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***Fiat Panis: Food Security and Biopolitics in the Committee
for World Food Security***

By

Joshua Bowman

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Political Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2020

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Fiat Panis: Food Security and Biopolitics in the Committee for World Food Security

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The task of overseeing food security at an international scale is complicated by the multi-variable and complex nature of the problem. Nevertheless, much policy and governance work has been done through international, most of all through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Within the FAO, the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) formalizes food security policy, guidelines, and assessments, acting as the main food security governance body within the much broader FAO. Previous research has pointed out the presence of a food security governance system but has not interrogated how power can be understood within this system. I use Foucault's theory of biopolitics, along with critical discourse analysis and discursive institutionalism, to determine how the CFS enacts biopolitical governance through its discursive framework, and what tools the CFS uses to achieve this governance. I find that through both the CFS' heavy emphasis on food production as a solution to food insecurity and the comprehensive use of statistical analysis, a system of biopolitical governance is achieved.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my incredible and supportive wife, Ashley.

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I am so grateful to have the opportunity to pursue graduate studies. It has been a dream come true to be able to do full time research, and I couldn't have done it without the support of several individuals.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAAPD	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CFS	Committee for World Food Security
DES	Dietary Energy Supply
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EEC	European Economic Community
EPTA	Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organizations
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GSF	Global Strategic Framework
HFSI	Household Food Security Index
HLPE	High-Level Panel of Experts
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICA	International Commission on Agriculture
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IIA	International Institute of Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IO	International organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IUWFS	International Undertaking on World Food Security
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PPP	Purchasing power parity
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOFI	State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World
UN	United Nations
UNCFA	United Nations Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organizations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republic
VGRtF	Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food
VGFSN	Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition
WFB	World Food Board

WFS	World Food Summit
WFS PoA	World Food Summit Plan of Action
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The idea of food security as policy appears at first to be basic: humans need food to survive, therefore any governing body should do what it can to see that people are getting fed. This common-sense approach to food security is what often appears in policy discussions and white papers about the linkages between hunger, poverty, and development. Whether it is labelled as “food security,” “food insecurity,” or “hunger,” the ideas that constitute food security as a policy object can be seen in development and aid initiatives from popular events such as the Live Aid concerts in 1985, which set out to raise money for the concurrent famine in Ethiopia, to formalized policy initiatives at sub-national, national, and international levels. In these formal settings, food security is often tied to poverty reduction mechanisms. Using Canada as an example, food security consultations and policy research took place under the Wynne premiership in Ontario, resulting in a white paper placing Ontario’s first attempt at a provincial food security strategy under the government’s larger Poverty Reduction Strategy (Government of Ontario, 2017). At the national level in Canada, mention of food security can be found in Health Canada statistical models on the relationship between community health, income level and food security (Statistics Canada, 2007), although formal discussions of food security at the federal level often fail to produce meaningful policy results precisely because of the connection made by legislators between food security and poverty (McIntyre et al., 2018).

At the international level, the connection between poverty reduction and food security is even more explicit. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) previous policy goals listed the eradication of poverty and hunger together in the number one spot on the list, while the more recent iterations of these in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) places them in the top two policy priority spots (UNDP 2019). The linkage between poverty, development and food security can be seen in the justification for the "Zero Hunger" goal of the SDGs, which discusses extreme hunger, malnutrition, undernutrition, and food insecurity as directly related to limited market access, economic growth, infrastructure investment and productivity (UNDP, 2019).

This understanding of food security in relation to poverty and development is useful in a pragmatic sense for creating actionable and quantifiable goals, which is ultimately what the above examples seek. Moreover, the intersection of food security, development, and poverty, especially in the form of food aid programs that seek to solve multiple problems at once, has led to fruitful scholarship in both the social sciences and public health literature (Bassett, 2010; Drolet, 2012; Essex, 2010; Leonhäuser, 2013; Margulis, 2012; McMichael and Schneider, 2011). Yet situating food security solely in development and poverty discourse, and only as a problem of delivering aid to the poorest, is just one way to understand how food security functions as a policy in international politics.

Another way to understand food security as international policy is through the discourse of global governance, here termed as "food security governance". The

distinction between food security governance and food aid is slight but important and is seen in the scope of the two concepts: food aid discourse is just one part of food security governance, which is broader in scope. While discussions about food aid look to the practical implications of food security policy, food security governance describes decision-making processes and resulting discourse within dynamic institutional and organizational structures, often, although not necessarily, at the international level of governance, and particularly within the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It is this concept that is the central focus of this thesis.

While it is possible to give descriptors of food security governance as policy, it is difficult to pin down what specifically is meant by the concept. Some recent scholarship (Candel, 2014; Allen, 2013) argues that there is a lack of consensus on what exactly is meant by “food security governance,” and that this poses a major problem for the literature moving forward. Yet as Duncan and Claeys argue, this may be a feature of the concept, rather than a bug. They argue that food security is a highly dynamic concept that exists in ever-changing political and economic contexts, and that as a governance problem food security evades basic, neutral diagnosis and solutions (Duncan and Claeys, 2018). Candel also observes this theme of complexity and lack of clear solutions, arguing that food security governance is “characterized by a high degree of complexity,” and that governance itself is often used as “a challenge and a solution to food security” (2014: 586).

The complexity of food security as a subject of governance means that it is usually beyond the ability of individual states to deal with (Margulis, 2013). Yet, as Candel (2014) notes, the literature is clear that there is also no single, authoritative governance body dealt the responsibility of governing food security, and instead that responsibility is spread across multiple, and often overlapping, organizations and forums. Despite Candel's analysis, there is consensus on the presence of an international or global food system, (Friedmann, 1982; Hopkins, 1992; Butcel and Goodman, 1989; Gustafon and Markie, 2009) which although marked by complexity, is centered around the main food governance institution, the FAO.

The FAO is a Specialized Agency of the UN, which is a grouping of agencies tasked with technical and regulatory objectives. These agencies exist under the supervision of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which along with the UN General Assembly (UNGA), International Court of Justice (ICJ), UN Security Council (UNSC), Secretariat, and Trusteeship council, make up the principal organs of the UN body. The FAO's primary objective is to ensure secure food for the world, often accomplished through policy recommendations, setting international food and nutrition standards, and promoting technological and economic mechanisms to assist with agricultural production ("About FAO," 2019).

Because of the complexity of food security governance, the unevenness of economic and political power, and the central discursive framework focused on the regulation of food, I examine the role of the FAO, and specifically the Committee of World Food Security (CFS) through a biopolitical lens. The work of Foucault and to a

lesser extent Agamben help illustrate the main questions of this thesis: how does the discursive framework of the CFS enact a system of biopolitical governance? And what biopolitical tools does the CFS use in order to regulate a central force of life, that is to say, food?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Three main themes in the existing literature help direct and situate this research. First, this thesis examines the literature on global governance. While broad, this discussion provides a solid foundation on which following sections will be built upon. This includes a look at what is meant by “global governance,” how it functions in practise through international soft laws, the evolution of governance norms, and what global governance means for international institutions and organizations like the FAO, especially with regards to ideas of legitimacy. This last point on legitimacy is particularly important to discuss since it plays a part in the next section on international organizations and their day-to-day functioning.

Since this research is heavily focused on the analysis of FAO food security discourse, it is important to contextualize the entire project within the literature on international institutions. This section looks primarily at the structural aspects of international institutions. To this end, it explores research done on internal and external forces of influence within international institutions, the functioning of specialized agencies, the role of soft laws within institutions like the FAO, and research on the functioning of the FAO.

The third and final section of the literature review examines research on food security governance in theory and practise. The theoretical aspects of food security governance situate food security within the literature of global governance more broadly in order to understand how food security functions as an object of governance. This discussion then moves to a look at the literature on food security governance in practise, which focuses on the way that institutional and bureaucratic systems at the international level act on food security as a policy issue.

THEORY AND METHOD

The theoretical and methodological section of this paper function to not only frame the research done on FAO discourse, but help to synthesize this research with the literature discussed in the previous section. To do this, this section discusses three theoretical frameworks that build off each other to fully contextualize the research done in the proceeding sections. Building off the last point discussed in the literature review, the first theoretical framework explored is Foucault's biopolitics and its role in the global governance of food security. Using the works of Foucault and Agamben, and other theoretical works such as Roberts' *Biopolitics and Global Governance* (2010), the aim of this discussion is to use biopolitics as a tool for understanding the FAO as an institution at the intersection of human security and global governance.

Second, this chapter discusses the methodological frameworks of critical discourse analysis, which helps shape the discussion of the discursive functions of the CFS. This methodology is particularly important since the work that I analyze is

CFS Session reports, assessments and policy papers. Although this methodology could stand alone to provide a solid analytical framework, I include a third theoretical and methodological concept in order to provide depth of analysis and applicability to an international organizational setting, providing a discussion of discursive institutionalism, which is a more recent addition to the “new institutionalism” methodological school. Relying on the works of Schmidt (2010; 2011), St. Clair (2006), and Weiler (2009), this discussion helps anchor the theoretical discussion in the institutional settings where actors form and deploy discursive framings and concepts.

THE FAO AND THE CFS

Chapter 4 focuses on the story of the FAO and food security governance in the CFS, providing both a historical context for understanding food security governance at the international level, and also the subject of my analysis in Chapter 5. The chapter begins with a brief history of the FAO, which focuses on the internal and external factors that shaped key policy decisions and organizational changes, including the post-war peace, the technocracy of the Cold War era, the transformative 1996 World Food Summit. This is followed by a short explanation of what role the FAO plays in the UN system, in order to provide the current larger organizational context for the FAO. Finally, this chapter looks at the CFS from 1976, when it was created, until the most recent session in 2019. This section is split into two parts to focus on two major areas of the CFS’ work. First, I look at the global food security assessments conducted by the Committee to understand how they

view food security. Second, I look at the policy decisions and guidelines recommended by the Committee to understand their responses to their assessments, and to see how they frame food security governance.

BIOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS

In chapter 5, the groundwork set out in chapter 4 is analyzed through a biopolitical lens. I accomplish this by looking at two major themes that emerge in the Committee's discourse on food security governance and assessments: production and statistics. These two themes, which are derived from the assessments and policy documents of the CFS show food security governance to be biopolitical in nature. Following Foucault, I argue that the failure of the CFS to regulate food security itself, instead focusing its institutional logic and power on producing and managing populations through statistical measurement and analysis, is precisely what makes it biopolitical in nature. I conclude by reflecting on and discussing the limitations of this research and providing possible avenues for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Global Governance

One of the primary themes of the existing literature on global governance is how international institutions operate, especially focusing on the normative and administrative function of those institution's bureaucracies. Further, the discourse on global governance must be contended with, since it has permeated discussions of international relations, the politics of international institutions, and the study of world politics to such an extent that "global governance" has come to be a catch-all phrase for anything that might occur politically on a global scale. In order to provide focus and limit the universalizing aspects of the concept of global governance, this section is broken down into three parts. First, I look at the definition and debates on how to define global governance. Second, I discuss international law and global governance as a fundamentally regulatory force. Finally, I briefly look at the literature on global governmentality as a bridge to connect the literature on global governance to the theoretical lens of biopolitics and governmentality applied below.

"WHAT IS GLOBAL GOVERNANCE?" – DEBATES ON MEANING

Defining global governance as a concept faces two challenges: first, the concept itself is contested, and second, there is a debate within the literature on where to start methodologically in defining the global governance. (Ba and Hoffman, 2005; Dingwerth and Pattberg, 2006; Hofferberth, 2015; Overbeek et al., 2010). Hofferberth argues that because "global governance" is used to signify a multiplicity of larger ideas in international relations, it is best to understand global governance

as a “slippery concept” which fundamentally lacks specificity (2015: 598-617). This ambiguity provides conceptual strength for Hofferberth, since it allows for a flexible framework through which global politics can be best understood and analyzed (2015: 602). This position offers a view into the complexity of the concept itself but does not provide a way forward in the meta-debate. Instead, Hofferberth’s argument can be understood to be part of a larger debate over whether global governance is primarily an analytical concept or a normative concept. Dingwerth and Pattberg (2006: 189, 195) frame the governance debate in this way, contending that the normative view of global governance considers the concept as a highly political framework through which to view international political interactions, characterized by a “discursive struggle over who decides what for whom,” while an analytical view of global governance considers the concept as a way to process “observable phenomenon” such as the mechanisms underpinning systems of rule, the “plethora of forms of social organization”. Put simply, the normative view of global governance sees it as ambiguous and value-laden but not referring to any particular phenomenon, while the analytical view of global governance is equated with already existing phenomenon and the material conditions of world politics.

Hofferberth’s conceptualization of global governance as a “slippery concept” and ambiguous framework can be seen as an argument for a normative understanding of global governance. On the other hand, Dodds argues that global governance is a purely analytical concept because it generally refers to collective political action, dealing with norms and values as well as laws, that exceeds the management capabilities of any one state (2016, 98). Similarly, Overbeek et al. argue

for an analytical reading of global governance, since in their view global governance fundamentally functions as a regulatory and institutional ensemble “to manage the conditions for the global mobility and accumulation of capital” (2010: 699). For the authors, global governance necessarily suggests that there is something concrete to govern, and that this governance has a distinct and unambiguous socio-political and class-based character (Overbeek et al. 2010, 699, 708). For Brachthäuser, the process of making sense of global governance is the process of ordering these socio-political structures and the “complex relationships and multi-level interactions” between them (2011: 222).

In their review of the literature on global governance, Ba and Hoffmann (2005) created a loose taxonomy of phenomena that scholars signify when they write about global governance. They found that these phenomena include international regimes, international society, hegemonic stability, dynamics of globalization, the pursuit of an international organization’s (IO) goals, global change, transformation in the global political economy, world government, and global civil society. Biermann et al. cluster together these often-interconnected phenomena into what they call the “architectures” of global governance, which encapsulate the complex relationships between the regimes, norms, and institutions that make up global governance (2000: 15). Wilkinson and Hughes, cited in Grugel and Piper, argue along the same lines, stating that global governance is simply “the various patterns in which global, regional, national, and local actors combine to govern particular areas” (Wilkinson and Hughes, 2002: 2; Grugel and Piper, 2007: 7). Brachthäuser argues that these phenomena point to “complex processes of social

pattern formation” that are characterized by self-organization, management, and regulation (2011: 222). Of these three characteristics, it is regulation that is often the primary site of global governance, as Carin et al. note that global governance is “always part of multilayered regulation” (2006; 3).

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AS REGULATORY

The regulatory aspect of global governance comes in to play as governance challenges deepen in complexity, as Cadham and Manicom argue (2013: 242). That is, global governance efforts result in the “cross-cutting proliferation of discrete policy responses” in a multilayered and complex governance environment (Cadham and Manicom, 2013: 242). These policy responses are often created through quasi-legislative mechanisms so that governance can be legitimized as soft international law, or in other words, as regulatory (Abbott and Snidal, 2000: 241). Here soft international law refers to legal mechanisms with little to no binding power, as opposed to hard laws, which impose binding rights and responsibilities. International law provides a common framework through which the regulatory aspect of global governance can be enacted (Diehl et al., 2003: 43). I provide a brief discussion of the literature on international law and global governance to understand not only the discussion of the regulatory aspects of global governance, but also the creation of norms within international institutions and the politics of knowledge production, which I discuss in more detail below.

The common framework of international law provides a space for the interactive production of global governance of multi-scalar actors mentioned above

(Wilkinson and Hughes, 2002: 2; Grugel and Piper, 2007: 7). Brunée and Toope argue that law and legal norms, when used to justify the processes and “broad substantive ends” of global governance, allows for the creation of “shared rhetorical knowledge” (2000: 206). For Sands and Klein, the creation, elaboration, and negotiation of this shared rhetorical knowledge is a fundamental characteristic of international institutions, who are tasked with acting out global governance formally (2009: 267). Since these institutions are not able to make laws in a traditional sense (that is, with any direct legal consequences for those involved or sovereign legitimacy), the legal characteristic of global governance is purely symbolic (Sands and Klein, 2009: 268). Although this symbolic form of law-making was intended by the founders of international institutions (Sands and Klein 2009: 291), there is some recognition in the literature that the regulatory character of global governance and international law has become much more central to the overall global governance project (Cogan, 2011; De Silva, 2017; Kourula et al., 2019).

For Cogan, this framework over the past two decades has taken the shape of what he calls a “regulatory turn” in international law, where international institutions and actors dictate precise provisions required to be adopted at national and subnational levels (2011: 322). Most importantly, Cogan notes that the regulatory turn has seen international institutions dealing with specific individuals, rather than with national and regional governments (2011: 322). This has affected several areas of international law, such as international criminal and facilitative law, which are of particular interest to Cogan. He argues that the second half of the twentieth century, and especially the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union saw an increase

in the usage of sanctions on individuals and calls for the creation of international criminal tribunals to deal with individuals (Cogan, 2011: 348). There has also been an impact to the way global governance is enacted through international law in what Cogan calls “mediated laws,” by which he refers to treaty law and conventions (2011: 349). He claims that while this area of international law is highly varied, there is a general trend towards state obligations within treaties and conventions becoming highly detailed, where previously there was discretionary space allowed for states to work out elaboration, enactment, and enforcement at the national level (Cogan, 2011: 351).

The regulatory turn in international law as part of the overall managerial character of global governance makes up what Roberts understands to be the mainstream view of global governance found within traditional international relations scholarship (2010: 27, 46). He argues that this view sees global governance as “functional and necessary to manage the unevenness of tumultuous globalization” or as the “governance without government” understanding of global governance (Roberts, 2010: 27-28). Yet this traditional perspective, as shown by Roberts, does not bother to ask who or what is doing the managing or regulating or how knowledge and power function within this global regulatory system beyond the narrow realist reading of power (Roberts, 2010: 46). Roberts notes that for realists, power in global governance takes the form of “manic outburst” rather than a chronic presence, or something inherent to the concept. This narrow reading of power is exemplified in Barnett and Duvall, who argue that power is simply the phenomenon of one state using its material resources to “compel another state to do something it does not want

to do” (2006: 40) For Roberts, these questions are unanswered by global governance scholarship simply because of the “primary perception of its subject matter in terms of technocratic ‘solutions’ to institutional problems” (2010: 165). This points to the growth in critical literature on global governance and the resulting concept of global governmentality.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL GOVERNMENTALITY

Building off of scholarship on the regulatory aspects of global governance, Halabi argues that global governance as a primarily regulatory phenomenon points to a system of power between developed and developing countries (2004: 21) That is, developed countries seek the expansion of global regulatory regimes to “regulate the behaviour” of developing states, while the acceptance of global governance and its regulations “marks the acceptance of regulations at the global level out of a conviction that such regulation will enable actors to seek wealth in an orderly fashion” (Halabi, 2004: 21). While this acceptance appears to imply an even playing field, the control and regulatory aspects of global governance remain well within the domain of developed countries who use it push for political and economic convergence, with countries who do not comply punished, or at the very least refused any benefits (Halabi, 2004: 33). The regulatory character of global governance is therefore tied to the necessities of global capital accumulation. Brand and Görg argue that the reproduction of global capitalist society can be regarded as missing a “steering centre,” or a centralized force of consistency and durability, necessitating governmental institutions. At a global scale, these institutions take the shape of global regulatory bodies such as the UN and its various branches (Brand

and Görg 2008: 573). This is compounded by national-scale market deregulation and privatization, increasing nation-state dependence on global capital, and therefore global regulatory systems (Brand and Görg, 2008: 574).

