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Are food quality schemes an alternative to the conventional food system? Reflections on the EU metaphors on agrifood quality regulation

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Abstract

The environmental, economic and social impacts of the current hegemonic agrifood regime, based on mass food production and global market oriented distribution have led governments and state agencies to increasingly promote alternative policies prioritizing food quality over quantity. Some of these policy measures try to highlight distinctive features based on geographical origin of foods (e.g. appellations of origin) or production

systems (e.g. organic farming). In order to understand how food quality is conceptualized and to assess its transformative potential, in this paper we present an analysis of the metaphors used in one of the European main legal texts on this subject (EU Regulation 1151/2012). Results show how this agrifood quality policy is mainly oriented to protect those producers in risk of being excluded from the current hegemonic agrifood regime, but this protection is basically understood in economic terms, while other environmental and social domains are almost absent from the policy aim.

Key words: agrifood regime, agrifood policies, agrifood sustainability, designations of origin, geographical food indications,

Introduction

The current hegemonic agrifood regime grounded on the development of industrial agriculture, based on massive monoculture food production and global market oriented distribution has produced multidimensional impacts. Evidence of these impacts have been described in several spheres, as human health issues in terms of farmers' poisoning, food contamination, or nutritional disequilibrium; as environmental degradation by chemical pollution, loss of biodiversity, and climate change impacts; as socioeconomic losses due to the destruction of agricultural employment; as territorial impacts caused by rural exodus and the overpopulation of cities; as political effects weakening peasant agriculture and increasing the power of large landowners and agrifood corporations; and as geopolitical consequences by reinforcing North-South colony-dependencies (Di Masso et al., 2014; Espluga, 2002, 2004; Holt-Giménez et al., 2009; McIntyre et al., 2009; McMichael, 2009; Patel, 2007; Rivera-Ferre, 2014). Such multidimensional impacts have led to the emergence of numerous social mobilizations around the world, which in turn have prompted urgent political responses.

The food regimes framework proposed by Friedmann and McMichael (1989) is useful in explaining how particular relations of food production and consumption are central to the functioning and reproduction of global capitalism. According to their proposal, the global food system has followed three stages: the first one (1870-1930s) was

characterised by cheap food and raw materials from tropical and temperate settler colonies fuelling European industrialization; the second one (1950-1970s) was characterised by the global spread of industrial agriculture through the 'Green Revolution', using a big amount of subsidized agrochemicals, machinery and high technological irrigation systems; currently, the third one (1980s to present) rests on the neoliberal capitalist expansion and liberalized global food trade, characterised by high market power and profits of oligopolistic agrifood corporations.

Following Polanyi's hypothesis (1944) that unregulated markets would have serious difficulties being socially and environmentally sustainable, an increasing amount of social movements and protests against agrifood policies have raised. Such social pressure can lead to new regulations on the part of the political system. In fact, according to Polanyi's hypothesis, alternating periods of unregulated markets followed by state intervention protective of social concerns are a cyclical part of capitalism. This has taken place in each of three food regimes. Thus, neoliberal food regimes can undergo substantive regulatory policy changes under social pressure.

One of the main regulatory changes related to agrifood policies reflects the "quality turn". As part of the food question, this refers to a change in discourse from quantity to quality (Constance et al., 2014). In policy terms, this turn was made evident beginning in the 80s and 90s of the past century, when "alternative" policy strategies emerged highlighting distinctive features based on the geographical origin of food (e.g. protected designations of origin, etc.) or on the production system (e.g. organic farming.). These policies result from the concern of policy makers who are trying to address some of the impacts of the current food regime (health, environmental, territorial issues) by pushing forward alternative agricultural models in opposition to the hegemonic and global market-focused model. One such alternative model is frequently conceptualized as "non-anonymous" and/or "territorial friendly" (Di Masso, 2013), taking the form of 'protected designations of origin' or 'protected geographical indications' policies or programs. From a food regimes perspective, the quality turn indicates the challenge by the "Food from Somewhere" to the "Food from Nowhere" regime (Campbell, 2009; McMichael, 2005) and a key emerging question is whether the *"Food from Somewhere" agrifood regime can be conceptualised as a significant countermovement to the "Food from Nowhere" regime* (Constance et al., 2014).

