews, regardless of their country of origin. This indicates that the film's crossover strategy successfully catered to different audiences. However, there are also some telling differences between the American and the British reviews.

All but one of the reviews mention Austen in the title or in the first paragraph, merely *The Independent* mentions her only in the second paragraph. This suggests that all authors assume that their readers know her. Furthermore, Austen adaptations feature prominently in the list of past heritage films and thus the mention of Austen immediately links *Pride & Prejudice* to other heritage films. *The Independent's* late mention of Austen is exemplary of another common trait. The reviews author, Anthony Quinn, expects his readers to be familiar with *Pride and Prejudice's* plot, for he does not summarise it. He begins his article by questioning the casting of the two leads. Throughout the review, Quinn presupposes the reader's familiarity with the story and does not even contextualise his example scenes (cf. Quinn 2005). The re-

¹² *SFGate* is the online division of the newspaper *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

¹³ For example, the review published on the website of *Variety*, a US-American entertainment magazine founded in 1905, was written by an Englishman and thus excluded.

views published by *USA Today*, *The Washington Post* and *TimeOut London* also presuppose a general familiarity with the story. Therefore, both British and American reviewers expect their readers to know Austen and in some cases even the plot of *Pride and Prejudice*. Thus, the Austen franchise as well as Austen's cultural capital work in practice.

Most of the reviews from both sides of the Atlantic contain allusions to works of art or artists associated with painting, literature and film. This indicates that they address audiences familiar with these references. References to painting include allusions to the Renaissance painter Bruegel (cf. Hunter 2005) and the baroque painters Vermeer and de Hooch (cf. Quinn 2005). Allusions to literature include Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (cf. Hunter 2005), Tolkien's hobbits (cf. Bradshaw 2005) and Dickens (cf. Holden 2005). References to the realm of film are for example those made to *Titanic* (cf. Andrew 2005) and Emma Thompson's *Sense and Sensibility* (cf. Bradshaw 2005). Although many of these references also allude to romantic comedy and romance (e.g. *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Titanic*), on the whole they address an audience educated in the liberal arts. This is the audience traditionally associated with heritage films.

Many reviews also discuss the casting of Keira Knightley. The opinions on Knightley are predominantly positive. Nine of the twelve reviews mention her acting positively. Three of these even base their positive reviews mainly on Knightley. Stephen Hunter titles his *Washington Post* review “Knightley is the 'Pride' of 'Prejudice’” (Hunter 2005) and Stephen Holden chose the title “Marrying Off Those Bennet Sisters Again, but This Time Elizabeth Is a Looker” (Holden 2005) for *The New York Times*. These titles suggest that the authors perceived Knightley as the film's most outstanding selling point. Peter Bradshaw hides his judgement in the middle of *The Guardian's* review. According to him, Knightley's “star quality will quite simply roll over you like a tank” (Bradshaw 2005). However, three reviews criticise Knightley's performance. Her acting was judged unconvincing in *The Independent*, *TimeOut London* and on *Box Office Mojo* (cf. Quinn 2005, Andrew 2005 and Holleran 2005 respectively). By trend, Knightley thus receives more praise in the US than in the UK. The fact that she features prominently in most of the reviews indicates that her star status is deemed important in an evaluation of the movie.

The three reviews which criticise Knightley are also the only ones which are generally negative. From the six American reviews only one, published on *Box Office*

Mojo, is negative. It calls the film “ponderous soap opera” and “Austen's female-dominated universe [...] intolerable” (both Holleran 2005). Whereas Scott Holleran apparently dislikes Austen's story in general, the negative criticism voiced by British reviewers takes offence with the adaptation. According to Quinn, “Austen's psychological subtlety” and “elegant sentences” (both Quinn 2005) did not survive the process of adaptation. Geoff Andrew adds in *TimeOut London* that “romantic melodrama's played up at the expense of her [Austen's] razor-sharp wit” (Andrew 2005). These examples show that the British tend to value an adaptation which is 'true' to the original.

