

Varieties of Food Capitalism?

A Political Economy of Food Provisioning in the United Kingdom, France, and Australia

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Thesis Abstract

Most scholarship in the traditions of anthropology and sociology of food has advanced that cultural forces and social structures govern food practices. This thesis expands beyond the cultural realm of food practices to enquire as to how and why the cross-national variations in the social and political organisation of food provisioning of selected advanced economies developed and persisted. It aims to tie a historical perspective on the importance of political and social origins of modern food capitalisms to the current debate for an integrative food policy analysis instigated by Lang, Barling, and Caraher's (2009) influential text, *Food Policy*. This thesis aims to explain why national food provisioning from production to consumption, continue to follow distinct developmental trajectories with no sign of convergence towards a single and unique model.

The thesis uses the policy regime construct as an interpretive framework to span the analytical lens over the, usually independently studied, policy domains of food production, transformation, and consumption in three advanced economies – the United Kingdom, France, and Australia. The thesis demonstrates that focusing on the interplay between ideas, interests, and institutional arrangements — the 3'I's that define a policy regime — shaping the political economy of food provisioning, can not only enrich Lang et al.'s (2009) integrative food policy analysis but also provide greater insights into the historical meta-analysis offered by the food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989).

The research concludes that two major influences shaped the developmental logic of national food provisioning over time — the extent to which domestic capitalism gained ascendancy over traditions of localism, and the extent to which global logics took precedence over national policy autonomy. Historical and structural factors relevant to the initial subordination of agriculture to industry, the nature of state activism and agency, and the degree of national autonomy and 'policy space' within the global scene describe and explain the distinct dynamics of national food capitalism along alternative pathways. Food systems that developed out of the need to negotiate politically and socially the extent of the commodification of food provisioning as it was the case in France, came to be underpinned by very different sets of ideological and institutional arrangements than those where the integration of agriculture into the capitalist mode of production encountered less initial resistance.

The thesis also proposes to distinguish national policy logics as a question of explicit or implicit emphasis. Just as France's food policy environment makes the social relations of food explicit with well-defined systemic policy responses, the liberal economies of both the UK and Australia conceive the organisation of food provisioning in more implicit terms, creating a political distance between the policy issue and the sites of policy decision. Overall, the study confirms that today's '*varieties of food capitalism*' find their origins in the

social and political dynamics present at the time of transitioning to a capitalist democracy, and finds little evidence for the convergence of national food policies.

Statement of Originality

This is to certify that the work in this thesis entitled *Varieties of Food Capitalism* has not been submitted in whole or in part for any other academic award to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University, Sydney Australia.

I also declare that the thesis is an original piece of research and that it has been written by me. Any information sources and literature used in writing the thesis have been appropriately acknowledged.

Brigit Busicchia, April 2017

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For their sustaining energies and patience, I must express my appreciation to my close friends. But, this thesis is dedicated to the two dearest people in my life — to my partner Ken, without whom I may have never finished this long journey of doctoral study, and to my mother.

INTRODUCTION

Eating is culturally significant: it is about the redistribution and sharing of food resources, and it is about social ordering, social cohesion, and social reproduction. Most scholarship in the traditions of the anthropology and sociology of food has advanced that cultural forces and social structures govern food practices. In these fields of enquiry, the literature has extensively documented cross-national variations in food representation, meaning and beliefs, and has argued that food practices are neither random nor a matter of individual preference, but instead express a more abstract significance of social systems and cultural values (Fischler, 2011; Fischler & Masson, 2008; Mennel, 1996; Murcott, 1982). This thesis seeks to contribute to this discussion by expanding beyond the cultural realm of food practices, and enquire as to how and why the cross-national variations in the social and political organisation of food provisioning of selected advanced economies developed and persisted.

If the absence of convergence upon forms of national capitalism and industrial society continues to be an important focus to comparative political economy, to this day little academic attention has been placed in accounting for the differences in the organisation and the policy environment of national food provisioning. However, food policy observers, and in particular Tim Lang and colleagues, have instigated the debate by first interrogating the nature of food policy, by questioning its directions and querying how to address the mixed challenges that the provision of food causes on the environment, public health and social justice (Bradbear & Friel, 2013; Lang & Barling, 2013; Lang et.al., 2009; Barling & Lang, 2003; Barling et.al., 2002). These scholars express the concern that traditional problems of policy history, differences of focus over policy issues and the large diversity found amongst interest groups and policy communities, have presented barriers to policy integration to the risk of facing an unsustainable future. Just as this school of food policy scholarship calls for immediate attention to integrate health, environment, and social dimensions in future policy decisions, much of the existing research looking into cross-national variations in individual policy domains, such as agriculture and nutrition, has equally uncovered major differences in institutional arrangements and policy outcomes, suggesting that policy integration may vary as a function of national political economy.

Tempting as it may be to call upon broadly accepted archetypes of market economy either with an emphasis on the character of state intervention in the economy, or with a focus

on the ways that firms coordinate their activities, these approaches do not fully explain the national and international forces involved in the development of national food capitalism and its policy environment. Of course, one cannot dismiss historical approaches used to explain patterns of food consumption, in particular food preferences (and avoidances) as outcomes of historical events (Mennell, 1996), or the places of staple agricultural commodities like potato, sugar (Mintz, 1986), or tea have held in modern societies. Nor can we exclude cultural and sociological approaches of the most prestigious origins (Pierre Bourdieu (1984), Roland Barthes and the mythologies of everyday living (1957), Georg Simmel (1910) or Claude Lévi-Strauss to name a few) to associate food patterns to mechanisms of cultural and social cohesion. However, these approaches offer either too broad or too narrow perspectives to tackle the reasons for cross-national differences in food policy amongst advanced economies, particularly in light of the political difficulties posed by the mounting global challenges of climate change, public health and social disparities.

The aim for this thesis, therefore, is to discern a distinctive layer of analysis about the variations of food capitalism in advanced economies. It does so by bringing an historical perspective to the current debate about food policy, and explaining why national food provisioning continues to follow distinct developmental trajectories. The thesis achieves this objective by exploring the significance of ideas, interests, and institutions in shaping the political economy of food provisioning of three countries — the United Kingdom, France, and Australia.

FOOD, POLITICAL ECONOMY AND POLICY – SETTING THE SCENE

Food is central to the survival of any species. For the human race, food is not only nutritional, it is symbolic. It is charged with cultural significance and it is central to our sense of identity (Fischler, 1988). Some go even further by arguing that '*food practices mark ideological moments*' to express resistance against political, racial, or even gender domination (see punk cuisine in Clark, 2013:231) or more broadly, food practices are used as forms of contestation against certain ethics or rationale of mainstream food industrialisation. In sum, not only do social prosperity and cohesion rely on cooperation in organising the provisioning and redistribution of food resources, but the centrality of food to the process of social reproduction makes it all encompassing, connecting production to consumption, linking the economic to the political, the social to the cultural, and bridging the ecological with the social.

However, the industrialisation of food provisioning has created an increasing 'disconnect' between production and consumption, a development captured in McMichael's

(2009a) '*food from nowhere*' that has built considerable social, spatial, and cognitive distances between producers and consumers limiting the possibilities of clear forms of feedback between these two worlds. Just as this void has led to the intensification of agricultural production at the cost of ignoring environmental impacts, it has also allowed the pervasive acceptance of consumption patterns of mal and/or over-nutrition, to the detriment of public health objectives. In the face of these mounting tensions, all democratic governments continue to claim policy objectives for a sustainable and resilient national food provisioning, begging the question of how this is achieved, and on what principles it is based.

Food policy observers argue that in most advanced economies, food governance strategies fail to provide coordinated governmental actions, and resist integrating policy goals across policy domains in a more systemic and integrated manner to respond to these mounting challenges (Bradbear & Friel, 2013; Ericksen et al., 2009; Lang et al., 2009; Barling & Lang, 2003; Maxwell & Slater, 2003). They offer few explanations as why there is resistance in formulating integrated policies for problems that span traditional boundaries of policymaking. Long-standing ways of "doing business" built into different and separate governmental apparatuses explain the ongoing segregation of policymaking processes that prevent integration across food-related policy domains. The involvement of the private sector into the governance of food may be another possible hindrance to policy integration. And again, the problem might not only be structural. Ideational dimensions play a role in shaping the level of government responses towards food. In the league of advanced capitalist democracies, food is not uniformly granted the same priorities and importance. Even if food "affairs" are given institutional recognition in most countries, there are instances where the governance of food is considered as a sub-set of a larger ministerial portfolio¹.

Food policy scholars are calling for a re-conceptualisation of food policy to integrate demands from the ecological and social spheres, and reconsider the remit of food policy as a suite of '*integrative processes and mechanisms*' (Lang et al., 2009:11) rather than distinct, separate and uncoordinated policy actions. Situated at the intersection between the social and the ecological, food is a barometer of the symbiotic relationship between human health and the health of the environment. On the one hand, pollution, depletion of natural resources, high energy usage and considerable wastage of resources illustrate the environmental degradation caused by the workings of the modern food supply chain. On the other, under- and over-nutrition affect most of the planet's population and have become some of the key stressors of public health systems. Notwithstanding the fact that the industrialisation of food production and the changes in our patterns of food consumption have caused adverse impacts on the environment and public health, ecological constraints and rising social inequalities are reasons for additional concern for the sustainability of the modern food system. In the face of the mounting challenges of population growth, climatic

¹ See Australia for instance.

variability, environmental degradation, and public health, we are confronted with a set of questions. Is it reasonable to assume that different advanced political economies may face different futures of food? And, since states clearly vary in how they organise the provisioning of food, is it reasonable to ask whether some countries are better prepared than others in tackling food policy responses in a more integrated manner? Finally, how can we explain these differences?

In the past, research in the organisation of food provisioning, which covers all the key activities linking production and consumption, has been approached both broadly and narrowly. The broader view has framed the organisation of food in terms of the sociology of agriculture and agrarian political economy in explaining the power relations that shape rural and agri-food systems. One of the pioneering analyses is that of Friedmann and McMichael (1989), who develop the concept of a 'global food regime' that sets a global context to explain national practices of state and capital. Other traditions of research have used analyses of agricultural commodity chains, agricultural productivism or actor-network analysis to name a few, to theorise the development of food provisioning. Amidst the many food scares episodes of the 1980s and 1990s, research developed in the governance of food, and used the much narrower focus of food safety and its regulation to explain the shortcomings of the modern organisation of food. Similar dynamics of 'broader-narrower' views are equally observed in the emerging scholarship of food consumption. Just as these broader views frame food consumption in the sociological terms of cultural sociology (see for instance the work of Fischler and Masson, 2008) or postmodernism, for example, questions of dietary and nutritional sciences narrow the enquiry down to examining food consumption patterns and their associations with social determinants and health outcomes.

System analysis has also been an avenue for studying the multiple interactions between food, the environment, and society, especially in relation to questions of sustainability and food security. Traditionally, the scholarship seeks to bridge social science and natural science perspectives by identifying key processes, determinants, and outcomes, to predict system responses to a variety of environmental and social changes and challenges. Just as the value of this approach resides in its modelling ability to capture at any point in time, feedbacks and interactions between drivers and outcomes, it does not dwell on the historical, political, or social forces that have shaped food systems development. In other words, modelling a closed, internally unified system is not a useful analytical tool to understand historical change and explain differences between countries.

Amongst the many theoretical orientations that sociology has brought to bear on the study of food and eating, most imply and even confirm that differences exist in the national conceptualisations of food, and that its provisioning came to be coordinated and regulated along different logics. However, to this day, the literature has remained silent or at best

fragmented in offering an explanation as to why the different ways in coordinating national food systems.

FOOD ACROSS BORDERS

Food is too important socially and politically not to explain and understand its representations, its organisation, and its redistribution. In support of Lang et al's. (2009) claim for re-conceptualising food policy along ecological and social considerations in the face of ecological, public health and social challenges, this research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the causal processes involved in the development of food provisioning. As much as a clearer understanding of the policy mechanics that propel national policymaking decisions is necessary to articulate new food policy objectives, it is however, not sufficient to engineer policy changes. Cross-national comparisons become particularly helpful in bringing out and sharpening the dynamics of other national policy models, and in revealing associations between apparently unrelated elements, such as ideologies and institutional architecture, otherwise conflated and obscured in the intricacies of the day-to-day policymaking activities. The comparative perspective provides, in my view, a primer on how to “do and think” food policy differently by showing how other national environments respond to events and challenges. As Landman and Robinson (2009:2) note, such cross-national comparisons *‘yield substantive inferences that typically go beyond the confines of the case or the cases that have been compared’*.

Comparing food policy cross-nationally is an attempt to develop social science explanations that give greater meaning and understanding to a policy world usually locked in technical and scientific considerations. There are dangers in not looking at historically contingent developments as causal relationships may be wrongly inferred. Policy, and food policy in this case, is often treated as a kind of evidence, or as if the questions and responses that it raises, are part of a panoply of global governance instruments with no specific national meaning of place and time. Just as policy studies often limit their scope of enquiry to the relevance and effectiveness of instruments to evaluate the effects that they create, the justification for choosing policies is considered as a secondary issue to the policy analyst (Lascoumes & Le Gales, 2007). Concentrating on the ‘technicalities’ of food policy and examining either the diversity of policy instruments, the accumulation of programs and policy initiatives, or the emergence of new actors is likely to mask the real interplay of social interests and power relations. However, since policy instrumentation is the link between the governing and the governed, it therefore embodies specific dynamics of social control (Lascoumes & Le Gales, 2007). In recognising this relation, it allows us to avoid the oversimplification and the ‘depoliticising’ of the governance of food.

By contrast, I argue that asking why there are differences in the organisation of food provisioning at national level is a significant avenue for reflection. Creating another interpretation of why some political economies make certain choices about food and not others acknowledges the significance of these policy choices for the present and the future. As daunting as the idea of ‘food policy’ may be, it nevertheless has the potential to construct specific social relations between the state and society around the question of food, its production, its distribution, its choice, and its access. Its study, and more precisely the study of its origins, values, and long-term impacts, is significant for our understanding of how food is represented and the meanings it carries.

FOOD POLICY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCE LITERATURE

In developing my major arguments in this thesis, I shall claim that the central properties that characterise the development, the cohesion, the complementarities or in some instances the conflicting nature of the different policy areas that contribute to the provisioning of food (— i.e. production, transformation, distribution, and consumption) have not been yet adequately theorised, even in the most influential theoretical frameworks. If entertaining a vision for a sustainable future requires that food policy integrates ecological, social and human demands, it then becomes important to begin theorising the spatial and temporal developments of national food policy.

Political economy approaches in the study of food have often implied trade-offs of scale and analytical focus. To understand the big picture, political economy approaches have traditionally not afforded attention to policy-level details and more importantly, political economy analyses have tended to segregate production from consumption, placing more attention and analytical focus to the forces of production and relegating consumption as a peripheral activity (Goodman & Dupuis, 2002). Furthermore, political economy generally calls on accepted archetypes of market economy to explain policy variations, whether regarding state intervention or ways that firms coordinate, which offer little scope for explaining inconsistencies or deviations from predicted behaviours.

Institutional analysis explains the divergences of policy responses through the nature of national institutions and how they shape political behaviours. In this respect, historical institutionalism brings significant insights linking historical context and policy decisions, and in understanding the historical roots of political culture, social learning, and expectations. However, the prevailing emphasis on institutional stability used to explain policy responses has caused much scholarly discomfort when trying to capture the most important ways in which institutions evolve over time (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). Just as explaining change is a

problem for institutional analysis, explaining the role of ideas via an institutional perspective is often neglected. In a similar manner, just as political economy tends to exclude political culture from its analysis (Trentmann, 1998), few historical institutionalists consider ideas to be an important explanatory concept (Steinmo, 2008:130). Traditionally, institutionalists view the adoption of ideas as an outcome of institutional design rather than being central to institutional change (Schmidt, 2009:134)².

Only the food regime literature (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; Friedmann, 2005; McMichael, 2009) has attempted to explain the historical development of agriculture and food, not so much as an economic phenomenon, but rather as a political project. Food regime theory focuses on *hegemonic regimes*, and as Pechlaner and Otero (2010:181) remark, '*the work remains focused on global transformations, and is more macro oriented and theoretical rather than empirical*'. If food regime theory does offer a global configuration of power relations, however, it tends to downplay the agency of the nation-state in resisting, tempering and re-interpreting international dynamics into national contexts. To close this conceptual gap between the 'global' (as theorised by the food regime perspective) and 'the national', this thesis examines the development of national food provisioning against the backdrop of historically grounded international food regimes.

A NEW LENS TO THE ANALYSIS OF FOOD PROVISIONING: THE AIMS OF THIS THESIS

This project aims to contribute to a better understanding of why the organisation of food provisioning in advanced economies follows qualitatively different policy logics in spite of shared common objectives, and it achieves this by asking two interrelated questions:

- (i) *How differently do advanced industrial societies conceptualise and develop food policy, and*
- (ii) *What is at the origin of these differences;*

in other words, **why is food provisioning coordinated differently across advanced economies?**

Notwithstanding the few 'blind spots' (policy details and relegating consumption to a peripheral role) that a political economy approach entails, this perspective remains, however, relevant to the study of the organisation of food provisioning while bringing in perspective cross-national variations. After all, political economy concerns itself with the political responses to market movements, the provision (and under-provision) of public goods, and more broadly with the political trade-offs between market 'efficiency' and social equity in the

² Although Schmidt (2009) concedes that Peter Hall crossed the line when he analysed the introduction of monetarist ideas in Thatcher's Britain.

face of common dilemmas — dynamics even more so relevant to the study of food. Given that historical institutionalism has specific affinities with the study of politics and brings attention to sequences of development, timing of events, and phases of political change, this thesis borrows from this tradition to sharpen the political economy perspective and contextualise how ideas and interests have developed over time.

FOOD POLICY UNDER THE LENS OF THE 3'I'S AS AN ANALYTICAL TOOL

The project finds that Lang et al's (2009) concept of 'food policy' provides valuable analytical purchase. Understanding food policy as an integrative process, rather than a suite of individual and independent policy areas, opens avenues of analysis that place the commodity perspective as a point of entry. Reflecting over the tensions between ecological, social, and human spheres as the integrated food policy does, is to establish an analytical relationship between the concept of food policy and the degrees of commodification that it underpins. When food is only represented for its market relations, i.e. its exchange value attributes, the policy environment coordinating its provision is likely to resemble a series of policy subsystems, operating in total autonomy from each other. Conversely, if food is viewed primarily for its "use value" attributes of nourishment, survival, or even cultural identity, then one may expect the policy environment to be more integrated across apparently unrelated policy domains. The research argues that although the modern organisation of food provisioning relies to a large extent on the exchange value of food, the extent of commodification varies across the provisioning of food in the selected countries.

Not only does the concept of food policy reveal the logic connecting individual activities involved in the organisation of national food provisioning, it also provides a valuable vantage point to study the linkage between the story of capitalism and the organisation of food. As Pierson (2005) once remarked, understanding the sources of policy often requires that we pay attention to processes that play out over considerable periods of time and placing history at the centre of this research has allowed me to trace the beginnings of food capitalism back to the confluence of modern forms of democracy and processes of industrial development.

Explaining the persistence of cross-national differences in the face of similar policy problems is a central theme in this work. Moving away from concepts that tend to homogenize whole groups of nations, I have turned to the concept of policy regime (also referred to as the 3'I's) to examine how the selected political economies have engaged with the organisation of food under successive food regimes since the 1870s, and capture the diversity of dynamics present in the development of their respective national food capitalism. In brief, the policy regime construct describes the '*political-institutional arrangements that define the relationship between social interests, the state, and the economic actors*' (Eisner,

1993:2) through the lens of the 3'I's of shared Ideas, Interest alignment, and Institutional arrangements, to grapple with the complexities of governing. Given that the construct is '*useful at characterising governing arrangements that foster integrative actions across elements of multiple subsystems*' (Jochim & May, 2010:304), the ambition here is to use the 3'I's framework for the study of food policy integration and its '*boundary-spanning*' (Jochim & May, 2010) dynamics, in a comparative perspective to capture some semblance of order and cohesion to apparently autonomous policy domains. The flexibility of the construct offers also a way to resolve the dualism of regime stability and policy change by examining the ongoing struggles for political advantages without losing sight of the larger context that shapes the scope of possibilities and alternatives (Sheingate, 2012).

THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH

This thesis has opted for a case-based understanding of causal relations to which the 3'I's construct is applied. The goal is to uncover the food policy dynamics that govern national food provisioning in selected countries. As Gerring (2011:1140-1) reminds us, the case study methodology is particularly oriented toward goals of hypothesis-generating supported by strong insights that explain causal mechanisms rather than causal effects, or in his words '*Case studies are more useful for generating new hypotheses, all other things being equal*' (2011:1141). Since this thesis seeks to examine national food provisioning through the lens of the integrative food policy construct as defined by Lang et.al. (2009), and to explain the organisation of food through the dynamics of the 3'I's, the case study approach is suitable and relevant to this new way of talking about food.

Given the degree of analytical depth expected from this research, I have chosen only two countries as instances of primary case studies — the United Kingdom and France. This choice has been informed by questions of representativeness to establish the magnitude of variation of causal relationships, and to establish predictable contrasts between cases, what amounts to Yin (2009:54) idea of '*theoretical replication*'. Whereas Britain is commonly characterised in the literature for its economic liberalism and its '*laissez faire*', albeit centralised, style of governing, French political economy is nothing like the 'liberal' economy of Britain (Prasad, 2005), and is often differentiated when compared to Britain for its level of state intervention in the affairs of the nation. Furthermore, the place that agriculture and food have held and continue to hold in French politics provides compelling support for an initial proposition that political differences in the organisation of food provisioning not only exist but are representative of the respective national political and economic histories.

With these distinctions in mind, the thesis carries out case studies of Britain and France to uncover the causal logics that set the development of national food policy over time and to highlight how differences in conceptualising food lead to distinct policy outcomes. However, in recognition that both Britain and France present commonalities of contextual and historical forces in developing as capitalist democracies, the thesis concludes its empirical research by applying the proposed framework to a country that presents distinctively different historical and socio-political legacies to ‘test-run’ the concept and elaborate on analytical issues of special interest. A former settler-capitalist economy, Australia, was chosen to contrast with both the British and French models of European capitalist development. A more detailed explanation of this method is given below.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS THESIS: NATIONAL FOOD POLICY ANALYSIS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The thesis upholds the importance of political and social origins of modern food capitalisms as guides to the current debate of food policy and its integrative processes. Two major influences are identified as critical to understand the developmental logic of national food provisioning over time and to ascertain the ‘why’ of cross-national differences — the extent to which national capitalism has gained ascendancy over traditions of localism (what I call the ‘origin story’), and the extent to which global logics have taken precedence over supranational and national policy autonomy.

Empirical evidence points out that the origins of many of the ideologies and values, institutions, and representation of interests can be traced back to the early industrialisation period, to the class structures in place and their relative political power at the time. Comparing Britain and France’s historical situations at the onset of the modern capitalist project explains how Britain’s ‘*triumphant capitalism*’ (Byres, 2009) sets in motion the subordination of agriculture to industrial interests and the embrace of free trade policies, while France’s form of ‘*delayed capitalism*’ (Byres, 2009) explains the decisions to keep the population on the land well into the twentieth century, the maintenance of agrarian values, and the adoption of protectionist measures when required. The case study approach brings further evidence that the organisation of national food provisioning is essentially an outcome of national political interplay between ideas and economic interests within specific institutional contexts, explaining why cross-national differences exist and continue to persist over time. The case study of hegemonic Britain documents how the early subordination of agriculture to industrial interests obliterated most forms of traditional food culture and constructed a representation of food around its market relations. In sharp contrast, the French case study explicates how a delayed transition to a capitalist agriculture created

representations of food around local traditions and provenance, which have been maintained and reinforced over time by institutional mechanisms to shelter small artisanal food production from the forces of industrialisation. Given that France's organisation of food provisioning has been driven more by the dynamics of national bargaining rather than by a global logic of trade, it has resulted in a greater involvement of the state in the coordination of food-related policies.

Although it is often implicitly assumed that globalisation forces make national policies grow more alike, this research attempts to uncover the degrees of policy autonomy enjoyed by nation-states in the organisation of their respective food provisioning systems. Given that the capacity of the nation-state to interpret and adjust to global dynamics rests in its ability to reconstitute state-society relations, what Coleman and Chiasson (2002) define as the '*transformative capacity of the state*', this study draws on the 3'I's construct to highlight the dynamics of stability and change over national governing arrangements, which in turn may explain why cross-national policy differences persist.

The larger context for this research lies with the historical forces theorised by the food regime perspective (McMichael, 2009; Friedmann, 2005; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989), against which the selected advanced economies have organised their respective policies of production, transformation/distribution, and consumption. Examining the development of national food provisioning over the successive food regimes since the 1870s, leads me to contend that national policy autonomy necessitates a certain position within the global order. The French case study is particularly revealing in this regard and illustrates how important relative economic and geopolitical weights are in providing degrees of national autonomy from global logics. France's ambitions of national independence have guided the development of food provisioning on a very distinctive national trajectory, around non-global logics of organisation exemplified, for instance, by the reinvention of agricultural policies around new principles of multifunctionality, or the maintenance of 'artisanal' food transformation.

One may also recognise that the 'smooth' developmental trajectory of the French (and to a certain extent the British) food provisioning system is somehow symptomatic of a considerable level of national autonomy that granted political space to pursue economic and social objectives beyond the impositions of a global logic. Therefore, to complete the analytical journey of this project and to 'test run' the proposed analytical framework as a preliminary application for future research, it becomes important to examine the development of causal mechanisms shaping the trajectories of food provisioning against a different context, and ask the following two questions — how would the ascendancy of national capitalism play out in a context where sense of place and local traditions had been historically weak? And, can national autonomy mean different things at different times and

follow a trajectory of change that diverges from theoretical expectations? Although future research may reveal that food provisioning in Continental European countries resembles the French context due to broadly similar historical political and social legacies, we might ask: what are the implications for the organisation and representation of food when no prior pre-capitalist attachment to the land existed, and when the national capitalist project became largely contingent on conditions or circumstances set by 'global' players?

Settler capitalism, as an alternative form of Western European capitalism (Denoon, 1983) is a good testing ground for these 'what if' conditions of non-indigenous form of capitalism and dependency to the global order for political and economic prospects. I have chosen Australia as a case of settler capitalism onto which to apply the proposed analytical framework and examine specifically these two questions. As a former settler economy, Australia presents analytical interest for its weak traditions of localism³ when compared to continental Europe — the lack of pre-capitalist attachment to the land and the absence of a large peasantry class — and for the ascendancy of global logics over the national policy directions that led to the rapid transitioning to a capitalist economy. Given that shortage of labour turned the emerging Australian economy towards pastoralism rather than agriculture⁴, the country became dependent on a narrow range of export commodities and reliant on Britain as the preferred export market. As Davidson (1981:67) proposes, the agricultural history of Australia has been about finding those high value commodities that would be produced for large markets, using low levels of labour (since wages were high) but requiring large areas of cheap land (since Australia had plenty of it). Agricultural activity became rapidly focussed on exportation and domestic demand treated as a peripheral concern. A history without peasants combined with a rapid adoption of capitalistic modes of food production also made white Australian settlers reliant on manufactured food for nourishment (Symons, 2007), annihilating any opportunity to connect food to geographical provenance or cultural meaning. Once the privileged access to UK's market was severed in 1973, the lack of national autonomy translated into a radical change of national aspirations and triggered a series of clear policy 'break points' from a highly protectionist policy environment to one canvassed by neoliberal principles of economic management. The implications for the coordination of national food provisioning were significant, and were made possible at the time by an alignment of ideological values with dominant interests within in an easily-dismountable institutional environment.

The study shows that the coordination of food provisioning is organised around its own logic, which owes its origins to different historical forces, and the selected countries continue to follow qualitatively different trajectories with no obvious sign of policy

³ I am referring to 'White Australia' and not, of course, to Indigenous Australia.

⁴ Denoon's (1983) argument is that settler economies developed differently on colonised lands where indigenous populations practiced agriculture. As hunters and gatherers, Indigenous Australians were displaced but hardly transformed into a peasantry class, creating a shortage of labour.

convergence. However, as the Australian example demonstrates, radical changes away from historically set trajectories are possible under specific set of circumstances, i.e. aligned interests with ideology within a “moveable” institutional fabric. The importance of institutional context over the development of food policy is to be noted. Strong institutional arrangements, as it is with the supranational architecture of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, can shelter policies from ideological changes. If the neoliberal experiment of the 1980s with its logics of deregulation and individual responsibility has remodelled significantly the transformation, distribution, and consumption of food in the UK, an EU sheltered agricultural sector has continued to be anchored in a state-assistance paradigm, receiving EU’s subsidies for its ‘multifunctional’ activities.

Given that the empirical research captures some of the most salient features of national food policy, I have hypothesised a typology to distinguish national logics and the “mechanics” that animate the relations between state and food economy, as a question of explicit or implicit emphasis. An explicit food policy regime provides well defined systemic policy responses, articulated around clear values and principles, and delivered through a dense institutional fabric. Such a food policy environment makes the social relations of food explicit. Conversely, an implicit policy approach is one that calls on frames of reference outside the issue of interest, such as macroeconomic reforms to shape or guide elements of the food economy, and creates a political distance between the policy issue and the sites of decision. Under such arrangements, the social relations of food are made implicit. This research proposes that while France’s approach to food policy is of an explicit nature, a semi-implicit style of food governance is adopted by the United Kingdom. Since its accession to the European Economic Community in 1973, the United Kingdom has surprisingly maintained a less liberal and more state-assisted approach to its agricultural policy, setting the UK as a hybrid form of ‘liberal food capitalism’. The organisation of food provisioning in Australia is in essence of an implicit nature, whereby food affairs are treated as a subset of agricultural policies, where no national food policy/strategy is in place, and where macro-economic management and international competitiveness are held as the safeguards of a food future.

To recap, this project brings an historical perspective on the importance of political and social origins of modern food capitalisms to the current debate of food policy and its integrative processes, to argue that two major influences shaped the developmental logic of national food provisioning over time — the extent to which domestic capitalism gained ascendancy over traditions of localism, and the extent to which global logics took precedence over national policy autonomy. Empirical evidence suggests that policy integration may be more feasible in non-liberal market economies, where political cultures rely to a greater extent on non-market instruments to frame the organisation of food. It also expands insights on how a non-hegemonic, non-Anglo and yet developed economy has been able to

accommodate the global structures of production and consumption on its own terms, shedding further explanatory light on why national food provisioning continue to follow distinct developmental trajectories with no sign of convergence towards a single and unique model. National institutional endowments, political cultures and traditions, and social regulation are some of the key filters through which global trends are reinterpreted and given specific national meanings. Finally, the research demonstrates the versatility of the 3'I's analytical framework in linking the broader world of political economy theorising to the more mundane spheres of policymaking, and offers the 3'I's as a valuable method of historical enquiry into the political economy of food. The 3'I's framework proves to be a useful analytical lens to grasp not only how differently the selected advanced economies understand food and its organisation, but also how a consistency of values and institutional approaches characterises the organisation of apparently independent policy spheres like production, distribution, and consumption. There is no doubt that this research suggests an avenue for further theorising, particularly in examining the interrelatedness of the political economy of food production and the political culture of food consumption.

However, a few words of caution are necessary. The reader is not expected to find here an analysis that is definitive, merely one that may be suggestive. There are few reasons for that. To begin, since none of the existing literature frames and theorises the development of food policy as defined by Lang et al. (2009), I had to construct much of the material for the analysis. I had to proceed in a manner that went back and forth between theoretical frameworks and the empirical steps of documenting evidence from the secondary literature and statistical material. This allowed me to reconstruct an interpretation that linked the three apparently independent policy areas of agriculture, industry, and consumption. This reconstruction had to deal with both the breadth and the depth of the concerned literature. A study of public policy is in the main a study of political contestation and organisation, and rarely does the researcher have access to what has been negotiated behind the scenes of public discourse. However, if much literature is available to discover the dynamics of the agricultural sector, the literature documenting the industrial sectors of food transformation and distribution is sparse and dispersed. Furthermore, the subject of food and its organisation is one that widens as the research proceeds. The efforts spent in articulating what is proposed here have continually opened up new lines of enquiry and suggested new questions. Finally, notwithstanding the insights drawn from examining national "models" at work in comparative perspective, it may also be premature to offer a definitive conceptualisation of food capitalism based only on three national case studies.

OUTLINE OF THIS THESIS

The aim of this research is to ask why food provisioning is organised differently in the selected advanced economies, to better understand what is at the origin of these differences, and to ascertain the nature of these differences. To address these questions, the dissertation is organised as follows. Chapter 1 begins by reintroducing the reader to the concept of food policy (Lang et al., 2009) and examines how the influential literature in the field of agri-food studies interprets the trajectories of national food policies in advanced industrialised economies. Chapter 1 makes note of how political economy problematises food production and consumption through the lens of productivism and consumer sovereignty, and reflects on the relevance of global food relations in shaping food policy at a national level through the lens of the food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989). However, it finds that the study of national food policy under the lens of political economy becomes methodologically constrained.

To support the historicised structural analysis of the food regime theory and the broader comparative political economy analysis, Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the novel policy regime construct from the political sciences tradition, and makes the case that much benefit can be derived in bridging those two approaches for the purpose of this work. What follows in Chapter 3 seeks to demonstrate that the application of the policy regime framework to the world of food highlights the significance of ideas, interests, and institutions (the 3'I's) in coordinating policy actions and decisions across the worlds of food production, transformation, distribution, and consumption. Chapter 3 devises a mapping tool to capture the combination of ideas, interests, and institutions that, at important historical moments, have underpinned policy settings for any of the three policy subsystems. Chapter 3 argues that mapping policy settings is useful to unveil patterns, if any, and to gauge the degree of policy integration across the multiple domains. The theoretical discussion concludes that it is possible to hypothesise a typology of national food policy logic along the lines of an explicit/implicit continuum, and proposes to conduct the empirical study on the two contrasting primary case studies, the United Kingdom and France.

This thesis develops the two national case studies: the United Kingdom in Chapter 4 and France in Chapter 5. In both instances, the research examines the causal mechanisms that have set policy trajectories to their present forms, and explain the origins and nature of cross-national differences. The UK case study uncovers how the adoption of free trade not only suited industrial interests, came to be accepted by labour and the consumer as essential to 'cheap food', and more surprisingly led to the subsidisation of British agriculture to maintain trade agreements with the dominions. The contingent moment for UK's organisation of food was its accession to European Economic Community's membership in 1973, and the institutionalisation of its agricultural sector under the supranational architecture

that offered shelter from the neoliberal experiment of the 1980s. While logics of deregulation and individual responsibility have infused the transformation, distribution and consumption of food, the agricultural sector — in a counter-intuitive sense — has remained set in a state-assistance paradigm.

France's historical development that Chapter 5 retraces, allows us to better apprehend the causality between a 'delayed' form of capitalism and the late modernisation of agriculture, the role that the state had to play in coordinating national economic activities, and the place that traditions and culture came to occupy in France's provisioning of food. As a result, French agriculture is still a national political enterprise with an agrarian agenda around the family farm model. The industrial fabric of food transformation and distribution has retained a heterogeneous character with a significant number of small businesses, and the consumption of food is framed around principles of social concern.

Chapter 6 revisits the contributions made in the earlier chapters to present national policy mappings in a comparative light. Chapter 6 draws the preliminary findings that the organisation of food provisioning can be envisaged as determined by the strength of national traditions and localism, and by the relative national position within the global order, both of which find their significance in historical legacies. Furthermore, Chapter 6 reaffirms the influence of state agency in the organisation of food by highlighting how states find ways to negotiate new social compromises, which do not always conform to theoretical expectations; the decision of the British government to subsidise its agricultural sector in the 1930s is such an instance.

Therefore, interested in finding out how the analysis plays out under different national contexts, particularly in relation to questions of the historical and political origins of food capitalism, national autonomy, and degrees of state agency under which it developed, the thesis proposes to apply the analytical framework to a settler economy. Given that settler economies have emerged as branching out variants to the Western European capitalist mode of production (Dennison, 1983), it is reasonable to expect that applying the analysis to a settler capitalist country will bear analytical complementarity to the national and imperial frames of reference. The choice of Australia for this study in Chapter 7 is driven by two analytical considerations — the rapid turn to a capitalistic form of agriculture without a peasant class and the implications that it borne for the representation of food, and the consequences of a dependent development linking the future of Australia to Britain. The Australian story presented in Chapter 7 may be considered as a preliminary application for future research.

The task set in Chapter 7 is twofold. The chapter seeks first to gauge the degree of importance that origins bear on the organisation of food provisioning, and then to establish the implications of a limited national autonomy within a global order over the developmental

pathways of food policy. The Australian case study reveals that the lack of prior pre-capitalist attachment to the land combined with a rapid commodification process of land and important urbanisation levels gave no chance for any consistent form of traditional food localism to develop, but instead gave rise to an Australian food identity associated with industrially processed foods. Although Australia demonstrated early political independence from Britain, the overall strategy remained one of dependent development on market access and capital investment from Britain until Britain decided to reorient its trade relations with the European Economic Community in the 1970s. In this respect, the Australian case study opens up avenues for further reflections on the interplay between ideas, interests and institutions in instigating clear changes of policy directions. Just as in the late 1970s-early 1980s, the European institutional arrangements protected the British agricultural sector from Thatcher's ideological pursuits, Australian farming groups acting in support of the state neoliberal agenda, facilitated the dismantling of prior protectionist arrangements.

Although the selection of case studies for this research is informed by the prime objective to offer a representative and useful variation on the dimensions of theoretical interest, I acknowledge that other choices could have been made to bring out cross-case characteristics. However, since there is no *prima facie* reason to choose one country over another in this under-researched area (provided that the selection bears analytical validity), the choice is also guided to a lesser extent by practical and biographical reasons. Just as these three countries illustrate the key moments in the historical development of food capitalism, being born and raised in France, helped the research to overcome language barriers and gave a certain affinity with the "French way" of doing and understanding things about food. Moreover, since Australia has been my home for many years, I became naturally interested in comparing it with the other two countries. In an unexpected way, my personal "cross-national" life experience has also motivated this research as I became curious to understand whether some advanced economies were better prepared than others in the face of the mounting pressures of climate variability, rising population and social inequalities. At the beginning of this project, I was intrigued that the debate to reconsider food policy originated from the United Kingdom, which traditionally understands food more for its commodity attributes than for its cultural and social significance. Having completed the research, I now understand why. However, I am still surprised and concerned that Australian policy circles continue to ignore the challenges ahead of us.

The thesis concludes by offering answers to the questions of how differently do advanced economies conceptualise food policy, and what is at the origin of these differences. The thesis submits that the lens of the food policy concept, as proposed by Lang et al. (2009), allows us to better understand how national variations in the commodification of food foster or resist policy integration across the ecological, health and social dimensions. The research finds that more implicit forms of food policy regime such as

in the UK or in Australia, tend to favour more commodified meanings of food, which in turn, impede policy integration. In instances where representations of food are anchored in the collective notions of traditions, provenance, and where conviviality rather than the service of commodity production serves individual wants, the coordination of food policy tends to be more explicit and favourable to greater integration. Although the origin of these differences lies with the class structures in place and their relative political power at the time the modern food provisioning was set in place, one cannot dismiss the importance of contingent events in resetting policy directions, meanings, and social representations of food. In this respect, the British case study demonstrates how the membership to the EU set the agricultural policy on a distinct pathway away from the much more liberal paradigm that underpins the transformation and distribution of food.

Given that this thesis is intended as an exploration of the concept of food policy in its theoretical and empirical senses, I will pursue two outcomes. At a theoretical level, I offer an alternative policy regime construct to understanding food policy from a political economy perspective. By identifying the salient characteristics that shape the provisioning of food at national levels, I hope to show how different the organisation of food can be cross-nationally understood and therefore suggest that different advanced economies may face different food futures. And, at an empirical level, this research may bring to food policy observers some additional insights about the importance of national contexts in defining food policy.

CHAPTER 1 – EXPLAINING FOOD POLICY AND FOOD REGIMES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The history of food and agriculture is first and foremost a political history. Just as most advanced industrialised economies have followed similar trajectories of institutional development to organise the provisioning of food, the rationale that has underpinned national food policies to support specific political and economic interests, continues to vary across borders. Given that the organisation of food provisioning can only impose its logic on members of society through a political act, asking why national food and agricultural policies in advanced political economies vary in the way they do, is an enquiry into national political histories that have set in motion certain principles and not others, to the benefits of some competing interests and not others. It is also an enquiry into how the state conceptualises food and its policy environment.

The original premise for this thesis is the contention of Tim Lang and his colleagues that contemporary food policy needs to be conceptualised as an integrated approach, sensitive to the pressing demands placed on the ecological, health, and social worlds, which *‘can address and re-shape the whole food system, from farm to consumption, not just a few sectors chosen for historical reasons’* (Lang et al., 2009:8). Drawing on this conceptualisation of food governance, my aim in this chapter is first to examine how the political economy literature in general, and the field of agri-food studies in particular, interpret the trajectories of national food policies in advanced industrialised economies. Traditionally dominated by institutionalist theories that emphasise the arrangements to define models of production or consumption, the literature on the political economy of food in advanced capitalist democracies has been to this day hesitant to engage with the intricacies of national food policy as they are defined by Lang et al. (2009). Instead, agrarian political economy problematizes the concepts of food production and consumption as two autonomous policy spheres with no analytical linkage, and does so through the lens of two major and yet largely unrelated scholarly discourses — the *‘productivist’* paradigm (Lowe et al., 1994; Ward, 1993;

Wilson, 2001; Dibden et al., 2009) and the notion of '*consumer sovereignty*' (Hutt, 1940 in Persky, 1993). If productivism captures the essence of traditional conservative values to explain the development of food and agriculture in post-1945 times, the literature uses the concept of consumer sovereignty to articulate the political agenda behind the discourse of consumption of the last few decades.

Although these discourses bring analytical insights to the dynamics of policymaking, they shed limited light in charting any possible form of policy integration from production to consumption. They also do not offer strong and conclusive explanation as to why any cross-national variations may exist. Instead, these discourses tend to present the evolution of food and agricultural policies in a deterministic manner, allowing little scope for national agency in re-interpreting 'global' forces and obscuring any possible form of interrelationship between production activities and the field of food consumption. This chapter seeks to open up the analytical space from productivism and consumer sovereignty by developing the concept of an integrative national food policy as a vantage point for the exploration of national food politics.

Situating the organisation of food in a greater international and global context is the second task for this chapter. Amongst the rich and abundant agri-food studies literature, relatively few works offer clear analyses that explain the major forces and relationships involved in the structural transformation of the modern food policy environment. By explaining the logics of a global food order and articulating the role of food and agriculture in the development of capitalism, the *food regime* literature (Friedmann, 2009; McMichael, 2004; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989) offers such theorisation. The food regime perspective informs this research at least on two counts. To begin, its historical and political representations of agricultural modernisation across the developed world provide a rich historical periodisation against which I can explore the role played by agriculture and food in the development of national capitalism. Second, the food regime theory helps to highlight how *national* autonomy may be exercised against the theorised *global* food order, particularly in political economies outside the direct hegemonic influence.

The third and final task is to establish how the literature characterises the interplay between global structures and processes, and national food policy environments. In particular, the chapter draws from political economy contributions to examine the capacity of nation-state to interpret or even resist globalisation forces, and to understand the mechanisms that make the transformative capacity of the state possible in the domains of agriculture and food (Roederer-Rynning, 2007; Schmidt & Radaelli, 2004; Coleman & Chiasson, 2002).

The chapter concludes by discussing how the existing literature covering the political economy of food helps us understand why the national organisations of food in advanced

economies differ the way they do. Despite the considerable insights offered by the literature, only the grand narrative of the food regime perspective (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989) offers an analytical framework that suggests structural reasons for the development of national food provisioning of advanced economies. However, like many other meta-narratives, the food regime literature tends to downplay local agency in mediating the dynamics of globalisation or temper its implementation, implying that nation-states are pressed into following similar trajectories of development, in accordance to their respective position in the global food order of the time. Although recent years have witnessed a resurgence of interest and scholarship around the concept of food regime and the roles of local agents in adapting the global agenda to their national environments, none of the reviewed literature offers a synthetic approach to identify the causal mechanisms that set national food policy environments on distinct trajectories. The chapter concludes that an integrative food policy analysis can be enriched by focusing upon the interplay between ideas, institutional arrangements, and interest representation to explain the developmental pathways of national food provisioning.

1.1 SPEAKING FOOD POLICY

This section proceeds in three parts. To begin, it examines how the notion of '*food policy*' has been defined, understood, and framed in contemporary literature by offering a brief overview of its different meanings in time and in space. It also introduces the reader to the conceptualisation of food policy by Lang et al. (2009) as an integrative process that links policy interventions along the food supply chain. The chapter continues by reviewing how existing scholarship frames and explains the forces that propelled the organisation of food in advanced economies. The inference from this review is that very little analytical linkage has been so far established between the worlds of food production and consumption. As Goodman and Dupuis (2002) have argued, the treatment of production and consumption in agri-food research has not only traditionally segregated production from consumption, but has also considered consumption as a peripheral activity. Acknowledging this asymmetry but seeking to build a clearer understanding of the forces that have propelled national food policies within the Western world, the review draws from two important and concurrent contemporary concepts common to most advanced economies — the political economy of '*productivism*' (Wilson, 2001; Lowe et al., 1994; Ward, 1993) and particularly in the primary and secondary production sectors, and the notion of '*consumer sovereignty*' (Redmond, 2000; Penz, 1986) and its underlying assumptions about rationality and consumption patterns — that somehow illuminate policy thinking at both the production and consumption ends. Moving beyond these well-established discourses, the section concludes by exploring

the implications of defining food policy as an integrated process (Lang et al., 2009), particularly through the lens of value relations, to argue that gauging the level of policy integration across the various food-related policy areas provides insight into how different advanced economies understand and support the commodification of food.

1.1.1 SOME CLARIFICATIONS OF TERMINOLOGY

One could argue that the original debates over the organisation of food provisioning were mainly informed by the Malthusian prognosis⁵ that the tendency in nature for population to outstrip all possible means of subsistence was to condemn society to a losing struggle in the face of the scarcity of natural resources (Heilbroner, 1999:78). However, as Lang et al. (2009) remark, nineteenth century's industrial and scientific developments pushed back the boundaries of Malthusian determinism to implicitly establish that policy could harness these progressive forces to overcome the restrictions imposed by nature. And, for the last century and a half, this has been the main objective of public policies; at first in the agricultural sector and to gradually expand to the domains of food transformation and consumption.

The terminology '*food policy*' and its usage in public circles have changed with time. Just as during war times the term '*food policy*' was used regularly by public administration circles to either discuss planning initiatives to help with the provision and distribution of food to the population or to emphasise the role of nutrition in rising living standards, national food policy was also evoked extensively during the interwar period to prompt governments to consider '*the interdependence of problems of public health, agriculture and economics*'⁶ in their respective policy agendas. Overall, food policy was the exclusive domain of agents of the public administration, public servants, and politicians whose approaches to the debate surrounding food, and public policy in general, were predominantly normative and not grounded in any theoretical framework (Smith, 2002). Most analyses prior to the 1970s commented in detail the history, the structure and functions, the competencies of the institutional model of the times, bearing little or no attention to their sociological underpinnings.

It is with the emergence of academic disciplines in the fields of social policy, social administration, and development in the 1970s that scholarly policy analyses, whether in the areas of agriculture or agri-food activities, became consistent throughout academic and policy circles (Lang et al., 2009; French & Phillips, 2004; Maxwell & Slater, 2003; Smith, 2002). By then, social scientists began to question what defined and constituted food policy.

⁵ See Rev. Thomas Malthus 1798 Essay on the Principle of Population as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society

⁶As presented in Anon (1935) National Food Policy: British Association Discussion on Economics of Diet, *Nature*, Vol 136(3442), p.631-3.

As Maxwell and Slater (2003) remark, the notion of food policy was short lived after being captured by the food security discourse of the 1980s, bringing in its wake a shift in emphasis, from *food policy* to *food security*, which in turn guided scholarly attention towards issues of development, hunger and mal-nutrition in the developing world. The question of food policy in the developed world resurfaced in the mid-1990s after a series of food scares in Western Europe, prompting scholarly research to question the nature and effectiveness of food policy when faced with the evidence that food provisioning and consumption had important impacts on health, environmental and social outcomes.

When asked ‘what is food policy?’, Lang and his co-authors reply that ‘*food policy is to food what economic policy is to economics*’ (2009:21). The many threads weaving the food policy landscape suggest that there is not one food policy or one food policy maker (Lang & Heasman, 2004), but a set of policies and policymakers, and that all contribute to the overall process of juggling competing demands of economic performance, public health, environmental sustainability, and social welfare. Although food policy may not appear to be a discipline in itself, we may argue that studying the dynamics at work in food systems makes the analysis of food policy possible. These are the policy dynamics that define the breadth of the policy domain of food, ranging from agricultural policies to those affecting the whole food supply chain (Hawkes et al., 2012).

If most scholars from English speaking countries⁷ tend to accept that the terminology of ‘*food policy*’ represents the envelope of policies that regulate the modern food supply chain, from agricultural sector activities to the processes of transformation and consumption of food, French researchers prefer to keep a degree of differentiation between agricultural, food, and agri-food policies (Fouilleux, 2008; Malassis, 1992). The French literature defines ‘*food policy*’ (*politique alimentaire*) as pertaining to the domains of transformation and consumption of food, and it chooses to use the term ‘*agri-food policy*’ (*politique agroalimentaire*) when referring to the ensemble of policies that regulate the food supply chain in its entirety, including agriculture. This distinction stems from the fact that agricultural and food (understand transformation and consumption) policy domains face different problematics and therefore use distinct instruments, institutional arrangements, and networks to resolve them (Fouilleux, 2008:114).

In the context of this work, the term ‘*food policy*’ is used to represent what French literature assigns as ‘*agri-food*’ policy, or more precisely to represent the collection of policy interventions along the food supply chain or what Lang and his co-authors describe as ‘*including any policy intervention from the field to the table, from inputs to outputs*’ (Lang et

⁷ Although in some circles, food policy is understood as being just a component of the broader food regulatory framework.

al., 2009:21). In other words, the term captures the relationship that exists between the state and the national food provisioning system and as such, it entails any of the state activities in the field of primary production, industrial policies coordinating the transformation and distribution industries, and those initiatives designed to govern patterns of food consumption.

Given that the concept of food policy represents the space where the relationships between state, civil society and the food supply chain are formed and negotiated, the terms on which the integration of food into the capitalist project occurred, are of significance to this research project. Drawing from the rich literature that analyses the social and ecological reorganisations instigated by the emergence of a capitalist world-economy, the next subsections seek to chart and document how agri-food research theorises the development of national food policy over recent times. In particular, I want to examine how the scholarship in the world of food studies can help forge an analytical link between the worlds of food production and consumption. With this precise objective in mind, and as a first instalment, I begin the discussion with two important theorisations that partially illuminate policy thinking at the production and consumption ends — the '*productivist*' paradigm and the notion of '*consumer sovereignty*'.

1.1.2 FOOD POLICY DISCOURSE IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Considering that the genealogy of food policy discourse has been well documented by Lang et al. (2009) and to a certain extent by Maxwell and Slater (2003), it is not my intention to recount the various discourses that have informed food policies over time. Instead, I want to place attention on two important developments in the contemporary history of food policy thinking of rich Western economies, and these are the development of a '*productivist*' paradigm affecting the organisation of food production and the political culture of '*consumer sovereignty*'. Looking at production and consumption as values rather than mere economic processes is a way to reveal the social and political meanings given to food and therefore gradually uncover national policy thinking. This in turn, may help us forge a better understanding of the mechanisms that have set national food and agricultural policies on certain trajectories.

PRODUCTIVISM IN FOOD POLICY DISCOURSE

The chaos in food and agricultural markets experienced during the consecutive war periods not only brought the questions of land productivity and unmet human needs to broader visibility, but also framed agricultural and food policies around a '*productivist*' policy paradigm to maximise production in the interests of food security (Grant, 2005). Productivism is often conceptualised in rural sociology as a commitment to an intensive,

industrially driven, and expansionist agriculture in response to the state project to '*modernise the 'national farm*'" (Lowe et al., 1993:221). As Lang et al. (2009) remark, science plus capital and skills are instrumental to the productivist ideology to raise farm incomes and expand output and productivity. Implicitly, the productivist approach believes in the ability of the state to plan the organisation of its agricultural sector, and this with the support of a very tight policy community. In post-war years, most European countries engaged with the productivist paradigm, with the UK for example, setting up the Agricultural Act 1947, or France engaging in the modernisation project of the national agricultural sector. If some scholars suggest that, under a productivist paradigm national agricultural sectors hold implicitly an unchallenged position⁸ (Cloeke & Goodwin, 1992), others frame productivism as a form of subordination of the rural world to urban capital and political classes (Prevel, 2006). To Prevel (2006), farm subsidies are compensatory mechanisms to maintain the social consensus that has allowed this form of subordination in the name of modernisation, which itself has conflated the productivist principle with the 'positive' connotation of progress.

Without any doubt, the concept of productivism provides a coherent account to understand development of national agricultural policies in post-1945 times (Ward et al., 2008), a period of history associated with a US-dominated global food order and characterised by forces of mass consumption of agricultural commodities supported by an expanding world food trade (Wilson, 2001; Le Heron, 1993; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989). However, the industrialisation of agriculture has become embattled facing ideological, environmental, and structural problems since the mid-1980s (Marsden et al., 1993). The significant tendency of the productivist food system to oversupply and misallocate food resources has resulted in a nutritional transition that not only affected traditional diets, relationships to the land, and cultural rules, but also has led to unprecedented levels of clinical overweight or obesity⁹ (Popkin, 1999).

Just as major public health and environmental challenges became the destabilising agents to the post-war productivist paradigm, explaining the dynamics of a transition towards something '*post*' is the source of some debate. Some interpret changes in public attitude toward conventional circuits of food production, the broadening of the once-tightly knitted policy community, the calls for the gradual dismantling of protectionist agricultural policies, and the transition to sustainable agricultural practices as markers of a shift towards '*post-productivism*' (Wilson, 2001; Marsden et al., 1993; Buttel et al., 1990). Others argue that the notion of '*post-productivism*' is a UK-centric phenomenon since very few international literatures outside the UK analyse the shift in these terms (Buttel et al., 1990). Some prefer

⁸ As the limited regulation of environmentally agricultural harmful practices often demonstrates.

⁹ Worldwide obesity has nearly doubled since 1980 and far more people suffer from abnormal fat levels than hunger Source: World Health Organization (WHO) Factsheet no. 311 - <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/>

to conceptualise the shift as not one single phenomenon but as a multitude of '*post-productivisms*' that are space and time-dependent, occurring simultaneously with productivist practices. Wilson (2001) proposes that the diversity and non-linearity of the observed changes in advanced economies, and in particular in the European Union, are in fact the representation of a '*multifunctional agricultural regime*' (2001:96), where productivist practices and ideologies can co-exist alongside with new modes of agricultural and rural changes.

