

From Stilton to Vimto: Using Food History to Re-think Typical Products in Rural Development

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Within the literature on rural development paradigms (van der Ploeg et al. 2000), culture economies (Ray 1998) and agro-food systems (Marsden et al. 2000; Murdoch et al. 2000), much has been written about agro-food products with special characteristics relating to territory. Although termed differently, for example, 'typical products' (Arfini and Mora 1998); 'origin labelled products' (Barjolle and Sylvander 1999); 'traditional foods' (Bessièrè 1998; Amilien 1999; de Roest and Menghi 2000), 'regional speciality products' (Tregear et al. 1998; Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000a, b), 'artisanal products' (Kupiec and Revell 1998) and 'special quality' or 'quality farm' products (Murdoch et al. 2000; Verhaegen and Van Huylenbroeck 2001), shared meanings have emerged regarding the properties of these products and their contribution to the socio-economic development of rural areas. Typical products are conceptualized as issuing from small-scale agricultural systems, with special characteristics due to the combination of local raw materials with traditional, inherited, production techniques (Bérard and Marchenay 1995; Bell and Valentine 1997; Bessièrè 1998): indeed, it is this conceptualization of a typical product that is enshrined in EU law, via Regulation 2081/92 (CEC 1992)¹. The products are associated with numerous socio-economic benefits including: increased farmers' incomes in marginal areas which may, through synergies, be multiplied across whole local economic networks (Brunori and Rossi 2000); enhanced skilled employment (Ventura and Milone 2000); enhanced social vibrancy (Ray 1998); improved environmental sustainability and animal welfare, and safer, healthier food for the consumer (Nygard and Storstad 1998). In terms of their position in the wider agro-food system however, typical products are portrayed as vulnerable: predominant forces of internationalisation, industrialization and free market capitalism are perceived as threatening to the existence and integrity of small-scale, specialized agriculture (Bérard and Marchenay 1995; van der Ploeg et al. 2000; Ventura and Milone 2000), and the emergence and revalorization of such production in recent years is considered a 'countertendency' (Murdoch et al. 2000), antithetical to the predominant forces.

Critical analysis of this classic conceptualization of typical products already exists. For example, authors such as Moran (1993) and Thiedig and Sylvander (2000) demonstrate how the concept is based on 'Roman'² conventions regarding

agriculture and food, and they spell out the various political and economic problems that may arise from the concept's perpetuation in EU law. Others give cautionary insights regarding the extent to which classic typical products can bring environmental or welfare benefits, in relation to specific case examples (e.g. Edwards and Casabianca 1997; Treggar 2001a). To date however, the literature is lacking in a more fundamental examination of how food and territory are inter-related, conducted from a sufficiently broad perspective to allow alternative conceptualizations of typical products to emerge, and for the different socio-economic impacts associated with them to be assessed comparatively. This paper attempts such an analysis, via an in-depth, historical account of the production and consumption forces shaping the links between food and territory in one case study country: the UK. As well as broadening the classic conceptualization of the typical product and challenging the tacit assumptions associated with it, the paper aims to show how a broader perspective of food-territory links gives a more sophisticated reading of the relationship between typical products and forces such as industrialization, internationalization and free market capitalism. In turn, this leads to a more critical analysis of the role these products play in rural development. The next section presents the theoretical context and analytical approach of the paper in more detail.

Typical Products in Agro-Food Systems: Choice of Analytical Approach

Agro-food systems have been the subject of many studies from a wide variety of disciplines. Within sociology and geography however, the often Marxist-inspired theories on which such studies are based tend to emphasise production aspects over consumption aspects (Tovey 1997; Goodman and Dupuis 2002), and take an overly deterministic stance on the power relationships and causal forces passing between actors in the systems (Lockie and Kitto 2000). Actor Network Theory has been proposed as an alternative framework for theorising agro-food systems, as prescriptions are avoided regarding directions of causality in network relationships, as well as the importance or power of any phenomena within the networks (Murdoch et al. 2000; Goodman and Dupuis 2002). At the same time though, this neutrality can be construed as reducing the explanatory powers of ANT (Marsden 2000). In both agro-food studies (Marsden 2000) and rural development (van der Ploeg et al. 2000), the search is still on for powerful explanatory theoretical approaches, which are both transparent and grounded in careful empirical examination.