In this paper, we aim to know how territorial food quality has been defined by policy makers, in order to assess whether the policies resulting from such definition are capable of modifying the current neoliberal food regime, and to what extent. We will focus on the EU Regulation 1151/2012, approved by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, which is of compulsory adaptation for all the EU member countries. This regulation aims to help producers of agricultural products and foodstuffs to communicate the product characteristics and farming attributes of those products and foodstuffs to buyers and consumers, thereby ensuring: (a) fair competition for farmers and producers of agricultural products and foodstuffs having value-adding characteristics and attributes; (b) the availability to consumers of reliable information pertaining to such products; (c) respect for intellectual property rights; and (d) the integrity of the internal market. The measures set out in this Regulation are intended to support agricultural and processing activities and the farming systems associated with high quality products, thereby contributing to the achievement of rural development policy objectives. Our analysis shows that EU Regulation 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs is mainly focussed on economic factors, and its conceptual framework is devoted to promote special protection, as a kind of social policy, for producers (farmers and other) in risk of being excluded from the current hegemonic agrifood regime, but without addressing the causes of such exclusion.

Defining food quality

The quality turn reflects a general discontent with the impersonal "industrial food world" and a resolute turn to the "interpersonal food world" where quality agreements embed trust and tradition within a moral economy of place and provenance (Goodman, 2003; Morgan et al., 2006). Quality is defined broadly to include quality of food, quality of work, quality of health, and quality of life for humans and animals (Constance et al., 2014). Several criteria of positive differentiation have traditionally been considered in the assignment of a food quality (Ilbery et al., 2005):

- Its nature (composition, nutritional value, organoleptic properties).

- Its elaboration and distribution process (traditional, sustainable, fair, corporate, independent, direct).
- Its geographical origin (which confers a differentiated identity linked to the qualities of the territory).

The difference is constructed by different actors in the food chain combining these attributes of 'product, process and origin' (PPP scheme) as main ingredients (Ilbery et al., 2005). In fact, quality is a social definition in which different actors interact with different motivations and interests. The way of signifying it (the values it imbues, the concepts associated with it) is also a subjective exercise. Therefore, the definition of the concept is not a matter of purely terminological interest, and depending on how it is defined, this definition will have a different impact on the agrifood system (Di Masso, 2013). In this sense, it is necessary to evaluate how food quality can be established in ways that substantively challenge the conventional system (Murdoch, Marsden and Banks, 2000) or the hegemonic food regime.

The explosion of official certification and labelling schemes is a response to multiple factors (Ilbery et al., 2005), from environment protection to the aim of adding value to the agricultural production. As a result, a diversity of labels co-exist ranging from the defence of local production and the social and economic structure that supports it, to the concerns about producing food through more equitable alternative means.

Within these certification practices, the EU origin labels have been identified as expressions of 'local', 'quality' or 'endogenous' food systems (Marsden et al., 2000; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000 cf. Holloway and Kneafsey, 2004). It has been pointed out that the attempt to connect product and place with the aim of adding value to agricultural products is one of the dominant features of alternative food networks, particularly in Europe (Maye et al., 2007). The concept of locality is what distinguishes these alternatives of product and origin, whose particularity and added value is its geographical specialization, the explicit allusion to the link with a given territory. As far as consumption is concerned, the presence of geographical identification labels implies specific messages on the mode and place of production, as opposed to simple labelling of the inherent qualities of the product (ingredients, nutritional information, etc.).