French scholars argue that the current productivist model, still underpinned by principles of productivity, is capitalising on newly expressed environmental, social, and food safety concerns to promote innovation and, scientific knowledge through a participative approach with the *firm* (and not the state) as the central actor to this renewal (Fouilleux & Goulet, 2012). In a similar vein, Norwegian scholars suggest a form of '*neo-productivism*', which repositions the productivist logic of exporting agricultural sectors with willingness to invest in farming (Bjørkhaug et al., 2012). If Wilson's (2001) interpretation has often been cast as a struggle between agricultural and environmental interests, other social scientists have placed more importance on the ideological framing and agency of particular actors to contend that the shift is in fact, a reinforcement of the dominant neoliberal regime of market productivism, one that promotes larger integration of agriculture into agri-food circuits of capital (Potter & Tilzey, 2005) to explain why some advanced economies (like Australia) have transitioned towards a competitive form of productivism (Andrée et al., 2010; Dibden & Cocklin, 2005).

This brief overview of the scholarly contributions that engage with the paradigmatic development of agricultural policies and the transition towards something '*post*' or something '*multifunctional*', offers several insights. To begin, it offers a temporal scale of how prevailing policy thinking has approached the industrialisation of agriculture over the last few decades. The post-war period signalled the onset of the productivist regime until the mid-1970s¹⁰, a transition to something '*post*' until the 1990s, and since then, a new agricultural regime that combines productivist values with other non-production concerns. The literature also confirms that productivism can coexist with many other non-productivist concerns such as those of environmental sustainability or rural development, equally inferring that there may be many forms of post-productivist policy thinking. Finally, since national responses to '*post-productivist*' concerns have varied considerably across the developed world (Wilson, 2001), a comparative perspective may bring further analytical insights about national dynamics that allowed the reinterpretation of the productivist model and its consequences on the coordination of national food provisioning.

¹⁰ According to Wilson (2001), the breakdown of the US-dominated food order in the mid-1970s may have been the trigger to the transition to something '*post*'.

However, two important dimensions escape the scholarly scrutiny of the agri-food studies literature. In the first instance and echoing Goodman's (2004:12-13) critique, the role of the consumer in the reproduction of these food policy thinking is seldom considered. As Lockie (2002) remarks, the historically productivist bias of social theory has contributed to further distance between the sociology of food *consumption* and *production*, treating consumption as either determined by the forces of production or as a source of demands that producers must meet. Second, by framing farmers as the key stakeholders of the productivist model, the literature obscures how the development of the food transformation and distribution industries have been impacted by these productivist and 'post'-productivist approaches. One would expect that under a productivist model, the food industry would aim at standardising quality and supply, and seek economic return. Alternatively, under a post-productivist environment, one would anticipate a more rigorous regulatory system to ensure the focus on sustainability, animal welfare, and territoriality. Given the limitations of the productivist narrative in dealing with the production/consumption relationships and the transformations undergone by the food industry under this paradigm, this research must call on other perspectives to sharpen the analysis offered by this well-established strand of political economy literature.

CONSUMER SOVEREIGNTY IN FOOD POLICY DISCOURSE

If the primacy of consumption has long been asserted by classical economics, its historical development has been the site of many political contests. For instance, the decline of British consumer cooperative society model so prevalent in post-war years, is explained by the loss of political support from the then Labour Party after its 1951 electoral defeat, and by the increasing hostility from the Conservatives who viewed the cooperative movement as another form of monopoly that constrained freedom of individual consumers (Gurney, 2005). In the US, the creation of a '*Consumer's Republic*' became one of America's post-war political projects, with promises of greater prosperity, equality, and freedom to its citizens (Cohen, 2004). Over time, political ideologies have transformed the consumer-citizen relationship by re-formulating their respective weight and functional association (Trentmann, 2004) to ultimately link access to consumption to a notion of fundamental right, thereby strengthening the conception of the consumer as the quintessential citizen (Kroen, 2004; Stearns, 1997).

The relatively modern notion of '*consumer sovereignty*' not only suggests that consumption is instrumental in mediating many aspects of social relations, but that it also alludes to a form of controlling power exercised by free individuals as an expression of democratic values (Hutt, 1940 in Persky, 1993). If consumer sovereignty rests on a value

judgement that it is desirable to control the economic activity through the act of consumption, this in turn, raises important difficulties with the concept of consumer individual choice and how it is exercised. Many agree that conditions of consumer rationality and quality information, conditions that are so essential to neo-classical economic theory, are at the best of times partially met and that 'consumer power' is seldom activated (Redmond, 2000). Not only consumer decisions are considerably influenced by non-rational considerations, such as cultural norms (Southerton, 2001; Mennell, 1996), economic factors like past and present incomes (Knox, 2005), and social and class orientations (Bourdieu, 1979), but they also suffer from the confusion of profuse information.

These difficulties are especially noticeable in the world of food consumption. Like many other domains of everyday life, decisions around food and eating have fallen into the sphere of individual and personal choice. If in the past, tradition or usage were 'collective templates' to implicitly guide individuals in their eating habits, today's consumer has increasingly been pushed into becoming the master of her own choices (Fischler, 2011). Competing solicitations from the food supply chain and from public authorities have resulted in a mounting cacophony of prescriptions that has made decisions over food consumption even more difficult (Fischler, 2011).

A burgeoning literature exploring the modern consumer food practices is seeking to uncover the influence of health and environmental prescriptions over individual food choices. In spite of cheaper and more abundant food choices being made available in advanced economies, some empirical studies have established that food practices — although greatly influenced by cultural norms — are equally impacted by social position (Plessz & Gojard, 2014; Southerton, 2001). The emerging research also suggests that health and environmental guidelines can be secondary considerations in 'mainstream' food practices. For example, Dixon and Isaacs (2013), situating their research in the '*ecological public health movement*' (Lang et al., 2009), establish that the feasibility of encouraging 'mainstream' Australia consumers¹¹ in making healthy and sustainable food choices without active government support seems highly unlikely. As they found out, food practices of the majority of Australians are primarily driven by considerations of budget and calories rather than by notions of nutrition and sustainability. Recent French research equally suggests that household resources and life-course events are key determinants to consumption prescriptions, which in turn affect food practices (Plessz et al., 2014). If age and household structure play a determining role in food practices, class position is also a mediating factor for changes in food practices, presumably explained by the nature of information gathered by the consumer to influence food choices (Plessz et al., 2014).

¹¹ Dixon & Isaacs (2013) place their attention to the 'mass consumer' rather than the 'alternative consumer'.

Notwithstanding the central role of the social and contextual, can we assume that these modern forces of individualisation of food choices are interpreted similarly across advanced economies? How important is the cultural dimension of our food choices? Fischler and Masson's comparative research (2008) suggests that in Britain, eating has become not only individualised and medicalised, but that personal food preferences are increasingly mitigated by nutritional and health considerations. By contrast, Fischler's (2011) research indicates that French consumers place more emphasis on variety and quality of the food products, and that in France *'representations of 'eating well' are more structured around mealtimes and commensality, in conformity with 'tradition' and usage'* (2011:541). In other words, French people view food and eating more from a social than from a utilitarian perspective, confirming the idea that a 'proper' meal remains culturally-defined.

If the question of food practices is attracting increasing research attention, scholarly analysis is also placed on what we may call the sources of consumer food choices. While large food and grocery retailers may often claim to be consumer oriented and provide what consumers want, there is on-going debate over how demand and food choices are in fact influenced or produced upstream of consumers and not by consumers themselves (Dawson, 2013; Dixon, 2002; Lockie, 2002).

'Consumer choice' not only has become a political ideology shaping our everyday practices, but has equally established new sets of relationships between individuals, markets, and the state (Kjærnes, 2012). Most importantly, consumption as 'choice' has allowed regulatory planning and rules to be shifted from state to consumer-market dynamics, leaving national food policymaking to focus on the declining primary production sector (Lang et al., 2009:36)¹². Demanding changes in consumer behaviours, although important to the policy process, has become politically delicate in a world that relies on market relations within which virtues of economic individualism are linked to some notion of democracy. To instigate changes in consumer food practices, policymakers rely on consumerist and 'soft' policy measures like food labelling, education, or nutritional guidelines to induce behavioural shifts rather than 'hard' policy approaches like bans or fiscal measures (Lang & Barling, 2013). How consumerism is used to engender changes to promote healthier and more sustainable food practices is open to debate, but as Kjærnes (2012) remarks, what may appear as individual choices is part of a much greater social process supported by public debates and collective mobilisation. Although the objectives of informed consent and freedom of choice are laudable, the implications of such discourses run deep. Devolving responsibility onto the individual may not be sufficient to induce the necessary changes towards a new ecological

¹² This shift also explains the often-noticed misappropriation of the term food policy when in fact referring to agricultural policy.

public health policy paradigm. The question of consumer choice is revisited in greater detail in Chapter 4 (the UK) and Chapter 5 (France).

In sum, several insights can be drawn from the scholarship conceptualising the consumption of food. If cultural norms shape food practices, then household budget and resources also contribute to food choices. And, this fact seems to apply to most advanced economies. However, '*consumer choice*' is no natural given and the significance of ideas in collective representations has not escaped contemporary literature. Recent empirical research appears to support Trentmann's (1998) argument that the meaning of '*the consumer*' is a question of collective values disseminated through discursive practices — in other words an '*ideological construction*' (1998:218) — and that the question of '*choice*' is an outcome of the collective representation of food held nationally. These insights will be used as initial propositions to compare how the United Kingdom in Chapter 4 and France in Chapter 5, engage with the intricate policy problems associated with the consumption of food.

1.1.3 FOOD POLICY AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF FOOD

A persistent criticism by observers of food policy is that governments have set the remit of food policy unnecessarily narrowly and that the challenge is now to join-up or link policy areas such as health, environment, employment, social policy, foreign and trade policy sides together to correct policy malfunctions. Scholars from the United Kingdom and more recently from France and Australia, argue that the time has come to re-interpret food policy and that a new ecological public health approach is needed (Friel et al., 2013; Mora & Hubert, 2012; Lang et al., 2009; Barling et al., 2002). These authors advocate for a shifting away from the dominant trade liberalisation-national economic competitiveness paradigm to one that promotes healthy and sustainable diet integrating environmental considerations. In their view, food policy needs '*to integrate to its mix human health, the environment, and social relations*' (Lang et al., 2009:1).

The implications of defining food policy as a space where production, trade, public health, environmental, and social policy issues intersect, all of which vary in influence and constituency, are significant to the analysis proposed by this thesis. It is my understanding that when Lang and his collaborators suggest that food policy needs to be '*sensitive to planetary and ecological demands as to social and human demands*' (2009:7), they reflect on two important sets of tensions at play in the organisation of the modern food system — the separation of social production from its biophysical environment or the Marxist theorisation of

'*metabolic rift*' (Foster, 1999), and the contradictions inherent to the commodification of food between market and non-market practices.

As Moore (2000:125) points out, capitalism is distinguished not only by the dominant role that cities have played in its development, but also by its propensity to '*urbanise the countryside*' and therefore to reorganise social structures and ecology to trap states and agrarian classes in commodity production. By examining where value is added, extracted from nature, appropriated, and distributed, most of the empirical studies in the commodity chain analysis tradition, in fact, document the rupture between social and ecological processes (Guthman, 2002). The 'disconnect' between production and consumption captured in McMichael's (2009a:288) '*food from nowhere*' has created considerable social, spatial, and cognitive distances between producers and consumers, preventing consistent forms of feedback between these two worlds.

Nonetheless, emerging forms of contestation over the productivist philosophy have come to play a role in reallocating power relations within distinct types of food provisioning systems. The emergence of alternative food networks, new rural development practices, organic produces and short supply chains are ways to reconstruct the idea of food quality through the lens of food provenance or environmentally sound production methods. These developments also express a new form of valorisation of the multifunctional forms of agriculture, although as Marsden (2004:136) explains, notions of regional and ecological quality can be (and are in some places¹³) recaptured by mainstream food supply chain channels. As expected, the significance of these short food supply chains varies across countries. Marsden (2004:139) has found that just as these alternative practices are usually taken up by medium sized farm holdings, they were more common in countries like Italy, France, and Germany, and much less developed in the UK, the Netherlands and Ireland. As Marsden (2004) points out, the causality of these differences may lie with the institutional support (through the policy process) of long-lasting traditions of strong national food cultures, and the degree to which these practices survived the productivist approach, rather than with a simple question of natural geography. In any case, Chapters 4 and 5 will reintroduce the reader to this debate and expand on this argument to highlight and explain some of these cross-national variations.

The commodity perspective on food offers a valuable point of entry to the exploration of food policy and food politics in general. Drawing from Arjun Appadurai's (1986) reflections on the political lives of commodities, which contends that politics (in the broad sense of power relations) is the link between exchange and value, it becomes then possible to conceive that the commodification of food takes various forms across different advanced economies. In a pure production regime, the commodification of food can be construed by

¹³ Marsden (2004:139) shows for instance that the sale of organic food products in the UK is dominated by corporate retailing chains (70%+).

the laws of supply and demand. Alternatively, in socially regulated environments, exchange calls on other non-monetary modes of valuation to ascribe a value to the food commodity. Since the divergence of interests frames the political contest in any specific regime of value (Appadurai, 1986:30), one may advance that different political economies create different value systems to build a palette of meanings to the food commodity, and to its exchange value, in particular.

If food was to be viewed primarily for its non-tradable qualities to human nourishment and survival, national public policies regulating the workings of the food system would most likely integrate some, if not all, of the policy subsystems that make up food policy, like agriculture, industrial policies, environment services, and public health initiatives. The most memorable examples of policy integration are those pertaining to the successive world war periods when governments coordinated national food policies very closely, confirming that when necessary, food can be considered for something more than just its exchange-value.

By contrast, if food is to be considered only for its commodity attributes to generate surplus, compensation for the provision of food becomes predicated on the creation of market mechanisms for each of the areas implicated in the provision and consumption of food. In this instance, food related policies tend to focus on specific individual domains and ignore the implications that one policy area might have on another. Therefore, a highly commodified food system not only would place importance on the exchange specificities of the food commodity, but would also tend to distance production from consumption, health, and the environment.

In sum, the important claim to rethink the health-environment-society nexus (Lang et al., 2009) calls effectively for reconsidering the extent to which food systems are commodified. It further suggests that apparent distances between policy subsystems within the world of food — such as between primary production and environmental services, or between food manufacturing and public health policy — become indicators of the degree of commodification of the food system under study. If food policy resembles an immense collection of commodity driven policies, from agricultural commodities to processed food, from environmental services to healthcare provision, there is little surprise that any of these food commodity-related policy domains are dealt with independently of each other. This is what the subsequent chapters of this thesis aim at uncovering in greater theoretical and empirical detail — the extent to which national food policies have constructed and maintained commodification processes, and the implications of these policy approaches for the development and organisation of national food provisioning.

Both discourses, productivism and consumer sovereignty, belong to the story of how land and labour have been progressively substituted by capital, how this transition has required food commodities to be produced for their exchange rather than their use value, and how nation-states receptive to economic interests have negotiated some of the tensions associated with the commodification of food. To link these particular discourses of food production and consumption to the historical process of capitalist accumulation, I turn to the historically contingent '*food regime*' theory to examine the global and international dynamics against which national agricultural and food policies have developed.

1.2 A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE TO FOOD POLICY

Complementing the many accounts of global political economy that discuss the global-local dichotomy¹⁴, the '*food regime*' literature (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989) analyses the hegemonic role of global circuits of capital in orchestrating global-scale food relations. It offers a distinct analytical perspective to understand the different periods of global capitalism. As Dixon and Campbell (2009) once argued, by asking where and how food is produced and consumed in the international political economy, the food regime perspective helps broaden the focus of research from the narrow analytical vantage point of '*point of production*' to the wider field of interrelationships between food production and consumption. It also provides greater recognition of historical and spatial dynamics involved in the integration of agriculture into the capitalist project rather than the simple path dependency of industrialisation.

Linking the dynamics of the global political economy of food to distinct forms of capital accumulation (the 'regimes') with geographical and historical specificity since the 1870s is a useful perspective when examining the development of national food systems over time. In particular, it provides a synthetic view of key international dynamics against which the development of national food provisioning can be contextualised when considering — the development of the nation-state system and its dominant ideological underpinnings, international patterns of trade and division of labour, and the relations between national agricultural and industrial sectors. Food regime theory may help explain some of the causal factors that have set national food policies on certain trajectories, and explain times of crises, transformations, and transitions to new paradigms. What follows summarises the key formulations and claims of food regime analysis.

¹⁴ Such as commodity chain analysis (Friedland, 1984), the French '*filières*' approach or the concept of 'food network' (Marsden & Arce, 1993).

1.2.1 THE FOOD REGIME FORMULATION

By identifying patterns of circulation of food according to a '*rule-governed structure of production and consumption of food on a world scale*' (Friedmann, 1993:30-1), the food regime perspective focuses on the pivotal role of food and agriculture since 1870, in the transformation of capitalism, in geopolitics, and in the overall global political economy. Indeed, the conceptualisation of the first two regimes, the 'settler colonial' regime (1870-1914) and the 'surplus' regime (1947-1970s), inform how hegemonic forces supported by technological advancement and other institutional tools have established world food orders. Friedmann and McMichael (1989:94-5) argued that as '*agriculture became an industrial sector*' (shifting from end use to industrial inputs), a transnational process of accumulation was organised where '*agriculture became incorporated within accumulation itself*'. The authors conclude that '*the growing power of capital*' over the organisation of agriculture has curtailed many of state policy initiatives, including those aiming at the preservation of rural peasant communities (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989:95).

This first 'settler colonial' food regime spanning between 1870 and 1910s, became a period of history that witnessed the development of the European industrial specialisation that built the foundations for the modern nation-states (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989:94). It was characterised by mass production of temperate food, including grains and meat, in the settler states to provide a growing workforce with 'wage-food' in industrialising Europe and to fuel Britain's 'workshop of the world' model, in particular. This flow of food and raw materials allowed European capital to avoid the limits to accumulation set by landed property and its high food prices (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989:101). In return, settler states imported European manufactured goods, labour, and capital. The authors contend that the food and goods circuits set in place during the first regime shaped twentieth century expansion of industrial and agricultural activities, and promoted agricultural production in settler regions based on principles of comparative advantage.

In response to the agrarian crisis of the 1930s and with a specific policy focus on the production of commodities rather than supporting rural development initiatives, US agriculture and food sectors entered an era of subsidised surplus exports, dominating international commodity markets to ultimately erode the self-sufficiency of importing countries. Under American hegemony, the second 'surplus' food regime (1947-1970s) used food surpluses to build strategic import dependence as well as to encourage a geopolitically motivated industrialisation of the 'Third World' to '*secure loyalty against communism and to imperial markets*' (McMichael, 2009b:141; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989:104). The new

food order also needed to reinforce the ‘development project’¹⁵ if it wanted to universalise the ‘national’ model of economic development with the adoption of green revolution technologies and major land reforms. A model of agricultural industrialisation took form, setting the scene for a new international division of labour. It is under the surplus food regime, later renamed by Friedmann the ‘mercantile-industrial’ regime, that the organising principle of the world economy shifted from state to capital converting national farm lobbies into corporate lobbies.

The second food regime — dominated by geopolitical power blocs, northern power and southern dependency — came to an end with the instability in world markets in the 1970s. Most food regime scholars argue that, since the inception of neoliberal globalism as the dominant ideology in the mid-1980s, we are transitioning into a third regime. Although a number of consistent features have already been identified to define the third regime, the analysis is still producing differing characterisations. For instance, if McMichael (2005) envisages a ‘corporate’ food regime as a successor to the ‘surplus’ regime, Friedmann (2005) prefers a ‘corporate-environmental’ food regime perspective, while Otero and Pechlaner (2010) argue for a ‘neoliberal’ food regime’ supported by the ‘neoregulation’ of agriculture. By contrast, Pritchard (2009) argues against a third food regime so far, and instead, interprets the incorporation of agriculture into the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a carryover of the crisis of the second food regime, which it is incapable of resolving. Despite these various characterisations, most agree that the basis of the third regime, if it comes to existence, will be one centred on the political elimination of barriers to capital in social and natural relations (McMichael, 2005). As a result, power over the food system will be in the hands of a concentrated number of corporate actors.

Central to the articulation of the third regime and, in particular to McMichael’s ‘corporate’ food regime, is the idea that the ‘development project’ has been replaced by the ‘globalisation project’, which in itself was pivotal for the integration of agriculture into international trade agreements through the creation of the WTO. The creation of the WTO at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round in 1994, was instrumental in expanding the reach of international trade policy into what had been considered national domains, like food safety, standardisation, and intellectual property rights. Not only had its reach expanded, but through a system of dispute settlement, the WTO had also acquired powers to impose sanctions on sovereign governments. In turn, these developments became a recipe for conflict between ‘North’ and ‘South’, but also amongst developed economies, between the US and the European Union (EU), and within the EU between France and the UK. The stalling of the current Doha Development Round is a reminder that these conflicts are still present and undermine the viability of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) which is ‘an

¹⁵ McMichael defines the ‘development project’ as a politically orchestrated initiative following the Second World War, incorporating postcolonial states into an imperial field of power to legitimise and expand capitalist markets as the vehicle of ‘national’ economic growth and modernity’ (McMichael, 2009(b):141).

attempt to bring the mercantile rules of agri-food into line with liberal rules for manufacturing (Friedmann, 2009:339). Nothing represents the polarised attitudes to agriculture better than the divergent positions about the directions of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with the Cairns group (in which Australia is one of the leading players), highly cynical about CAP references to non-trade concerns, believing these to be a new term for the old habit of protectionism.

1.2.2 THE MISSING GUESTS

Commentaries on the preponderance of contributions to the food regime literature from former settler states (United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada) are particularly worth noting (Le Heron & Lewis, 2009). These authors interpret these contributions as a reflection of the fact that the food regime perspective articulates the restructuring of these white settler economies. Food regime theory is predominantly the story of Anglo-centric hegemony-settler relations, bearing little attention to the dynamics operating outside Anglo countries in this historical world-order development. Although the food regime perspective offers valuable insights into the nature of political, economic, cultural, and ideological pressures exercised by hegemonic entities over what we may call the 'subordinate' economies, it does not concern itself with the impacts over and from jurisdictions of international economic and political influence.

Of course, the development of most national food policies within the developed world coincides with the cycles articulated by the food regime meta-narrative. For instance, the remodelling of agriculture into an industrialised sector under the second food regime period links to productivist policy paradigm, that was adopted by most Western industrial countries and exemplified by the highly production-centred European Union Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the time. The neoliberal approach that characterises the third food regime resonates with the waves of CAP reforms of recent years and supports the rise and importance of corporate actors in the development of national food systems. However, placing strong emphasis on the driving forces of international institutions over patterns of production, trade, and consumption, tends to obscure national institutional arrangements and sideline local agency in mediating the dynamics of globalisation or temper its implementation (Pechlaner & Otero, 2010).

One of the contributions made by this project is to examine the extent to which the reorganisation of national food and agricultural policies outside the Anglo-centric world, conforms to the patterns theorised by the food regime perspective. McMichael (2000:241) acknowledges *'there is a substantial arena of food production and consumption beyond that*

of the food regime'. Therefore, is it possible to imagine that nations maintain different and non-convergent 'varieties of food policy' by re-interpreting at national levels global dynamics?

1.3 FOOD POLICY IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

As Ward and Almås (1997) remark, differences at the local level remain an obvious feature of the agri-food systems of capitalist economies by virtue of the continuing importance of local and national cultures and histories. My objective here is to review some of the most important contributions that explore the *global-national* dynamics and the modern restructuring of national food systems in the face of trends like globalisation, neo-liberalism, or financialisation. The scope of this review is limited to contributions that explain at both theoretical and empirical levels, the ideological and institutional dynamics forging the developmental trajectories of national agriculture and food policies. Of particular interest to this study are the contributions analysing — either the transformative capacity of the state to re-interpret global forces, or the role of policies in sheltering national policies and their actors from international pressures to ultimately reinforce existing differences.

1.3.1 EXPLAINING CHANGES – FROM GLOBAL TO NATIONAL

Not surprisingly, a large body of work examining the question of globalisation (and its impacts on national agricultural sectors and food policy in general), has flourished over the last 40 years, offering a broad range of context in which empirical studies have been grounded (Ward & Almås, 1997; Murdoch, 1995; Bonanno et al., 1994). In his account of how Australia constructed and secured neo-liberalism as a vision for its agricultural policy, Pritchard (2005a) persuasively demonstrates that the transformation of the Australian agricultural policy since the mid-1970s has been possible through the ability of a dominating policy community to impose an ideological position of trade liberalisation. Pritchard (2005a; 2005b) furthers his argument by concluding that not only the construction but also the maintenance of the neo-liberal ideological position has been made possible through the systemic exaggeration of the benefits of these policies, and the policy silences over its costs.

When analysing how entrenched neo-liberal economics are in the development of agricultural policy in Australia, Botterill (2005) tests and confirms the assumption that policy change is more likely to happen in an environment of looser network structures. As an outsider to larger trading blocs and as a semi-peripheral frontier nation dependent on the export of bulk commodity goods, Australia has had greater economic imperatives to

deregulate agriculture because of its comparative advantage in the production of coarse grains and beef (Cockfield & Botterill, 2012; Vanclay, 2003). The Australian agrarian narrative, which has not only reinforced policy directions but also entrenched market liberalism within key interest groups and political parties, has also led to spasmodic political interest in questions of rural development and issues of environmentalism¹⁶. However, the adverse implications of the national restructuring of Australian agriculture on rural communities and the environment are here to stay (Vanclay, 2003), what Gray and Lawrence (2001) call a '*global misfortune*'.

The enquiry into the role of government in a period of intensifying globalisation is a central focus to research in state capacity and globalisation. For instance, by examining the structural evolution of agricultural policy in France, Coleman and Chiasson (2002) suggest a transformative capacity of the state to re-interpret the state-society relations, both vertically and horizontally. Their account describes how the French state was able to reconstitute its relations with the agri-food sector to pursue an adjustment policy to globalisation on its own terms, by shifting from a bipartite corporatist policy networks to more open multipartite corporatism. This transformative capacity of the state is echoed by Levy et al. (2006), who refute the predominant interpretation of *dirigiste* rollback in France, and argue that changes and policy innovations must be understood as new state interventions rather than a decaying state activism. The role of ideas is often underestimated in determining the transformative capacity of the state, as 'weak state' theories tend to overstate the limitations of state administrative and organisational capabilities (Roederer-Rynning, 2007). Roederer-Rynning (2007) demonstrates how French 'farm conservatism' and its policy entrepreneurs won the European Union support in resisting the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and concludes that the politics of ideas (which are supported by a broad segment of the French population in opposing agricultural retrenchment) is as important as the politics of farm interests.

In attempting to explain the Europe Union's transformative experiences, the study of policy change has gone from a focus centred on explaining processes of formation of a European sphere to a new attention concentrating on the process of national adjustment to the EU (Schmidt & Radaelli, 2004). It is often argued that practices of harmonisation of national policies with international standards involve complex processes, in which national sovereignty becomes increasingly dispersed as corporations, trading partners, and domestic political actors participate to the processes (Dibden et al., 2011). If the question of 'policy fit' somehow dictates how a country is faring in harmonising with EU policies, Schmidt and Radaelli (2004) remind us that fits and misfits are politically constructed and that the 'goodness of fit' is predicated on subjective understandings and actors' preferences.

¹⁶ It is estimated that in 2005 US\$1,514 was spent per farm on NRM program in the UK while only US\$453 was spent per farm in Australia (Cockfield & Botterill, 2012:347).

Moving away from 'reductionist' notions that change is driven by changing regimes of capitalist accumulation, other 'actor-centred' approaches, sensitive to the role of social action, provide a counter-narrative to the structural analysis offered in the sociology of development (Arce & Marsden, 1993). For example, the actor network theory (Marsden et al., 1993) views power of interest representation as an outcome rather than a cause of social action, and explains the coming into existence and strengthening of networks that emerge from norms and shared visions of the world. However, in spite of its distinct ability to focus on the dynamics of policy change, the network perspective does not lend itself to the study of important historical transitions and societal shifts as the structuralist approach does (Ward & Almås, 1997). Therefore, it partially fails to explain why some policy discourses come into existence and not others by side-lining questions about the power relations within national policy environments and the role of broader historical moments.

What states can and cannot do under the pressures of globalisation remains the central question. I argue that the answer rests with the 'capacity' of the state to transform its relationships with societal actors. Because states remain the fundamental units for territorial and political organisation, adjusting to globalisation finds its answers first in the role played by the state in reconstructing state-society relations (Coleman & Chiasson, 2002). However, states are not monolithic structures (Weiss, 1998) and changes cannot be implemented by the state alone, but through its linkages with national policy communities and sectoral actors. Therefore, policy changes become then mediated through the strengths and weaknesses, cohesion, and influences of policy communities (see for example, Pritchard, 2005a and Botterill, 2005).

1.3.2 NATIONAL FOOD POLICIES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Despite the breadth of analytical contributions discussing the dynamics between the *global* and the *national* food provisioning, most of the existing comparative literature in the field of *food policy* is quite specific in focus. Contributions are found to discuss distinct aspects of national food policy in comparative perspective whether in the field of agriculture, environmental protection, or covering matters of nutrition and public health. However, the analysis of the mechanisms involved in the development of food-related policies as an integrated process between health, the environment and social issues is currently under-developed in sociology and political sciences.

Agricultural policy is one of the most visible fields of comparative enquiry in studying the impacts of globalisation and the implications of freer agricultural trade for rural development or environmental policies. The European Union (EU) as a key player in the

WTO process, is often used as an example of resistance to agricultural neoliberalisation to contrast the European model with more liberalised forms of agricultural trade. For example, Dibden et al. (2009) bring the EU '*multifunctional agriculture*' under comparative light with Australian '*competitive productivism*' to show that the compatibility of market rule with agri-environmental sustainability is in both cases contested and accommodated differently. The concept of agricultural multifunctionality is also used by Bjørkhaug and Richards (2008) to compare the national agricultural policy regimes of Norway and Australia and in particular, their approach towards rural decline and environmental problems. Acknowledging that particularities of national contexts and modes of governance explain how policymakers use different principles and tools to implement the concept nationally (Daniel & Perraud, 2009), some contributions shed light on the influence of institutional arrangements over ideological principles. Dibden et al. (2013) use Australia and Britain as case studies to demonstrate that, despite a shared commitment to neoliberal forms of governing, Britain's EU membership and Australia's relative focus on production issues (rather than consumption) have both proven to be key determinants to national attitudes towards agricultural biotechnology. Whereas the UK does not allow the commercial cultivation of Genetically Modified (GM) foods ¹⁷(although the importation of some GM foods into the UK is allowed), Australia has authorised the commercial production of GM cotton and canola while allowing the importation of a wider range of GM foods (soybean, potatoes, corn, sugar beet, lucerne, wheat, and rice)¹⁸.

Food consumption is also the object of much comparative analysis: many of these cross-national comparisons explore the causalities of specific food consumption patterns within varying research traditions. However, much of this comparative analysis is grounded in the hard sciences of health and nutrition, and focuses on collecting cross-national data to profile national patterns of food consumption. Conversely, just as social science research places greater attention on the incidence of social, environmental and policy factors over food choices to articulate the relationship between socioeconomic, gender, class or culturally related drivers and food diets in specific political economies, its focus tends to be national rather than cross-national. Furthermore, whilst it acknowledges the influence of public policy over patterns of food consumption, social sciences contributions have yet to theorise an interpretative framework to decipher the causal mechanisms over food choices in relation to national policy environments.

¹⁷ The European Union does not grow GMOs.

¹⁸ Source: Food Standards New Zealand Australia – Current GM Applications and Approvals. July 2017.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Is there any general benefit in looking at food policy through the prism of the integrated health-environment-society nexus as proposed by Lang et al. (2009), to explain why the qualitative differences in the organisation of national food provisioning of advanced economies? This chapter argues that there is. By revealing some of the fundamental tensions caused by the commodification of food, the integrated food policy framework offers a valuable point of entry to the exploration of food policy and food politics in general. I have made the case that a highly segregated collection of policy subsystems is in fact a representation of the extent to which nation-states have embedded the notion of food commodification into their food-related policy agenda. Furthermore, this perspective suggests an analytical thread that links the conceptualisation of food policy by the state with its explicit or implicit intervention in the coordination of national food provisioning. As many food policy observers contend (Dixon & Isaacs 2013; Friel et al., 2013; Lang et al. 2009), linkages between the several policy domains that relate to the production, distribution and consumption of food do exist and that time has come for the state and its policymakers to re-interpret the remit of food policy along the health-environment-society nexus.

Apart from learning about the important moments and dynamics that have punctuated the developments of modern food policy discourse in advanced political economies, this chapter has identified why the question of cross-national differences in the coordination of food provisioning cannot only be answered by the productivist paradigm. In fact, not only does the production-based theorisation tend to omit the links between practices of consumption and the sphere of production, but by placing its analytical focus on agricultural policy, it obscures the transformations undergone by the food industry. The international literature in the field of consumption confirms that the socially important idea of a 'proper' meal is culturally defined: the meaning of '*the consumer*' is a question of collective values disseminated through discursive practices, and that the notion of '*choice*' is an outcome of a national collective representation of food. In sum, the politics of consumer choice, and therefore of consumer sovereignty, present significant differences across countries.

The food regime perspective offers a valuable historicised understanding of the political role of food in the organisation of the world economy, from which individual national case studies can be brought into examination. Notwithstanding that the strength of the structural analysis lies in understanding the development of food provisioning within the hegemon-settler relation (the United Kingdom and Australia for example), this analysis, however, misses the complexities of national bargaining while bearing little detailed attention to the roles played by other advanced economies in the theorised global food orders. The question of national autonomy is indeed a very important dimension in explaining cross-

national variations. If the comparative political economy literature acknowledges the significance of internationalising and globalising forces on national dynamics, it also reminds us not to exaggerate their effects on state capacity. After all, as Coleman and Chiasson (2002:170) argue, states occupy the centre-stage in the political organisation of the globe and therefore national approaches to adjusting and integrating globalisation forces are likely to vary.

Asking why national food provisioning systems of advanced economies differ in their organisation and priority settings is also enquiring about the role of the state in shaping the logic underpinning how food is being produced, distributed, and consumed nationally. Just as much of the reviewed literature concurs with the idea that the state continues to play a pivotal role in such logic, most of the contributions in the *comparative political economy* literature tend to limit their comparative enquiries to the field of agricultural policies. However, the study of national food policy, as it is understood by this research (- i.e. as integrating food-related concerns of public health, environmental and social impacts) is to this day under-explored. This is one of the contributions offered by this research project — to broaden our understanding as to how and why different conceptions of national food policy exist.

Answering the question as to why different political systems engage with similar food problems in different ways is, in many ways, to identify the causal mechanisms that have set food-related policy trajectories in place. To bring a sharper focus on the dynamics of national bargaining and the relative influence of political, cultural, economic, and environmental factors over the coordination of food provisioning, it becomes necessary to call on other social sciences traditions to complement both the historicised structural analysis of the food regime theory and the broader comparative political economy analysis. Food provisioning systems consist of a multitude of actors and organisations operating according to particular institutional logics and distributional principles. If historically these institutional arrangements have led to political struggles between opposing interests, the provisioning of food has also incorporated values and ideologies from larger cultural contexts through which food systems have developed and operated. However, the nexus ideas-institutions-interests often leads to a variety of outcomes. Sharing similar principles but with varying institutional structures, two countries may coordinate very differently the provisioning of food at a national scale. In the following chapter, I attempt to develop an approach that better captures these key relationships and issues that are nationally and contextually defined in a globalised environment. I do so, by placing the analytical focus on what has been recently earmarked as a useful comparative instrument by an emerging American political science community — the *policy regime construct*.

CHAPTER 2 –ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

International pressures or changes are often evoked to explain the adoption of certain policies. But, the question remains as to whether nation states are still able to pursue adjustments that maintain and sustain cross-national differences rather than adopting uniform responses in the face of these external forces. Scholarship interested in the development of political economic orders has highlighted the importance of policy styles, institutional arrangements, and the dynamics of pressure politics in determining how different capitalist models mitigate the increasing interconnection of markets (Hall & Soskice, 2001; Amable, 2003). However, whether it is through the lens of national market governance as argued by the *Varieties of Capitalism* literature (Hall & Soskice, 2001) or through analysis of path dependency, these scholarly debates suggest that there is more than one 'ideal' way to implement market policy.

Both theoretical and empirical literatures in the field of food studies place little attention to understand cross-national differences in national food policies. At a theoretical level, the works of Lang and his collaborators (2004, 2009) illuminate the question of food policy as an integrative process of health, environment, and social policy issues. In turn, the food regime perspective (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009) uncovers historically grounded global dynamics to situate and explain not only the waves of agricultural modernisation that set in motion the productivist paradigm in advanced economies, but also the development of consumerist 'soft' policies as an extension of the regulatory policy process. This research project seeks to explore the idea that national food systems of advanced political economies have developed over time according to distinct policy logics, which are broadly defined by the relations between state and food economy. If historical events are influential in how food systems come to be organised, the influence of the state, actors along the food supply chain as well as social attitudes to food are equally important in shaping the policies and the politics surrounding the governance of food, revealing degrees of national policy autonomy in the organisation of food provisioning.

The literature in the field of food and agrarian studies ranges from some of ‘grand theorising’ scope to others much more specific and narrow in focus. But what is clear is that none of the contributions is offering an explanation as to why organising principles underpinning individual national food systems vary across advanced economies. **This is the gap that this works aims to contribute** — to offer an explanation as to why and how national food systems in advanced political economies differ.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the assumptions underpinning this research and outline the research strategy adopted to carry out this project. By defining the scope and limitations of the research design, the chapter situates the research at the cross-road between the existing research traditions of political economy and policy studies.

The methodological assumption proposed by this research is that there is value in complementing the toolkit offered by the political economy approach with a sharper nationally-focused analytical tool — the concept of *the policy regime*. Adopting a policy regime approach within a historical-institutional context is one way to reconcile the structure-agency dualism (since the regime construct recognises that structures are socially constructed and reproduced through the actions of real people), and to understand why nation-states are likely to adopt very different policy responses when faced with similar food-related problems.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the policy regime approach and to demonstrate that such an analytical lens — when combined with the broader historical institutional approach — offers valuable insights in explaining the variations in food provisioning systems of selected advanced capitalist economies. Therefore, the chapter is organised as follows. It begins by outlining the research process used in this project while discussing how the approach taken here departs from traditional research methodology. The chapter continues by presenting the policy regime approach to uncover how spaces of policy implementation become political spaces. In its third section, the chapter examines how the policy regime construct allows for the study of socio-political dimension of change so important to understand national variations of sectoral policy environments, and offers some discussion on the dynamics, scope, and modes of allocation of a policy regime. The chapter concludes by commenting on the relevance of the proposed theoretical framework to the comparative study of national food provisioning and its policy environment.

2.1 CONSIDERATIONS OVER METHODS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 1 has highlighted how the existing body of food studies literature does not offer an appropriate theoretical framework to understand variants of food policy logics. The

task of Chapter 2 (and Chapter 3) is to suggest an analytical construct that overcomes some of the analytical barriers and fill some of the analytical gaps identified in the existing literature.

This project proposes to complement the toolkit offered by the political economy approach with a sharper nationally-focused analytical tool — the concept of *the policy regime*. The policy regime construct is a recent development of American political scientists that has not yet being widely disseminated. However, the construct allows us to bring aspects of food production, transformation, and consumption in a novel way to the existing agri-food research of comparative scope. In order to identify the causal mechanisms and causal paths that have structured the development of food policy logics across borders, the construct is used to analyse the governing patterns of key food-related policy areas by examining the forces that propel the policy trajectories through the prism of shared ideas, interest representation, and institutional architecture (also referred to as the 3'I's).

The research strategy adopted here is to apply the 3'I's conceptual framework to two primary national case studies and then 'test run' the framework on a partial case study. Considering the highly conceptual nature of the problematic presented here, no fieldwork has been conducted. Since this thesis is primarily of a conceptual nature, the aim is to test the application of the policy regime construct, rather than to develop new empirical data on the organisation of food systems. A number of rich empirical studies already exist on various aspects of food systems in each of the case study countries. At an empirical level, the thesis draws together both contemporary and historical studies of agriculture, food processing, and food consumption, and seeks to re-interpret this data through the framework of the 3'I's. Analytically, the thesis asks if such a framework helps us to identify and compare nation-specific logics in the development of food systems, and thus adds to the existing analytical tools used in both the food policy and food regime literatures.

2.1.1 A POLICY REGIME APPROACH

Although the regime model has been prominent in many social science traditions such as, for instance, international relations or the welfare state literature, it is still a quite new concept to the public policy literature. Theories of the policy process are many and most have shared theoretical emphasis on either agenda setting (Kingdon, 1984), policy networks (Thatcher, 1998; Marsh & Rhodes, 1992), policy feedback (Pierson, 1993) or the politics-policy connection, just to name a few. The latest scholarship on policy regime theory comes to complement this existing literature. As with the international regime literature, the

emerging policy regime literature argues that policy regimes develop typically around specific issue areas such as environmental protection, education, or in this case food.

A policy regime is a context-like environment in which agendas are set, solutions are articulated and policies are designed and implemented. To policy scholars tackling questions of '*boundary-spanning*' and policy integration, the construct is a useful tool to study historically specific configurations of governing arrangements (Eisner, 2013) that bring some semblance of order and cohesion to disparate policy arenas (Jochim & May, 2010). It becomes possible to examine the degree to which policy integration is achieved, if any, by identifying sense of shared purpose, institutional cohesion, and mobilising efforts of key players (May et al., 2011).

Policy regimes are different from the commonly used policy cycle framework. Whereas policy cycle aims at explaining the process of policy development, the policy regime seeks to explain why policies develop the way they do in a way that conceives the policy environment as a terrain of political choices between a range of possible paths orchestrated by the actions of the state. To date, the complexities of climate change policies (Woods et al., 2012), energy policy regimes (Worsham, 2013), homeland security (May et al., 2011), energy transition policies (Sergent, 2014), or contemporary US food politics (Sheingate, 2012;2014) have been examined under the prism of the policy regime approach.

WHY A POLICY REGIME APPROACH?

Just as the process and dynamics of policy change are important considerations in the study of policy regimes, the main purpose of this project is also to understand how and why policy differences persist in between national contexts over time. For this reason, the analytical focus of this research is to be placed on the nature of changes such as the elaboration of decision-making and policy outcomes rather than the forms that policy changes take — e.g. incremental/layered or sudden changes. In the case study chapters that follow, this thesis examines the nature of governing arrangements and their changing forms through the lens of the **3'I's** of the policy regime construct: from a political economy tradition to ascertain the degree of nation-state agency and autonomy, and, in a comparative international context.

As a way of analysing a policy domain as complex as the one governing national food provisioning, the policy regime appears to be suitable for many reasons. To begin, the theoretical approach '*transcends the narrow focus on discrete public policies*' (Eisner, 2013:2) and offers scope to interrogate narratives of national food governance. By placing policy at the centre of governing arrangements across multiple policy domains, the policy

regime allows us to study variations in modes of governance by capturing the dynamics involved in the coordination of these interrelated policy elements. In particular, it helps form an overarching understanding of what may guide different sectoral policy networks (like agriculture, food processing or public health) in designing specific policies. It also provides an invaluable descriptive and analytical tool for a cross-national comparative perspective, as it constructs a framework against which different national policy environments may be examined and evaluated. Furthermore, the conception of policy regime presents important affinities with the broader public policy literature when invoking the roles of ideas, interests, and institutions to describe the arrangements of political authority. Finally, the policy regime construct allows us to capture the enduring features and regular patterns of public policy while apprehending at the same time the ongoing process of institutional change, and offering a way to resolve the dualism of regime stability and policy change (Sheingate, 2012).

The complexity encountered in the analysis of national food governance is in many ways like those encountered in these other multi-dimensional policy environments. As such, the provisioning of food at national levels is not only organised around political institutions and social structures, but it also incorporates values and ideologies — captured under the term of ‘ideas’ in the 3I’s framework — from larger historical and cultural contexts. Given that I am interested in choices made by governments in coordinating national food policy agendas, my purpose here is to develop a framework that allows the analysis of national food policy by focusing on the policy logics that have underpinned the development of national food systems over time. A regime approach seems more suitable to this project than the alternative of individual policy analysis.

Regime theories in their abstraction encourage understandings of the world in a synthetic yet nuanced form (Buttel, 2001), and offer representations of a reality, that cannot be otherwise explained by ‘universal’ laws. Regime perspectives create typologies and models to suggest multi-dimensional characterisation of specific configurations of policies. However, the interactions between political systems, economic structures and policy domains tend not to be examined in detail by the traditional institutional regime literature¹⁹. This is where the policy regime construct brings further insight. By questioning the ideational, institutional, and coalitional cohesion of policy subsystems, it helps outline the policy regime’s contours. Whereas the traditional regime literature engages with analytical projects of ‘national’ or ‘international’ breadths, the policy regime construct allows a finer analytical lens to reveal the interplay and policy feedbacks at sectoral levels that give cohesion, legitimacy, and longevity to public policies and their political contexts (May & Jochim, 2013). As such, the policy regime approach may help unveil industry logics and governance mechanisms that shape relationships of competition, cooperation, and market

¹⁹ Although, as Mabbett and Bolderson (1999) note, Esping-Anderson analyses these interactions to some extent in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990).

engagement within specific policy environments. However, at a broader policy area level (in our case food) this approach makes it possible to outline governing practices and institutional arrangements between the different actors (from different policy subsystems) through which collective issues are framed, legitimised, and institutionalised.

Regime analysis has also its detractors. In her critique of the theory of international regimes, Susan Strange (1982) argued that the notion of regime was '*woolly and imprecise*' where it overlooked the questions of power and the dynamics of change. For Strange, regimes, if they can be said to exist at all, have little or no impact on outcomes. However, her structural orientation conceptualises a world of rational self-interested actors in which systems or environments are defined by actors' interests, power, and interaction. In doing so, this approach gives little attention on principles or values in analysing social phenomena. This research and the policy regime approach in particular, cautions against such interest-based economic conception, although it may accept some of the basic analytic assumptions of such structural approach. Instead, I contend that policy decisions may be more importantly rooted in national identities, historical, and cultural characteristics than solely anchored in interest-based representations of economic life.

Another critique of the regime approach is that it tends to oversimplify the problem of scale. The concern here relates to the generalisation of the notion of regime and its capacity in capturing the complexity of policymaking within each country. To some extent, the comparative case study approach taken by this project addresses this critique as it observes national institutional structures and patterns of political mobilisation involved in the development of public policy. Accordingly, the case study approach examines national 'models' at work. Furthermore, the historical analysis that supports the comparative case study approach makes it possible to locate specific instances of political choice on a larger policy trajectory. Finally, the policy regime is not so much the cumulative result of public policy choices, but it is about the interplay between ideas, interests, and institutions over time offering possibly the systemic features to examine why national food provisioning systems differ across industrialised economies.

Finally, this theoretical project needs to pay explicit attention to the mechanisms involved in granting durable and stable governing authority. If it is important to examine what sustains the organisation of food provisioning at any point in time, the question of change is also central to this discussion. Whereas major historical developments have transformed how individual national food provisioning systems have come to be organised in advanced industrial countries, these developments have given rise to a diversity of policy responses that have maintained cross-national differences. Therefore, the search for explanatory factors to account for these different responses and outcomes is twofold. In the first instance, it is important to understand how change is interpreted and implemented at the

national level since it ultimately sets policy trajectory. Then, it is important to understand why policy differences persist between national contexts and the nature of these differences in order to shed light on how the state coordinates industrial change in the face of changing international pressures and maintain and reproduce policy choices. The premise of this chapter is that an historical institutional account complemented by a policy regime approach is an appropriate theoretical framework to undertake such analysis.

2.1.2 A CASE STUDY APPROACH

Developing research methodologies to provide cross-national analysis that has explanatory power often underlines the problems involved in choosing the appropriate comparative analytical tool. This thesis could have opted for the study of individual case studies in an historical institutional tradition, using inductive and interpretative methods to understand the interaction between interest groups, policymakers, and social attitudes in the development of individual policy subsystems such as agriculture, food safety, or nutritional guidelines. Using this line of methodology, the project then would have attempted to highlight commonalities in between case studies and develop a thesis about the reasons why national food systems converge or differ in the respective policy sub-domains. However, since it would be incorrect to assume that national food policy is the sum of the nation's policies relating to the provisioning and consumption of food, this approach would fail to provide a comparative tool allowing for the study of governance dynamics in a cross-national perspective. Instead, the interest of this project must lie in understanding how the state conceptualises food policy and the coordination of its national food provisioning. For this reason, I have chosen to broaden the study to the sets of relationships and dynamics that give shape, form and contents to this area of public policy. These governing arrangements are the object of this research.

If theoretical frameworks provide spaces to articulate certain research questions, case studies help to confirm or point out the limitations of the proposed arguments. This is the objective of this subsection: to present the rationale behind the choice of case studies to assist with examining the variations in national food provisioning systems. The project has opted for a case study approach to reveal the historical and political origins of governing arrangements, which can explain the cross-national variations and policy logics coordinating national food provisioning.

There are many ways to undertake case study research. Considering the breadth of the chosen topic and the limited amount of existing research projects of a similar vein, I have

chosen to carry out a ‘structured and focused’ (George & Bennett, 2004) comparison of two national food policy environments and undertake a ‘test-run’ of the analytical framework in a different national context, a former settler economy, to gain further insight into the key propositions that came out of this comparative exercise. The research is structured around the key questions that construct our understanding as to why nation-states are likely to adopt very different policy responses when faced with similar food-related problems. To interrogate the reasons underpinning the differences in conceptualisation of national food policy and their respective governing arrangements, the research focuses primarily on aspects pertinent to questions of development about food policy regimes through the lenses of historical institutionalism and political economy perspectives.

The case study method is an avenue to trace the links between possible causes and observed outcomes, and to convert a descriptive account into analytic explanations. If the method is strong at identifying social and political processes (the causal mechanisms), it is relatively weak at measuring causal effects. As Bennett and George (2004) remark, many of the variables that interest social scientists, such as power, political culture and even state strength, are notoriously difficult to measure, raising the question of how to establish equivalence in comparative politics. However, this research does not assume equivalence to the process of food policymaking cross-nationally— instead, it places its attention on historical legacies to explain the variations of governing arrangements that led to the divergences of outcomes in food policy environments. In other words, it offers a contextualised comparison (Locke & Thelen, 1998) of cross-national differences to capture how particular challenges have been interpreted in various national settings and examine how ‘*a class of events*’ (George & Bennett, 2004:17-18) — whether historical, social, or political — create similar or different outcomes.

CHOOSING PRIMARY CASE STUDIES

The United Kingdom and France have been selected as the primary case studies to ascertain the applicability of the policy regime construct at explaining and characterising cross-national food policy differences. The contrasting features presented by these two countries in relation to principles and norms, institutional styles, and the organisation of interest representation are found appropriate for at least two reasons. As a starting point, the development of both these national food provisioning systems coincides with two critical historical junctures. It begins with Britain’s enclosure project that signalled the emergence of an industrialised national agricultural sector and the rise of Britain as the first food regime hegemonic power. The modernisation of France’s agricultural and food sectors occurred at another important historical moment, shortly after the Second World War. France, which had

maintained until then most of its population on the land, embarked on the project of modernising its agricultural sector at a time when the productivist values of the second food regime (1945-1970) informed much of the developed world agricultural and food activities.

The second reason rests with the diversity of principles, norms, power relations, and rules experienced in each of these countries. These differences offer avenues to analytically establish the relationships between those factors, the policy regime they constitute, and the type of policy outcomes that they generate. In other words, the political economies of both countries provide sufficient variation of causal factors (ideas, institutional architecture, and interests) to test the applicability of the policy regime construct and establish whether the coordination of national food provisioning follows some sort of policy regime logic. The UK is best characterised by its liberal political economy promoting free trade, commercial farming, individual choice, and a deregulated environment when possible²⁰. Neither a liberal market economy nor a coordinated market economy, France's political economy is characterised by a mix of political commitments to regulated labour, social negotiation, and the discursive illegitimacy of the free market (Schmidt, 2002 in Culpepper, 2004). By the same token, although the rhetoric of the 'family farm' structure continues to be a central feature of French agricultural politics, and the state plays an important role in reproducing it, France is one of the world largest exporters of agricultural and food products.

TESTING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In recognition that both Britain and France developed as capitalist democracies under similar contextual and historical forces, I believe it is important to conclude the empirical research with a preliminary application of the analytical framework to a political economy that followed a significantly different developmental pathway. Although this preliminary study provides further analytical insights on the possibilities and limitations of the framework, it may also set the grounds for future research. I have chosen Australia to conduct this preliminary 'test run' study for several reasons. Settler capitalism, as a variant of the Western European form of capitalism (Denoan, 1983), represents distinctive and differentiated historical and socio-political legacies that in turn, set the scene for examining in greater detail how initial conditions and degrees of national autonomy play out on the developmental pathway of national food provisioning. Australia's lack of pre-capitalist attachment to the land, its initial adoption of pastoralism rather than agriculture, and its dependent relationship to Britain's commerce are important analytical dimensions to complement findings and propositions from the primary case studies. Furthermore, the break-away moment that Australia experienced,

²⁰ Despite those characteristics, the UK has been a discreet supporter of CAP farming subsidies that largely favour the British landed aristocracy.

when its export-led growth was put to a halt as the UK reoriented its trade preferences towards the EEC, is another avenue for reflection over what national autonomy in a globalised system means and implies about the organisation of food. The major political economic reforms and the embrace of neoliberal ideological principles that ensued, epitomise what food regime theorists conceptualise as the third food regime project, supporting the liberalisation of markets and the '*neoliberalisation of nature*' (McMichael, 2013:130).

In terms of food policy outcomes, the contrasting case studies offer three different approaches to the relationship between the nature of policy regimes and their policy outcomes. Whilst Britain had been at the forefront of national food policy debates since the early 2000s, the explicit attitude towards a greater food policy integration has waned since the newly elected coalition government came into power in 2010. In contrast, France has continued since the early 2000's to articulate in a much more explicit manner its objectives of national food policy integration over questions of environmental sustainability, food choices, and social equity. Australia, on the other hand, maintains a form of orthodox liberalism that limits the state actions to questions of food quality and safety. Instead of presenting the three countries as three distinct case studies, this dissertation is organised in a manner that presents both Britain and France as two primary case studies in Chapter 4 and 5. The objective of these two primary case studies is to conceptualise the interplay between the national 3'I's against the backdrop of a global order, and in an historical perspective. As such, and to borrow from Levy's (2008) typology of case studies, Britain and France's case studies can be categorised as '*heuristic case studies to stimulate the imagination*' (2008:3) and serve the purpose of generating the hypothesis that persistent cross-national differences respond to distinctive national logics. Conversely, the discussion of Australia's food provisioning in Chapter 7 serves as an example of the preliminary application of the conceptual framework to sharpen and refine the identification of key variables.

2.2 DEFINING POLICY REGIMES

Although the *contour* of a policy regime is defined by the policy subsystems that make it, the forces that affect its *strength* include what is often referred to as the '**3'I's**' — shared Ideas, Interest alignments and Institutional arrangements (May & Jochim, 2013:428).