This phenomenon makes up what Roberts, citing Cox, calls “global governance as hegemony” (2010: 32). For Roberts, hegemony constructs and projects “the potential for wealth and security” and the hegemonic power itself exerts that power “through the manipulation of knowledge and the production of legitimacy, subjective normality, and ‘common sense’” (2010: 32-33). Burnham argues, in a synthesis of the points raised above and the ideas of neo-Gramscians such as Cox and Gill, that an international hegemonic order emerges with the successful creation of an international historic bloc of social power that is based on “the articulation of a dominant ideology accepted by a subordinate group” (1991: 76-77). This interaction between a dominant and subordinate group, in Roberts’ view, shows global governance to be a biopolitical force in that there is a disciplining of international systems of governance (2010: 37). This results in all members of the international system conforming to liberal political values by “reaching into supposedly sovereign territory and, where conformity is absent, punishing a state and its people” (Roberts, 2010: 37).

The concept of global governmentality starts the process of bringing together a view of global governance and international politics based not only on the materialist critiques above but also the role of, and relationships between, power, knowledge and subjectivity in global governance, which tie into the concept of

biopolitics discussed in depth later. Governmentality, a concept elucidated by Foucault, describes three primary ideas. First, governmentality refers to the assemblage of “institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections...that allow for the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power” through a knowledge system of political economy and the technical “apparatuses of security.” Second, governmentality for Foucault refers to the long-term tendency throughout the West for this form of this type of power, resulting in the formation of “a whole series of specific governmental apparatuses,” and the development “of a whole complex of knowledges.” Finally, Foucault argues that governmentality is the long term and historical trend for government to move from a “state of justice” to an “administrative state” which he refers to as state systems becoming “governmentalized” (Foucault, 2003: 244).

Building off of Foucault’s concept of governmentality, Larner and Walters present global governmentality as filling a conceptual gap in understanding the “tactics, techniques, and technologies” that constitute governance of spaces beyond the state (2004: 1). They argue that this approach to understanding international governance allows scholars to “consider how governing involved particular representations, knowledges, and often expertise” within governed spaces beyond the state (Larner and Walters, 2004: 2). They further argue that while global governmentality does share with global governance the perspective that governance does not necessarily come from a single source, global governmentality allows for a specific focus on the “particular sets of forces, institutions, desires, and fears and constitute them as specific territorializations” (Larner and Walters, 2004: 16). In

this sense governmentality is a “loose set of analytical tools,” but this inherent weakness, for Walters, provides flexibility and adaptability that is able to account for the “subtle shifts in the rationalities, technologies, strategies, and identities of governance” (Walters, 2012: 3). The differences and similarities of global governance and global governmentality are described more in depth by Weidner, who argues that fundamentally, both perspectives attempt to seek out the source or sources of rule and order in “the absence of a clear state-based international order” (2009: 390). For Weidner, what separates the global governmentality perspective from other readings of global governance is the focus on the relationship between the production of subjectivity and the structures and relations of power constituted by governmental systems, which he argues is ignored both by liberal scholarship on global governance (2009: 390-391). Weidner argues further that the strength of global governmentality is precisely its ability to account for the way that underlying socio-political forces are “inscribed in thought” such that discourses of the global are “seen as a particular form of power/knowledge that makes possible and also forecloses different kinds of political practises and arrangements” (2009: 410).

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Global governance in theory expresses the forms and methods of socio-political power of international institutions. For Abbot and Snidal, international institutions offer states “functional attributes” through which global governance can be facilitated. Crucially, they argue that the primary functions of international institutions for state actors can be found in the centralizing and independent aspects of those organizations (Abbot and Snidal, 2005: 31-47). Moreover, they find

that beyond a state-centric viewpoint, IOs act also as community representatives and enforcers, setting norms and values for issue areas (Abbott and Snidal, 2005: 48). Looking at international institutions through a neo-Gramscian perspective, Cox argues that international institutions function as the “process through which the institutions of hegemony and its ideology are developed” by embodying the rules that allow for the expansion of a hegemonic international order, achieving legitimacy and support primarily from hegemonic actors, authenticating and justifying the ideological norms of the world order, co-opting elites from peripheral countries, and absorbing counter-hegemony (1983: 172). Yet Woods argues that this sole focus on formal international institutions as the sole organ of global governance misses the fact that the processes of global governance are increasingly being undertaken by formal and informal institutions, institutional networks, complexes, and arrangements, beyond the gaze of the public and increasingly without the direct control of governments (2002).

While there is clearly contention over the primary site of global governance, there is no doubt that international institutions and organizations are a major part of the processes and structure of global governance. This section therefore reviews the literature on international institutions, focusing on three main themes. First, the theme of legitimacy and legitimization is discussed. Second, recent literature on international regime complexes is explored. Finally, literature on the role of norms and the discursive practises of international institutions is considered.

LEGITIMACY

The perennial question of international institution legitimacy is a key theme in the literature on IOs since legitimacy informs the broader functioning of these organizations and their fundamental ability to govern. This is especially true for Keohane, who argues that IO legitimacy takes a normative shape in that it asserts the institution's "right to rule" (2011: 99). Using a liberal democratic framework, Keohane explores what conditions are necessary for institutions to be considered legitimate (2011: 99). He argues that the standards of liberal democracy should be used to assess legitimacy at the international level, but that the threshold for meeting those standards should be low so as to allow for a greater ability to distinguish between institutions (Keohane 2011: 100). Keohane lists six measurable yet purposefully dynamic criteria by which observers and analysts can assess legitimacy, allowing for a set normative standard. These six measurable criteria are minimum moral acceptability, inclusiveness, epistemic quality, accountability, compatibility with national governance structures, and comparative benefit between institutions (Keohane 2011: 101-103). The assertion that legitimacy is measurable in a meaningful way is problematized by Cerutti, who argues that any debate about legitimacy at the international level assumes an answer to the question "legitimacy for whom?" (2011, 124). The problem for Cerutti is that assessing the legitimacy of IOs presupposes the ability to "determine the values and interests of such a universal, but fragmented group" (2011, 124). Unlike Keohane, who argues for a set of universal criteria on which legitimacy can be judged, Cerutti argues that legitimacy is not universalizable at the international level and instead

must be determined on a narrow, case-by-case basis (2011, 125). Panke adds to this discussion by arguing that states and state delegates within institutions sometimes are unable or unwilling to participate because of “real world structural differences between states,” which results in negative implications for legitimacy in those actor states (2017: 123, 138).

Brasset and Tsingou find that any attempt to positively identify legitimacy at an international level, just as Keohane and Cerutti have attempted, simply points to the ambiguity of the term (2011: 1). Further, they argue that attempting to positively define legitimacy quickly moves from ambiguity to contestability, since “one man’s legitimacy is another man’s domination” (Brasset and Tsingou, 2011: 2). Crucial to Brasset and Tsingou’s exploration of the topic of legitimacy is the balance they argue for between legitimacy and legitimization, where legitimization is a dynamic social process, rather than the static ideals of legitimacy strictly defined (2011: 3).

Ultimately, the disagreement over how legitimacy should be framed and defined is overshadowed by the fact that legitimacy is still assumed to be a feature of global governance and international institutions, regardless of the shape it takes. For Tallberg and Zürn, legitimacy is a fundamental characteristic of international organizations that informs the “long-term capacity to deliver” on policies and issue areas in the eyes of national governments and the public (2019: 1). They argue, like Keohane, that legitimacy is an observable, empirical, yet varying concept that generally refers to the “beliefs of audiences that an IO’s authority is appropriately

exercised” (Tallberg and Zürn, 2019: 2). For the authors, legitimacy takes place through the dynamic process of legitimation (and delegitimation), which can be observed discursively through the texts and speech acts of institutions, or behaviourally through the “rules, procedures, or policies put in place by IOs with the aim to strengthen legitimacy” (Tallberg and Zürn, 2019: 8).

This process of legitimation is further explored by Gronau and Schmidtke. Using the Weberian concept of “legitimate rule,” they argue that processes and strategies of legitimation differ depending on the constituencies addressed (2016: 537). For the authors, legitimation is the interactive dynamic between authority on the one hand, and constituencies, who in this case consist of nations, the public, and also the civil servants who work within the international institutions (Gronau and Schmidtke, 2016: 537, 539). This interactive process of legitimation is based on “the insight that individuals do not attribute legitimacy to international institutions in a societal vacuum but are constantly influenced by many factors” such as policy and data output, crises, and legitimacy claims by other competing or interactive actors (Gronau and Schmidtke, 2016: 539). They argue that legitimation strategies are “goal-oriented activities employed to establish and maintain a reliable basis of diffuse support for a political regime by its social constituencies” (Gronau and Schmidtke, 2016: 540). The main contribution of Gronau and Schmidtke though is the incorporation of bureaucratic actors into the legitimation equation. With their usage of the Weberian “legitimate rule,” they take on Weber’s emphasis on the bureaucratic core of institutions, whose obedience to the institution for whom the bureaucrats work is tied to the bureaucrats’ belief in the legitimacy of that

institution (Gronau and Schmidtke, 2016: 544). In this case then, IOs use legitimation strategies employed to cultivate “positive legitimacy beliefs within an institution’s staff” by creating belief in the virtues of conformity and formal, procedural, yet abstract, “codification of impersonal rules” (Gronau and Schmidtke, 2016: 545).

The bureaucratic aspect of international organizations is a central point of this research and makes up an important component of internal influence within an organization. Yet the topic of international regime complexes must be addressed in order to understand external organizational influences on the functioning of international organizations.

INTERNATIONAL REGIME COMPLEXES

The discussion of the governance implications of the relationships between international institutions has been present since the post-World War II emergence of IOs as we know them today. Yet Ruggie finds that we are currently witnessing a “fundamental discontinuity” in the international political space (1993: 143). Writing at the end of the Cold War and the subsequent overhaul of the international system, Ruggie argues that the discontinuities, that is, the changes that the international system is undergoing, point to the possible emergence of postmodern modes of configuring and reconfiguring political space (1993: 144). For Ruggie, this takes the shape of an “unbundling of territoriality” as the force of the transformation of capitalist production fragments and, by virtue of “the logic of late capitalism,” reunifies the space (1993: 147, 171). It is this fragmented/unified space that Elsig

explores, arguing that part of understanding the functioning of modern-day international institutions is analyzing the “material and social preferences” of the proximate principals (agents that can act as principal or agent) within the organization (2010: 510). Using a principal-agent framework and focusing primarily on the relationship between states and the secretariats of different international organizations, Elsig finds that international organizations are constituted by the dynamic relationship between the organization, civil servants, and state actors (“sovereign principals”), who all act in some capacity as a principal and in that way gain influence (2010: 499-500). Yet Manulak argues that this focus on the internal aspects of principal-agent relationships between secretariats and sovereign principals is simplified and misses two key points. First, the presence of multiple state principals within international organizations leads to competing views on the formation of secretariats and institutional design more broadly (Manulak, 2017: 517). Second, at a micro-scale focused on the day-to-day political functioning of international organizations, it becomes clear that there is a high susceptibility to “informal modes of influence” (Manulak, 2017: 517). Both of these issues point towards an external force that shapes the functioning of international organizations. While Manulak and Elsig might point to the state as the primary external force, the literature explored below shows that the interaction between international organizations in “regime complexes” has become a powerful source of influence and fundamental site for working out global governance. A major point of debate among those looking at global governance is the importance and influence of the internal minutiae of IO functions, and whether and to what extent international regime

complexes act as an external force shaping and even determining those functions and their effects.

Simply put, an international regime complex is the phenomenon of overlapping, nested or parallel international organizations outside of a hierarchical ordering system (Alter and Meunier, 2009: 13). Alter and Meunier argue that the major issue with regime complexes is that they blur the lines of legal obligation “by introducing overlapping sets of legal rules and jurisdictions governing an issue” (2009: 17). For the authors, regime complexity leads not only to this fragmentation of law and rules within and between organizations, but leads to forum-shopping, an increased reliance on heuristics because of the blurring of rules and standards, a shift towards the formation of insular small groups within institutions, and the undermining of accountability through the increased difficulty of determining who has jurisdiction over what issue area (Alter and Meunier 2009: 16-20). For Raustiala and Victor, the proliferation of international regime complexes is a product of the more general increase in institutional density since the end of the Cold War (2004: 295). Using an analysis of the institutional regime complexity on plant genetic resources, they argue that regime complexes mark a shift in the site of institutional action away from “elemental regimes,” a term used Raustiala and Victor to refer to groupings of international agreements, towards “legal inconsistencies that tend to arise at the joints between regimes” (Raustiala and Victor, 2004: 306). Moreover, they find that whereas these elemental regimes often make rules on a “clean institutional slate,” the ambiguity of regime complex rules emerge from a dense backdrop of rules, which leads to those legal inconsistencies (Raustiala and Victor,

2004: 306). Ultimately, this shifts the method of rule change towards a bottom-up system, away from the traditionally assumed top-down approach (Rausitala and Victor, 2004: 306).

Gehring and Faude argue that these characteristics of emerging institutional regime complexes establish “permanent patterns of institutional co-governance” and the necessity for inter-institutional divisions of labour (2014: 473). Focusing primarily on regulatory institutional complexes, the authors differ from other scholars examining regime complexes by arguing that the preference for functional overlap may be a “purposive action of state actors” in order to drive competition within institutions as those actors vie for power (Gehring and Faude, 2014: 474-475). This is done primarily through forum-shopping, where state actors can strategically choose institutional alignment that best suits their policy needs (Gehring and Faude, 2014: 476). This competition is also present externally, between institutions that are intertwined within functional overlap. Gehring and Faude argue that institutions performing similar tasks within similar issue areas must compete over governance functions and resources, and ultimately authority over the area of functional overlap (2014: 475). For Urpelainen, states can exert this power-based pursuit within IOs, especially on bureaucrats, because of the permeable nature of international organizations (2012: 708).

Overlapping functional areas and forum-shopping are explored in greater depth by Busch. Busch, analyzing dispute settlement mechanisms within the WTO, argues that forum-shopping provides a way for complainants to shape future

governance by determining between overlapping membership, allowing for a choice on whether or not to set a precedent on a given measure (2007: 735). That is, the legal victory of a complainant over a defendant in an international dispute mechanism has future ramifications on its relationship between itself and other members of that institution, therefore institutional actors forum-shop in order to determine where a precedent would be more useful (Busch, 2007: 757). Busch notes that there are two implications from his findings on the larger picture of forum-shopping beyond international trade disputes. First, he argues that forum-shopping shows that who is allowed within institutions can end up being an institutional constraint, since it determines who will be allowed to have standing at negotiations (Busch, 2007: 758). Second, forum-shopping points towards a deeper understanding of institutional design, since, if it is promoted, institutions are seen to be “investing in flexibility” (Busch, 2007, 758).

Abstracted from member decision-making to the level of institutions as primary actors, forum-shopping becomes institutional deference, which is discussed by Pratt (2018). He argues that institutional deference is a coordinated attempt at rulemaking within a fragmented global governance arena and is vital to the functioning of multilateral cooperation and decision-making (Pratt 2018: 562). Just like forum-shopping, deference has a decentralizing effect as institutions use it to “successfully resolve jurisdictional conflicts in the absence of clear legal hierarchy” within a system of fragmented, independent rulemaking by institutions (Pratt, 2018: 563-564). From a legal perspective, deference mimics the legal principle of “conflicts of laws” as institutions with seemingly identical jurisdiction and rule sets

attempt to determine, and ultimately delegate authority through deference (Pratt, 2018: 567).

INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSE AND NORM DIFFUSION

The fundamental issue at the heart of international regime complexes are the rules and norms of the institutions. Meyer and Rowan argued thirty years ago that the process of institutionalization is at its core a process “by which social processes...come to take on rule-like status in social thought and action” (1977, 341). They argue that institutions become structured around the “myths of their institutional environment” (Meyer and Rowan, 1977: 341). Moreover, they argue that it is the norms and rules of institutions which act as the place and mechanisms of legitimization, since “institutions inevitably involve normative obligations...which must be taken into account by actors” (Meyer and Rowan, 1977: 341). Barnett and Finnemore take Meyer and Rowan’s ideas a step further when they argue that the power of international institutions to set norms stems from the rational-legal authority granted to international organizations (1999: 699). This rational-legal authority is embodied by and embedded within the bureaucracies that make up international organizations (Barnett and Finnemore, 1999: 700). For the authors, while IO bureaucracies gain legitimacy through their relationship with states, the recognitions of the embeddedness of a rational-legal authority within the bureaucracies helps to move away from seeing IOs simply as arenas for state pursuit of global governance goals towards IOs being purposive actors themselves (Barnett and Finnemore, 1999: 726). With this autonomy and authority, Barnett and Finnemore argue that IOs use their ability to structure knowledge to act to classify

the world, fix meanings in the social world, and “articulate and diffuse new norms, principles, and actors” around the globe (1999: 710).

In *Rules for the World*, Barnett and Finnemore contend that starting an analysis of international organizations from the assumption that they are inherently bureaucracies helps to generate a different set of expectations, away from the traditional focus of IOs as simple problem-solving, welfare-improving governmental bodies that are vacuous until a state actor act through them (2004: viii, ix). They argue that this traditional focus quickly falls apart when international organizations are seen developing and pursuing their own ideas and agendas (2004: 2). When it comes to norms and discourse, Barnett and Finnemore find that IOs viewed as bureaucratic actors can be seen as shaping “both how the world is constituted” and the global governance agenda need “for acting in it” (2004: 7). This view of institutions fits within Lieberman’s concept of the “ideational approach” to understanding international organizations (2002: 698). This approach places ideas at the centre of institutional decision making, moving away from traditional institutional theories which take the aims and actions of individuals as purely rational and always a given (Lieberman, 2002: 698). Anderson expands on this, arguing that “political actors’ interests are not mutually pre-determined” but are rather “constructed ideationally” and dynamically in response to normative beliefs (2008: 278). The ideational process as it relates to institutional policy change is best articulated by Béland, who argues that ideational processes “impact the ways policy actors perceive their interests and the environment in which they mobilize (2009: 701). Béland uses Parsons’ definition of ideas, which are “claims about descriptions

of the world, causal relationships, or the normative legitimacy of certain actions” (Parsons, 2002: 48 in Béland, 2009: 702). For Béland, there are three ways that ideational processes impact actors in this way: through shaping “the problems and issues that enter the policy agenda,” by constructing “the assumptions that impact the content of reform proposals,” and lastly by becoming “discursive weapons” in the formation of imperatives (2009: 702).