The oldest protection legislation at the European level dates back to 1970 and was exclusively limited to wine products. In 1992, the EU extended this protection to the rest of agrifood products through the creation of the quality schemes known as Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs), Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSGs) (Galdós, 2004). Taking the French "appellation d'ôrigine controlee" (AOC) as a model, the European PDO and PGI systems enable regions to claim collective ownership over local food production modes. Contrary to trademarks, source labels 'belong' to regions and are administered by state governments to prevent fraud and oversee certification schemes (Holloway and Kneafsey, 2004). The European Commission has been increasing the formalization of labels that indicate the region of origin or system of production of different food products. Although it offers the advantage of harmonization, on the other hand this regulation offers little information to the consumer regarding relevant activities related to the production system, such as the type of farm or producer (Gilg and Battershill, 1998), and it has also resulted in unexpected trends, such as homogenization of production systems and exclusion of agrobiodiversity.

The PDO designates the name of a product whose production, processing and elaboration must take place in a given geographical area with a recognized and proven specialization. The PGI indicates the link with the territory in at least one of the stages of production, transformation or elaboration. The two levels of geographical reference are different: the link with the territory is stronger in the first case. As regards TSGs, this quality protection system does not refer to origin (i.e. it is not linked to the territory), but rather aims to emphasize a traditional product composition or a traditional mode of production (Barco Royo, 2007). Currently in the EU there are around 570 names of cheeses, meats, fruits, vegetables and other products registered as PDO, PGI and TSG (EU, 2017).

Metaphors' methodological approach

In order to know how territorial food quality has been defined by policy makers and assess if and to what extent these measures attempt to modify the current food regime we have performed a metaphors analysis. Our underlying assumption is that every social process is controversial as there are different actors fighting in the public arena to

position their viewpoints (Cammaerts, 2012), and that metaphors play a key role in defining controversial issues (Capdevila, 2004; Moragas Fernández, 2016). Because of their ability to "simplify and make understandable political events" (Mio, 1997:121), metaphors are one of the mechanisms used by political actors in their struggle for imposing a certain vision of contested issues.

Metaphor deals with two different domains of knowledge (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) that relate with each other: one from which we depart (source domain) to understand the meaning of the other (target domain). Hence, metaphors function as political schema used as a mean "to shape public discourse" and "to present political 'reality' in a specific way" (Cammaerts, 2012:244), while they influence evaluation on the metaphorized topics (Charteris-Black, 2011) and, thus, are also persuasive. In this sense, metaphor plays a double role: on the one side, it has a cognitive dimension because it helps to know and to understand a concrete issue; on the other side, it has a persuasive dimension, as it leads to action (or attitudinal pre-disposition). From this perspective, the act of choosing a 'source domain' to represent a 'target domain' is in itself a persuasive act. Besides, metaphors provide the main storylines or perspectives along which conceptual mappings are developed and extended (Musolff, 2004). As Charteris-Black (2011:32) points out: "In political rhetoric the primary purpose of metaphors is to frame how we view or understand political issues by eliminating alternative points of view." This is, by making a choice of which ideas will structure the speaker's discourse in order to convince the audience.

Metaphors are also an effective problem-solving tool, since they "provide specific guidance on how to deal with novel situations" (Bougher, 2012:146). According to Grey (2000), metaphor is not only a tool of conceptual economy, but also a tool of discovery, providing a way of imposing or discovering structure within novel or unfamiliar situations. In keeping with that, Mio (1997), states that metaphors are like devices that, at first sight, "simply draw a comparison between one thing and another, but in a more subtle way, they usually imply a whole narrative story and prescription for action" (Mio, 1997:120).