Defining 'ideas' is no easy task. I borrow from Schmidt (2008) to define ideas as '*the substantive contents of discourse*' (2008: 306), and to acknowledge that ideas exist at distinct levels of generality— policies, programs, and philosophies. It is important to make a distinction between ideas that directly relate to policy solutions and the broader levels of

ideas that generally sit in the background as underlying assumptions rarely contested. Whenever the term 'idea(s)' is used in this dissertation, it usually refers to paradigms or background normative ideas unless otherwise stated. Personal responsibility is such an example of a background normative idea; a politically powerful notion used to legitimise in some countries the key approaches to food policymaking. Although both ideas and values infuse the exercise of power, the term 'values' suggests an additional layer, one of evaluation and judgement. Because values are normative ideas that exert unique effects on policymaking (Campbell, 1998:384), values express what is collectively preferred, what owes to be done. Furthermore, and as Botterill (2004) demonstrates in her mapping of values informing agricultural policies in Australia, situating normative ideas becomes a useful analytical tool to understand policy directions over time. However, normative ideas or values do not always occupy the same public space nor do they carry the same meaning and significance as they become reinterpreted over time by prevailing national political cultures (Trentmann, 1998:238). To account for this political culture 'variable', the 3'l's framework used by this research expands on Botterill's (2004) value mapping tool, to incorporate two additional and distinct dimensions: the institutional arrangement in which policy settings are developed and the patterns of power arrangements (in other words, the representation of interests) that compete over policy decisions.

Ideas shape the way problems are defined and inform how problems can be solved. Arguably, ideas influence policy paradigms not only in determining what type of issues come on the public policy agenda but also by establishing a policy discourse that in turn defines and suggests a solution to the problem. Conversely, ideological positions also dictate the type of issues that do not deserve policy attention. An example of policy 'avoidance' in the Australian food policy context is the question of food insecurity at the household level, for which food relief efforts are coordinated through private and charity-based organisations rather than through public policy. In contrast, European countries²¹ and the US address the question of household food insecurity through public policy and public funding. Ideas are represented in the values, beliefs, and ideologies that policy actors use to understand the nature of the solution to the problem and shared understandings amongst actors strengthen policy communities to foster eventually the durability of a policy regime.

How issues are defined is also influenced by who defines these issues or in other words, who is involved in the policy development, and on what terms. **Interest representations** and their patterns of power arrangement with policy development are pivotal to these questions. They may consist of few powerful interest groups or larger broad-based coalitions depending on the policy domain of interest. For instance, agricultural policy has traditionally attracted a few but powerful interest groups from farming organisations.

²¹ In the EU, food relief efforts are funded through the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and in the US, food stamps are funded through the US Farm Bill.

Such is the case in France or in Japan where the representation of farming interests has enjoyed corporatist policy partnerships with their respective governments, arrangements that have wielded considerable success over time against potential retrenchments of agricultural welfare policies (Sheingate, 2000). Similarly, collective representation within the food transformation industry of most advanced economies has been strategically organised so that food industry business associations have been able to infiltrate policy networks to form what Panitch (1999:30) describes as ‘*a structural relationship between state and capital*’ —a relationship that blurs the boundaries between public and private interests. By contrast, in most advanced economies consumer interest groups have limited access to the policy table. In Australia for example, the relationship between state and civil society or consumer groups (as they are now called) has become more distant with time. If consumer interest groups in the domain of food or public health were given access to policy discussions and even received funding in the mid-1970s-1980s, this relationship was gradually severed under successive Howard governments (1996-2007). As the government discourse shifted away from democratic objectives to focus on efficiency and economic management, community activism had to redefine its role in accordance with neoliberal and managerial ideologies and the contribution of these groups to the policy process has become peripheral, and at most to provide representatives on committees and working groups²².

The policy regime scholarship (Eisner, 2013; May & Jochim, 2013; Sheingate, 2012; Jochim & May, 2010) sets **Institutional arrangements** of governance as the third important dimensional characteristic of the policy regime framework. I should clarify here that whenever the term ‘*institution*’ is used, it is meant to represent the formal rules and organisations such as pieces of legislation, governmental departments, and agencies. It does not refer to informal rules and norms, because the policy regime construct makes allowance for values, beliefs and overall cultural norms into its analysis, and this inclusion is a way to bring ‘*informal*’²³ institutions from the margins to the centre of comparative research. In a manner similar to some institutional analysis broadens its scope by arguing that ideas constitute the political discourse of a nation²⁴, the policy regime construct suggests that informal institutions co-exist with formal institutions to guide political behaviour. As Boyer (2005:367) notes, ‘*all institutional forms result from social compromises that are then embedded in law, jurisprudence, social norms and conventions*’ and by establishing the rules of the game, formal institutions structure and shape the political behaviour of politicians and interest groups to foster distinct logics of decision-making. Even if the state increasingly relies on a broader range of mechanisms and professions to shape the provisioning of food,

²² Lofgren (2011) discusses how the inclusion of health consumer groups within the state policy circles has constrained their capacity to mobilise.

²³ Helmke and Levitsky, (2003:9) define informal institutions as ‘socially shared rules, usually unwritten but enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels’

²⁴ See Peter Hall (1989).

the central institutional spheres in which policy directions are being debated and decided still remain within governments and their administrative departments and agencies. However, institutional arrangements have changed in time and space. In some instances, the strength of historical legacy has maintained dedicated governmental departments to handle policy decisions and delivery; such is the case where agricultural policies are coordinated by national agriculture departments (or ministries), whose existence can be traced back to the late nineteenth century. For other national economic sectors, policymaking and policy implementation have been partially transferred away from traditional and established governmental institutions to independent regulatory agencies²⁵. Institutional transfer is most common in policy domains covering industrial activities, such as, in this case, the transformation and distribution of food. This institutional transformation has also been more pronounced since the mid-1980s' wave of public management reforms in many advanced economies. In the world of food, the withdrawal of government activity has occurred in the fields of food quality and safety, and to variable degree in the areas of market operation and competition. Nonetheless, as Mark Thatcher (2007) points out, institutional convergence is not what is implied here. Cross-national variations are maintained as different political rationales, and drive this type of institutional transformation at the national level.

The development of policy is also shaped by the level of influence enjoyed by the institution within the overall government apparatus. As Greer (2005:33) notes, the place occupied by the agri-food sector within the national economy or the nature of domestic politics (one party government or coalition) bear influence over the development and resourcing of food policy at national levels. For instance, it has been often argued that the difficult development of agricultural policies prior to UK's membership to the EEC was caused by the lack of sufficient "clout" of the Ministry of Agriculture within Whitehall. Today, similar claims are made about UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) not being in a position to influence policy decisions within government²⁶. Since institutional architecture reinforces political commitments from interest groups around distinct policy goals, it is fair to submit that the strength of a policy regime is mirrored in institutional arrangements, even if continuous adjustment is required for institutions to be socially authorised (Streeck & Thelen, 2005).

Not only do ideas bear significant weight on how institutions gain and maintain legitimate authority but they also sustain 'core beliefs' that define and unite **interest coalitions** and their participants (Weible & Sabatier, 2007; Sabatier, 1988). If dominant policy paradigms embody certain assumptions and shape how problems are defined to grant mandate for specific types of policy solutions, they also play an important role in producing

²⁵ For a comparative analysis of the use of independent regulation agencies (IRA) between France and Britain, see Mark Thatcher (2007).

²⁶ According to Fourth Report (2005) Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs available at www.parliament.uk.

long-term regime stability (Wilson, 2000:259). As remarked by Ruggie (1982) when discussing international regimes, converging expectations have a way to reinforce the subjective quality of the regime through language and principles across discrete policy subsystems. When in place, this configuration of — institutions, interests, and ideas — yields durable governing arrangements with distinct patterns of authority, collective action, and interest mediation (Sheingate, 2012). To this end, Sheingate (2012) offers a triangular representation of the policy regime concept linking ideas, interests, and institutions to illustrate the dynamics at play in between any of these three polarising elements. When ideas and institutions are aligned, they create a dynamic of power and authority, formalised by rules and supported by cognitive and normative frames. Furthermore, the ideas-interest nexus promotes the capacity of collective action by bridging resources to beliefs in which identity and allegiance are enshrined. Finally, the connection between interests and institutions offers insight about access and influence enjoyed by interest groups within the policy regime. However, neither politics nor policymaking stands still.

2.2.1 HOW POLICY REGIMES CHANGE

As May and Jochim (2013:442) point out, observing policy change or learning through the lens of regime perspectives '*illuminates the realities of how a given set of problems is addressed and the political dynamics that are engendered by those realities*'. The regime framework helps to unpack the role of policy feedback effects under different governing arrangements and does not seek to supplant more traditional policy perspectives. As such, the emerging policy regime scholarship draws inspiration and insight from the theorisation of change proposed by other traditions of political sciences. For example, when Eisner (2013) explores the policy history of US financial regulation regime, he places his focus in the context of path dependency to demonstrate that it is more appropriate to view policy change as '*path dependent development wherein new [policy] regimes are layered upon earlier regimes*' rather than '*constituting a succession of qualitatively different regimes*' (2013:21). Worsham (2013) prefers to look at the origins of the regime to assess its durability and resilience to change, and he argues that the mechanics involved in the construction of policy regimes offer good insight into the policy process and its aptitude to change. When Sheingate (2014) discusses the food policy regime of the US, he is specifically interested in what causes the weakening of the current food and agriculture regime and a possible transition to a new food policy regime. He sharpens insights from historical institutionalism, and in particular from Streeck and Thelen' (2005) study of gradual institutional change, to examine the undermining impact that entry of new interests and actors has had on an historically insulated policymaking community (Sheingate, 2014).

Just as the question of regime stability is central to the perspective, much of the scholarly discussion aim at establishing when to expect incremental or abrupt policy changes. Because regime features are embedded in the institutional fabric, it is very rare for a sharp break away that leads one regime to transition to another (Eisner, 2013). Instead, policies evolve to accommodate new interests and new issues what Worsham (2013) labels '*arbitrage*'. These incremental changes are not about revolution or a clear 'break-away' from a previous policy regime configuration, but rather they are about gathering bits and pieces from existing institutional arrangements to garner support from newer or wider coalition of interests. In the world of food, policy layering may apply when questions of supply and production are overlaid by issues of food safety, public health, or environmental impacts, forcing policy changes to accommodate new concerns²⁷. By contrast, radical policy regime changes occur when the right set of enablers are in place, whether in the shape of a paradigm shift, a weakening of the regime in place, or a major external event (Wilson, 2000). The advent of World War II became such a moment. It triggered a fundamental reorientation of policy directions not only during wartime, but also in the ensuing post-war period, when policies were realigned around planning and control measures that replaced liberal market practices and for which the state became an important actor to reform many policy environments.

Extended periods of relative stability are not uncommon in the world of policymaking, particularly when actors share a common understanding of the policy problems and accept the distributional outcomes of policy decisions. For Heclo (1974), local agency plays a much more decisive role in policy change than macro factors do. He argues that policy change is the mediating intervention of a local policy community (interventions driven either by expertise in the particular field or by political motivations) against larger social, economic, and political forces. In many cases, as Hall (1993) notes, expertise and motivation fuel social learning and ultimately policy change.

Just as institutions and interests are important in the development and stability of a policy regime, core values can either reinforce dominant visions, stabilise the interplay between actors and institutional fabric, or disrupt policy equilibrium to set a new course of institutional development. For Steinmo (2008), explaining institutional change needs to bring the world of ideas into the analysis. He argues that '*change is the product of changes in ideas held by actors*' (2008:170) and that a focus on ideas is also a way to bring interests back into institutional analysis.

However, not all policy subsystems are created equal. Policy and regime development depend on the right institutional and temporal conditions to foster positive policy feedback effects (Patashnik & Zelizer, 2010). As policy regime theorists May and Jochim

²⁷ See Feindt and Flynn (2009) analysis of British food policy that examines the policy stretching, and therefore change, of the institutional fabric to accommodate the layering of new policies domains over old ones.

(2013) remark, the lens of the policy regime may prove useful in theorising the political impact of policies — if governing is about securing and sustaining political commitments, then the capability of the regime to reinforce these commitments is a direct indication of the level of regime's legitimacy and durability.

In sum, it is reasonable to view the policy regime construct as a 'complementary' analytical tool to the broader political and institutionalist literatures. In a similar manner to historical institutionalists, policy regime theorists understand institutions as playing a role in structuring behaviours. The emerging policy regime literature goes a step further by stressing the influence that ideas and values have over interest representation and institutional arrangements. To policy regime theory, history matters as well. The policy regime construct allows the researcher to examine the questions of regime stability and policy change by weaving an analytical fabric that connects important interdependent variables together. For example, if ideas shape the way problems are defined they also are representative of the interests to protect. In turn, the rules of the game or institutional arrangements, infused with ideas and values, structure the political behaviour of actors. By inquiring into the *power* relations set between ideas, institutions, and interest the policy regime approach integrates agency into the analysis.

2.3 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE

2.3.1 THE POLITICS-POLICY CONNECTION

Policy regime theorists remind us that if policy regimes are sources of policy equilibrium, they also can be sources of political tensions and policy changes (Worsham, 2013; Sheingate, 2012). This fact prompts a question about the interplay between policy and politics. A long-time concern of the study of public policy is whether politics determine policy or whether policy shapes politics. The emerging policy regime literature supports the insight proposed long ago — that '*new policies create a new politics*' (Schattschneider, 1935:288), and it does so by framing policy regimes as governing arrangements to address policy problems (May & Jochim, 2013). For instance, as governing arrangements, policy regimes make allowance for policy feedback dynamics, as theorised by Pierson (1993). In fact, the development and evolution of a policy regime are shaped by *feedback* processes, and as remarked by May and Jochim (2013), the impacts of these feedbacks are also mitigated by the strength of the regime.

Under the policy regime perspective, the two key mechanisms involved in policy feedback — namely policies as providers of resources and incentives, and policies as

sources of interpretation of the political world (the '*interpretative effects of public policies*' (Pierson, 1993:610)) — are not only factored into the concept itself, but are also mediated by the forces defining the regime. The normative ideas underpinning policy decisions that also influence elites, interest groups, and public opinion, combined with the regime's institutional expertise and the organisation of interest groups are the mediating forces to policy feedback mechanisms. If policies create incentives for supporters, they equally can fuel counter-mobilisation and lead to new forms of political organisation. Notwithstanding the transformation of state administrative and bureaucratic capacities, these changes in social groups and their political ambitions constitute major dynamic forces within the policy feedback process (Skocpol, 1992:58).

As it is true with ideas and interests, institutional feedback effects are also important sources of 'staying power' of a regime (Sheingate, 2012). Research in historical institutionalism (and in particular in institutional change) discusses the limitations of viewing change as mainly caused by exogenous factors (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). For Streeck and Thelen (2005), gradual institutional transformations may also lead to major historical discontinuities. To capture the incremental and endogenous processes of change, these authors sum up the concept of institution as '*a set of rules stipulating expected behaviour and 'ruling out' behaviour deemed to be undesirable*', viewing institutions as regimes with rule makers and rule takers whose interactions propel the evolution of the regime (2005:12-13). An important implication of this line of work is understanding institutions as sets of relations of authority, obligations, and enforcement rather than as mere functional coordinating mechanisms — as rational choice theorists would suggest.

The role of ideas in the policy regime concept resonates on many fronts with other important works whose central contentions focus on the weight of ideals, representations, and social beliefs in the elaboration of public policies. For instance, the notion of policy paradigms as articulated by Peter Hall (1993) may prove useful for thinking about patterns of authority linking ideas and institutions within the policy regime framework. The concept of advocacy coalition framework as presented by Sabatier (1988), which articulates how critical belief systems are in orienting policy decisions, shares some affinities with how identities and allegiances are made under the concept of policy regime. The policy regime concept shares some affinities as well with French literature conceptualising the '*référentiel*' (Jobert & Muller, 1987; Muller, 2000a), a concept that examines the interplay between ideas and interests as well as how interpretations and values become important in policy development. For this stream of French scholarship, since public policymaking also entails the construction of a represented reality from which actors elaborate problem significance and policy actions, the '*référentiel*' is the representation that is made for any policy area including its importance and role in society (Jobert & Muller, 1987:63).

In many ways, Hall's policy paradigm echoes that of the notion of '*référentiel*' since it also conceptualises public policy as a construct based on a certain representation of the problem and its possible solutions. It is interesting to note here the emphasis placed on the cognitive and normative approach in French public policy literature. In contrast to North American scholarship, French social scientists refute the idea that rational choice is the foundation to political decision-making and prefer to focus their attention to the cognitive dimension that dictates public action in designing policies (Smith & Hassenteufel, 2002; Muller, 2010). Whereas North American scholarship points out the merits of 'game theory' or 'public choice', French political scientists consider these approaches a-sociological and marked by determinist visions of economics (Smith, 2000). Policy analysis '*à la française*' is also more inclined to pursue historicised qualitative methodologies and associate policy analysis to questions of state activism, power, and democracy (Nahrath, 2009).

In concluding this discussion, it is fair to note that the emerging policy regime literature offers a perspective to address one long-standing theme in policy process research — that is the question of how policymaking evolves in different political institutional contexts and policy subsystems. However, some important questions remain. If national historical development influences domestic policy choices, how do these national policy choices continue to maintain distinct differences with other national responses? Do these different trajectories reflect some levels of national policy autonomy and resilience to the dynamics of capitalism and of international political economy? Can the policy regime construct help us understand the transformative capacity of the state to adjust national food policies to globalisation forces on its own terms?

2.4 WHAT TO EXPECT OF A POLICY REGIME

As a descriptive tool, the policy regime construct is adapted to the examination of policymaking in the complex area of food provisioning since its application is transportable to *any* of the policy subsystems²⁸ that contribute to the organisation of food provisioning. Not only does the construct make allowance for the variety of actors and institutions that form policy subsystems, it also acknowledges the core values and visions held within these policy subsystems (Eisner, 2013:2). The boundaries of policy subsystems may be at times '*artificial constructs*' (May et al., 2011:289), defined by the level of specialisation that they require. By contrast, policy regimes cannot be characterised by policy specialisation since they span individual subsystems. Instead, the policy regime construct maps out the governing arrangements for addressing policy subsystem problems by elaborating on the social and

²⁸ Sheingate (2012) describes a policy subsystem as characterised by a group of institutionally-situated actors organised around the formation and implementation of public policies.

political contexts within which policy decisions are made. As such, it offers insight into how policy subsystems intersect and interact with each other within the larger political environment. The nature of these interactions is of analytical significance. Rather than examining policy struggles in different areas separately and in isolation from each other, the policy regime provides a space to bridge the logics underpinning separate policy subsystems within the broader policy domain to which they contribute.

Because policy regimes are historically specific, the construct allows questioning how cross-national differences are maintained. One of the core propositions made by historical institutionalism is to view institutions as a legacy of historical processes, inferring that questions of timing and temporality are at the root of institutional development (Thelen, 1999:382). This focus on historical origins (rather than functionality) of institutions implies that the juxtaposition of different temporal logics constrains the way that national institutions continue to evolve in response to changing contexts. Given that policy regimes are built on specific sets of ideational and material (interest mediation and institutions) foundations, noticeable differences in patterns of power, authority, and collective action are to be observed in how regimes 'reproduce' and maintain stability. For these reasons, problems raised on the international scene are likely to be interpreted and treated differently at national levels, since these international problems intersect with on-going domestic political dynamics, themselves defined in relation to their historical context. Hence, different policy regimes are likely to respond differently to 'external' or even to 'internal' events, and not all events will be causes of regime disruption. The many moving parts of the policy regime whether national or international in nature, render its response to external possible causes of disruption unique. More importantly, the policy regime construct allows us to examine the dynamics, scope, and modes of allocating resources that propel the development of policies in addition to providing insight into how regimes reproduce and evolve.

Just as the three-dimensional constructs of 'ideas-institutions', 'ideas-interests', and 'institutions-interests' define the contours of the regime dynamics, the feedback process defines the nature of these dynamics. As May and Jochim (2013:426) observe, *'public policies shape politics by allocating winners and losers, by sending signals about who is deserving and undeserving, and by setting in place feedback processes that affect political participation and future policy'*. There are a few specific effects that different policy types have on mass publics or on the structures of interest groups (Pierson, 1993; 1994). In some instances, policies provide incentives and resources for interest representation to form or disappear while at other times, policies create environments that 'lock-in' groups in their expectations. Public visibility and traceability of policies mediate mass-public reactions to any particular public policy. For example, when agricultural policies provide incentives for farming organisations to preserve entitlements and benefits, these groups become gradually locked in their expectations about the intervention of the state in maintaining these incentives

(Coleman et al., 1996: 277). Largely, these expectations concerning the role of the state in structuring political economic contexts equally reinforce national trajectories and maintain cross-national differences. Many instances can be cited to illustrate how the expansion of state authority has strengthened popular expectations in this regard. When in the late 1950s, France engaged in the modernisation of its agricultural sector, the political consensus was that only under state leadership could this transition occur. The legacy of this historical critical juncture has been a closer relationship between state and farm organisations and an expectation for the government to play an important role in mediating the affairs of the sector. However, these partnerships are not static and can be transformed. As Coleman and Chiasson (2002) demonstrate, the transformative capacity of the state depends on the nature of the partnership between state and societal actors, and the pursuit of a vision by the state may require reconstructing the patterns of power arrangements with interest groups.

Not only does regime theory integrate these dynamics at different levels, with combinations and boundaries of problems spanning multiple subsystems, it also is an appropriate tool to analyse governing arrangements for cases of ‘dispersed’ problems not comprehensively addressed by policy responses (May & Jochim, 2013). In that way, the policy regime perspective is a useful concept for examining the overall dynamics of national food policy (–which itself presents the many symptoms of dispersed problems across a wide range of food-related policy subsystems), thereby transcending the narrow focus of individual public policies. Furthermore, in analysing national food policies through the lens of the policy regime, we get a richer understanding to what Lang and his colleagues (2009) mean when they argue that food policy is an integrative process rather than a series of independent policies. As such, not only does the policy regime approach help us to better apprehend the remit of food policy in national contexts, but it also brings out the implicit and explicit motivations of the state in integrating or not ‘dispersed’ problems into policy agendas.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

By applying a policy regime framework to the comparative study of national food systems and their policy environments, I hope to offer a cohesive narrative that can help to understand the complex process of national food policy development within an historical-institutional context. Whilst there may be important causal factors that can be attributed to certain developments of national food policy such as aspects of international trade, and environmental policies, aspects of national ‘comparative advantage’, or even demographic trends, any of those distinct factors cannot alone explain significant variations across borders. Viewing national food policy through the lens of the policy regime helps this

research project to gain a clearer and deeper understanding of governance dynamics across policy domains at national and supranational levels.

In the first instance, the policy regime perspective may prove useful to explain the transformative capacity of the state (Coleman & Chiasson, 2002; Weiss, 1998) to reinterpret exogenous forces through ‘governed inter-dependence’ between state and interest groups. If an analysis grounded in political economy sheds light on allocation of resources and its mechanisms of causation, the combination with a policy regime perspective provides greater clarity about how economic factors and institutions affect policy outcomes. Furthermore, the construct of the policy regime provides policy scholars with an analytical framework that can overcome the duality of stability and change (Sheingate, 2012). And, finally, if policy studies in general, tend to focus on specific dimensions, they do that to the detriment of others. For example, political process studies highlight the role of actors (policymakers and interest groups) to the detriment of policy paradigm, and studies on policy paradigms focus on how new narratives and imagery are created to construct problems and solutions but ignore factors impacting institutions and acting as catalysts for resistance or for change. The policy regime approach appears to provide a broader context perspective in which policies evolve over time. As May and Jochim (2013) remark, the merits of the policy regime construct lie in its descriptive and analytical qualities. As a descriptive tool, it provides a ‘conceptual map of the governing arrangements for addressing a given problem’ (2013:428). As an analytical tool, it reveals how policies set in place feedback processes on the political environment, which in turn, affect the impact of public policy.

If the thrust of this chapter has been to demonstrate that a political economy approach complemented with a policy regime perspective makes sense of a range of different forms of state-society relations at policy sectoral levels, it also ends with one open-ended theoretical question — how do we recognise a food policy logic when we see one? To unveil the forces and contours that shape the coordination of food provisioning, I propose to apply a ‘dual-lenses’ approach to the domain of food policy. This is the primary interest of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 – APPLYING THE POLICY REGIME TO THE WORLD OF FOOD

INTRODUCTION

Few would argue with the observation that food provisioning in the modern and developed world is a complex undertaking. Given the breadth that it covers, actions in one area of interest can have unsuspected effects elsewhere. It is also a contested space with a web of social relations, actors, and institutions from which emerge competing interests and perspectives. If at a national level, the coordination of food provisioning appears similar across many advanced political economies, any succinct overview reveals significant differences in the way nation-states, economic actors and civil society understand and resolve problems of comparable nature.

To help us understand the sources of these variations, the preceding chapter proposes a theoretical approach to examine cross-national differences in national food policies articulated around two theoretical concepts issued from two separate social sciences traditions. To uncover the historically grounded dynamics that explain the social and economic impacts of the industrialisation of food and agriculture, the approach draws from the rich literature of comparative political economy. In order to illuminate the question of food policy as an integrative process, the research sharpens its analytical focus by using a policy regime construct to complement the political economy approach. This double disciplinary theoretical approach moves beyond the traditional theoretical paradigms to suggest a novel way to analyse production-consumption relations.

The novelty of the theoretical approach taken here lies in considering policies as ‘common denominators’ across distinct and apparently autonomous policy subsystems. This chapter advances that it is possible to examine in detail each policy subsystem through the lens of the policy regime construct and weave an analytical thread to explore the idea that national food systems of advanced political economies have developed over time according to distinct policy logics. The analytical framework proposed here is designed to map policy subsystems according to their values, the pattern of their institutionalisation, and the interests that they represent. This framework also draws attention to the linkages that may exist between the field of production and those of transformation/distribution and consumption.

Many examples cited in the comparative literature confirm that most countries of the developed world face similar food-related problems — whether at the production end with, for instance, challenges of sustainable agricultural productivity or at the consumption end with issues of household food insecurity. However, they are likely to attract very different policy responses across borders. Answering the question as to why so many variations in national approaches to food policy and the coordination of national food systems is an attempt to understand how the state conceptualises national food policy, which in turn can explain its actions around that particular issue. It is also a way to bring some evidence about how globalisation forces affect (or not) the convergence of national food policies towards a single and unique policy model.

Since my research seeks to reveal some of the reasons underpinning cross-national differences in food policy, it becomes important to place explicit attention on the mechanisms involved in granting durable and stable governing authority. Yet, if it is useful to examine what sustains the organisation of food provisioning at any point in time, the question of *change* is also central to this discussion. Whereas major historical developments have transformed the ways in which individual national food provisioning systems have come to be organised in advanced industrial countries, these developments have given rise to a diversity of policy responses that have maintained cross-national differences. Therefore, the search for explanatory factors to account for these different responses and outcomes is twofold. In the first instance, since change ultimately sets policy trajectory, it is important to understand how it is interpreted and implemented at national levels. Then, it is necessary to explore why and how policy differences persist between national contexts to evaluate the degree of state agency in maintaining and reproducing policy choices.

Acknowledging that the effects of globalisation cannot be underestimated, this research attempts also to uncover the degrees of policy autonomy enjoyed by nation-states in the organisation of their respective food provisioning systems. It is often implicitly assumed by policy analysts and scholars that globalisation makes national policies grow more alike and imposes similarity of institutional architecture forcing nation-states to revoke long-standing social contracts. For some, including food regime theorists, globalisation is an ideologically driven political project (Pechlaner & Otero, 2010; McMichael, 1996). Nonetheless, the question of national policy autonomy is important. An emerging literature using the food regime perspective is gradually building the argument that while processes of market liberalisation are played out on the international stage, there is little evidence that coordinating national food systems develop according to one and only script. This new body of research suggests that the globalisation of agriculture and food is tempered by different national interests that resist external forces (Heis, 2015; Pechlaner & Otero, 2010; Campbell, 2009). Characteristic to this resistance is what Weiss (1998) and Coleman and Chiasson (2002) define as the '*transformative capacity of the state*', underpinned primarily by an ability

to reconstitute state-society relations, which in turn enable states to adjust to the forces of globalisation on their own terms. To contribute to this scholarship, and in recognition of the importance of national policy autonomy in developing national food policy, this thesis seeks to examine how these global forces — as predicted by the food regime theory — have influenced selected advanced economies in shaping the coordination of their respective national food provisioning. It proposes to do so by complementing the food regime meta-narrative with a more ‘nation state-based’ analytical framework, the policy regime construct.

To uncover the dynamics animating the coordination of national food provisioning, the chapter proposes a methodological framework to inform the comparative perspective underpinning this research. The first section of this chapter focuses on the elaboration of a suite of analytical tools devised to help us examine different national contexts and connect the different policy subsystems together to form a ‘boundary-spanning’ system, what we may call of *food policy regime*. Borrowing from the literature of agricultural policies and more specifically from Botterill’s (2004) value mapping, I extend the notion of mapping to the other two dimensions of institutional arrangement and interest representation to suggest a continuum of individual policy subsystem settings. Whereas Botterill’s original tool has been mainly applied to the world of agricultural policy, I propose to broaden its application to the policy domains of food transformation-distribution and food consumption. This mapping tool provides a way to illustrate the combination of values, interests, and institutions influencing policy directions that assists us to understand why particular policy approaches emerge in some polities and not others in addition to examining the extent to which these differences are systemic and representative of what might constitute a national food policy regime.

However, national food policy environments do not operate in a vacuum. They connect, link and exchange with the broader system of global food relations. The nature and extent of these national-global dynamics is the object of a succinct discussion presented in the second section of this chapter. Using an historicising and politicising approach to food developed by the food regime perspective (McMichael, 2009; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989) allows us to establish the historical dimension against which national food policy environments have evolved. The purpose here is to place attention on the mechanisms that have allowed nation states to translate these international events into different challenges.

3.1 CONSTRUCTING A FOOD POLICY REGIME

Two basic questions underlie the discussion presented in this chapter. Considering that food provisioning spans multiple policy domains, we might start by asking what constitutes a national food policy regime. One fundamental aspect of any answer must address the issue of policy subsystems overlap, what May et al. (2011) identify as policy

'boundary-spanning' problems. As these authors note, since most policy subsystems have followed distinctive historical developments with dedicated interest groups granting specific attention over distinct issues, policy integration in any domain proves to be a difficult enterprise. This concern is shared by Lang and colleagues (2009) when they lament the dysfunctionalities and unsustainability of the modern food policy environment and argue for greater policy integration in particular in the domains of health, environment and social needs. Therefore, the discussion presented in this section elaborates a set of analytical tools that ought to allow us to define not only the contours of a food policy regime but equally its internal 'boundary-spanning' elements where policy subsystems overlap.

Given that policy regimes are historically grounded, we need to explore the question of how food policy regimes are situated and evolve over time. This second question prompts the discussion presented in Section 3.2, in which I seek to conceptualise the historical moments and forces that have shaped regime formation and reproduction. Drawing from the historical and political assertions proposed by the food regime perspective, the discussion highlights the dynamics that have made a sense of shared purpose around which key actors from any of the three subsystems have mobilised and developed patterns of authority.

3.1.1 APPLYING THE POLICY REGIME CONSTRUCT TO THE WORLD OF FOOD

The coordination of national food provisioning systems has been and continues to be a delicate exercise of policy fine-tuning to pursue national objectives of food security, food safety or food quality while contributing to national employment, national income, and international trade. It calls upon diverse policy instruments to define the modalities of production, transformation, and consumption, which in turn shape the overall organisation of the national food provisioning. As French rural economist Louis Malassis (1994) summarised it, '*a food system is the way that humans organise themselves in space and time to get and consume their food*'. This elegant definition also implies that there are many ways or modalities to organise the provisioning of food, and as Montanari (1995) points out, what we eat and how we eat depend largely of the type of food system in which we live. If the organisation of the food system in nineteenth century Europe revolved primarily around agricultural activities either on national territories or in colonised countries, twentieth century food provisioning came to be articulated around long supply chains in which agriculture plays a lesser role, and where transformation and distribution activities have gained important control. Therefore, policy concerns and priorities have changed with time.

When applied to the world of food, the policy regime spans across several overlapping subsystems from agricultural policies including income support, to land use or

even tax policies, to food quality and safety, nutritional guidelines or plans, and food relief schemes. However, for the purpose of this thesis, I concentrate on three particular policy subsystems, which I consider essential pillars from which an overarching food policy regime can be defined within an advanced political economy. These policy domains are — primary production-related policies usually regrouped under the heading of agricultural policy, then the industrial policies that regulate the modern food transformation and distribution industries, and finally on the consumption side, the policy subsystems relating to public health and welfare. A few considerations underpin this choice. To begin, agriculture has been for a long time a pivotal policy domain where decisions about how food was to be produced were made. Although no longer as central to the provisioning of food as it has been, agriculture has maintained a role not only within the organisation of the modern food system but also in areas of rural development, employment, and environmental services. The advent of industrialisation, combined with societal transformations has presented food producers and distributors with new opportunities, which have resulted over time in the consolidation of two new and powerful industries — the food transformation sector and the distribution channels of food and groceries. Since the regulation of these large and modern industries has become determinant in how food is produced and accessed, this ensemble of regulatory policies forms the second policy subsystem. The rise of the food transformation and distribution industries has been accompanied by new consumption policy directions focusing primarily on matters of public health and to a limited extent to matters of social welfare. This forms the third policy domain of interest.

Chapter 2 has argued that if the construct of policy regime is to apply to the domain of food, a form of interdependence must exist between the three policy subsystems contributing to the coordination of national food provisioning. To extend the notion of what is called here a *food policy regime*, this chapter proposes to develop a series of tools to identify how ideas, interests and institutions come together to generate self-sustaining arrangements of governing authority, political coalitions, and influence within and in-between individual policy subsystems. The proposed framework must guide our analysis in establishing whether differences at individual policy subsystem level represent common patterns or logics and if so, whether those differences can be systemised to form an overarching food policy regime. The country-based case studies discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 7 will test the validity and usefulness of the analytical framework proposed here.

Whereas political economy has provided fertile ground for examining questions of structural developments in the agricultural and rural sectors, the theorisation of or the research into the causal forces affecting national agricultural sectors such as agricultural policy has received less attention (Buttel, 2001:29). This is not to say that agricultural policies have not been the focus of much empirical research. International scholarship has provided discerning studies using econometric modelling or measurement of environmental

performance as instruments of policy analysis. Amongst the few conceptual insights proposed by the literature to articulate the dynamics between policy objectives and policy instruments, the 'value policy map' developed by Botterill (2004) has been very useful to better understand why different governments arrive at different agricultural policy settings when mediating competing interests. Her approach identifies dominant ideas or principles contending for policy action, arrayed on a continuum of values delimited at its extreme ends by contrasting and in some instances opposing positions. Botterill (2004) also demonstrates how value anchors (a form of ideal policy settings) evolve along the continuum of time and socio-political context.

Mapping presents a good metaphor for the exercise of locating policy anchors, distribution of power and for exploring the functional relationships to explain policy outcomes. Nevertheless, words of caution are in order when considering the abstract representation of mapping. In unpacking the basic features of mapping, Aligica (2006) warns us about the need to distinguish between the '*cognized environment*' of model constructs and the real world of '*operational environment*'. The human 'cognized environment' tends to maintain the integrity of its structure by selecting which features of the 'real world' to model and by processing information to conform with its cognitive underpinnings (Azzevedo, 1997). Since cognitive modelling is always selective, Aligica (2006) argues that there is no single or universal way of mapping a social space and that the purposes for which the mapping instruments are constructed dictate their structure. Therefore, mapping reflects reality in line with the relevance of the problems it is intended to solve. In this case, mapping is used to evaluate how specific parameters (values, interests, and institutions) once modified may change the overall food policy outcomes.

In this section, I propose to apply Botterill's mapping approach not only to values or ideologies but also to institutional arrangements and interest representations to reflect the matrix-like characterisation of the governing arrangements and policy settings structuring primary production activities. Botterill (2004) uses the mapping approach for the specific purposes of uncovering the balance of agricultural policy values through time and space. To illustrate the balancing act of policymaking, Botterill plots policy values against two competing ideological dimensions: more-or-less family farm support *versus* more-or-less business support (see Figure 3.1 below), or more-or-less production values *versus* more-or-less non-production values.

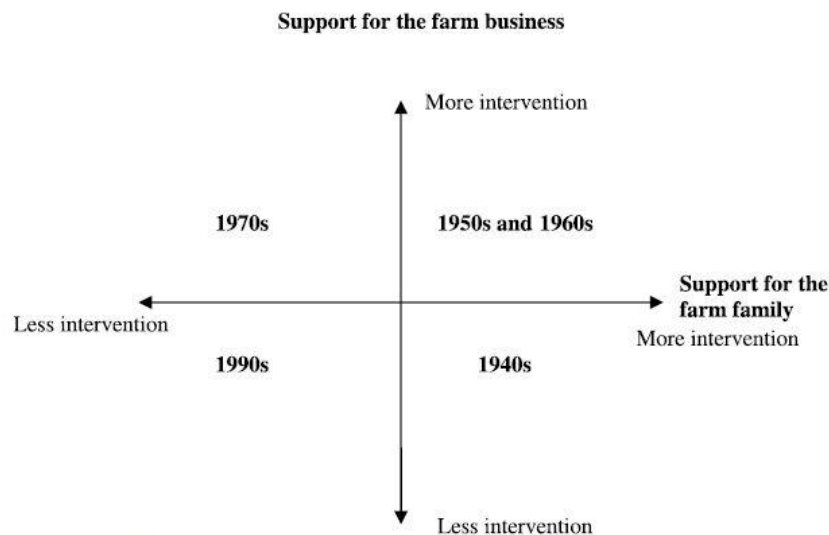


FIGURE 1: *Locating the policy anchor for Australian Agricultural Policy*

FIGURE 3-1 – AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL POLICY VALUE MAP FROM THE 1940S TO THE 1990S

Source: Botterill (2004:206)

This graphical representation is useful for tracking historical changes of a specific policy against one dimensional characterisation, in the above example, the values underpinning agricultural policies. However, to consider the institutional and social dimensions (the other 2i's) against which the values develop, the mapping requires some adjustment. I propose to adapt Botterill's (2004) mapping representation to the 3'i's architecture by rendering competing characteristics under broad denominations defining a continuum model, and then applying the continuum model to the three fields of ideas, interests, and institutions. This process creates a three-columns 'matrix' offering a topological description for each of the i's (or columns). This representation captures associations or concurrences between any of the three dimensions of ideas, interests, and institutions.

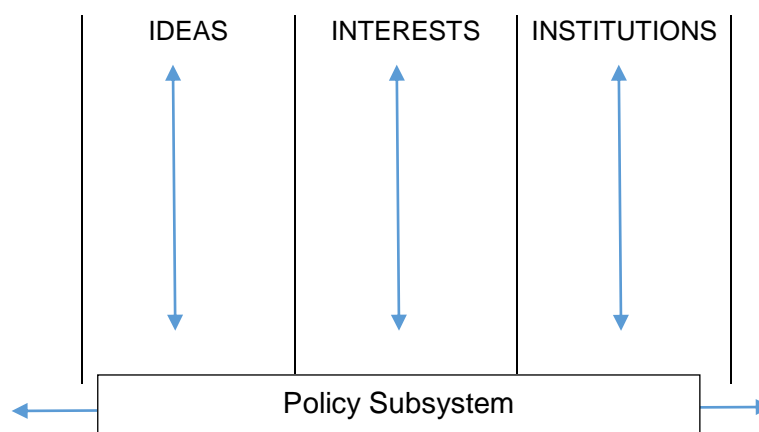


FIGURE 3-2 – PROPOSED MAPPING OF POLICY SETTINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL SUBSYSTEMS

I understand that the mapping approach may not capture all the intricacies inherent to policymaking. When outlining the theoretical and epistemic foundations of institutional mapping, Aligica (2006) remarks that maps need to represent the relationships that guide the overarching theoretical approach and are to be used as predictive tools. Therefore, my contention here is that the mapping of policy settings is a useful heuristic device to guide us through the process of unveiling the dynamics shaping individual policy subsystems and to evaluate what is different about each of them. Thus, I propose to use the mapping tool to describe the policy settings and dynamics governing the other two policy subsystems of transformation-distribution and food consumption.

Although perhaps less theorised than the agricultural sector, a brief overview of the policy literature discussing food transformation-distribution and consumption indicates that the dynamics animating these two policy subsystems can equally be captured as pertaining to a continuum of mediation processes whether in the world of ideas, interests, or institutional arrangements. Depending upon the interplay between prevailing values, influential interests and institutional architecture, specific dynamics will produce different policy outcomes. My intention is to use the mapping of policy settings as a tool not only to understand the combinations between the range of ideas, the variety of interests, and the types of institutional venues for any of the policy domains, but also to comprehend the space where these policy domains intersect and overlap. Although policy subsystems may appear autonomous, the mapping tool may prove useful in identifying the mechanics of interdependency amongst any of the three policy subsystems. Ultimately, for a food policy regime to be in existence, the mobilisation of supportive political forces around a sense of shared purpose is necessary. Therefore, the consistency of underlying forces — ideas, interests, and institutions — is critical to establishing the nature, strength, and coherence of such a regime.

PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Although the rationale of national agricultural policy has always hinged on core principles situated in the broader national historical and political contexts, the ‘exceptionalism’ of agriculture²⁹ is not discussed here. Instead, examining the ‘centres of ideological gravity’ (Botterill, 2004:206) that anchor national agricultural policies at any point of time presents a more nuanced and adapted approach to this research. As remarked by Botterill (2004:205), economic efficiency is no more important than other values competing for policy attention and ‘*efficiency may only be one of them [policy objectives] and in some*

²⁹ The exceptionalism of agriculture refers to the argument that agriculture is fundamentally different from other forms of economic activity because it is essential to the rest of the economy despite its exposure to climatic uncertainties, market fluctuations and contingencies of the family farm operations.

cases not the most important. The continuation of the family farm, the conservation of rural landscape, rural development and the multifunctionality of agriculture are amongst other important values that drive the formulation of national agricultural policies. Inspired by Botterill's concept of 'value mapping' (2004), I propose to represent the values that commonly underpin the rationale of agricultural policy on a sliding scale ranging from production-related objectives such as productivity improvement and economic efficiency to non-production-related values such as environmental management, rural development, or farm family welfare.

As Lindblom (1965 in Botterill 2004:200) notes, the mediating agent in organising the balance between competing values is of course the state, and state capacity in the agricultural sector has been traditionally effective in mobilising consent and institutionalising cooperation. Its capacity further extends to allocating resources to support its policy choices. In a 'state-assisted' agricultural policy paradigm, the state devolves income and productivity support mechanisms to protect its national agricultural sector against the imperfections of the market (Coleman et al., 1996:275). Yet, rising pressures from neoliberal critics and international organisations have shifted the centre of ideological gravity of some countries towards a 'market-oriented' agricultural policy paradigm, one favouring market allocation rather than state assistance, and efficiency rather than on equity.

Primary production, and agriculture in particular, is an instructive case to examine the interplay between historical legacy and public and policy actors' expectations concerning the involvement of the state. Whereas most industrialised countries developed in post-World War II period their national agricultural policies around similar state involvement paradigm, these countries today present significant differences in their expectations and acceptance of state intervention. Of course, the political discourse associated with such developments has taken root from specific interpretations of national history in relation to the integration of agriculture into the industrialisation project. The case of French '*dirigisme*' when applied to the national project of modernising the agricultural sector is such an example of governed interdependence between state and farming organisations underpinned by the belief that modernisation was only to come through state intervention rather than through markets. In the US, the historical provenance of government farm programs is rooted in the period of the Great Depression when the federal administration expanded its intervention authority over the coordination of the economy. The regulation of the US agricultural markets through production control and price support provided a social safety net to farmers that set-in motion the rise of the agricultural welfare state (Sheingate, 2000). However, the unfolding landscape of agricultural liberalisation of the last few decades has led states to reconstruct the relationship between markets and national agriculture, reflecting the extent to which nation states have felt necessary to intervene either in the name of social solidarity to accept responsibility for rural and farming livelihoods or for reasons of economic efficiency.

By shaping the forces propelling interest mobilisation, institutional frameworks promote key ideas behind any policy regime. Not only do institutions determine the range of available policy instruments but they also control access and influence of interested parties, implicitly producing distinct patterns of authority. Historically, agricultural policies have been delivered through institutional arrangements mostly composed of governmental ministries, departments and agencies, and policies have become governing instruments once legislated through the parliamentary process. Institutional policy arrangements are often characterised by the literature as being of varying centralised nature. In the instance of a centralised policymaking institution, decision-making power is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of people who enjoy significant degrees of autonomy. Typically, the centralised institution, either a department or an agency, draws information from sectoral actors through established task forces or coordinating committees. In more decentralised institutional structures, characteristic of those under federalism, the power to govern is shared between central governing authority and constituent states or provinces, as it is the case in the US or in Australia. Despite the expectation of uniformity of treatment from federal policies, it is not unusual to find alternative forms of governance around food and agriculture at state or regional levels, whereby individual federated states place various emphases on different criteria, resulting in different policy outcomes within national boundaries.

Most scholarship agrees that with greater levels of policymaking centralisation comes greater state capacity for intervention (Atkinson & Coleman, 1989: 52). Concentration of authority when combined with bureaucratic autonomy and sectoral interest activity creates specific policymaking dynamics. As noted by Atkinson and Coleman (1989), under a highly centralised and autonomous policy institutional landscape, cooperation through ‘concerted efforts’ is the most common form of interest intermediation with the state. By contrast, weak concentration of authority combined with high bureaucratic autonomy renders corporatist bargaining possible whilst decentralised or separated institutional powers tend to maintain a level of conflict and a pluralism in interest representation. As remarked by Sheingate (2001), centralised institutions combined with corporatist relations between government and interests are more likely to result in policy capture than in instances of separated institutional powers dealing with pluralist interest groups.

Patterns of interest representation in the agricultural sector are often characterised as varying from types of ‘sectoral corporatism’ — with its features of centralised access to policymaking — to the more open form of ‘pressure pluralism’, where a multiplicity of interest groups attempt to influence policymaking with their values and objectives. In both instances, political culture and state traditions tend to structure interest representation to the advantage of the prevailing types of interest representation at national levels. For example, the development of sectoral corporatism can be traced back to the protectionist period of late nineteenth century when governments hand-picked interest groups to devise agricultural

policies. Even if sectoral corporatism is best conceptualised around features of centralised organisation, representation monopoly and institutionalisation of specific economic sectors, its stability remains predicated on certain levels of interest convergence within the sector and with those of the state (Lehmbruch, 1984). A certain degree of political party competition for constituency representation further strengthens sectoral corporatism representation (Halpin, 2005; Campbell, 1985). Therefore, corporatist arrangement is most likely when farmers' organisational capacity coincides with the state willingness to enter a corporatist relationship, and this with the support of public opinion.

However, this level of apparent interest convergence is not always *de rigueur* in modern political economy. Greater farming specialisation often resulting in divergence of interest amongst commodity groups has fractured traditional corporatist bargaining. Processes of economic integration as it is the case in Europe have also forced interest groups to restructure, to compete with newcomers, and to redefine their relationships with the state (Grossman & Saurugger, 2004). Other challenges, moreover, have arisen from related policy areas such as trade, the environment and rural development to fragment what has historically been a 'closed' policy community (Greer, 2005:63). For instance, the influence that French corporatist farming interest group Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA) enjoyed for a very long time has gradually been eroded by the emergence of another interest group, the Confédération Paysanne, which opposes corporatist bargaining as it favours large commodity producers rather than small farm holders. Agricultural policy networks have become more pluralist and competitive.

It is evident from the literature that most analytical attention examines the nature of economic farming interests at large. However, the dynamics of industrial relations in agriculture is worth a brief discussion. Because small enterprises and self-employment are prevalent in the agricultural sector, the organisation of labour interests tend to be represented more commonly by farmers' organisations rather than by sectoral trade unions³⁰. The downward trend of employment in agriculture may explain the relative absence of specific agricultural workers' trade unions in most advanced economies. Collective bargaining on behalf of agricultural employers is often undertaken by large organisations that represent broader economic producer interests (outside of their roles as employers) such the UK National Farmers Union (NFU) or the French Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA).

It is also worth noting that as the objectives and focus of agricultural policies have changed over time, so has the scope of issues covered by policy instruments. Today,

³⁰ Trade union organisation specific to the agricultural sector is relatively uncommon. In some countries like Germany, a single union affiliated to a main national confederation represents agricultural workers. In other places like Denmark or Finland, trade unions divided along occupational lines (blue-collar and white-collar workers) represent agricultural workers. In France, Italy or Belgium, trade unions divided along ideological lines represent agricultural workers.

irrespective of the structural differences, most countries share common goals of sectoral economic viability, rural development, and environmental sustainability. However, they attach varying weight to these objectives and consequently develop policy instruments to reflect the role played by the respective national agricultural sector. The heterogeneity of agricultural policy objectives explains why some countries bundle very different policy concerns under one important piece of policy or legislation. Such is the case with the US Farm Bill, which devotes most of its funding not only to agricultural assistance and commodity programs but also to federal food relief programs and conservation issues. Similarly, the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) spans issues of primary production, environmental and conservation issues, rural development, and food relief efforts.

To illustrate the variations described above, Table 3.1 introduces a mapping of policy settings around the three key dimensional parameters (the 3'I's) constituting a policy regime. Mapping policy settings offers several benefits. To begin, isolating each of the three dimensions provides greater insight in gauging the balance struck between any of them. Then, by locating a policy anchor along the scale of ideological values, it becomes possible to better comprehend how institutional architecture mitigate the influence of interest representation and conversely, how the structure of interest representation influences institutional development. Because policy anchors change over time, mapping policy settings becomes a useful tool for historical research.





Values	Institutions	Interests	Scope
Production oriented Economic efficiency Productivity improvement Export oriented	Decentralised Federalism	Pressure Pluralism	Single policy issue Agricultural affairs
			
Non-Production oriented Environment management Rural development Family farm welfare	Centralised	Sectoral Corporatism	Multiple policy issues Agricultural affairs Environmental services Food relief efforts

TABLE 3. 1 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF PRIMARY PRODUCTION SUBSYSTEM

The policy settings mapped here in Table 3.1 highlight the sectoral dynamics between values, institutional architecture and interests that assist in explaining the development of policy responses over time. To begin, it draws the attention on the multi-causal nature of policymaking and the challenges faced by agricultural policymakers to develop policies that concur with the interests of competing groups while maintaining ‘*centres of ideological gravity*’ (Botterill, 2004) in place. It also outlines broad forms of association described in the wider political science literature between the structure of institutional power and interest representation³¹ (Mahoney, 2004; Salisbury, 1984) or between values and the types of institutional power. For example, since greater levels of centralisation generally equate to greater levels of state intervention, one may expect that policy outcomes underpinned by non-market values are easier to deliver under a centralised institutional fabric with the centralised support from corporatist actors. Conversely, since decentralised institutional powers favour lower levels of state intervention, policies informed by market-oriented values find broader support from pluralistic interest groups. The mapping of policy settings proposed here intends to provide a tool to examine approaches to agricultural policies in different national political contexts to understand why different governments have arrived at different agricultural policy settings.

FOOD TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION

The consolidation of the modern food transformation industry is a recent historical development. At the turn of the twentieth century, firms engaged in food processing were very small concerns and generally supplied manufactured foods to the specifications of wholesalers. Although it is during the interwar period that food processors began producing and marketing branded products, it is not until the mid-1950s that major structural changes appeared in the food transformation and distribution industries. It is with the lifting of wartime government controls that private trading of food items began to intensify. The development of private branded food products found support with the newly adopted concept of self-service food store (the supermarket) that had appeared to cater for the rapid growth in personal consumption. The 1950s and 1960s period marked the transition from artisanal to industrialised food transformation accompanied by large capital investments to improve production capacity.

Issues of competition within the food sector became particularly prominent in the political debates of the post-WWII reconstruction period, and food manufacturers that had enjoyed until then collective price agreements and control over retail prices, were forced by

³¹ Mahoney (2004) demonstrates how governmental activities draw certain interests to action and shape the patterns of participation.

the state into competitive behaviours³². Ever since, distributors have reversed the balance of power and are now the ones setting exacting standards and contract specifications from their suppliers. The growing bargaining power of the distribution and retailing channels has had major impacts on the structure of the modern food manufacturing industry, which responded to these pressures through consolidation and diversification. For example, in response to the growing power of food and grocery retailers, the number of leading food processors fell by 40% in the UK between 1958 and 1972 (Maunder, 2002:193). The rapid pace of take-over activity was further increased by governmental policies that held the view that scale was the key to international competitiveness (Owen, 2012). In Europe and North America, objectives of productivity improvement and international expansion accompanied this period of industry concentration (Rastoin, 2000). The wave of liberalisation policies of the 1980s only magnified these post-war trends, structuring the modern food processing and distribution industries of advanced economies around oligopolistic principles. Food processors engaged either in diversifying their activities by mergers and acquisitions or in consolidating their operations by disposing of unwanted assets while large food retailing chains gained considerable control and market share. The overall effect has been a continuation of concentration in individual food markets with some firms becoming price leaders, exerting significant influence of pricing policy in their respective markets (Maunder, 2002).

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To capture the balancing act facing governments, and the policies that result, I propose to extend the policy map approach developed by Botterill (2004) and used for the agricultural subsystem to the policy environment governing the transformation and distribution of food. In a similar manner to the previous subsection, I chart how values, institutional arrangements, and interests interact around the transformation and distribution of food in order first to conceptualise the policy differences existing between primary production and transformation-distribution, and then to establish whether some form of pattern between those subsystems emerge. This would in turn confirm not only that the policy regime construct is useful at examining subsystem and national differences, but also that the notion of a food policy regime might be conceivable.

Moreover, the reader will notice that in discussing the architecture of food policy, I place a particular emphasis on the broader industrial policy environment rather than on the commonly discussed regulatory aspects of food quality and food safety. There is no doubt that questions of safety and quality are as important as the industrial policy mechanisms that

³² For a detailed account of how British food manufacturers were forced into competitive behaviour, see P Maunder (2002).

shape national agri-food sectors. Food quality and safety regulatory mechanisms help explain not only the risk-control dynamics within the supply chain, but also point to a space where industry and consumer interests intersect. For this latter reason, food quality and safety are useful loci of analysis to uncover the role of the state in mitigating these particular aspects. However, the industrial policies that coordinate the development of the supply chain are essential elements not only to understand the governing arrangements underpinning the operation of the sector and its dynamics of influence, but also to capture in time the values informing the development of the industry and interests represented in this development. To restrict the analysis to the confines of food quality and safety policy regulatory domains would fail to shed light on the powerful dynamics that have transformed national food supply chains over time. Although policy issues of food quality and safety cover questions of industry regulation and consumption, I have chosen to include these policy aspects in the discussion below.