American and British reviews differ slightly in their evaluation of the overall look of the film. The British tend to characterise *Pride & Prejudice* as a fairly conventional Austen adaptation that “satisfies the traditional demand for the conventions of bowing and bonnets and breeches and balls” (Bradshaw 2005). Stella Papamichael for the BBC and Jessica Winter in *Sight & Sound* notice the cinematography's “traditional style” (Papamichael 2005) and increasing reliance “on close-ups and the conventional rhythms of shot and reverse-shot” as the film “builds in melodramatic momentum” (both Winter 2005: 83). The Americans tend to emphasise the film's modern, comic, romantic and animated elements. Claudia Puig characterises *Pride & Prejudice* as “[w]ry, beguiling and lushly romantic” (Puig 2005) and Owen Gleiberman asserts that it “makes the past feel as swirling and alive as the present” (Gleiberman 2005). Moreover, three of the American reviews allude to the sexiness of the new adaptation. Ruthe Stein's article on *SFGate* begins with an allusion to metrosexuals (cf. Stein 2005), Puig describes the film as “subtly sexy” (Puig 2005) and Gleiberman finds Netherfield's ball “eroticized” (Gleiberman 2005). Not one of these reviewers refers to the US ending. The Americans clearly perceived *Pride & Prejudice* more as a modern love story than the British reviewers did.

British and American attitudes also differ when it comes to the film's Britishness. All but one review of each country refer to the film's Britishness in one way or another. While the American reviews tend to emphasise the beauty of England, the British emphasise other British features. Three of the British reviews name the British production company Working Title. None of the American reviewers mentions this firm but four refer to Focus Features. Although they downplay the British origin of the film, five of the six American reviews pay tribute to the British countryside and manor houses depicted. All of these references are worded positively. For

example, Stein writes that the film “could be a travelogue for the English countryside and those fabulous mansions” (Stein 2005). In *The New York Times*, Holden names the real locations of two of the film's settings (cf. Holden 2005). Holden also specifies that *Pride & Prejudice* caters to “Anglophilic tastes” (Holden 2005) and thus singles out a specific niche of the American audience for which he thinks the film suitable. Two of the British reviews address the film's manor houses but they do so with negative connotations (cf. Quinn 2005 and Andrew 2005). Only Philip French, who published his review in *The Observer*, seriously considers the manor houses. However, he interprets the settings in light of their characterisation of their inhabitants and does not universally praise them for their beauty (cf. French 2005).

This short overview of popular and journalistic receptions of the film indicates that *Pride & Prejudice's* crossover approach and marketing campaign were successful. The film was perceived as a traditional heritage film as well as a romance. Box office figures, awards and reviews show that it was positively received critically as well as commercially. Additionally, fans still use *Pride & Prejudice* for numerous fan activities, which indicates the film's enduring appeal. These fan activities are more related to romance than to Britain's cultural heritage which could suggest that fans rather watched the film as a romance story. However, this could also be a generational problem, with older viewers being less active on the internet. Traditionally, heritage film fans have been described as slightly older. The review analysis suggests that British journalists perceived the film more as another heritage film than a romance, which could be ascribed to the film's different ending. The American's more romantic take could however also be derived from the more romance-centred advertisement in US-America. Additionally, whereas in the US the film's Britishness was a distinct selling point, British reviews did not patriotically remark upon this characteristic. Even though British characteristics and landscapes, Austen and Knightley feature prominently and positively in reviews, which arguably is culturally advantageous for the British.

4.5. The film and the British tourism industry

Pride & Prejudice related tourism does not feature among the interests of many academics writing about the film. This is remarkable considering the criticisms of the heritage film debate. The tourism industry knows the advantages which film produc-

tions might entail. According to Hudson and Tung, more and more tourists specifically visit film production locations (cf. Hudson, Tung 2010: 198). The British tourism industry was not ignorant to the marketing possibilities which opened up with this new Austen adaptation. It created a buzz about the film and its locations during the time of shooting and carried on marketing the film alongside its locations for some years. The film's marketing campaign pointed to the British locations and tourism campaigns pointed to the film. Insofar, both marketing campaigns profited from each other. Alongside, both promoted a specific image of England.