In practise, a focus on norms and ideas in institutions allows for a broader understanding of how institutions function. In tracing the theoretical approaches of norm creation through United Nations gender equality initiatives, Krook and True find that the dominant (constructivist) perspective of norms at the international level tends to see norms as fixed and bounded ideas (2012: 104). They argue instead that norms become diffuse at the international level, and that this “evasive nature” offers greater analytical flexibility “for explaining why norms emerge and appear to diffuse rapidly (Krook and True, 2012: 104-105). The authors show this by approaching norms from a discursive perspective, where norms are tied to language and created through speech acts, which helps establish those norms as broadly institutionalized and permanent (Krook and True, 2012: 105). They show this by providing a case study for their theory that traces the evolution of gender mainstreaming as an international institutional norm. By analyzing gender-balanced decision-making, and gender mainstreaming in the UN, Krook and True find that norms can be both more and less dynamic depending on content and meanings (2012: 123).

Finally, Haas helps bring together ideas of power discussed above in the section on global governmentality with the concepts of ideation and norms within international organizations. He argues that the control over ideas, knowledge, and norm diffusion is a central part of the power of institutions since “the diffusion of new ideas and information can lead to new patterns of behaviour and prove to be an important determinant of international policy coordination” (Haas, 1992: 2-3). It is this power for Haas that binds members of institutions in “epistemic communities,” which are characterized by shared principles and normative beliefs, shared causal beliefs, shared notions of knowledge validity and intersubjectivity, and a common framework for dealing with the specific set of issues tasked to the group (1992: 3), such as food security in the case of the FAO.

FOOD SECURITY GOVERNANCE

The study of food security takes many forms, spanning across multiple fields and disciplines. McKeon lists several entry points to studying food security, including agricultural models, nutrition and health, human rights, and economic justice (2015: 6). This issue is addressed as well by Pottier, who finds that food security governance as a concept is concerned with “interconnected domains” such as agriculture, nutrition, environment, income, policy, and society, making food security as well as its governance a contested set of concepts (1999: 11).

Schanbacher argues further that this interconnectedness is a permanent feature, not a bug that must be resolved, as it is impossible to detach food security from the discourse of agriculture, trade, global poverty, and economic development (2010: 1). The entry point for this thesis is of course through understanding the governance

structures of food security. This section therefore focuses on two areas of the literature on food security governance. First, I discuss the literature on food security and food security governance in theory. Second, I look at food security governance in practise, focusing on the institutional aspects of food security.

FOOD SECURITY IN THEORY

Food security, as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization, “exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 2006). This definition is set by the FAO primarily to inform their research work and policy in member nations, but the breadth and inclusion of multiple factors like physical and economic access, dietary needs, preferences, health, physical activity, for all people always, clearly presents the difficulty in pinning down what, in a practical sense, food security is. This is echoed by Patricia Allen when she argues that there is wide divergence in how food security is framed and defined based on who is doing the defining, and what they are presupposing to be the solution to food insecurity (2013: 135-38).

Candel extends this debate over the issue of food security governance framing and priorities into academia. Using systematic discourse analysis, he finds that much of the literature on food security and food security governance is focused on an “ideal state” of food security rather than the present state of food security norms and policies (Candel, 2014). He finds that food security governance is framed primarily with a problem-solving lens, and that this literature does not address the

question of how food security and food security governance is defined (2014: 598). Given the breadth and depth of the topic of food security governance, Candel argues that it is difficult to pin down a specific definition of what is meant by “food security governance” in particular (2014: 598). While McKeon sees the wide variety of entry points into understanding food security academically as a testament to the variety of issues “food security” entails, Candel notes that this lack of specificity of methodology and approaches to food security points to a difficulty in studying it empirically (2014: 586). Lang and Barling explore this in their attempt to reformulate food security policy objectives for the 21st century. They argue that there is a mismatch between food security policy and food security reality, resulting in a “considerable rupture in the discourse” (Lang and Barling, 2012: 313). They find that this is due to both a merger of food security and food sustainability discourses at the policy-making level, but also simply the juggling of actors, evidence, interests, and scale that is involved in dealing with food security as a policy issue (Lang and Barling, 2012: 323).

This wide variation of themes built into the concept of food security is termed by Sonnino et al. as “multiple vulnerabilities” and are only effectively addressed when approached using a discursive lens (2016: 477). The authors also indirectly address the merger of sustainability and food security discourses by using “sustainable food security” as the object of their place-based, discursive framework for addressing food security (Sonnino et al., 2016: 486). They argue that this place-based approach, that is, focusing first and foremost on the policy spaces of food security, “offers the conceptual advantage of building far more complexity and

diversity into generalised and aggregated food security debates” (Sonnino et al., 2016: 487). Jarosz builds on this geographic conceptualization of food security by questioning the role of scale in how food security is understood (2011: 117). She traces the shift in the definition of food security from its inception where it was focused on attaining food security at national and regional levels, to the current framework that links “individuals and households to global modalities of governance and technical interventions in agriculture” (Jarosz, 2011: 118). Jarosz argues that this had deepened poorer countries dependency on neoliberal, free market foodstuff prices (2011: 118). Moreover, the connection between the individual/household and global food supply management and governance results in “the commodification of food and conditions food access to revenue, capital and individual income and wages,” further resulting in the devolution and diffusion of responsibility for the hunger of others (Jarosz, 2011: 121).

Hendricks also attempts to deal with the complexity of food security and the debate over food security governance by arguing that the debate is complicated by the lack of differentiation between “the risk factors for food insecurity, food insecurity as a phenomenon in itself and the consequences of food insecurity” (2015: 610). The definitional problem at the heart of this debate, she argues, comes down to determining and setting out a system of measurement from which a definition can be gathered (Hendricks, 2015: 610). Shepherd argues that this measurement can come from analysis of food security as an issue of human security (2012, 195). He finds that there are two aspects that need to be examined for food security to be fully understood: “food security behaviours by empowered actors”

and “hunger as widespread human insecurity” (Shepherd, 2012: 208). For Shepherd, the main focus of food security and food security governance should be de-centered away from a passive, institutional framing of the problem, and re-centered around the idea of securing vulnerable people “from the structural violence of hunger” (2012: 206). He argues that the strength of this re-centered food security analysis is that it is active, and that it “provides a normative position that can (must) be used by actors to validate and evaluate the actions of others,” therefore forcing accountable policy-making (Shepherd, 2012: 206). Shepherd provides one pathway towards controlling food security as a policy issue, but it should be clear that this issue is interdisciplinary and therefore impossible to boil down into one single policy path. Further, pathways of accountability are unclear, making it difficult to identify who is accountable to whom. The next section will deal with the some of the problems faced in the governance of food security.

FOOD SECURITY GOVERNANCE IN PRACTISE

McKeon argues that the focus on food governance is crucial for the present era “because we are getting very close to the absolute ecological, socio-economic, and political limits” of our current “unsustainable and inequitable food system” (2015: 6). This food system is internationalized in particular ways that make it unique to the study of global governance. For Clapp and Cohen, the system has become fragmented and incoherent because it is based on frameworks from historical conditions, past practises, and past understandings of food systems and food security (2009: 6). Margulis argues that the current food security governance regime is internationalized purely because the complexity and fragmentary nature

of the issue which is beyond the capabilities of any one individual state (2015: 53). For Margulis, this complexity is tied into the global financial markets and food commodification, creating, along with the historical evolution of the governance system, a global policy framework with the technocratic capabilities of international organizations (2015: 54). Yet this framework is inherently centred in the conflict found in regime complexes. For Margulis, there are three competing policy frameworks attempting to “deal with” food security: agriculture and production, international trade, and human security and human rights (2012: 60). While this regime complex is conflictual in nature, Margulis argues that without recognizing the interconnected relationship between these three institutional frameworks on food security, the ability to address global hunger and food insecurity will be negatively impacted (2012: 65).

This interconnectedness has led to regime overlap, as discussed above. The history of food security governance is directly tied into agricultural and economic development not only in the FAO, but also through trade mechanisms in the World Trade Organization (WTO). This is explored briefly by Lawrence and McMichael, who argue that the neoliberal turn in international politics and governance in the 1980s created food import dependency in the Global South as countries with the political and economic might shaped trade regulations and created subsidies through domestic agricultural policy to benefit themselves (2012: 135). This has led to a situation currently where countries no longer have sovereignty over the production and international flow of their own foodstuff (Lawrence and McMichael, 2012: 136). Friedmann argues that this global food order “reflects international

power through the complementary national policies that constitute it” (1982: 254-255). Friedmann adds to this by arguing that the neoliberal global food order is significant since it has led to a “widening and deepening of capitalist relations within the world economy” through the repositioning of the world’s population away from direct access to their own foodstuffs, and towards liberalized food markets, making food security subject to market dictates more than ever before (1982: 255).

This market-based global food order broke down in 2007/2008 with a global food crisis. Fouilleux et al. argue that the food security debates that were reinvigorated around this time centered around a call for increasing food production, although the lack of production was not the cause of the food crisis (2017: 1659). The authors argue that the discourse on production within food security governance is a “productionist trap,” a concept they use to refer to the phenomenon where there is a “tendency to reduce the complex food security issue to a need to increase production” (Fouilleux et al., 2017: 1662). The discursive power of this institutional framework stems from “the simplicity and general nature of the productionist paradigm” and “the ability of hegemonic actors to develop multilevel strategies for its promotion” (Fouilleux et al., 2017: 1672). While this literature focuses on important aspects of the larger debate on food security governance, there are also crucial framing debates happening within international institutions, and particularly within the FAO.

The FAO’s main function as a specialized agency of the United Nations is the international regulation of food and agriculture, and therefore it deals directly with

ensuring the security of food. Yet as Duncan and Claeys note, this is not a neutral policy endeavour. They argue that the dynamic nature of food security and the contestation over its definition has led to a policy problem “for which there is no neutral diagnosis” (Duncan and Claeys, 2018: 1412). This results in the continuous politicization of food security within the FAO, which, on the one hand, allows for hegemonic powers such as the US and Private Sector Mechanisms to try and take back control, while on the other hand allowing “re-building food systems as it makes counter-hegemonic positions both visible and possible while re-invigorating policy processes” (Duncan and Claeys, 2018: 1421). The political debates that are part of this politicization is one of three major debates taking place in the FAO, as identified by González, the others being scientific debates, and ethical debates (2010, 1345). Jarosz argues that the political aspect of the food security debate is the central driver of FAO through the political-economic and foreign policy goals of the United States (2009: 55). Furthermore, she finds, like Fouilleux et al., that the dominant discourse of the FAO has been to push agricultural production, alongside economic development and trade liberalization, as the main solutions to food security globally (Jarosz, 2009: 55). Nevertheless, there have been attempts at reform within the FAO in light of these criticisms, although the success of these reforms is mixed, as Gustafson and Markie note. They argue that current attempts to reform and modernize the organization has led to a lack of consensus on how issues of food security and hunger are to be framed, what they call the one of the major challenges of international governance reforms (2009: 157). While the FAO was established with narrow humanitarian intentions and fairly clear guidelines, Gustafson and

Markie point to the “perfect storm of inactivity” which necessitated reform, created by disagreement on framing and priorities between the secretariat and members, and a chronic lack of funding (2009: 160).

CONCLUSION

The literature on global governance and international institutions points to the interconnected, difficult to define, and politicized ways that we deal with global issues like food security. Global governance and global governmentality illustrate the conflicts at the heart of the global system and how the politics of knowledge creation, legitimation, and dissemination are mutually constitutive of the structures and procedures by which IOs set the global political agenda and make and enact policy. The practical aspects of this is found in the literature on international institutions, which shows how complex the political undertakings of states and actors within institutions can get, particularly in the midst of overlapping institutions, interconnected legal frameworks and rule sets, and forum-shopping. These characteristics outline the influence the internal and external forces have on knowledge creation, norm formation, and norm diffusion, which are key functions of regulatory institutions like the FAO. Finally, the case of food security and food security governance highlights the contestation of norms, the overlap of institutions, and the difficult balance the FAO faces between politicization, hegemonic influence, and the moral objectives at the foundation of the organization.

This literature ultimately provides the groundwork for the rest of the research in this thesis, which is focused precisely on the discursive politics of

knowledge formation on food security within the FAO. The scholarship on food security, international institutions, and global governance provide different scopes of analysis and entry points for understanding how the FAO functions and why it functions the way it does. Although investigating and understanding these discursive frameworks and regime complexes is crucial, it does not tell the whole story. As I argue below, it is vital to understand the biopolitical functions of these discursive frameworks and regime complexes. Including biopolitics in this discussion helps to unravel the way that international organizations, like the FAO in particular, attempt to regulate and manage the reproduction and frailty of life.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The above introduction to global governance, international institutions, and food security governance makes clear that the FAO governance operates a complex system for a complex problem. In order to analysis this system, this chapter introduces the theoretical and methodological approaches taken. This allows for a clearer picture of how the FAO, and specifically the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) functions, and ultimately helps to answer the questions posed in the introduction.

First, the concepts of biopolitics and biopower are outlined through a discussion of Foucault and Agamben's definitions of the concept. This debate is built upon to find a middle ground between Foucault's particular and narrow view of biopolitics and Agamben's broad understanding of biopolitics. Second, the methodologies of discursive, or constructivist institutionalism and critical discourse analysis are introduced as the frameworks used to explore the discursive practises within the CFS, that is, the reports and documents produced by the Committee. Using both of these theoretical and methodological approaches allows for a deeper understanding of the biopolitical functions of the CFS.

BIOPOWER AND BIOPOLITICS

"Biopolitics" and "biopower" are terms popularized by Foucault towards the end of his life, yet he did not write or lecture on the topic in detail. Instead, Foucault often used "biopower" and "biopolitics" either as a jumping off point to discuss

other topics, as in his lectures *Society Must Be Defended* (1976-1977), *Security, Territory, Population* (1977-1978), and *Birth of Biopolitics* (1978-1979), or briefly in his writing, as in *History of Sexuality, Volume 1*. This has left many scholars agreeing that biopower and biopolitics are both unfinished concepts and are therefore limited (Agamben, 1998; Cisney and Morar, 2016; Patton, 2016; Mills, 2016). Nevertheless, efforts have been made, particularly by Agamben, to build on the concepts and expand them into more useful analytical tools. Therefore, in order to make sense of these concepts and their theoretical utility for the purposes of this thesis, it is important to first go over how Foucault originally understood biopower and biopolitics. Second, I look briefly at Agamben as an example of the work that has been done to further the analytical and theoretical utility of biopolitics. Third, I explore more recent theorists' work on biopolitics in order to gain a fuller picture of the concept to finally build a working theoretical definition to be used in my analysis.

Foucault most succinctly discusses and defines "biopower" and "biopolitics" at the end of the first volume of *History of Sexuality*. He argues that the power of the sovereign over life and death has evolved significantly in Western politics, especially since the 17th century. This time is identified by Foucault as a crucial point of the "power over life" splitting into two separate poles. First, he argues that the sovereign sought power over the individual body through discipline, or what he calls "anatomy-politics". Second, and more importantly, is the sovereign's regulatory intervention over the "species body," or power over the biological processes of the population as a whole, which is biopolitics (Foucault, 1990: 139). For Foucault, the

rise of biopower led to the “investment of the body, its valorization, and the distributive management of its forces” as machines of production and was fundamental to the parallel development of capitalism (1990: 141). In this same timeframe, sovereign powers, usually, but not always, taking the form of the state, institutionalized biopolitics through the creation of “techniques of power” such as the school, the family, medicine, and corporate and political administration or bureaucracy. The increase of productivity and economic development in the 18th and 19th centuries led to further regulatory intervention through the development of “fields of knowledge concerned with life” such as agriculture, demographics, and the “probabilities of life” as measured by disciplines such as pathology and nutritional sciences (Foucault, 1990: 142). That is, these fields of knowledge were co-opted by the state in an attempt to regulate and standardize the lived experience of populations.

Yet as Foucault goes on to state, biopolitics does not mean that power over life has been fully integrated into the techniques of power and governance, but exactly the opposite: life constantly escapes regulation and control. For Foucault, this is evident in the fact that large scale famine and food scarcity still persist despite governance systems and regulatory regimes aimed precisely at alleviating or even eradicating those phenomena (1990: 143). Biopower, according to Foucault, is therefore an analysis of the application of power, and not a theory of power in itself. He argues that biopolitics describes the mechanisms of the objectification of “basic biological features” within political strategy, which is a feature of a more general strategy of power (Foucault, 2009: 1-2).

After laying down this foundation, Foucault argues that one main mechanism of biopolitics is security, which he defines as a phenomenon which seeks to “respond to a reality in such a way that this response cancels out the reality to which it responds,” where the reality is one of scarcity (2009: 47). That is, security becomes the sovereign’s ability to make populations legible to its power, which is managerial and administrative power over the material and biological functions of populations. The sovereign’s ability to make populations legible to its power occurs through security, since for Foucault, security acts as the mechanism for objectifying “basic biological features” of individual and social life by quantifying data “as it is” rather than looking for or casting moral judgement on the data. To illustrate this point, Foucault uses the example of the evolution of vaccinations and variolation to show that these medical advancements both act as a form of security and integrate into the mechanism of security a central dynamic between basic biological features and chance, probability, and statistics (2009: 59). Thus, the biopolitical, through security, acts not as “extensive surveillance of the individual” but instead attaches specific phenomena that are not quite individualized to the population. The population is the space of biopower when it is framed by “regulatory apparatuses,” since the population is fundamentally a “datum that depends on a series of variables” (Foucault, 2009: 71). The population becomes not a collective of individuals but a set of constitutive elements containing constants and regularities, extending “from biological rootedness through the species” up to the public surface. For Foucault therefore, the population is a politicized and quantified concept of *Homo sapiens* as a biological being, and the “end and instrument of government”

enumerated by statistics (2009: 74-75, 105). Here Foucault argues that “government” is no longer exclusively related to territory, but a sovereign “complex of men and things” like wealth, resources, means of subsistence, and population (2009, 96). Population appears in this relationship to be both the subject of government through the recognition of needs and aspirations, while also being the object of governmental manipulation. Foucault writes that “vis-à-vis government, [population] is both aware of what it wants and unaware of what is being done to it.” (2009, 104-105). Through this attempted individualization of the population, Foucault limits biopolitics as being inherent to a neoliberal governmentality.