Some of these tensions and gaps are evident in extant studies of typical products in agro-food systems. As indicated in the introduction, many examinations have been made of these products within the context of rural development. These give useful insights into the dynamics of supply networks and distribution chains, but consumers often only appear as a 'shadowy presence' (Goodman and Dupuis 2002). Studies adopting conventions theory (Moran 1993; Murdoch et al. 2000) or social anthropological approaches (Bérard and Marchenay 1995; Terrio 1996; Bessièrè 1998), which give insights into the processes by which typical products are bestowed with meaning and value, also tend to focus on production or supply contexts rather than consumption. At the other end of the scale, the dedicated consumer studies of typical products that appear in the economics and marketing literatures tend to make only limited reference to wider social, cultural and political circumstances surrounding

consumption (e.g. Gil and Sanchez 1997; Loureiro and McCluskey 2000; van der Lans et al. 2001), although they do indicate a great diversity of consumer interpretations and usage behaviours. A further overlooked dimension is that of time, with few authors setting their analyses within a well-elaborated temporal context, particularly when presenting case examples (e.g. Murdoch et al. 2000; Kneafsey et al. 2001). It may be argued that such a perspective is critical to a subject matter that incorporates explicit temporal properties, by way of heritage, tradition, etc.

The analytical approach adopted here followed the principles of the developmentalist school of food sociology (Mennell et al. 1992). For the current study, this meant tracing, over time, the key social, economic, political and cultural influences on the links between food and territory in the UK, in terms of both production and consumption. In the context of this analysis, 'production' is taken to mean aspects of agro-food systems such as labour, trade, technology, mechanisation and the behaviour and motivations of actors involved in agro-food production and supply. 'Consumption' is taken to mean size and shape of markets, user lifestyles, tastes and behaviour, and the processes and nature of social valorisation of food-territory links. Typical products themselves are conceptualised as being at the intersection of production and consumption dimensions, shaped by physical aspects such as ingredients and production techniques (the production dimension) and also perceived or symbolic aspects such as identity, branding, etc. (the consumption dimension). In application, this approach has much in common with the historical and context specific case studies of agro-food enterprises undertaken by Blundel (2002) and Bianchi (2001) in the field of small firm research, or Moran et al.'s (1996) comparative analysis of the development of agricultural policies in France and New Zealand. A key objective is to identify critical incidents in the evolution of contexts relevant to the subject matter, and to unearth unexpected or hidden forces of importance. The analysis begins with an overview of the current situation regarding UK typical products.

The Links between Food and Territory in the UK

The present day situation for typical products in the UK is characteristic of many northern European countries. Few products are PDO- or PGI-registered relative to Mediterranean countries³ and, overall, the vast majority do not conform to the French-Roman conceptualization of products derived from indigenous, collective, agricultural systems. For example, although many have a rural production base, only a minority is actually produced on-farm, and over half of producers are 'incomers' to the area⁴ (Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000a). The UK also has, in popular terms at least, a widely lamented and delocalised food culture, with higher levels of concentration in food distribution chains than Mediterranean countries. Yet a recent UK inventory of traditional foods contains almost 400 entries (Mason 1999), whilst DTZ (1999) identifies approximately 3,000 speciality food producers in the UK, many of whom employ craft-based or traditional methods. Market studies also indicate that the popularity of regional and local products is growing amongst UK consumers, as are alternative supply chains such as farmers' markets (Holloway and Kneafsey 2000). These insights imply more complex forces at play and suggest that selective indicators of the status of typical food production and consumption, such

as numbers of officially registered products, must be treated with caution. This is particularly the case when such indicators are inspired by conventions exogenous to the country concerned. To understand better the present situation in the UK, key forces impacting on the links between food and territory are summarised (Table 1), drawing from the food history and food sociology literatures. For clarity, the analysis divides the evolution of food-territory links into three eras: pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial. These correspond broadly to the development phases of ‘world cuisine’ described by Goody (1982) and Mennell et al. (1992). In each era, the key trends and forces are identified in both production and consumption domains.

Table 1: *Forces shaping the links between food and territory in the UK*

	Pre-industrial Era	Industrial Era	Post-industrial Era
Production domain	Small-scale, labour intensive systems of production, development of territorially distinctive customs of cultivation, processing, etc.	Agricultural and industrial revolutions, mechanisation, standardisation, application of science and technology to food production and processing, giving homogenising effect	Continued agricultural policy emphasis of production maximisation and efficiency, food security prioritisation
	But also international trade in agricultural commodities, periods of production intensification	But also development of explicit identities and specifications for agro-food products, linked to territory, by producers acting entrepreneurially	Creation of state monopoly marketing boards act as disincentive to small-scale, on-farm processing Late 20th Century revalorisation of small scale, differentiated agriculture
Consumption domain	Close geographic proximity between food production and consumption, development of territorially distinctive customs of preparation, usage	Gradual urbanisation of populations leading to loss of self-sufficiency and know-how in production: ‘de-localisation’ effect. Social elites embrace French culinary culture	Rationing continues for 13 years: loss of culinary knowledge, restricted repertoire
	But also social hierarchies driving patterns of food distribution and usage across territorial boundaries	But also development of tastes and markets for speciality items and delicacies, e.g. linked to rural and coastal tourist destinations	Postwar social climate of convenience, reflecting changing role of women Late 20th century revalorisation of typical foods as one trend within many, reflecting nostalgia for rural roots; alternative value system; interest in exotica