MAPPING THE POLICY SETTINGS GOVERNING THE TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD: VALUES, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND INTERESTS

In contrast to agricultural policy, the range of values that are important to the policies governing the transformation and distribution of food are not infused with virtuous and romantic associations. Whereas the imagery of agriculture may still carry connotations of courage, resilience, and hard work³³, the industrialisation of food is, by contrast, primarily associated in the collective imaginary with the city and a competitive environment populated with notions of productivity, efficiency, and growth. In other words, the industrial policies governing the development of these modern industries carry no other considerations than those related to economic behaviour. However, the dominant ideas about what industrial policy is supposed to achieve have varied with time. If the post-war understanding of industrial policy was one to organise and direct economic affairs whilst mitigating class conflict, a gradual ideological transition occurred in the aftermath of the economic turbulence of the 1970s and 1980s, which framed a new vision of national competitiveness in a context of deepening economic integration (DeMartino, 1998). Influenced by neoclassical economists who critiqued the interventionist state and attributed growing unemployment in part to the rigidities embedded in these policies that undermined capital will to innovate, political elites came to develop a more complicated relationship to industrial policy. Policy discussions turned increasingly towards issues of national (and supranational) competitiveness in global markets³⁴, indicating a normative change of political aspirations for

³³ See Botterill (2004:201-203) for a discussion of the moral values underpinning agrarianism

³⁴ Paul Krugman (1994) is highly critical of this obsession with competitiveness and argues that 'it is not only wrong but dangerous and threatening the international economic system' (1994:30).

which the notion of competitiveness has gradually been used to '*salvage state intervention*' and to re-assign '*a proper role of the market in society*' (DeMartino, 1998:27). In summary, post-war industrial policy that acted as a mediating mechanism between domestic class conflicts (capital versus labour) during this period has gradually been reframed in the name of competitiveness as a mediation of intra-class conflicts (domestic versus foreign capital and labour).

The emergence of the competitiveness debate has brought with it important theoretical discussions about the connotations associated with the term of 'industrial policy'. Largely associated with notions of 'anti-competition' and failing industrial interventionism, industrial policy has fallen into disrepute (Aghion et al., 2010; Cohen, 2007), and has been replaced by discourses of competitiveness as a new liberal strategy of accumulation. However, as a matter of clarification, whenever this dissertation uses the term 'industrial policy', unless specified otherwise, reference is made to any form of program or initiative, sectoral or non-sectoral, that aims at shaping or influencing the investment decisions around particular industrial sectors.

The institutional arrangement structuring the policy developments associated with the transformation and distribution of food is often described as a two-tier policy architecture. At a background level (first tier) and to support the national rhetoric of innovation and competitiveness, these industries are the recipients of broader and overarching cross-sector policies in the form of fiscal policies or the (de)regulation of competition and labour. At a sectoral level (second tier), industry-targeted policies commonly vary from tax concessions, tariffs, research, and development programs to reviews of the regulatory environment (especially about issues of food quality and safety). Many reasons may underpin decisions to implement sectoral policies, whether these are for questions of national security (e.g. defence sector), technological autonomy (e.g. telecommunication or energy sectors), to offset decline in traditional activities or to even address rural development dynamics. Depending on the objectives, industrial policy can either be *structural* when addressing instances of market concentration, specialisation, etc., or *strategic* for reasons of national security or technological autonomy. Industrial policy can also only be about allocating resources to troubled sectors.

In practice, background and sectoral policies are often intertwined but the balance between these policies and the level of targeted interventions have shifted over time. Today, the policy environment surrounding the transformation and distribution of food of most advanced industrial societies continues to address questions of food quality and safety although most of the impetus is around questions of competition and industry competitiveness. However, policymakers approach these questions in a much more intermingled manner. For example, food quality and safety, which originally aimed at

regulating food adulteration, have become instrumental in matters of domestic and international competition. The French system of '*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*' (AOC) standards that links quality with know-how and territory (e.g. the wines of Champagne) exemplifies how food quality has been reframed to support industry competitiveness. Similarly, Australian food producers emphasise freshness and quality of their products to conquer Asian markets. The policy environment has further gained in complexity when it began to tackle the asymmetries of power between global retailers and suppliers/labour/consumers. Consequently, many novel issues have popped up such as anti-competitive practices between farmers, processors and distributors, the control of food wastage along the supply chain³⁵, and the local sourcing of food to populate the public policy agenda.

In most advanced industrial economies, national food and beverage industries usually represent one of the largest industrial sectors by employment and revenues³⁶, and therefore command public policy attention and influence. However, the structure of its interest representation remains difficult to identify. Schmitter and Streeck (1999) comment on the silence surrounding the subject of '*organising capitalists*' and argue that the lack of academic attention may be attributed to the secrecy and confidentiality surrounding the operation of business associations. As these authors remark, business associations have no real incentive to politicise their actions as long as their power to invest grants them sufficient control over the political process. Still, the political mobilisation of labour and the interventions of the state into the economy have forced business interests to organise over time. At sectoral levels, the organisation of business interests is shaped by not only the degree and type of regulation imposed on a sector, but also by the importance granted by the state to that particular sector. Schmitter and Streeck (1999:37) believe that the greater importance given by the state to a sector, the more likely a state is to put '*emphasis on structuring and regulating self-governing sectoral associations and enabling them to solve sectoral problems independently*' instead of using direct intervention. Such example of self-governance is found for instance with the Australian food and grocery retail industry, where large retailers have in recent times entered a voluntary code in their dealings with suppliers.

In the domain of food transformation, the wave of broader neoliberal restructuring has oriented production towards international markets and with the support of the 'competition' state, industries have formed associational governance arrangements at sectoral levels. Lofgren (2013) explains this new form of collective representation as an 'understandable' though paradoxical response to the climate of industry deregulation supported by this restructuring. As he also points out, the formation of influential peak industry bodies has

³⁵ France has passed legislating measures in 2016 to prevent food wastage at points of sale.

³⁶ In the UK, the food and beverage industry is the largest manufacturing sector by employment and turnover (Office of National Statistics, 2012). The Australian food and beverage industry represents in excess of 20% of the overall manufacturing employment (Source: Australian Government Department of Industry, 2014).

benefited governments with more structured information and exchange channels. However, the internationalisation of production systems by large international food companies has equally strengthened the role played by these business associations within policy networks, often to the exclusion of organised labour and small producers. Trade liberalisation measures have had the effect of moving national arrangements towards international regulatory regimes, shifting the role of the state as a facilitator of competitiveness and marketisation. In this new role, it is not uncommon for the state to be active at both sectoral and background levels. At sectoral levels, the state may either endorse industry assistance programs (irrespective of a neoliberal rhetoric) or consider less prescriptive regulatory environments to help specific industrial sectors. Background support to industry competitiveness is achieved through macro-economic reforms like currency stability or a low inflation rate. This new form of partnership no longer conforms to the traditional forms of corporatist or 'pressure pluralist' bargaining found in national agricultural sectors.

Table 3.2 attempts to isolate the salient characteristics and features of the governing arrangements presented here that coordinate the transformation and distribution of food. It illustrates how the range — along which values, institutional arrangements, and interest representation vary — can be characterised as a continuum of 'food policy practices'. Similar to the governing arrangements coordinating agricultural activities, the mapping highlights the dualistic nature of the extreme positions at either ends of the continuum. For instance, polities favouring market-based allocation of resources that view government intervention as a distortionary practice (e.g. tariff protection) prefer to focus on economic efficiency on the belief that with greater efficiency, no direct intervention improves social welfare.





Values	Institutions	Interests	Scope
Competitiveness Economic Efficiency Adaptation via innovation Mediation of international intra-class conflicts	Market-based instruments Deregulated environment	Global players Trans National Corporations targeting integrated economic spaces (EU, Mercosur, etc.)	Horizontal policies Macroeconomic and social policies that have indirect impact on industry sector
			
Offset market failures Mediation of class conflict Equity Tradition and Culture	Executive Planning National champions Sectoral intervention	Local players Small to medium size companies targeting signs of quality and local provenance	Sectoral policies Sector-targeted policies underpinned by state intervention

TABLE 3. 2 – MAPPING INDUSTRIAL POLICY SETTINGS FOR FOOD TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION SUBSYSTEMS

Such mapping is useful for tracking policy rationale through time and through a variety of socio-political contexts (Botterill, 2004). For example, a government may want to support locally-based small and medium size food businesses to maintain employment levels in rural areas by enforcing sectoral policies that promote local provenance or traditional artisanal production methods. Conversely, a government valuing competitiveness and innovation as engines of growth may turn its policy attention to entice corporations to locate their operations within its borders. In this instance, the accent is placed on horizontal policies around the development of skills, labour flexibility, and the protection of corporate interests rather than sectoral initiatives. It also shows how policy settings reflect the multi-causal influence of prevailing ideology over the choice of institutional arrangements and the types of interests that they serve. At times when state intervention was conceived as central to the governance of national economies as it was in the first half of twentieth century in Australia (and elsewhere), protectionist instruments such as tariffs or quotas were used for example, as a guarantee of employment. Following the economic turbulence of the 1970s, successive Australian governments have implemented a suite of microeconomic reforms to rationalise public intervention and create a new form of regulation designed to produce competitive market outcomes (Quiggin, 2001). As Quiggin (2001) argues, a close association exists between policy objectives and their underpinning values, and the institutional arrangements that deliver them. Similarly to the agricultural sector, centralised institutional powers are more likely to implement sectoral policies to correct market failures and to protect small-scale

food producers and distributors. Conversely, less interventionist states would tend to opt for macroeconomic reforms to foster growth in the food transformation industry.

CONSUMPTION

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

At first glance, food consumption is a prism of intersecting discourses and practices that connect the separate universes of individual wellbeing, capital accumulation, public health, and social welfare. It is a sphere where mechanics of power and authority are constructed, often outside the state apparatus to become a site of diffuse practices where those who hold authority attempt to shape modes of consumption. Relations of power between producers, distributors and consumers are constantly negotiated and reproduced through processes of capital accumulation, consumer influence and the much-debated regulation of markets. In affluent segments of society where prices do not drive exclusively food choices, the capacity to influence the consumer purchasing patterns around other values claiming expertise and responsibility has become strategic. Conversely, in situations of social precarity where the price system is determinant in driving consumers' food related decisions, regulation of markets and social provision become central. They are the two aspects that I have chosen to discuss here under the broad heading of food consumption to elucidate the nature of policy settings for guiding food choices and for providing household food security.

In this subsection, I apply the policy mapping approach used previously to outline what underpins the governing mechanisms that coordinate these apparently distinct aspects of food consumption. I also provide an account of the range of values, institutions, and interest representation along which policies can be set. The reader will notice the similarity of policy settings characterising both food choices and food access practices. In both instances, the values that anchor policy actions range from principles of individual choice and responsibility to contexts of collective responsibility underwritten by state provision or direction. Similar institutional arrangements coordinate both policy issues of choice and access, through either a self-regulatory system (private standards for choice and charity organisations for access), or a stronger regulatory system to help consumer choice and institutionalise social provision. The two major protagonists to influence policies in the field of consumption are the well-organised and well-resourced business groups, and broader civil society.

CONSUMER FOOD POLITICS — WHEN FOOD CHOICES BECOME POLITICISED

The literature on the development of modern consumption has been advanced by critical readings and theoretical debates around the dynamics linking citizenship to consumerism (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2008; Trentmann, 2004; Wood & Isin, 1999; Gabriel & Lang, 1995). Trentmann (2004) argues not only that the status of the consumer in national political imaginations is representative of how nation-states settle consumer politics by allocating different functional relationship and weight between citizenship and consumption, but that behind the confluence of consumption and citizenship, the political dynamics are revealed through power and social relations. Gabriel and Lang (1995) show how different discourses invent different one-dimensional representations of the consumer. To these authors, Western consumption is volatile, fragmented and confused, and therefore ‘unmanageable’. At issue here is the role played by the state in defining consumer rights and obligations as to elaborate a new form of economic democracy based on the notion that economic citizenship is practiced primarily through consumer choice (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2008). Although this is not the place to reproduce these arguments, we can still build on the question of consumer choice and the changing meanings and functions of consumption, by highlighting some policy implications that assist in mapping key policy settings.

In recent times, notwithstanding issues of food quality and safety, the role of the state in matters of food consumption has gradually turned to the question of guiding consumer choices toward healthier food options. This new role is not without its conflicting aspects. Whilst most national governments have strong ties with food industry sectors for reasons of economic development or national employment (see previous subsection), it has become a delicate exercise for the state to use these partnerships as solutions to rising rates of obesity and associated chronic diseases. If the state seeks to build a social and economic environment favourable at serving the business interests of a nationally-based food industry, it also must demonstrate that partnership with industry serves the public interest. Accordingly, resolving the delicate question of guiding consumer choices has attracted much debate in political, academic, business and civil society circles, with some supporting a self-regulatory approach and others advocating for state regulation.

The voluntary self-regulation approach, underpinned by the view that market forces self-correct negative externalities, relies on the informed consumer to choose healthy foods. This format frames industry and consumer as part of the problem as well as part of the solution, and emphasises corporate responsibility in conjunction with prevention and personal responsibility. On the one hand, the consumer is framed as using knowledge, buying power, and organising capacity to influence market supply while on the other, business interests have intensified their promotion of corporate responsibility and authority to convince political and policy circles of their responsiveness to demand. Food processors

and retailers have been particularly successful in mobilising reputations, not only from an economic power perspective but more importantly by asserting a new form of ‘cultural power’ now competing against traditional authority figures (Dixon, 2003). Since authority and expertise are necessary conditions for self-regulation, these new social developments have allowed large food retailers to operate free of stringent regulatory constraints.

To this day, most governments of advanced industrial societies have opted to varying degrees for self-regulatory industry mechanisms to guide consumer food choices. If the food processing industry has been a little reticent to engage in self-regulation, it also acknowledges that a self-regulation system is preferable to a more coercive and constraining state regulatory instrument. Described as the ‘*privatisation of politics*’ by Hirsch (2000:331 in Lofgren, 2013:78), it indicates a new form of state activities, particularly in liberal market economies, based ‘*on the assumption that the interests of business and the public coincide*’ (Lofgren, 2013:79). Civil society challenges the injunctions of privatised politics, concerned about the possible conflict of interest between market relations (and the commodification of food) and the delivery of public good (understand public health). This framing of the issue seeks to control the public food environment and exhorts politicians and policymakers to regulate the ubiquitous availability of food, the advertising of low-nutrition foods and the transparency of information to induce healthy food choices. Accordingly, this approach finds opposition in the libertarian argument promoted by the industry that the consumer freedom to choose food products based on wellbeing and healthy outcomes must be preserved, and that the problem rests not so much with the food on offer, but with the modes of consumption. This ‘personal responsibility’ attitude has obvious political implications since it points away from legislative solutions (Kersh, 2009). The question remains whether the state can enlist the market to correct the under-provision of public goods to an acceptable level. To counteract the difficulties involved with a self-regulatory environment and the poor outcomes of personal responsibility campaigns, some countries like Norway and France have mobilised their policy efforts to form and influence food preferences of younger generations through school food procurement guidelines³⁷. Although the panoply of policy instruments designed to regulate food choices is broad, the adoption of such measures may prove difficult in policymaking systems rich in veto points and therefore with too many avenues of opposition (Kersh, 2009).

³⁷ France set up in 2001 a National Health and Nutrition Plan (PNNS). Although Norway has had a national nutrition policy since the 1950s, it launched a school-based intervention program in 2004.

Public health concerns have a strong resonance with questions of food access. Notwithstanding the incidence of diet-sensitive chronic diseases in food secure households, much research has established a strong association between food insecurity³⁸ and poor health outcomes (Olson, 1999). The fact that food insecurity often co-exists with instances of overweight and obesity has led research to conclude that both are consequences of low income. Although the reasons for this association are several, questions of physical accessibility and affordability remain central to explain the consequences of food insecurity on health and nutrition. Because low-income areas frequently lack access to nutritious and healthy food choices, local government areas now call for policy responses to 'spatialize' the production and distribution of food by revisiting urban planning practices of land use and zoning. If the spatial and territorial disparities are often addressed at local government levels, the question of affordability and emergency food relief rests with national political responsibility.

Although the contribution of food and nutrition to health inequalities has been well characterised by the literature, there is no general agreement on the causes underpinning food poverty, driving national policy responses in two very distinct directions. The key frontline policy responses to food poverty in liberal market economies such as the UK, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia is to question whether food poverty and inequalities are so special to warrant specific and targeted rather than macro-economic responses (Lang et al., 2009:262). Because these governments take the view that most of the time, food poverty is dealt with by macro-economic responses, no specific policies are set up to alleviate the problem of food insecurity. Instead, attention is placed on questions of individual responsibilities, choices, and awareness while charity-based food banks or community organisations fill the policy gap for emergency situations. The contrasting approach to the individual responsibility approach is concerned with the determinants of food access and affordability, and combines macro-economic reforms like labour regulations and family payments with targeted food assistance programs. For lack of a better word, I refer to this policy stance as the 'institutionalised safety net' approach. Under this model, the state acts as the funding and coordinating body for delivering food assistance in cooperation with private and philanthropic sectors. In 2002, the European Union institutionalised food assistance on the principle of social protection by setting up the European Food Aid Program for the Most Deprived to fund and complement national food aid programs of EU member

³⁸ Food insecurity is defined by the American Dietetic Association as an instance when 'limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways'.

states³⁹. In the United States and despite its liberal approach to individual choice, one of the legacies from the 1930s New Deal reforms has been the institutionalisation of food aid through a series of assistance programs including the former food stamps program now renamed the 'Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program' (SNAP).

MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS AROUND THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD

An attempt to capture the broad settings that characterise the range of policy regimes governing food choices, food access and affordability is presented in Table 3.3. In a similar way that the scope of policies governing the transformation and distribution of food vary from macroeconomic approaches to targeted sectoral policies, the values anchoring both issues of choice and access reveal related logics. In polities infused with rhetoric of national competitiveness that enforce market logics, principles of personal responsibility and self-help are preferred to collective approaches to welfare (Rose, 1999). Conversely, polities supporting logics of collective social concern are more inclined to intervene to offset market failures and systemic social disparities. The institutional fabric that delivers these policy objectives resembles in many ways the arrangements observed in the transformation and distribution of food. Both subsystems feature institutional arrangements varying from self-regulatory logics to state-assisted regulations. When regulatory and welfare responsibilities are shifted out of state control, these responsibilities rest either with business groups or/and civil society organisations.

³⁹ The largest recipients of the EU Food Aid funding are Italy, Poland, Spain and France. In contrast, Germany, the UK or Denmark understand that food insecurity is a matter of national social policy and do not use European funding. For example, Germany prefers to address food insecurity through family payments and does not contribute to any food assistance program.





Values	Institutions	Interests	Scope
Personal responsibility Freedom of individual choice Self-reliance	Decentralised Macroeconomic reforms Self-regulation Private standards	Business interests	Nutritional guidelines Education and Information
			
Social Concern Regulatory mechanism Social provision	Centralised Executive Regulations Institutionalised safety net	Advocacy groups For public health For food security For environmental sustainability	National food programs Targeting Nutrition, Food insecurity

TABLE 3.3 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS AROUND THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD

Table 3.3 reveals how a new form of private regulation has appeared to capture how ethical and ecological values contest those of the dominant agro-industrial food system primarily driven by industrial policies and price signals. Operating beyond the traditional networks of corporate and state entities, this new form of regulation is animated by civil-society collective actions to promote new food relations and values in traditional economic practices in which the state has begun to participate to varying degrees to align the interests of consumers with those of producers. Ethical consumption, fair trade, labour, and environmental standards, just to name a few, are now subject to certification systems, codes and standards set in place by the state (often at the request of producer groups) to govern this new form of economic activity. Although these private forms of regulation (certification systems and standards for instance) could be interpreted as mechanisms to protect non-intensified and non-exploitative forms of production, most scholarship agrees that these instruments present some contradictory aspects that disguise the emergence of a new phase of commodification (Daviron & Vagneron, 2011), and ‘*extend property rights to practices where none previously existed*’ (Guthman, 2007 in Raynolds, 2012:278).

3.1.2 HOW DO WE RECOGNISE A FOOD POLICY REGIME WHEN WE SEE ONE?

Most would agree with Tim Lang and his co-authors (2009) that the ultimate objectives of provisioning food lie in achieving sufficiency of production on ecological terms, whilst preventing diet-related ill health in a manner that is equitable to all within the developed and the developing worlds. However, as these authors remind us, the problem of food provisioning is messy in policy terms because food provisioning spans multiple policy areas with varied and conflicting interests and objectives. The pathways taken by individual nation-states to deliver such objectives are varied.

Chapter 2 has argued that patterns of power, authority and collective action are built on specific sets of ideational and material foundations characterising policy regimes and that the policy regime construct helps us to crystallise the underlying forces that shape national understandings and implementation strategies governing the provisioning of food. If the previous section has aimed at mapping the broad policy settings that govern individual subsystems, the task here is to examine at a theoretical level and then at an empirical level through subsequent case studies, whether individual policy subsystems share similarities in their patterns, connection, and interdependency. If this is the case, this may indicate that these subsystems operate under the dynamics of an overarching food policy regime.

UNVEILING PATTERNS, SUBSYSTEM INTERDEPENDENCY

Regime dynamics are often described by patterned behaviour, convergent principles, and rules, or as an expression of order and explicit commitments (Haggard & Beth, 1987). The previous section has brought out that a similar range of values broadly informs the three apparently autonomous policy subsystems. At one end of the continuum, we find production-oriented values fuelling export-oriented visions for the agricultural sector, principles of national competitiveness for the transformation and distribution industries, and notions of personal responsibility guiding consumption. At the other end of the continuum of policy settings, we find non-production related concerns guiding agricultural policies, sectoral policies aiming at offsetting market failures in the industrial sector and state regulation and provision framing food consumption.

The previous section has equally highlighted how values not only guide patterns in the modes of allocation and institutional architecture, but also define the scope of policy instruments. However, if '*ideas serve as the organising principle for integrating actions across subsystems – the glue of the regime*' (May et al., 2011:290), their adoption is often predicated on national institutional arrangements and coalition supports. For instance, when

Margaret Weir (1989) enquires into the differences in the receptivity to Keynes's economic ideas in 1930s Britain and US, she argues that contrasting patterns of administration and their relationships to politics affected the terms of emergence and political acceptance of Keynesian ideas in these two countries. Similarly, the role of administrative arrangements and policymaking processes in allowing ideas to reach the centres of decision-making and their influence on consolidating new paradigms applies to the world of food policy. An example of such institutional and coalition dynamics is the French '*Conseil National de l'Alimentation*' (CNA) or National Food Council (author's translation), an independent advisory council that assists the ministries in charge of agriculture, public health, and consumption in setting up and implementing the national food program. Formed in 1985, this mini 'food parliament'⁴⁰ represents members of the supply chain, including consumers' associations, producers, transformers and retailers, worker unions and state scientific research institutes. As a result, this consultative process has assisted the legislation of many food-related policies spanning over policy domains, which includes the recent 2014 national food policy.

The previous section has shed some light not only on the distinctiveness of individual subsystems and on their intrinsically structured nature, but also it has highlighted their structuring influence on the other subsystems. This indicates that their governance is not solely conditioned by macro-level environmental factors but is also subject to the interdependencies and dynamics of interaction with the other two policy domains. For example, a competitiveness-based approach to the transformation and distribution of food expands the scope for agency for these industries to reinvent the relations with the agricultural sector. Similarly, the prescriptions of policies at the consumer end of the supply chain impact to varying degrees on the food transformation and distribution industries.

It is therefore reasonable to expect that in 'real life' food policy environments, there will be strong logical connections and some forms of patterns of inter-relation may emerge in between values, institutional arrangements, and interest representation. Again, what this research proposes here is a heuristic method to uncover the complexities of food provisioning rather than an argument for or against the existence of food policy regimes. It does not suggest that these are the only dynamics occurring in this area of policymaking or that, although necessary to the exercise of policy mapping, these dynamics are strictly binary in nature, or that the relationships described here are the sole dynamics at play.

⁴⁰ The French National Food Council is divided in seven colleges and has 49 members. Its president is nominated for three year terms. The process to manage coalitions of support or opposition uses a majority voting system held in a plenary session.

POLICY INTEGRATION ACROSS POLICY DOMAINS

Given that policy subsystems have different policymaking histories that have involved different interests, the question of policy integration across any of these domains remains at the heart of this discussion. More particularly, we might ask: when and how can we establish that some form of policy integration exists at national levels? If so, what are the integrative forces across elements of multiple subsystems that allow some cohesion of purposes and objectives? What are the problems encountered when different policy subsystems develop along incompatible logics?

The example of the French national food council exemplifies the role played by institutions in facilitating integration across elements of policy subsystems by structuring information flows, authority, and political attention. Notwithstanding that a successful policy integration is also predicated on the general acceptance of values and objectives that bind subsystem elements together, an initial step in establishing signs of integrative processes around the question of food policy lies in gauging the state's commitments and governmental efforts through the formation of committees, independent advisory agencies, and national food councils. These institutions serve as integrative forces across individual policy subsystems and reinforce policy cohesion around common values by channelling authority and information flow (Jochim & May, 2010). A variety of institutional arrangements may render policy regime cohesion possible, as for example, a dominant agency may be sufficient to bring actors from individual policy subsystems around compatible logics. However, if no explicit form of institutional integration across subsystems is apparent, does it mean that the existence of a food policy regime is highly unlikely — or does it mean that it is an instance where the ideas governing the coordination of the policy regime implicitly support the separation of its subsystems?

EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT FOOD POLICY REGIMES

My contention here is that it would be unreasonable to conclude that the lack of policy institutional integration equates to the non-existence of a policy regime. Instead, I assume that policy regimes can be conceived of as intervening variables standing between causal variables (values, institutions, and interests) and food policy outcomes (Krasner, 1982), and once in place they affect related behaviours. I argue that since norms and values are the glue of the system, those supporting implicitly the segregation of policy domains must be at the core of an *implicit* food policy regime. To illustrate the comparative differences in various national contexts it is possible to offer and justify the distinction between an 'explicit' and

‘implicit’ policy regime, and posit that the nature of a food policy regime is somehow closely associated with the intensity of its institutional framework.

The explicit/implicit divide in public policy is not new to social sciences scholars. It has been widely used for understanding differences in international regimes (Krasner, 1982), cultural policies (Throsby, 2009), and industrial policies (DeMartino, 1998; Norsworthy & Tsai, 1998), etc... For instance, Krasner (1982:186) defines regimes as ‘*sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations*’. And, DeMartino (1998) frames macroeconomic policies as implicit instruments to shift nationally grounded labour class-conflicts to a new international stage of intra-class conflicts. In a similar way to these authors, I propose that an explicit/implicit distinction assists in grasping the nature of the governing arrangements that define food policy outcomes. Placing the focus on the ‘mechanics’ that animate the relations between state and food economy is a way to elucidate how different nations form and construct their food policy regime.

Broadly speaking, I define a food policy regime of an explicit nature when the national policy discourse provides clear systemic policy responses, linking policy objectives and orientations of programs with institutional arrangements. In many ways, explicit food policies express the position of the state about matters that it considers of public interest and for which institutional arrangements allocate responsibilities and powers to serve specific interests. Because those types of policy regime articulate clearly values and ideologies, they tend to institutionalise those principles by setting up agencies, councils, governmental departments to coordinate a legislated regulatory system. At first glance, an explicit food policy regime presents a dense institutional fabric. Such an explicit policy approach is found for example in the French regulatory system around Genetically Modified Organism technology, which set in place in 1998 stringent regulations to meet very explicit objectives of protecting public health and environmental systems.

By contrast, an implicit food policy regime is an instance when no clear policy objectives are publicly articulated around the issue of food provisioning although these may be virtually embedded in broader logics and norms. Since an implicit policy approach does not take an explicit form, its interpretation calls on frames of reference outside the issue of interest. For instance, implicit regimes may use macro-economic policies to shape elements pertinent to the food policy agenda. The competitiveness debate discussed earlier in this chapter embodies this implicit emphasis. As noted by Friedmann (1993), if implicit rules evolve ‘*through practical experiences and negotiations among states, ministries, corporations, farm lobbies, consumer lobbies and others*’ they become a subtle indication of a relatively stable set of relationships. Implicit approaches are by default ‘distancing’ strategies from the policy problem for which the state is not willing to take direct

responsibility. Therefore, an implicit policy environment built on broad interpretative frameworks tends to place emphasis on *ad hoc* and improvised responses rather than on long-term policy visions. Weak institutional arrangements around the issue of food and its provisioning are typical of an implicit food policy regime.

The explicit/implicit dichotomy presented here echoes the ongoing political struggle characterised by Polanyi's seminal work on the tensions between the dis-embedding forces of the self-regulating market – the implicit policy regime environment, and re-embedding efforts of social protection – more frequently found with explicit policy regimes. Explicit policy regimes are also characterised by institutional devices to promote deliberative processes to design outcomes. The French mini 'food parliament' described earlier is such an example. By contrast, implicit policy regimes rely on the self-regulatory nature of markets to coordinate the organisation of the national food economy.

Although I suggest explicit and implicit policy regimes as approaches to deal with the coordination of food provisioning, this distinction is about levels of emphasis rather than a mutually exclusive dichotomy. Some explicit food policy regimes may have noticeable elements of implicit emphasis and conversely, implicit food policy regimes that tend to operate through indirect institutional channels may address at times, issues where there are explicit links between objectives and policy instruments. Examples of explicit policy objectives within an overall implicit policy regime would occur at time of crisis when widespread issues of concern may act as attention-focusing mechanisms and force policy integration across several policy domains (Jochim & May, 2010: 311). In these instances, irrespective of the overall policy regime emphasis, the articulation of policy objectives tends to be explicitly presented, prompting governments and other actors into action. The international responses to the food safety crises of the 1990s are examples of the formation of new institutional arrangements (laws and agencies) to deliver the explicit objectives of risk prevention and openness of information. Such issues are not only triggers for garnering attention across policy subsystems but also cohesive forces that maintain regime in place.

If crisis-driven dynamics appear more explicit in nature, the less visible but just as powerful coalition-driven policy dynamics may be as effective in spite of their implicit nature. It is reasonable to suggest that since WWII the emergence and development of the modern food policy regime is more an instance of political coalition-building than a response to specific crises. If crises have punctuated the development of food policy regimes and have led to policy and coalition changes, so far they have been agents of transformation rather than causes of regime formation⁴¹. Modern history provides many instances of transformation of food policy regimes. The contemporary American food policy regime takes its roots from the 1930s New Deal policies that aimed at stabilising farming incomes in times

⁴¹ Contemporary 'national security' regimes in response to threats of terrorism or 'war on drugs' regimes to criminalise drug use are examples of explicit policy regime formation around a 'crisis' issue.

of economic crisis. The '*agricultural welfare state*' (Sheingate, 2012) infused with its 'family farm' rhetoric continues to be of relevance 80 years later, although scholars are now questioning the possible erosion of these governing arrangements. As Chapter 7 will show us, the important transformation of the agricultural policy regime in Australia is another example of policy regime transformation. A shift in the intellectual environment of the 1970s-1980s prompted a major reform of the relationship between the state and the agricultural sector (Prichard, 2005). In a pursuit of liberalisation, a new vision articulated the argument that public interest was best served by creating space for capital. The times of economic protectionism were over, signalling the beginning of a new style of agricultural and food policies. However, national food policy regimes do not exist in a vacuum. Successive waves of global restructurings have shaped, pressured and constrained national food relations. Since I am particularly interested to understand the global-national dynamics, the next section proposes to examine the key elements within the broader global food order that bear influence on the development of national food policy regimes.

3.2 THE FOOD POLICY REGIME IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

While the food policy regime construct is useful for understanding the role of the state in the historical development of the modern food provisioning system, food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009) provides a complementary analytical lens that brings the trajectories of food and agriculture within a broader and global capitalistic perspective. Because the food regime perspective primarily focuses on identifying the hegemonic role of few nations (or corporations) in shaping the world food system, it understates the agency of the state. The introduction of the national food policy regime in this research allows reconciling this divide, between the *global* and the *national*. If the food regime theory historicises the developments of nation-states and national food systems, in turn the policy regime complements this account by highlighting the national dynamics in the structural transformations of national agriculture and food provisioning systems within broader historical settings.

To explain the transformations of capitalism since the 1870s, food regime theorists have placed their attention on what has determined and formed regimes of capital accumulation in agriculture to constitute and support global power arrangements. By examining patterns of circulation of food over space and time, the perspective outlines how the creation of distinct 'global regimes' of capital accumulation in food and agricultural sectors have served the geopolitical interests of a hegemonic power. To food regime theorists these rules not only have governed international agri-food transactions, but have

also dictated the organisation of national agri-food capital and state system (McMichael, 1992:344).

Based on the argument that food regimes constitute a '*vector of power*' (McMichael, 2005), this dissertation attempts to unpack some of the dimensions to this power, by examining how the international state system and division of labour, the relations between agriculture and industry, social forces and the ideological discourse have borne influence on the development of national food policy regimes. Against a backdrop of geopolitical dynamics, capital-state relations and producer-consumer relations, the case studies chapters outline the historical development of the national food policy environments of the UK and France, to question whether their changing configuration can be solely explained by food regime dynamics.

The construction of the nation-state, central to the formation of the first food regime (1870-1914), is examined to understand how it altered food relations in the selected countries. If Britain expanded its empire through colonial territories, settlements and trade, other industrialising European countries like France, opted to maintain people on the land, to protect national agricultural sectors, and to source exotic foods from the colonies. By the end of WWII, the nation-state system was completed and a series of interventions prioritising national self-sufficiency and food security were in place. Characteristic to the second food regime (1945-1970s) was a system of subsidies to underwrite agricultural productivity, and the development of food aid interventions from the US and from Europe to redirect production surpluses. As long as the 'Cold War' lasted, the building of the European Economic Community, that subsequently became the European Union, complemented rather than contradicted US hegemony, but these geopolitical alliances and interests between the US, Europe and the large emerging economies of China and India were to be redefined with the collapse of the Soviet Union bloc (Calleo, 2009). This geopolitical schism combined with a corporate takeover by Trans-National Corporations (TNCs) over commodity chains have left a space for globalising markets to replace a socialised form of food security and to integrate agriculture into the international trade system. Accordingly, the third food regime perspective (1990s-onwards) argues that corporate activities have become co-constitutive of regulation and governance while bringing new range of contradictions (Le Heron, 2013:59).

Although an important consideration, the extent to which national food systems are linked to a system of global food relations is not tested by this research. This thesis does not seek to establish whether a global food order determines the trajectories of national food provisioning, or whether the global just co-exists amongst individual national food systems, with no apparent pattern and structure. Instead, this thesis assumes that a cross-scale connection exists between food regimes and national food systems and that the prevailing structure of the global food order is impacted by, as well as affecting by, the development of

national provisioning systems. The choice of the case studies made here aims at, amongst other things, providing a palette of national contexts to support this analytical position.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This dissertation asks how and why governments coordinate their respective national food provisioning the way they do. It answers the question by confronting hypotheses about the historical, social, and political origins of national food policy logics possibly embedded in what we may call food policy regimes. The policy regime approach offers a way to place analytical emphasis on the conception of state-market relations in many ways informed by Karl Polanyi's argument about the ineluctable embeddedness of market activity and examine the various forms of state intervention of the liberal state upon the coordination of food provisioning.

This chapter has proposed a novel theoretical and methodological approach capable of dealing with the key aspects of food — that it to use policy instruments as bridging devices to overcome the institutional separation traditionally found in food studies between those researching production and those who study food consumption. The analytic assumption underpinning this project is that values, principles, and norms are the critical defining characteristics of a policy regime. Therefore, the mapping of policy settings for each individual policy subsystems, and in particular of its value settings, provides significant clues to outline the contours and internal dynamics of what might be labelled food policy regimes.

However, the usefulness of such analytical tools is to be probed in the following national case studies in ways that should help us understand not only the weight of national history in shaping values, interest representation and institutional fabric in the face of international dynamics, but also how the state interprets and transforms national and international constraints over time. The tools developed here will be used to map the settings of individual national policy subsystems. The purpose of this mapping is to highlight patterns of power, access, and values by identifying the nature of institutional arrangements, whether functional, legislative, or regulatory, by recognising whose interests these institutional arrangements serve, and by describing the principles and norms that inform such dynamics. The degree of accuracy of the mapping process is expected to reflect the trade-off against the accuracy of scale (international, national, and local). In any case, the mapping process should allow the research to capture the dynamics of stability and change in historical time.

This research project has a commitment to offering historically grounded explanations as to why contemporary national food provisioning systems operate under different food

policy logics. The comparative approach is meant to show that national food policies coordinating the provisioning of food in present times are not all of one type, and that they owe their origins to a variety of historical forces that have set the respective national food policies on distinct developmental pathways. Therefore, although the period of interest spans from the post-war period until present times, the research will go back to the transformative period of late nineteenth century in a quest to identify causal configurations that have produced the major transformations in the coordination of national food provisioning.

CHAPTER 4 – UNITED KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

The review of the literature presented in Chapters 1 and 2 has set out two distinctive perspectives in explaining the organisation of food provisioning systems. On the one hand, the food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989) proposes a temporal organisation of a global food system to reflect how hegemonic regimes have anchored over time their authority throughout the political and economic construction and coordination of the provisioning of food. As such, British hegemony has played a distinctive role in the organisation of the first food regime. On the other hand, comparative literature examining cross-national differences in food policies generally calls upon broadly accepted archetypes of market economy to explain policy variations. Whether the literature emphasises the character of state intervention in the economy or the way firms coordinate their activities, Britain is at large identified as a champion of a liberal political economy model, even though Britain's welfare capitalism, particularly its healthcare system, may escape this 'ideal-type' liberal typology to present a more 'hybrid' form in its organisation.

Empirical evidence points out that both lines of analytical enquiry may not be sufficiently fine-grained to explain some inconsistencies in the historical and political development of food provisioning in Britain. Arguably, by framing world-order politics as strategically orchestrated and delivered, food regime theory tends to obscure the realities of national cultures and histories in hegemonic development. Similarly, the extent of British liberalism ought to be scrutinised if one wants to understand why competitive market arrangements do not extend to the coordination of the agricultural sector. This chapter is designed to contribute to these conceptual gaps by arguing that it is possible to explain the contemporary British food policy environment by looking at how the causal mechanisms of ideas, interests, and institutions. The pillars of the policy regime or the '3I's' as it will be mostly referred, have interacted over time to determine certain policy trajectories and not others. In particular, the chapter offers analytical insights to show that free trade became the pillar of late nineteenth century British political economy, not so much as an instance of hegemonic strategy but rather as the result of interest alignment, contest, and a constructed national identity. It also highlights the significance of regional dynamics, — in this case the

European Union and its institutions — to mitigate the effects of international trade liberalisation and restrain the reach of British liberalism over the agricultural sector.

Central to the analysis submitted in this research is the argument that the development of national food provisioning systems is conditional on both — the extent to which domestic capitalism gained ascendancy over traditions of localism, and the extent to which global logics influence or undermine forms of national autonomy. This chapter illustrates how the early transition to a capitalist system obliterated most forms of national food culture to build a representation of food based on market relations. It makes the case that in many instances the normative logics of production-based interests also inform the representation of food consumption, showing the ‘transportability’ of values and principles across individual policy domains. Drawing on important moments of the modern history of food consumption, the discussion shows how the collective representation of food in the modern British capitalist society emerged from the political economy of free trade and ‘cheap food’ and remained centred around broader attributes intrinsic to the exchange value of food like price and trade, rather than around more ‘practical’ forms of usages to satisfy human needs, such as taste, pleasure, conviviality, and tradition. This confirms the structuring influence of production policies over the apparently autonomous field of consumption and the need to consider these interdependencies in the governance of food consumption.

Drawing attention to how ideas, interests, and institutions have formed, been held together and, in some cases, come apart is a useful way to explain how policy trajectories are either maintained, reproduced, or interrupted. When applied to British political history, this chapter shows that at times when interests support state ideological stance, institutional change follows, as was the case in the 1980s when business interests supported Thatcher’s neoliberal experiment that led the dismantling of intermediary institutions. In other circumstances, institutional arrangements become pivotal in shaping interest representation and values, as happened during the interwar period, when the Ministry of Agriculture and Food shaped the corporatist partnership with the farming community to enter the post-war productivist era. At other times, exogenous events may destabilise institutional architecture, as was the case with the food safety crises of the 1990s and 2000s that resulted in the creation of the new Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

In sum, the lens of the 3’I’s allows us to better understand the causal pathways taken in the organisation of food provisioning, to explain why the transformation, distribution, and consumption of food are structured around neoliberal principles of competition, self-regulation, and ethics of self-reliance, while the agricultural sector continues to follow a ‘state-assisted’ logic of protection and subsidies⁴². The analysis also highlights how the

⁴² Although this logic may be under considerable pressure once the UK exits the European Union. At the time of writing, the British government has agreed to match the level of EU subsidies until 2020.

commonality of values create patterned behaviour amongst apparently independent policy subsystems.

To examine the causal mechanisms that have set policy trajectories to their present forms, the chapter proceeds as follows. To set the context of the discussion, the chapter begins with a brief overview of contemporary food provisioning system highlighting some of its key characteristics such as — the national reliance of imported foods, the respective places of agriculture and food processing in the national economy, and the role of food consumption in questions of public health and social policy — as well as the governing arrangements currently in place. To trace the origins of these contemporary arrangements and to interrogate the role of the British nation-state in the global food order as it has been theorised by the food regime perspective, the second section unpacks the key historical moments and political forces leading to the post-Second World War period through the lens of the 3'I's, to explain the policy trajectory in the domains of production and consumption of food. This period is important on three fronts. To begin, it reveals that the late nineteenth century ideology of economic liberalism and free trade first developed out of class-based politics of contestation to later support a state-centred strategy of hegemonic ambition. As such, this thesis sharpens the national political dynamics proposed by food regime theory. It also uncovers how the adoption of free trade constructed the politics of consumption around the notion of cheapness rather than origins and traditions of food. Finally, it shows that Britain's difficulty in maintaining the ideology of economic liberalism in a protectionist world economy led to the astonishing step of subsidising agriculture, a governing arrangement institutionalised later through the accession to the EEC in 1973 and of continued relevance.

The third section discusses the specific dynamics since the end of the Second World War that have set in place specific policy approaches still in place today. Of special interest are the 1970s and 1980s, periods of international economic turmoil in the history of capitalism punctuated by the accession of the United Kingdom to the EEC (1973) and the election of Margaret Thatcher (1979). Both moments are critical in helping us understand the interplay between the three causal mechanisms of ideas, interests, and institutions when reorganising the provisioning of food in contemporary terms. To begin, the neoliberal experiment of Thatcher's governments demonstrates how the alignment of corporate food industry interests with neoliberal ideology facilitated institutional changes notably in labour relations, corporate ownership, lenient competitive practices, and industry self-regulation. Furthermore, farming interests, traditionally opposed to *laissez-faire* economic practices, remained 'sheltered' from major national ideological reform through their membership to the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), showing that institutional arrangements may at times be sufficient to resist ideological pressures. In any case, this duality in the conception of competitive arrangements brings into question how much Britain conforms to an archetype of liberal economy and compares with other liberal market economies. The final section

questions whether it is possible to identify forms of patterned behaviour or convergent principles across the individual policy subsystems of production, transformation and distribution, and consumption, which could indicate the existence of a British food policy regime. The chapter offers some concluding remarks about the usefulness of the analytical framework in examining some of the key dynamics shaping food policy trajectories.

4.1 THE CONTEMPORARY FOOD PROVISIONING SYSTEM IN THE UK – AN OVERVIEW

With a national level of ‘self-sufficiency’ for all food types hovering around 60%, the United Kingdom relies on food imports to ensure its national food security. France, the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, and Spain are the major exporting countries to the United Kingdom. Whereas the United Kingdom mostly imports lightly processed food like fruits, vegetables, meat, cheese, and wine, it exports mainly highly processed foods and alcoholic drinks⁴³. Overall, the UK is a net importer of agricultural and food products with imports representing twice the value of its exports⁴⁴.

Agriculture represents 0.6 percent of the United Kingdom’s economy, provides three quarters of the indigenous food eaten in the country and occupies about 70% of the landmass. In 2014, agriculture employed about 480,000 people, a comparable figure to the food transformation industry, but only a third of the employment in the food retailing industry. Despite the small contribution of the agricultural sector to the national economy, farmers receive state assistance in the form of subsidies through the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In 2014, UK farmers and land owners have received about £4 billion of CAP subsidies, almost entirely decoupled from production activities, and of which 15% has been diverted to agri-environment activities such as environmental stewardship and organic farming schemes⁴⁵.

Compared to its European neighbours, it has a highly concentrated farm structure, operating traditionally on capitalist relations of production using modern technology and inputs. There are two distinct types of farming in today’s United Kingdom — a pastoral farming predominantly located in the north and west of the UK and an arable farming in the southern and eastern regions. The distribution of agricultural holdings shows signs of land

⁴³ Whisky is the leading export from the UK while fresh fruits, vegetables and wine are the major food imports into the UK (Defra ‘Agriculture in the United Kingdom 2014’ available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/430411/auk-2014-28may15a.pdf and accessed 21 March 2016.

⁴⁴ Source: European Commission Members Factsheets 2015 – available from http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/factsheets/index_en.htm and accessed 2/06/2015.

⁴⁵ Source: Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ‘Agriculture in the United Kingdom 2014’ available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/430411/auk-2014-28may15a.pdf and accessed 21 March 2016.

consolidation where the very small holdings (of less than 5 ha) are gradually disappearing to consolidate into larger parcels of five hectares or more. In 2003, about 37% of agricultural land was still parcelled in lots of less than five hectares but by 2010, it had dropped to about nine percent. Overall, small holdings (up to 10 hectares) make up only a quarter of the agricultural holdings, the other three quarters are equally distributed between medium holdings (up to 50 hectares) and large holdings (more than 50 hectares). The average holding size that was 57 hectares in 2003 had increased to about 90 hectares⁴⁶ in 2010.

Great Britain and England in particular, is a long-time urbanised society with few people having any personal or family connection to farming. In 2010, the rural population represented as little as three percent. Young farm holders are very few in the UK, and about a third of farm holdings are in the hands of older generation operators, indicating the slow replacement rate of farm entry⁴⁷. Agrarian ideologies do not prevail and the concept of family farming is not held as the model of agricultural activity. Instead, and most probably in response to strong urbanisation and industrialising historical forces, agriculture is organised around efficiency and managerial logics.

Although food manufacturing is generally spread over the United Kingdom, some areas have pronounced local specialisations, like for example, the manufacture of grain mill and bakery products in the South-East region. If traditional foods such as meat, bread, and dairy were typically produced by small local or regional family-owned businesses, novel products such as confectionary have been the domain of mass production and high technology enterprises. Today, the food manufacturing industry represents about 15% of national manufacturing turnover and employment. The number of businesses involved in the food and drink industry is noticeably lower than in other industries, confirming perhaps the high level of industry concentration in this sector. It is estimated that out of 8,500 firms that make up the bulk of the food processing industry in the UK, 70% are small enterprises with a small workforce⁴⁸. However, the top five UK food companies account for about 30% of the industry turnover⁴⁹. At aggregate levels, food processing companies are strongly represented in the list of Britain's largest firms and compared with other European countries, the UK has a greater number of large sized food companies (Maunder, 2002). The

⁴⁶ Source: European Commission Members Factsheets 2015 – available from http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/factsheets/index_en.htm and accessed 2/06/2015.

⁴⁷ Source: European Commission Members Factsheets 2015 – available from http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/factsheets/index_en.htm and accessed 2/06/2015.

⁴⁸ Source: Defra Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015.

⁴⁹ Source: <http://www.foodmanufacture.co.uk/Manufacturing/Food-and-drink-manufacturing-industry-set-for-3-4-growth> accessed 6 April 2016. The top five private UK food companies in 2013 were Brakes Group (£3bn), Sisters Food Group (just under £3bn), Iceland Foods (just under £3bn), SSP (just under £2bn) and Bakkavor (just under £2bn).

continuing rationalisation of the food manufacturing industry has also led to lower levels of employment and below than average working conditions and skill levels⁵⁰ (Hannon, 2014).

Since the 1980s, power has shifted from producers to retailers, transforming the supply chain from being a producer-driven to a buyer-driven one and creating situations of bilateral oligopoly (Lang et al., 2009:164). Controlling about 70% of food retail sales⁵¹, large retailers influence consumption patterns while driving agricultural restructuring. An arm-length style of state intervention favouring self-regulation and consensual modes of regulation, has maintained what some scholars consider as a form of privatisation of food governance (Lang et al., 2009; Barling & Lang, 2003; Flynn et al., 1999; Marsden et al., 1997). Although the British government has kept the role of setting minimum food safety and quality standards, retailers have become private regulators imposing private standards to producers and farmers.

Britain's food culture has been transformed, diversified, and softened. Food tastes have 'Europeanised', and some argue that Britain has turned into a café society where wine drinking permeates all classes and most age groups, and olive oil has become a common ingredient of British cooking. The population is predominantly urban with about three quarters of people living in urban centres and less than another quarter living in intermediate centres (European Commission, 2014). Average household food expenditure represented about 11% of the total household final consumption expenditure⁵². However, for households in the lowest income quarter, about 16% is spent on food⁵³. Between 2007 and 2012, UK retail food prices rose by 32% compared to a 13% increase in France and Germany over the same period⁵⁴. In real terms, this represents an increase of 12%. Price is still the most important determining factor for food choice. According to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), in 2015 price was given as one of the top five factors influencing food choices in more than 90% of cases, and as the most important factor in more than a third of food purchases⁵⁵. By contrast, quality commonly perceived in terms of freshness and appearance was considered as the most important factor in less than 20% of the purchases.

⁵⁰ A trend confirmed by the 'Future of Manufacturing Project: Evidence Paper 3' Government Office for Science available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277161/ep3-geography-of-manufacturing.pdf and accessed on 13 April 2016.

⁵¹ According to Defra's Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015, the 'big four' retailers (Tesco, Sainsburys, Asda and Morrisons) would represent some 60% of grocery retail sales and hard discounters (Aldi and Lidl) would amount to another 10%. According to Consumers International, the 'big four' supermarket chains controlled 76% of the national food market.

⁵² Source: Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 'Agriculture in the United Kingdom 2014' available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/430411/auk-2014-28may15a.pdf and accessed 21 March 2016.

⁵³ Source: Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015, Defra.

⁵⁴ Source: Food Statistics Pocketbook 2012, Defra.

⁵⁵ Source: Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015, Defra.

Most people in the UK are overweight. National statistics indicate that more than 60% of the adult population and 30% of children suffer from excess weight⁵⁶. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UK obesity levels have more than trebled since the 1980s, setting the country with the highest level of obesity in Western Europe, ahead of countries such as France, Germany, and Spain⁵⁷. 15% of the UK population live below the poverty line⁵⁸ and some of these people resort to charity-based food banks to meet their dietary needs. Food relief efforts are provided through a network of privately-run food aid providers like the renowned and largest Christian charity-based food bank network Trussell Trust. Food insecurity in the United Kingdom is on the rise particularly since the 2013 cuts to social security benefits, and it is estimated that 10% of the population suffered from food insecurity in 2014⁵⁹. Food relief efforts are neither monitored nor collated by governmental agencies and the only evidence-based data is one provided by privately-run food relief agencies.

What follows is an historical account that examines how the '3is' or the causal mechanisms of ideas, interest and institutions have guided the transformation of the policy environment surrounding the provisioning of food in the United Kingdom to be one characterised today by the continued subsidisation of the agricultural sector, the transformation and distribution of food governed by neoliberal principles of competitiveness and self-regulation, and a political culture of consumption infused with values of individual responsibility and self-reliance.

4.2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MODERN UK FOOD PROVISIONING SYSTEM – LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE END OF WWII

This section explains how the key causal mechanisms of ideas, interests, and institutions have shaped policy environments coordinating the production and consumption of food until the end of World War II. Three points of historical and analytical interest are made in this section. To begin, this section discusses how nineteenth century agricultural interests, land owners and tenant farmers, were able to institutionalise the commodification of land through the parliamentary enclosure process. Then, drawing from the wider source of economic history, the section explores how the adoption of free trade was in fact the outcome of a contest driven by the interests of manufacturing capital together with an urban working class rather than an ideological stance guiding hegemonic ambitions (O'Rourke,

⁵⁶ Source: Report titled 'Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity, and Diet' published in March 2017 by National Statistics, Statistic Team NHS Digital.

⁵⁷ Source: United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization 'The State of Food and Agriculture 2013'.

⁵⁸ With income under 60% of the median threshold. Source: Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015, Defra.

⁵⁹ Source: Food Foundation Report 'Too Poor to Eat' May 2016, available at foodfoundation.org.uk

2000; O'Brien & Pigman, 1992). Finally, just as the adoption of free trade signalled the subordination of agriculture to suit the conception of Britain as an industrial nation (Rooth, 1985), it also shaped the contours and dynamics of the first food regime under British hegemony.

Analysing this period of British political history through the lens of 3I's contributes to the scholarship of British food studies on two levels. To begin, it sharpens the food regime analysis in outlining why Britain resorted to free trade to establish its hegemony. Then, it reveals how the pursuit of a free trade logic led to two important and interrelated consequences — the state subsidisation of agriculture and a representation of food around principles of 'cheapness' rather than origins or traditions.

4.2.1 THE TRANSFORMATION OF BRITISH AGRICULTURE

The revitalisation of the landlord class throughout the enclosure project and the transition to a capitalist agriculture were only possible with the support of the rich peasantry, the '*village aristocrats*' (Byres, 2009:37)⁶⁰ that ultimately became the new class of capitalist tenant farmers, leasing the land at 'competitive' rents from the landed aristocracy (the new capitalist landlord class) and hiring labour from landless agricultural proletariat (Byres, 2009). The transformation described by Byres (2009) as '*landlord-mediated capitalism from below*' proceeded forcefully during the Tudor era, and by late seventeenth century the peasantry had been defeated and the new class structure was in place.

The most striking feature of the period of history ranging from late eighteenth to mid nineteenth century is that for the first time, the relationship between population increase and food prices had been broken and that agricultural output kept up with a rising population (Overton, 1990). England resorted to two essential mechanisms to increase agricultural output; first, it introduced technological changes⁶¹ in the cultivating methods to increase yields and then it extended the cultivated areas through the enclosure process. What remained of the former collective economy in the form of open field and commons was finally privatised through the nineteenth century parliamentary enclosures. E.P. Thompson (1980) advances that enclosures were also framed as a project of social discipline to eradicate any possible '*breeding ground for barbarians*' (1980:242), and increase the dependence of cheap reserves of labour to the benefit and convenience of the tenant farmers and land owners. In Thompson's words (1980:243) '*Ideology was added to self-interest*'. The violence of the enclosure movement severed the customary relations of the poor with the agrarian means of

⁶⁰ Although peasantry may be considered as a single class, differentiations existed amongst the peasants and this stratification was to become pivotal to the agrarian reform of England.

⁶¹ Such as crop rotation techniques, new pieces of machinery and new chemical compounds.

production forever. Commodification of the land was almost complete and agriculture had been transformed as a vehicle for the accumulation of capital and a source of labour to more modern sectors of the economy (Hobsbawm, 1964:31). Agricultural interests represented by the class coalition of tenant farmers and land owners had institutionalised the commodification of the land through the enclosure process to serve their purposes of expansion and by the same token, at reducing land labourers to dependence.

4.2.2 NEW VISIONS FOR BRITISH AGRICULTURE

Two important historical developments explain the contemporary arrangements of agricultural subsidies. It begins with the institutionalisation of free trade in mid nineteenth century to access the provisioning of cheap food, that would underwrite Britain's industrialisation. Contrary to what the food regime theory may suggest, the adoption of free trade was in fact the outcome of a contest between interests (O'Rourke, 2000; O'Brien & Pigman, 1992) rather than an ideologically state-driven strategy. However, once institutionalised, free trade reinforced the conception of national interest in the pursuit of hegemonic expansion. Caught up in the 1930s-world crisis of primary production, Britain faced a difficult dilemma. Its commitment to unilateral free trade to support industrial interests and access to cheap food was incompatible with the need to assist British producers. This conundrum led to the revolutionary step of protecting the agricultural sector through state-financed subsidisation.