Agamben argues that this analysis of power through biopolitics marks Foucault’s abandonment of traditional forms of power “in favour of an unprejudiced analysis of the concrete ways in which power penetrates subjects’ very bodies and forms of life” (1998: 5). For Agamben, this is incorrect, as he argues that sovereign, or traditional power, is not separate from biopolitics, but the main force of biopower and biopolitics. He argues against Foucault’s assertion that biopolitics is simply the “inclusion of men’s natural life in the mechanisms and calculations of power,” arguing instead that there is no longer any distinction between “natural life” and “political life,” or qualified life (Agamben, 1998: 119-120; O’Donough, 2015). Agamben illustrates this point using the legal concept of *habeas corpus*. He argues that the origin of this concept in the 18th century is significant, since the subject was neither the ancient feudal subject or the individual citizen, but simply a *corpus*, or body. He further argues that the new biopolitics is therefore that the bearer of rights, the sovereign subject, can only be constituted as such through the isolation

and presentation of one's body (Agamben: 1998: 124). Since the sovereign is the root of biopolitical power, and the body constituted and subjugated by the sovereign is the biopolitical subject, Agamben concludes by arguing that all of Western politics is biopolitics. For Agamben, the only way to understand Western politics is to first start with the awareness of the death of distinction between natural and qualified life, or the living being and the political being (1998: 187).

Agamben's claim of biopolitics being universal severely limits its analytical utility. Mills argues that for Agamben, the merger of natural life with political life, "such that biopolitics is just politics," leads to a concept that is without limit, and is therefore analytically inert (2015, 88). Instead, as noted above, biopolitics is specifically limited to neoliberal governmentality. Most importantly though, biopolitics is not built on the political containment and encapsulation of life as Agamben argues, but that biopower in practise is systematically reactionary to the "errancy internal to life," or the nature of life to elude capture or regulation, constantly forcing biopolitical governmental actors to "respond to the contingencies of the living and the phenomena of life" (Mills, 2015: 98). Put another way, biopolitics and biopower are simply reacting to the political conditions of the production and reproduction of life, rather than actively and successfully encapsulating that same errancy as Agamben argues (Negri, 2015: 61). In responding to these political conditions through a biopolitical reaction, the state or source of institutional power seeks not the betterment of the life of the population, but the intensification of political domination by the ruling class and continued economic control (Gros, 2015: 268). For the purposes of this thesis, I focus on

institutional power, and, in particular, the FAO. The FAO, and several other regulatory international organizations like it, acts as an aggregator of biopolitical power, generated through internal political processes and external political pressure as discussed in the previous chapter.

With these arguments in mind, it is possible to move away from the universalism of Agamben's biopower and go back to Foucault's original intentions for his conception of biopower and biopolitics. It is therefore not a theory that can stand apart, but a primary mechanism of a much larger system of power and security. In the context of the FAO, the regulation of biological processes related to food from production to consumption at a global scale clearly illustrates how these mechanisms of biopower function within the more general neoliberal international political economy. The FAO acts as a regulatory apparatus within an international power structure whose mission is to respond and react to the "contingencies of the living and the phenomena of life" (Mills, 2015: 98). This formal institutional setting of biopolitics within the FAO is built primarily on discursive and ideational processes that construct populations as objects of biopower, especially by identifying and quantifying food insecurity and hunger, and then defining and limiting the range of legitimate interventions and solutions. I will examine these processes as they work within and through the FAO using discursive institutionalist and critical discourse analysis methodologies.

DISCURSIVE INSTITUTIONALISM AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The most accessible way to understand how the FAO functions as a biopolitical organization is through its institutional discourse. The term “discourse” is often used to portray an ambivalence towards language, where language is simply assumed to be self-evident, and the content of the discourse operates to reinforce a prescribed meta/mega-narratives (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000: 1145; Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011: 1141). Critical discourse analysis and discursive institutionalism are here used to counter this tendency. When used together, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and discursive institutionalism act in tandem to not only capture the larger discursive narratives, but also the lower level phenomena of language as the site where agents create biopolitical knowledge and use it in service to biopower.

Critical discourse analysis, or CDA, refers to a specific method of discourse analysis that is focused broadly on investigating discourse as a form of social behaviour and “the linguistic character of socio-cultural processes and structures” in order to understand power in discourse and power over discourse (Titscher et al., 2000: 146). More specifically, Fairclough argues that CDA as a methodology is centred on the analysis of the semiotic or “meaning-making” aspects of discourse at an analytical level, and the relationship between these elements of discourse and broader elements of discourse and the discursive formations in which they operate and which they help constitute, like social order, or in the case of the FAO, institutional elements (2011: 122). This methodology follows the steps of discourse

analysis more broadly in that it first identifies the site of the discourse, or the “discursive plane”, followed by a processing of materials, a structural analysis, and a fine analysis of select documents (Jäger, 2011: 52). CDA differs from a more general understanding of discourse analysis in that it includes an analysis of the fundamental social processes embedded within discourse. CDA’s central focus is on analyzing the “opaque and transparent structural relationships of dominance...manifested in language” (Hucking et al., 2012: 107). Proponents of this methodology argue that it sees discourse as the primary site of ideological formation and transformation and allows researchers to “pinpoint the everyday manifestations and displays of social problems” (Van Dijk, 1985: 7). Moreover, discourse in this methodology is understood as pointing toward the ways that institutions, centred within the dominant class, create meaning and particular ways of talking about life (Kress, 1985: 28; Seidel, 1985: 46). What makes this methodology useful in the analysis of the FAO, food security knowledge production and biopolitics is its synthesis with the methodology of discursive institutionalism, which brings CDA into the realm of political science and away from its formal semiotic and linguistic focus.

Fairclough, an early proponent of CDA, argues that the political element of CDA is found in its ability to trace the movement of political activity in that political actors put forward certain “sources of action” through “deliberation over what should be done,” effectively operationalizing discourse, or putting it into action (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough, 2013: 180, 194). Yet CDA scholars limit the incorporation of politics into the methodology by broadly defining and

abstracting it as another variable (Zienkowski, 2019: 136). Incorporating discursive institutionalism into CDA allows for the inclusion of a specific understanding of political activity and political actors. Discursive institutionalism falls under the broader umbrella of neo-institutional approaches to political science, and is highly interpretive, setting it apart from the more analytical methodology of CDA. It is focused primarily on policy transformation and knowledge creation at the institutional level, examining the normative or “substantive ideas developed and conveyed by ‘sentient’ agents in discursive interactions” (Schmidt, 2011: 107). Ideas form the core of discursive institutionalism, where they are understood to be concepts formed in relation to other ideas and to actors (Carstensen, 2011: 612). Within formal institutions, the very structure of the organization affects the ordering of these relations of ideas to other ideas and actors, or ideational processes, as it rigidly establishes “who can talk to whom about what, where and when” (Schmidt, 2011, 120). This structure is bound specifically by a “shared belief or faith in the verity and applicability of particular forms of knowledge and specific truths” (Haas, 1992: 3). This structure, which Haas calls epistemic communities, is responsible primarily “for circumscribing the boundaries” of rationality, thereby limiting the discursive and ideational processes. In the case of the FAO, this rationality is biopolitical. I show this in the next chapter through an analysis of food security assessments and session reports of the Committee for World Food Security, a sub-committee of the FAO directly tasked with overseeing food security governance.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FAO AND THE CFS

INTRODUCTION

The history of the FAO offers some context for the analysis of food security governance and illustrates the points brought up in the previous chapter. But before going into a historical account of the FAO, and finally the Committee on World Food Security, it is important to understand the organizational context within which both of these organizations operate. The FAO is a Specialized Agency of the UN, which is a category of UN organizations that carry out the governance goals through negotiated agreements. Currently there are 17 specialized agencies of varying scope (UN, 2019). The need for Specialized Agencies arose out of the desire to embed the technical aspects of international post-war reconstruction within the UN system. These agencies were placed under the management of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the primary organs of the UN system, although the agencies were purposefully given a measure of autonomy (Williams, 1987: 3-4). Initially, the Specialized Agencies were to function primarily as institutional sources of specialized information in order to assist in the creation of international standardization, but as the international political environment changed from the 1940s to the 1950s, the specialized agencies became organizations of technical assistance for the Third World (Williams, 1987: 15).

Even as these organizations became more generalized towards technical assistance rather than international standardization, distinctions grew between the types of organizations. Williams argues that there are four categories of specialized

agencies: the “Big Five,” which are UNESCO, FAO, WHO, ILO, and the UNIDO; technical and regulatory organizations like ITU, UPU, IMO, WMO, ICAO, WIPO, IAEA, and sometimes WHO; the Bretton Woods organizations (World Bank, IMF, WTO); and organs of ECOSOC such as UNICEF and UNCTAD (1987: 26-31). The “Big Five” are separated out because, as Williams argues, their mandate is broad enough to encompass the political, economic, and social life of most states in which they operate. While these categories are not strict, the FAO is certainly among the largest and most broadly mandated of the specialized agencies.

The FAO is made up of Governing Bodies, Statutory Bodies, and Departments, all of which are tasked with working to fulfill the mandate of the organization. Governing Bodies are defined by the constitution of the FAO as defining overall policies, establishing strategic plans and frameworks, and overseeing the administration of the FAO (FAO, 2017). The Governing Bodies include the main Conference, regional conferences, technical committees, administrative committees like the Finance, Legal, and Programme committees, and the Council on World Food Security (FAO, 2017). The Departments of the FAO are permanent bodies that carry out the specific interest areas of the FAO relating to the work of the Director General, Climate and Natural Resources, Regional Offices, permanent programmes, and economic and social development work done within the FAO (2020b). Finally, the Statutory Bodies exist in between the Governing Bodies and Departments as ad hoc programmes designed to address “an identifiable problem of sufficient importance in the subject matter field” that is persistent yet can be addressed in a limited timeframe (FAO, 2020b). While these subcommittees and administrative

bodies are crucial to the work that the FAO does, the CFS is the main focus of this paper, as it is the Governing Body specifically focused on food security governance and administration. Before any discussion of the CFS can occur, the history of the FAO must first be outlined, as it provides policy and historical context within which the CFS emerges.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAO

With only a handful of books written on the topic (Hambidge, 1955; Marchisio and Di Blase, 1991; Shaw, 2007; Staples, 2006; Tosi, 1989) and an equally small number of scholarly articles, the history of the FAO has not been well explored academically, at least in comparison to the histories of other international organizations like the WHO, World Bank, or IMF (Pernet and Forclaz, 2019). Nevertheless, the FAO has a unique place in the makeup of the post-war international order. The history of the FAO can be broken down into four main timeframes: formation, post-war shortage and surplus, the 1970s scarcity, and the present time, characterized by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

FORMATION

The FAO, along with several other specialized agencies of the UN, came into existence at the tail end of World War II, and was built on the lessons learned from the failures of the League of Nations and the rekindled desire for international cooperation. The Second World War itself negatively affected food supply and production, industrial production of agricultural products, and the overall trade in

and of agricultural products and produce (Phillips, 1981: 1-2). These stressors, along with the commonplace rationing of food, led to Allied governments engaging in cooperative agricultural and nutritional planning in the middle of World War II, which Pernet and Forclaz argue gave those governments a taste of what international and institutionalized food governance could look like (2019: 346). This experience, plus the quasi-international order outlined by the League of Nations and some pre-war institutions like the International Commission on Agriculture (ICA) and the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA), were the foundation on which the FAO was established in 1945 (Phillips, 1981: 7).

The founding of the FAO, while formalized in 1945, was a multi-year endeavour that started at a conference held between May 18 and June 3, 1943. This conference, referred to as The Hot Springs Conference, took place under the initiative of President Franklin Roosevelt with the participation of 45 member countries, each sending technical experts in nutrition, agricultural sciences, and statistics (Hambidge, 1955: 50). The attention given to technical and scientific aspects of food, agriculture, and nutrition set the tone for the organization's focus on technocratic governance moving forward (Staples, 2006). Through the Hot Springs conference, the FAO was "carefully and painstakingly" organized, ending in a compromise between delegates who wanted an action-oriented international agricultural regulator, and delegates who preferred a "limited fact-gathering and advisory agency" which would be protected and prevented from engaging in positive action (Hambidge, 1955: 53). This compromise led to Article 1 of the draft constitution, which set the FAO as a primarily advisory organization but one that

was open to transformation based on the requirements of future member states (Hambidge, 1955, 53).

After the Hot Springs Conference, the Interim Commission was immediately formed. It was made up of the same members of that made up the Conference, with the option of adding additional members by vote. While the Hot Springs Conference was assembled to collectively envision what post-war food and agricultural governance was to look like, the Interim Commission was organized to tackle the administrative and legal details of those visions (Hambidge, 1955: 54). Rather than a one-time meeting, the Interim Commission set up headquarters in Washington, D.C. with Lester B. Pearson as the chairperson. Its purpose was to formalize the constitution and create “a specific plan for the permanent organization in the field of food and agriculture.” (Phillips, 1981: 12). The Interim Commission was given three main tasks to advance the goal of formalizing the FAO as a truly international organization. It was assumed at the time that it was unreasonable to call the first session of the FAO since there was no official constitution, and therefore no ratification at the national level for member countries. The first task of the Interim Commission was therefore to draft the Constitution of the FAO, with the second and closely related task to push for the acceptance and ratification of the constitution by member countries (Phillips, 1981: 13). The third and final task was to create reports on the specific goals and areas of interests that the organization was to focus on, which resulted in five technical reports being written on Nutrition and Food Management, Agricultural Production, Fisheries, Forestry and Primary Forest

Products, and Statistics. Moving forward, the five main subcommittees of the FAO were based off of these initial reports (Phillips, 1981: 13; Hambidge, 1955: 55).

On October 16, 1945, just over a month after the end of WWII and a week before the founding of the UN, the FAO held its first session in Quebec City, chaired again by Lester B. Pearson, with Scottish nutritionist Sir John Boyd Orr elected as the first Director-General. At the first session, 34 of the 45 nations in attendance became full members on the first day, bringing into force the Constitution and creating the FAO, the first organization of the UN system (excluding the ILO, which Hambidge notes originated with the League of Nations system)(Phillips, 1981: 13; Hambidge, 1951: 60). In the closing address to this session, Pearson praised the organization's ability to harness science "to the chariot of construction" and finally balance the development of social progress and scientific progress (Hambidge, 1955: 60). While Pearson's speech was effective, the next 70 years of food and agricultural governance would bring into question the feasibility of bringing balance between these two modes of human advancement.

POST-WAR SCARCITY AND SURPLUS

The first major governance task of the FAO, after filling administrative spots within the organization, was to manage the post-war food shortage that persisted after WWII had ended through the formation of a Special Meeting on Urgent Food Problems (Hambidge, 1955: 62; Phillips, 1981: 60). This group, which was formalized as the International Emergency Food Committee, was active between 1946-1949, and was the primary group focused on international food security. It functioned as a centralized body where member states could plan and negotiate the

allocation of food and agricultural inputs while shortages persisted as nations refit their industries and economies for peacetime (Philips, 1981: 70). Shaw notes that while the FAO was nominally interested in a unified international effort to manage food supply, institutional policy was split, as it would be for decades to come, between the Global South and the Global North (2007). In the Global North, technical efforts were directed toward expanding production through subsidies and monopolistic production control, while in the South, the focus was on making access to foreign agricultural exchanges and the purchasing of agricultural capital goods a requirement of being part of the new international order (Shaw, 2007).

Nevertheless, an ambitious attempt to centralize the FAO's focus on food supply and food security was made by then Director-General Sir John Boyd Orr. In 1946, he proposed an international commodity exchange, called the World Food Board, as part of the policy measures being implemented (Hambidge, 1955: 66). Orr and his staff argued that this food board would stabilize global commodity prices, establish a global emergency foodstuffs reserve, provide funding for surplus disposal, and provide a centralized agency that could support third-party organizations focused on international agricultural credit, industrialization, and economic development (Belshaw, 1947: 298). This exchange would be funded by both commercial sale of buffer stock held by the Board, and through a general levy on UN members to accommodate the sale of commodities at a subsidized price (Belshaw, 1947: 299). Orr and his staff quickly produced a detailed report that was published and presented at the Second Session of the FAO, five months after the idea was initially pitched, feeding off of the post-war idealism of Western governments

(Shaw, 2008: 25). While the general food security objectives of the WFB proposal were generally accepted by the FAO, the proposal was amended until it became a shell of Orr's initial vision.

According to Shaw, two major objectives stood in the way of the WFB proposal: the lack of "requisite authority" or legitimacy to co-ordinate such an institution, and more importantly, the opposition of the US and the UK to any institution which they did not directly control (Shaw, 2008: 27). Instead, the objectives were co-opted into more passive governance mechanisms which were to be administered by the newly formed Council of the FAO, a centralized executive committee of 18 member-states (Shaw, 2008: 29). In this way, the conflict of the Hot Springs Conference over whether the FAO should be an active, regulatory body, or a passive, governance body was settled in favour of the latter. The governance decisions of the first three sessions between 1945 and 1947 set the stage for the food security governance of the next twenty years.

TECHNOCRACY, FOOD CRISIS, AND THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE 1974

Between 1948 and 1974, the FAO continued to refine its global position as a technical advisory institution focused on agricultural development. The major policy direction of this time came from the FAO's newly-formed Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA), which focused on supplying experts to developing countries to provide ad hoc conferences, training seminars, fellowships, and aid in the construction of more permanent "training centres" (Phillips, 1981: 71). This, along with increased access for developing countries to industrial tools, equipment, and experimental seeds, was part of a push to spread agricultural techniques

developed in the West immediately following WWII (Phillips, 1981: 72). This effort was driven by the FAO's promise to developing countries that a world without famine could be accomplished through a heavy focus on scientific method as a tool for world peace. This post-war idealism was quickly dragged down by a rapid shift from post-war global peace to Cold War politics, attenuating an already underfunded institution (Pernet and Forclaz, 2019: 348). These politics continued to negatively affect how the FAO conducted its ambitious goal of a world free from want, yet the Organization was still able to complete modest tasks, such as collecting and disseminating global agricultural statistics and food safety guidelines leading to new domestic policy adoption for member states (Pernet and Forclaz, 2019: 348).

The next big governance test for food security governance in the FAO came in the 1970s with increasing shortages of food around the world. This was brought on by four main factors: a decline in global grain reserves, the disappearance of idled US farmland, global dependence on imports from North America's surplus production, and the decision by the famine-struck USSR to offset its declining grain supply with major agricultural imports rather than restrictions (Shaw, 2008: 120). Shaw notes that the problems listed above, which were the viewpoints of the FAO, fail to include any socio-economic factors that were present in the early 1970s, instead focusing on the technocratic side of the food shortages (2008: 120). Nevertheless, by recommendation of the Non-Aligned Movement meeting in 1973 and support by Henry Kissinger, the FAO convened the World Food Conference of 1974. This was a crucial moment for food security governance, as it was at this

conference that the FAO first defined “food security” in order for the concept to be useful in policy (FAO, 2003).