Food Territory Links in the Pre-Industrial Era

In the pre-industrial era, it is tempting to envisage close links between food and territory and indeed, to consider typical food as the “natural order of things” (Montanari 1994, p. 160). From a production perspective, this is based on the notion of pre-industrial agrarian systems driven by needs of self-sufficiency and preservation of nutrition from locally available raw materials. Territorially differentiated foods emerge as communities in different geographic areas gradually develop their own

customs for processing these raw materials. It is this vision that drives the classic view of how typical products evolve, and on this basis, it may be argued that levels of geographically distinctive food production in the British Isles would be on a par with much of continental Europe in pre-industrial times (Mennell 1996). At the same time though, food historians caution against depicting pre-industrial food production as fixed in certain modes. Periodic intensification of agricultural production is observed, for example from the 11th to the 13th centuries (Tannahill 1988; Montanari 1994). The existence of international trade from early times is also noted, introducing novel raw materials to areas that today might be considered indigenous: for example, tomatoes and pasta to Italy, (Goody 1982; Montanari 1994); olive oil to Provence (Goody 1982); and rhubarb to the British Isles (Mason 1999), all between the 15th and 17th centuries. Thus the pre-industrial era should not be envisaged as devoid of the kinds of forces – agricultural intensification, international trade – classically associated with later eras.

It may also be presumed that in a pre-industrial era, consumption tends to take place in close proximity to production, via self-sufficiency or localized trade, contributing to the development of geographically differentiated culinary habits. Yet food sociologists highlight that food usage practices are influenced by factors other than physical location of users: they are part of food culture, the dynamics of which may transcend physical local contexts. This means that although peasant based agricultural systems are associated with the development of distinctive cuisines⁵, the former does not presume the latter. Indeed, Mennell (1992) attests that diets in the pre-industrial era in Europe, for the bulk of the population, were generally monotonous and homogenous. The nature of social structures is influential, such that societies with complex social hierarchies tend to evolve more differentiated food practices than egalitarian societies (Goody 1982). This may be explained by the theory of social capital (Bourdieu 1984, as discussed by Terrio 1996): as foods are visible, everyday items, they are apt vehicles for higher echelons to demonstrate social distinction. Pre-industrial food-territory links may therefore be thought of as dependent, in part, on the social strategies of powerful elites, for which politics and religion also play important roles. In circumstances where social elites prize locally derived foods, then it follows that food-territory links strengthen and classic typical production develops under aristocratic patronage (a vision presented for Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (de Roest and Menghi 2000)). However, social elites often choose to prize extra-local products, as these demonstrate power and wealth more explicitly. Consumption of food products may therefore take place at a distance from production, stretching the distinctiveness of culinary habits beyond localized territories. This dynamic is well illustrated in Mennell's (1996) comparison of pre-industrial French and English culinary practices, where it is argued that the absolutist monarchy of the *ancien régime* stimulated centralist food provisioning to supply the composite cuisine of the Parisian Court, whereas in England, the relatively powerful and geographically dispersed baronetcy stimulated a greater regional differentiation of culinary practices.

Food-Territory Links in the Industrial Era

Whilst the above indicates that complex socio-cultural forces and fluctuating patterns of agricultural trade and intensification were already complicating the links between food and territory in many parts of Europe, the industrialization era

is taken to be the period in which these forces and trends expand and intensify. This period is generally taken to be particularly significant for the UK typical product situation, as the agricultural and industrial revolutions here are thought to have profoundly broken previously tight food-territory links, and caused a widespread loss of typical foods in the classic sense (Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000b). This section summarises these forces, but also presents evidence, often overlooked, that the industrial era created a context in which the classic conceptualization of typical products actively developed.