From a methodological level, Charteris-Black (2010:31) states that "metaphor arises from our expectations about meaning that are based on our knowledge of how words

have previously been used". Breaking the original meaning of words and, consequently, the ordinary understanding of the text, results in what semiotics defines as breaking isotopy (Greimas, 1971) or the "direction that a text exhibits when submitted to rules of interpretative coherence" (Eco, 1980:153). Arduini (1993) labels the breaking of the isotopy as a deviation to the normative use, which establishes a new one. This deviation provides some practical applications in the detection of metaphors. Arduini (1993) warns us about relegating them to deviations to the norm, which leads us to think that, though we detect metaphor in a superficial level of discourse, we cannot understand it completely without focusing on the analogy that takes place in the deep level of discourse, which lets us arrive to its meaning and the reasoning of its use. For instance, in the "love is a journey" metaphor (Moragas Fernández, 2016: 66), "if 'love' is the target domain and is understood in terms of the conceptual domain of 'journey' (source domain), then, the travellers will be the lovers, the vehicle its love relationship and the obstacles along the way are the difficulties encountered in the relationship". Beyond these basic correspondences, source domains also map other ideas, which are named "entailments" or "inferences". In Lakoff's words (1993:210): "each mapping defines an open-ended class of potential correspondences across inference patterns. When activated, a mapping may apply to a novel source domain knowledge structure and characterize a corresponding target domain knowledge structure".

We have based our analysis on the current main European regulation on quality: the 'EU Regulation 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs'. This law is composed of 59 articles distributed in three chapters, plus two annexes, preceded by an extensive explanatory statement where precedents and motives (up to 65 motives) for approving the law are fully explained. We have focused our analysis on this explanatory statement because it is where policy makers have made explicit their ideas and arguments about the need and purposes of this law.

Once the official text where the quality food schemes are explained and justified was selected, the analysis procedure (based on Capdevila, 2004; Mussolf, 2004) focused on identifying and interpreting the metaphors used in the text to refer to 'food quality' as our 'target domain'. This process consists of looking for the semantic tension or isotopy, trying to identify along the text words referring to different semantic fields

related with the one we are talking about. These words are called "token" (signals) and they identify the metaphors. Once the metaphors along the text had been identified, the interpretative phase consisted of connecting them with their conceptual sources, this is, with their respective 'source domains'. In order to simplify the analysis we followed Musolff's proposal (2004) of twelve general source domains that would cover the vast majority of metaphors used in everyday life: Way-movement-speed; Geometry-geography; Technology-building; Group-Club-class; School-discipline; Economy-business; Love-marriage-family; Life-health-Strength; War-fight-battle; Game-Sport; Show-Play; and Nature-time.

Our analysis covered all the 65 paragraphs of the above mentioned explanatory statement where precedents and motives for approving the law are fully explained. An exhaustive analysis going through the whole set of paragraphs has been done, and as a result we have identified the entire set of lexemes ('token') (the words to which its original meaning have been broken) related with our target domain (food quality). A total of 36 token have been identified along the text, of which 33 can be inductively classified in three of the main source domains proposed by Musolff (2004) (table 1). A fourth (residual) source has also been identified but with very few signals throughout the text (only three token).

Table 1: Metaphors detected and their respective lexemes (token)

Source domain	**Conceptual elements**	**Lexemes (token)**
Economy-business	Competitive advantage	competitive advantage (§1)
	Reward	rewarded (§3) reward (§4) benefit (§4)
	Added value	adds value (§20) add value (§44) add value (§44) added value (§46)
Technology-building	Enhancing	enhances (§20)
	Support	support (§4)
	Securing / ensuring	securing (§18) ensures (§20) ensures (§20) guarantee (§47) guaranteed (§47) ensure (§48)

	Control	controls (§46) controls (§46) controls (§46) control (§50) control (§50)
War-fight-battle	Protection / Defence	protecting (§5) protects (§20) protecting (§23) protection (§24) protection (§24) protection (§24) protected (§24) protection (§29) protected (§29) protection (§55) protected (§60) protection (§60)
Life-health-Strength	Life	alive (§1) living (§1)
	Strength	strengths (§1)

(Numbers in brackets identify the concrete paragraph in which each lexeme has been found).