The Conference itself was the site of conflict over the fundamental nature of development and globalization and in-fighting over the organizational structure of the conference itself. There was immediate recognition by the Conference coordinators that the food scarcity of the 1970s was a result of domestic policies failing to recognize and take into consideration the interconnectedness of the global food system, yet Secretary-General Waldheim, in his opening speech to the Conference, blamed the food scarcity on Third World countries for their heavy reliance on agricultural imports and lack of domestic production (Shaw, 2008: 129-130). Nevertheless, the Conference resulted in three major policy recommendations which still shape food security governance. The first was the drafting and adoption of the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, which, in short, formalizes the recognition of the interconnectedness of national agricultural and food policies, and argues that this interconnectedness should be used to provide food security as a human right and end hunger (OHCHR, 1974). The second, related recommendation was the creation of the International Fund for Agricultural Development in order to boost agricultural production in the developing world. This fund was to be made by voluntary contribution, carried out by existing institutions, and aimed specifically at increasing food production, including livestock and fisheries (UN, 1974). This recommendation was met with a lukewarm response from the developed countries, since they argued they already

funded development projects, yet no country officially opposed the recommendation (UN, 1974).

The next set of recommendations were split into two categories at the conference, with one set relating to global food security, and the other to institutional frameworks. With regards to food security, the Conference recommended three policy directions. First, the Conference proposed a global information and early warning system for food and agriculture, where member states would communicate information and forecasts on current crop statistics and domestic commodity and input prices. Second, the Conference “agreed to study” the possibility of creating a global cereal reserve, although developed countries refused this in practise (UN, 1974). Negotiation and planning of this recommendation were pushed to a subcommittee of the top importing and exporting countries. Finally, the Conference recommended an increase in food aid, which was agreed to as an objective (UN, 1974).

The last set of recommendations came as part of an attempt by the Conference to reshape the institutional framework, specifically taking into consideration the importance that this Conference placed on food security. With this in mind, the first recommended institutional change was the creation of the World Food Council, which was to act as a subcommittee of ECOSOC, assisting national governments with “solving the food problem” (UN, 1974). Second, the Conference recommended the creation of the Food Security Committee, which would act as a new group within the FAO to continuously examine “the situation and the prospects of demand, supply and the stocks of basic food products” and whether or not the

level of those stocks were adequate (UN, 1974). Finally, the Conference proposed the creation of the Committee for Policies and Programmes for Food Aid, which would oversee the new food aid objectives and coordinate the fulfillment of those objectives (UN, 1974).

The specific focus on food security at the 1974 Conference framed the FAO's governance over the next twenty years, culminating in the 1996 World Food Summit, where food security governance was again the focus, and was reshaped for the twenty-first century. The need for the World Food Summit arose out of the failure of the goals set out at the 1974 Conference, specifically the Conference's goal of "eradicating hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition within a decade" (FAO, 1995). Despite these goals, developed countries still controlled the vast majority of the global agricultural market, limiting the ability of developing countries to "break through" and become producers themselves (Shaw, 2008: 147-148). While technical summits existed between the World Food Conference 1974 and the World Food Summit 1996, there had not been any opportunity for world leaders to gather to assess global food insecurity (FAO, 1995). This, along with increasing malnutrition and hunger, overexploitation of fisheries and arable land, and a rapid decrease in the agricultural share of development aid prompted world leaders and ministers to open the World Food Summit in Rome from November 13-16, 1996 (FAO, 1995).

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT, 1996

The World Food Summit (WFS) of 1996 was viewed by the UN and FAO leadership as both a reaffirmation of the "overriding need to ensure food security

for all” and a “new beginning” that “will help shape and implement a food security strategy” more effective than those of the past (FAO, 1996c). While this Summit and the 1974 Conference shared similar missions of understanding and solving food insecurity, the major and defining difference was that unlike in 1974, there was no global food crisis occurring at the time of the conference. For Shaw and Clay, this fact immediately undermined the proceedings and policy prescriptions, as there was no shared incentive for anything to actually be accomplished (1998: 72).

Nevertheless, the Summit set out its goal of reducing the number of undernourished people by half by 2015 at the latest (FAO, 1996c). To this end, the Summit members agreed to seven non-binding commitments formalized in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security. These commitments generally focus on eliminating poverty, ensuring political, economic and social stability, and enabling food security through international trade and market mechanisms (FAO, 1996a).

The commitments of the WFS were at the same time too abstract and too lofty for any meaningful domestic policy changes to occur. This combined with the non-binding nature of the commitments, the lack of new institutional mechanism proposals, and lack of new aid commitments, meant that there was limited change in the institution following the WFS. (Shaw, 1998: 73). Post-WFS 1996, the FAO becomes more and more decentralized, with emphasis placed on its composite parts. This provides a good transition to the CFS, one of the main composite parts of the FAO, and the focus of this research.

THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was formed initially to act as an evaluative body focused on assessing the economic and material wellbeing of agricultural production in order to judge the level of global food security or insecurity. A formative report entitled “Matters Pertaining to the Establishment of a Committee on Food Security,” outlines four specific characteristics of this new organization: keeping a continuous review of the supply, demand and stock of basic food, assessment and forecasting of stock levels with special attention paid to import and export levels of goods, to review national implementation of food security strategies in line with the 1975 World Food Summit recommendations, and to recommend short- and long-term policy action (1975a). This broad mandate was set up in order that the FAO, through the CFS, could “remedy any difficulty foreseen in assuring food security,” although initially the CFS was focused almost exclusively on setting policy associated with financial and technical support to aid in agricultural production, which was seen as the primary driver behind food security (FAO, 1975b). In essence, the CFS was created to address the complex problem of hunger through a broad political, economic, and later social mandate and “high-level intergovernmental decision-making” (CFS, 2010b).

The CFS has operated under these guiding principles for 45 years, yet the operation and policy direction of the committee has not been as clear and direct as originally intended. Instead, three distinct timeframes emerge, each characterized by both internal policy decisions and external food security issues that changed the trajectory and functioning of the organization. These timeframes are the food

production crises and famines between 1976 and 1993, the World Food Security era of 1994 to 2006, and the food price crisis, CFS reform, and multi-stakeholder governance efforts of 2007-2019. These timeframes are used in this analysis to show the progression of the organization over time and the biopolitical nature of the organization's policies and programmes. This is accomplished by looking at the CFS' session reports. These reports include policy recommendations and assessments of global food security, allowing for a comprehensive overview of how the CFS understands and approaches food security. Using these two components of the session reports, the timeframes are further broken down into an analysis of the assessments made in the final reports to provide context for the policies, followed by analysis of the policy recommendations over the same time period.

FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT: 1976-2009

1976-1993: Food Production Crises

The first session of the CFS directly following the 1974 World Food Summit was attended by 74 of 78 member states, with eight other states notifying the Secretariat of their pending membership and several international organizations including the EEC attending as observers. Notably, the U.S.S.R. and China refused to adopt the CFS' principle statute, the International Undertaking on World Food Security, and refused to become members, which in effect denied the CFS the Soviet and Chinese agricultural and food stock data, which the Committee required from member states (CFS, 1976). This led the Committee to comment that until this data was made available, "a comprehensive evaluation of the stock position" of the world would not be available. Despite this, they carried out its assessment of the food

security situation based on the “adequacy of world cereal stocks” (CFS, 1976). The Committee noted that there were “several important factors affecting the world food situation” such as wheat production in the U.S.S.R. and the United States, rice production in Asia, and the amount of feed consumed by livestock globally (CFS, 1976).

Further, they noted that food stock distribution was inadequate, cereal stocks were unsatisfactory in relation to “the objectives of world food security,” and that food aid remained significantly below recommended levels (FAO, 1976). The effect that lack of food aid had on food security at this time was further compounded by a significant lag in the rate of food production growth in most developing countries, compared population growth. Finally, the CFS concluded that the lack of “an adequate world food security system” put excess pressure on the global market as it would not be able to properly handle surplus production (CFS, 1976). The Committee argued that overproduction in developed countries would disincentivize developing countries to boost production, creating a feedback loop that would put developing countries in perpetual underproduction, and therefore food insecurity (CFS, 1976).

This theme of unequal production continued to characterize the committee’s view of global food security over the next five years. In 1977, the CFS found that production increased in developed countries, though only due to favourable weather rather than specific policies, and production shortfalls continued to affect developing countries, leading to continued food security deterioration (CFS, 1977). In 1979 and 1981, the CFS echoed almost precisely the same assessment: global

production was increasing, but regional production in developing countries was drastically declining (CFS, 1979; CFS, 1981). For the CFS at the time, this meant that food security continued to be in danger of collapsing. The 1979 assessment begins positively with the Committee finding room for optimism over “certain aspects of the world food security situation” yet there were still “many reasons for continuing and serious concern” (CFS, 1979). They found that cereal production was still below the necessary level in many regions and was actually in decline in most African countries. Notably, the Committee makes brief mention of the threat that this production decline will have on nutrition levels in the region, signalling the introduction of a crucial theme for the CFS moving forward. Nevertheless, the CFS continued to operate under the assumption at this time that “adequate growth in food production for the world as a whole...was the only lasting solution of the food security problem” (CFS, 1978).

The 1981 session of the CFS saw a change in the way food security was evaluated, if only slightly. While the poor food security situation of the late 1970s still continued just the same the assessment of the global food security situation began with a shift in the attitude towards the concept of food security, as the Committee noted that “a review of the adequacy of production and stocks” was one of the most important functions of the assessment of food security, and that it was part of a balanced assessment, leaving room for other factors to be reviewed (CFS, 1981). Previously, the assessment only considered relevant information on production and stockpiling, and while this was still the primary focus of the 1981 assessment, other factors were introduced.

The first new variable to be discussed was the cost of inputs. The high price of being technologically competitive on the global market was brought up in previous years but only as a concern mentioned by delegates and not the Committee itself, and always as a secondary thought to the larger issue of production. In 1981, the Committee found that the availability of inputs was directly related to the success of food security, and that these inputs could also come in the form of harvest loss reduction and agricultural research in general (CFS, 1981). They also noted that “many delegates” brought up the importance of finding a balance between technological advancement, input accessibility, and the importance of protecting the production of traditional crops (CFS, 1981).

The second new topic discussed at the 1981 meeting was world trade. Although mentioned only briefly, the Committee reported that developing countries, who were often faced with price decline for their major agricultural exports, were unable to “earn the foreign exchange required to meet the extra cost of cereal imports and of imported production inputs” (CFS, 1981). Some delegates, the report states, brought up the need for fair and equitable access to world markets, and that transnational corporations were seen by developing countries to be distorting policy and prices since there was no clear governance structure to accommodate and regulate their involvement (CFS, 1981).

These two new variables continued to be addressed in 1983, when many developing countries saw further deterioration in food production and food security. The Committee noted that there was a net increase in production output, but that the increased production was centralized in developed countries (CFS,

1983). The report shows that most African countries were facing rapid deterioration of food security as countries dealt with both humanitarian crises and drought. This was further problematized by some of the same issues that developing countries faced in 1981, namely a sharp drop in export prices, the rising price of imports and interest rates, and the adverse effects of export subsidies in developed countries (CFS, 1983). Nevertheless, the Committee agreed ultimately that emphasis should still be placed primarily on improving production output and productivity in developing countries, and that this effort must be accomplished at the national level for food security to be obtained (CFS, 1983). This assessment therefore effectively ignored the other food security variables it was also measuring, not to mention the debt crisis affecting farmers in the US and Europe. In the middle of this assessment, the Committee advised that further disaggregation of data should be made available, and the scope of foodstuff production assessments should be broadened to include non-cereal commodities like pulses. By 1985, this goal was achieved, and new data was included in the assessment of that year's session, just in time to assist in detailing the acute food emergency in several African countries (CFS, 1985b).

By 1985, the crisis in Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, and Sudan had reached its peak, with multiple other countries across Sub-Saharan Africa continuing to underproduce and struggle to meet the food security standards outlined by the FAO (CFS, 1985a). Aggregate food aid requirements of the region were over double the received amounts and aggregate cereal production was 21 percent below the five-year average (CFS, 1985a). Even though this food emergency was occurring, the Committee notes that global food production had "increased

substantially” over the year, leading the Committee to “express concern” that the gap between the ample production of developed countries and sharply decreasing production of developing countries was widening (CFS, 1985b). According to the Committee, this crisis was further complicated by a still-inaccessible international credit market. The report notes that although global food prices were low, developing countries (now labelled as low-income food-deficit countries) the foreign exchange services of these countries were “under great pressure from large external debt servicing charges and low prices for many of their exports” blocking these countries from even accessing IMF financing services to aid in market access (CFS, 1985b). The same financing issues also affected the ability of these low-income food-deficit countries from accessing technical and financial resources related to agricultural inputs, worsened still by stalled technical assistance programs.

Despite all of these issues, which had been building since the CFS was founded almost a decade previously, the report’s assessment concludes by reiterating that the issue of food insecurity was an issue of production management, and that the “achievement of food security” depended “primarily on a sustained increase in production at the national level” (CFS, 1985b).

In 1987, with little to no change in the food crisis occurring in some African countries and a continued decline in per capita food consumption, the assessment repeated almost all of the observations made two years previously regarding unequal global production, trade barriers, the failure of the global development financing mechanisms, ultimately concluding with a reiteration of the importance of increased production as the main solution to the food insecurity faced by much of

the developing world (CFS, 1987). Nonetheless, the 1987 report did make some observations that were new, indicating that the Committee was considering new data in their assessment of world food security. These new observations include a brief statement recognizing the “important role played by women in food security and the efforts that need to be made to improve their position as producers of food,” and an acknowledgement of regional and sub-regional cooperation as a function of a strengthened food security system (CFS, 1987). The assessment was also prefaced with a comment regarding the increasing accessibility and use of data on nutrition in the Committee’s assessment of food security. These factors of food security would continue to be important as the CFS transitioned into the new decade.

The assessments made in 1989 and 1992 are unique in the observations made because of the rapid shifts in global food production. In 1989, drought severely limited North American agricultural production, while some of the African countries that had faced food shortages were now faced with surplus agricultural production. The Committee still concluded that because of this imbalance, and structural issues such as limited access to global trade, financial deficits, and limited food aid, the global food security situation was “precarious” (CFS, 1989). A new issue arose out of the surplus crop in a number of African countries as noted by the Committee, where donor support was required in order to dispose of the “sizeable surplus” since limited market access and inadequate storage infrastructure constrained those countries from using the surplus (CFS, 1989).

Despite the bumper crop in some African countries though, the Committee “emphasized that in order to achieve food security...it was necessary to accelerate

food production in low-income food-deficit countries,” stressing that this was required exclusively a national effort, resting on the governments of “developing countries themselves” and that the governments of developing countries must ensure market access, opportunities for technological advancement and investment and the “provision of marketing facilities, inputs, and credit” (CFS, 1989).

By 1992, the assessment of the global food security situation noted that production had again deteriorated to below-consumption levels. Additionally, forecasted production was said to be inadequate to meet demand. This was not a particularly unique situation, but the difference was in the change in global trade liberalization and the opening of major markets. With the Uruguay Round nearing completion and the Soviet Union dissolved into its composite parts, the international economic and trading environment was fundamentally changing, allowing for the trade liberalization and Soviet agricultural data that had been sought after for the 16 years of CFS sessions (CFS, 1992). Most notable of all in the 1992 assessment however is the disappearance of any explicit mention of food production as the primary driver behind food security. This particular observation had been the stressed every year as the most important part of “solving” the food security issue. Instead, in 1992, it became a background implication, replaced by a heavy focus on consumption rates, pressure on food prices, food aid and related technical and financial assistance, regional supply chain management, and the detrimental economic effects of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) (CFS, 1992). The recognition of the negative effects of SAPs speaks to a shift in larger macro-economic trends of the late 1980s and early 1990s. In particular, the global

economic order was settling into a new normal: the USSR was disintegrating, and Western neoliberalism was firmly established as the new economic order. In the context of the global food security system, this shift, as I show below, brought with it the use of extensive market data for the identification and regulation of life, which is biopolitics.

1994-2006: The World Food Summit and the New Millennium

The 1994 Assessment first began by addressing traditionally reviewed indicators, including crop production levels and stock replenishment, which the Committee noted were both facing a downward trend (CFS, 1994). Further, the Committee argued that economic inequality, characterized by rising food prices, high interest rates, and the deterioration of trade agreements still affected low-income food-deficit countries despite improvement in GDP growth, creating “adverse consequences on food security and for the development of sustainable agriculture” (CFS, 1994). Traditionally assessed external variables were addressed as well, with the Committee finding that a large number of both manmade and natural disasters had affected large areas of Sub-Saharan and southern Africa in the previous year. Finally, the Committee noted that food aid was still in decline, despite continued efforts to address the issue of maintaining food aid levels (CFS, 1994).

By 1996, the year of the World Food Summit, world food security continued to falter, characterized by sharp decline in food production in both major importing and exporting countries (CFS, 1996a). This of course meant limited availability of exports, matched with a forecasted rise in importing, limited stock growth, a sharp rise in food prices, and heavier than normal reliance on food aid. According to the

Assessment criteria on food emergencies, a total of 31 countries faced a food emergency, which was defined as “shortfalls in food supplies requiring exceptional assistance,” usually as a result of “crop failures, natural disasters, interruption of imports, disruption of distribution, excessive post-harvest losses...or an influx of refugees” (CFS, 1996a). Part of this food emergency, the Assessment notes, was the high level of landmines still left in primarily developing countries, since these landmines were primarily placed under useful agricultural land, limiting production potential (CFS, 1996a).

The instances of food emergencies continued to grow, and by 1998 there were 38 countries facing a food emergency, with a large number of these countries facing the negative effects of a large El Niño, causing environmental damage (CFS, 1998c). Nevertheless, the Committee noted that overall food production was forecasted to increase in the following year, creating a food security situation where stock levels would remain above utilization and consumption, allowing for downward pressure on food prices. Yet despite the growth in global food emergencies, and the global surplus of food, food aid amounts were observed to be dropping again, to the extent that food aid shipments “were the smallest since the start of the food aid programmes in the mid-1950s” (CFS, 1998a). The Committee noted that forecasted food aid in the following year could rise.