THE POLITICS OF FREE TRADE

Friedmann and McMichael (1989) have argued that the first food regime (1870-1914) was centred on the imports of 'cheap food' from the settler states to underwrite Britain's industrial growth and world economic hegemony. Instrumental to this hegemonic strategy was the rhetoric of free trade that framed financing through the gold standard (Friedmann, 2005). However, Britain's nineteenth century debates within the ranks of the Whigs and Tories over trade liberalisation, as documented by O'Rourke (2000), highlight how state-centred theories may oversimplify the causal pathways to hegemonic expansion, and obscure the internal political struggles and tensions taking place in the formation of trade policies. English and Irish cereal producers, who had enjoyed for about 30 years the protection of the Corn Laws, were opposed to industrial interests that favoured free trade arrangements to lower food prices and therefore reduce wages. The political dispute that opposed on one side landed property owners who enjoyed a long-lasting parliamentary

representation by the Conservative Party and, on the other side, the new liberal 'industrialist' class found unexpected support from within the Tories ranks, its Prime Minister Peel and the House of Lords⁶². The puzzling element lies in the fact that even though both houses of parliament were dominated by landed interests, the Repeal of the Corn Laws succeeded. To McLean and Bustani (1999), Peel had lost faith in the Corn Laws and rallied support from the leader of the House of Lords not on grounds of economic efficiency, but on fears of an impending famine in Ireland and political instability should the protectionist policy be maintained. This episode of nineteenth century British political economy reveals how a pragmatic approach to economic difficulties combined with sophisticated political skills can become pivotal in convincing certain class interests to adopt new policy trajectories, and accept a regime change towards unilateral free trade practices.

When imports from the 'New World' economies surged and wheat price fell by almost half in real terms over the period 1873 to 1895, the spill-over effects on other commodity markets led to a significant drop of income for crop farmers throughout Europe (Swinnen, 2009; Lévy-Leboyer, 1968; Musson, 1959). In line with its commitment to the freedom of trade, the British government refused to raise import tariffs, a decision that suited industrial capital and labour's interests. Contrary to Britain's expectations, free trade practices were no longer favoured by other major economic partners like Germany, France, and the US. These countries reinstated tariff protection for very different economic and political reasons. As Kindleberger (1978) observes, the *'differences in European responses to the decline in world prices of wheat in the 1870s and 1880s may be summarised as follows: In Britain agriculture was permitted to be liquidated; In Germany large scale agriculture sought and obtained protection for itself; In France agriculture successfully defended its position with tariffs; In Italy the response was to emigrate'* (1978:27). Instead, those protectionist countries developed manufacturing industries behind protective tariffs, which caused Britain to face considerable competition in many key industries (O'Rourke, 2000: 834). However, Britain maintained its political argument for free trade to the detriment of the expansion of its national agricultural sector until the early 1930s. If in continental Europe, agricultural productivity and animal farming had progressed, the reverse was true for England that could only feed one-third of its population (Murdoch & Ward, 1997: 314), and provide agricultural employment only to 20% of the workforce in 1870⁶³ (Broadberry et al., 2008).

In summary, although the system was finally able to escape Malthusian dynamics to deliver 'cheap food' to the expanding proletariat, the strategy to achieve it caused much contest within established interest groups. The adoption of free trade came out of a contest driven by the interests of manufacturing capital and an emerging urban working class, which

⁶² The power of these ideas even prompted the British Labour Party to adopt in 1904 a pro-trade liberalisation position for the following 30 years.

⁶³ According to Broadberry et al. (2008:27), if British agriculture employed 22% of the working population in 1870, by 1913 only 12% of employment came from the agricultural sector.

received political and institutional support from governmental elites. Not only did the commitment to free trade allow the subordination of agricultural interests to industrial capital, it also reinforced the alignment between industrial interests and the conception of national interest in the pursuit of hegemonic expansion. Highlighting the political influence of national coalitions of economic interests sheds further insights in understanding the first food regime of accumulation under British hegemony. By the end of the nineteenth century, free trade ideology was so entrenched in parliamentary circles that Britain maintained its stance despite the world economy reverting to protectionism in the aftermath of the 1890s' economic crisis (O'Brien & Pigman, 1992).

THE INTERWAR PERIOD AND THE STATIST CORPORATIST APPROACH

The interwar period is a key moment in British political history. It witnessed the end of British hegemony over a world food order (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989), and a transition from a '*laissez-faire*' policy regime of free trade to a more interventionist approach, ranging from food control policies during WWI to broader trade protectionist measures during the depression of the 1930s (Rooth, 1985; Dewey, 1984; Whetham, 1978). It is also during this time that institutional arrangements were built to establish a corporatist partnership between agricultural interests and the state.

Reluctant to abandon liberal principles of *laissez-faire*, the government had let the provisioning of food for the first two years of WWI develop into one of chaos and instability⁶⁴ (Whetham, 1978), sending food prices upwards⁶⁵ and leading labour organisations to demand higher wages and food controls. The era of 'cheap food' was under threat and the alignment of interests between labour and capital was fractured, convincing the newly elected government to abandon some of its liberal principles and intervene over the production and distribution (rationing and price control) of food⁶⁶. Although the state was prompt at reverting to its traditional *laissez-faire* approach once the war was over, it however maintained some of its institutional arrangements to exercise control over the use of the nation land and manage guaranteed prices granted to British producers (Cox et al., 1985:132). As Murdoch and Ward (1997: 315) suggest, the collection of agricultural data '*facilitated the construction of agriculture as a sector and rendered this sector more 'visible' to policy-makers*' and by 1919, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) was created. A nascent form of corporatism emerged between state and the NFU⁶⁷, more from the

⁶⁴ On the eve of the First World War, just under two thirds of Britain's food came from overseas (Barnett, 1985).

⁶⁵ British farming had become highly profitable and profits were largely free of tax (Dewey, 1984)

⁶⁶ Food controls were instated in June 1917 and by July 1918 compulsory rationing was implemented nationally.

⁶⁷ The NFU membership grew from 10,000 to more than 125,000 by the 1930s, representing over half of British farmers (Brassley et al., 2006).

demands of the state than from agricultural interests (Cox et al., 1985: 133). Various nominations of former NFU presidents as Ministers of Agriculture over the years reinforced the close-knit nature of this corporatist arrangement, that later became instrumental in the subsidisation of agriculture.

In the face of collapsing world prices in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the dilemma faced by the British government was to maintain access to cheap food while providing protection and support to British producers. Supporting the view that free trade allowed Britain to retain its industrial and financial supremacy, Cabinet originally opposed proposals of assistance to the farming community and pushed for agriculture to accommodate the protection of industrial interests (Rooth, 1985). However, a succession of resignations of key Cabinet members in 1932 led the British government to adopt a twofold solution. It imposed import tariffs on foreign goods through the General Tariff 1932 while redirecting its pattern of free trade towards the Empire. It, then, provided agricultural subsidies to local farmers⁶⁸ while maintaining its trade policies of Imperial Preference⁶⁹. Both measures soothed the fierce opposition that Australia⁷⁰ had against a possible protectionist regime, and shaped the principle of state assistance that underpinned British agricultural policies until the 1973 membership to the European Economic Community (EEC) (Rooth, 1985).

In the lead up to WWII, Britain began planning for wartime by setting up a rationing system and encouraging home grown food production to complement food imports. In just three years between 1939 and 1942 British farmers successfully increased their gross output by two-thirds (Bowers, 1985), demonstrating the strategic importance of a prosperous agriculture to the post-war settlement. Combined with rationing and home production, it is estimated that by 1945 Britain was producing 75% of its food consumption.

In summary and as O'Rourke (2000: 841) notes, class-based politics were at the centre of the nineteenth century debate around the ideology of economic liberalism of which free trade formed an integral part. Whereas labour and industrial capital supported free trade, landed interests contested the commitment to trade liberalisation especially in times of economic downturn, and sought protection from international competition. Yet, liberalised trade prevailed as the main conception of national interest⁷¹ until the 1930s. Despite continental Europe having reverted to protectionist policies, liberalised trade continued to receive support from liberals, unionists, export industries and the working class (O'Brien & Pigman, 1992:107). However, the institutionalisation of farming subsidies in the 1930s

⁶⁸ By 1937, the UK government had accepted the principle of Treasury-funded subsidised agriculture to preserve the interests of Britain as an industrial nation (Rooth, 1985: 189).

⁶⁹ Imported food and raw agricultural products from the empire received exemption from the tariff wall.

⁷⁰ According to Rooth (1985), Australia used some economic inducements such as preferential tariffs on British textiles to persuade Britain to maintain the privileged import regime.

⁷¹ During this period, British political elites maintained the British Empire open to traders from all nations.

indicates the difficulties encountered with the pursuit of a free trade logic⁷² in times of increasing international competition and declining hegemonic economic position. The erosion of Britain's hegemonic position may not only have forced Britain to resort to 'bargaining' with the self-governed dominions but it paradoxically imposed a *state-assisted* protection of national agricultural interests to accommodate its industrial interests. National agriculture was no longer regarded by governmental officials as an industry much like any other industry. Dominated by a restricted policy community (a corporatist interest representation) operating a specialised institution (the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries) to deliver privileged arrangements (subsidies to producers), agricultural policy had finally endorsed its '*exceptional*' character (Grant, 1995).

4.2.3 FOOD MANUFACTURING AND FOOD CONSUMPTION

Nineteenth century technological innovations not only allowed the development of new foods but most importantly transformed a small-scale craft-based food transformation network to a more diversified and industrialised food provisioning system. Just as much of the food industry's activity continued to be transacted by small manufacturers and traders, larger food companies emerged in specialised food sectors⁷³. Overall, these industrial transformations combined with increasing flow of cheap grain and meat imports expanded and transformed individual food consumption⁷⁴. While food distribution remained in the hands of small shopkeepers until well after WWI, the retail cooperative movement fostering principles of fair trade and safe food garnered considerable support and a growing membership⁷⁵.

Much as the economic and social significance of this reorganisation would have called for more institutionalised forms of regulation, the difficulty resided in the diversity of business demands on the regulatory process. To maintain its business autonomy, the emerging corporate food manufacturing industry deliberately remained outside the political sphere until the Second World War (Trentmann, 1996), while the retailing sector made of small shopkeepers conducted its lobbying through local government channels (French &

⁷² Julian Go (2014) argues that an imperial logic underpinned by territorial annexation is at its strongest in times international economic competition; however, in times of economic hegemonic position, free trade is used as a vehicle to further capitalist interests.

⁷³ For example, Unilever was created after the merger in 1929 of Lever Brothers and the Dutch Margarine Union; Cadbury and Fry amalgamated in 1920.

⁷⁴ Only those with greater discretionary income regularly accessed the new factory-produced foodstuff. Working class households spent between half and two-thirds of their income on food, and wealthier households only committed about 20% (French & Phillips, 2000:14)

⁷⁵ Membership had reached 8.4 million in 1938 (French & Phillips, 2000:20)

Phillips, 2000:26). In any case, most of the regulatory burden was carried by the retail sector⁷⁶.

These transformative currents gave rise to a new understanding of the consumer, of its identity and its emerging agency. Drawing from Trentmann's (1998) seminal work on the political culture of consumption, I want here to tackle the politicisation of consumption in Britain and the influence it held over consumer food choices over time. What follows elaborates on a point made earlier in Chapter 1, that the consumer is an '*ideological construction*' (Trentmann, 1998:218), and shows that the journey of the identity of the British food consumer results from social and political traditions specific to the British context.

FOOD CHOICES FOR THE NEW BRITISH CONSUMER CITIZEN

Britain's political culture of free trade had not only influenced political and policymaking circles but it also shaped British consumers' expectations associated '*with democratic rights, social justice and national identity*' (Trentmann, 1998:236). Consumption under the political culture of free trade was viewed as an active agent of democratisation and an alternative to political action for groups usually excluded from formal politics (Trentmann, 2006). By the late nineteenth century, British workers had accepted the rhetoric of free trade, had aligned their interests with those of the free traders, and had constructed food consumption around principles of cheapness rather than food quality, provenance, and territoriality (Trentmann, 2006; Maclachlan & Trentmann, 2004).

This form of liberal consumer politics equally privileged the understanding that self-governing associations and civil society were the main mechanisms of consumer representation rather than state regulation and protection. The consumer cooperative movement is the testimony to such conception of consumer protection. Although Britain maintained its free trade position until the early 1930s, wartime imperatives of economic planning and the chaotic nature of markets of the ensuing economic depression led organised consumers to demand increased state controls over the supply of scarce commodities, calling on notions of 'right' to consume instead of freedom of trade⁷⁷ (Trentmann, 2006:35). The politics of consumption were shifting away from the sole emphasis on cheap prices to a broader notion of consumer protection mainly attained through informed and rational self-governance. In sum, the argument can be made that the consumption of food was set on a path that no longer recognised attributes of provenance,

⁷⁶ French & Phillips (2000) argue that the limited lobbying power of retailers caused the regulatory burden embedded in the Sale of Food and Drugs Act to focus on retailers rather than manufacturers throughout the 1875-1939 period.

⁷⁷ High levels of unemployment during the interwar period fostered the understanding that free trade had failed.

tradition and 'quality' as paramount to food choices, but instead considered price and safety as more valuable markers.

4.3 UK FOOD PROVISIONING SYSTEM IN MODERN TIMES – POST-WWII TO PRESENT TIMES

This section makes the case that it is possible to explain the causality of food policy trajectories through the lens of the 3'I's at a time when Britain's political economy shifted from post-war economic planning to a more liberalised environment. The section begins with a discussion of how the post-war productivist paradigm was a 'near-perfect' alignment between a production-oriented ideological centre of gravity (Botterill, 2004), agricultural interests and an institutional arrangement of state-funded subsidies. By the 1970s, the political cost of state assistance and the demands from the second food regime hegemon (the US) led British farming interests to seek institutional refuge under the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), a significant move that proved beneficial in sheltering farming interests from the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. However, the entry of conservation interests to the policy table shifted the production logic to broader agri-environmental functions and gave an opportunity for an institutional rearrangement to reflect the multifunctionality of British agriculture, even if farming interests continued to enjoy an agricultural policy of 'exceptionalism'. This section continues by examining the impacts of the neoliberal ideological project over the development of the food manufacturing and distribution industries to explain how corporate food manufacturing and distribution industries developed into an oligopolistic sector with regulatory powers. This section concludes by discussing the implications of these industrial transformations for food consumption to argue that normative logics of production-based interests also inform the representation of food consumption.

4.3.1 PRIMARY PRODUCTION

THE POST-WAR PRODUCTIVIST PARADIGM

Post-war agricultural policy was dominated by ideas of food security, increased national self-sufficiency and an emphasis on the maximisation of production through 'a permanent ... system of assured markets and guaranteed prices for the principal agricultural products' (Williams, 1965:156 in Dorey, 2005:8). Institutionalised in the Agricultural Act of

1947, these principles confirmed the high-profile status of the National Farmers Union (NFU) (Winter, 1996; Cox et al., 1985) for many provisions were made to involve farmers, often to the exclusion of agricultural workers, in setting guaranteed prices or in granting union members statutory rights (Bowers, 1985). In other words, the governing arrangements to address the policy problem of ensuring food security rested on the alignment of agricultural interests through the institutionalisation of state-funded subsidies.

When policy preoccupation turned to issues of public expenditure⁷⁸, entry to the EEC became a 'logical' step even though the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) caused political disagreements. By the third and final application to EEC membership, the leadership of the NFU had recognised the benefits of being sheltered by the large EU trading bloc from the demands of an American agriculture for greater international liberalisation. As Grant (2005:13) remarks, '*Britain inside would be afforded protection from the trade pressures being increasingly applied by the big power-blocs outside Europe*'. The governing arrangements were maintained, but the institutionalisation of industry assistance had shifted from national to supranational level.

THE NEOLIBERAL EXPERIMENT

The role of the European institutions in sheltering national agricultural interests from the neoliberal ideology is one of the most important policy dynamics from this period of British food politics. Although long-standing intermediary institutions such as state-sponsored educational centres and privileged access to capital were dismantled in the 1980s and 1990s, the determined neoliberal approach of the 1979-1990 Thatcher Governments could not detract the course of policy from the status-quo of subsidies and protection that the European CAP provided (Grant, 2005a). When the newly elected Thatcher government made clear that times of 'vested interests' were over, it also framed corporatism as ill-conceived⁷⁹ and a major cause for Britain's difficult economic management (Grant, 1989a). In response, most interest groups sought alternative venues to exercise influence often beyond the national borders. However, the process of Europeanisation had changed the policy game and at a time when supports to national industries were removed, agriculture maintained governmental support to keep the British sector competitive with state-assisted French and German producers.

⁷⁸ Since imports were unrestricted and deficiency payments went uncontrolled.

⁷⁹ For example, the Milk Marketing Board created in 1933 was dissolved in 1993.

THE POST-THATCHER ERA AND THE RISE OF NEW POLICY ISSUES

Three major developments brought change to British agricultural policy — a series of food safety crises in the 1990s, the pressure of environmental and conservation issues, and the liberalisation of trade and agriculture. The series of food safety crises led to a national institutional rearrangement. The rise of environmental and conservation issues brought new interests to the national policy table, while the liberalisation of international trade brought new European institutional arrangements to cater for a new understanding of the multifunctionality of agriculture.

The series of food safety crises of the 1990s, which highlighted how the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) vested interests in protecting farming and food industry had been detrimental to food safety and consumer protection, triggered institutional change with the creation of the independent Food Standards Agency in 2001 and the new Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). If the creation of Defra suited the grand project of rural policy reform entertained by the then New Labour government (Ward & Lowe, 2007:8), concerns around climate change and sustainability shifted Defra's policy priorities over questions of agri-environment (Barling & Lang, 2003; Ward & Lowe, 2007). This new turn suited environmental interests for it allowed to redirect subsidies towards environmental objectives, while farming interests were presented as part of the solution to environmental conservation.

The entry of new interests to the policy circles became a precursor to change not only to the established understandings of what agriculture was about, but also to the institutional arrangements that protected the position of agriculture. Grant (2005a) argues that the transformation of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) into a mass membership organisation was pivotal for a policy network to be established around conservation issues, and shake the corporatist political arrangement enjoyed so far by the farming community. As Grant (2005a:17) explains, with more than one million members by the early 2000s, the RSPB had '*emerged as a major definer and articulator of conservationist values and of alternative agricultural policies*', suggesting that agricultural policy was opening up to outside influences.

The growth of the environmental movements combined with the growing international pressures for the liberalisation of agricultural trade⁸⁰ led to a series of reforms with the objectives to first bring EU commodity prices closer to world market prices (MacSharry reform of 1992), and then to organise the decoupling of compensation payments from production to support to both environmental functions of agriculture and the socio-economic development of rural areas (Agenda 2000). If, overall, the level of subsidisation under the

⁸⁰ Within the Uruguay Round of the GATT trade negotiations.

CAP had diminished⁸¹, the nature of the assistance had also shifted from a production-oriented rationale to a greater emphasis on meeting environmental standards⁸² and as a result, farmers were no longer required to produce in order to receive subsidies.

The support that Britain offered France when negotiating the implementation of the 'Second Pillar' was not so much because of an environmental ideology but more as '*a tactical response to 'test drive' degressivity, to show that the UK was really committed to this sort of approach, to demonstrate its feasibility and to promote a form of degressivity that would suit the UK*' (Lowe et al., 2002:7). To Lowe et al. (2002), degressivity in the form of the decoupling of compensation payments from production and a steady reduction in these payments, was a way to address the politically unsustainable system of farm subsidies. It also suited the domestic political agenda of the New Labour Government of revitalising and modernising rural policy. Most of the political decisions made around the reallocation of CAP subsidies in Britain have not been justified on grounds of agricultural survival but on a characterisation of farmers as stewards of the countryside, what Lowe et al. (2002:15) define as a '*countryside agenda*' in contrast to the French '*agrarian agenda*' of rural development. While the latest reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2014-2020 has imposed that 30% of direct payments to farmers be allocated towards a 'greening payment', it also has granted considerable flexibility to individual member states to reduce direct payments to farmers raising concerns amongst the NFU's leadership of the scheme being an opportunity to 'gold plate' the environmental requirements⁸³.

In sum, when the stability of the productivist paradigm was shaken by national budget politics, world economic turmoil and a shifting ideological climate, agricultural interests found safety with the European institutional arrangement. However, the new focus on environmental functions and rural development institutionalised under the EU CAP' Second Pillar reveals a national conception of rural development based on environmental improvements, what Lowe et al. (2002) define as a '*countryside agenda*' rather than one centred solely on agricultural activities. In any case, if farming interests could combine elements of the neoliberal programme with a continued commitment to state assistance, as Potter and Tilzey (2005) argue, it has been out of the opportunities offered to political interests to recast agricultural support in a more market-oriented form. The Agenda 2000 CAP reform that decoupled support from production on the one hand and recoupled it to agri-environmental and rural development outputs, was such an instance.

⁸¹ According to the OECD, the Producer Support Estimates representing the policy transfers to the EU agricultural sector have declined down to about 20% of gross farm receipts.

⁸² This is implemented through the CAP architecture of Pillar 1 to cover guarantee payments and Pillar 2 concerned with rural development and environmental practices.

⁸³ See UK Parliament Commons Briefing Paper SN06693 published August 14, 2013.

4.3.2 THE TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD

This section brings to light how the neoliberal ideology transformed the organisation of post-war food industry from a climate of industrial policy supporting corporatist economic planning to liberal principles of self-regulation that are in place today. Drawing from a literature that documents British industrial policy and business-government relations since 1945, this section makes the case that the support of business interests to the state-led ideology of neoliberalism was instrumental in the transformation of institutional architecture, confirming that support from interests towards new ideological principles facilitate institutional change. To set the scene of this major transformation, the section briefly outlines post-war policy dynamics centred on principles of corporatist economic planning to continue examining the implications of the new rhetoric of national competitiveness and its ideology of *laissez-faire* for the organisation of interests and institutional fabric of the transformation and distribution of food.

THE FOOD TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRIES IN POST-WAR BRITAIN

Of the largest European countries, the United Kingdom and France were the two most '*active practitioners of industrial policy*' in the first 30 years after the Second World War (Owen, 2012). Notwithstanding the conditions that prevailed at the end of the war, both countries were losing their overseas empires and had great motivation for preserving their status as world powers. The rise of Japanese and East Asian economies during the 1950s and 1960s prompted UK's industrial policy to hand-pick 'national champions' as a response in narrowing the technology gap presented by this international competitive challenge (Beath, 2002). Mimicking in many ways French institutional planning arrangements, a National Economic Development Council (NEDC) was set up in 1962 as a corporatist economic planning body bringing together state, capital, and organised labour to devise industrial policy responses to international challenges. Encouraged by the state that needed at the time a unique business "partner" to commence its new programs in economic planning, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) was created in 1965 as the peak industry representative organisation (Moran, 2006:456).

There was little competition law to speak of in mid-twentieth century Britain and many scholars have commented on the causality between the relative tardiness of a stronger regulatory regime and the high levels of market concentration found in the processing and retailing industries. The first statutory intervention came in 1948 with the passing of the Monopolies and Restrictive Practices Act but its remit was timid, discretionary, and more focused on restrictive practices than on monopoly control (Scott, 2009). This may be

consistent with the idea of the time that industrial performance was a product of market concentration (the 'national champions') rather than one of competition. In any case, the food industry was never hand-picked as a 'national champion' and developed within a limited regulatory environment, explaining its significant level of market concentration since the 1960s (Hannon, 2014).

THE TRANSITION TO A NEOLIBERAL WORLD

The election of the Conservative government in 1979 came at a time when traditional industrial sectors seemed to be eclipsed by new knowledge-based industries and financial sectors, making the stigmatisation of industrial policy and economic intervention even more relevant. Overall, this led to a situation where at both national and European levels, greater emphasis was placed on matters of national competitiveness rather than sectoral industrial policy. As Wright (1988) remarks, the 1980s' official industrial policy rhetoric was one of providing all the necessary conditions for achieving a profitable, competitive, and adaptable productive sector in the UK, objectives that continue to be articulated in present times⁸⁴.

The implications of the change of ideological underpinnings led to major developments in the way interest representation accessed influence, and in the reorganisation of the institutional landscape. In contrast to the agricultural sector, corporate business interests supported the shift to a neoliberal ideology and as Rollings (2013) argues, organised business had already established linked with neoliberal circles prior to 1979. Not only large corporations were providing financial support to neoliberal think tanks, but some of the key members of the CBI who had already strong neoliberal views, bridge the neoliberal discourse to the heart of the British business community (Rollings, 2013:640). A return to the values of free market, individual initiative, self-reliance, and self-help was welcomed by corporate interests and this, in turn, underwrote the development of a privatised consumer culture conducive to the restructuring of the food distribution sector along large corporate logics (Marsden et al., 1997).

Not all forms of business representation suffered the impositions made by the new Conservative governments⁸⁵. Instead, government developed direct connections with large individual firms (Grant, 1993) whilst smaller size firms maintained a form of political presence through associative arrangements (May et al., 1998; Grant, 1993). A reinvented '*business-friendly Labour Party*' (Moran, 2006:458) continued fragmenting governmental agencies, introducing market mechanisms into the practices of national bureaucracy and overall

⁸⁴ See UK 2010-2015 Industrial Strategy.

⁸⁵ The NEDC was eventually dismantled in 1992, threats were made on the CBI, and civil servants were encouraged to bypass trade associations and establish direct contact with companies (Budge & McKay, 1993).

shifting power from labour to capital. In the domain of food policy, this ideological climate resulted in an increasing reliance on corporate and retailer-led regulatory systems to drive food policy (Marsden, 2013:124), which in turn redefined the role of the state in the regulatory domains of competition, planning and food quality.

INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS ON COMPETITION AND REGULATION

Although programmes of privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation may have needed strong competition policy, it took almost two decades for the introduction of a structured competition policy regime. The enactment of the Competition Act 1998 was the first visible step towards a new approach to such a regime, although its primary motivation (and the subsequent Enterprise Act 2002) was to reduce the regulatory burden on companies by aligning UK competition laws with those of the European Community (EC). The tardive set up of adequate competition enforcement powers is interpreted as a reflection of a national predisposition for '*pragmatic adjustment rather than comprehensive design*'⁸⁶ and a general perception that competitive conditions were reasonable (Maunder, 2002:206).

Accordingly, both sectors of food transformation (processing) and food distribution (retailing) have followed parallel and interdependent paths of industry concentration. The growing bargaining power of large retailers, especially since the 1980s, which had increased pressures on food processors to either merge or take-over to diversify their product range and to resist these forces, led to a significant pace of take-over activity. Thus, the level of market concentration in the food processing sector became much higher than in any other manufacturing sector, and similar dynamics applied to the food retailing sector (Maunder, 2002:197).

In line with values of national competitiveness, successive governments have endorsed industry mechanisms of self-regulation, moving the governance of food beyond traditional governmental channels to include private interests in setting standards and public systems of regulation (Flynn et al., 1999). The fact that the food retail industry has been particularly swift at positioning itself as pivotal to the regulation of food safety and quality, has shifted the locus of *power* within the food supply chain from manufacturers to large retailers. State divestment of former corporatist responsibilities was also noticeable in land-use and planning policies that endorsed the expansion of out-of-town superstores across the UK⁸⁷, and made the market dominance of food retailers a product of state action as much as one of

⁸⁶ Reference: OECD Report 'United Kingdom – The Role of Competition Policy in Regulatory Reform (2002) available at <http://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/27068497.pdf>

⁸⁷ Whereas controls over store size and location have been strict in many European countries, the UK has adopted a much more liberal and uneven view in this regard (Marsden et al., 1997:217).

corporate innovation (Marsden, 2012). Overall, the mix of public and private governance renders the institutional framework that regulates the food industry as one where cooperation and competition overlap. The outcome of this arrangement is that it has produced a dual system of regulation with at one end a privately-led regulation for large and global corporate entities and a more traditional command approach for small operators. As Marsden et al. (1997:221) argue, food policy has therefore been recreated around new power interests and new representations of consumer interest to which individualised choice is paramount.

In sum, several points of analytical interest may be highlighted. To begin, it has showed that when interests are aligned with an ideological stance, as it was the case when business interests supported the neoliberal project, institutional change follows. The account also demonstrates how a commitment to the ideology of '*laissez-faire*' economics and to the primacy of freedom of contract has created a lenient competition policy regime to support industry self-regulation mechanisms. This, in turn, raises the much-debated question of economic power and the tendency for large firms to acquire it over a specific industrial sector. The competition policy regime tinted by a national 'predisposition for pragmatic adjustment' has underwritten the structural development of Britain food industry where large companies enjoy direct access to the policy table to set the terms of the regulatory environment in which they operate, while smaller operators are subject to greater regulatory scrutiny. This British case study supports Galbraith's (1967) view that in order to control the market, large corporations seek to exercise economic and policy influence. It also reveals the dominance of an essentially non-competitive market structure in British food economy.

4.3.3 FOOD CONSUMPTION

Chapter 3 has argued that consumption is a site where power and social relations between market, state and civil society construct the representation of the 'consumer'. Because this '*creature of changing shape and values*' has occupied different positions over time (Trentmann, 2005:2), the purpose of this subsection is to explain how the political culture of food consumption in Britain since the post-war years has been defined through the formative role of ideas or values, the interplay between economic and civil interests, and the formal institutions that guide the consumer in choosing and accessing food.

Building on the relationship between political economy and political culture of consumption proposed by Trentmann (1998), this subsection makes the case that in many instances the normative logics of production-based interests also informs the representation of food consumption. As Trentmann (1998) argues, the significance of free trade in the Victorian and Edwardian era went beyond economic interests to reach a cultural conception

associated with cheap food. Similarly, principles of cooperation in post-war Britain framed the consumption of food as a collectively organised endeavour to which price control, information and protection prevailed over the sole consideration of cheapness. In recent times, the ideological nature of the neoliberal logic has displaced notions of cooperation to grant the consumer with principles of individual responsibility, choice, and freedom. The organisation of interests reflects the ideological shift. At the production end and operating in a self-regulatory environment, economic interests have privileged the notion of individual choice and responsibility to influence modes of consumption. In turn, organised consumer interests frame responsibility as a collective good and engage the state in instituting mechanisms to provide information and protection.

Both change and continuity are characteristics of consumer politics in post-war Britain (Maclachlan and Trentmann, 2004:189). Whereas economic affluence and technological advances gave the opportunity to consumers to redefine their relationship to the state and the market, principles and values that had arisen before the war still conditioned the conception of consumption. The pre-war political culture of free trade that had promoted cheap food re-emerged amongst other claims of tighter price and food quality control. Post-war British consumer interests were being redefined in terms of education and protection for which a buoyant food cooperative movement that owned factories, flour mills and farms, played an important role. However, post-war economic affluence challenged the ethical understanding of consumption on many levels. Politically, Conservatives attacked the cooperative movement as being yet another monopoly that restricted the freedom of the individual consumer (Gurney, 2005). The Consumer Association, created in 1957 as a consumer advice service, became another threat to the cooperative movement by constructing a representation of the consumer as a rational individual. Internal difficulties within the movement were another constraint on its expansion. Overall, the individualistic model of the consumer within the political and economic spheres had prevailed. When the neoliberal project brought back the consumer to the centre of political discourse, it also placed a new emphasis on principles of choice and individual responsibility (Blay-Palmer, 2008 ; Maclachlan & Trentmann, 2004:197). The former rhetoric of post-war '*paternalism*' was being replaced by one firmly anchored in the ideas of choice and freedom (Gabriel & Lang, 2006:9), to imply that maximising choices resulted in greater freedom.

Consumer education about questions of food quality and safety continued to be one of the key institutional responses in the protection of the consumer to which nutrition science became instrumental. However, exogeneous crises (and pressures) tend to instigate such institutional arrangements. When in the early 1980s scientific evidence linked affluence with a wide range of illnesses from heart disease to tooth decay, the policy response was to release in 1984 a set of national dietary guidelines. The institutional responses to the wave of scandals over food contamination and adulteration of the late 1980s were the Food Safety

Act 1990, the creation of a new food safety division within MAFF and in 1996 the first UK national food labelling regulation⁸⁸.

According to Lang (1997:246), it is during the 1980s that a '*strong coalition of people, groups and interests came together*' to rally public attention around food and contest the relationship between state and industry. New priorities to shelter food from the forces of a liberalised market were articulated to oppose the intensification of food production on grounds of public and environmental health. Advocacy for better consumer protection and stronger business regulation was particularly decisive in the set-up of the 1984 national dietary guidelines, and certification and labelling systems in the 1990s. Thirty years on, civil society organisations (CSOs) continue to instigate changes in public attitudes and understandings over questions for instance of ethical consumption such as animal welfare and fair trade practices, concerns for sustainability in production and consumption (like food waste and short food chains), or the implications of biotechnology for food production. However, if the number of CSOs is estimated anywhere between 10,000 and 25,000⁸⁹, very rarely do these organisations have a seat at the policy table. Instead, CSOs use capacity-building around grassroots initiatives to apply pressure on public opinion and policy circles together. Just as public funding is received on *ad hoc* basis by CSOs involved in education and capacity building, private funding is subject to the changing fashions of philanthropy and tends to be directed towards projects showing 'innovation' to improve food and farming⁹⁰. It is estimated that the segment of UK's civil society preoccupied by issues of food and farming spends less than one percent of the overall funds available to UK's CSOs. In spite of being kept at arm's length from policymaking with low funding levels, CSOs have been able to broaden over time consumer preferences to consideration of quality, safety, and ethical concerns such as animal welfare, fair trade, and environmental impacts of food production.

Because household food insecurity is also framed as a matter of individual choice and responsibility, the key frontline policy response is one to question whether the issue merits special policy attention since individual competencies to budget, cook or make appropriate choices are considered as the most appropriate solution to alleviate food insecurity. Placing particular importance on individual responsibilities and choices rather than on the structural causes of food poverty, the state has let charity-based organisations to fill the policy gap and respond with food relief efforts. To a large extent, the institutionalisation of charity-based food banking maintains the de-politicisation of food insecurity and its social construction as a matter of community and corporate support rather than a question of right to food.

⁸⁸ A European Food Information to Consumers (EU FIC) came into force in 2011.

⁸⁹ Source: 2011 Food Ethics Council Report '*The Food Issues Census: Survey of UK Civil Society*' Food Ethics Council: Brighton.

⁹⁰ Id.

In summary, the consumerist model that guides policy response of ‘informed choice’ is the default position for policy problems of nutrition and household food insecurity. As such, policy initiatives are limited to consumer education and information and food choices are guided through soft policy approaches rather than choice-editing initiatives such as bans and fiscal measures. Similarly, the policy response to household food insecurity continues to be one of questioning whether the issue merits special policy attention. The adoption of the principle of the informed individual has left private actors to fill the policy gaps and has allowed corporate dominance over the discourse of nutrition and charity-based organisations to respond to food relief efforts. Contrary to the sectors of production and distribution, consumer interests tend to be represented within civil society and outside formalised policymaking channels.

4.4 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF FOOD POLICY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The previous two sections of this chapter have analysed the historical developments of the three policy subsystems of production, transformation and distribution, and consumption through the lens of the causal mechanisms of ideas, interest, and institutions (the 3is). For each of these policy domains, these sections have suggested causal paths to explain the contemporary policy environments. However, none of the previous discussions have explored whether individual policy subsystems share similarities of pattern, connection, and interdependency. This is the aim of this section — to uncover whether the dynamics that have animated food policy in the United Kingdom reveal patterned behaviour, convergent principles, and rules across the individual policy subsystems over time with a particular emphasis on the contemporary governing arrangements.

Nineteenth century British liberalism with its cluster of ideas of *‘laissez-faire’*, individualism, freedom of choice, and minimal state involvement had favoured trade liberalisation to advance its economic hegemonic expansion. As a result, the adoption of free trade not only reaffirmed the subordination of agriculture to industry, but it also aligned consumer interests around principles of ‘cheapness’ rather than food quality or origins and territoriality (Trentmann, 2006; MacLachlan & Trentmann, 2004). In other words, to producers and consumers, the free trade ideology did not impart any other quality to food beyond price. Since most of the population had left the land, food provenance and culinary traditions were relegated to secondary considerations.

The interwar period marked a time of policy changes. The rationale of free trade as the main conception of national interest was undermined, support coalition was weakened and as a result established patterns of influence were destabilised. The imposition of the

General Tariff in 1932 not only signalled the official end of the policy of free trade but also indicated a redirection of pattern of trade towards the Empire and the Commonwealth. The new protectionist policy approach led to two concurrent developments — agriculture was to be granted state assistance and the politics of consumption shifted towards stronger nationalistic and cooperative overtones.

The British response to post-war economic problems was economic planning and Europe. The reappraisal of British economic policy supported by both sides of politics replaced free market principles by ideas of economic planning. Productivist principles animated the production of food. Agriculture received production-based subsidies while the food manufacturing industry entered a phase of significant expansion in a regulatory climate of *'laissez-faire'*. These developments at the production end also transformed how consumption was to be understood. The cooperative movement that had gathered considerable momentum during the interwar and war periods faced an ideological challenge with the rise of the *'consumer society'*. Principles of cooperation were competing with the new representation of an individual and rational consumer. Productivism nurtured individualised consumption and as Hilton (2009:43) puts it, *'as the politics of productivity dominated Europe after the war, productivism as an ethos inspired consumerism'*. When Britain turned to the European Economic Community (EEC) to capture Europe's expanding trade, it came at the price of losing access to cheap food imports from Canada, New Zealand, and Australia in particular⁹¹. The agricultural sector was now sheltered from national politics.

The return to a free market ideology since the 1980s has had several implications for the development of contemporary food policy, particularly for the regulation of both food industries (transformation and distribution), and for the framing of food consumption. To begin, it has allowed British corporate food industries to expand in a climate of self-regulation and private standards, and gain economic power and market control over smaller operators more directly subject to the dictates of the market. In turn, because food companies are mostly competing on price, the notion of 'cheap food' has been reinstated as prevailing over attributes of quality particularly to mainstream consumption⁹². The deregulatory logic that continues to fuel the development of the corporate food industries converges with the idea that individual welfare is best promoted by allowing individuals to associate and exchange freely with one another through markets or other forms of voluntary actions. This has led to the individualisation of responsibility and duties of the consumer, and reinforced an ethic of

⁹¹ Shortly after UK accession to the EEC in 1973, food prices rose by 20%. Source UK Defra Family Food Statistics available from <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130103014432/http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/foodfarm/food/familyfood/nationalfoodsurvey/>

⁹² 90% of consumers declare food price in their top 5 priorities and 36% name it as the most important factor. Source Defra Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015.

self-reliance as a social norm explaining the absence of a state-led institutionalised food relief.

Although similar liberalising forces have played out over the European institutional framework governing the British agricultural sector, the sector has been able to maintain most of its privileges because of its strong affiliation with the Conservative party. Both developments, economic liberalisation privileging corporate entities and the preservation of farm subsidisation in the global North, are consistent with McMichael's (2005) theorisation of a third 'corporate' food regime. The new emphasis on the 'multifunctional' ability of farming to provide environmental and social benefits rather than production alone is highly debated at international levels. Highly contested by Australia that supports unsubsidised competitive productivism to win international markets, the British version of multifunctionality still gives priority to the free functioning of the market but centres on ideas of 'countryside' improvements and not on agriculture itself to deliver these services, a marked difference with the French approach. It is what Grant (2005a) labels as '*the politics of collective consumption*' where policy concerns have turned to the outcomes of production rather than production itself. These concerns are shared by some affluent segments of the population that have broadened the consideration of price to questions of collective concerns like environmental impact, animal welfare and localisation of production.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has examined in a historical perspective how ideas, interests, and institutions have shaped and influenced policy developments across the three individual policy subsystems that make up the modern food provisioning system in Britain. The policy regime concept used here, has offered a mechanism to highlight how policymaking across these individual policy domains has embodied ideas about the role of the state, the extent of the market, and the representation of the consumer when coordinating the provisioning of food in modern Britain.

The 3I's analytical framework has been useful in four distinct ways. To begin, it has confirmed that food policies and the regimes that orchestrate them, are about continuity in change, and that, rather than starting anew, they build upon previous arrangements. Although it is important and interesting to see how new policies come about on the political agenda, the policy regime framework has been useful to better understand how and why policies have changed, either because of an external threat or as a result of a gradual weakening of prevailing ideologies, institutions, and interest representation.

The chapter has also highlighted how a policy instrument while serving different interests also reinforces ideas across different policy subsystems to create a process of positive feedback between those policy subsystems. The institutionalisation of free trade is such an instance. Delivering 'cheap food' to the working-class consumer had strengthened the ideological underpinnings of free trade and produced some type of reinforcing dynamics, or feedback loop, between production and consumption. The fact that consumer interests prioritised cheap food over origin and territoriality, geared the structure of British agriculture around productivist principles of specialisation and economy of scale. The same form of reinforcing dynamics has also applied between post-war productivist and consumerist logics, and to the more recent adoption of trade liberalisation and freedom of choice advocated by the neoliberal project.

The policy regime framework has also helped to highlight how episodes of reforms do not always bear the same degree of significance across policy subsystems. The neoliberal project that has shaped the transformation, distribution, and consumption of food around ideals of economic and individual freedom has however not applied to the agricultural sector, which continues to enjoy state-assisted and 'insider group' (Grant, 2004) privileged arrangements. This confirms the influence that institutional arrangements dominate at times over ideological forces.

And finally, if global periodisation offers a valuable analytical background to meta-narratives such as the food regime theory, a national focus has allowed us to recognise the importance of economic interests and national and regional political coalitions in shaping international food regimes. In this instance, it helps us to understand why Britain created an international food regime underpinned by free trade of agricultural and food commodities to protect its industrial capital and national interest. Furthermore, the chapter uncovers the significance of regional dynamics (e.g. the European Union and its institutions) to temper the international forces of trade liberalisation and to provide room for alternative national policy trajectories.

CHAPTER 5 – FRANCE

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has discussed how the development of Britain's food capitalism may not be fully explained through the lens of a world-system logic nor that it can be entirely typified as a liberal market economy. Although the British development rested on a foundation of free trade and market mechanisms, it nevertheless appeared that these mechanisms came out of national coalition politics rather than a unified strategy of hegemonic ambitions, that trade may have been complementary to industrialisation rather than a driving force, and that regional institutional dynamics are equally important to specific economic interests in the mitigation of international forces. The aim of this chapter is to expand insights from historical comparative research and continue questioning the determining causal factors that have set food-related policy on certain trajectories by looking at the ways that France has coordinated its provisioning of food over time. I argue that an examination of the historical political economic development through the lens of ideas, interests, and institutions (the 3'I's) can generate new knowledge about the organisation of food and therefore explain some of the key causal mechanisms that have set policy trajectories to their present forms. Furthermore, examining how differently nation states conceptualise food policy offers an important contribution to the scholarship of food studies on two levels. To begin, it enriches the food regime theory by interpreting how international dynamics are translated into regional and national contexts. The case study of France presents much interest to this research for it expands our insights on how a non-hegemonic, non-Anglo and yet developed economy has been either contributing or governed by the world structure of production and consumption of food. Then, examining cross-national variations of how food policy is conceptualised, informs the ongoing argument and debate led by Tim Lang and co-authors over the meaning and contours of food policy, which in their views '*has to address the triple challenge of health, environment and social justice*' (Lang et al., 2009:viii).

This chapter shows that the organisation of national food provisioning in France is more an outcome of national political interplay between ideas and economic interests within certain national and regional institutional contexts, than it is a question of being constrained by the rules imposed at the global level. The chapter argues that the origins of many of the ideologies and values, institutions, and representation of interests (the 3'I's) that define the

contemporary food policy environment can be traced back to the early industrial period. Then, I suggest that once these decisions and choices are implemented, they exert a determining influence on the course of later developments due to institutional legacies and the vested interests that they generate. A further case is made that there is a continued dominance of national traditions not only in terms of national ambitions but equally in ways countries proceed to accomplish their objectives, a sort of logic of intents and purposes. Finally, the chapter shows how the politics of consumption are notably influenced by the political economy of production and the logics embedded in the welfare state construction.

The chapter demonstrates that, in the case of France, the social, political, and economic legacies of the 1789 Revolution have set in place a totally different political vision for agriculture whereby national interest became aligned to those of the agricultural sector for reasons of political support and stability. Rather than subordinating agriculture to industry, successive governments have until the mid-twentieth century, endowed the agricultural sector with specific policy attention, protection and welfare, a contrasting approach to British liberalism. The post-WWII nation building project set in place an ideological position of national independence that has guided the national industrial transformation. This industrial transformation was accompanied by the political acceptance of agricultural subsidies and the development of a food industry predicated on the dynamics of the Fordist model, from which emerged few 'national champions' supported by a large base of small to medium size companies. In response to the pressures of economic liberalisation of the 1980s, the French state was able to recast the agricultural policy framework with the continuing support of sectoral interests, by blending principles of market economy with social and environmental considerations, and to introduce the concept of multifunctionality of agriculture into the European framework as another expression of French national interest. Independent Regulatory Agencies (IRAs) were introduced as new governance mechanisms but as Thatcher (2007) argues, these were used to support the ongoing national strategy of national champions rather than pursuing, like Britain, internationally competitive markets. In other words, the state managed to adapt its institutional response to the new European conditions and retain an industrial fabric of food transformation made of a large artisanal component, presenting a very different picture from its British counterpart.

Not only does the 3'I's framework provide a fruitful approach to complement scholarly contributions of policy processes, but it also enriches the narrative of the 'hegemonic' food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989). I argue that the persisting differences between the UK and France are more consistent with national and regional political economy contexts than they are derived from a global food order. A relative national autonomy allowed France to follow its own national logic of development even if, at times, it had to engage on the terms of the British hegemon, as nineteenth century France's colonial expansion illustrates. France's response to the rise of the US hegemon under the second

food regime was the reconstruction of Europe into another major trading bloc that was to resist subordination and hegemonic control.

Furthermore, adopting a 3I's analytical lens has suggested an avenue for theorising the interrelatedness between the political economy of production and the political culture of consumption. This chapter indicates that the cultural significance of protectionist trade policies may have gone beyond economic interests to forge a collective understanding of food, rating provenance and quality as being just as important as price. Anchoring the production of food in cultural heritage, traditional craftsmanship, reputation, and ultimately quality contrasts sharply with Britain's historical cultural association of free trade and cheap food.

To set the context of the discussion, the chapter begins with a brief overview of contemporary food provisioning system, highlighting some of its present key characteristics. Following the periodisation of the food regime theory, the subsequent two sections explore how patterns of class formation have created very specific social structures and historical configurations that in turn explain the national organisation of food provisioning and France's response to the geopolitics arising from the global food order. The chapter establishes that an instance of '*delayed capitalism*' (Byres, 2009) combined with an early democratisation are the most plausible causes to explain the French politics of protectionism and agrarianism that have informed national food provisioning policies until WWII. It continues by exploring how a willingness to play an active part on the world stage post-WWII has guided the French state over time to construct and reconstruct frameworks of ideas and institutions to shape the contemporary food provisioning system as it is known today. The chapter concludes by asking whether it is possible to understand the organisation of France's food provisioning as following a policy regime logic.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CONTEMPORARY NATIONAL FOOD PROVISIONING ENVIRONMENT – DEFINING FEATURES

After the United States, France is the second largest exporter of agricultural products and as such, French farm exports exceed the combined exports from Australia and Canada. In 2013, agricultural and food products exports represented some 14% of all French exports with two thirds of these being destined to the EU (European Commission, 2014). Overall, the agricultural and food sector represents the second largest share of national exports after the civil aviation sector and internationally, France's combined food and agriculture exports

follow those of the United States and Germany. National levels of self-sufficiency are high, in excess of 100% compared to about 60% for Britain on a calorie supply basis⁹³.

Similar to the UK, France has experienced a noticeable decline in the numbers of agricultural holdings since the late 1970s, a trend that was further accentuated by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform of 1992. Arable land consolidation has resulted in the doubling of the average size holding since the 1980s⁹⁴ and just over half of agricultural land is controlled by 20% of holdings occupying more than 100 hectares⁹⁵. Large agricultural holdings are found in the grain, wine, beef and dairy sectors and smaller size holdings are more frequent in horticultural, fruits and poultry activities.

Similar to the UK, the labour force employed in agriculture has equally sharply declined from representing almost half the workforce in 1900⁹⁶ to as little as three percent in 2013. The 'family farm' structure continues to be the model of French agricultural policy and three quarters of those employed in agriculture are 'family members' of the family farm production unit. More than two thirds of farm holdings operate as sole trader concerns and in excess of three quarters of agricultural producers lease the land. With a little less than 10% of farmers aged 35 or below and just over 10% of farmers aged 65 and over, most farmers are between 40 and 60 years old.

Similar to the UK, the modernisation of the economic system and of agriculture in particular has moved labour away from the rural areas towards industrialised centres. In contrast to a British rural population representing three percent of the total population, the population of France is evenly distributed between rural, intermediate, and urban areas⁹⁷. In fact, since the late 1990s, rural areas and small country towns have been witnessing population increase under the influence of regional development policies.

The agri-food sector employs about 20% of the industrial workforce, generates about 20% of the industrial revenue and just under 20% of the industrial sector added value, placing the agri-food sector as the first industrial sector of the country⁹⁸. Although the French food transformation industry employs a similar number of people (about 435 000), the number of French firms is double that of the UK (16 000 for France and 8600 for the UK) with a larger turnover and greater exports⁹⁹. In contrast to the UK, the French food industry has

⁹³ Source: Japan Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries – 2010 Annual Report, Chapter 1 available from http://www.maff.go.jp/e/annual_report/2010/pdf/e_1.pdf.

⁹⁴ Source: European Commission Members Factsheets 2015.

⁹⁵ In 2010, 19% of the total number of farms had land holdings greater than 100ha. Source: Agreste, Recensement Agricole 2010.

⁹⁶ Source: Piketty T (2013). Capital. Table 2.4: Employment by sector in France and the United States: 1800-2012.

⁹⁷ Source: European Commission Members Factsheets 2015.

⁹⁸ Source: Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt, Panorama des Industries Agroalimentaires Edition 2014

⁹⁹ French industry turns over 50% more than British counterpart and exports three times as much as Britain.

an important artisanal component with some additional 44 000 artisanal producers¹⁰⁰ (bakeries, cheese makers, charcuteries, etc.). About 98% of the food manufacturing industry is composed of small and medium size companies, and employs about half the industry workforce. Large food manufacturers (the other two percent that employs more than 250 people) turn over just over half the industry revenues and two third of the export sales¹⁰¹.

There are six large food and grocery retailers in France, supplying about two thirds of the food and grocery market of which three of these large retailers control about half¹⁰². Similar to the UK, the way that food is consumed has changed considerably over the last 60 years. In 2012, less than 14% of the household expenditure was spent on food¹⁰³. According to the OECD (2017), about 40% of the French population is overweight or obese compared to a 60% figure in the United Kingdom.

At policy level, some differences are to be noted between the two countries. The persistence for state assistance to farming from the French side has caused much disagreement between France and the UK, which continues to press for commodity support subsidies to be phased out in favour of a '*public money for public goods*' rhetoric. Furthermore, whereas agriculture occupies centre stage in French rural development policy, the British model conceives rural economy as the support of agriculture rather than the other way around. The role of the state in organising the geography of industrial development (the interplay between territory and economy) is another notable difference in policy approach that has far reaching consequences on the organisation of food provisioning. Questions of economic access to food are dealt with in very distinct fashions as well. While Britain's food relief system continues to entirely rely on charity-based organisation, France has been gradually institutionalising food relief as an extension of its welfare system.

The task of this chapter is to identify what has propelled the organisation of food provisioning that could help us understand why states define their responsibilities so differently, why the cultural significance of food presents such drastic variations, and why these policy divergences remain.

¹⁰⁰ Source: Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt
<http://www.agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/enquetes/entreprises-agroalimentaires/statistiques-structurelles-sur-les-752/>

¹⁰¹ Source: INSEE Caractéristiques de l'Industrie Agroalimentaire 2014.

¹⁰² Idem

¹⁰³ Source: Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt
http://agriculture.gouv.fr/sites/minagri/files/documents//L_alimentation_cle834582.pdf

5.2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MODERN FRENCH FOOD PROVISIONING SYSTEM TO POST WWII

I will argue in this section that variations in patterns of class formation and cohesion in the modernisation of agriculture provide an initial step in explaining alternative pathways in the development of the modern food provisioning in France. When compared to Britain, these social structures have resulted in distinct historical configurations of national food provisioning. Although international food patterns and structures may have influenced national food politics, this section also contends that the extent of this influence whether ideological or economic has been limited. To do so, the section begins by drawing on the established literature that documents the rise of capitalism and the emergence of class formation to understand the forces that shaped the provisioning of food in eighteenth and nineteenth century France. In particular, the section draws from the concept of '*delayed capitalism*' (Byres, 2009) to explain how a resilient peasantry and a non-progressive landed aristocracy delayed the modernisation of agriculture. This, in turn, contributed to the state's decisions to keep people on the land and align national interest with those of the agricultural sector. The section continues by discussing how the timing of democratisation and the rate of the industrialisation process led the nation-state to generally adopt protectionist trade policies to shelter agriculture, industry, and labour from international competition. Whereas the size of the domestic and imperial markets made it possible to sustain varying degrees of protectionism over time, protectionist trade policies also provided a favourable climate to the formation of coalition of interests between peasantry and industrial interest groups. When compared to Britain that industrialised earlier, the combination of a gradual industrialisation process at a time of democratisation may explain why the French state adopted protectionism as its main policy approach to trade.

Whereas Chapter 4 has argued that the British political culture of free trade infused food consumption with principles of cheapness, this chapter and this section in particular, advances that in the case of France, the political culture of protected trade has helped to construct a collective representation of food around notions of geographical provenance, tradition, and quality rather than price alone. This representation was further institutionalised in the interwar period with the first-time legislation of '*appellation d'origine contrôlée*' (AOC) to define the geographic provenance of wine and food products.

The contributions made by this section are several. To begin, the 3I's analytical framework offers a fruitful way to reinterpret how post-revolution class formation forces combined with political instability forced a nineteenth century emerging nation-state to align its national interest with those of the agricultural and farming sectors, and construct a food policy regime that fostered values of agrarianism and national self-sufficiency. Furthermore,

the lens of the 3I's allows us to examine the role played by institutions in fostering these ideals through politics of trade protectionism that would never embraced liberal individualism and a '*laissez-faire*' orthodoxy as dominant ideological principles. Finally, it complements the food regime account by qualifying that not all nations depended on the global economy to organise their national food provisioning. The analysis shows that France's political, military and economic powers offered a reasonable degree of autonomy to opt out of the global food circuit when required. If at times France adopted freer trade measures, it was driven by domestic considerations and national interests rather than by convergence imposed by the hegemon, and when necessary France reverted to protectionist measures. However, if one may claim that France's colonial expansion was a response to the hegemonic imperial strategy, it was never instrumental in the provision of 'cheap food' as most of the food demand was met by national producers.