In terms of agricultural production, the industrial era in Britain is associated with standardisation, mechanization, intensification, and the application of new discoveries in science and engineering to land cultivation: forces militating against the existence of small-scale, artisanal, territorially differentiated agriculture. These trends extended also to the processing level⁶. The industrial era is also associated with rural exodus, creating a ‘delocalisation’ effect between food production and consumption (Pelto and Pelto 1983), and a loss of inherited knowledge and skills in food production, usage and self-sufficiency. Expanding numbers of urban dwellers required an industrial provisioning process to feed them, and were thus reliant upon the products of new food processing technologies as well as collectivized distribution systems for commodities like milk (Oddy and Burnett 1992). A further consumption dynamic served to erode inherited, territorially distinctive food usage patterns. Amongst higher echelons in British society, and also the new middle classes via the first published cookbooks, French culinary practices were enthusiastically embraced, via adoption of the haute cuisine model codified by La Varenne in the Enlightenment (Mennell 1992). This culinary model echoed principles of the *ancien regime*, necessitating ingredients and ‘made’ dishes sourced from considerable geographic distances and also, in a British context, requiring the importation of French chefs to dispense the exogenous knowledge and skills. Several authors attest that this fashion for French cuisine (driven by desires for status and distinction – the cultural capital theory again) caused an abandonment of native culinary habits amongst upper classes in the UK (Driver 1983; Brown 1990; Montanari 1994; Mennell 1996).

Yet these trends and forces also brought forth a socio-economic context in which the concept of typicity began to be identified and acknowledged in terms akin to the present day. A key accompaniment to the improving tendencies of 19th century British agricultural revolutionists was the modernist – and entrepreneurial – desire to specify identities for the fruits of their labours. Thus, it was during the industrial era that so-called ‘native’ farm animal breeds (e.g. Gloucester Old Spot and Tamworth pigs, Aberdeen Angus cattle – many of which are now registered ‘rare’) and fruit and vegetable cultivars (e.g. Cox Orange Pippins, Jersey Royal Potatoes) were first ‘invented’ or given type and profile specifications⁷ (Mason 1999). Many British breed societies and producer associations for typical products also have their origins in the late 19th century (e.g. Aberdeen Angus and Galloway cattle societies, the association of Stilton producers (Mason, 1999)). Permeating such activities is a concern for *authenticity*: the identification of the quintessential, genuine and ‘official’ embodiment of the type. Crucially, the key stimulus for both specifications and authenticity can be construed as the development of *markets* for these products. For agriculturalists, the effective branding of progeny or cultivars

represented an important means of differentiating their commodities in an era of agricultural improvement and expansion. Likewise, the producers of Stilton cheese could gain competitive advantage by specifying and then assuring the product's identity (indeed, Stilton derives its name from where the cheese was originally *sold*, not produced (Mason, 1999)). The emergence and branding of rural and coastal speciality foods – baked goods, confectionary, seafood – is another example of this production-specification-marketing dynamic, in this case to cater to the tourist and leisure markets expanding with the development of the railways (Rojek 1993). Thus in the industrial era, the identification and construction of typicity developed in ways not seen in previous eras.

Food-Territory Links in the Post-Industrial Era

It is perhaps in the post-industrial era more than any other where a quite unique combination of trends and forces can be identified for the UK, giving very specific impacts on food-territory links. The drive for agricultural production efficiencies continued throughout the 20th century, given added stimulus by two world wars, which rendered food security the priority in an island nation (Tannahill 1988; Mason 1999). The creation of state marketing boards which monopolized the purchase of agricultural commodities, and heavily controlled the processing sectors, were also critical. For example, the Milk Marketing Board's position as statutory buyer and seller of all UK milk and dairy products effectively rendered small-scale, on-farm processing of milk into cheese for commercial purposes completely uneconomic (Blundel 2002), if not illegal (Mason 1999). The middle decades of the 20th century therefore witnessed a significant reduction in farm-based and artisanal food processing. Meanwhile, the government's less interventionist approach in the downstream food supply chain saw increasing concentration here – a force classically perceived as problematic to small-scale suppliers (Blundel 2002) – with the emergence of supermarkets in the 1960s.

In terms of consumption, perhaps one of the most significant forces for food-territory links was W.W.II. Not only were diets and food usage patterns severely restricted during the war years themselves, rationing continued for a full 13 years in the UK, thus a whole generation grew up with little inherited food culture to call upon and only a restricted culinary repertoire to practice (Driver 1983; Mason 1999). With the role of women altered in the post war years, items associated with the alleviation of the 'chore' of cooking became popular (e.g. convenience foods, white goods, kitchen gadgets), whilst in the 1960s, food and diet became entwined with body image (Montanari 1994; Bell and Valentine 1997). Where culinary skills were extolled, via the expanding mass media of television and magazines, these tended towards either the haute cuisine model of the industrial era, or else, via food writers such as Elizabeth David, towards an exotic vision of Mediterranean cookery (Mason 1999). Overall, the recent past presents a destructive combination of forces in terms of close food-territory links.