Texts produced about *Pride & Prejudice* often featured information on its shooting locations and thus advertised them while promoting the film. As mentioned above, the film's two official websites provided information on the shooting locations. Additionally, some US journalists took their film reviews as causes to promote the locations. The film itself is probably the best promotional tool. Wright provides highly romanticised, as well as typical heritage film images of England's countryside and manor houses. The film promotes the beauty of England embedded in a romantic story. Among the film's target audiences were fans of British heritage films. Traditionally, this audience niche has been identified as slightly older and better educated than mainstream audiences, which suggests that they also tend to travel more than other audiences. Finally, period Austen adaptations specifically address Anglophiles around the world. These films appear to be made to promote British tourism and *Pride & Prejudice* was no exception.

The British tourism industry seized the opportunity and employed various techniques to benefit from the film. Two tourism associations, Lincolnshire Tourism and Visit Peak District created a marketing campaign to specifically exploit the awareness raised for their area by the film. They re-branded themselves as 'Pride and Prejudice Country', launched a special website and published a *Pride and Prejudice* themed movie map. The regional tourism board of the same area encouraged media representatives to report about the film and its locations. For example, a special screening of *Pride & Prejudice* at Chatsworth was organised for journalists and tourism trade representatives (cf. O'Connor, Pratt 2008: 5-6). The locations themselves held *Pride & Prejudice* exhibitions or informed about the film on extra displays (cf. *ibid.*: 7). The website of Visit Britain also encouraged *Pride & Prejudice* tourism as did the National Trust (cf. Higson 2011: 174).

Newspaper articles often exhibited a curious amalgamation of film publicity, tourism promotion and sometimes patriotism. In July 2004, more than one year before *Pride & Prejudice's* release, the BBC published an article about Groombridge Place being chosen as the location for Longbourn. The article helps creating a buzz for the film while simultaneously promoting Groombridge's gardens as having "been voted the top garden attraction in the UK, and the best family attraction in Kent" ("Austen Story Filmed at Old House"). Groombridge's gardens conveniently stayed open during shooting (cf. *ibid.*) and thus took best advantage of it.

Another example is an article in *The Telegraph* in August 2005, which provided more film information. For most of the article, one paragraph on the film alternates with one paragraph on the beauties of Groombridge Place. The article's last third introduces all manor houses that are used in *Pride & Prejudice*. Furthermore, the article links both, Austen and country houses, to Englishness (cf. McGhie 2005). The former is most obvious in the following quote:

There is nothing like a little Jane Austen to remind us of quintessential Englishness. The stately pile, the manicured parkland, the tales of love, status and property, are stitched into our subconscious. (McGhie 2005)

McGhie's vision of Englishness encompasses the upper classes ("status", "property"), and a beautiful but domesticated nature ("manicured parkland"). Austen's selling of this through "tales of love" endears this England to the reader. And Groombridge Place is not even located in 'Pride and Prejudice Country' where journalists were actively encouraged to praise the area.

As Higson noticed in respect to earlier heritage films (cf. Higson 2011: 142), the marketing efforts pay off as visitor numbers at shooting locations increase. Higson reports that Chatsworth and Basildon Park (Netherfield) experienced increased visitor numbers as a result of the film (cf. Higson 2011: 174). According to O'Connor and Pratt, especially the film itself and the movie map encouraged tourists to visit the film's locations (cf. O'Connor, Pratt 2008: 8).

Tourism sites certainly benefited from *Pride & Prejudice* and the media campaign surrounding it. On the other hand, the film profited from the buzz created by tourism agencies that sought to exploit the awareness raised by the film. All measures taken were thus for the mutual benefit of the film and the British tourism industry. A healthy tourism industry also benefits the British economy. Higson concludes that *Pride & Prejudice* "saw the film business and the tourism business working hand in

hand to reinforce the enduring brand image of England as a picturesque, historical place” (Higson 2011: 175). I doubt that they consciously chose to promote this image but think that they did so because it sells well. The picturesque, historical England is the England Anglophiles worldwide are prepared to pay for. Moreover, it is readily recognisable as British.

