One of the aims of Wine Economics and Policy is to offer an open arena for debates, bringing together academicians and practitioners involved in the wine sector at global level.

Previous issues considered three main typologies of articles for publication: “full-length”, “review” and “discussion” papers. This number launches a new section dedicated to book, film and documentary reviews. It represents a further opportunity to share thoughts and opinions on recently published materials, introduced by eminent scholars who help readers with critical viewpoints.

The first edition of this column hosts the reviews of three well-known academicians: Armand Gilinsky, founding director of the Wine Business Institute at Sonoma State University (US), Benoît Lecat, professor at Burgundy Business School in Dijon (France), and Alan Clarke, professor at University of Pannonia (Hungary). We asked them to go beyond summarizing the book by evaluating issues and methods presented by authors and editors, according their personal experience and academic background.

A common element of these books is their nature of edited volumes covering the wine sector worldwide. Contributions of different authors on a single topic per book, such as “food and wine events”, “wine and culture” and “wine and identity”, harmonized by editors, offer the chance to compare several cases and to obtain insightful suggestions.

Moreover, it is worth stressing that nowadays many scholars belonging to different disciplines in social sciences and humanities are actively involved in the wine sector. Such cross-fertilization can foster new and interesting debates among academicians and practitioners.

We hope readers will find these contributions of some interest for their work. Anyone wishing to suggest recently published materials and to act as book/film/documentary reviewer can contact WEP Editorial Office (wepjournal@unicesv.unifi.it).

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Cavicchi A., Santini C. (Eds.), 2014, Food and Wine Events in Europe: A Stakeholder Approach, Routledge, Abingdon, UK

Research into wine and food tourism around the world in general and the role of stakeholders in planning, organizing, monitoring, and controlling these endeavors in particular has grown exponentially over the past 25 years. I was particularly interested in reviewing this book inasmuch as the catalog of research into this field has not been updated since Carlsen (2004). Since that time, researchers have focused primarily on the demand side and consumer behavior, rather than on the supply side and provider behavior (Axelsen and Swan, 2010; Bruwer and Alant, 2009; Fountain and Charters (2010); Getz and Brown, 2006; Quadri-Felitti and Fiore, 2013). Few if any researchers have devoted as much time and care as Cavicchi and Santini to compiling experiences and outcomes that result in “sustainable novelty” for the disparate stakeholders of food and wine events.

Sustainability is part and parcel of the underlying paradigm put forth by the editors, Cavicchi and Santini, who pose the central question of the impact of food and wine events on stakeholders in terms of benefits enjoyed and return on investment: “Successful festivals and events can increase local development, in the sense that through them local producers meet new customers and establish contacts for opening new national or international markets” (6). The first section of the book offers a collection of novel articles tackling the topic of accommodating stakeholder goals: community (Charters and Mitchell), legitimacy (Getz), authenticity (Clarke), and proximity (Ditter). Already highly regarded in the field of wine and food tourism, these researchers collectively provide a range of theoretical approaches to foster greater understanding of and measurement techniques that demonstrate how food and wine festivals achieve success as well as experience continuity.

The next two sections present nine fascinating stakeholder theory-building case studies, each rooted firmly in its cultural context and attendant stakeholder values, attitudes, beliefs, and norms. Six cases depict regional festivals, including the Insular Fair of La Palma (Spain), GirOlio (Italy), Chianti (Tuscany, Italy), Eurochocolate (Perugia, Italy), Vinitaly (Verona, Italy).
and the Gladmatfestivalen (Stavanger, Norway). Three later cases examine the impact of festivals on local economic development in Sardinia, Bulgaria, and Bridgend County (southeast Wales, UK). One only wishes that there had been space in the book for a broader representation of EU nations and regions.

The book closes with two essays on the impact of festivals on Swedish visitors’ enjoyment and universally within Europe, too much enjoyment, perhaps, with a study of how festivals across the EU impact drunk driving.

I have only a few minor quibbles with this book. It would have been helpful to have a Glossary of Terms to help students and practitioners understand some key terminology that is used throughout the book. Coverage of emergent “Flash Mob” food and wine events, such as those that are crowdfunded via electronic social media (rather than those funded by the central EU government), would also be useful. Also, are there no farmers’ markets in Europe, as those regular events (rather than seasonal festivals) are considered central to the locavore or farm-to-table movement?