It is only in recent decades in the UK that forces have emerged to 'revalorise' typical products and geographic proximity between food production and consumption. In the production domain, observations have already been made in the introduction about the turn towards quality, environmental sustainability and integrated rural

development, all of which might involve territorial specialisation of foods. In the consumption domain, recent decades have brought forth unprecedented food and meal options for UK consumers, set against a recent history of an eclipsed and decimated native food culture. In sociological terms, this leads to multiple possibilities in explaining food choice (Warde 1997): it may become more homogenous (Ritzer 1996); more fragmented and individualized (Fischler 1988); more clustered on the basis of changing special interests, e.g. vegetarianism or 'foodie'-ism (Beardsworth and Keil 1997); or more related to traditional markers like income or social class (Warde 1997). Against this background there is, however, more agreement on the consumption significance of typical products: symbolic of rurality, they represent means by which urbanites indulge nostalgic desires to return to rural roots (Montanari 1994; Bessièrè 1998); symbolic of craftsmanship, they represent an alternative set of production and exchange values (Terrio 1996), offering a moral and aesthetic anchor in the post-industrial world (Warde 1997; Amilien 1999). Foods associated with labour intensity also have an exotic appeal (Kupiec and Revell 1998), coinciding with a turn in fashion towards home cooking and entertaining. The shifting nature of these symbolic values is well noted by Montanari (1994) and Delamont (1995), who point out that in previous eras, foods symbolic of rusticity and artisanship (e.g. breads made from dark grains like rye) were accorded low status, whereas for the bulk of the population, refined, processed and convenience foods were prized for the liberation they represented from the tedious and often unpleasant labour entailed in making typical products. As Montanari (1994, p.159) asserts: "only a wealthy society can afford to appreciate poverty".

The preceding analysis brings forth a number of implications for the classic conceptualisation of typical products. It highlights the fallacy of conceiving of a pre-industrial era, frozen in time, that represents the cradle of typical food production: international trade, industrial production and market dynamics permeated this era, without which typical products would not have developed as they have. Neither should forces in the industrial era be conceived of as entirely antithetical to the development of typical products: the classic conceptual associations of typicity crystallised in this era. The analysis also identifies a number of cross-era forces critical to food-territory links: the role of social hierarchies in bestowing symbolic value to foods; the tendencies of entrepreneurial producers to mark identities and specifications for products in response to markets and competition; the inter-relationships and inter-dependencies between urban and rural areas with respect to the production, appreciation and usage of typical products. The next section draws on these forces to propose an alternative and broader classification of typical products, one that is grounded in a UK context and reflects its experience.

Typical Products in the UK: an Alternative Classification

Table 2 illustrates the alternative classification. The typology⁸ is intended as illustrative rather than definitive: the examples presented in each category are offered as particularly 'apt' to illustrate the combination of forces in each case, but the boundaries between them should be considered as overlapping rather than mutually exclusive. A typology approach is taken here partly to retain the detailed, grounded quality of the historical analysis (more difficult under a schematic approach), and

also to explicitly identify quite diverse products as manifestations of food-territory links. The five product categories all emerge from the same fundamental context of UK agro-food history, however it is the varying forces of industrialization, symbolic valuing, producer motivations, etc. that determine the distinctive features and development trajectories of each.

Table 2: *A classification of typical products in the UK*

	<i>Pre-industrial</i>		<i>Industrial</i>		<i>Post-industrial</i>	
1 <i>Classic</i>	Documented history of existence/reputation	→	Creation of producer associations/product specifications	→	Strong reputation/renown, PDO-eligible	eg. Stilton Cheese
2 <i>Appropriations</i>	Origins in widespread artisanal activity	→	Many small producers eclipsed by industrial activity; few persist through entrepreneurship	→	Remaining producers appropriate previously shared know-how	eg. Craster Kippers
3 <i>Re-inventions</i>	Origins in widespread artisanal activity	→	Practice dies out in face of industrialisation	→	Practices revived in face of revalorisation → Practices 'invented' in face of revalorisation	eg. Cornish Yarg, Extra Mature Welsh Beef
4 <i>19th Century Specialities</i>	Origins in artisanal activity	→	Branding of specific products to capture tourist/gift markets	→	Products retain strong speciality/gift symbolism	eg. Harrogate Toffee, Morecambe Bay Potted Shrimps
5 <i>Industrial Other</i>	Origins in medicinal/apothecary practices	→	Products gain renown through industrial scale manufacture	→	Products often have strong market close to local origins	eg. Vimto