5. Conclusion

The British film industry has struggled against the dominance of US-American film companies since the 1910s. However, modern British heritage films have developed into a commercially and critically successful type of national cinema because they have embraced Hollywood's strategies and means. Only by learning from Hollywood's aesthetic and marketing strategies and accepting the opportunities which a close cinematic relationship with the US entails, British heritage films have become a prominent British production strand.

Modern British heritage films are produced by British companies in Britain, are distinctly different from Hollywood's mainstream products, are watched by British audiences, represent a specific image of Britain and are appropriated by British industries as culturally distinct promotional tools. The heritage film debate of the 1990s, which was concerned only with this most recent British heritage film production trend, negatively associated these films with Thatcher's conservative politics and the heritage industry. Other academics defended these films by pointing to their ability to transmit social criticism. Most of this debate however revolved around questions concerned with the image of Britain's past which these heritage films convey. This distracted from their usefulness in cultural and economic terms.

This thesis investigated British heritage films as a historically grown British production strand. I showed that variants of British heritage films have been produced throughout the history of British cinema, even though academic attention has concentrated on production trends in the 1940s and since the 1980s. The close relationship between the British and the American film industry has affected the evolution of British heritage films by restricting some and encouraging other developments. For example, even though British heritage films have not entered the American mass market, they have developed in such a way as to attract crossover audiences. Today, British heritage films are a strand of Britain's national cinema that combines British

filmmakers' traditional strength for films indebted to realism with Britain's rich cultural heritage and Hollywood's strategy for commercial success.

US-American audiences, who are vital for this production trend, have shown a niche interest in British films from the beginning. *Rough Sea at Dover* was the first foreign film publicly screened in the US and the British heritage film *Henry VIII* (1933) was the first to be commercially successfully distributed in US-America. In the 1930s and 1940s, 'British' heritage films such as *Pride and Prejudice* (1940) proved that there was an American mass market for British-themed films. Nevertheless, it took until the 1980s that British heritage films developed into a production trend which has made profits with some reliability and has been characteristically associated with British cinema. Modern British heritage films employ similar narrative strategies like earlier 'British' films but they combine them with nationally specific characteristics.

Modern British heritage films comprise a host of British characteristics. Numerous awards and nominations have confirmed their 'quality' status, which sets them apart from mainstream Hollywood output and aligns them with national cinema traditions. Accordingly, they traditionally address audiences distinct from Hollywood's main target audience. These films also employ Britain's rich cultural heritage in numerous ways. Shakespeare's history plays, famous monarchs and canonical British literature have provided the material for numerous screenplays. The stories told are always easily recognisable as British through British settings, characters and narratives. By definition, these films are concerned with Britain's upper social stratum and thus exhibit a rather elitist image of the country's past. Britain's beautiful countryside and manor houses, carriages, costumes and lavish interior design invite the viewer to indulge in the dream of a grand and enjoyable past. In accordance with the UK's author-centred theatre tradition, British heritage film adaptations are relatively true to their literary source texts. The much debated period authenticity of heritage films, as well as the realism which Wright claims for his adaptation, stem from Britain's traditional interest in the documentary and realist style. Additionally, these films are usually produced and shot in Britain and comprise a largely British cast. Furthermore, the British heritage film genre itself is inseparably associated with the UK. *Pride & Prejudice* is exemplary of all these aspects.

In order to be commercially successful, British heritage films draw on some of Hollywood's strategies and means. The dominance of US-American film companies

on the British distribution and exhibition sector has necessitated some arrangement with Hollywood by most national cinema movements. Due to their comparably high production values, British heritage films require box-office revenues from the US in order to make profits. Thus, they draw on US-American means such as American finance, American distributors and the American star and awards system. *Chariots of Fire* was re-released successfully in the UK after its success at the Oscars. *Pride & Prejudice* profits from Keira Knightley's star status, which she acquired with Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Both films, as well as most British heritage films, profited from American finance and distribution.