At the 2000 Session, the Committee noted that the above climate-based food emergencies had severely disrupted the steady progress the FAO had been making on securing food for undernourished people (CFS, 2000a). This realization made it clear that without drastic policy measures and national interventions, the goal set at

the WFS to reduce the world's undernourished people by half by 2015 would not be attainable. The Committee noted that while these projections of undernourishment were important to illustrate the progress of the goals set out by the Committee, they “do not provide information on the severity of food insecurity” and that these estimates must be complemented by reports on “the depth or severity of undernourishment” (CFS, 2000a). To accomplish this, the Committee utilized average calorie requirements, ranked from low depth of undernourishment to high depth of undernourishment¹, and assessed countries based on these new measures. The Committee reported that based on these measures, 60 countries faced moderate depth of undernourishment and 23 countries faced high depth of undernourishment (CFS, 2000a). This inclusion of nutritional data, which made up the beginning half of the 2000 Assessment, illustrates the new importance being placed on non-supply factors in addressing food security. Moreover, the Committee makes brief note of other “health and nutritional status,” measuring percentage of children under five years old who were wasted, stunted, or underweight; and life expectancy, mortality rate of children under five, and percentage of population with access to adequate sanitation (CFS, 2000). These new measures vastly improve the depth of analysis and outlined the new direction being taken by the Committee.

The increase in indicators measured is elaborated further near the end of the 2000 Assessment. Building off of World Food Summit goals, the Committee put forward a list of eight key indicators to be used for monitoring food security at a

¹ Low depth of undernourishment = average dietary energy deficit per person < 200 kcal/day
Moderate depth of undernourishment = average dietary energy deficit per person 200 < 300 kcal/day
High depth of undernourishment = average dietary energy deficit per person > 300 kcal/day

global level: dietary energy supply per person, GNP per caput, percent of income spent on food, index of variability of food production, access to safe water, percent of population undernourished, under 5 mortality rate, and percent of under 5 children underweight (CFS, 2000a). These indicators allow specifically for in-depth cross-country analysis; an additional 15 indicators were suggested for in-depth assessment of vulnerability and food security levels. The Committee argued that purpose of the large influx of indicators based primarily on non-food factors of food security is to achieve “adequate analysis of food insecurity and vulnerability” (CFS, 2000a).

These new indicators and measures were used in the Assessment of the 2002 Session of the CFS. Notably, the order of assessed factors of the food situation in 2002 changed with the introduction of new indicators, with the current status of global food and nutrition taking the first agenda spot, followed by “hot spots,” followed finally by “other dimensions of food security” which in this case refers to supply and stock availability, production data, and import/export market data (CFS, 2002). The Committee observed that in both absolute and proportional terms, the number of undernourished people went down in a majority of low-income food-deficit countries (CFS, 2002). Moreover, the Assessment made note that child stunting had decreased in all regions except Eastern Africa.

In their analysis of “other dimensions of food security,” the Committee found that due to a “sharp fall in total grain production,” the ability for major exporters to meet global food demands was declining, although it was still within the five-year average (CFS, 2002). This also meant that total stocks by the close of the season

were down, but some cereal level declines were projected to be offset by good harvests, making the overall decline minimal. These two indicators, plus a contraction of food production in low-income food-deficit countries leading to rising import demand, meant that prices were higher than the two previous years (CFS, 2002). On top of below-average food production and rising prices, the Committee noted that 29 countries remained categorized as facing food emergencies due to protracted conflict and natural disasters (CFS, 2002). This was further exacerbated by a global economic slow-down that was projected to see recovery in the following year. This global slowdown was characterized by rapidly growing inequality and increased agricultural subsidies in developed countries (CFS, 2002).

This negative outlook led to the Committee commenting in 2004 that there had been continuously “insufficient progress so far towards the World Food Summit target and Millennium Development Goals relating to poverty and hunger” (CFS, 2004). This continued increase in the global hungry occurred despite relatively positive agricultural production, stock levels, export ending stock, and lowering prices. A potential cause of continued food insecurity is the level of instability, leading to 35 countries being labelled as in a food emergency, up from the 29 two years previous. By 2004, the majority of these emergencies were due to civil strife, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, though environmental and economic disasters continued to play a large role (CFS, 2004). For a large number of those countries labelled as being in a food emergency, the CFS noted that they were “extremely vulnerable to consumption shortfalls” (CFS, 2004).

The number of vulnerable countries facing food emergencies continued to climb into 2006, reaching 39. This number may have risen due to a change in methodology, since the CFS expanded the scope of what defines a country in need of external assistance (CFS, 2006). Regardless, the CFS argued that because of the increasing level of countries facing food emergencies, and the increasing complexity of the situations that these countries are facing there is a major “need to improve emergency response based on credible analysis” by developing an analytical tool “for classifying the severity of food insecurity” (CFS, 2006).

A major factor in the increasing vulnerability of low-income food-deficit countries was certainly the economic and agricultural situation of the world in 2006, which in retrospect was due to the food price crisis and the general economic volatility that led up to the recession two years later. The Assessment reported that commodity markets saw increased prices, while agricultural markets, affected by “abnormally high incidences of natural disasters,” saw increased pressure on demand that was unable to be matched by supply (CFS, 2006). These negative trends led the CFS to double down on its efforts to measure and regulate life, while also making visible the CFS’ inability to do just that. By 2007, these negative trends were reversed, though only briefly.

2007-2009: Food Price Crisis, CFS Reform, and the Multi-Stakeholder Era

In their 2007 Assessment, the Committee no longer took into consideration non-food factors as it had been doing since the beginning of the decade, instead exclusively relying on stock levels, market indicators, import and export data, all under the heading of “Food Cereal Situation Indicators,” and assessments of food

emergency situations. They note that almost all indicators show decline in stock and production levels, export availability, and a large spike in food prices, including a 31 percent increase from 2006 to 2007 in the maize index (CFS, 2007). Despite the negative trends, the Committee observed that low-income food-deficit countries were seeing an increase in production, though not enough to decrease the level of aggregate imports to those countries (CFS, 2007). This positive trend in food production possibly assisted with the decrease in numbers of countries facing food emergencies, which the Committee notes declined from 39 countries in 2006 to 34 in 2007. The majority of these countries, 26 in total, were in Africa, where countries continued to face extreme weather conditions and protracted civil conflict.

By 2008, the full effects of skyrocketing food and fuel prices was being observed, with the Committee estimating that the number of undernourished people had jumped by 75 million over the previous two years, to a total of 923 million people (CFS, 2008a). In an analysis of long-term trends, the Committee noted that since the pre-Summit baseline period of 1990-1992, the global undernourished had increased by 6 million, with an absolute increase of 43 million in Sub-Saharan Africa (CFS, 2008a). Further, the Committee found that while the overall prevalence of hunger, as measured by the MDGs, decreased over the same period, this trend was reversed by the food price crisis of 2006-2008 (CFS, 2008a). The alone led the Committee to argue that reaching the MDG goal of halving the global hungry by 2015 was “becoming an enormous challenge” (CFS, 2009b). The causes and effects of the food price crisis have been discussed in depth elsewhere (Cohen and Clapp, 2009; Cohen and Garrett, 2010; Watson, 2017) and is beyond the

scope of this analysis, though it is important to point out some of the analysis made by the Committee regarding its effects. They noted that at the time of the Assessment, it was unclear what effect the food price crisis would have on making a distinction between countries already in a food emergency and vulnerable “at risk” countries. The Committee argued that while food emergency vulnerability was already measured with several key indicators, high food prices themselves added a new dimension to vulnerability (CFS, 2008a).

The impact of the financial crisis and food crisis came into clearer view by 2009, when the Committee reported that the number of undernourished people rose to 1.02 billion, a large increase from just two years previous (CFS, 2009b). Further, they found that people already facing undernourishment and hunger were coping with the high cost of food and the financial crisis by reducing food consumption and diversity of food consumed. At a regional and national level, low-income food-deficit countries were coping by reducing spending on education and health care (CFS, 2009b).

Although these food security issues were fairly major, the Committee cut short its assessment, relying instead on the assessment produced by the FAO called the *State of Food Insecurity in the World* (SOFI) in order to focus on the extensive reform that was being undertaken within the Committee. The brief statement summarizing points made in the SOFI are minimally useful for analysis since they focus exclusively on the broad mandate of the FAO, and they do not line up with policy and governance decision made by the Committee, instead acting as a brief primer for whatever policy work is scheduled to be done at CFS sessions. Moving

forward, the Committee began entirely relying on these FAO assessments instead of conducting their own internal assessments, leaving more room for policy work. Any assessments that were made at the CFS were delegated to a new body within the Committee called the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE), which are committees of academics and experts tasked with creating biennial white papers on specific food security-related issues, usually focused on policy recommendations.

CFS POLICY EVOLUTION: 1976-2019

1976-1993: IUWFS, World Food Security Compact, and HFSI

The International Undertaking on World Food Security (IUWFS) arose out of the food crises of the early 1970s and was accepted in whole at the World Food Conference of 1976 at the same time that the CFS emerged. The agreement marked the first time that member states recognized the shared responsibility inherent to global food security governance (Shaw, 2007: 150). The CFS was ultimately tasked with the implementation of the Undertaking and therefore based early policy direction and decisions on the document's policy recommendations. The IUWFS consists of three main elements: the implementation of national food stock policies based on associated international guidelines; intergovernmental communication and consultation on stock levels and required assistance; and assistance to developing countries in order that those countries have access to production programmes. These policies were to be organized through an international food security information system (FAO, 1975b). While stock management was a major focus of the Undertaking, the agreement stressed that the most vital part of the policy implementation was "ensuring that food production is adequate to build

stocks for food security” (FAO, 1975b). These principles were adopted by the FAO and framed CFS policy into the 1980s.

By the First Session of the CFS in 1976, the Undertaking, which was a voluntary, non-binding agreement, was adopted by 69 countries and the EEC, accounting for 95 major food exporting countries (CFS, 1976). The Committee noted that most principles were beginning to be implemented but recommended several policies to member countries to supplement its shortcomings. First, the Committee recommended the creation and implementation of “practical programmes” to assist with the full realization of the Undertaking. Second, the Committee recommended that in order to support the “high priority which developing countries were placing on national food production,” international efforts should be made to increase financial assistance and ease of market access. Third, the Committee stressed the importance of the global food stock information system and urged countries to allow access to their stock level and production data (CFS, 1976).

Of these policy recommendations the first was the most productive, and by the Fourth Session of the CFS in 1979, the committee adopted the Plan of Action on World Food Security to assist with the enactment of the principles laid out in the IUWFS (CFS, 1979). This action plan is broken down into five categories, each with subsections outlining specific points. The first measure recommended is the adoption of food stock policies, where the Committee encouraged countries to formulate their own stock policies. The Plan notes that developed countries have an extra responsibility to assist developing countries in creating stock infrastructure, providing surplus for developing nations, and stockpiling in way that does not

distort international trade to avoid affecting the already limited market access of exporting developing countries (CFS, 1979). Second, the Committee recommended that stock management systems should be in place such that the stocks are able to be released in the case of a food emergency in order to “maintain a regular flow of food supplies both in domestic and in international markets at prices fair to consumers and remunerative to producers” (CFS, 1979). Third, the Committee encouraged donor countries to “do their utmost to increase their food aid” including contributing to the International Emergency Food Reserve, creating national food aid reserves, and purchasing food from export-dependent developing countries as a form of aid (CFS, 1979). The fourth recommendation concerns the formal structure of food security assistance, recommending that developing countries should develop their own food security programmes, and developed countries should donate financial aid to assist in both national and international food security programme funding (CFS, 1979). Finally, the Committee recognized the importance of “collective self-reliance” by proposing that developing countries set up regional cooperative agreements, regional reserves, special trading agreements, and joint investment ventures (CFS, 1979).

Over the next five years, the CFS focused its policy recommendation output on the implementation of these directives by monitoring the progress made and suggesting further steps. In 1981, the Committee reported that multiple member countries had adopted national stock policies, but that these generally did not include food stock policies in the interest of global food security, instead focusing heavily on domestic stock policy (CFS, 1981). In regard to food aid, financial

assistance, and collective self-reliance, the Committee noted that only small steps had been taken towards adoption. With this in mind, the Committee made several policy recommendations, mostly reiterating the points of the Plan of Action. Of the ten recommendations made, six focused in some way on production and production assistance (CFS, 1981).

By the 1983-1984 sessions it became clear to the Committee that the Plan of Action had failed to materialize any meaningful policy changes both nationally and internationally. The 1983 Session report notes that despite wide acceptance of the concept and objectives of food security since the early 1970s, only small steps had been taken to ensure that the policies and mechanisms of a global food security system was in place. The need for a new, revitalized policy direction, and fundamental conceptual framework of food security, was recognized by the Director-General of the FAO in 1983, culminating in the formulation of the Director-General's Report on Food Security (CFS, 1983). The report, which was not fully considered at the 1983 Session, was met with some criticism over its approach to food security as a concept with multiple and equal aspects, since the Committee considered food production to be the primary factor underlying food security (CFS, 1983).

The points of the Director-General's reports that were considered were eventually introduced into the World Food Security Compact, which was requested by the CFS in 1984 and adopted a year later in the Tenth Session in 1985. In the 1983 Report, the Director-General argued for "improved measures for an improved world food security system," which outlined what needed to be accomplished at

national, regional, global and institutional levels, ending with a note on the revision and strengthening of the CFS (CFS, 1983). These measures would be formalized in the World Food Security Compact, which was requested in order to bring revitalize public awareness and political and moral support for world security (CFS, 1984).

The Compact begins with an acknowledgment of the non-uniformity of food insecurity as a policy issue, noting that “measures to strengthen food security must be carefully tailored to match specific problems they are intended to resolve,” marking a change from the CFS’ approach to food security as a problem with only a few issues that need solving (CFS, 1985c). Building off of this, the Compact identified four main principles that must frame how it would approach food security moving forward: that food security is a collective responsibility of humankind; that food security relies fundamentally on the abolition of poverty; that food security is a necessary objective of any socio-economic planning; and that food must never be used a political tool (CFS, 1985c). From these principles, the Compact assigns policy guidelines to different groups and stakeholders, specifically for developing and developed countries, non-governmental organizations, and individuals.

The Compact suggests that developing countries should do everything possible to promote production of food, including economically incentivizing food production, disincentivizing the consumption of imported food, and that this should be the top policy priority to ensure food security (CFS, 1985c). The Compact notes that economic measures to improve food security should not simply end at increasing production, but that financing should be available for stockpiling infrastructure and rural economic development, which the Compact notes all assist

in the effort to increase production (CFS, 1985c). For developed countries, the Compact makes the case for increasing the moral weight of food security in economic and agricultural policy, specifically suggesting that developed countries should “consider the interests of the world as a whole when making their policy decisions” (CFS, 1985c). Further, the Compact suggests that the moral dimension of food security should inform trade policy, technical and financial assistance, and food aid. Overall, the Compact suggests that “the development of a world food system characterized by stability and equity” should be the primary objective for developed countries (CFS, 1985c).

To non-governmental organizations, the Compact suggests an increased level of support for governmental action. Specifically, NGOs are requested to help facilitate and complement the actions of government by creating a “climate of opinion favouring measures for food security,” assisting with information gathering and dissemination, and increasing “mutual understanding” by facilitating contact and organization between different countries (CFS, 1985c). This is one of the first mentions of NGO involvement in the CFS, which, by the 2009 reform, becomes a much larger part of the Committee. In this instance, the CFS initiated its reliance on NGO data and groundwork as part of its biopolitical project. That is, the frontline work done by NGOs in food security and food governance is recognized rightly by the CFS as valuable, but that work was and would continue to be exploited for the larger biopolitics of the Committee.

Finally, the Compact addresses the actions of individuals, which previously had been the focus of “collective self-reliance” policy recommendations mentioned

in the Plan of Action in 1979. The Compact suggests that individuals should focus on their food security, but also keep in mind that each human has a “sacred obligation to concern himself with food security of those less fortunate,” and that failure to acknowledge this connection “is a betrayal of man’s duty to his fellow men” (CFS, 1985c). Individuals are further tasked with raising the social status of agricultural work, conserving the land and natural resources being used for production, and actively being interested “in the efforts of governments and organizations to promote development and food security” (CFS, 1985c).

This Compact clearly marks a change in policy direction from a focus on the purely economic, supply and demand management of the previous ten years, to a moral and social framework. It reaffirmed that food security was more than simply an issue of production and identified multiple avenues for and responsibility to ensuring food security for developed states and the growing network of NGOs working in the field. Yet by 1987, neither the Compact nor its language of moral and social responsibility appeared in the Session Report. Instead, policy discussions were exclusively focused on the continued need trade liberalization, the failure of food aid policies to be timely and sufficient, and the contentious role of trans-national corporations in the agricultural production of developing countries (CFS, 1987). Despite recognition of the growing agricultural and food inequality, the CFS did not recommend any policies in 1987, nor did it follow up on adoption of the World Food Security Compact as it had done in the past with the IUWFS and the Plan of Action.

Between 1989 and 1993, policy focus and recommendations were concentrated on select issues each year, from the effects of Structural Adjustment Programmes on food security at the 1989 session, to the role of women and food security at the 1990 session. By 1992 and concluding with the 1993 session, the Committee once again faced a large policy shift which led to the creation of the Household Food Security Index. While this index is primarily a methodological tool, it clearly outlines what the Committee at the time considered important for understanding the effects and lived experiences of food security.

Broadly defined, the Committee recognized that household food security required physical and economic access to food, and access to nutritionally adequate food, with a focus “longer-term sustainability of access to food” (CFS, 1992). The HFSI would be implemented in order to better understand the “causes and consequences” of food insecurity in order to better inform policies and programmes in the long run (CFS, 1992). This would be accomplished through gathering and measuring “relevant indicators” determined by the Committee, which would ultimately be incorporated as part of the yearly Assessment and used on a periodic basis to assist in the creation of “medium-term policy recommendations” (CFS, 1992). These indicators are of particular interest here, since they highlight the aspects of social, economic and political life considered by the Committee to demonstrate food (in)security.

The Progress Report submitted to the Committee in 1993 states that the main purpose of the HFSI was to create a uniform conceptual framework in order to monitor household food trends at an international level (CFS, 1993). This

uniformity, the Report argues, comes from the use of multiple indicators which are better able to capture the multi-dimensionality of the concept of food security. In the finalized index, the Committee settled on three main variables that were both broad and accessible: per capita daily dietary energy supply (DES), per capita GNP in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) units, and the coefficient of variation in income distribution. The first indicator, per capita DES, is an indication of estimated “aggregate food availability for human consumption in a country” which is converted into caloric units and divided by population (CFS, 1993). The GNP per capita in PPP units, a commonly used World Bank metric, was adopted by the Committee to establish economic wellbeing, and specifically to establish the “overall real purchasing power of an average person” (CFS, 1993). Finally, the coefficient of variation of income distribution was used to measure the degree of household income equality or inequality. While in general these three data points do not cover the broad ranging issues that are associated with food insecurity, they bring together social and economic factors that had not be assessed up until the HFSI was formalized. The adoption of market-oriented measures shows how the CFS was developing a new biopolitics of food security through policies built on technocratic and statistical approaches in line with neoliberal understandings of the role of the state and international organizations. By the 1994 Session, the Committee had begun to use these data in their annual assessments, broadening the scope of the Committee’s understanding of food security.