Type 1. Classic Typical Products

This type refers to the classic conceptualization of typical products described at the start of the paper: small-scale, artisan-based agrarian production, organized on a collective basis, with products combining local raw materials with inherited customs of production. The preceding analysis demonstrates why so few products of this type exist currently in the UK and also why those producers who have been awarded PDO designations rarely conform to the classic model (Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000a). Industrial era forces of agricultural revolution, rural exodus, delocalisation of food production and consumption and upper class adoption of French culinary culture have combined with post-industrial era forces of agricultural efficiency drives, state marketing monopolies, supply chain concentration and post-war food policy to erode the context for classic typical foods to flourish. Stilton is one of the most apt examples of a British classic typical product: an artisanal cheese

made of local materials by an association of six cheese-makers today, with a long and unbroken history of production (to at least the early 1700s), and an official specification dating back to 1910 (Mason 1999). Further research is needed to trace the particular development pathways and critical incidents of such a case example, to identify how it has persisted in the face of adverse contextual forces.

Type 2. Appropriations

This category refers to present day products with territorial associations, whose producers are the remaining small-scale operators in sectors that once contained many artisanal suppliers. Fish smoking would be an example of this: originally an artisanal activity practised widely along the north east and Scottish coasts (Brown 1990), with localized distinction in techniques, forces such as mechanisation, standardisation, supply chain concentration and changing consumption patterns reduced the number of small-scale smokehouses over the course of the 20th century. An interpretation of what happened to the remaining producers who found strategies to survive, using entrepreneurial skills, is that they effectively undertook a process of appropriation of know-how once shared collectively in the area. 'Appropriation' refers both to the status of credibility and legitimacy conferred upon the remaining producers to deliver the typical product, and also to their tendency to personify and take ownership of the territory name as their product brand name. For example, the Craster Kipper was developed in the 1840s, from the traditional methods of smoking herring on the north east coast of England, specifically to meet the demand of the Newcastle and London markets⁹ (Mason 1999). Today the product is exclusively produced, and branded, by one remaining smokehouse in the village of Craster. Typical products appropriated in this way tend to have a speciality symbolic appeal, due in part to the rarity value they have developed, but also due to the effective and imaginative way in which their market-oriented producers have branded them.

Type 3. Re-inventions

This type refers to products created or re-created in recent decades, whose properties have some link to local territory either via their raw materials or the techniques of their production. Producers in this category are diverse in character, but often are not direct descendents of long-standing family enterprises in the area concerned. Small-scale cheese-making is an example. The destructive forces of the industrial era, combined with later agricultural policies, greatly reduced farm-based, artisanal cheese-making in the UK by the mid-20th century. The activity has gradually increased since the 1960s, in tandem with the 'revalorisation' forces in production and consumption domains described earlier. In some cases, products are assiduously faithful revivals which the cheese-makers themselves have inherited experience of (e.g. the traditional Lancashire cheese of Singletons Dairy (Tregear 2001b) and the traditional Cheshire cheese of Appletons (Blundel 2002)), or else, where the producers have come from other professional backgrounds, local expertise is consulted to verify authenticity (e.g. Swaledale cheese (Tregear 2001b)). Other UK artisanal cheeses are recent creations that either have only vague stylistic or identity references to an older typical product, or which are born out of completely

unrelated styles and traditions. Cornish Yarg is thought to be similar to a general style of cheese formally produced in the county of Cornwall, but the product itself was invented in the 1970s and is named after its inventors: Yarg is 'Gray' backwards (Mason 1999). Other Re-invention examples would be the recent explicit territorial branding of agricultural commodities such as beef, lamb or honey (e.g. 'Extra Mature Welsh Beef' (Marsden et al. 2000)). Importantly, it is recent revalorization forces that stimulate such revivals, raising complex issues about tradition and innovation, essential and symbolic typicity, and competition and collaboration, which require much further detailed study.

Type 4. 19th Century Specialities

These products have their origins in the late 19th century, when the forces of leisure and tourism market expansion, assisted in the UK by Queen Victoria's patronage of seaside and rural resorts, stimulated a demand for speciality food items associated with these places. Small-scale operators, again acting entrepreneurially, developed or re-branded products to meet this demand. An example is Morecambe Bay potted shrimps: a tradition of shrimping on the north west coast of England dates back to at least the late 1700s, but potted shrimps – cooked in butter and mace – became a popular delicacy with visitors who began to congregate in this emerging tourist area (Mason 1999). Another example is Harrogate Toffee: based on much older traditions of confectionary production, this was a craft-produced sweet created by grocer John Farrah in the Yorkshire town of Harrogate in the 1840s, which owed its flavour (lemon) and texture (hard, like a boiled sweet) to its use as a confection for ladies to take after tasting the bitter spa waters for which this resort town was fashionable (Mason 1999). Today, the symbolic appeal of these products reflects their origins as 19th century speciality items: indeed, both of the key present day producers of Morecambe Bay shrimps and Harrogate Toffee have royal warrants of usage (Tregear 2001b). Examples in this category highlight issues of origins and myth-making in food-territory links, in addition to those of markets, entrepreneurship and patronage by social elites.