British heritage films also draw on Hollywood's experience in attracting audiences. As the historical overview and *Pride & Prejudice*'s marketing strategy show, heritage films have developed into a genre that reliably satisfies pre-sold audience expectations. Over time, British heritage filmmakers have adopted Hollywood's popular narrative strategies. British heritage films have developed into concise, goal-oriented films with stars in the leading roles. They concentrate on readily recognisable British characters of the privileged classes. Aesthetic and narrative requirements have taken precedence over faithfulness to the source text. The latter shows for example in Wright's exaggeration of the Bennets' and Darcys' living conditions in *Pride & Prejudice*. This film is also exemplary of Hollywood's deliberate influence on the viewer's emotions and of the nostalgic, romanticised and idealised image of Britain which Hollywood sold in the 1930s and 1940s. Like earlier 'British' films, *Pride & Prejudice* profits from its source's cultural capital by adopting its title. The crossover strategy, which modern British heritage films predominantly employ, was developed in the US. It allows these films to target their traditional niche audience, which is older and more educated by trend. Additionally, these crossover films now also target a younger, more mainstream oriented audience. A strong romance plot, as highlighted in the analysis of *Pride & Prejudice*, its marketing and reception, is a useful tool to address this second audience segment. Finally, *Pride & Prejudice* is also part of the Austen franchise, which combines the advantages of British heritage films with Hollywood's franchise strategy.

Obviously, the major Hollywood studios are too commercially oriented not to have financial incentives to involve with the production of British heritage films. Their increased involvement with this production trend since the 1990s reminds of Hollywood's increased investment in British prestige films in the 1930s, when the

British film production industry began to compete for British market shares. Universal, the Hollywood major affiliate company of Working Title and Focus Features probably kept the largest share of *Pride & Prejudice's* profits. American film companies have a financial interest in British heritage films, which influences the production of this type of Britain's national cinema. On the other hand, the British have an interest in American involvements with their films. This reciprocal relationship is the reason for this thesis' title. In the end however, the production of British heritage films has a broad range of economic and cultural advantages especially for the UK.

Economically, the UK profits from a healthy film production industry which generates revenue and employs a broad range of people. British filmmakers are so well trained that Hollywood frequently employs them on their blockbusters. *Pride & Prejudice* was produced with a predominantly British cast and crew in Britain. Furthermore, film exports improve the trade balance for films. As heritage films address niche and mainstream audiences, they can make considerable box-office in the UK, of which the British exhibition sector profits. These films attract inward investments for productions and promote further industries such as the publishing, design and fashion industries. Moreover, they promote Britain to audiences abroad, of which especially the tourism industry profits. The case study of *Pride & Prejudice* shows that the tourism industry and the film benefited from each other. Moreover, the prestige status attached to these films, which is reinforced by awards and for example *Pride & Prejudice's* film title, might be associated with the UK and its exports in general, which entails further advantages for the British economy.

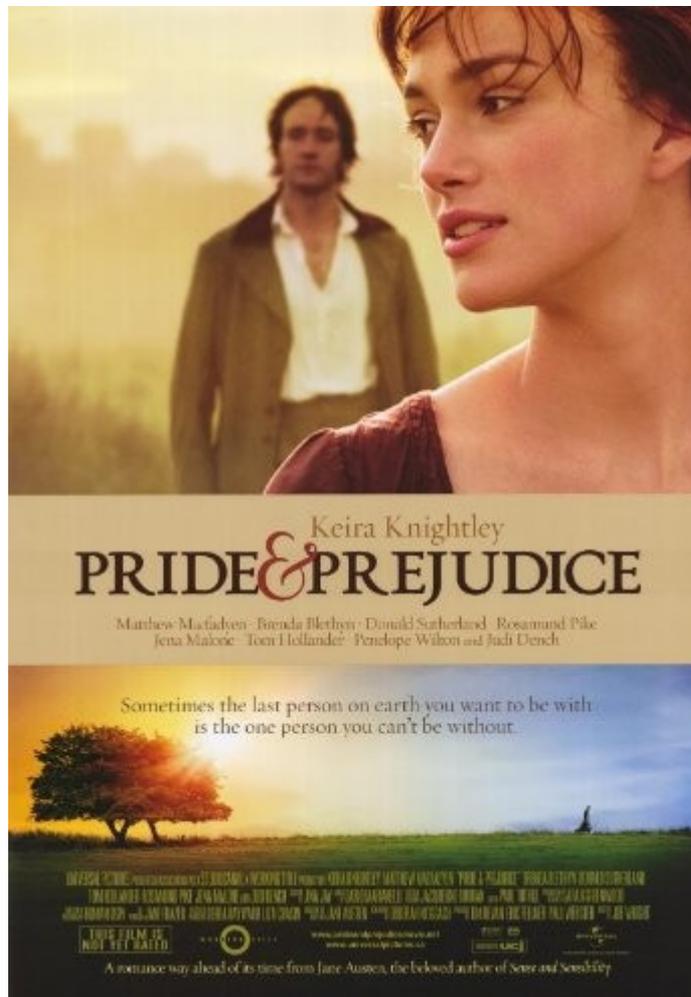
The latter aspect already indicates that a commercially successful British heritage film genre also entails cultural benefits for the UK. Awards and nominations raise the prestige of the nation's film industry. The genre's national characteristics and its belonging to Britain's national cinema also show that the British film industry does resist Hollywood's hegemony. In contrast to the 1950s, most creative decisions for these Anglo-American co-productions are not made in the US. *Pride & Prejudice's* British director and its British ending are exemplary of this development. By definition, British heritage films depict an elitist, rather picturesque image of Britain's past, architecture and landscape. Even if some critics warn that this antiquated image might have detrimental effects on the British nation, the British project a positive image of themselves to the world. In contrast, Germany is most often depicted as the Second World War country in international films. These films cast a much more