Results

Food quality policies become an attempt to minimize or avoid some of the negative impacts of the neoliberal agrifood regime, in particular those related to environmental and social impacts. In theory, by following the EU food quality rules, the characteristics of the agricultural products and the way they have been produced would be more sustainable and respectful of the environment and local traditions, and supposedly more attractive for a consumer willing to pay more for such characteristics, protecting small farmers of being excluded of the market. The here analysed EU Regulation (1151/2012) aims to help producers of agricultural products and foodstuffs to better communicate these characteristics to buyers and consumers. But not all the actors playing in the global food market must agree with these corrective policies, or at least not all them will benefit equally. So, we can assume that the definition of agrifood quality is embedded in a political struggle between those actors. As stated before, because of their ability to simplify and make understandable political events (Mio, 1997), metaphors are one of the mechanisms used by actors in their struggle for imposing a certain vision of

contested issues. In this sense, one would expect to find in the EU Regulation metaphors related to environmental and social sustainability conceptual domains.

The analysis carried out shows that the EU policy makers who produced the text used basically three types of metaphors related with the following wide source domains (according to Musolff's terminology): Economy-business (8); Technology-building (13); and War-fight-battle (12). Some very few additional metaphors (3) related with the Life-Health-Strength source domain were found.

Economy –business Metaphors

The 'economy-business' source domain includes all those words (signals or token) associated with the production, use, and management of resources, distribution, trade, and consumption of goods and services by different economic agents, monetary transactions, economic credit or debit values, and the whole set of concepts related to economy and business.

The analysis shows that EU policy makers are interpreting food quality in terms of economy and business conceptual frames. In the regulation text food quality is presented as a 'competitive advantage' to producers (in relation to other producers):

> "The quality and diversity of the Union's agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture production is one of its important strengths, giving a **competitive advantage** to the Union's producers and making a major contribution to its living cultural and gastronomic heritage." (§1)

Food quality also means a (economic) 'reward' to producers (for their effort in doing something different):

> "Producers can only continue to produce a diverse range of quality products if they are **rewarded** fairly for their effort." (§3)

Food quality is characterized also as a benefit to the "rural economy":

> "Operating quality schemes for producers which **reward** them for their efforts to produce a diverse range of quality products can **benefit** the rural economy." (§4)

Food quality represents a way of adding economic value to the products in the market (internal and external):

> "Provision should be made for the development of designations of origin and geographical indications at Union level and for promoting the creation of mechanisms for their protection in third countries in the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or multilateral and bilateral agreements, thereby contributing to the recognition of the quality of products and of their model of production as a factor that **adds value**." (§20)

Food quality is interpreted as something optional or subject to voluntariness, thus a regulatory proposal that fits perfectly with the free market framework:

> "A second tier of quality systems, based on quality terms which **add value**, which can be communicated on the internal market and which are to be applied voluntarily, should be introduced." (§44)
>
> "The optional quality term 'mountain product' has met the conditions up to now and will **add value** to the product on the market." (§44)

Food quality is considered as something depending on consumers' trust (as it would be in a kind of stock exchange market). Official controls (by third parties) should be provided to help achieving consumer trust as an expected outcome:

> "The **added value** of the geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed is based on consumer trust. It is only credible if accompanied by effective verification and controls." (§46)

Technology-building Metaphors

The 'technology-building' source domain refers to concepts and words (signals or token) related to a structure or system standing more or less permanently in one place, such as a house or a building, including elements and basis that support the entire system, builders or makers of the system, the technologies and process of constructing and functioning the system, situations of stability or collapse of the system, materials and building elements, and all kind of concepts related to this semantic area.

A second wide conceptual sphere to which EU policy makers refer when talking about food quality is the 'technology–building' source domain. This would include such

metaphors as security, support, guarantee or control, all them referring to the maintenance of the stability of strong structures (markets) where food quality will be found or produced.