5.2.1 THE TRANSFORMATION OF FRENCH AGRICULTURE

As Byres (2009) suggests, France epitomises a case of '*delayed capitalism*'. Although the 1789 Revolution and the ensuing 1791 'Rural Code' had established avenues for land consolidation, a resilient and determined peasantry struggled to retain collective arrangements that neither the aristocracy nor the bourgeoisie attempted to defeat. The French landed aristocracy, not as 'progressive' as its British counterpart, did not push for any reorganising of land tenure and the 'agricultural middle class', which had vested interests in preserving the '*Old Régime*' resisted any transition to a new form of agricultural economy (Soboul, 1956). By the end of the eighteenth century, France was a country of small peasant proprietors who continued to give their political support to political regimes maintaining the land status quo (Hobsbawm, 1964:154)¹⁰⁴. If at the beginning of the nineteenth century British agriculture employed less than 20% of the workforce, around 65% of the workforce¹⁰⁵ was still employed by French agriculture. As Grantham (1993:491) remarks, '*farms of all sizes were able to coexist in an economic symbiosis*' and a form of traditional mutual long-term interdependence between farm employers and villagers, allowed large farms to secure a reliable and affordable source of local labour. Furthermore, mechanisms were set in place to release labour from light industrial activities during harvest times, suggesting a form of 'floating' workforce to complement a 'fixed' agricultural labour (Grantham, 1993:493). In sum, France and Britain started the modernising process with very different social structures

¹⁰⁴ Land holding in pre-1789 France was reasonably spread amongst the three major economic classes; for example, in the south-eastern region of Montpellier, the peasants already owned 40 per cent of the land, the bourgeoisie about 20 per cent, the nobility around 15 per cent, the clergy about 5 per cent and the remaining 20 per cent as common land (Soboul, 1958 in Hobsbawm, 1964).

¹⁰⁵ Source: Piketty T (2013). Capital. Table 2.4: Employment by sector in France and the United States: 1800-2012.

and patterns of class struggles that in turn was to determine different pathways in organising agricultural production and the provisioning of food.

5.2.2 FRENCH AGRICULTURE AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE

The two most important dynamics that have shaped the trajectory of France's agricultural policies can be subsumed to — an *early democratisation* process with universal male suffrage instituted in 1848 occurring at a time of *gradual industrialisation*. Early democratisation meant that peasants had become a constituency to be reckoned with and therefore the gradual (compared to Britain) industrialisation process required the state to align national interest with those of agriculture and industry. Since visions of national development placed agriculture on an equal footing with industry (Kuisel, 1984; Jobert & Muller, 1987), the agricultural sector had the dual functions to stabilise social and political unrests, and contribute to economic reproduction. To achieve such objectives, the nation-state had to secure the political support of agricultural interests while providing economic protection. In contrast to Britain, the state developed what Sheingate (2000) calls an '*agricultural welfare state*' that incorporated publicly funded peak farming organisations into the policy process, and fostered agrarian values.

The transition to democracy¹⁰⁶ happened quite surprisingly after the collapse of the constitutional monarchy, when a hastily declared Second Republic (1848-1852) announced that direct universal male suffrage (without any fiscal requirement) would be used to elect a national assembly. These inaugural mass elections were a defeat for the republican cause and Louis-Napoleon (the future Emperor Napoleon III) emerged as the clear winner. The peasantry had voiced its preferences. The Second Republic was cut short in late 1851 and marked the beginning of a second Napoleonic regime (the Second Empire) whose commitment to universal male suffrage was maintained in a very controlled and authoritarian manner¹⁰⁷. Once the Third Republic was securely founded after 1870, following a succession of wars, civil unrests, and economic crises, republican¹⁰⁸ leaders needed to first stabilise economic and political forces by maintaining the economic and social balance within

¹⁰⁶ The advent of mass elections was a first step towards the establishment of democracy.

¹⁰⁷ Napoleon III was against a parliamentary system and believed that a strong state was the answer to social instability. However, the parliament remained but was constituted of 'official' representatives chosen by the government and universal suffrage was maintained but took the form of plebiscites (rather than electing representatives). This authoritative regime was possible because of an outstanding economic prosperity. Losing the support of the Catholics and the Bourgeoisie, Napoleon III liberalised the regime in the mid-1860s.

¹⁰⁸ In the French context, 'republican' refers to the notion of the 'Republic' (and its values) in contrast to Monarchy or Empire.

the rural world¹⁰⁹ (Jobert & Muller, 1987:81). If the French Revolution had been an attempt to proclaim liberal individualism and free enterprise, the reality meant that the emerging nation-state had to resort to a hybrid form of economic liberalism using free trade when necessary and reverting to protectionism when required. At times of relative economic and political stability as it had been the case under Napoleon III (1852-1870), trade policies were liberalised and culminated with the signing of the Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce in 1860. As Nye (1999) notes, if main agricultural interests including wine producers benefited from the free trade arrangements under the 1860 treaty, support for liberalised trade fell off in the aftermath of the 1880s-economic downturn. By 1892¹¹⁰, France had reverted to protectionist measures to shelter agriculture from collapsing commodity prices.

The economic downturn of the 1880s became an opportunity for governments of the Third Republic to engage in a rapprochement with the traditionally Empire-supporting French peasantry¹¹¹ and secure its political loyalty (Flamant, 2010; Sheingate, 2000). A dedicated Ministry of Agriculture was set up in 1881 to signal the interest of the government over agrarian matters together with a network of agricultural colleges that helped to maintain the political contact with the rural population and introduce new practices that would eventually modernise the French agriculture. This institutional organisation of expertise translated into the appointments of '*Professeurs Départementaux d'Agriculture*' and the establishment of municipal food laboratories. These 'Professors' were public servants whose missions were to disseminate information to agricultural producers and to primary school pupils. The success of this new institution led to its expansion in 1912 when departments of agricultural services were established nationwide to support the development of regional agricultural centres (Flamant, 2010; Morel, 1938). In sum, agriculture was framed as providing a public good¹¹², and not as a reservoir of labour to fuel industrialisation and as such, ideas of food self-sufficiency and trade protectionism were common currency.

As agricultural and farming interests began to organise and principles of cooperation developed, the republican government seized the opportunity to bankroll services such as insurance or credit to the benefit of cooperatives and farm associations (Nicolas, 1988; Sheingate, 2000). Not only did this signal the politicisation of these organisations, but most importantly these organisations (the cooperative and union movements) became policy instruments for state intervention. However, the economic disparity between regions, the variety of political representation within the rural classes combined with a resistance from the

¹⁰⁹ Three quarter of the holdings were run by owners (not tenant farmers) (Lhomme, 1970) and agriculture provided about 40% of the population with work and subsistence.

¹¹⁰ See Loi Méline, 1892.

¹¹¹ The rural population represented about 75% of the population and the introduction of a male "universal" suffrage in 1848 brought the number of voters from 246,000 to more than 9 million people.

¹¹² As Sheingate (2000:187) notes, 'the nineteenth century peasant was viewed as a guarantor of social harmony who balanced the dangerous radicalism of the cities'.

conservative landowners and the Church made the formulation of any national agricultural project very difficult (Sheingate, 2000; Mendras, 1976; Fauvet & Mendras, 1958).

In summary and in very sharp contrast to Britain, the organisation of nineteenth century French agriculture was very much anchored in an agrarian logic. The contested history of land consolidation in eighteenth and nineteenth century France combined with a newly institutionalised electoral representation of the agricultural community led to the decision of keeping the population on the land. As Grantham notes (1980:530), the political weakness and instability of the emerging nation-state made the project of land consolidation almost impossible although the fragmented structure of French rural land tenure caused some disquiet. In other words, the British model of entrepreneurial capitalist farmer was not conceivable in the French context. The economic downturn of the 1880s was a critical moment in French political economy as it triggered a reconsideration of classical liberalism and led to the establishment of an institutional structure to govern agricultural affairs and set up close links between the state and the representation of agricultural interests. Stemming from an agrarian 'ideological centre of gravity', principles of national self-sufficiency and trade protectionism developed, supported by a farming community bankrolled by the state.

FRANCE AND THE FIRST FOOD REGIME OF BRITISH HEGEMONY

While the previous subsection has focused its attention on some of the key national political dynamics that have caused policy trajectories to be set around principles of agrarianism and national self-sufficiency, it is however important to ascertain how international food orders, as theorised by the food regime approach, have influenced the organisation of national food provisioning. More precisely, since the food regime theory argues that food circuits support the hegemonic exercise of power through economic and ideological expansion, the question is to understand whether British hegemony was influential enough to impose a new international division of labour and trade to an industrialising nation like France.

On the count of ideological expansion, all points to confirm the weak influence that Britain exercised over France's trade policies. As Nye (1991) has argued, if at times France used free trade to serve national economic interest, it did it because of domestic politics rather than of ideological enthusiasm. In fact, most French political¹¹³ elites, industrial circles, and organised labour¹¹⁴ contested a generalised liberalisation of trade. Sensitive economic sectors such as the textile and metallurgic industries that received strong

¹¹³ Even Napoleon III believed that a certain amount of protectionism was necessary and beneficial to the French economy.

¹¹⁴ Such as the influential '*Association pour la Défense du Travail National*'.

protection (through outright bans or high tariffs), equally opposed the relaxation of trade barriers. Unlike its British counterpart, the French working class feared that a liberalised importation of manufactured goods from Britain would threaten their employment. This is not to say that France resisted trade. As Nye (1991) shows, France had a much more open trade regime than Britain until the 1880s, but the country was attentive to the economic benefits brought by free trade to specific industries as the signing of the 1860 Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce¹¹⁵ confirmed. The French interest in free trade was industry-based and political but not ideological (Davis, 1997:82). In any case, the dogmatic position to principles of free trade left Britain nothing to bargain with and once the 1860 Treaty was abandoned, British commercial influence was marginalised (Marsh, 1999). Britain's adherence to free trade was damaging and pushed her to resort to 'free trade imperialism' forcing dependent part of the empire to accept free trade¹¹⁶ (Cain, 1999:3) to compensate for lost European markets once higher tariffs were reinstated by France (and other European countries) in the aftermath of the 1870s depression. As Bairoch (1970) points out, whereas the protectionist environment had made trade and national prosperity increased in France¹¹⁷, liberal politics of free trade had resulted in economic stagnation in Britain.

Nineteenth century France was a large player in world trade; the country produced enough food to be self-sufficient¹¹⁸ and exported to Britain¹¹⁹ and the rest of Europe. France also engaged into colonial expansion to maintain a certain level of rivalry with Britain and other industrial economies (Hobsbawm, 1989). The French colonial empire was an important vehicle for protected trade but, by the same token, it also sheltered less performing industries from competitive forces. As Marseille (1984) points out, the French cotton industry used colonial trade to avoid restructuring while performing industries were less inclined to continue trading with the colonies and in the 1930s were already calling for the dismantling of the French empire to raise the international competitiveness of French industries. Imperial expansion was also very strategic in counteracting domestic discontent, what Hobsbawm calls '*social imperialism*' (1989:69). Encouraging the masses to support colonial conquests and political imperialism was a way for the state political apparatus to be endowed with legitimacy. If the empire and its protectionist environment had raised problems to performing industries, public opinion was by the early part of the twentieth century totally convinced that colonialism was a perfect vehicle for culture and 'civilisation' to achieve development. Politics and economics were at odds.

¹¹⁵ It instituted principles of free trade between Britain and France until the 1880s based on the reciprocity principle (in contrast to the unilateralism principle) and allowed Britain to lower duties on French wines¹¹⁵ in return for cuts in French tariffs on manufactured goods.

¹¹⁶ India and Japan were such examples.

¹¹⁷ See Levy-Boyer (1968) analysis of 19th century France's economic development.

¹¹⁸ In 1858-1862, cereal supplies catered for 98% of the national demand. Source: Bairoch (1988:15).

¹¹⁹ In 1875, about 40% of French exports towards Britain were agricultural commodities like cereals, wines, dairy products, eggs, and fruits (Cadier, 1988).

In sum, this episode in French history uncovers how national autonomy that industrialising and ‘powerful’ continental European nations enjoyed may have been sufficient to resist the economic and political influence exercised by the hegemon over the organisation of a world food order. Despite a more gradual industrialisation process than that of Britain, France was however in a position to follow its own national logic of development, even if at times it had to engage on the terms of the hegemon as nineteenth century France’s colonial expansion illustrates.

THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

The key dynamics that characterise the organisation of food provisioning during the interwar period can be resumed to three major developments — the maintenance of the pre-war *agrarian* logic with at its centre the family farm unit, the consolidation of *corporatist* interest representation and the strengthening of institutional arrangements to support the affairs of food and agriculture under an increasing level of *state intervention*.

Whereas WWI had inflicted heavy human and resource costs on French agriculture with the devastation of large agricultural areas and a decimated agricultural workforce, post-war reconstruction efforts led to two interrelated developments — the strengthening of the ‘family farm’ model around which French agriculture was to be developed in decades to come, and the beginning of the modernisation of agriculture. The post-war rehabilitation of agricultural land under state control and finance which had resulted in an increased average acreage¹²⁰ allowed for a greater diversification and a more commercial approach to household farming (Friedmann, 1978), while the shortage of agricultural workforce prompted the state to commence the modernisation of agriculture. Central to this initiative was the creation of a state-funded national network of Chambers of Agriculture¹²¹ in 1924 that served to disseminate information but also, and perhaps most importantly, to consolidate the policy partnership between state and farm organisations.

As Sheingate (2000:199) notes, agricultural corporatism in France was commodity-specific and producer organisations or cooperatives operated as agents of the state in the regulation of markets. To control agricultural production and therefore prices, governments and farm organisations forged strong policy alliances to protect specific commodity markets. For example, the chronic overproduction that caused a series of wine crises in the early part of twentieth century was resolved by the institutionalisation of so-called ‘anti-fraud’

¹²⁰ Very small land holdings (less than 1ha) disappeared while the number of medium size (10 to 40ha) farms increased.

¹²¹ The Chambers are elected by members from individual producers to waged labourers and cooperatives.

policies¹²², that in fact were designed to reduce output and raise prices (Sheingate, 2000). These 'anti-fraud' regulations eventually led to the 1935 '*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*' (AOC) concept of anchoring designated provenance and territory (the '*terroir*') to notions of food quality. Similarly, grain producer cooperatives were used by the state to secure grain storage¹²³ to counteract an increasing concentration of grain buyers, and to rally against collapsing grain markets.

FRANCE AND THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Food regime theory only offers a cursory discussion of this period of capitalist history to broadly comment on the factors that have contributed to the downfall of the British-centred world economy. To McMichael (2013:32), the economic nationalism that spread all over Europe and the ecological disaster of the American dust bowl pointed to the contradictions and therefore limits of the first food regime model. These dynamics led Britain to transition from a '*laissez-faire*' policy regime of free trade to a protectionist and interventionist style of agricultural policymaking, signalling the demise of the first food regime. The contribution here is to briefly explore how the contradictions pressed by the international economic order over the French national political economy, reorganised national political coalitions and called for new powerful and compelling visions of social change.

Compared to most industrialised countries, France was brought into the international economic crisis relatively late in 1931. Having enjoyed the protection of an undervalued currency, France had managed to escape the impacts of the economic depression¹²⁴ until currency devaluations all over the world reversed the relationship (Gouveritch, 1984:122; Fohlen, 1966:91). Being one of the two major gold surplus countries of the interwar period with the US¹²⁵, France was committed to the gold standard monetary policy. Its decision to reject devaluation and instead reduce public spending proved insufficient and inappropriate against other economies that had begun to recover (Bemanke & James, 1991). As the economic crisis deepened, traditional political relationships were thrown into uncertainty. Discontent with spiralling commodity prices, agricultural interests fractured and moved to the left to form alliance and mobilise with organised labour. Determined to forestall labour strikes, the business community strategically moved to the left to support the social-

¹²² These regulations (1905, 1919, and 1931) imposed quality controls but most importantly instituted production restrictions through prohibition of irrigation to reduce yield, the removal of old vines and a progressive tax on overproduction.

¹²³ When the government needed to secure grain storage during the Great Depression in 1929, it did so by funding cereal cooperatives to increase warehousing capacities.

¹²⁴ In fact, the undervalued currency and the emerging energy industries allowed France to enjoy considerable international trade until 1931.

¹²⁵ The perception that France was a '*safe haven*' for capital made France hold up to 30% of monetary gold (Bemanke & James, 1991).

democratic Popular Front coalition in the 1936 elections (Vinen, 1991:26). As Gouveritch, (1984) argues, notwithstanding the backing from organised labour and some sections of the agricultural community, the support from the 'republican' bourgeoisie that business represented was pivotal to the longevity of the new governing coalition. In the short time it held power, the Popular Front increased wages, constructed a national retirement system and extended corporatist marketing arrangements for wheat producers¹²⁶. In 1937, it was forced into currency devaluation which produced very little help to the economy and within a year the fragile coalition fell. This episode of political history demonstrates how state incapacity to resolve the economic situation led to disruptive political ramifications, as interest groups changed alliances to suit their respective situation.

This political plasticity not only translated into frequent changes in the make-up of governing coalitions but also permeated the way agricultural interests organised for most of the interwar period. On one side, conservatives supported ideals of corporatism hinged on the designation of a peak association, while republicans preferred a more pluralist view of interest representation. The ideological divide found resolution during the Second World War under the Vichy government (1940-1944), that endorsed corporatism as the 'official' state doctrine (Denord, 2012: 177). In line with visions to revive traditional agrarian values and 'a return to the land', the government institutionalised a corporatist regime of interest representation by forming the '*Corporation Paysanne*'¹²⁷, a grouping of unions and landowners under the close control of the state.

The legacy of the interwar moment to the coordination of food provisioning in France is twofold. To begin, despite the contest of ideas that prevailed during the period, France maintained the commitment to an agrarian logic centred on the family farm model, which would remain one of the key elements of French agricultural policy in times to come. Second, the interdependence between state and farm organisations to respond to the agricultural depression paved the way for the pursuit of a corporatist solution in which the state would play an increasingly important role as an intervening agent in the operation of markets. In other words, the interwar period was foundational to the patterns adopted in post-WWII.

¹²⁶ The 'Office National Interprofessionnel du Blé (ONIP) was one of the few policy innovations of the Popular Front to survive.

¹²⁷ The '*Corporation Paysanne*' was dissolved at the end of the war and replaced by the umbrella farm representation union, the '*Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles*' (FNSEA)

5.2.3 FOOD MANUFACTURING AND FOOD CONSUMPTION

Although the industrial and scientific spirit applied new processes to the transformation and preservation of food products, the processing of food remained primarily the domain of artisanal enterprises and only few industrialised companies were actively involved in the transformation of food. However, the most important development of this period of history is at the consumption end, when ordinary people, imbued of nationalistic sentiments and democratic rights, began to adopt the new '*cuisine bourgeoise*' signalling a nutrition transition from diets mainly consisting of grains to diets including fats, sugar, oils, and meat. The new culinary model had turned into a cultural phenomenon of international authority. It had been led by the French bourgeoisie and a cohort of trained chefs, who produced profuse written material about the new art of cooking which undoubtedly served as discursive ambassadors of the French culinary nationalism with the relentless association of good food and 'Frenchness' (Parkurst Ferguson, 1998; Mennell, 1996). In my view, this association between food and national identity became an important marker in the political construction of food consumption.

THE POLITICS OF FOOD CONSUMPTION

This subsection attempts to chart a new path at exploring the significance of values and collective representations in shaping the politics of food consumption. While building on the core insights gained from Trentmann's (1998, 2005) research that links the formative role of historical memory and political language of production and trade policy (in his case, free trade) in constructing the politics of consumption (and this case, the collective representation of food), I propose to complement the analysis by incorporating notions of social solidarity in a way that brings a richer understanding of how food was to be represented and accessed. For the present discussion, I want to disentangle the two distinct questions that define the politics of food consumption, with on one side the representation of food linked to the political economy of production and trade (see Trentmann's argument), and on the other, the economic access to food linked to the political economy of social policy. Then, I ask how to think about the intervention of the state in relation to these two dimensions if we are to observe the trajectories of food policy changes over time. In either instance, whether it was to shelter agriculture from the early phase of international trade or to institute the moral obligation of social solidarity, state intervention was initially justified on grounds of democratic principles. Just as protectionism, which I argue constructed a representation of food around ideas of provenance and traditions, was justified in relation to a democratic representation of

interests, social solidarity was made the foundation of action of a democratic people (Henderson, 1905:169).

Drawing from the work of Frank Trentmann (1998, 2005) that argues that political culture has a broader reach than what political economy would conceive, I wish here to propose that in a similar manner that the British political culture of free trade had permeated food consumption with values primarily based on cheapness, the French political culture of protectionism nurtured an understanding of food based on notions of quality and locality rather than price alone. Whereas the politics of free trade had convinced British workers to align their interests with liberal values that constructed food consumption around principles of 'cheap food' (Trentmann, 1998), France's trade protectionist measures whether through tariffs, quotas or the '*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*' (AOC) system, implicitly encouraged strong nationalistic sentiments, which in turn reinforced the positive association between food, culture, tradition and national identity, and this is this cultural significance that went beyond individual economic interests.

The social compromise that initially had developed under the Third Republic with at its core peasantry and land owners, evolved to gradually inculcate the virtues of a national cuisine, itself composed of distinctive regional traditions (Thiesse, 1997; Chanet, 1996). In that respect, food and cuisine became remarkable vehicles of national unity that not only transcended regional differences but also constructed a web of associations between quality, provenance, and traditions that weaved the national narrative. The dissemination of these associations of ideas and narratives formed a collective memory and reinforced over time the emotive power of French national cultural identity. Similar to nineteenth century Britain that discursively constructed free trade as an '*anchor of liberal civilization*' to justify the rejection of alternative forms of ideology (Trentmann, 1998:228), France's protectionism was politically validated in reference to democracy (Aldenhoff-Hubinger, 2005:84), economic nationalism and of what we may call 'cultural patrimony'. The close connection between the constructed national identity, the collective representation of food and a subsistence economy backed by a large rural population¹²⁸ supported a loose and implicit policy feedback that allowed the state to legitimate trade policies to the collective interest¹²⁹.

If successive post-French Revolution governments had tackled questions of relief to the poor through legislative instruments in late eighteenth century and the support of mutual aid societies (the friendly societies in Britain) that echoed traditions of Republican fraternity throughout the nineteenth century, the principle of social solidarity became 'national obligation' in 1905 when a secular Republican state declared the separation of church and

¹²⁸ In the 1936, the rural community represented just under 50% of the overall population.

¹²⁹ It is also worth noting that the negative economic impacts of protectionist measures on prices (and wages) were negligible (O'Rourke, 1997:792), and therefore did not find opposition from urban working classes (Aldenhoff-Hubinger, 2005:83).

state. Until then, poverty relief had relied on voluntary charity, usually administered by the church, and supported by the Conservatives. In contrast, the Republican political elites had argued for meeting the moral obligation by setting up a public service of social solidarity, which later allowed the state to assume responsibility for social aid (Silver, 1994).

5.2.4 IN CONCLUSION TO THIS SECTION

The section has made the point that the different class structures that were present at the time when France started the modernising process explains the diverging development pathway when compared to Britain. Just as Britain's early industrialisation created a strong financial and trade sectors in support of free trade, the early advent of universal suffrage in 1848 forced the emerging nation-state to maintain an agrarian logic and adopt protectionist policies to shelter rural interests. I argue that the introduction of 1848 universal suffrage in a country with a dominant rural population was a contingent event. Should the electoral franchise not have been introduced at the time when the emerging nation-state was seeking political support, the agricultural sector may not have received the support that it did and overall the agricultural development gone another way. The account presented here sheds additional light on the dynamics played out between a 'powerful' nation and the international food order as theorised by the food regime approach, and confirms that France was autonomous enough to opt out of the international food order that served the interests of British hegemony and follow its own national logic of development. By the 1940s, the family farm was upheld as the prevailing model of agricultural organisation and a corporatist policy partnership between state and farm organisations was confirmed as the organising principle of interest mediation. As André and Delorme (1991) contend, the interwar period was also a decisive moment that shaped the centrality of state intervention in coordinating national economy in times to come. The section concludes by advancing that in a similar manner that Britain's free trade rhetoric aligned consumption patterns along principles of 'cheapness', France's protectionist stance at the production end has strengthened a culture of food consumption around notions of quality, provenance, and tradition rather than price alone.

5.3 ORGANISATION OF THE NATIONAL FOOD PROVISIONING POST-WWII TO PRESENT TIMES

This section contends that the differences in position within the international economic order, the nature of national social structure and the style of state involvement in

coordinating national affairs that prevailed before WWII explain to a large extent the divergence of post-war food policy developments between France and Britain. Overall, I argue that visions of 'national independence'¹³⁰ and a willingness to play an active part on the world stage have guided the state over time to construct and reconstruct frameworks of ideas and institutions, which in turn can explain the nature of transformations that have shaped modern food and agriculture sectors. To begin, the state-led modernisation project informed by de Gaulle's reluctance to subordinate national interests to a powerful 'protector' (Krotz & Sperling, 2011; Bernstein, 1989; Franko, 1979), managed to turn the French agricultural sector with the support of agricultural interests and the food industry through industrial planning into one of the leading international powerhouses. In the 1980s, to adjust to forces of economic liberalisation, the French state was able to recast the policy framework with the continuing support of sectoral interests, by blending principles of market economy with social and environmental considerations. It reasserted its vision of national independence by bringing the concept of multifunctionality of agriculture into the European framework as another expression of French national interest. These developments may well confirm Thelen's (2014) thesis that there are 'varieties of liberalisation' which are determined by the reconfiguration in both form and function of the relationships between producer group organisations and the state capacity to broker agreements with those groups.

It is also my contention that the post-war politics of food consumption infused with the political culture of interwar trade protectionism and social solidarity have set up policy trajectories on distinct development paths with different background understandings, when compared to Britain. Not only the language of protectionism was reinterpreted to foster post-war notions of national sovereignty, national independence and 'Frenchness' that continued to define food around attributes of provenance, tradition, and quality, but its post-war political significance extended to one of social solidarity in which the state played a pivotal role. If variations in nineteenth century trade regimes were symptomatic of patterns of democratisation, in the long run it assisted the rise of more interventionist and corporatist systems that extended social rights to excluded and disadvantaged groups (Trentmann, 1998:238-239). Whereas the British politics of free trade pointed to notions of individual freedom and the autonomy of civil society from the state, the French protectionist approach was to be understood as '*a progression in democratic political participation*' (Milward, 1981:63). Over time, traditional forms of protectionism were replaced by new understandings¹³¹ that extended to concerns of social solidarity (with state-led food relief efforts) and the protection of the national food culture.

¹³⁰ Nonnenmacher (1986) comments that independence and autonomy remained a firm dogma of French parties: communists, socialist and Gaullists alike.

¹³¹ That still included direct economic measures such as subsidies.

How to interpret the rise of a post-war food order as theorised by the food regime perspective from the French and European perspective? As historian Alan Milward (1997:7) reminds us, there may have been a web of motives for France to be one of the founding nations of the European Economic Community (EEC) but '*the essential reason for accepting the Treaty [of Rome] was to secure France's place in the world*'. Although the European project had been highly contested within French political circles, its creation however, provided France with protection from the impositions of an international economic regime driven by American and British interests while it proceeded to the modernisation of the food and agricultural sectors under the auspices of the Common Market (Bossuat, 2005). Just as the post-war European project was the restoration of the nation state¹³² through supranational dynamics (Milward, 1992), from a food regime perspective it can also be understood as a form of contestation to US hegemonic regime. Using a similar logic of agricultural welfare system, Europe succeeded to become a massive food exporter and set the scene for what Pritchard (2009:300) calls a 'trans-Atlantic agricultural war' between the two trading blocs. In sum, the post-war period illustrates the tenacity of national historical and ideological dynamics that prompted France to engage in the European project as a mechanism to contest the rising economic and cultural hegemony of the United States.

5.3.1 THE MODERN FRENCH AGRICULTURE

This subsection argues that underlying the major transformations of the French agricultural sector since the post-war period, are the timeless visions of national independence from hegemonic economic powers. These visions framed the French model of blending state intervention, corporatist management and market economy as an alternative to the dominance of a superpower. Whereas it is not my purpose to discuss the ideological underpinnings of France's political economy, I wish however to show how the state constructed a framework of ideas and institutions to make these visions explicit in transforming the agricultural sector, which have been different from those adopted by Britain that has rarely questioned international economic interdependence. Just as the imperative of national independence guided the construction of the European confederation in which the state remained the guardian of national sentiments (Krotz & Sperling, 2011:313), the nature of the state-society in the post-war period legitimated the state as the '*industrial guardian*' irrespective of the political orientations of successive governments (Rosanvallon: 1989:193).

¹³² Milward (1992) critiques the functionalist view of European unity and claims that far from eroding the authority of the nation-state, the European project delivered a platform for popular support as it brought material security. Furthermore, Milward (1992) argues that French political elites have never intended not to set up a federal European structure but rather a confederation of independent nation-states.

Since the end of WWII, the French agricultural sector underwent two major transformations. From the post-war years until the early 1980s, fitting into the broader project of state-led planning to turn a largely agricultural country into a modern industrial nation, the agricultural sector was to be modernised. This meant that the politics of maintaining people on the land were to be abandoned and that the social and economic roles played by agriculture were to shift from being stabilising forces to become a productive sector integrated to the national economy (Muller, 2000). The corporatist management of agricultural interests was pivotal in the success of the plan. By the early 1980s, the agricultural welfare state that had been constructed as a trade-off for the restructure of the sector was being challenged by international¹³³ and European forces¹³⁴. If protectionism had been necessary to modernise agriculture, once modernisation completed, adjustment had to be made to guide the sector to a market environment. This second transformation posed new policy challenges and forced the state to reconstruct its relations with economic actors from broader horizons than the bipartite arrangement with the peak body FNSEA (Coleman & Chiasson, 2002). The multifunctionality of agriculture was the key outcome of this second transformation, the French response to an intensifying globalisation.

THE POST-WAR CONSENSUS AND THE MODERNISATION PROJECT

In just two years, not only the economic role of the state had grown considerably as the country's banker, industrialist and economic planner, but public opinion came to view state activism as a unifying force of long-term perspective (Rosanvallon, 1989:187). The first task had been to reconstruct the productive apparatus by increasing production. Agriculture, as other key industries, received government attention in the form of state subsidies and credit facilities to boost production and productivity levels. The result was successful; from 1949 to 1957, national production had increased by 15% and productivity had progressed for the same period by almost 30% (Malassis, 1959:240). As economic priorities evolved, the questions of land and labour came to the centre of the modernising reform. Land consolidation so fiercely resisted in the past, had to proceed while labour had to be released from agriculture to industry. The 1958 election of de Gaulle as French president presented the 'political window' necessary to this major reform (Muller, 2000).

With still a third of the labour force employed in the agricultural sector¹³⁵, the state had to call on the corporatist policy partnership¹³⁶ it had formed during the interwar period

¹³³ When agriculture was included in the GATT negotiations framework.

¹³⁴ In 1983 French President Mitterrand had opted for the EU integration project.

¹³⁵ Compared to a slim 5% in Britain for the same 1950s period.

¹³⁶ Most scholars have commented on the role played by the 'Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs' (CNJA) to support the modernisation project.

with peak farming unions, to settle the terms on how to best restructure and raise productivity levels. The alignment of vision between the new Gaullist government reform agenda of modernisation and economic development, and those articulated by farm unions made the restructuring possible on the condition that the family farm was maintained as the production unit model (Boinon, 2011:25). As Sheingate (2000:206) remarks, '*the corporatist management of agricultural policy in France paid handsome political dividends for both conservative politicians and the leaders of the French farm union*'. Over time, while the farming interests received many concessions from price support to the protection of agricultural land from market pressures, agricultural interests became key constituency of the Gaullist government.

In marked contrast to Britain that had been historically inclined to confine the role of government to macro-economic management, France used extensive government tools through the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as guaranteed prices, market regulation and export assistance schemes to soften the depth of this first transformation¹³⁷. In addition, the state developed an extensive network of research and professional institutions to support the modernisation project in conjunction to the state-planned geography of industrial transformation (also known in France as *l'aménagement du territoire*) to manage regional economic disparities. Overall, the modernisation had yielded positive results. If in the immediate post-war years, France had to limit its exportations to excess stocks and non-essential food products and rely on imports to cater for domestic demand while it reconstructed its productive base¹³⁸ (Rastoin, 1963), by the mid-1990s it exported much more than it imported, making France the largest European agricultural exporting country.

THE NEW MARKET-BASED AGRICULTURE

The European integration combined with the introduction of agriculture in international trade negotiations changed not only the rules of the game but also shifted the prevailing organising logic from a state-led policy domain to a more market-based coordination. As Coleman et al. (1997) remark, the system of multilevel (national, supranational, and international) governance had forced the widening of interest membership in traditionally closed agricultural communities. By reaching out to new interest groups, in particular to environmental and alternative farming representation, the state was able to pursue new visions for agriculture that responded to public concerns about the fair distribution of

¹³⁷ From 1955 to 2000, the number of farm holdings declined from 2.3 million to about 700,000 while the employment dropped from 5 million to 1 million.

¹³⁸ In 1960, France imported twice as much as it exported.

subsidies¹³⁹ and re-orient agricultural policy away from production to a more 'service' agriculture, with emphasis on product quality, social and ecological considerations (Muller, 2000; Petit, 2002). A new legislation was introduced in 1999 in line with an EU directive for rural development¹⁴⁰ to institutionalise income protection in the name of environmental protection and rural development¹⁴¹. A new agricultural welfare regime still centred on the family agriculture model was replacing the old consensus of subsidised modernisation by reframing the role of farmers no longer as solely producers of food but as custodians of the rural space.

This shift to a 'multifunctional' agriculture has been interpreted by many as France's resistance to neoliberalism and globalisation to protect a European social model. As McMichael (2011:806) notes, it is at the origins of tensions within the European community and with international partners like the US and the Cairns Group in relation to trade. However, it shows how the French state was able to construct a new framework of ideas and institutions that blended economic liberalisation with considerations for social and environmental issues to further its national interest of a spatial organisation of economic activity (*l'aménagement du territoire*) to support ambitions of agri-exporting and national self-sufficiency.

5.3.2 THE INDUSTRIAL REINVENTION OF FOOD MANUFACTURING AND ITS DISTRIBUTION

The industrial fabric of food transformation and distribution equally developed under the auspices of post-war national planning, conducted by a succession of 'plans' of economic and industrial development according to specific national objectives, and this until European integration happened. In a similar manner that a logic of national independence informed the development of agriculture, national planning encouraged the industry to form few but large international firms capable of competing on world markets and in particular to resist US economic influence. The food transformation and distribution industries were modernised with the support of the state and the provision of credit facilities, tax incentives and training schemes in line with the Fifth Plan (1966-1970) objectives. Agri-exports developed under the Sixth Plan (1971-1975) to counterbalance trade accounts and compensate for national dependency of raw commodities and as a result, processed food exports almost doubled

¹³⁹ The distribution of subsidies had favoured large grain producers while smaller structures received inadequate support pushing these producers off the land.

¹⁴⁰ At the national level with the 1999 agricultural blueprint law and at the European level with the European Rural Development Regulation no. 1257/1999.

¹⁴¹ Services such as 'manure management plans', nitrate traps, intermediate crops, conversion to organic farming and many other improvement schemes (Daniel & Perraud, 2009:S134).

between 1971 and 1974¹⁴². As Franko (1979:33-34) notes, '*the essence of French industrial policy was to follow no rigid 'market' versus 'non-market' approaches to economic management, but rather to support, strengthen, salvage and promote industry on a selective basis*'. This pragmatic approach explains in the broad lines the course of development that the food industry followed; an initial growth predicated on national macro-economic developments¹⁴³ that lowered production costs while increasing mass consumption and purchasing power, followed by the emergence of few national champions supported by a large base of small to medium size companies (Fifth Plan), and an industry geared towards exports (Sixth and Seventh Plans).

The decision to opt for European integration in 1983 rescripted economic management from what had been traditionally a state-led responsibility to one open to market-led forces. The implications of this moment for the organisation of the food industry is that the government had to phase out its sectoral industrial policy approach. Although the internationalisation of French capitalism allowed large firms to engage in transnational mergers and acquisitions, the industrial fabric of food transformation retained a large artisanal component made of small and medium size companies, presenting a very different picture from its British counterpart; if in 1986, three quarters of the British food processing industry turnover came from large food companies¹⁴⁴, about two thirds of the French food processing industry turnover originated from small to medium size companies (Corsani et al., 1990).

European integration also rescripted the ways industry regulation was to be carried out. As Mark Thatcher (2007) argues when examining cross-national differences in the adoption of Independent Regulatory Agencies (IRAs), similar regulatory institutions can be adopted for different reasons and operate in different ways across nations. He demonstrates that in the case of France, IRAs were used as governance mechanisms of markets to support the ongoing national strategy '*to create internationally competitive suppliers*' (the national champions) while Britain adopted IRAs to '*pursue internationally competitive markets*' (2007:1043). In other words, the state has been able to adapt its institutional response to the new European conditions and pressures while maintaining its overarching vision.

At sectoral levels, regulation for the safety and quality of food has extended from national to European institutional arrangements, which in general have embraced practices of self and co-regulation within a public-private partnership environment. However, and despite the changing policymaking patterns of the 1980s, France continued its adherence to

¹⁴² Source: Coujard (1977).

¹⁴³ In other words, the Fordist model.

¹⁴⁴ In 1986, 13% of British food companies were employing more than 1000 staff (CSO Census of Production, 1988).

the ‘traditional statist’ model (Schmidt, 1996) in particular in matters of geographical distribution of economic activity and the mediation of commercial practices between large distributors and producers. More precisely, the set-up of food manufacturing clusters, the establishment of large commercial centres (distinct from typical building application processes)¹⁴⁵ or questions of anti-competitive practices and market access between suppliers and distributors have kept attracting regulatory attention from the state.

In conclusion, there have been two important moments in the development of the transformation and distribution of food. From the post-war period to the European integration of the mid-1980s, the industry developed under a script of national industrial planning informed by principles of national independence and a ‘*national champions*’ logic that, as a result, gave rise to few large food companies surrounded by a broad base industrial fabric made of small and medium size companies. Although the European integration project led to significant changes in regulatory enforcement, the state succeeded to maintain a level of intervention that mediated the natural tendencies of economic and spatial market concentration.

5.3.3 THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD

This subsection argues that the understanding of food in terms of quality, provenance and tradition that developed as a corollary to the protectionist politics of production since the late nineteenth century, has continued to inform French politics of food consumption throughout the post-war period until now, despite the contemporary context of economic and cultural globalisation. Drawing from Trentmann’s (1998) insight that the cultural significance of public policies is largely prompted by the ideological reading of the economy, I want to propose that the political culture constructed around ideas of national sovereignty and ‘Frenchness’, those very notions that underpinned French foreign policies in the post-WWII period, has contributed to reinforcing the collective representation of quality in food when associated with signs of provenance and traditional know-how. Important to this social construction has been the development of institutional instruments that have granted over time food with attributes other than economic consideration, helped to disseminate narratives around food and strengthened the emotive power of national cultural identity and its collective memory. As the custodian of national interest, the state has played a particular role in defending the ‘cultural patrimony’ of food and as Trentmann (1998:232-233) observes, popular support is garnered when the policy discourse shifts from an economic function to a social one, when ‘*consumption becomes a cultural agency*’. Just as cultural agency varies

¹⁴⁵ Reference to the following legislations: Loi Royer 1973 and Loi Raffarin 1996.

across countries, so does the level of national tolerance to inequality and food insecurity. The question that concludes this section is to understand how the organisation of food relief efforts in France has developed since the post-war years and how does it reflect the collective representation of food poverty. I argue that the same logics of social stratification that are embedded in the construction of the welfare state apply to the way household food insecurity is addressed. The strong individualistic self-reliance that typifies Anglo-Saxon nations like Britain and Australia has led in both instances food insecurity to be dealt with by private charity organisations. In contrast, a greater 'de-commodifying' (Esping-Andersen, 1990) capacity of the French welfare state has made the extension of social protection to the provision of food relief possible.

FOOD AND ITS REPRESENTATION

The post-war period was an important moment for the construction of ideals of national sovereignty, French exceptionalism, and the preservation to some degree of national independence and autonomy. Just as French national sovereignty in economic matters was affirmed through its vast national modernisation project, a much more subtle message about the cultural superiority of French gastronomy was found behind its public representation. French food and French cuisine were associated with ideas of quality and sophistication (the renowned French *'art de vivre'*), implicitly ascribing the Anglo food culture with connotations of 'coarseness' (Martigny, 2010) and by the same token, reaffirming through this cultural 'grandeur' the place of France in Europe and in the world. Central to this narrative has been the concept of provenance and *'terroir'* that have linked the attributes of quality and know-how (and tradition) to food. In many ways, the *'terroir'* opposes *'the food from nowhere'* of industrial agriculture (McMichael, 2009:147) and anchors the production of food with cultural heritage, traditional craftsmanship, reputation and ultimately quality. Since the institutionalisation of provenance in the mid-1930s with the *'Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée'* (AOC), other certification systems have gradually been set in place to institutionalise other food 'virtues' such as quality with the *'Label Rouge'* brought out in the early 1960s, traditional know-how with the *'Spécialité Traditionnelle Garantie'* brought out in the early 1990s or organic production with the *'Agriculture Biologique'* and in total, more than a thousand French food products are currently certified under any of these systems¹⁴⁶.

Notions of cultural patrimony fuel new forms of identity politics (in particular over questions of food) especially in an environment that tends to homogenise cultural landscapes. Since nationalism and globalisation are historically entwined and self-

¹⁴⁶ Since 1992, the EU sponsors three certification systems: Protected Designation of Origin, Protected Geographical Indication, and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed.

reinforcing phenomena (Hearn, 2015), this is no surprise that questions of food traditions and authenticity help states to play the politics of national and cultural identity while negotiating at supranational or international levels (DeSoucey, 2010). Echoing DeSoucey's (2010) argument of '*gastronationalism*', food may be an economic and cultural sphere where it is possible for the state to reassert some of its legitimacy. Just like Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, France has been particularly apt at advancing gastronomy as a matter of cultural heritage. France has one of the largest rates of protected 'origin label' registrations and it has also succeeded to have the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to declare in 2010, French cuisine as a 'world intangible heritage'. These symbols and practices are not only signs of national independence but carry with them a sense of shared citizenry and cultural pasts.

The collective understanding of food quality has not only informed individual patterns of food choices but has also been used as policy platform in the implementation of the national food plan '*Programme National Nutrition Santé*' (PNNS) since 2001. This policy initiative, which originally stemmed from the anxieties caused by the food safety crises of the 1990s, reasserted the importance of food in the politics of public health. Just as the series of food safety crises of the late 1980s-1990s led the UK's government to reorganise the institutions handling food safety¹⁴⁷, it also triggered a series of trade restrictions between the UK and Europe (particularly for meat products) and the creation of a network of supranational and national food safety agencies. In response to the major BSE food safety crisis of 1996 ('mad cow disease'), not only did France maintain an embargo policy on UK's beef imports¹⁴⁸ for four years, set up an independent food safety agency in 1998, but most importantly placed the issues of food provenance back on the political and policy agendas. Certification systems such as '*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*' (AOC) or '*Agriculture Biologique*' (organic food) were reaffirmed and used in the implementation of the national PNNS food plan. It has been through an emphasis on the cultural meaning and the importance of food quality that the French national plan (the PNNS) was designed to guide consumer's food choices. Many other policy actions have complemented this initiative since the early 2000s, with for example at the demand side, the ban of snack and soft drink distributors in schools or the subsidisation of healthy meals in school canteens and hospitals, and at the supply side a state partnership with the food industry to improve the quality of processed food and reduce food wastage. Just as the representation of food weaves the institutional fabric of national food policy, questions of social welfare and equitable access to food constitute another important area of policy activity.

¹⁴⁷ With the creation in 2001 of an independent Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the replacement of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food by a new Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

¹⁴⁸ Against the recommendations of the European Union to lift the embargo, France maintained its embargo on UK's beef from 1996 to 2002.

There are complex linkages between household food security and social protection and I want to discuss here the historical policy trajectories that the French state has held in developing social protection and fighting poverty and hunger. Central to this brief discussion are obviously the politics of de-commodification of the French welfare state and the degree to which individuals or families can uphold acceptable access to healthy food. France's occupational welfare system, based on collective agreements and social insurance schemes, is funded through wage-based contributions and income taxes, giving workers and employers a stake in the welfare state. Family allowances originally introduced to moderate wage demands (Schelkle, 2012:32), reflect the centrality of the family in the provision of welfare¹⁴⁹ that scores high on the de-commodification scale. Refocussing our attention to food, the main mechanisms by which, in general, social protection improves household access to food are through either direct transfer of food (food relief) or by raising income through redistributive mechanisms. Until the mid-1980s, in France, the focus of state intervention was directed to the provision of welfare and the forms and nature of the redistributive mechanisms that would allow people to have sufficient income in terms of wages or benefits, to assure household food security. However, slower growth and de-industrialisation caused greater social demands that could no longer be met by the social protection regime in place. While the initial policy response was to turn to the EU to divert excess agricultural stocks to those in need, since the early 2000s a gradual institutionalisation of food relief has been implemented in which the state plays a central role in extending a form of protection to the access of food.

The redistributive ambitions of the immediate post-war period had been for an all-inclusive universal system but these were defeated by groups of self-employed groups and high wage earners who wished to limit their redistributive burden. As Baldwin (1990:159) remarks, these redistributive ambitions were much greater than those provided by '*the successful, but more innocuous Beveridge-style legislation*' of Britain or Scandinavia. Ultimately, France's social protection came to be articulated around a socially fragmented welfare system that clustered welfare recipients as members of a class rather than as individuals as the British system did (Baldwin, 1990), and the interplay amongst the interests of these many different groups resulted in a protection system premised on segregated risk pools, financed by social contributions paid by both employees and employers, and based eligibility for benefits on past contributions. Until then, household food insecurity remained indirectly addressed through the social protection system that was predicated on full employment.

¹⁴⁹ According to Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of welfare regime, France's Conservative model allocates a marginal role to market and offers a high degree of de-commodification.

The first food banks appeared in France in 1984 as emergency food relief mechanisms at a time of major macro-economic transformations associated with the European integration project, the liberalisation of the national economy accompanied by the post-industrial phenomena of slow growth and de-industrialisation. Growing unemployment became problematic for a welfare regime that extended entitlements on the basis of work performance. As Esping-Andersen (1994:387) reminds us, *‘the welfare state was informed by a social order [of a relatively homogenous industrial working class] that was no longer predominant’*. Therefore, the political difficulty for France was that access to food had become conditional to a context of precarious employment at a time when the European agricultural activity suffered from overproduction. By 1987, while images of “mountains of butter” and “lakes of milk” were used to characterise agricultural overproduction, a European food distribution program was set up to redirect some of the excess intervention stocks like wheat, rice, sugar, and milk from the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to food relief efforts. Since then, a more market-oriented CAP and lower intervention stocks have caused individual nation-states to complement supply from national food provision systems. The institutionalisation of food relief in 2004 granted a legislative framework within which food aid from agriculture and food industry was to be delivered¹⁵⁰ to complement the declining European program of food distribution by setting up two main initiatives; the state-funded national program of food relief (PNAA) and the public/private partnership with the food industry for food and social insertion (PAI). Today, the major sources of food aid originate from national and supranational funding, private-sector firms and individual donations linking back to the productivist model that uses food relief/aid as an adjustment variable to overproduction. However, new forms of food relief are emerging that depart from the traditional logic and encourage links between people in difficulty with alternative local food supply systems. The new model based on a network of *‘solidarity shops’*¹⁵¹ funded by local authorities, government services and private foundations is perhaps the way forward in dissociating food aid from agricultural policy.

5.3.4 FRANCE AND THE POST-WAR FOOD REGIMES

Over the course of the post-war and post-cold war periods, the Franco-American relationship has been one of mixed and complex patterns of discord and collaboration (Krotz & Sperling, 2011). As these authors note (2011:306), the historically rooted domestic

¹⁵⁰ The European program is complemented by two national initiatives with the creation of the National Program of Food Relief (PNAA) in 2004 and coordinated with the overarching national food plan (PNNS).

¹⁵¹ Goods are sold at prices not exceeding 30% of purchase price.

constructions of *'their national roles and relative positions in the international system were inherently oppositional; just as the United States viewed itself as a benevolent hegemon [...], France considered itself as a great power capable of questioning or balancing an American hegemon and leading an independent Europe'*.

The argument proposed here is that the construction of Europe was a way for France to reject the subordination of Europe to the United States control and respond by restoring Europe as another global player while pursuing its projects of national independence. Just as the *'US aimed at universalising the American farming and dietary models'* (McMichael, 2009:146), historical trajectories, foreign policy ideological divide and national political coalitions pressed the French state to follow a distinct path in modernising its agricultural and food industry sectors while engineering the contours of the European project. As agricultural production in Europe and in France started to recover and compete using a similar logic of agricultural welfare system (the EU Common Agricultural Policy) to become a massive food exporter, the demand for US agricultural goods from these regions began to weaken (Pritchard, 2009:299). This caused problems of over- production and excess stocks that ultimately induced a political division amongst US agricultural producers¹⁵², which in turn explains why the second food regime under US hegemony was governed by a logic of protectionism and subsidies (Winders, 2009). In any case, as Pritchard (2009:300) notes, the expansion of subsidised European food exports instigated the US into efforts to outcompete Europe in developing economies, and led to a *'trans-Atlantic agricultural war'* that clearly demonstrates the level of contestation from a food regime perspective.

The incorporation of agriculture into the WTO framework in 1995 has been theorised as a signal to a possible third food regime in which the global food politics were to be governed by market forces and no longer by the nation-state. As an international institutional mechanism, the WTO was supposed to be the remedy for the escalation of agricultural subsidies between the EU and the US and foster liberalisation of markets to the advantage of developing economies. The reality was that prior agreements between the two trading blocs had secured them modest obligations that continued to disadvantage exporters from the global South. Pritchard (2009) concludes that the incorporation of agriculture into a multilateral trading system cannot be interpreted as a movement towards a new stabilised food regime, but rather as a 'carryover' from the crisis of the second food regime.

¹⁵² With a wheat-cotton coalition that favoured protectionism of agriculture opposing the pro-liberalisation corn farmers (Winders, 2009).

5.4 A FRENCH FOOD POLICY REGIME?

Despite the complexity this involves, it is possible to extract the salient characteristics that best describe the modern organisation of the French food provisioning system.

Following the policy regime conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 3, the present section proposes a preliminary overview describing the broad dynamics that articulate ideas, interests and institutions governing the three individual policy subsystems of primary production, transformation and distribution of food, and consumption, which weave France's contemporary food policy. However, greater analytical attention is given to these dynamics in the following chapter, Chapter 6, which handles the task to compare national characteristics and draw preliminary conclusions on why and how the coordination of food provisioning varies across borders.

Drawing from the policy mapping tool presented in Table 3.1 of Chapter 3, we may interpret that the mix of economic (productivity or export oriented objectives) and non-production (family farm welfare, environmental management, etc.) oriented values encapsulated in the EU CAP continues to express the sentiment of the uniqueness of agriculture in Western European societies. France's position in defending a continued support to agriculture against the 'market liberalising' pressures of Britain and others within the European Union agricultural policy (Lowe et al., 2002) denotes the political importance that agriculture holds in the national agenda. The reinvented social contract between farmers and the state with at its centre the multifunctionality of agriculture, can be interpreted as a continuing commitment to the model of agricultural welfare state and the future of the family farm rhetoric. In sum, the reframing of agriculture and its multifunctionality was possible because of the historically centralised character of the institutional fabric that allowed greater levels of state intervention, and the corporatist relations existing between government and farming interests.

A dualistic value system underpins the policy logic that coordinate the transformation and distribution of food. Whereas the governing arrangements for large food companies are infused with principles to foster national competitiveness such as measures to promote labour flexibility and skilling, or the protection of corporate interests, more sectoral policy approaches are used for small and medium size food companies. Furthermore, the notions of spatial distribution of economic activity that characterise France's approach to industrial development may explain, as well, why the food industry is mainly constituted of many small and medium size firms when compared to Britain.

Capturing the broad settings that characterise the politics of consumption is obviously a difficult task. However, drawing from Chapter 3's mapping tool presented in Table 3.3, I propose that we may consider French polity as one supporting a logic of social concern (in

opposition to principles of personal responsibility) when constructing the political culture of food consumption. This is admittedly expressed through the historically constructed collective representation at individual and policy levels (the national food plan) of food around attributes of quality, provenance, and traditions as well as through the notion of social solidarity that permeates state and community's activism in the national effort of food relief. In sharp contrast to the British approach, the institutionalisation of food relief by the French state denotes an acknowledgement of collective responsibility in questions of food poverty, nutritional health, and wellbeing, even though it may not be an adequate response to the underlying causes of the problems. Using the characterisation proposed in Chapter 3 – Section 3.1.1 Consumption, reference to an 'institutionalised safety net' may be an appropriate representation in the case of France.

In sum, drawing from one of the claims made in Chapter 2 that institutional arrangements mirror policy regime strength by reinforcing political commitment and garnering support from interest groups, the establishment of a National Food Council since 1985 and the National Food Plan (PNNS) since 2001 may well indicate that an explicit food policy regime is in place in France.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter attempted to chart the path of food policy development in France since the late eighteenth century until present times to explain cross-national differences with other advanced economies like the United Kingdom. While building on core insights from the rich comparative political economy literature, this account provides a complementary perspective to the food regime theory by qualifying the nature and extent of the impact of a hegemonic power over other rich and productive nations like France. Such countries have sufficient bargaining powers — whether political, military or economic — to resist global rules and retain autonomy in organising the provisioning of food. One of the conclusions proposed here is that the development of France's food provisioning system cannot be explained solely by the Anglo-centric food regime perspective. Despite the British first food regime being predicated on a rhetoric of free trade, France was able to follow its own logic of development underpinned by agrarian and protectionist principles. Under the second food regime of US hegemony, contestation took the form of the European Union. Determined to reject the subordination of Europe to the United States control, France could engineer the restoration of Europe as another global player while pursuing its projects of national independence.

This chapter suggests that the use of the 3'I's analytical framework can advance our understanding of French food policy trajectories through changing times. Four predominant

factors can be identified in determining what has driven the policy pathways of food provisioning in France. First, the origins of many of the ideologies and values, institutions, and representation of interests (the 3 I's) that define the contemporary food policy environment can be traced back to the early industrial period. The chapter makes the case that the logics of France's agricultural transformation have initially been determined by the character of the class struggle between a resistant peasantry refusing to leave the land and a complacent landlord class. This instance of '*delayed capitalism*' (Byres, 2009) has set in place a very different structure of interests from those in place in Britain at the same period, and those dominant interests have in turn dictated the course and nature of policy decisions that were to shape future decisions.

Second, once these decisions and choices are implemented, they exert a determining influence on the course of later developments because of institutional legacies and the vested interests that they generate. The decision to maintain people on the land has led to ideologies of agrarianism and national self-sufficiency, which in turn have informed policy choices until the mid-twentieth century. In contrast to the British example of capitalist agriculture, viewing agriculture as a social and economic stabilising mechanism had pressed the French state to foster a corporatist form of agricultural interest mediation and develop an institutional fabric at an early stage. Whereas British industrial interests hinged on free trade mechanisms, an agrarian France followed a different path to industrialisation and therefore could not replicate British politics. Instead, France opted for protectionism, which in turn assisted the rise of a more interventionist state with extended responsibility for welfare. Just as WWI had revealed the vulnerability of nations from the interdependence of trade, the interwar period and its economic upheavals witnessed a reinforcement and institutionalisation of French protectionism, the consolidation of a corporatist mode of interest mediation and an agricultural sector premised on the family farm model.