1994-2006: WFS Plan of Action, FIVIMS, “Who are the Food Insecure?”, Core Indicators, VGRtF

These non-food factors arose immediately in the policy discussions of the 1994 CFS Session. In a brief overview entitled “Sustainability and Food Security,” the Committee recognized that “economic, social and human factors were at least as important, if not more so than, physical and technological factors” in determining sustainable food security through agriculture (CFS, 1994). The Committee found that food security policy would be enhanced by using these non-food indicators and urged the FAO Secretariat to consider this in its report to be delivered in a special session of the FAO (CFS, 1994). This policy focus helped, at least in part, to direct the policy decision-making that took place at the 1996 World Food Summit, resulting in the World Food Summit Plan of Action (WFS PoA).

The Plan of Action and Policy Statement presented at the World Food Summit represents another major policy stepping stone in the work of the CFS, building off of previous plans of action, but also signalling the continued shift in the CFS’ thinking on food security as more than something based purely on agricultural production statistics. The Policy Statement, a brief call to action preceding the Plan of Action, begins by arguing that there is a moral duty to deal with hunger and undernourishment through a commitment to “ensuring that future generations have secure access to the food they need for an active and healthy life” (CFS, 1996b). This would be accomplished, according to the CFS, by ensuring the availability of “adequate food supplies” and access to “an adequate diet” for all citizens of every country, with a focus on providing these things through sustainable economic policy, agricultural production and development policies, and social progress

policies (CFS, 1996b). Further, the CFS committed to focusing on the necessity of increasing technological and infrastructure investment, particularly as it relates to agricultural productivity, “food marketing, processing, quality control, and distribution systems” (CFS, 1996b).

These broad ranging policy commitments frame the seven specific commitments laid out in the Plan of Action. These commitments are non-binding, though they are intended to help prepare individual national programmes and policy pathways in order to improve food security in each country. Further, they are intended to create a level policy field in which countries can integrate and collaborate on food security policies (CFS, 1996b). The first commitment suggested for adoption is to “create appropriate political, macroeconomic, and trade conditions to foster food security” (CFS, 1996b). The Committee recommended that countries adopt major Western democratic characteristics in governance, such as the enforceable rule of law, participatory selection of leaders and legislatures, the establishment of property rights and regulations, and decentralizing governance for increased efficiency (CFS, 1996b). The corresponding macroeconomic recommendations suggested that countries should maintain stable interest rates, avoid a financial deficit by balancing expenditures and revenue, and allow free market exchange rate adjustments. Additionally, the Committee recommended that countries institute economic policies related to food, including maintaining “targeted and efficient” food assistance programmes, imposing tariffs on subsidized food imports, and protecting food producers from outside market disruptions (CFS, 1996b).

Building off of Commitment One, Commitment Two recommends that countries “ensure that policies and institutions contribute to improving access to food” (CFS, 1996b). The Committee suggested that this should be accomplished through broad economic growth by increasing market competition, building and maintaining infrastructure, encouraging “private sector activities,” and increasing land tenure security through policy mechanisms (CFS, 1996b). These policy recommendations are balanced out by the recommendation that countries also establish a robust social safety net to ensure access to food despite employment status, which should include access to nutritional programmes and services, and the monitoring and evaluation of food supplies (CFS, 1996b).

Tying into the recommendation regarding national social safety nets, Commitment Three recommends that countries “meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, development, and a capacity to satisfy future needs” (CFS, 1996b). The Committee recognized that emergency management, especially in the emergency management of food, requires large amounts of financial and technical resources, which they suggested was the responsibility of national and municipal governments. With this in mind, the Committee suggested that countries adopt work for food programmes, “decentralized supervision of intervention activities” through grassroots organizing, and a focus on human capital development (CFS, 1996b).

In Commitment Four, it is suggested that countries aim to develop sustainable agricultural practises alongside rural development initiatives in order to “ensure adequate and stable food supplies” at all levels of civil society (CFS, 1996b).

This Commitment is by far the broadest, encompassing numerous suggestions for regulations on agriculture and food production, crop and livestock production, and food from forestry and fisheries. In general, the CFS recommended that in order to build a sustainable production system at global, national, and local levels, countries should assess sustainable use of natural resources, ensure property rights, promote diverse economic activity, provide education and skills training, and implementing policy on developing non-farm income alternatives (CFS, 1996b).

The promotion of sustainable rural and agricultural development requires the participation of people, and the CFS stressed this in Commitment Five, where they recommend the assurance of “effective and equitable involvement of all people in decisions and actions that affect food security, with particular attention to achieving the equal participation of women” (CFS, 1996b). The involvement of women is the primary focus of this recommendation, and the Committee notes several key areas that national and local governments can focus on in addressing this issue. Areas where countries are suggested to include women are employment and income, productive services, research and information, and decision-making and policy formation (CFS, 1996).

Commitments Six and Seven are much more specific, with Commitment Six addressing the promotion of “investments in sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries research, extension, infrastructure, and institutions,” thereby adding depth to Commitment Five. Commitment Seven is focused on international economic and technical partnerships in order to “ensure international cooperation and assistance with respect to food and agriculture” in order to address the growing global market

linkages connecting national commodity markets to one another in a post-Uruguay Round environment (CFS, 1996b).

Finally, the CFS set out three main follow-up mechanisms: follow-up and monitoring, follow-up and national responsibilities, and follow-up and international responsibilities. In the first instance, the CFS suggested that countries and the international community must set out actionable and time-constrained processes in order to “develop achievable national and global targets and verifiable indicators” including the collection of in-depth national data relating to all of the above Commitments (CFS, 1996b). In the second mechanism, the CFS argued that all government should review any relevant national policies and programmes in order to achieve Summit goals, including the implementation of a national review process in collaboration with stakeholders and other levels of government (CFS, 1996b). Finally, the CFS recommended that international organizations are expected to assist in the national and international implementation of the commitments, including providing technical assistance, helping to arrange cross-border and regional partnerships, and in general, “raising the global profile of food security issues and helping to sustain a commitment to universal food security” (CFS, 1996b).

In 1998, it became apparent to the Committee that while some countries, UN agencies, and international organizations had reported their steps to implement the WFS Plan of Action, it was difficult to draw any conclusions on progress due to lack of standardization of indicators. In order to address this, the Committee agreed to the formulation of an inter-agency indicator standardization process, the Food

Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS). The Committee noted that while FIVIMS was meant to “reflect the large differences in situations between countries,” there was a parallel need to a minimum standardization among national and regional systems, in order that the WFS Plan of Action be implemented properly (CFS, 1998c). FIVIMS, like the HFSI before it, relies on statistical data to determine causes of vulnerability and food insecurity. The indicators offer a look at how the CFS view food insecurity post-WFS.

In its “Guidelines for FIVIMS: Background and Principles,” the Committee argued that in order to achieve food security success, it is essential to “tackle the underlying causes” of food security by combining data from a number of sectors, including agriculture, health, education, social welfare, economics, public works, and the environment (CFS, 1998b). By combining data from these fields, the Committee asserted that the FIVIMS would be able to “facilitate user groups’ access to more comprehensive information that is up-to-date and easy to interpret” in order to enhance the implementation and success of food security programmes and interventions (CFS, 1998b). FIVIMS was intended to use pre-existing national systems in order to populate data and coordinate internationally amongst policymakers, governments, civil society groups, donors, researchers and training institutions (CFS, 1998b). This project, while similar to the HFSI, was much more decentralized, relying heavily on the capacity and technical ability of member states to set up monitoring systems that would match the requirements of set out by the CFS. Moreover, the focus was less on generating statistical data based on a strict set of indicators. Instead, the focus of the FIVIMS was to create a food security database

for countries to use, and the choice of indicators would be left up to the nation or actor using the system (CFS, 2000). There is no mention in the FIVIMS policy documents of assistance for developing countries to meet the technological infrastructure requirements to utilize the database to the fullest extent, further reinforcing the CFS' technocratic and neoliberal mandate and approach to food security governance.

Nevertheless, the Committee established multiple indicator guidelines at the 2000 Session, releasing two major documents in order to do so. The first document, titled "Who are the Food Insecure?" established a broad set of guidelines and recommendations in order for countries to profile vulnerable groups and determine whether or not they are food insecure (CFS, 2000e). The Committee suggested creating a "vulnerability group profile" classification system at a national level through brainstorming sessions, using data from the FIVIMS (CFS, 2000e). This system, the Committee argued, will help countries identify "possible action areas" based off of livelihood activities, staple food consumption data, and aggravating factors.

In the second major policy document of the 2000 Session, the CFS published recommended indicators for monitoring food security. This document was meant as a supplement to the FIVIMS monitoring programmes being introduced. The Committee argued that instead of delineating a rigid set of guidelines, the core indicators laid out in the document were for the "purposes of cross-country comparison and to provide a manageable dataset for monitoring progress" towards the WFS goals (CFS, 2000d). In total, the Committee recommended 103 distinct

indicators broken down into 2 main categories (“food security and nutrition outcomes” and “outcome indicators for vulnerability factors”) and 15 subcategories, or “information domains,” with all 103 indicators cross-referenced with latest available UN data source and corresponding UN institution (CFS, 2000d).

Between 2000 and 2003, most policy recommendations were focused on specific measures for the implementation of specific WFS commitments, with little else being focused on. This changed in 2003 with the beginning of another major policy change within the CFS, the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food (VGRtF) (CFS, 2003). In 2004, the Committee adopted the VGRtF, which had been created and approved by a CFS Working Committee that same year. Just as the title suggests, the main concern of the VGRtF is the achievement of the right to food, which differs from the CFS’ usual concern of food security in general. Instead of focusing on technical analysis and guideline implementation, the VGRtF introduces human rights-based language into the policy mechanisms of the CFS (CFS, 2004). Although it frames food security so specifically as a human rights problem, the VGRtF represents the culmination of policy work accomplished since the WFS. It was created to fulfill the CFS’ commitment to establish actionable guidelines for the implementation of the WFS’s Plan of Action (CFS, 2004). Just like with the Plan of Action, the guidelines in the VGRtF are non-binding “practical tools” (CFS, 2004). The CFS makes it clear that although the VGRtF is not legally binding, it is meant to supplement the legal obligations of states that are party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (CFS, 2004).

Consisting of 19 guidelines and separate recommendations for international commitments and coordination, the VGRtF covers a broad base of policies meant to reform government systems and policy decision-making mechanisms to the extent that they consider and assist with the realization of an individual's right to food. In the Report, Guidelines 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 17, and 18, concern themselves with the political implementation of this right to food, including the promotion of democratic rights and good governance, the development of national food strategies and programmes, multi-stakeholder governance, the establishment of domestic legal frameworks establishing the right to food within legal systems, the creation of national monitoring and evaluative mechanisms, and the formation of national human rights institutions (CFS, 2004).

Guidelines 2, 4, 8, 12, and 14 are interested in the economic implementation of the right to food, including establishing progressive and responsive national economic development strategies, encouraging the adoption of and participation in international market structures and market-oriented policy, the sustainable development of natural, genetic, and human resources, creating transparent and sustainable financial systems, and implementing social safety nets, focused on food assistance (CFS, 2004). Guidelines 9, 10, 11 focus on health and nutrition, including food safety and consumer awareness programmes, the introduction of state-funded nutrition and diet programmes, and educational programmes directed at training and awareness around food and nutrition. Guideline 13 relates to State's responsibility to vulnerable groups, with the Committee recommending the adoption of FIVIMS in order to establish analytical tools to "ensure effective

targeting of assistance” (CFS, 2004). Guidelines 15 discusses the issue of international food aid, with the Committee recommending that donor states base their food aid on “sound needs assessment,” including a clear exit strategy to avoid creating dependence Finally, Guideline 16, regarding the issue of natural and human-made disasters, the Committee reiterated states’ obligation to international humanitarian law, and suggested that states establish and maintain early warning systems to “mitigate the effects of natural and human-made disasters” on food systems and food security (CFS, 2004). Ultimately, the VGRtF formed the policy foundation for the CFS as it navigated the economic crises of the following five years, culminating the in CFS Reform of 2009. As I discuss below, the VGRtF has impacted the current policy structure of the CFS and led to the policy guidelines of the Global Strategic Framework and the work done in the High-Level Panel of Experts.

2007-2019 CFS Reform, the GSF, and the VGFSN

Between 2004 and 2008, the CFS engaged in review processes, analyzing the implementation of WFS PoA Commitments. This review was concentrated in the 2006 Mid-Term Review, but by the 2008 CFS Session’s analysis of the Review it became clear that there were serious issues with the commitments of the PoA, despite countries already having completed implementation or having taken steps to begin the processes (CFS, 2008b). The overall summary of the PoA implementation analysis was that while reporting measures were in place and even revised for ease of use, relatively few member countries were submitting reports to the Committee, leading to difficulties in compiling data and specific information to

be used in creating additional policies (CFS, 2008b). Given these difficulties, the Committee detailed the future of the CFS in a report entitled “Proposals to Strengthen the Committee on World Food Security to Meet New Challenges” (CFS, 2008c). The Committee agreed that CFS Sessions must be streamlined and more policy-oriented in focus, which could be accomplished by concentrating on one key food security-related theme per session and having Session reports “focus on action items” (CFS, 2008d). Further, the Committee agreed that on a later date the timing of Sessions, structure of the CFS, reporting process, and non-state actor participation would be addressed and changed (CFS, 2008d).

This “later date” came soon after at the 2009 CFS Session, which introduced structural reforms to the CFS. Although some of these reforms are purely administrative, dealing with by-laws within the constitution of the FAO (the Basic Texts of the FAO), some mention is made of recommitment to food security policy. In general, the CFS recommitted itself to creating the

“foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings” (CFS, 2009a).

This goal would be accomplished through the implementation of the VGRtF, and through the CFS’ commitment to three new roles: global governance coordination, policy convergence, and national and regional support (CFS, 2009a). These new roles, the Committee noted, would be supplemented by a Phase 2 of role adoption,

including national and regional coordination of programmes, promotion of best practises and accountability, and the development of a Global Strategic Framework (GSF) for food security and nutrition. Among the administrative reforms taking place, the CFS agreed to the formation of the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) in order to better inform CFS sessions and include “structured food security and nutrition-related expertise” within the policy decision-making mechanisms of the organization (CFS, 2009a). The CFS expected the HLPE to take on the assessment and analysis work that had previously been done by the Committee itself, and also comment on emerging issues based on scientific and knowledge-based analysis (CFS, 2009a). The Committee agreed that the HLPE should be composed of experts drawn from a database created from CFS stakeholder recommendations (CFS, 2009a).

The Global Strategic Framework developed out of a desire to rethink policy coordination in the new reformed environment of the CFS. The Committee noted in a concept note on the topic that despite all of the work being done by the CFS, the FAO as a whole, and many other development-focused UN agencies, member states, and stakeholders, the fight against hunger was lost. The Committee argued that the main cause of this failure was the lack of a common policy platform to provide stakeholders with “agreed yet flexible, forward thinking, and participatory guidance towards coordinated and synchronized actions” (CFS, 2010a). The Global Strategic Framework was therefore created to develop a new framework that would synchronize policies and help guide stakeholders as they endeavour to improve food security systems (CFS, 2010a). The Concept Note states that the process of

creating the GSF would be a “comprehensive, participatory, and transparent process” in order to ensure that all relevant voices are considered (CFS, 2010a). Moreover, the Committee stated that GSF would be supplemental to previous CFS/FAO food security frameworks and would be considered a “living document” that would be updated periodically by the CFS in order to take into account “more relevant, emerging issues” to food security and nutrition (CFS, 2010a).

The First Version of the Global Strategic Framework as released and adopted by the CFS at its 2012 Session, marking the final turn away from production-based food security policy making to results- and knowledge-based policy making. The Framework begins with a reiteration of much of the CFS reform points and discusses the purpose and goals of the GSF discussed in the Concept Note. The Committee stated that in large part, the GSF is an amalgamation of earlier food security frameworks, including the VGRtF, and also much broad frameworks, international agreements, and regional agreements like the United Nations Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action (UNCFA), the G8 L’Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food Security, and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAAPD) (CFS, 2012). The Framework is extensive, laying out all relevant food security data, knowledge, policy recommendations and programmes, including important information to help countries and stakeholders assess who the hungry are and what emerging issues they face, to addressing gender issues in food security (CFS, 2012).

After the initial release, the framework was updated yearly until 2017, with each yearly update including a different specific food security policy topic, often in

line with the HLPE research results that were published concurrently. Between the 2014 and 2017 versions of the GSF, the Committee added sections on social protection of food security, food security and climate change, biofuels and food security, food loss and waste in the context of sustainable food systems, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, water for food security, and livestock and sustainable agriculture for food security (CFS, 2017). Another major shift in the content of the GSF came in 2015 with the ending of the MDGs and the adoption and beginning processes of the SDGs. The shift primarily revolves around the language change between the MDGs and SDGs, where the MDG on food security was set on halving the number of malnourished, and the SDG on food security and nutrition is focused on eradicating hunger and malnutrition. For the GSF, this meant a change in programming and priorities, which may explain the disappearance of the GSF by the 2018 Session.

The focus of the 2018 and 2019 sessions were on the future, specifically looking to 2030, which the CFS Chairperson noted in his opening remarks to the 2018 session might be “the most consequential turning point in history” (CFS, 2018). In this way, the CFS became a primarily proactive organization, in contrast to its past 44 years of history which was characterized by reactivity. Yet in 2018, the policy focus was no longer on food security directly. Instead, the CFS was focused on managerial tasks, creating policy for its own bureaucratic structures in order to manage the new multi-stakeholder identity forged in the CFS Reform nine years earlier. The major policy document of the 2018 Session, the CFS Evaluation: Plan of Action, is deals with this issue of stakeholder management explicitly, outline

how and with what outcomes the CFS would coordinate and strategize the involvement of stakeholders moving forward (Mellenthin and Jiani, 2018).

In 2019, the Committee went back to adopting and prescribing food security policy, this time in the form of a new version of the voluntary guidelines, dealing specifically with Food Systems and Nutrition. These guidelines, the latest food security policy as of writing, are intended by the Committee “to be a reference point that provides evidence-based guidance mainly to governments, specialized institutions and other stakeholders” to address malnutrition in all its forms (CFS, 2019). Specifically, the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSN) are focused on three main areas: food supply chains, food environments, and consumer behaviour. In the food supply chains guidelines, the Committee’s recommendations are concentrated on four additional policy areas: production systems, handling, storage, and distribution, processing and packaging, and retail and markets. The Committee argued that these guidelines will help states provide available, affordable, accessible, safe and nutritious food through policy interventions (CFS, 2019).