From this perspective, food quality means a way of 'enhancing' the credibility of the products (in the market), and 'ensuring' fair competition among producers (in the market):

> "A Union framework that protects designations of origin and geographical indications by providing for their inclusion on a register facilitates the development of those instruments, since the resulting, more uniform, approach **ensures** fair competition between the producers of products bearing such indications and **enhances** the credibility of the products in the consumers' eyes." (§20)

Food quality is understood as a kind of 'support' for the producers (to help them remain in the market):

> "In this way quality schemes are able to contribute to and complement rural development policy as well as market and income **support** policies of the common agricultural policy (CAP)." (§4)

Food quality is also conceived as a way of 'securing' fair (economic) returns for producers, 'ensuring' fair competition between them and 'ensuring' impartiality of the competent authorities, and 'guaranteeing' specific characteristics of the products. All these words recall to security concepts:

> "The specific objectives of protecting designations of origin and geographical indications are **securing** a fair return for farmers and producers for the qualities and characteristics of a given product, or of its mode of production, (…)" (§18)
> "A Union framework that protects designations of origin and geographical indications by providing for their inclusion on a register facilitates the development of those instruments, since the resulting, more uniform, approach **ensures** fair competition between the producers of products bearing such indications and enhances the credibility of the products in the consumers' eyes." (§20)

> "To **guarantee** to the consumer the specific characteristics of geographical indications and traditional specialities **guaranteed**, operators should be subject to a system that verifies compliance with the product specification." (§47)
> "In order to **ensure** that they are impartial and effective, the competent authorities should meet a number of operational criteria. Provisions on delegating some competences of performing specific control tasks to control bodies should be envisaged." (§48)

Food quality also means to have official 'control' over production, processing and distribution, and 'control' plans to be launched by governments:

> "The added value of the geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed is based on consumer trust. It is only credible if accompanied by effective verification and **controls**. Those quality schemes should be subject to a monitoring system of official **controls**, in line with the principles set out in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official **controls** performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (16), and should include a system of checks at all stages of production, processing and distribution." (§46)
> "Information on **control** activities for geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed should be included in the multiannual national **control** plans and annual report prepared by the Member States in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004." (§50)

War-fight-battle Metaphors

The war-fight-battle source domain refers to concepts and words related to the military sphere in wide sense, characterised by the combat between opposing forces used to achieve specific objectives, with all kind of strategies, techniques, activities and tools used both to attack and defence.

Another wide source domain found in the analysis is that related with war-fight-battle metaphors, with several references to 'protection' with the meaning of 'defence'. In this sense, food quality is conceived as a way of 'protecting' producers against unfair practices (of other producers):

> "Agricultural product quality policy should therefore provide producers with the right tools to better identify and promote those of their products that have specific characteristics while **protecting** those producers against unfair practices." (§5)
>
> "A Union framework that **protects** designations of origin and geographical indications by providing for their inclusion on a register facilitates the development of those instruments, since the resulting, more uniform, approach ensures fair competition between the producers of products bearing such indications and enhances the credibility of the products in the consumers' eyes." (§20)

Food quality is also related with the 'protection' of the natural resources or landscape of the production area or improving farm animals' welfare:

> "An agricultural product or foodstuff bearing such a geographical description should meet certain conditions set out in a specification, such as specific requirements aimed at **protecting** the natural resources or landscape of the production area or improving the welfare of farm animals." (§23)

Food quality is widely related to the 'protection' of products in the European markets (fighting, in some way, against products of other countries made with different criteria):

> "To qualify for **protection** in the territories of Member States, designations of origin and geographical indications should be registered only at Union level. With effect from the date of application for such registration at Union level, Member States should be able to grant transitional **protection** at national level without affecting intra-Union or international trade. The **protection** afforded by this Regulation upon registration, should be equally available to designations of origin and geographical indications of third countries that meet the corresponding criteria and that are **protected** in their country of origin." (§24)
>
> "**Protection** should be granted to names included in the register with the aim of ensuring that they are used fairly and in order to prevent practices liable to mislead consumers. In addition, the means of ensuring that geographical indications and designations of origin are **protected** should be clarified, particularly as regards the role of producer groups and competent authorities of Member States." (§29)

> "The criteria by which subsequent trademarks should be refused or, if registered, invalidated on the ground that they conflict with a prior designation of origin or geographical indication should correspond to the scope of **protection** of designation of origin or a geographical indication laid down." (§55)