Third, there is a continued dominance of national traditions not only in terms of ambitions but equally in ways countries proceed to accomplish their objectives, a sort of logic of intents and purposes. France's ambitions and visions of national independence of the post-WWII period resonated strongly with the protectionist stance it took by the end of the nineteenth century. Not only did it inform most of the post-war nation building project and its national planning institutions, but it continued to influence the transformative capacity of the state in adjusting to the European integration project. Although the European integration project had forced France to adhere to more liberal policies, to reduce its levels of state intervention and to gradually privatise key industries, France has not engaged in the more radical and ideological changes that have taken place elsewhere (Prasad, 2005) but continues to be strongly influenced by its *dirigiste* history (Clift, 2012).

Finally, the politics of consumption are notably influenced by the political economy of production and the logics embedded in the welfare state construction. In this chapter, I have argued that the political economy of protectionism has shaped a cultural significance of food associated with narratives of national sentiments of provenance, tradition, and quality. Furthermore, the potential for de-commodification of the French welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990:52) explains why France loosened food from the bonds of the market for economically disadvantaged individuals and families.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

This research project attempts to chart a new path in understanding the trajectories of national food policy development by uncovering the mechanisms and contingencies that explain the spatially uneven nature and therefore the cross-national variations of these transformations. Drawing on insights from both traditions of political economy and public policy studies, the project proposes a new and more differentiated way of thinking about food and about food policy. The proposed framework breaks with the traditional discussions offered in the public policy literature that commonly use the individual policy subsystem lens, and prefers to explain the causality of development either as an outcome of institutional settings or as the result of influential ‘stakeholders’. Although the influence exercised by interests and the institutional architecture in which they evolve are two necessary dimensions to understand the distribution of power within the policy environment, the framework used for this research, brings the world of ideas as the third (and necessary) dimension into the analysis. In doing so, the 3I’s framework reveals the significance of values and collective representation in shaping the political economy and policy environment of food, otherwise obscured in traditional policy studies.

To ascertain the suitability of the proposed 3I’s framework to the research question, the case studies of the United Kingdom and France have been used as testing grounds in assessing how the interplay between ideas, interests and institutions can help us not only to understand why the historical development of national food provisioning differ across advanced economies, but also to establish the nature of cross-national policy differences and whether food policy holds some specific attributes or patterns that distinguish it from any other national policy domain. Chapter 4 (the United Kingdom) and 5 (France) have woven insights that challenge the ideas that the impositions of a global food order dictate the dynamics of national food provisioning in advanced economies, and that market pressures drive the organisation of national food economies towards a single model of food capitalism. Although acknowledging the structural imperatives of capital accumulation, both case studies demonstrate the importance of political contestation, interest group power-play, and the discursive framings in shaping national policy decisions and outcomes. The objective here is to develop a model that best describes the role of state agency in the trajectories of national

food policy development, and link these national policy dynamics to broader patterns of change.

As a starting point, the chapter revisits the nature of the contributions offered by the analytical framework to submit that while examining the interplay between the three causal mechanisms (the 3'I's) of ideas, interests and institutions helps us to understand the trajectory of food policy development, historical and class analysis are *also* important in explaining the emergence of the modern food provisioning and its later transformations. To disentangle values and principles from institutions and interests that have been frequently conflated in contemporary research, the chapter continues by applying the policy mapping tools proposed in Chapter 3 to both national case studies.

Having pointed out the characteristics that distinguish policy patterns between France and the United Kingdom, the second section submits that the timing of the original integration into the capitalist system, and the resilience of the national cultural food patrimony are two important predictors in determining development pathways of modern food provisioning. In other words, I argue that an *early* adoption of market society built a monetary mode of valuation that construed the value of food to its commercial exchange, while a *delayed* adoption appears to have maintained (through cultural mechanisms) a representation of food around values of traditions, provenance, and conviviality. After having considered the food policy development of hegemonic Britain and compared it with the 'late' developer and yet important political economy of France, the chapter concludes by reasserting that little evidence exists to confirm some form of food policy convergence across the selected political economies. In fact, two major influences determine the logic underpinning the development of national food provisioning, and these are the initial national socio-political processes that set in motion the commodification of food, and the level of national autonomy (in the face of global forces) that maintains and reproduces this policy logic. Drawing from insights gained through both case studies, the chapter proposes a tentative 'explicit/implicit' policy typology to capture the variations of policy dynamics. Just as the United Kingdom tends to follow a semi-implicit policy logic, France operates on a much more explicit level to organise the provisioning of food.

6.1 DISCUSSING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF COMBINING POLITICAL ECONOMY WITH POLICY REGIME CONSTRUCT

Chapter 3 has made the case that complementing the political economy approach with the policy regime construct (the 3'I's framework) allows us to conceptualise food policy in a way that reveals the degree of integration across the related policy subsystems (i.e. agriculture, transformation/distribution and consumption). Furthermore, a cross-disciplinary approach makes it possible to trace the interplay between ideas, interests and institutions

that ultimately steered and guided policy development in an historical manner. In particular, Chapter 3 has contended that the proposed framework overcomes the restrictions encountered with institutionally based approaches to the likes of Varieties of Capitalism (Hall & Soskice, 2001) with its focus on the 'firm' and coordination problems and not on policymaking, or with the broader historical institutional tradition that may prove difficult to apply as an analytical lens in fluid policy areas like food consumption.

Drawing from the two case studies presented in Chapter 4 and 5, this subsection begins by examining how the theoretical framework has contributed in gaining additional insight about the nature, influence and interplay of the three causal mechanisms (the 3'I's) that guided the trajectories of the multiple policy areas organising the provisioning of food. It discusses how the new conceptual tools have helped to uncover the influences exerted by the original conditions at the time of development of the modern food provisioning system, and how once in place these national traditions maintained and reproduced variations in the organising principles of food provisioning. Moreover, and regardless of the boundary-spanning features so characteristic of food policy, the framework helps to trace the dynamics linking the political economy of food production with the political culture of consumption. The second part of this discussion addresses the importance of historical analysis in providing an interpretative account to support a broader social analysis as to why the emergence of the modern food provisioning and its later transformations.

6.1.1 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE 3'I'S THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK TO THIS RESEARCH

To begin, it is fair to say that examining any of the three 'building blocs' (the 3'I's) independently of each other has allowed to disentangle the relative roles that any of them have played at any one time. In the first place, it has been possible to discern the sources of ideas and values that have at times informed policy decisions. As such, the sharpness of analysis offered by the 3'I's has revealed whether values guiding policy actions were focal points around which collective action had organised – i.e. when the material interest of certain interest/producer groups became the main causal factor –, whether these values were underpinned by ideologies or doctrines formed by influential political or intellectual elites to give priorities to certain policy actions and not others (e.g. the neoliberal experiment of the 1980s with the Thatcher's governments), or whether — behind those values — were cultural variables deeply intertwined in national history and traditions (as it has been the case with the French pursuit of national independence after the Second World War). Similarly, under the prism of the 3'I's it has been possible to establish whether interest-based influences that pushed policy trajectories in some direction originated from a form of organised battle amongst competing producer groups — such was the case of British

industrial interests pressing for free trade policies in late nineteenth century or from the pursuit of electoral politics as it was the case in France when the Republican government sought political support from rural communities. Finally, the framework has yielded further insights into the causal influences of institutional structures over government choices and options. At times, institutional arrangements have been protecting economic interests (e.g. British agricultural sector shielded by the European CAP from Thatcher's neoliberal reforms), while at other times institutions acted as mediating agents that gave distinct national responses to the forces of globalisation. In sum, the flexibility of analysis offered by the 3'l's framework not only helps to identify the influence of any of the forces over the other two but also broadens the range of causal propositions that would have otherwise been implied if only one analytical lens had been used.

The framework offers a way to systematise interpretation of continuity and change, and reconstruct the story of why national food provisioning got to be organised the way they did in the selected case studies. For any of the policy areas that contribute to the organisation of food provisioning, these new conceptual tools have brought to light important dynamics, revealing how the dominance of national traditions has maintained cross-national differences in policy approaches. When observed under the lens of the 3'l's framework, associations between values and institutional arrangement or between institutions and interest representation are given greater clarity, which in turn can shed light on how national traditions continue to reproduce cross-national differences. For instance, one may suggest that the traditional British '*laissez-faire*' style of governing can be associated with present levels of market concentration in Britain's food industry or with the government liberalism in resolving questions of household food insecurity. Behind those outcomes one must recognise the implicit and yet active principles of market hegemony in organising the transformation or consumption of food. Conversely, France's corporatist-statist legacy not so concerned about market efficiency has resulted in a continued emphasis on upholding centralised institutions to deliver broader non-market solutions across the three policy subsystems of agriculture (with state assistance funding), transformation and distribution food industries (with certification systems or with the spatial distribution of industry) and in the realm of food consumption (with state-organised food relief or the implementation of a national food plan). In sum, cross-national variations are more consistent with national dynamics rooted in historical development than they are the outcome of a global and/or hegemonic logic.

Whereas politics have been highly visible in debates about production and agriculture, consumption politics tend to be obscured by the notions of private sphere and individual responsibility. However, a closer examination under the lens of the 3'l's highlights

how the political and economic forces that have shaped and guided the development of production, have helped to construct a national political culture of food consumption. Inspired by the work of Frank Trentmann (1998, 2005, 2007), I have argued in Chapter 4 that Britain's rhetoric of free trade, endorsed by capital and labour, has led to a collective representation of food associated with notions of 'cheapness' and that the ideology of liberalism which fosters a culture of individualism and self-reliance, has kept policy intervention away from the civic side of consumption in general, and of food choice in particular. By contrast, France has developed since the nineteenth century a very distinct collective representation of food. Protectionist measures originally taken to shelter small-scale farmers from the international competition of the 'New World' have gradually resulted in an understanding of food associated with notions of provenance and tradition. These representations have been further reinforced through a variety of institutionalising mechanisms such as the designation of origin system (AOC) set up during the interwar period and the listing of French cuisine on the UNESCO World Heritage records in recent years. Furthermore, long-standing traditions of state intervention have manifested in the world of food consumption in the form of national food plan since the early 2000s or with the establishment of food banks under the supervision and financing of the state.

6.1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Just as the 3'I's framework has been extremely useful at revealing the influence of causal mechanisms over policy trajectories, it has however come short to grasp the preconditions, structures and inner tensions that have animated the development of modern food provisioning. While the historical structures of the modern food economy reflected the interdependence between a constellation of interests, the values that they claimed to embody and the authority of the institutions to which the 3'I's framework has been very useful, an historical sociological account becomes necessary if one wishes an interpretative account to support a broader social analysis as to why the emergence of the modern food provisioning and its later transformations. In brief, interpreting the logic of food capitalism cannot be solely relying on the lens of the causal mechanisms of ideas, institutions and interests but must be complemented by a broader analysis of structural changes (the historical sociological account) as another interpretative layer of causality to relate the operation of food provisioning to elements rooted in its history.

Both Chapter 4 and 5 have highlighted the fundamental differences of class structure found in the early moments of the industrialisation period and have argued that these circumstances set in place distinct development paths along which food provisioning was to be articulated. From those marked cross-national structural differences developed distinct

models of market economy, from which the interdependent development of the food economy can be traced back. The story of Britain is one of a rapid transformation to a market society, in which market relations replaced customs of a declining moral economy and instituted an ethos of individual responsibility, and where as principles of reciprocity were gradually superseded, the cash nexus came to mediate most relations between the individual and society. The legacies of Britain's nineteenth century industrial supremacy, reflected in the structure of its institutional fabric and parliamentary representation, gave priority to industrial protection to facilitate industrial exports. The fact that industrial capital and labour alike supported Britain's reliance on imports to source 'cheap' food gave very little political clout to national agriculture, although already organised around modes of capitalistic operation (with tenant farmers/managers but no family farm business). Although agriculture began to receive support when the landed Conservatives became a dominant force in national government in early 1930s (Rooth, 1985), the cultural ties with the traditional production of food had been severed.

By contrast, the story of France is one of political compromise forced by early (if compared to Britain) democratic institutions that set in motion a social logic of 'place' and established provenance as an important attribute of food production. Whereas in Britain the timing and the rapidity of industrialisation rationalised the organisation of food provisioning around the price system, in the face of social resistance the French state decision to preserve the late nineteenth century social organisation around the family farm and to a greater extent around a mode of subsistence economy, reduced the extent to which the provisioning of food was to be commodified. The political renegotiations in the face of social resistance gave rise to a series of protectionist institutions that not only responded to trade pressures but equally sheltered the social relations of food from the cash nexus. In other words, protectionism was a political response to trade dynamics within specific social contexts¹⁵³. Under these circumstances, the modern organisation of food provisioning in France developed around agrarian values and corporatist forms of interest representation.

The argument can be made that because the organisation of food provisioning shares its origins with those of the capitalist democracy and embodied similar patterns of class relations, it also explains the divergent pathways of development. The class structures of agrarian societies at the onset of economic modernisation have been determining factors of political outcomes. Food systems that developed out of the need to negotiate politically and socially the extent of the commodification of food provisioning came to be underpinned by very different sets of ideological and institutional arrangements than those where the integration of agriculture into the capitalist mode of production did not find any initial

¹⁵³ Similar dynamics were found in late nineteenth century German Empire that needed the support of the rural electorate to proceed with the unification of the territory (Aldenhoff-Hübinger, 2005). The German Empire granted universal suffrage to the rural population between 1867 and 1871.

resistance. The ‘early’ form of British capitalism and a ‘delayed’ form of democratic representation¹⁵⁴ gave rise to a food provisioning system anchored in the cash nexus and an understanding of the function of food as primarily material subsistence to reproduce labour. The ‘delayed’ form of French capitalism combined with an ‘early’ democratisation gave rise to values of agrarianism, and a suite of protectionist institutions that framed the role of food not only as a function for subsistence but also as an affiliation with regional heritage and traditions, material pleasure and conviviality. As both Chapter 4 and 5 demonstrate, historical variations in class alliances and class power distinguish the ideological and institutional underpinnings of respective policy subsystems (whether agriculture or politics of consumption) and their interrelations. Furthermore, not only has Chapter 4 confirmed the significance of contingent moments in rerouting policy trajectories, as it was the case when the UK became a member of the European Economic Community in 1973, but it has showed as well how important institutional arrangements can be in resisting ideological change.

Notwithstanding the far-reaching implications that such developments have had for the ways food provisioning came to be organised, this chapter is also concerned with analysing whether the present organisation of national food provisioning shows persistent cross-national differences and whether a form of logic or pattern emerges from this analysis. Drawing from the analytical model proposed in Chapter 3 that articulates policy settings through the lens of the 3I’s, the next section elaborates on how respective national food policies coordinate national food provisioning systems.

6.2 MAPPING FOOD POLICY SETTINGS AND DISCUSSING CROSS-NATIONAL DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

6.2.1 MAPPING THE FOOD POLICY SETTINGS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR – A PRODUCTION ORIENTED POLICY SETTING WITH OVERTONES OF CONSERVATION ISSUES

By any standards, the subsidisation of the agricultural sector is a little bit of an oddity for a liberal market economy that has pioneered the subordination of agricultural interests to industry. By the 1960s, public opinion was reconciled with the idea of permanent protection, although *‘the rise in real average pre-tax net farm incomes since then has been greater than the real income growth of many other groups of workers’* (Bowers, 1985:75), and farmers understood the great advantages offered by moving inside the European trade bloc (Grant,

¹⁵⁴ The urban working class was given franchise in 1867, the country working class in 1884, and universal male suffrage was granted in 1918.

2005). With the protection of agriculture widely accepted¹⁵⁵, entry to the EEC was considered as the logical culmination of UK agricultural policy that made protection permanent, its costs borne by the consumer, and if there was any discontentment about it Britain could always blame it on the French (Bowers, 1985:73).

Within the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), national ambitions can coexist or complement those expressed at the supranational level and as Grant (2012:432) notes, the European Commission's own vision of CAP is itself one where the two competing discourses of neoliberal and protectionist stances coexist and frame debates within the European agricultural community, even if a liberal market-oriented direction seems to be the default policy position. Although the UK agricultural community has been a public advocate for a more market-oriented, commercial agriculture and a programme of continuing liberalisation, there is no indication that permanent protection will disappear soon¹⁵⁶. Nonetheless, the emergence of new agendas of environment and conservation at national and supranational levels has forced the UK to adopt what Potter and Tilzey (2005:584) identify as a 'bimodal' policy strategy, premised on the coexistence of post-productivist policy directions alongside market productivism.

However, and despite the decoupling of support for production to non-production considerations, overall the dominant framing of UK's agricultural policy remains in favour of a further integration of agriculture into the agri-food circuits of capital framing the market as an effective way of transmitting consumer preferences through the price mechanism (Grant, 2012:428). The consolidation of farm holdings since the early 2000s¹⁵⁷ or even the disproportionate allocation of subsidies¹⁵⁸ to large farms in many ways only confirm a policy direction towards a more productivist and capitalistic style of agriculture.

The institutional framework responsible for the delivery of agricultural policy directions is what could be described as 'centralised' at both supranational and national levels and through which decisions are made in allocating EU CAP funding. On average, between 2006 to 2013, just above 80% of CAP funding has been used as direct payments for income support and greening activities while the remaining 18% has been directed towards rural development, what Lowe et al. (2002) characterised as the '*countryside agenda*' of UK's agricultural policy.

The greater emphasis on public goods, '*e.g. attractive landscapes produced by agriculture*' (Grant, 2004:414) has affected the ways interests organise and interact with the

¹⁵⁵ And as Bowers (1975:72) points out, agricultural protection was no longer an overt burden to the Exchequer.

¹⁵⁶ Following the 2016 referendum to exit the European Union, the British government has confirmed that agricultural subsidies will be maintained until 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Whereas a quarter of holdings were less than 5 hectares in 2005, by 2013 small-scale holdings mounted only to 8% (Source: European Commission Member States Factsheets 2016).

¹⁵⁸ According to the European Commission Member States Factsheet 2016, in 2014, whereas 98.9% of beneficiaries received 86.2% of CAP funding, the remaining 1% of very large farm holdings received 13.5%.

state. Although newer forms of protest are becoming more visible, major farming interests and the National Farmers Union (NFU) in particular, keep enjoying a status of ‘insider’ group to exert structural and lobbying power (Grant, 2004). Therefore, interest representation around agricultural policy issues is best characterised as an instance of ‘insider’ versus ‘outsider’ groups where traditional farmers ‘insider’ groups have privileged access to policymaking while contending with the demands from ‘outsider’ protest groups of a pluralistic nature. Table 6.1 below maps the policy settings that coordinate agricultural policy today.

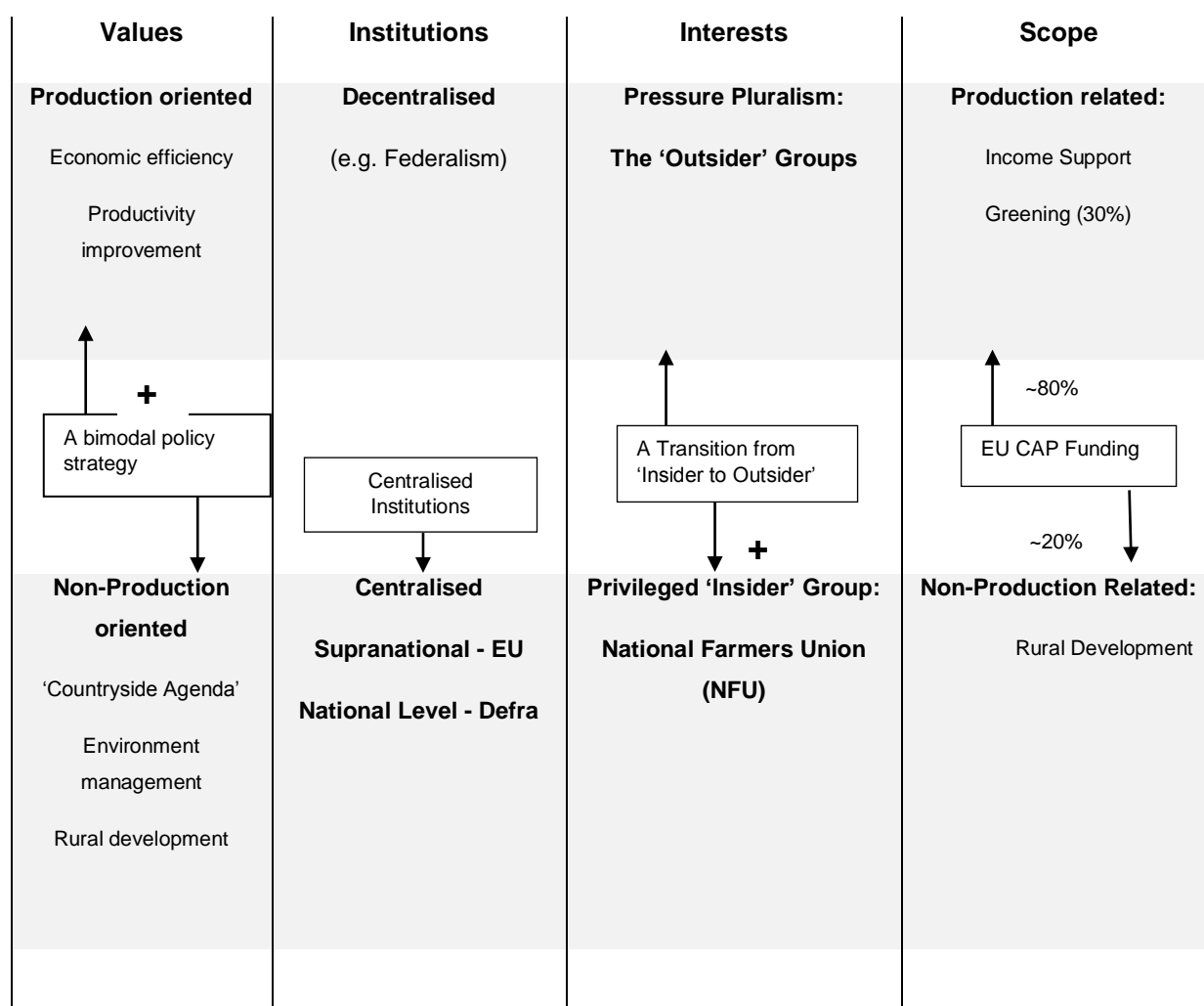


TABLE 6. 1 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY IN THE UK

FOOD TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION SECTORS – OLIGOPOLISTIC ENVIRONMENT

Since the return in the 1980s to an ideology buttressing the primacy of the market, food processing and distribution industries alike have expanded in a climate of self-regulation and private standards, and have continued to gain economic power and market control.

Although market concentration within the industry can be traced back to the 1950s, the trend became even more pronounced in the 1970s as the food market got progressively saturated¹⁵⁹. The industry underwent further rationalisation in the 1980s/1990s that was accompanied with a noticeable decline of employment¹⁶⁰. Alongside these developments, came concerns over competition issues in the food manufacturing and retailing activities. Although competition laws were instituted very early in comparison to Continental Europe, they have been rarely enforced as other instruments have been preferred to control industry behaviours. As Wise (2003) notes, the UK has had a long tradition of eclipsing competition from its macroeconomic policies. Even with the adoption of the Competition Act 1998 that brought a new outlook on competition issues, old institutions such as the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) or the Competition Commission¹⁶¹ had remained in operation and offered scope for economic actors to negotiate and escape stringent anti-competitive regulation (Wise, 2003). A similar approach is taken over 'buyer power' dynamics between retailers or buying groups and the farm sector. To UK's political and policy circles, 'buyer power' is not necessarily considered as a competition issue but rather as a question of fair trading practice (OECD, 2013) and therefore, apart from fair trading arbitration no other policy mechanism is in place to mediate commercial relationships between producers and influential retailers.

From these new buyer-producer relationships have emerged private systems of governance and corporate systems of standards settings (Lang et al., 2009:167-169). The response of the UK policymaking community has been predominantly to accept these self- and co- regulatory arrangements even more so since the government has embarked in a reform programme to simplify taxes and regulation to facilitate business activities (OECD, 2010). To the British government, these voluntary-based mechanisms are better alternatives to traditional command and control regulation (Senden et al., 2015).

To conclude the characterisation of the UK's food industries and as Table 6.2 illustrates, the developments of both manufacturing and distribution sectors continue to follow a market efficiency logic defined in economic terms of productivity, market shares, export potential and so on, with policymakers in the backseat overseeing from a distance the 'good' operation of the market while private interests often mediate the execution of policy (Lang et al., 2009:80). Indirect and softer forms of policy approach have built up an institutional architecture that mixes a variety of groups from within and outside governmental bodies, using a combination of self- and co-regulation instruments to strengthen market efficiency. Although these 'private' forms of governance are subject to redirection or intervention from national or supranational authorities over specific policy issues relating to food safety or food quality, more diffuse negative externalities to the likes of environmental impact and diet-

¹⁵⁹ To illustrate this point, in 1987 18 British food companies were within the top 100 international food firms (Corsani et al., 1990).

¹⁶⁰ Between 1979 and 1986, the industry had shed more than 20% of its workforce (Corsani et al., 1990).

¹⁶¹ It is only in 2014 that the UK Government closed both the OFT and the Competition Commission.

related outcomes are broadly left to the consumerist belief that consumption drives change in production. Finally, while large industry players set standards and operate in self-regulatory environments, small size food enterprises are subject either to certification requirements set by the large industry players or to regulatory enforcement by local and governmental authorities.

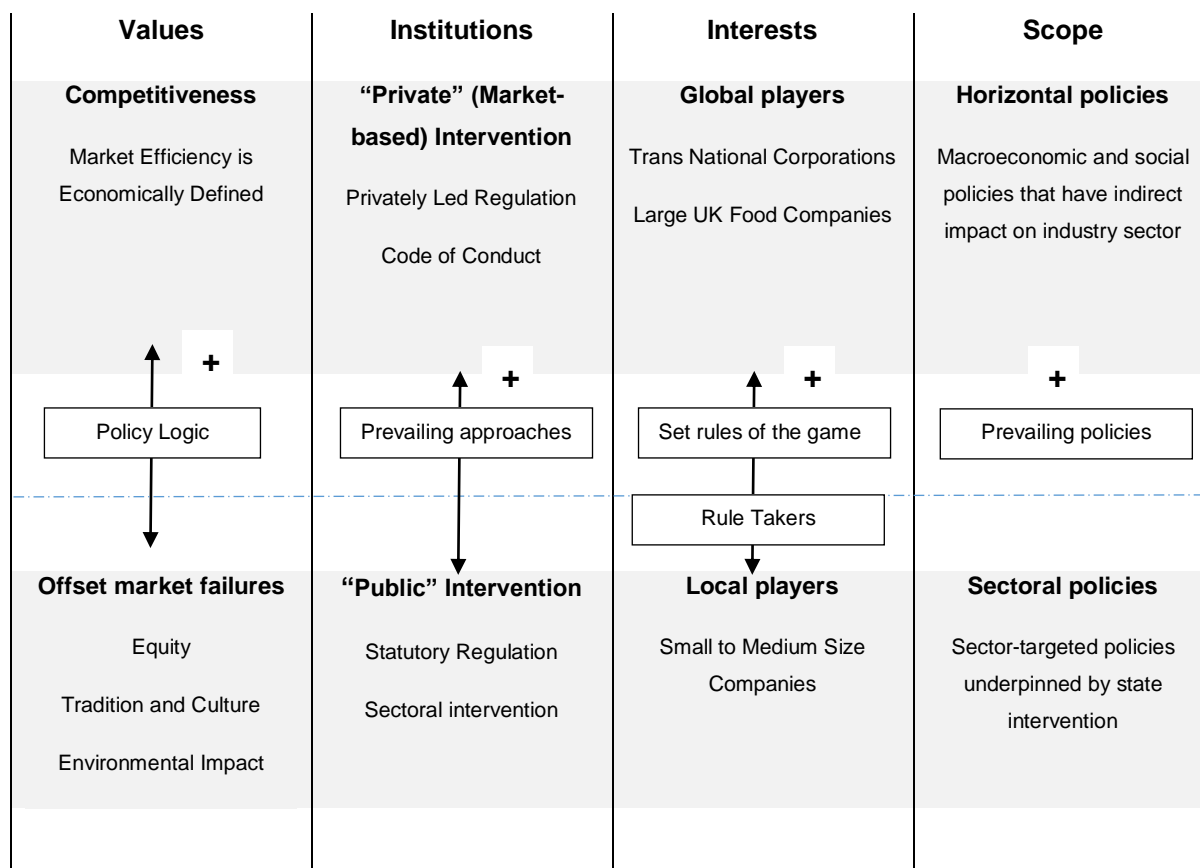


TABLE 6. 2 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF THE TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD IN THE UK

THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD – AN INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

As Chapter 4 has already highlighted, both aspects of food choice and access are infused with principles of personal responsibility. Over the last thirty years, the dominant approach to better public health outcomes has been to engineer behaviour changes in food choices (Brooks et al., 2012:5). Premised originally on the existence of the rational, sovereign and choosing subject who has access to external sources of information to make ‘healthy’ choices, the approach has nevertheless involved the intervention of the government

in either helping consumers in making better choices¹⁶² or in involving food companies in ‘choice editing’¹⁶³. The roles that choice plays in the policy environment framing food consumption has become problematic. On the one hand, choice is framed as the expression of personal freedom and individuality while on the other, it is used as a vehicle for change. Brooks et al. (2012) point out the contradictions and tensions caused by the duality of roles that ‘food choice’ carry and the difficulties encountered by the policy community when dealing with such an ‘*indeterminate and slippery*’ concept (2012:9). Shifting the attention to the formative role of historical memories that have constructed the political culture of food consumption in the United Kingdom, I want to suggest that if an association exists between the difficulty in guiding consumption choices and a political culture of consumption woven around the price mechanism, this in turn can explain the policy difficulties in guiding food choices in a society with a long standing tradition to value food through the price mechanism instead of other attributes such as tradition and provenance.

The legacies of an early industrialisation, a rapid shift from traditional reciprocity to the cash nexus and an all-encompassing liberalism not only constructed the collective representation of food around principles of price and cheapness (influencing food choices) but also elaborated an understanding of social order as one centred on mechanisms to encourage independence and self-help association rather than direct government intervention¹⁶⁴. The implications of such political culture are that the consumption of food came to be conceived as an assembly of networks of voluntary exchanges between autonomous and motivated individuals outside state responsibility. The organisation of civil society organisations (CSOs) around food issues reflects this political culture. With less than one percent of the national funding available to CSOs, food organisations focus largely on the concern of ‘informed choice’ as put forward by policymaking circles, either through education campaigns or capacity building initiatives¹⁶⁵, and spend moderate efforts at tasks involving lobbying or direct activism¹⁶⁶. Just as food CSOs, in general, call for a greater state intervention in health, social and environmental policy issues, they also believe that cooperation with the food industry is necessary. On the business side, common corporate strategies for influencing policy emphasise ‘corporate social responsibility’ and frame business as a credible societal and political partner to promote the notion of ‘market justice’ against civil society’s arguments for ‘social justice’ (Weishaar et al., 2016). To the industry, consumption is a question of personal lifestyle choice, voluntary behaviour and ultimately a question of personal responsibility. The policy implications in a political economy that

¹⁶² See the 2008 ‘Food Matters’ campaign by the UK government.

¹⁶³ Choice editing involves measures that restrict the available choices either through supply-based strategies or by applying greater levels of taxation (for less sustainable and healthy options) in order to structure consumption patterns. See the Scottish Diet Action Plan (1996).

¹⁶⁴ Although by the early 1900s, the limitations of voluntary self-help were visible and convinced politicians to create state pensions and health schemes (Cordery, 2003)

¹⁶⁵ Such as food co-ops or allotment associations.

¹⁶⁶ Source: The Food Issues Census 2016 available at www.foodissuescensus.org

encourages principles of individualism and little government intervention are in support for forms of ‘market justice’. This characterisation is captured in Table 6.3 below, which maps the settings of policy environment addressing food consumption in the UK.

Values	Institutions	Interests	Scope
Personal Responsibility Freedom of individual choice Self-reliance	“Private” Intervention Choice Editing by Supply Chain Self-Help Associations	Business interests Corporate Social Responsibility	Soft Approaches Education Campaigns for an ‘Informed Choice’
<div>↑</div> <div>Choice & Self-Reliance as pillars</div>	<div>↑</div> <div>For choice and access</div>	<div>↑</div> <div>‘Market Justice’</div>	<div>↑</div> <div>Prevailing policy actions</div>
Social Concern Social provision	“Public” Intervention Education Campaigns	<div>↓</div> <div>‘Social Justice’</div> <div>↓</div> Civil Society Organisations For public health For food security For environmental sustainability	National food programs Targeting Nutrition, Food insecurity

TABLE 6. 3 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD IN THE UK

6.2.2 MAPPING THE FOOD POLICY SETTINGS OF FRANCE

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR – STILL A NATIONAL POLITICAL ENTERPRISE

If the national post-war strategy was one to encourage more production, the contemporary approach presents more nuances in its objectives. Environmental and social considerations have come to shape French agricultural policy in past decades as one following a two-pronged strategy (even if in some aspects these objectives appear contradictory). On the one hand the policy focus aims at maintaining farm production and

strengthening France's export position for specific agricultural commodities, while on the other, policy attention and funding is placed on the delivery of non-production functions such as 'greening' support and rural development. To some extent, national allocations of CAP funding reveal state priorities across the different policy areas. For example, between 2008 and 2013, France has allocated on average 80% of its CAP funding towards income support to farmers and 'greening'¹⁶⁷ activities (direct payments). During the same period, an additional nine percent was allocated towards market support measures to the wine and horticulture industries, and food programs. Described by Lowe et al. (2002) as the '*agrarian agenda*', France agricultural policy decisions have maintained small-scale farming (under five hectares in size) since the early 2000s as a constant and important element of the agricultural landscape¹⁶⁸.

The changing structure of agricultural production, the changing role of the farmer within the supply chain and the Europeanisation project have disrupted the traditional corporatist arrangements between the state and the FNSEA (Hennis, 2005). As other types of organisations have joined the policy table, interest intermediation in France has taken an increasing number of pluralist elements that have challenged the long-lasting corporatist management of agricultural interests. The organisation of French agricultural interest can now be described as pluralist in nature, although the principal farm organisation, the FNSEA, still retains some importance in decision and policymaking (Delorme, 2004; Colson, 2008).

¹⁶⁷ Green direct payments account for 30% of the direct payment budget. Greening measures include crop diversification, maintaining permanent grassland and the protection of 'ecologically beneficial elements'.

¹⁶⁸ Since the early 2000s small holdings represent a quarter of the national farm holdings (Source European Commission Member States Factsheets).

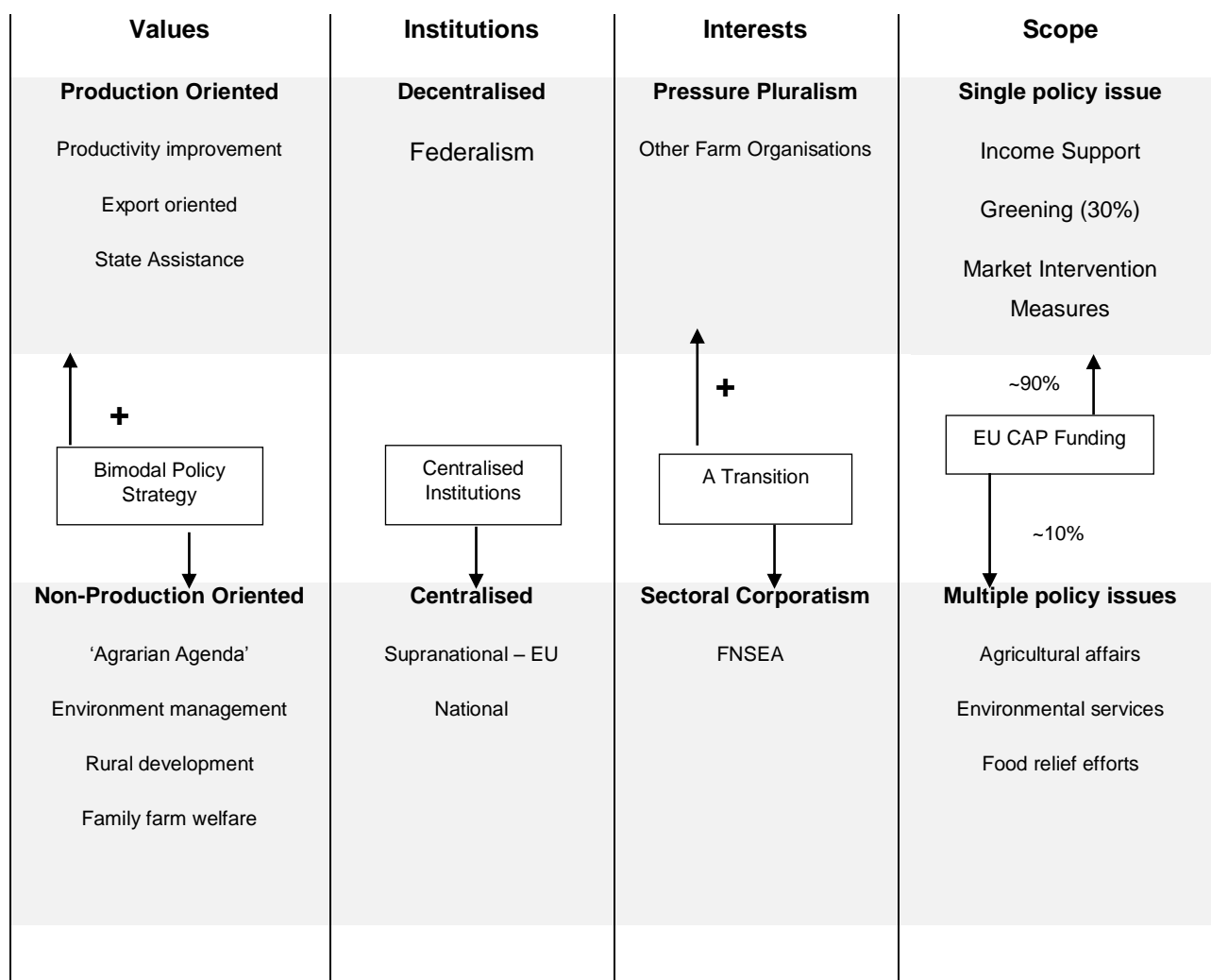


TABLE 6. 4 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY IN FRANCE

FOOD TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION SECTORS – AN HETEROGENEOUS INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

Although self-regulation is practised in certain professions (medical professions, legal and accounting, and sport federations are granted regulatory powers), overall France's regulatory environment is one in which legislation prevail and where enforcement is traditionally carried out by national or regional governmental bodies. For instance, food safety policymakers hold the view that the commercial pressures on food companies may impede on the efficiency and reliability of self-regulatory practices, and prefer to maintain the involvement of public agencies in evaluating and managing risks¹⁶⁹.

If in the past the state played an active and centralised role in national economic affairs such as price controls to industrial planning, since the mid-1980s the playing field of state intervention has shifted from enforcing control to ensuring competitive behaviours.

¹⁶⁹ See 'La Politique de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments – Diagnostic et Propositions' prepared in June 2014 for the Ministers of Agriculture & Food, Health, Consumption available at http://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/epp/epp_securite-sanitaire-aliments-rapport.pdf

Whereas competition issues were dealt with through statutory regulations until the early 2000s, France has shifted its approach by fostering competition and ensuring compliance with competition law instead of regulating it (OECD, 2013). Nevertheless, France has given great political attention to competition within the food supply chain, and particularly in matters relating to buyer power and how it affects the commercial relationships between distributors (supermarket chains) and producers (the agricultural sector) through legislative instruments. Conversely, the UK has diffused the political saliency of the bargaining power between producers and distributors by framing the problem not so much as a question of competition but rather as an issue of fair trading practices.

In sharp contrast to the UK, the French food transformation industry includes a much greater proportion of small food manufacturers, bakers and '*charcutiers*' that have retained an artisanal character, making the French food industry and the interests that it represents more heterogeneous. Overall, the French food industry can be described as a Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) industrial environment situated at the cross-road between a sectoral industrial logic ('*logique des filières*') with a focus on international competitiveness and a territorial/geographic logic that links back the production of food to the notions of quality, tradition, and provenance, environmental and social (employment) impacts.

To conclude the characterisation of France's food industries and as Table 6.5 below illustrates, the developments of the manufacturing and distribution industrial sectors follow a dual logic; for the large size companies, the logic is defined in economic terms of productivity, market shares, export potential, while for the rest of the industry made of SMEs, the logic turns its attention towards more sectoral-related objectives of food quality and regional industrial development. Direct forms of policy approach have built up an institutional architecture primarily situated within governmental bodies, still favouring statutory regulation to other private form of regulation.

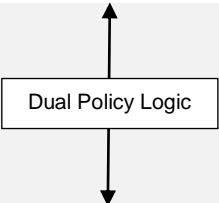
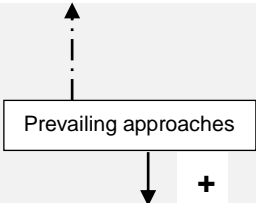
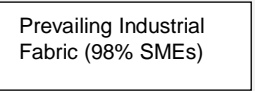
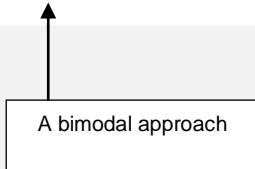
Values	Institutions	Interests	Scope
Competitiveness Economic Efficiency	‘Private’ (Market-based) Intervention Self- & Co- Regulatory Mechanisms	Global players Trans National Corporations	Horizontal policies Macroeconomic and social policies for large players
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
Offset market failures Mediation of class conflict Equity, Tradition and Culture	‘Public’ Intervention Statutory Regulations Sectoral intervention	Local players Small to Medium Size Companies targeting signs of quality and local provenance	Sectoral policies Sector-targeted policies underpinned by state intervention

TABLE 6. 5 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS OF THE TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD IN FRANCE

THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD – CONVIVIALITY, TRADITION AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

I propose that the concept of ‘collectiveness’ is the common denominator that on both accounts, food choices and food access, inform and coordinate in France the policy patterns around food consumption. Whereas food choices are guided by a collective representation of food associated with cultural heritage and patrimony that link food to a sense of place and provenance, food access and food insecurity are predominantly informed by the social idea of solidarity to construct a collective response in which the state assumes responsibility.

As Chapter 5 has brought out, much of the representation of food continues to be constructed around notions of cultural patrimony, cultural meaning, food traditions and ‘authenticity’. These representations institutionalised since the early years of the twentieth century, now inform modern policy initiatives over questions of patterns of food consumption by setting food as a collective good shared through cultural and social mechanisms. Furthermore, the policy logic tackling the problem of food insecurity and its corollary aspect of food access, is also informed by notions of social concern and solidarity. To support this proposition, I draw on Hillary Silver (1994)’s insightful analysis of the moral discourse of French Republicanism where she contends that since the late nineteenth century Third Republic, a discourse of ‘exclusion’ inferring a breakdown of social solidarity between the

individual and society rather than ‘poverty and inequality’, has woven political ideologies. As she explains, the implication to frame the social problem in terms of ‘exclusion’ and not economic poverty or inequality finds its solution in the notion of ‘solidarity’ that allows the state to assume responsibility for social aid and set public institutions to further social integration¹⁷⁰ (Silver, 1994:537). Consequently, in the world of food consumption, the main institutional fabric is one of public intervention or supervision. Such is the case for example with the national food banking network, created by the state in the early 1980s and operating now under state control over funding and resources allocation. Table 6.6 below reflects this characterisation.

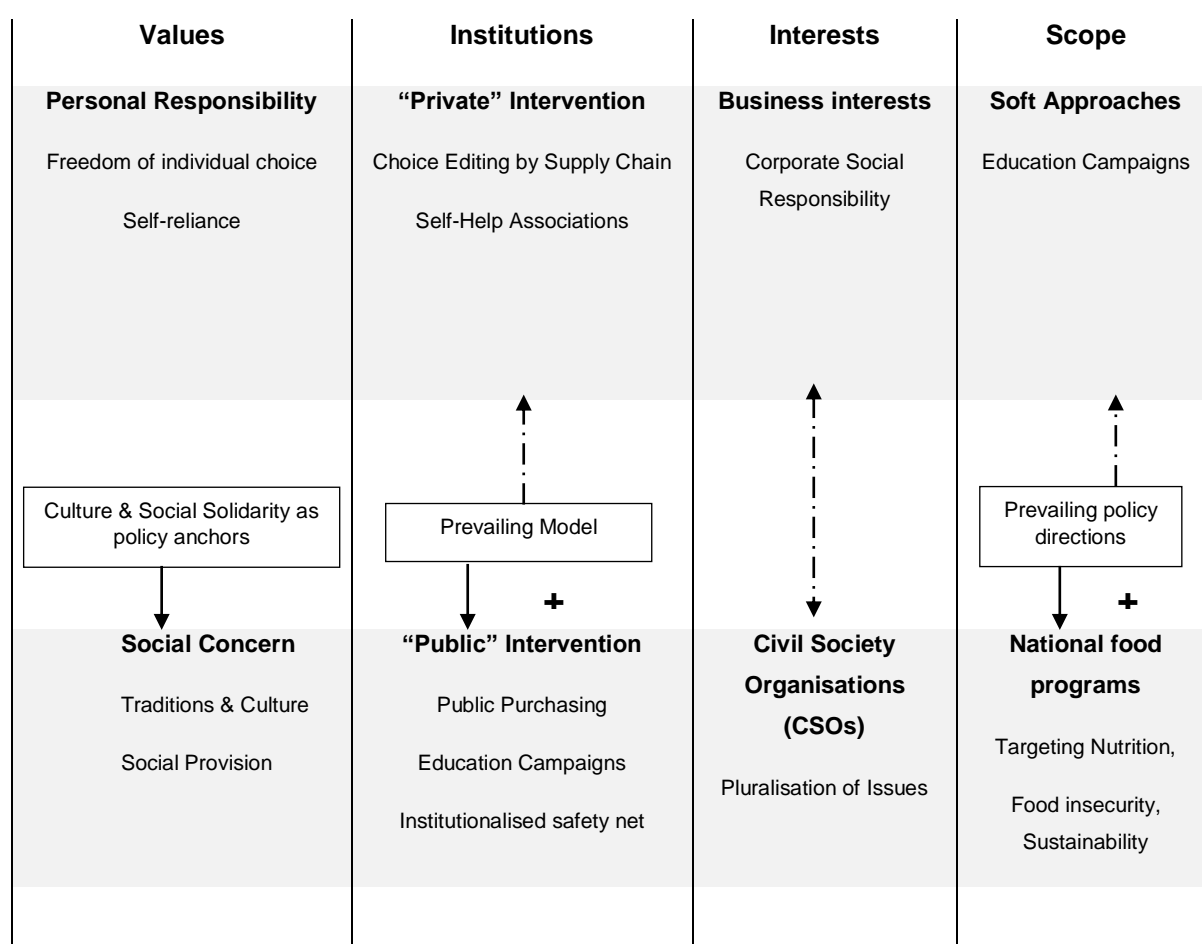


TABLE 6. 6 – MAPPING POLICY SETTINGS FOR FOOD CONSUMPTION IN FRANCE

¹⁷⁰ This Republican citizenship extends nowadays to incorporate multicultural notions and reconfigure the basis of solidarity.

6.2.3 DISCUSSING CROSS-NATIONAL VARIATIONS

Just as the preceding subsections have attempted to capture the essence of the policy environments that govern the three policy subsystems organising the provisioning of food, the purpose of this subsection is to unfold some preliminary conclusions as to the causal factors that may explain these cross-national variations or similarities within each of the three policy subsystems.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL POLICIES UNDER SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

As Greer (2005:202) remarks, one may argue that the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is increasingly less 'common' and that it is no longer about just agriculture. Although national rhetoric differs greatly when discussing the need to protect agricultural sectors against unrestrained market forces, the redistributive functions of CAP have been maintained in both countries. However, it is when explicit allocative objectives are examined that differences are noted. National political traditions and preferences over the role of agriculture in society become central to the main cross-national differences between the two nations. France's priority to protect an important rural social fabric, small scale farming in particular in order to maintain an economic geography across national territory, has led the state to place more policy attention to rural development. The socio-economic circumstances of the United Kingdom do not call for similar policy directions and with a largely integrated agricultural sector, the state's priorities are not about addressing questions of rural development *per se*, but to place conservation issues at the centre of its policy agenda.

Both countries share a format of dominant farm organisations and their close links to agricultural departments even if a range of outsiders have come to challenge this hegemony. Perhaps the French agricultural policy is still distinctive for its continued pattern of interest mediation along distinctly corporatist lines even if since the 1980s, the French state has widened its reliance from the historical bipartite to a multipartite policy networks. In sum, despite the European integration, national agendas and preferences remain important influences in setting the 'not so' common and 'not so' agricultural policy. Indeed, at times some 'strong' countries have been successful in enshrining their core preferences within the EU CAP to meet the demands of influential constituencies. Whereas France continues to consider agriculture as a national project and is insistent to maintain support to a small-scale farming community, the UK prefers to advocate for subsidies to support conservation issues

to be received by large and wealthy landowners¹⁷¹. It is the argument here that because national agendas and policy preferences have their roots in the social and political histories, it is therefore possible to trace the causal influences guiding policy trajectories and explain cross-national differences.

NATIONAL FOOD INDUSTRIES

The food transformation and distribution industries are fertile grounds for examining cross-national differences since the post-war period. To illuminate the workings of this understudied policy subsystem, a degree of simplification has been necessary in order not to get lost in the details, but to extract the most salient national characteristics that help us to understand how and why the coordination of food provisioning differ across borders. The analytical tools used to map the national policy settings of this policy subsystem have brought to light the importance that forms of institutional arrangement play in shaping the arrangement and coordination of these industries.

In the case of the United Kingdom, private forms of regulatory intervention are common for both ‘social’ e.g. areas of health or safety for instance, and ‘economic’ e.g. competition-related forms of regulation. Both types of regulation, whether social or economic intervention, owe their origins to the regulatory liberalisation set in place during the tenure of post-1979 Conservative governments, which produced regulatory independence from direct state intervention across many industries, including the food industry. In sharp contrast, French regulatory traditions (like in most Continental European countries) rely more strongly on traditional command and control mechanisms with a marked preference for the ‘written law’. Until the post-war period, European public opinion hostile to the market economy demanded state intervention and centralisation to regulate market dynamics (Majone, 1996:10). This historical focus on the state and its public-style intervention has not only constructed a culture that places ‘public interest’ above the more rational Anglo-Saxon notion of ‘market failure’, but has led to the difficulties of severing regulation from government authority (Ogus, 2002:7).

The above account strongly suggests that regulatory traditions and styles are the products of historical and cultural forces that have led to define the relationship between state and regulatory agencies, and the remit and degree of discretion that these regulatory institutions enjoy. In other words, the late acceptance of the market system by Continental Europe, and France in particular, has shaped a national tradition of regulatory functions

¹⁷¹ In 2014, out of the 2.4% of larger farm holdings that received 23% of CAP payments, the very largest units made up only 0.04% of the number of beneficiaries but received 2% of CAP payments. Source: European Commission, Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Report on the Distribution of Direct Aids to the Producers (Financial Year 2014), November 2015.

being assigned to governmental bodies. Despite the wave of economic liberalisation of the 1980s, the legacy of older approaches is still felt in the way the French food industry, whether transformation or distribution, is regulated. Considering these different national institutional conceptions, we can explain the cross-national differences noted earlier. If compared to its continental neighbours, the broader acceptance of the market economy in the UK has historically cast intervention as exceptional rather than routine, and therefore led to patterns of social and economic regulation that have allowed oligopolistic forces to shape the food industry. Conversely, the legacy of a late acceptance of the market society which had placed the state at the centre of the regulation activity, led to a more direct interventionist style, giving the French food industry a more heterogeneous texture. These developments challenge the propositions suggested by globalisation and convergence theories alike, that as nations become fully industrialised they begin to resemble one another. In fact, both case studies show that the original conditions at the time of industrialisation and democratisation, especially in terms of class alliances and class power that set in place the mobilisation of state authority, became determining factors in the development of national food capitalism. Furthermore, the case studies of the UK and France, show that differences in political culture and institutional architecture create variations in responses to international and global forces of market liberalisation, to ultimately suggest that industrial policy convergence around neoliberal ideals has not occurred.

TWO WORLDS OF FOOD CONSUMPTION

Whereas policy differences are marked when comparing the transformation and distribution of food, those become even more pronounced around consumption. On either side of the Channel, values and principles are at opposite ends of the spectrum. In the case of the UK, a liberal political culture supporting primarily notions of individualism and personal responsibility guide the general policy patterns in questions of food choices and food access. In sharp contrast, France's political culture of solidarity underscores a sense of 'collectiveness' as the organising principle to policies targeting both food choices and access. Just as culture is used as a binding mechanism to instigate a collective memory of traditions that endows food with special meanings and representation to guide consumer food choices, France calls on 'social solidarity' to justify state intervention in food relief efforts. Rejecting liberal individualism, the moral discourse of social solidarity rooted in French Republicanism discredits the notion of 'poverty' used in Anglo-Saxon countries for its association with Christian charity and monarchism (Silver, 1994:537). In other words, if France considers the social bond between individual and society as paramount, the United Kingdom casts public and private domains as two separate spheres and where integration occurs through exchange (the market) rather a collective integrating process. Obviously, the notion of

choice becomes much more important in a political economy infused with individualistic values than it is in one that calls on collective representation.

As such, choice has proven to be a very difficult, contradictory, and evasive concept to anchor UK's policy initiatives over the consumption of food as the tensions between the neoclassical theory of the rational subject and the reality of unhealthy food consumption are yet to be resolved. Conversely, recent French policy initiatives have centred their attention and rhetoric on concepts of pleasure, taste, conviviality, and tradition in which individual responsibility and freedom are hardly mentioned. These two different approaches only highlight and reaffirm the strong association that exists between the collective representation of food and the conceptualisation of food consumption, between values and their representation. On the one hand, Britain's early commodification of food has set an understanding of food primarily framed around its exchange value (see the rhetoric of free trade and 'cheap food') that no longer gives room for original use value attributes of pleasure and tradition. Instead, choice has become the mantra to express the freedom enjoyed by individuals living in a price-regulated food economy. On the other hand, the French representation of food is built in terms of its importance in maintaining and reproducing a 'French way of life', underpinned by notions of conviviality, pleasure, tradition, and place; in other words, French policy initiatives use the prism of use value to set patterns of food consumption.

To conclude, I wish to draw on Hazel Kyrk (1923) pioneering work and insights about consumption and the freedom of choice to illuminate some of the contemporary problems encountered in advanced economies, particularly in those with no strong cultural representation of food. Kyrk (1923) argued that not only the problem of choice is one of values and valuations, but also that free choice and rationality do not exist in a vacuum for they are the constructions of social organisation and individual will. If the origin of value were in utility outside of any social interference, problems of control and guidance of choice would be easily solved. However, as she points out, in a price organised society that continuously establishes exchange value to balance production and consumption, the price mechanism becomes dangerous as it does not differentiate the merit or demerit of the demands which it registers. In sum, political economies that advance the price mechanism as the coordinating agent for food choices may well encounter strong obstacles in guiding consumption patterns towards choices with 'merit', while anchoring policy initiatives in a context where food holds a cultural meaning may well prove more successful. In many ways, this re-affirms the proposition made earlier in Chapter 1, that the commodity perspective is a valuable vantage point to the examination of food policy. Just as food policy observers comment on the breadth, the complexity, and the difficulty to analyse the policy arena of food, the commodity lens proves to be very useful in decrypting how different political economies create different value systems to give different meanings to the food commodity.