The second guideline, food environments, is centred on recommendations for state policy on the physical space of food security: where food is, food infrastructure, affordability, and the marketing, positioning and advertising of food (CFS, 2019). This guideline also focuses on food safety and food quality, recommending that states introduce measures to improve food quality and food safety measures (CFS, 2019). The third and final guideline, consumer behaviour, centres on knowledge production, demographics, lifestyle, and food preference of

individuals. This guideline is broken down into two sub-guidelines: food and nutrition education and information, and social norms, values, and traditions (CFS, 2019).

Currently, these guidelines represent the last major policy work done by the CFS and outline the continued push for biopolitical governance by the CFS, motivated by the SDG to eradicate hunger. As the analysis below shows, the past 43 years of CFS activity, assessments, and policy recommendations outlined above shows an immense effort to control the biosphere through technical, economic, political, and physiological means, ultimately detailing the biopolitics of food security.

CHAPTER FIVE: BIOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS

The history of the CFS shows the struggles of an organization to manage an issue as broad and complex as food security. But the above exploration of the governance and assessment mechanisms of the CFS still leave unanswered the question of how the committee's activities relate to the biopolitics of food security governance. Before answering this question, an even more pressing question remains: how does food security itself relate to biopolitics? Foucault provides us with an answer to this question. In his lecture series *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault introduces the idea of security in relation to his overall theorization of biopolitics by discussing "scarcity," which is the term he uses to refer to the phenomenon of food shortage, or food insecurity. He argues that scarcity is not famine, but an acute, "present insufficiency of the amount of grain necessary for a nation's subsistence" (2009: 30). Foucault's analysis of scarcity is focused on the 17th and 18th centuries, but the principles remain the same. He argues that food scarcity is an issue that affects both the population and the governments, resulting in attempts by governments to enact "a system of legality and a system of regulation" focused not the halting or eradication of food scarcity, but the absolute prevention of the phenomenon, to "ensure that it cannot take place at all" (Foucault, 2009: 31). These systems put in place to exert absolute control over scarcity represent the "regulatory apparatuses" framing a population, which is a function inherent to biopower.

In the current context, the FAO, and specifically the CFS, manifests this food security biopower as it works to establish regulatory apparatuses and bureaucratic control over scarcity. Using the previous chapter's history of the CFS and the methodological tools discussed in chapter 3, this chapter analyzes the particular ways that biopower over food security is created in the CFS. To do this I look at two major themes that illustrate the biopolitical nature of the Committee's work and regulatory mechanisms. First, I look at biopolitical implications of the CFS' early assessments and production-centered policymaking found in the IUWFS, the 1979 Plan of Action, and the Compact. Second, I analyze the CFS' focus on measurements and statistics, and the increasing importance placed on these tools as the CFS has evolved.

PRODUCTION

The source of the heavy focus placed on production and stockpiling in CFS governance is found in the food security definition provided at the 1974 World Food Summit, which was the first time that food security was defined by the FAO. This preliminary definition states that food security is the "availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices" (FAO, 2003). This definition is the basis of the assessment mechanisms of the early CFS, which themselves act as frames for the policy decisions made.

BIOPOLITICS AND EARLY ASSESSMENTS 1976-1993

The assessments of 1976 to 1993 provide perhaps the most detailed look at the underlying logic of the CFS' objectives and policies before the 2009 Reform, although among the assessments made between 1976 and 2009, they are the most limited in scope. This limited scope provides strength in analyzing the organization as it lays bare the assumptions being made about food security, hungry populations, and international governance. As shown above, the CFS only occasionally moves from a purely economic analysis of the global food security situation, and when they do it is only brief mentions, as in the case of nutrition and the role of women and regional and sub-regional cooperation in the 1987 Assessment.

The fixation of the early CFS assessments on economic measurements in general, and food production statistics specifically, represents the first step of the CFS' biopolitical governance. Although the Committee transformed and reformed itself by continuously refining the foci of assessments, the primacy of food production and economic indicators in the assessment acted as both a baseline biopolitical framework and as a form of biopolitics governance itself. The focus of these early assessments on food production and commodity stocks represents the primary site of ideological formation for the Committee, centering the Committee's understanding of food security within a particular economic framework. This economic framework positions the CFS' assessments as biopolitical through the way that it shapes the Committee's governmentality, that is, the relationship between the governance structure of the Committee and its membership to be so governed. For Foucault, the "natural mechanism of the market" enables governments, and

organizations acting in a governmental system like the CFS, to “falsify and verify governmental practises,” and in this way determine what is and is not good governance (Foucault, 2010). The CFS’ inclusion of market indicators further indicates the beginning of a biopolitical governance structure through enacting a secondary market mechanism according to Foucault. That is, market systems are not only a “site of veridiction” but also determine the “elaboration of the power of public authorities and the measures of their interventions” (Foucault, 2010: 32). While the Committee discursively placed primary importance on market indicators early on in its governance practise and presented itself as a proactive governance system, the Committee was fundamentally reactionary to the “truth of the market,” where policy and jurisdictional mechanisms were already pre-determined or prescribed by the logic of capital. Since these market indicators are not general for the CFS, but specifically dealing with agricultural production, stock levels, and food aid, the nature of the early assessments are therefore biopolitical, since they are reacting to the “contingencies of the living and the phenomena of life” (Mills, 2015: 98). In other words, the CFS helped produce and then operated through a biopolitical framework that normalized global market mechanisms as the arbiter of food security.

PRODUCTION-CENTERED POLICIES: THE IUWFS, 1979 PLAN OF ACTION AND WORLD FOOD SECURITY COMPACT

The policies derived from the early assessments reinforce the above analysis, especially in the case of the IUWFS and the 1979 Plan of Action. Both of these policy documents are focused on improving the same economic indicators used in the food

security assessments, creating guidelines for countries to aspire to, and recommendations on best practises, thereby acting out the narrowly defined and market-oriented biopolitical governance discussed above. Yet the Plan of Action appears on the surface to go beyond these economic indicators as calls for the differentiation of roles between the developed and developing world, a handful of variations in the procurement and distribution methods of food aid, and the recommendation of food emergency stock management systems. Looking beyond the surface level connection, it is evident that these variants in policy all stem from the same biopolitical strategy as the indicators and policy objectives covered in the IUWFS and the assessments above. The biopolitical connection between these two policy documents is further shown in the noted failure of their approaches to food security in the 1983 Session.

These failures contributed to the paradigm shift seen in the 1983 and 1984 CFS Sessions, and ultimately the World Food Security Compact. While the recommendations of the Compact go beyond the production-centred approach of the IUWFS and the Plan of Action, they directly build on the central biopolitical framework of those policy documents. That is, the basis of the Compact still views economic regulation, particularly through productivity increases and management of commodity grain stocks, as the primary source of food security. This is shown not only in the recommendation that developing countries increase production, but also in the promotion of financialization of agricultural systems and infrastructure.

The Committee goes beyond this basic level of economic biopower in the Compact in two notable ways. First, they recommend the adoption of a moral interest in the wellbeing and interests of “the world as a whole,” and that this moral element should inform policy decisions made towards developing nations, including financing and food aid decisions. Second, the Committee recommends “collective self-reliance,” suggesting an attitudinal and behavioural change focused on individual duty to alleviate food insecurity.

Both of these recommendations explicitly bring the “population” into focus, which for Foucault is the biopolitical subject. Moreover, the positioning of developed countries as active, moral participants, opposed to the passive, unproductive developing countries reinforces the biopolitical strategy of the CFS through the intensification of political and economic control over life via management of global food flows. Further, the phrase “collective self-reliance” masks the true intention of the CFS’ recommendation, which in the language of biopolitics is simply the individualization of the population, that is, the attachment of quasi-individualized phenomena to the population. This quasi-individualization appears in the CFS’ collective self-reliance recommendation when they note individuals should do what they can to focus on their own food security but that they also have a “sacred duty” to the broader population, especially those less fortunate (CFS, 1985). The recognition of the biopolitical population, which for Foucault is the “end and instrument of government,” is continued in the inclusion of statistical analysis into the policy-making processes of the CFS.

STATISTICS

ASSESSMENTS AND STATISTICS

Statistics plays a major part in the assessments of the CFS. The Committee's assessments used basic macro-economic data, such as commodity trade prices and production levels, and also population statistics to determine the state of food security, continually presenting the vital importance these statistics play in conducting assessments and determining policies and strategies. The assessments use these statistics to strengthen the biopolitical framework being discursively built by the CFS. While these statistics do not go so far to necessarily quantify the "basic biological features" of life, the CFS uses these statistics to objectify the population as the biopolitical "datum that depends on a series of variables" (Foucault, 2009). Instead, the quantification of life as a biopolitical means of power is left for operational policies about the collection, usage, and analysis of statistics and information that emerged as the CFS evolved.

BIOPOLITICS AND THE QUANTIFICATION OF FOOD SECURITY

The introduction of the HFSI in 1993 was a major turning point in the CFS' analytical policy. Although the HFSI is purposefully limited in scope, confined to only household trends, its creation builds on the biopolitical framework of the early assessments and policies through the inclusion of social indicators. The introduction of three new indicators into the evaluative toolbox of the Committee helped spur the Committee's transition in the 1996 World Food Summit to a more inclusive socio-economic focus for food security policy. The micro-economic focus of the two of the

three indicators (per capita GNP in PPP units, and the coefficient of variation of income distribution) adds a social aspect to the macro-economic indicators of the past assessments. The third new indicator, measuring the “aggregate food availability for human consumption in a country,” is the first time the CFS used a statistical measure of food availability per capita (CFS, 1993). Moreover, it marks the beginning of the CFS tracking food availability and intake, directly using biological data to measure food security. The use of these statistics therefore continues to build on the biopolitical process of specific individualized phenomena attached to a population. Further, it fulfills Foucault’s definition of the population being a set of constitutive elements extending from “biological rootedness” up to the public surface (Foucault, 2009). That is, with the inclusion of micro-level analysis based on socio-economic and biological data, the Committee is able to assess both micro- and the macro-level population data of production discussed above.

This trend was continued post-World Food Summit with the introduction of two new policies, the FIVIMS and the “Who Are the Food Insecure?” guidelines. FIVIMS represents an intensification of the statistical processes within the CFS by increasing the scope of data captured to include numerous sectors. With FIVIMS, the CFS makes explicit the role of population in their decision-making and analysis by breaking down data into categories for use by specific “user groups” (CFS, 1998). The FIVIMS further acts as the first specific instance where the CFS becomes an aggregator of biopolitical power, as it uses data and policies from its membership to populate the data collected. The nature of FIVIMS as an open access data repository allows for the use of biostatistics and socio-economic data for biopolitical ends by

both states and international institutions since it allows for ease of access with no guidelines on usage.

The FIVIMS was quickly followed with the supplemental document “Who Are the Food Insecure,” which built on the construction of population groups by providing guidelines on determining who should be considered “vulnerable groups” (CFS, 2000). Further supplementing the FIVIMS was the recommended indicators for policy production and monitoring of food security document. This document, along with the “Who Are the Food Insecure” document, are the full realization of biopolitical governance in the CFS. The regulatory power of the FIVIMS, refined through these two documents, is an attempt to capture life through data analysis and policy production, and to regulate populations as both an “end and instrument of government” (Foucault, 2009). Fundamentally, the FIVIMS was created in order to track the “errancy internal to life” and set a path to regulating that errancy (Mills, 2015). To illustrate this, dozens of policies were created for and adopted by the FIVIMS system after its introduction in 2000. In 2001, a number of organizations and FAO subcommittees contributed “normative work” for FIVIMS by collectively introducing poverty targeting strategies based on GIS software and methodology developed by the World Bank. (FAO, 2001). By 2004, the CFS, along with other stakeholder organizations, had established multiple national, regional, and sub-regional profiles of food security vulnerability by compiling and analyze geographic, economic, and physiological statistics into several databases, including the Nutrition Country Profiles, the Poverty Mapping Project, and the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping, which was to be consolidated into the Standard Analytical Framework for

Food Security Monitoring and Vulnerability Analysis. This system was extensive, and no doubt contributed to unfocused policies and decision making of the post-reform CFS currently in place today. Further, despite the depth of analysis and breadth of statistics being tracked, malnutrition and food insecurity continued to worsen, culminating in the failure of the MDGs in 2015 and the holding pattern policies of the 2018 and 2019 CFS sessions.

CONCLUSION

This system was continually built upon until the reform period of the CFS post-2009. After this time, the governance structure shifted to focus on internal management, administering guidelines, and facilitating more qualitative and normative analysis through the HLPE in support of the biopolitical project of the CFS. Currently, the CFS appears to have split its focus. On the one hand, the biopolitical governance and regulation of food security continued in 2019 with the introduction of the VGFSN which promotes a wide range of recommendations focused not only on food security and also business regulations. On the other hand, the CFS has transformed into an organization that is heavily focused on its internal affairs and the administration of its own bureaucracy. This can be seen primarily in the amount of time spent on updating the GSF between 2010 and 2019, the lack of assessments conducted by the CFS, and the 2018 Session being solely focused on administrative tasks. The inherent difficulty in regulating global food security, which the CFS came up against constantly as it questioned why malnutrition continued to

get worse, has left the CFS unfocused and heavily bureaucratic for the sake of administrative and managerial efficiency.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The story of the CFS and the FAO shows the ideas of global governance and international institutions from Chapter Two put into action. The CFS in particular represents Roberts' reading of global governance as a "functional and necessary" managerial phenomenon which addresses the unevenness of globalization (2010: 46). The global governance of the CFS functions as a hegemonic system as it incorporates the ideas and worldview of the larger neoliberal project which occurs parallel to the evolution of the CFS. Yet the CFS uses the particular methods of subjectivity and structures of power inherent to the global neoliberal order for the very specific purpose of attempting to manage and regulate agriculture, food systems, and the health and nutrition of populations. The discursive aspects of the CFS, analyzed in Chapter Four, reveal the ideational processes and norm creation as being the central point of power within the Committee, creating Haas' "epistemic communities" through shared knowledge and policy coordination (1992: 3). These processes resulted in the creation and use of production-based assessments and policies, and also extensive statistical methods and programs, through which the CFS has constituted and continues to implement a system of biopolitical governance focused on food security. This account of the CFS and biopolitics provides some insight into the functioning of food security as a policy object. This allows us to reflect on food security's place in the broader body of knowledge, discussing the limitations present in this research, and provide possible avenues of future research. In this thesis, I have provided a deeper understanding of food security

governance at the international level through the application of Foucault's theory of biopolitics.

CONTRIBUTION TO BROADER LITERATURE

This research adds to the body of literature in two particular ways. First, it adds to the specific discussion of food security as a biopolitical object. As addressed above, Foucault saw food scarcity as a particularly pertinent example for illustrating the evolution of states' regulatory mechanisms. Nevertheless, the work being done on biopolitics is muddled by the fact that Foucault either purposefully left the concept loosely defined or died before being able to fully elucidate the idea further. This research provides a biopolitical and discursive analysis of food security governance and contributes to the understanding of biopolitics by using the CFS as an example of biopolitics in practise.

Second, this research adds to the body of literature focused on the work of the FAO in general and the CFS in particular. The CFS is lacking in research from a historical perspective, allowing for this research to fill a glaring gap in examinations of the international institutions that regulate food security as policy and practice. The discursive institutional perspective, itself an offshoot of the larger historical institutionalism within political science, provides this research with a unique perspective through the analysis of how biopower is constituted discursively within the Committee. Further, this research can be extrapolated to the longer history of the FAO, since the Committee functions as part of the FAO. The history of the FAO up until this point, as I show in the introduction in Chapter Five, is confined to only a

handful of works. This analysis of the CFS can shed some light on the way that the FAO has historically understood food security. While this research does contribute to the wider body of literature, there were limitations to the research conducted.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are three main limitations to this research. First, and most crucially, relates to the primary data sources available. The primary data, that is, the reports and assessments of the CFS, were intentionally limited to provide a clearly delineated area of study, but two seemingly contradictory issues arose while conducting the primary data research. First, the CFS has a publicly available online archive of all documents relating to its annual sessions, going back to 1974. This provides ample sources of data for analysis and also reveals a restriction in this research. The time constraints on this research and the analytical constraints of the project made it unrealistic to cover in detail each document in each annual session, but these documents more than likely contain useful information.

Second, and related, although the available content on the CFS and the FAO is more or less available online, there remains a restriction of access to some data and more first-hand knowledge of the internal operations of the CFS. Since the FAO and the CFS are located in Rome, access to their archival data was non-existent. This information would have provided a deeper look at how the FAO and the CFS construct themselves discursively.

Third, I came up against a limitation in the formulation of my research goals and objectives. That is, one of the objectives I initially wanted to research was how

the CFS produced its information. While I discussed some of the ways that the CFS created knowledge, including the methodologies and statistics, I was limited in what I could focus on without being too broad. In particular, the current post-reform CFS includes the vitally important HLPE, which currently is the centre of knowledge production informing CFS policy. Their reports are highly detailed and cover a large scope of food security and related issues.

Given the broad scope of literature available within the CFS, and the room for application of biopolitics within food security governance analysis, there are three main pathways for future research based off this research. First, building off of the last limitation above, more research should be done into the production of knowledge within the FAO and CFS. This type of analysis could be centered around biopolitics, but in general should take into account the hegemonic reading of global governance and norm diffusion. Understanding the power structures within the CFS and how they relate to knowledge production would add depth to our understand of how the organization functions. This research would entail taking a deeper look at methodologies for early assessments, the HFSI, and especially focus on the FIVIMS, which includes multi-stakeholder relations; a broad indicator base; multiple national, regional, and sub-regional profiles; and the introduction of accessible information technology for the time period, like CD-ROMS.

Second, again building off of the limitations above, future research in this area should look at a larger historical analysis of the CFS. The archival information available online on CFS sessions is immense and could provide a highly detailed

history of the organization. The CFS is a highly interesting organization because of its limited scope but broad regulatory power. This type of historical institutional analysis would add to political history in general and provide insight into food security governance specifically. This research would add to works like those by Shaw (2007) and give more detail to the story of food security in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Finally, future research should focus on and continue to build on the idea of food security as biopolitics. The complexity of food security and related issues like food sovereignty provide fertile ground for biopolitical analysis. Framing food security policy research through biopolitics helps address some of factors often missed by an analysis of just power structures and imbalances. The inclusion of the recognition of the power over life and biological processes adds another layer to research interested in politics and food. This research is crucial for understanding how we can better address food security and ultimately address the uneven way that food security governance is built up around us.

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