Type 5. Industrial Other

These are products with properties perhaps least akin to the classic conceptualization of typical foods. They have their origins in pre-industrial traditions, but they developed as identifiable, branded products via industrial contexts and production processes. An example is Vimto, a berry and herb-based cordial manufactured today by J. Nichols Ltd. of Warrington, north west England. Based on the medieval practice of cordial-making for restorative and medicinal purposes (Burnett 1999), the product was first formulated in 1908, from 29 fruit and herb ingredients, originally as a health tonic. Via the temperance movement, designed to encourage sobriety amongst the working class population that industrial era forces had brought to the region, the product gained popularity as a healthful leisure drink (Mason 1999). The product then became adapted into a carbonated soft drink, the bottling of which was licensed to agents in a system of small to medium scale production and distribution quite distinct to urban areas of north west England and Scotland. Other examples

of this type are 'fancy' (i.e. not ship's) biscuits such as Bath Olivers or Abernethy biscuits: first developed by doctors and Quakers for medicinal use, they came to renown via industrial-scale manufacture, involving the employment of special baking machines (Goody 1982). With different symbolic values to many of the other product types in this classification, this category raises significant issues regarding degrees of industrialization in production processes and also associations of typical products with urbanity rather than rurality.

Discussion

The preceding analysis has presented an alternative classification of typical products based on the historical development of food-territory links in the UK. Cutting across the categories are common, repeated features: the balance producers strike between inheriting territorially distinctive resources and manipulating these, as symbols, to gain market advantage; the rolling out of operations across different horizontal and vertical network relationships; and the symbiosis of fluctuating scales and intensities of manufacture with the changing characteristics of consumption. Thus, it may be argued that both 'Classic' typical products like Stilton and 'Re-inventions' like Cornish Yarg represent a balance between inherited and symbolic typicity, the differences between them being incremental and temporal, rather than one being more 'authentic' than the other. The embeddedness of present day 'Re-inventions' and 'Appropriations' in networks of small firms that use regional identity as a springboard to differentiation echoes the collective systems of production in 'Classic' typical products, the difference being that the former networks are cross-sectoral rather than based on one product. Finally, different levels of production scale and intensity may be witnessed across and within the five product categories as producers choose how to engage with different consumption opportunities: some artisanal 'Re-inventions' may distribute the greater proportion of their output via national and international outlets, whilst some 'Industrial Other' firms find significant markets in their home, or neighbouring regions.

Echoes of these features can also be observed in classic Mediterranean typical products. For example, Casabianca and Coutron (1998) reveal the pragmatic process of negotiation undertaken by the producers of Prisetto de Corse to 'construct' their typical product, whilst Bérard and Marchenay (1995) describe the processes of myth-making surrounding the origins of Roquefort. The shifting boundaries of the production and supply networks of Parma Ham, described by Arfini and Mora (1998), illustrate the non-permanent nature of classic typical product collective systems, as does Moran's (1993) account of the licensing of the production of Bleu de Bresse in New Zealand. Modern technologies and mechanisation are characteristic of many of the most renowned Mediterranean typical products, reflecting choices made by their producers to engage with high volume urban and international markets: a balance illustrated well in de Roest and Menghi's (2000) discussion of Parmigiano-Reggiano production techniques and scales. Therefore, the classic Mediterranean concept of typical production as ancient, inherited, collective *savoir-faire*, whose existence is antithetical to the forces of industrialisation, internationalisation and free market capitalism, needs to be re-thought. The components of the concept themselves need to be examined in more sophisticated terms, as phenomena moving in symbiosis

with changing contexts and forces. The process of re-thinking would be enhanced by acknowledgement and incorporation of other countries' experiences and conventions relating to typicity in food. After all, if typical products have a role as identity markers and celebrations of cultures, they should be representative of those cultures.

The analysis presented here also raises the need for a reassessment of the tacit assumptions regarding the rural development benefits of classic typical products. In short, products do not need to accord with the classic concept to deliver these. For example in the north of England, producers of 'Re-inventions', 'Appropriations' and '19th Century Specialities' are often key players in local rural development networks, contributing to employment, skills enhancement, localized supply chains and community vibrancy (Tregear 2001b). In north west France, Gilg and Battershill (1998) also find non-conventional farmers contribute much to their local economy. In both cases, territorial distinctiveness may be a basis upon which socio-economic benefits are brought, but they are achieved neither with production systems based on prescribed collectives, nor with centuries-old specification histories. Indeed, the freedom of individuals to develop, innovate and engage flexibly in cross-sectoral networks, drawing from diverse professional backgrounds and life experiences, may contribute positively to socio-economic enhancements and biodiversity (Bérard and Marchenay 1995).