critical, negative light on the German nation than British heritage films do on the British. Finally, films like *Pride & Prejudice* also perpetually remind worldwide audiences of Britain's great novelists, outstanding personalities and for example gentleman values.

One of the most important preconditions for these cultural benefits is that British heritage films, their source texts and settings are readily recognisable as British. Higson and the British Labour government which introduced the Cultural Test for British films in 2007 might worry who controls this image of Britain, or mostly England. I rather wonder how the British heritage film production trend will develop once American companies lose their interest in it. For the time being however, modern British heritage films finally fulfil the role which has been envisioned for the British film industry since the 1920s. They successfully promote Britain abroad and yield cultural and economic benefits for the UK.

6. Appendix

The film poster of *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)



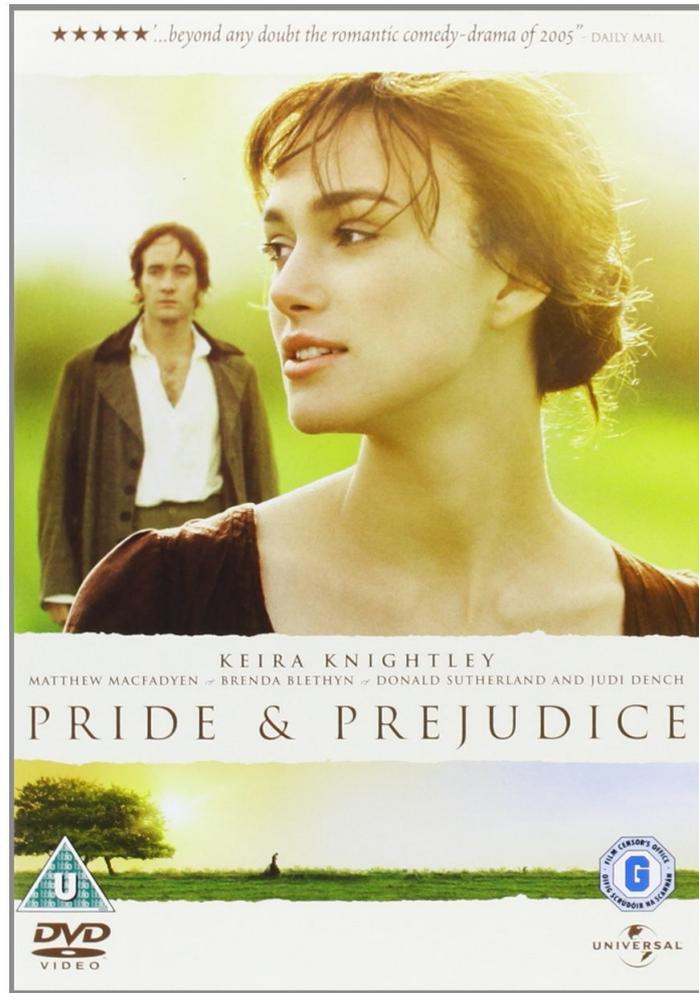
The bottom line reads:

A romance way ahead of its time from Jane Austen, the beloved author of *Sense and Sensibility*

Source: “*Pride & Prejudice*. Film Poster.” *Amazon US*. Web. 26 February 2014.