Food quality is also related to 'protection' against liable practices misleading consumers. Policies, institutions and resources should be devoted to guarantee these protection activities (playing a defence role):

> "The symbols, indications and abbreviations identifying participation in a quality scheme, and the rights therein pertaining to the Union, should be **protected** in the Union as well as in third countries with the aim of ensuring that they are used on genuine products and that consumers are not misled as to the qualities of products. Furthermore, in order for the **protection** to be effective, the Commission should have recourse to reasonable budget resources…" (§60)

Life-Health-Strength Metaphors

Finally, three more token have been found in the analysis referring to the 'life-health-strength' source domain. Although it is practically residual, from this perspective food quality means keeping farmer traditions alive (while taking into account the new production methods, referring to the second green revolution agricultural technologies):

> "This is due to the skills and determination of Union farmers and producers who have **kept traditions alive** while taking into account the developments of new production methods and material." (§1)

Food quality is also referred to as a European strength, which would give a competitive advantage to the UE and a major contribution to the producers' living cultural heritage:

> "The quality and diversity of the Union's agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture production is one of its important **strengths**, giving a competitive advantage to the Union's producers and making a major contribution to its **living** cultural and gastronomic heritage." (§1)

Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis carried out gives us indications about the expected role that a type of policy measures on food quality, as they are expressed by EU policy makers, play in the EU agrifood policy. The analysis focused on the metaphors appearing in the text of the European law on the subject of territorial food quality (EU Regulation 1151/2012).

As stated above, metaphors are seen from our theoretical approach as one of the mechanisms used by political actors in their struggle to impose a certain vision of political issues (i.e. food quality). Metaphor deals with two different domains of knowledge that relate with each other: one from which we depart (source domain) to understand the meaning of the other (target domain). In our case, the meaning of food quality (target domain) is understood through other concepts belonging to three main source domains: economy-business; technology-building; and war-fight-battle; and the few that do not fall into these categories seem to be related to the life-health-strength source domain. As it has been an exhaustive analysis, there are no more metaphors related to the target domain in the analysed text.

In terms of the 'economy-business' source domain, agrifood quality means a competitive advantage for producers (in relation to other producers), an (economic) reward for producers (for their effort in doing something different), a benefit also extensive to the "rural economy" in general, a way of adding value to the products (in the internal and external markets), something to reach through producers' voluntariness (in a context of free market), and something depending on (anonymous) consumers' trust (that is, depending on other wills beyond the producers themselves).

From the 'technology-building' source domain, agrifood quality means a way of enhancing products' credibility (in the market), a way of ensuring fair competition between the producers (in the market), a way to support producers (helping them to remain in the market), a way of securing a fair (economic) return for producers, and the necessity of an official (state or third parties) control over production, processing and distribution.

Agrifood quality is related also to 'war-fight-battle' source domain, in the form of a strong defensive attitude aimed at protecting producers against unfair practices (from other producers), protecting the natural resources or landscape of the production area, or

improving animal welfare, but also protecting the products in the context of European markets, and to protect consumers against liable practices.

Finally, only three lexemes related to the 'life-health-strength' source domain have been found in the first paragraph of the analysed text, which indicates that agrifood quality would also mean keeping farmer traditions alive (but, interestingly, taking into account the new production methods coming from the technological agroindustrial system and promoting homogenisation). It also represents a European strength. These are the only references to social factors related to food quality, and they appear only in the initial paragraph of the analysed EU normative but without any further development throughout the text, evidencing the little weight that is given to this dimension.