At the same time, examples can be found amongst some of the most renowned classic typical products of production realities that somewhat belie their symbolic associations, posing challenges as well as benefits for rural development. For example, Bessière (1998) refers to the 'factory tourism' of the Roquefort consortium, whilst Edwards and Casabianca (1997) highlight the animal welfare and environmental pollution problems associated with the scale and intensity of pig production in Parma Ham (worth comparing with Murdoch and Miele's (1999, p.469) comments about "huge industrial pig farms" of North Carolina). Products produced from distinctive local ingredients with age-old production histories may have great valorisation potential in the context of rural development (Bessière 1998). However it may be argued that they do not have a monopoly on ensuing rural development benefits. Whilst much policy and academic attention is paid to such products in Mediterranean countries and elsewhere, it is probable that other categories of typical product exist that are similar to the ones identified here for the UK. However, they receive less attention and less analysis because of the general preoccupation with one conceptualisation of typicity and its assumed benefits. The result is that products, producers and firms with much to offer rural and regional development may be overlooked and undervalued. Moreover, from an academic point of view, the opportunity is missed to examine empirical cases which challenge existing theories about typical products and their benefits, and which may stimulate moves towards whole new ways of thinking about this subject area.

Conclusion

The classic concept of typical products, based on Roman conventions, pervades the academic and policy debates about food in rural development and sets up norms about how food-territory links should be understood and valued. The analysis elaborated here illustrates how, if examination is grounded in the specific contexts and conventions

of another country, a different set of norms emerges and a more subtle and insightful picture ensues of the links between food and territory. Overall, a broadened concept of the typical product develops: the manifestation of the links between nature and culture, shaped by the actions and value systems of actors in production and consumption domains, in turn linked to macro social, economic and political forces. Thus, all typical products represent a mixture of tradition and innovation, physicality and symbolism, mechanization and craftsmanship, endogeneity and exogeneity, myths and realities. The preoccupation in some policy and academic circles of identifying, across these mixes, the products and systems that are 'more typical' than others, is distracting. Instead, a research agenda should be pursued that investigates the processes by which different mixes of properties emerge in different contexts, and that examines the consequences of these for socio-economic development. Such an agenda needs to be based on a recognition that all manifestations of food-territory links are of potential importance and relevance to rural development. Grounding investigations in the contexts and conventions of the specific geographic areas under study would be a useful basis for pursuing this agenda.

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Notes

- 1 Under this legislation, producers of typical products may apply to have their product names designated 'protected designation of origin' (PDO) or 'protected geographical indication' (PGI).
- 2 Thiedig and Sylvander (2000) use the term 'Roman' conventions to denote the particular legislative and administrative arrangements in France and Italy that regulate production and labelling of agro-food products by geographic origin. In wine for example, these countries have the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC) and *Denominazione di origine controllata* (DOC) systems, respectively. The arrangements are based on a strong cultural belief – identifiable elsewhere in southern Europe – in the relationship between geographic origin and special quality in agro-food products.
- 3 Currently 35 in the UK compared to 127 in France and 108 in Italy.
- 4 Data drawn from a survey of 55 out of 100 regional speciality food producers in south west England.
- 5 For example Symons (1982), cited in Mennell et al. (1992) describes Australia's cuisine as one of the 'worst in the world' because the country evolved rapidly from a hunter gatherer to an industrialized mode of food provisioning, with no stable period of landed peasantry in between.
- 6 For example in the south west, cider-making had been conducted on a localized scale since its introduction by the Normans in the 12th century, but by the end of the 19th century production was dominated by two large firms, Bulmers and Taunton Cider, who mass-produced an homogenous product (Twiss 1999).
- 7 Such specifications would often be the result of years of selective breeding and intervention to arrive at an ideal type bearing little relation to naturally occurring, wild species. For

example, the Berkshire pig breed was developed with bloodlines from Chinese and East Asian stock (Mason 1999). This reinforces the point that the processes of developing and specifying typical products are guided by their role as economic, marketable objects, as much as by their status as socio-cultural symbols.

- 8 Strictly speaking, it is a typology rather than a classification that is presented here, in that this is a study and interpretation of types. However, for the broad purposes of this paper, the terms 'classification' and 'typology' are employed inter-changeably, to denote a range of alternative categories based on a common theme.
- 9 'Kipper' originally referred to either smoked salmon or herring, but today is generally taken to denote the latter.

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