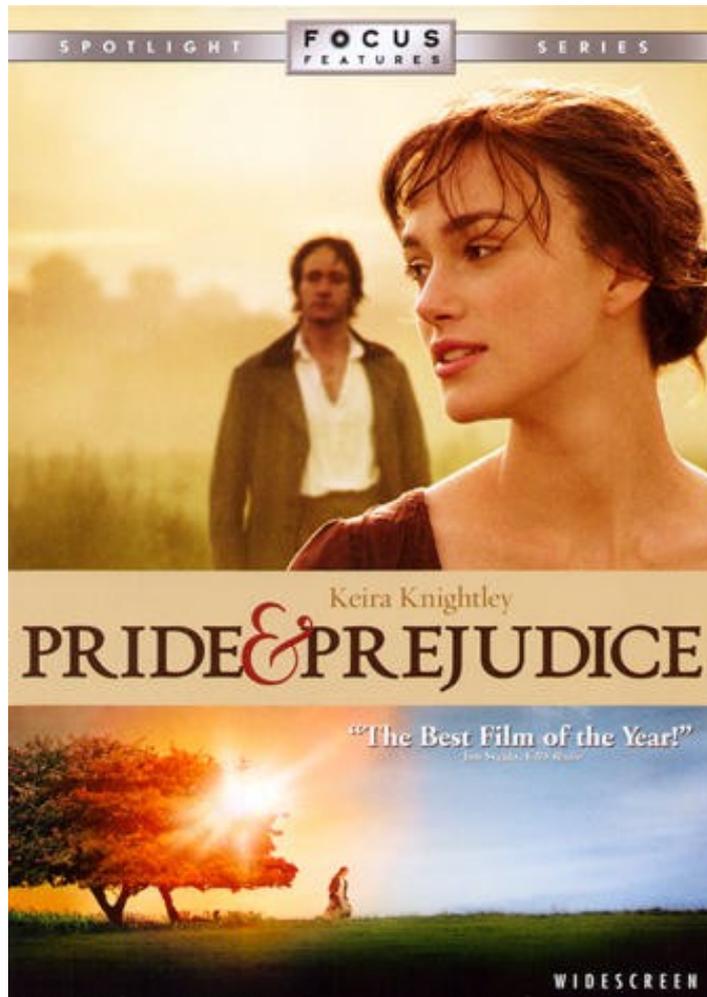
<http://www.amazon.com/Prejudice-Knightley-Matthew-MacFadyen-Blethyn/dp/B003GM4T42/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1393441768&sr=8-2&keywords=pride+and+prejudice+poster>.

The British DVD cover of *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)



Source: “*Pride & Prejudice*. DVD.” *Amazon UK*. Web. 26 February 2014.
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Pride-Prejudice-2005-Keira-Knightley/dp/B000BKT-B3Q/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1393441086&sr=8-3&keywords=pride+and+prejudice+dvd>.

The US-American DVD cover of *Pride & Prejudice* (2005)



Source: "*Pride & Prejudice*. DVD." *Amazon US*. Web. 26 February 2014.
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-media/product-gallery/B000E1ZBGS/ref=cm_ciu_pdp_images_0?ie=UTF8&index=0>.

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8. Statutory Declaration

Statutory Declaration

I hereby declare the following:

- (1) that this work has never been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other degree, examination, or thesis;
- (2) that it is my own work;
- (3) that all the sources, including online sources, cited, reproduced, or referred to herein – especially the sources of quotations, images, and tables – have been acknowledged as such.

With my signature, I acknowledge that any violation of these declarations will lead to an investigation for cheating or attempted cheating.

This thesis contains 31179 words.

Caroline Döring, Coburg, 30 April 2014