In sum, territorial strategies to promote food quality through the geographical origin of food (e.g. PDO or PGI), in the way they are promoted by EU policy makers, are mainly focused on economic and market spheres. All the three main emerging source domains deal with economic relations and factors, but other metaphors related to environmental or social concepts are almost absent (only 3 of 36 lexemes could be related to it). Most of the conceptual framework embedded in the EU regulation is devoted to promote special protection for specific producers: those needed of protection against the turbulences of the capitalist food markets. From this viewpoint, the analysed EU Regulation could be understood as a kind of "social policy" addressed to farmers in risk of being excluded from the current hegemonic agrifood regime, but without addressing the causes of exclusion, which would rest on the normal functioning of global food markets. These policies do not propose other relationships between producers and consumers than the ones framed in the standard capitalist market. On the contrary, given the heavy reliance of food quality on labelling and certification; they deepen even more farmers and consumers' dependency on third party certification, which is a weak form of addressing the impacts of the agrifood regime (Bain et al., 2013; Busch, 2011; Sodano et al., 2008). This would support Polanyi's hypothesis (1944) that unregulated markets would have serious difficulties being socially and environmentally sustainable, bringing on social pressures and leading to new regulations on the part of the political system, alternating periods of unregulated markets and other periods of protective state intervention. These cycles would be part of the normal functioning of the capitalism (Polanyi, 1944). Thus, neoliberal food regimes can undergo substantive regulatory

policy changes under social pressure. In this sense, the analysed EU policy would be part of the governments' protective interventions to cope with the social pressure of small and medium peasants and consumers in Europe. But it seems to have little transformative impact and rather contributes to the maintenance of the neoliberal agrifood regime.

In this sense, one would expect to find metaphors related to environmental and social sustainability in the EU Regulation, but the analysis shows how it is focused mainly on economic frameworks: Environmental and social sustainability is intended to be achieved primarily through market mechanisms, which is consistent with the axis of the typical mode of accumulation of capital of the neoliberal agrifood regime. For this reason we argue that the EU food quality policies are good in correcting some market impacts, but far from solving the sustainability problems generated by the global agrifood system.

Food policies can be framed in the debate about ecological modernization and the new ecological paradigm (see Foster, 2012), in the sense that the former can be seen as a way of maintaining the capitalist mode of production and consumption with some cosmetic corrections. From the ecological modernization theory perspective, the unlimited growth of capitalist industrial society is conceived as possible and the ecological crisis can be surmounted through the incorporation of nature within the capitalist economic process via technological changes and market mechanisms (Mol, 1995; Spaargaren et al., 2000). Ecological modernization theorists argue that there are evidences showing that capitalist societies of the late Twentieth and early Twenty-first century are progressively introducing effective measures for environmental protection (Mol et al., 2009). These measures are at least of two types: on the one hand, political measures (local agendas 21, industrial ecology, product lifecycle study, green labelling, recycling policies, organic farming, and other environmental and sustainability policies at various levels) and, on the other hand, market measures (green capitalism, environmental responsibility, greenhouse gas emission quotas and markets, etc.). In addition, thanks to technological innovation, such a degree of eco-efficiency of products, processes and services could be achieved, which could reconcile economic growth without deteriorating the environment or depleting natural or energy resources. Ecological modernization theory is a normative rather than descriptive proposal that fits

perfectly with the political proposal of 'sustainable development' and, therefore, with the model of progress-growth-development that has dominated the capitalist expansion of the last century.

The food quality schemes proposed in the analyzed EU Regulation fit very well with the ecological modernization approach, as it intends to correct certain dysfunctions of the market economy with the intention of protecting certain actors and practices threatened by the global economy, but without altering or questioning the operation of this economic model, based on the universalization of export agriculture, neither altering the power relations that occur there and that cause those dysfunctions. In sum, this policy does not properly address "the undemocratic and unsustainable impact of the contemporary food trade and investment regime" (as said by McMichael, 2016: 469). According to our analysis, a more holistic perspective (in terms of agrifood system or regime) would be needed to properly address sustainability issues from a policy perspective. Alternative agrifood quality schemes should take into account not only economic dimensions from a reductionist neoliberal market framework (as the EU Regulation seems to do), but also environmental and social dimensions from an alternative framework more oriented to the restructuration of the production and consumption of food rules on a world scale and overcoming the tension between transnational and local economies.

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