6.3 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

How and why are the organisations of national provisioning different across the developed world? To address the '*how*' element of the question, this dissertation has sought to establish whether analysing food through the lens of food policy as defined by Lang et al. (2009) helps to shed some light over the national dynamics that animate policymaking around the issue of food, and to uncover some of the logics that connect apparently independent policy domains. I argue that framing food policy as an integrative process across the major policy domains provides analytical purchase. Reflecting on the tensions between ecological, social, and human demands (Lang et al., 2009), food policy discourse implicitly sets the commodity perspective as a point of entry into the organisation of food provisioning and its historical development. In other words, it sets an analytical avenue to better understand '*why*' these differences emerge in the first place, and why these differences have been maintained over time.

I want to advance that two major influences determine the developmental logic of national food provisioning systems and help us to understand the '*why*' of cross-national differences — the extent to which domestic capitalism gained ascendancy over traditions of localism, and the extent to which global logics influenced and/or undermined forms of national autonomy. Given such propositions, one may envisage the organisation of national food provisioning system as a function of these two determining variables — the strength of national traditions and localism, and position within the global order. The case study of hegemonic Britain has showed how the swift transition to capitalism that helped it lead the global food order, also obliterated most forms of national food culture to ultimately construct a representation of food around market relations. Distinct from hegemonic power model, the '*late*' industrialising and yet economically '*important*' countries fit into a second category in the global food order. The French case study has pointed out how a delayed transition to capitalism and a strong cultural identity, sense of place and regionalism have shaped the modern organisation of food around sets of values and institutions that confer food attributes beyond price and exchange value. The question arises as to why '*traditional*' food practices survived in the modern French capitalist economy.

In this particular national instance, the enablers for reproducing '*traditional*' food practices are to be found in national culture and state activism. Although the French economy has undergone major modernisation, the country has retained, like many other Continental European states, a strong cultural value for independent craftsmanship. As Chapter 5 has pointed out, the share taken by small artisanal food production entities in the overall transformation industry is a testimony to the resilience of the cultural value of the

small self-employed outfit. In post-industrial France, these culturally recognised 'authentic' food products have continued to capture mainstream and specialised market segments. However, it is easy to imagine that without the support of the state, the cultural value of craftsmanship would have been to a certain extent wiped out. The family farm model, the institutionalisation of quality or provenance certification schemes, the set of policies to protect small food shops from the influence of large retailers, and even the listing of French gastronomy to the UNESCO's register of 'world intangible heritage' are all examples that show how state interventions can uphold craftsmanship and artisanal modes of production as culturally valuable. In turn, craftsmanship links to cultural pasts and to a collective representation of food around traditions and provenance.

This research corroborates the intuitive presumption that global food orders as theorised by the food regime theory, bear less influence over countries situated on the outskirts of the hegemonic relationship than those in the direct 'line of fire'. One of the key reasons for these variations of influence is to be found with the pathways in capitalist democratic development that, in turn, determined the degree of national autonomy within the international order. The French case study shows that a 'delayed' form of capitalism (Byres, 2009) pressed the nation-state to follow a national logic to respond to the social structures in place at the time. Contending with the developing hegemonic food order on its own terms was only possible because of the geopolitical, intellectual, and economic influences exercised by France at the time. Given that these circumstances of autonomy from the hegemonic and global influences were maintained over time, France was able to give food a sense of place and regionalism from which emerged an economic value of the food commodity endowed with the subjective notions of quality, pleasure and tradition that helped to reproduce the French 'art de vivre'. The exchange of the food commodity developed along a certain line of 'use value' logic. In sharp contrast, the rapid transition to a market economy, and the displacement of the rural community to urban centres, left hegemonic Britain to understand and represent food for its market relations.

Given that the origins of capitalist democracy have revealed major differences in historical structural contexts, how can we explain that these different political economies have been able to maintain and reproduce their respective course of development and not converge towards one common model of food capitalism? Drawing from the emerging policy regime literature, this research makes use of the novel 3'I's framework to identify causal pathways linking historical structural settings (such as the time of acceptance and adoption of the market economy) to the causal mechanisms of ideas, interest, and institutions. These linkages help show how food policy is represented, organised, and reproduced in national contexts. In fact, this research confirms that an early adoption of a market economy system can be associated with a representation of food centred around a system of exchange values, while a delayed adoption appears to maintain, through cultural mechanisms, a

representation of food around notions of use value like traditional recipes, provenance, and conviviality. In the instance of France, a resistant peasantry refusing to leave the land but conferred with electoral franchise, forced the emerging nation-state to establish institutions to protect values of agrarianism and national self-sufficiency at a time when a nascent national consensus formed around a Republican moral of solidarity. Under such circumstances, social relations were to mitigate the market relations involved in the production and consumption of food. In the case of the United Kingdom, an early industrialisation pushing the people off the land to the cities, forced a market economy to regulate the provisioning of food at a much earlier time than it happened in France. Combined with a political culture of liberalism, the political economy of food came to be organised around principles of private intervention in both spheres of transformation/distribution and consumption.

The significance of these historical legacies reveals itself in the consistencies of principles and rules that informed the broader morals that weaved national political culture. In turn, political culture legitimated the establishment of certain institutions and not others. By morals, I mean the ideological pressures that legitimate a way of coordinating social relations. In liberal economies, the respect for market competition had to be internalised by individuals and reproduced through social structures. As Amable (2011:5) notes, public intervention in liberal economies is only deemed necessary today when 'fair' competition needs to be restored to *'level the playing the field'*, and to allow self-reliant individuals to compete for choices. Overall, the British public has accepted quite widely the neoliberal ideas and values (Schmidt, 2001). It has been a different story in France. The Republican conception of social solidarity has imposed an obligation on the state to *'aid in the inclusion of the excluded'* (Silver, 1994:570) and has therefore sheltered individuals to varying degrees from direct market competition. Even with the turn to a more neoliberal approach to economic management since the late 1980s, successive French governments have aimed at maintaining the idea of social solidarity through generous compensation programs (Schmidt, 2001:254).

These two distinct worlds of political culture have also borne considerable influence in threading principles and rules into the organisation and institutionalisation of the provisioning of food. Originally backed by hegemonic capabilities, which reordered the relationships between domestic political authority and economic processes (–e.g. limited state intervention, free trade politics), the organisation of Britain's liberal food order has continued to give pride of place to market rationality and maximise the scope of market forces. Thus, both spheres of industrial transformation and distribution of food have evolved infused with this liberal political culture to become highly oligopolistic. However, and in contrast to these two other sectors, UK's agricultural sector has somehow escaped the full liberal market logic since its institutional integration within the European Union in 1973. The fact that France's organisation of food provisioning has been driven more by the dynamics of national

bargaining rather than by a global logic of trade, has resulted in a more state-structuring style policy coordination. This, in turn, gave rise to more heterogeneous forms of industrial relations, particularly for the industries involved in the transformation and distribution of food.

Three insights can be drawn from these developments of the provisioning of food. The first insight confirms that different political economies take different paths even if they all seek similar outcomes. Following UK's example, we may hypothesise that liberal market economies are more likely to follow a global logic of economic relations than non-liberal production regimes in the coordination of the provisioning of food. In the case of France, the response to the global logic has been at times to retreat under the shelter of protectionist policies, while at other times, particularly since the mid-1980s, to call upon notions of social solidarity.

The second insight drawn from the case studies reflects on the interplay between values, interests, and institutions (the 3'I's) in reproducing policy trajectories and conditioning policy outcomes as an expression of state agency in sustaining national visions. The lens of the 3'I's has highlighted, for example, how post-1980s' France constructed a framework of ideas and institutions that blended economic liberalisation with the national social and political contexts, revealing the creativity of state agency in responding to global forces while maintaining national autonomy through supranational institutional mechanisms¹⁷². Another example of how institutional arrangements influence policy trajectory is found in the puzzling combination of state-assisted British agriculture (through the EU) and market coordination styles for the rest of the national supply chain.

The third insight is that national policy autonomy in food provisioning is dependent upon the relative 'ranking' within the global food order. The French case study shows that France's economic weight and position in the global food order allowed the French state to pursue its own policy logics and retain policy autonomy in spite of international and global pressures.

Under the lens of the 3'I's, the comparative analysis also brings to light consistencies of pattern behaviours in the instrumentation of national food policies. In the case of France, policy interventions across the three policy subsystems are organised in an explicit manner, articulated around clear values and objectives, a legislated regulatory system, and a dense institutional fabric. State-assistance defines the *modus operandi* of the national agricultural sector, while food industries operate in a statutory regulated environment, and questions of food consumption are articulated through the prism of 'collectiveness' of cultural references and social solidarity. The establishment of a National Food Council¹⁷³ and the implementation of the National Food Plan since the early 2000s not only confirms the explicit

¹⁷² See the institutionalisation of a multifunctional agriculture.

¹⁷³ The Conseil National de l'Alimentation (CNA) created in 1985.

nature of food policy in France, but also indicates a willingness to address food issues as a distinct policy area. The United Kingdom brings contrasting evidence to the French approach. With the exception of the agricultural sector that falls under the EU institutional framework, the governance of UK's food industries and the coordination policies targeting food consumption are generally much less explicit in form, calling upon frames of reference often outside the issue of food to govern questions of transformation or distribution. Although the question of food has been the subject of political attention in recent years, with no national food plan in place questions of food consumption are addressed on an *ad hoc* basis. Therefore, I would like to suggest that the organisation of food provisioning in the UK evolves in a semi-implicit policy environment; the concern is somehow explicit but the institutional delivery is implicit.

Surprisingly, this research also reveals that differences in policy settings are more noticeable in the policy sphere of consumption, and as I have demonstrated earlier, clear distinctions between values of individual responsibility and social concern, and in institutional styles separate both national policy environments. The reasons for the 'visibility' of these differences are yet to be explored, but a preliminary hypothesis may lie with how national political cultures magnify the political economy of production and transformation at the point of consumption. Should this hypothesis be confirmed, it would support the argument that an interrelationship does exist between the apparently independent policy domains of production, transformation, and consumption, and that therefore, an integrated food policy approach becomes possible.

I recognise that generalities cannot be drawn from only two case studies, and that further research work is necessary to confirm some of the arguments I have presented here. Particularly, further research could examine how and why other continental European countries like Italy, Germany, and Spain have retained distinctive national food cultures. This would shed further light on my proposition that the *why* of the representation and organisation of food is an outcome of the *where* (i.e. relationship to the global food order), and the *when* (i.e. under which food regime the transition to a market economy occurred).

To recap this long and sinuous account, this work suggests that two forces are at play in determining the development of food provisioning in advanced economies. On the one hand, we have the initial processes of commodification, set in motion by the political dynamics of national bargaining, that lay out path-dependent patterns and sequences. Of course, significant contingent events may also have disrupted the course of development to another path. On the other hand, maintaining an internal logic to the organisation of food provisioning requires a certain degree of national autonomy, itself dictated by position within the global order.

I propose to conclude this dissertation by ascertaining how the propositions that the historical determinants and timing of integration into the capitalist project, and the level of resilience of cultural patrimony, have played a significant role in shaping the contemporary provisioning of food. These insights can be applied and used in further case studies, particularly in places outside the European social and political contexts. Just as future research may bring further analytical insights as to whether other European countries follow the typology of France's food policy proposed by this research, applying the analytical framework to a developed economy with *significantly different* historical legacies may test the propositions I made earlier about the political and social origins and the causal mechanisms that allow policy reproduction. To take this final step, I have chosen to explore how the development of the food policy logic in the former settler state of Australia dealt with a different kind of 'origin story' to those of Britain and France and where strong policy transitions have occurred. Drawing from the Australian story seeks to shed further analytical light by asking — what does it mean to have an origin story that involved the displacement of an indigenous culture and the appropriation of the land by an imperial power? And, how can we better understand the interplay between national autonomy and food policy trajectories, particularly when the key element (i.e. system of imperial preferences) structuring the original policy development suddenly evaporates (i.e. when the UK joined the EEC)? Just as Britain used food to further its hegemony over the industrialising world, and France used food to resist global pressures, the next chapter explores how the conceptualisation of food and its policy environment developed in the Australian political economy, characterised by no previous attachment to the land or strong food traditions, and the absence of any regional institutional protection.

CHAPTER 7 – THE AUSTRALIAN STORY

INTRODUCTION

To understand how and why the organisation of food differs across advanced economies, I have advanced that the coordination of food provisioning is conditioned by two determining historical developments — on the one hand, the national position within the global order and on the other, the strength of national food traditions and localism. Both previous case studies have shown how the patterns of class relations and social structures embodied at the origins of the national capitalist democracy, have signified distinct pathways in the development of the food economy and therefore the logic of commodification. Just as Britain's swift transition to capitalism obliterated most forms of national food culture, France delayed embrace of the capitalist model maintained and reinforced food with a sense of place and customs. To extend the range of cases to which the analytical framework can be applied and tested, I have chosen to examine the development of causal mechanisms against a non-European context. Involving sufficient contrasts with the other two case studies, the Australian context is an opportunity to demonstrate how the food policy regime can be applied. However, the Australian case study is intended only as a partial one, designed to explore two questions — how did the ascendancy of national capitalism play out in a context where sense of place and local traditions had been historically weak? And, can national autonomy mean different things at different times and follow a trajectory of change that diverges from theoretical expectations? This preliminary examination adds on both counts — the “origin story” of capitalism and the national autonomy within the global food order — much to our understanding of why cross-national differences may exist and how they are reproduced over time.

Since questions of ‘origin’ and ‘reproduction’ are central to the discussion, the logic of ‘dependent’ development provides an analytical background against which the development of Australia's food capitalism can be examined. Although it is not my purpose here to discuss in detail the concept of ‘settler capitalism’, I wish to acknowledge two major contributions on the matter. Denoon (1983), interested in the nexus colonialism/capitalism, suggests that settler societies embody a hybrid form of capitalism that has internalised the logic of dependency to retain the prosperity expected of their European heritage. McMichael (1984), focussing on the interplay between the state and the international system, argues

that settler capitalism is an outcome of their world-historical context and that settler capitalism is a by-product of a world capitalist regime. Following both Denoon and McMichael, we can see that the development of Australian 'settler capitalism' points to two lines of enquiry for our discussion about food capitalism and its influence on the representation and meanings of food. The first point relates to the 'origin story' or in other words, to the social and political dynamics involved in the transitioning to a capitalist economy and how these may have influenced the formation and maintenance of a national food culture. The second point relates to the influence exerted by history and the historical aspirations of Australian capitalism over the construction of national food capitalism.

To explore how patterns of class relations and social structures (the 'origin' story) have shaped the initial development of food provisioning, this chapter examines the implications of organising the provisioning of food in a context of nascent capitalist logic but void of any prior attachment to the land or local food culture. The absence of a large peasantry and culinary traditions eased the embrace of a capitalistic mode of food production and freed the white settlers' society from any historically set collective representation of food. Although values of agrarianism developed and endured over time, the rapid commodification of appropriated land, a large urban population, and ideas of progress that considered subsistence farming as outdated, set Australia on a path of becoming an export-oriented economy, giving no chance for any strong form of food localism and culinary tradition to develop. The Australian experience is significantly distinctive from those of continental Europe and France in particular, as it began with indigenous dispossession followed by a rapid integration of agriculture into the capitalist project.

How has the original foundation anchored in an imperialist globalisation logic determined successive developments? Although the rhetoric of imperialism helped foster an Australian nationalism, that was sometimes in conflict with the empire and sometimes assimilated to it (Trainor, 1994), the settler dependency logic required Australia to undergo a rapid commodification process. This in turn fostered a rationale of export-oriented development of a narrow range of agricultural commodities and conditioned the formation of food relations. Although Australia's national autonomy from Britain was expressed successively through political self-governance, withdrawal from free trade arrangements, the adoption of protectionist policies, and then ultimately economic liberalisation, it was unable to construct a representation of food outside a commodification logic because the country remained a prisoner of its historical export-oriented rationale.

As to how the Australian provisioning of food differs from those of the United Kingdom and France, the account provided here indicates that Australian food capitalism shares several features with its British counterpart, particularly in the realms of transformation/distribution and consumption. Of course, the Australian case reveals many

differences in ideological principles and degrees of institutionalisation when compared with the French context. The consistency of principles, whether in values or institutional organisation across the three policy subsystems of production, transformation/distribution, and consumption, suggests that Australia's food policy regime is more implicit than the one of UK. The implicit emphasis placed on the coordination of food policy in Australia is an indication that low levels of policy integration are to be expected.

The chapter is organised in three sections. It begins by examining the distinctive form that food capitalism took in Australia at the onset of settlement to retrace the 'origin' story of Australia's food capitalism and the influence it borne over its later development. To bring further insight to the interplay between national autonomy and the organisation of food, the second section of this chapter shows that despite increasing economic and political independence, Australia remained prisoner of its settler economy legacies and that, in the absence of culinary traditions and practices, trade and industrial dynamics shaped Australian foodways. The third section concludes this chapter by giving an overview of the organisation of food in contemporary Australia.

7.1 THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MODERN AUSTRALIAN PROVISIONING OF FOOD

Even if the Australian colonies were markedly different from one another, an initial dependence on imports and the emergence of an export economy without any prior form of rural development ensured the ascendancy of ports and their cities, and with it, the forces of urbanisation (Rowland, 1977). As Frost (1998:45) remarks, although the Australian capitals were not all founded for the same purpose, they soon developed a common commercial function as part of the world economy. Just as the initial gravitation of economic and demographic activities towards coastal centres was also entertained by what Blainey (1971) calls the 'tyranny of distance', the emergence of industrialisation and manufacturing permanently set up the urbanised patterns of Australian society. Although urban growth had stabilised between 1890 and 1939 because of droughts, World War I, and the Great Depression, more than half of the population lived in urban centres and only a third of the population was employed in primary industries (Rowland, 1977). As Frost (1998) remarks, one of the paradoxes of the nineteenth century Australian economy was that national wealth was derived from the extraction of resources located in rural areas, the population lived in towns and worked for service industries, creating a divide between city and countryside. The city was viewed by country people as an unproductive place of consumption which used political advantage to drain resources away from the countryside. These tensions led rapidly to political demands for increased government support for rural development, and by the early years of the twentieth century, most state governments had adopted policies of rural

development while farming and conservative interests became more organised with the creation of state-based Country Parties.

The agricultural history of Australia has been about finding those high value commodities that would be produced for large markets (industrialising Britain), using low levels of labour (since wages were high) but requiring large areas of cheap land (since Australia had plenty of it) (Davidson, 1981:67). Since late-nineteenth century Australian farmers were not self-sufficient peasants but specialist and market-minded producers, and by the 1870s their agricultural activity came to be rapidly oriented to the export of commodities¹⁷⁴. At the same time, domestic demand developed around questions of supply, distribution, and price. Despite a significant degree of political autonomy from the imperial power, Australia's economic development, highly dependent from the trade relations with Britain, led to a rapid process of commodification of the appropriated land. This development raised of course not only the agrarian question in the Australian context (i.e. how land was to be productively organised), but equally the issue of economic dependency and its consequences over the long-term organisation of food provisioning. As McMichael (1984) argues, the land reforms of the 1860s that instigated the commodification and improvement of Crown land, opened the gates to a capitalist agriculture. In the absence of a peasant class and no pre-capitalist attachment to the land, the production of food came to be valued primarily for its market relations. However, 'the early irony of settler capitalism in Australia was that it was capitalist but not industrial' (Beilharz & Cox, 2007:121) and as such, Australia's capitalist mode of production embraced specialisation in export staples to serve export interests and state's revenue streams (Denoon, 1983).

The agricultural history of Australia has also been about Australian governments having engaged in agricultural affairs, whether from early settlement times with the establishment of farms to address questions of self-sufficiency or through to twentieth century projects to develop rural and agricultural infrastructure. Even if agrarianism has remained a strong thread in Australian political rhetoric over time (Berry et al., 2016), it is important to note that meanings and representations have differed from those held in Europe, and in France in particular. Whereas the valorisation of farming in the Australian context related primarily to an economically efficient agricultural activity, farming in France was more often affiliated with notions of 'way of life' anchored in local practices. This latter understanding has been further reinforced by a continuing governmental attention in balancing economic activity across the national territory, strengthening the instrumentality of agriculture in meeting these policy objectives.

Symons (2007) reminds us that at its infancy, Australian food culture was anchored in 'Englishness' (2007:18) that had inherited from the 'nation of shopkeepers' (Britain) a diet of

¹⁷⁴ The development of railway systems and shipping in the 1850s, and refrigerated transportation from the early 1880s expanded Australia's opportunities for agricultural exports.

flour, sugar, and tea (2007:23), but the emerging success of the grazing industry turned Australia into a nation of meat eaters (2007:28). Given that domestic gardening and subsistence farming had been discouraged from the beginning, considered out-dated by nineteenth century British elite, there was no prospect for the Australian producer to turn peasant. As Bannerman (2011) documents, early Australian society regarded food as a question of sustenance and not as an expression of cultural tradition, suggesting that the meaning of food shifted from necessity to commodity very rapidly.

A history without peasants combined with a strong urbanisation led to the rapid adoption of capitalistic modes of food production and made white Australian settlers reliant on manufactured food for nourishment (Symons, 2007), annihilating any opportunity to connect food to geographical provenance or cultural meaning. Just as the need of urban dwellers for food, clothing and shelter fuelled a rise of agricultural productivity, it equally stimulated the emergence of the processing of food and drinks. As milling, bottling and canning developed, food factories began to manufacture biscuits, jams, canned fruits, tomato sauce, peanut butter, confectionary, ice cream and frozen meat, just to name a few, and by the early 1900s, international food companies began to set their Australian operations. In sum, the settler capitalist foundations shaped the organisation of food provisioning around an export-oriented production and a local demand met through a rapidly rising industrialisation of food, contrasting sharply with France or other European countries that had maintained greater traditions of artisanal food making. Furthermore, food consumption was never considered as a matter of cultural agency nor did it ever become a way to assert national influence over international trade negotiations.

7.2 NATIONAL AUTONOMY AND THE PROVISIONING OF FOOD

This section seeks to establish how the logic of the founding moments of Australia's food capitalism has been reproduced over time, considering that Australia gained progressively national autonomy from the immediate dictates of a hegemonic global food order. Just as Chapter 5 has shown how France could resist international pressures and reinvent state-society relations to suit its national cultural and socio-political contexts throughout the first and second food regimes (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989), this section places its attention on how Australia negotiated its historical political and economic dependency to Britain and the implications that had for the organisation of the national food provisioning system.

Australia's national autonomy was politically and economically interlocked with its commitment to nation-building, and was exercised successively through protectionism,

industry assistance, and economic liberalisation. However, national autonomy does not necessarily equate to freedom from historical impositions and legacies. Australia's food capitalism commenced and continued to be organised around functions of agricultural commodities exporting, and with the emergence of a national industry, transformed and processed foods became the staple of the Australian diet. In fact, one may argue that the formation of the Australian food identity was, until recently, associated with branded industrially processed food like Vegemite or Milo, reflecting the significance of the political economy of production over national food identity and consumption patterns. The intensification of the industrialisation of food transformation and distribution in the post-war period led to the acquisition of local food manufacturers by larger national or multinational firms. If for most of the twentieth century, Australian agriculture received support and funding, regional development was planned while protectionism sheltered producers from international marketplace (Lawrence, 1987), a radical paradigmatic shift to realign Australian interests occurred once the UK joined the EEC. This final step in declaring Australia's national autonomy from the once hegemonic Britain embodied the drastic move to a fully liberalised economy, embracing agricultural and industrial deregulation that fostered dynamics of market concentration. This section also shows that the rupture from the post-war protectionist policy environment was made possible by the critical alignment of ideas and interests within an easily-dismountable institutional architecture.

In the absence of a national food culture at the onset of the Australian capitalist project, to what extent do 'food regimes' dynamics shape the collective representation of food? Would the apparent political and economic autonomies from Britain be sufficient to let an Australian food culture to develop and, with it, a policy environment that reflected the social relations of food? I will argue that national autonomy was not a sufficient condition, and despite an increasing economic and political independence, Australia remained prisoner of its settler economy legacies. When examined through the lens of nutrition value relations (Dixon, 2009), foodways in Australia appear to have been shaped by trade and industrial dynamics rather than by gastronomy or cultural traditions, confirming the importance of national culinary traditions and the practices of localism over the historical development of food provisioning.

IMPERIAL PREFERENCE SYSTEM AND PROTECTIONIST AUSTRALIA

The common commercial policy for the British empire had been one based on the principle of free trade to which all colonies were expected to conform until a crisis in British capitalism became obvious in the 1880s. As the processes of devolution of authority and self-governing unfolded, Australia and other settlement colonies extended their control over

trade policies to progressively introduce customs duties on imports, legitimised on grounds of revenue-raising. In a supposedly free trade empire, protective tariffs were being erected by colonial governments while in Britain, the preferred strategy remained one of free trade with the consolidation of imperial territory. However, even if Australia's leadership saw empire trading and the imperial preference system as a way of securing British markets, imperial preference was not to be conceded at the expense of Australian industry. A protectionist movement had grown since the 1880s from the working-class campaigns against unemployment (Trainor, 1994:53), and as Sullivan (2001:40) notes, '[t]he empire represented the best way both of consolidating Australia's economic position in a trading bloc, given 'hostile' competition from outside, and of retaliating against the external trade threat'. Tariff Reformers in Britain, led by Chamberlain, were defeated in their campaign of 1903-1906 for imperial preference, therefore ending possible tensions with Britain about Australia's goals of industrial development. It took the changed circumstances of the early 1930s in the world economy to prompt the reconsideration of British free trade policy.

The introduction of tariffs to protect nascent industries reflected early visions to put 'Australia first' ahead of British interests. The shifting position of the Australian economy and the rise of newly industrialised nations of Europe and North America, meant that limiting market opportunities to Britain was becoming less appealing, and a preference system was restrictive for an export-oriented nation. However, as Sullivan (2001:57) reminds us, there was genuine pro-British sentiment amongst many federal politicians up to 1914 with little desire to alienate Britain. Since continental European markets were closed to Australian agricultural commodities, the expansion of British demand was one of the key avenues for export growth. Australian nationalism had become compatible with continued Empire membership, particularly for its close economic relations.

By 1929, protection of the urban import-competing manufacturing sector was formally accepted as an effective means of securing a higher standard of living for a larger population, and by then Australia had one of the most protected economies in the world. By switching Australian demand away from imports towards domestically produced goods, the state aimed at creating high wage employment, fostering population growth by attracting immigrants, and encouraging capital investment. Although protectionism may have been critiqued by some, it was nevertheless an instrument for nation building found in a political compromise between an urban-protectionist middle class representing business interests, and the rising labour movement, in which the state played an extensive role (Fenna, 2012). As Fenna (2012) remarks, not only the willingness of the state to engage directly with the economy set Australia apart from Britain, but what made Australia stand out was the strength of its labour movement.

The reader will have already noted how differently the Australian protectionism compares with the French approach, and how state engagement with the national economy set Australia apart from Britain. Just as France's protectionism was used as a buffer mechanism to shelter a newly enfranchised peasant agriculture threatened by world markets, in the Australian context, protectionism was not to shelter a pre-capitalism peasantry class nor was it to protect any form of regional food culture. Instead, it was about nation building and industry assistance.

If Australian protectionism took the form of an alliance between manufacturers (capital) and workers (labour), non-tariff measures like subsidies and quotas were the prevailing forms of state assistance to primary producers exposed to global commodity markets. As in most developed countries in the post Second World War period, Australia's agricultural policy paradigm was one of state assistance designed to stabilise producer incomes, to improve efficiency, and to regulate domestic and export marketing (Coleman et al., 1996). However, as Botterill (2005:209) notes, policy decisions were made on an ad hoc basis in close consultation with producer groups. Because competition amongst commodity groups prevented the development of a single representative voice for Australian farming communities, a variety of policy instruments were used across different agricultural sectors usually in response to requests from industry.

Although agrarian values developed rapidly, these values were not a reflection of a pre-existing relationship to the land, but rather a means to build a national identity. Without existing pre-capitalist peasant groups, not only no regional food cultures developed but more importantly, agrarian values were dissociated from food culture and attached instead to manufactured foods. The appropriation of agrarian values to commercial ends combined with the rapid adoption of capitalistic modes of food production made white Australian settlers reliant on meat and manufactured food for nourishment (Symons, 2007). If the legacy of the first imperial food regime had turned Australia into a meat-eating country, what Dixon (2009:324) labels the 'master nutrient' (animal protein), the consolidation of the processed food industry during the second food regime instilled in the collective memory a culinary identity associated with some iconic brands of processed food such as Vegemite, Milo, Arnott's Biscuits, Rosella Tomato Sauce, or Foster's Lager — brands with no specific association to geographical and cultural provenance. This early endorsement of processed food as representing the national food identity may explain some of the trends in contemporary food consumption. Over time, geographical provenance (i.e. Australian grown or produced) gained importance but only for questions of food safety and quality. The Australian consumer had to look beyond geography and borrow from other cultural influences to create what has become the modern Australian cuisine. Whether this development has become an expression of multi-culturalism or a way to fill the culinary

'vacuum' is open for discussion, but in any case, I contend that the legacy of processed food has endured and still influences Australian food choices.

AN UNSETTLED SETTLER STATE AND HOW AGRICULTURAL POLICY CHANGED

The restructuring of the Australian agri-food system happened when the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973, effectively excluding Australia from its major agricultural market (Dibden et al., 2009; Bjorkhaug & Richards, 2009). A decade ahead of most other developed countries, Australia underwent a profound reorientation in its food trade, away from traditional European markets towards emerging Asian markets. As an export-dependent country unable to compete against subsidised European and American competitors, Australia pursued a path of open competition on the world market through elimination of tariffs and production subsidies. The liberalisation of Australian agriculture not only sprung from this major economic debate over trade strategy, but was carried out concurrently to the dismantling of manufacturing protection by the then Labor government in the early 1990s. This finally resulted in the break-down of regulations in domestic agriculture (Pritchard, 2005a).

How can we explain this sudden enthusiasm for market liberalisation within political and policy circles? After all, classical liberalism had limited early influence on Australia's twentieth century development. In the early phases of colonial settlement, governments had been interventionist and had introduced protectionist measures to shield nascent industries. Similarly, agricultural assistance was delivered either from a variety of assistance packages or from more indirect instruments such as state-sponsored collective marketing bodies (grower-controlled boards). Although protectionism had been questioned since the late 1960s, the radicalism of policy directions that set in place the rapid deregulation of the Australian agricultural sector and the abandonment of any serious rural development policy, can only be explained through the powerful ideological alignment between political and policy circles (including farm organisations interest groups) (Cockfield & Botterill, 2012; Botterill, 2005; Pritchard, 2005a). This institutional arrangement offered no strong barriers to reform.

The rhetoric of market liberalisation was justified nationally on grounds of economic efficiency but more importantly on the notion of comparative advantage as an alternative for smaller economies to compete with large trading blocs like the EU and the US (Cockfield & Botterill, 2012; Pritchard, 2005a). In fact, the objective was to go beyond national significance and set policy prescriptions for global agriculture (Pritchard, 2005a). Just as most policy observers agree that the support of farming interests was pivotal to the implementation of these reforms, this support was only possible when the Australian National

Farmers Federation (NFF) was formed as the peak organisation and single voice of farming interests. This organisation included large commodity exporters that favoured a deregulated market to improve export competitiveness. The broader institutional environment also facilitated the retrenchment of state-assistance policies, as most of those had been implemented through indirect and ad hoc mechanisms that were easily dismantled. After all, as Coleman (2001) suggests, it was easier for centre-left parties to push through changes of this nature as they were not traditionally aligned with farming interests. This was especially the case where these changes presented some political gains. Pritchard (2005a:9) goes a step further to advance that the agenda of deregulation was a way for the Hawke Labor government to dislodge any conservative influence from policymaking. In other words, political bargaining was at the root of the drastic re-orientation in Australian economic history that involved the conversion of Australian agricultural policy to neoliberal ideals. In sharp contrast to France and most probably because of its origins as a settler economy, Australia was once again to embrace international economic interdependence: the formation of the Cairns Group under Australia's instigation in 1986 was a testimony to Australia's activism to trade liberalisation and international economic interdependence.

While the radical transition of the 1980s has shifted the national agricultural policy agenda from 'protected development' to the support of market liberalisation practices, values of agrarianism have remained high in public sentiment and in political rhetoric (Berry et al., 2016). However, the value set that underpinned Australian agrarianism have changed with time. When mapping values of Australian agricultural policies, Botterill (2004) shows how the transition to market liberalisation brought out a new mix of policy ideas combining limited state intervention together with an enduring set of agrarian values that kept asserting the importance of agriculture in the Australian society. How can we explain the concomitance of strong agrarian sentiments with the liberalisation of agriculture? I argue that the representation and value given to agriculture around notions of commodity production and economic efficiency explain the persistence of agrarian sentiments in a climate of economic liberalisation. Finally, as Berry et al. (2016) quantitative empirical research suggests, the form of agrarianism or 'countrymindedness' has evolved in recent times to reflect the tension arising from the workings of a liberalised agricultural sector¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁵ Berry et al. (2016) highlight the environmental component in modern Australian agrarianism, extending a caring responsibility to farmers of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation when opposing from the degradation caused by other extractive industries.

DISMANTLING MANUFACTURING PROTECTION

There is no doubt that the agricultural sector offered a strong contextual background against which the dismantling of manufacturing protection debate was to unfold. The restructuring of the Australian economy around neoliberal principles set off a wave of corporate mergers, especially in sectors where national deregulation took place to accommodate the internationalisation of production and financial capital (such as the dairy industry). The climate of deregulation not only fostered the growth of multinational and transnational food companies' operations on Australian grounds, but also resulted in higher levels of market concentration and foreign ownership.

Domestic government controls of food production and sales for the purpose of public health and safety have a long history. A national food regulation system was set in place by the early 1990s with the creation of the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA), which later became Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). Just as the FSANZ develops and reviews standards pertaining to food product composition, production, labelling, and promotion to ensure public health and safety, it is also concerned with providing a regulatory framework to foster international harmonisation. While food regulation in Australia relies on co-operative federalism between States and the Federal government¹⁷⁶, it has also adopted a partnership regulatory model with business groups for more flexible, less prescriptive, and co-regulatory policy solutions (Lofgren, 2001:84).

The creation of the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) in 1998 has been a particularly important moment for the Australian food industry in engaging with food regulation and policy circles. Signalling a professionally organised representation of business interests, it allowed the industry to become an active participant in elaborating state industrial strategy. As Lofgren (2001:88) remarks, 'the boundaries between public and private interests and organisational structures are now remarkably fluid'. In line with the newly adopted neoliberal rhetoric, successive governments have continued to emphasise their role in industrial development as one to facilitate and support rather than regulate (Lofgren, 2001). However, despite this public discourse, targeted industry policy programs have never ceased, and the food industry keeps receiving state support for many types of industry initiatives. The question of indirect protectionism has also been raised of late, around some anti-dumping measures adopted by successive governments for imports of steel, plastics, or food products.

In sum, the organisation of contemporary food provisioning in Australia can be traced back to the contingent event of UK's membership to the European Union in 1973 that set in motion a radical change of ideological and institutional patterns. In many ways, the

¹⁷⁶ States and Territories retain responsibility for monitoring and enforcing (often through local governments) food regulation.

organisation of Australian food capitalism resembles the much debated third 'corporate' food regime, with the growth of corporate power, particularly that of supermarkets, intensification of production, global and direct sourcing, financialisation of the food system, and new production-consumption relationships.

7.3 THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN FOOD PROVISIONING

To conclude this discussion, this section seeks to capture the salient characteristics of the Australian food economy and briefly discuss whether the food policy settings in contemporary Australia reveal a form of embedded logic across the three policy subsystems. The contemporary Australian food provisioning is organised around policy logics that are production oriented, that value competitiveness and where consumption is understood as a question of personal responsibility. Policy interventions across the three policy subsystems are organised in an implicit manner, calling on distant macro-economic mechanisms rather than more directly food-related policy instruments to coordinate national food affairs. To this day, Australia does not have a national food plan.

AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURE – A COMPETITIVE PRODUCTIVISM

Today, Australia relies on 'competitive productivism' — unsubsidised, highly productive agriculture to win markets (Dibden et al., 2009) — and as such, opposes any form of trade protection which would undermine the ability of Australian farmers to prosper from the sale of their commodities on the world markets. As an export-oriented economy of a neoliberal political orientation, the institutional fabric surrounding the operation of the sector is decentralised across the two levels of state and federal government, and is primarily focused on trade-related questions rather than support for family farming and farm business. Policy interventions in this domain are made on an ad hoc basis, as the overarching strategy tends to be one of distancing the state from the policy problems. In support of the neoliberal economics as the preferred approach to agricultural policymaking, farming interests are generally aligned with policy values and institutional architecture.

TRANSFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRIES – MARKET CONCENTRATION

Historically a low-tech sector, the food transformation industry has undergone significant changes in production structures bringing new capital-intensive technologies, and commercial practices to adapt to an environment increasingly driven towards market liberalisation. These trends have oriented the development of the Australian food transformation industry towards market concentration and high foreign ownership. Despite little changes in the level of employment and revenues, the number of businesses involved in the transformation of food has dropped by almost 40% between 2011 and 2015. In 2015, there were about 6,500 firms, of which just over 80% of these businesses were small outfits employing less than 20 people. For the same year, just under 20% of the largest food processing firms (those employing more than 20 people) accounted for 70% of the industry turnover. The share of foreign involvement in the food industry has been steadily increasing over time. Apart from bread, pasta, rice, and small goods production that still retains some Australian ownership, many other processed food products are manufactured by non-Australian companies. Foreign ownership is particularly noticeable in fresh dairy products (including cheese and butter), canned fish, canned fruits, frozen vegetables, sugar, or biscuits¹⁷⁷. As the national food transformation industry has gradually been transformed through processes of global sourcing, imports of processed food have also continued to rise, particularly for processed fruits, vegetables and seafood, bakery products, soft drinks, and oils and fats.

With a workforce of about 200,000, around half the agricultural or the distribution (retailing) sectors, the food manufacturing industry is the largest manufacturing sub-sector in Australia. Although the bulk of the industry consists of small business entities, governmental policy towards small business is one essentially of 'distance' (Jones, 2006; 2011). Following a logic that links the success of small businesses to the strong performance of large businesses, state policy and political attention tend to be placed on large corporate interests.

Australia has one of the most concentrated retail food sectors in the developed world. Two firms control a significant share (more than 70%) of food retail activity (OECD, 2013:49). Although food retailing employs about as many people as agriculture, its impressive revenue base commands much policy attention. Similar to the transformation sector, a political culture of 'distance' applies also to the retailing sector. Given that Australian business and economic policy circles believe that market concentration achieves greater efficiency (Jones, 2011), the Australian competition policy regime shares many characteristics with its British counterpart, where large companies enjoy direct access to the policy table to set the terms of the regulatory environment in which they operate. As Jones (2011:70) argues, much of the

¹⁷⁷ According to a report 'Foreign Investment and Australian Agriculture' prepared by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) in 2012.

small/large business relationships in Australia is a form of 'structured exploitation', particularly in the retail sector where large retailers receive cross-subsidisation as 'anchor tenants' of large shopping centres, from the multitude of other small retailers.

In a typical Anglo-Saxon tradition, the focus of the Australian state in matters of regulation places emphasis on 'market failure' regulation rather than on the broader notion of 'public interest' commonly used in Continental Europe (Ogus, 2002). Given that regulatory policies tend to be worked out with the regulated industries on a consensual basis, the AFGC has become the business voice on matters of regulation and the sponsor of several self-regulatory codes of conduct on behalf of the food industry.

FOOD AND THE AUSTRALIAN CONSUMER

The Australian policy approach to consumption, whether in terms of food choices or food access, is one that fully embraces individual responsibility. Australian policy initiatives to guide food choices are broadly limited to questions of nutrition. Nonetheless, as Dixon and Isaacs's (2013) qualitative research indicates, patterns of 'mainstream' food consumption (in opposition to 'alternative' food practices) tend to gravitate towards cheap and tasty food from 'anywhere' particularly when food competed with other necessities. As the authors comment, just as sustainability and environmental consideration do not constitute important values to households, government-endorsed nutrition guidelines have had little influence in food choices. The national representation of food that linked the national food identity to branded processed foods still holds significant credence within mainstream consumption, confirming the dominance of the normative logics of production-based interests over the collective representation of food.

In line with values of self-reliance and individual responsibility, questions of household food insecurity are framed as issues of individual competencies to organise and make appropriate decisions and do not receive any state-endorsed policy response. In a similar manner to the UK, the Australian private sector has filled the gap to respond with food relief efforts.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Why and how the Australian organisation of food provisioning differ from those of France and Britain? The argument presented here suggest that the '*why*' element can be answered by the '*origin*' story and the national position within the global food order. With no

pre-capitalist attachment to the land, without any pre-existing traditional food culture and no historical connection to most forms of subsistence economy, the development of Australia's food provisioning followed a capitalist logic that conferred food primarily with values articulated around market relations. The rapid adoption of a capitalist mode of production forced on Australia by its dependency to Britain as a guaranteed export market, gave no opportunity for the country to develop any strong form of food localism and tradition. Later, as this economic dependency was severed, a radical shift to a neoliberal-driven project was the result, significantly transforming how food was to be produced, distributed, and consumed.

As to '*how*' Australian food capitalism compares to France and Britain, the analytical prism of 'food policy regime' provides some insight. The adoption of neoliberal rhetoric has transformed the organisation of Australian food provisioning from a very explicit state-coordinated policy regime to one with implicit features. Today, just as the agricultural sector is export and production-oriented, fuelling narratives of 'national competitiveness', notions of personal responsibility and self-reliance also guide the policy environment of food consumption. In other words, Australia takes an implicit policy approach to the organisation of food provisioning and calls on external frames of reference such as national competitiveness and individual responsibility, to organise policy responses on an ad hoc basis. These distancing strategies from policy problems combined with a weak institutional framework suggest a political culture that support high levels of food commodification by providing low levels of policy integration across the issue of food.

CONCLUSION

Inspired by Lang et al.'s (2009) argument that food governance in most advanced economies fails to respond to the mounting challenges of environmental degradation, climate variability, social inequalities, and over-stretched public health systems, the motivation for this thesis was to ask whether some advanced industrialised societies were better prepared than others in the face of these mounting global challenges. Even if most democratic governments continue to claim similar objectives of sustainability for their respective food provisioning systems, a brief comparative overview reveals that the organisation of food in Western countries follows qualitatively different logics. Acknowledging these cross-national variations, I set myself the task in this thesis, to advance our understanding of why food provisioning was organised differently, what was at the origin of these differences, the nature of these differences and, what allowed these differences to be maintained.

I carried out the task by applying the novel 'policy regime' construct (the 3'I's) to establish how the degrees of commodification that underpin respective national food policy environments, influence policy integration. The analytical framework was applied to two contrasting primary case studies — the United Kingdom and France — to highlight how differences in conceptualising food led to distinct policy outcomes. In recognition that the UK and France shared common contextual and historical forces under which they developed as capitalist democracies, the analysis expanded its reach by applying the framework to a country that presented distinctively different historical and socio-political legacies — Australia. In this final chapter, I set out my conclusions about how and why food policy is conceptualised differently across borders. These conclusions derive from the comprehensive discussion in Chapter 6 that presents preliminary findings from the two primary case studies, which were complemented by insights drawn from the Australian story in Chapter 7. This chapter begins by addressing the relevance of policy convergence and path dependency to the development of national food policy, and continues by presenting the research contributions in explaining why and how the organisation of food provisioning differ across borders.

POLICY DIVERGENCE AND PATH DEPENDENCY

This research confirms that little evidence exists to suggest a convergence of national food policies to one, unique, model of food capitalism. Although this study has captured the changes that have indisputably occurred in the selected countries, it has also revealed how the national organisation of food remains anchored in distinct policy logics, which appear to be durable even in the face of new pressures. Even if on the surface there are similarities of cross-national trends, such as the decline of farm holdings over time, market concentration in the transformation and distribution industries, or even rising levels of obesity, this study finds that these changes are mediated by different national policy logics across policy subsystems, resulting in divergent trajectories of change and social outcomes. This research suggests that globalisation cannot be reduced to a set of deterministic forces; rather, nation-states retain agency in coordinating food provisioning, and in fact, the liberalisation of the institutions of organised food capitalism takes different forms and proceeds at different speeds.

Although the question of transnational ideational and economic forces on national policy autonomy was not at the centre of this research project, this study may however present some opportunities for future reflections on the transformative capacity of the state (Coleman & Chiasson, 2002) at integrating these new dynamics. For example, future comparative enquiry could examine the growing role of financial investment on commodities, agricultural land and agriculture-based activity markets on national food policies. As recent literature (see the works of Clapp (2014;2009), McMichael (2012), Burch and Lawrence (2009), and Mittal (2009)) suggests, deregulation has brought out new actors and new 'distancing' dynamics within agrifood supply chains that make the political context for opposition especially challenging. At the same time as financialisation opens new opportunities for corporate accumulation in the global food system, and as Clapp (2014:798) notes, 'some of its specific dynamics shape the political context for resistance', suggesting that financialisation adds another layer of divergent policy response to the organisation and operation of national agrifood systems.

Furthermore, this study confirms that developments of national food provisioning present strong elements of path dependency in which contingent events have set into motion institutional patterns of deterministic properties. In the case of France, the organisation of food capitalism was contingent on the granting in 1848 of electoral franchise to a large rural population, explaining why agriculture became a national political project. Ever since, changes to the organisation of food provisioning have been gradual and have not set France on a drastically different course. History has played out differently for the UK and Australia, when the membership of the UK to the EU in 1973, set in motion major changes in

institutional patterns in both countries. UK's agriculture was to become 'exceptional' under the EU CAP and granted protection from the neoliberal agenda of the successive Thatcher's governments, while Australia responded by embracing the neoliberal project that led to the deregulation of the national economy. This study also confirms the significance of ideas and values in shaping the political economy of food, highlighting how national political culture infuses the ways countries proceed to accomplish their objectives.

The explicit attention of this research on institutions (when examining the coordination of food) confirms their significance in mediating political struggles and ideological changes when adopting, implementing or even dismantling policies. Just as the UK case study has confirmed that the resistance of the agricultural sector to the neoliberal ideological principles was predicated on the 'sheltering' function of the supranational institutional arrangement of the EU CAP, a 'patchy' and dismountable institutional fabric made the rapid restructure of the Australian agricultural sector along neoliberal ideas possible.

WHY CROSS-NATIONAL DIFFERENCES?

This research advances that two major influences have determined the developmental logic of national food provisioning and help us to understand the 'why' of cross-national differences — the extent to which national capitalism gained ascendancy over traditions of localism, and the extent to which global logics influenced and/or undermined forms of national autonomy. Not unsurprisingly, the resolution of the agrarian question and the class structures of agrarian societies in place at the onset of economic modernisation have had a determining influence over the development and coordination of the national provisioning of food. Food systems that developed out of the need to negotiate politically and socially the extent of the commodification of food provisioning, came to be underpinned by very different sets of ideological and institutional arrangements than those where the integration of agriculture into the capitalist mode of production did not find much initial resistance.

The '*early*' form of British capitalism and a '*delayed*' form of democratic representation gave rise to a food provisioning system anchored in the cash nexus and an understanding of the function of food as primarily material sustenance to reproduce labour. The '*delayed*' form of French capitalism combined with an '*early*' democratisation gave rise to values of agrarianism, and a suite of protectionist institutions that framed the role of food not only as a function for subsistence but also as an affiliation with regional heritage and traditions, material pleasure and conviviality. As both Chapter 4 (the United Kingdom) and Chapter 5 (France) demonstrate, historical variations in class alliances and class power

distinguish the ideological and institutional underpinnings of respective policy subsystems (whether agriculture or politics of consumption) and their interrelations. The Australian case study has also confirmed that in the absence of pre-capitalism food traditions or attachment to the land, the developmental logic conferred food primarily with values articulated around market relations.

Relative national autonomy from global logics casts a pivotal role in organising food provisioning at a national scale. France's case study clearly brings out how state agency can be exercised in a context of relative political and economic autonomy. This thesis shows how France was able to resist global rules, to follow its own logic of development underpinned by agrarian and protectionist principles, and engineer the European project in the pursuit of national independence from hegemonic ruling. Although Australia exercised its political and economic autonomy from Britain in successive waves of economic policies, the foundations of its national food capitalism, anchored in an imperialist globalisation logic, fostered a logic of export-oriented development, which conditioned the formation of national food relations. Acknowledging that the Australian story is peculiar if compared to examples of indigenous capitalism of most continental European countries, it is, however, important to remind ourselves that a vast portion of the world has experienced like Australia, the forces of colonialism and imperialism. In this light, the food regime theory provides a very accurate story for a majority of national experiences.

How different are these national policy environments? National political traditions and preferences over the role of agriculture, regulatory traditions, and styles over the development of food industries, and collective representation of food and its consumption, are the key dimensions where cross-national differences have been noted. In agricultural affairs, the UK's national rhetoric of agricultural efficiency combining conservation efforts to protect rural landscapes contrasts with the French emphasis on small-scale family farming and economic geography across the national territory. If private forms of regulatory intervention are common in the coordination of Britain's food industries, French regulatory traditions rely more strongly on traditional command and control mechanisms of public-style intervention. Sharp differences in political cultures are reflected in the representation that food and its consumption hold. Just as the liberal UK supports notions of individualism and personal responsibility to guide food choices and access, collective memories of traditions and principles of social solidarity construct how the French consumer understands food and its consumption.

Drawing on the concept of integrated food policy (Lang et al. 2009) has helped the research to analytically examine how political economies negotiate the tensions between ecological, social, and human demands. The lens of commodification has suggested avenues to better understand the socio-political circumstances that allow some countries like

France, to opt for greater policy integration across the areas of production, transformation/distribution, and consumption. Just as commodified meanings of food appear to be associated with a light institutional architecture and uneven policy integration, de-commodified representations are likely to emerge under more comprehensive and integrative institutional fabric, resulting in greater policy cohesion around common values and organising principles.

While the analytical framework has revealed some of the interplays between values, interests, and institutions (the 3'I's) in reproducing policy trajectories, the research has also hypothesised a typology to capture the types of pattern behaviours in the instrumentation of national food policies. I have proposed to distinguish national policy logics as a question of explicit or implicit emphasis. Just as France's food policy environment makes the social relations of food explicit with well-defined systemic policy responses, the liberal economies of both the UK and Australia conceive the organisation of food provisioning in more implicit terms, creating a political distance between the policy issue and the sites of policy decision. However, the United Kingdom does not make the social relations of food as implicit as Australia does. In fact, the UK's state-assisted agricultural policy may qualify Britain more as a 'hybrid' form of 'liberal food capitalism', while the organisation of food provisioning in Australia is best described as one being coordinated through market and implicit strategies.

Unexpectedly, the research has also revealed that political cultures of food consumption can be closely related to the political economy of production. Without revisiting in detail the proposition made in the earlier chapters, I argue that an early commodification process has determined the UK's politics of food consumption. This politics articulates the relation between the individual and food as one of exchange value, leaving very little space for other 'use value' attributes of pleasure or tradition. Conversely, France's representation of food is more anchored in collective notions of tradition, provenance, and conviviality. The brief overview of Australia's politics of food consumption tends to indicate similarities of patterns with those of the UK. The early onset of capitalism in the Australian context endowed food with attributes of market relations that were further reinforced with the embrace of the neoliberal project that placed the individual at the centre of the politics of consumption.

REVISITING FOOD REGIME THEORY?

This research has viewed the global focus of food regime theory as something of a barrier to understanding how nation-states can resist and temper international trends in food provisioning. To overcome this limitation, the research brought a policy regime perspective

and examined how ideas, interests, and institutions have converged to give shape to national food and farming policies. The French case study, as no-Anglo centric story, has been particularly appropriate at showing the usefulness of the 3'I's construct in complementing the food regime theory, and offering greater insights in how national contexts translate, adapt, and respond to international dynamics. For instance, the research has examined more closely how nation-states responded to shifts in international hegemony in world capitalism, particularly between the first and second food regime. Therefore, I want to suggest that the policy regime framework might be a possible analytical interface between the grand food regime theory and national policy analysis.

Furthermore, the research offers some scope for reflection about how the differentiated relationships to global restructuring forces presented in the case studies might influence and shape the global food order. In other words, the study of national responses to global adjustment through the lens of the 3'I's may bring further analytical purchase in understanding the feedback effects of national policies over the global food order. The creation of the European Union and the implementation of its Common Agricultural Policy as a response to the international post-war hegemonic shift may be such an example of future enquiry.

WHERE TO NEXT?

I hope that this study will inspire future research to further our understanding of how and why national food policies develop the way they do. Since one of the main findings of the thesis is that each national approach to the coordination of food provisioning is unique to its historical heritage of place and time, future research may wish to confirm some of this study's findings. For example, it would be of analytical interest to confirm that France's patterns of development are examples of a wider phenomenon shared by other important Continental European countries, like Germany, Italy, or Spain. Similarly, examining the coordination of food provisioning of other former settler states, whether Canada or New Zealand, may grant greater clarity to the conclusion of the role played by the relative national position within a global food order.

A host of issues have arisen in attempting to unveil the dynamics surrounding the 'boundary-spanning' forces that link production to both transformation/distribution, and consumption. Because this study has focused on broad conceptual issues and has illustrated some of the more obvious dynamics, more rigorous and detailed research work still needs to be carried out to complement the 'rudimentary' understanding proposed by this contribution. For example, practical issues were particularly present when examining implicit policy systems that segregated policy subsystems. A more detailed understanding would be gained through analysis of strategy documents, reports and directives, to trace key ideas and

principles, to ascertain degrees of support from interest groups, and to analyse changes in institutional alignments. All of these tasks would ultimately contribute to the theorising of national food governance in greater details. Future research may also ultimately confirm or refute the existence of national food policy regimes.

Many questions remain about the implications of the policy regime perspective. For instance, we can ask whether the claims made by institutionalists that strong states are likely to produce strong welfare states (Pierson, 1996) are applicable to policy regimes in general, and to food policy in particular. Just as institutional cohesion, administrative governmental capacities, and financial resources are certainly important in building robust 'boundary-spanning' policy environments, we could also ask whether we can assume that political authority is sufficient to further policy development, or is the integration of human health, the environment, and social relations in food policy a question of national political culture.

Returning to the question of whether some countries are better prepared than others to handle the social and environmental challenges posed to and by national food provisioning systems, I want to advance the argument that explicit food policy regimes might be better equipped than their implicit counterparts. This study has suggested that an explicit food policy regime like France, for example, can be associated with better outcomes in terms of public health, economic geography, or environmental impact. The French example also supports the idea that opportunities of policy integration require a bigger 'tool box' than a mere reliance on market forces alone. Although firm conclusions cannot be drawn from such a small number of case studies, this thesis has, however, established that they are different ways to "do food policy". My suggestion is that future research is required not only to advance our understanding of how different national food policy is across borders, but also to imagine how different national food policy could become.

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