All that said, reading *Food and Wine Events in Europe* is akin to returning to a summer home at the beginning of the season: the reader feels both a sense of place and a place to restore the senses. This book is highly suitable for students who desire to learn about the opportunities and challenges of mounting events, both for-profit and not-for-profit. It is suitable for professional event organizers who want to develop a deeper understanding of how to convey the tangible benefits of their efforts to stakeholders and/or who seek proven “Old World” approaches to marketing food and wine. For researchers in the field, this is an invaluable compendium of cutting-edge theory and illustrations of an as yet under-studied phenomenon. For teachers, the text could also be used as a supplemental reader in a Hospitality Management or Wine Marketing course for the growing number of related business programs around the globe.

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This is the first book I have read in a long time where I have sat back and thought ‘wow, I wish I had done that!’ Harvey, White and Frost have done a wonderful job in bringing the book together and presenting a set of articles on complex and interconnected themes.

I would recommend the book simply on the basis of the editors’ introductory chapter alone if necessary (which is not so, because there is much else beside to praise). They have taken it upon themselves to provide a contextualizing introduction, covering the concepts of heritage, branding and terroir in thirteen pages. This serves to both introduce the concepts and to raise some of the more complex questions which are developed in the following chapters. It is clear, concise and critical. It should be made compulsory reading, not only for our students, but also for all of us tempted to produce an edited collection!

Following this chapter, the book is divided into three sections. The first on ‘Heritage’ contains five chapters ranging over Georgia (where wine was born?), Slovenia (where the oldest vine is claimed in Maribor), Central Otago, Andalucia and a comparison of California and Victoria. The second section moves on to ‘Branding’ with six chapters dealing with the challenges of branding regions, categories and transitions.

In the third section we are taking on a tour of ‘Terroir’ in five chapters which broaden and deepen the sense of terroir beyond the physical into discussions of the political, the virtual, the reputational, legal, architectural, functional and culturological (a term I personally and my spell checker both have difficulties with!)

In a review limited to 1000 words it is not possible to give a full sense of the richness of the contributions here. Not even listing the chapter titles would add much to the sense of the contributions that this volume can make to our critical understandings of the wine(s) experience(s). It is a book which works at many levels and the editors are honest enough to admit that they could have allocated the chapters differently between the sections. This should not be a surprise as the issues in the three sections are clearly only separable to introduce some sense of order in the presentation. They are not separable at the level of the analysis being promoted here and it is to the credit of the authors and the editors that they are not artificially conflated. This allows the book to explore the contributions of wine to the overarching concept of identity, including the contributions that can be found in the debates on heritage, branding and terroir. The interconnections become almost impossible to resist as the analyses in the chapters unfold. The role of terroir in heritage, the role of branding in heritage recognition of terroir and the complexities of narratives of identities that are constructed using these elements demand to be analyzed holistically in order to guarantee the depth and authenticity of the accounts presented here.

The editors use Spawton’s (1991) segmentation of the wine industry in their introduction—the four categories being Connoisseurs, Aspirational Drinkers, Beverage Wine Consumers and New Wine Drinkers. This is very helpful in structuring this review of the book. If you are a New Wine Thinker, you will thoroughly enjoy this collection. It will give you a taste of and hopefully a taste for moving further into the unpacking of the wine experience by looking into the creation of meaning within the wine experiences. Beverage Wine Thinkers will recognize the value of bringing these arguments together into one well researched and bundled glass full of interest. There may even be sufficient depth to tempt these consumers into thinking more carefully about the wines they drink and the wines they do not. This could lead on to becoming an Aspirational Wine Thinker, where the chapters may be read more slowly and valued for their complexities and textures. Finally, the book will also appeal to the Connoisseurs...
amongst its readership with its deep levels of flavors carefully overlaid, although beware for amongst the discussions there may be found tastes that challenge some of the preconceptions of these readers. Sip deeply and savor the complexities of the analysis of the narratives of architectures and even wine labels.

It is not always an easy read as the chapters assume a competence in the basics of wine and heritage discourses in order to get the most out of the case studies and examples. For example, the challenge to the old world of wine order by the emergence of the new world wines is—as you would expect, especially in a volume edited in Australia—well explored. What makes this more significant is that the readings of this change in our understanding is not presented as a linear journey. The heritages, brands and meanings of old and new are examined from different perspectives and therefore the constructions of the identities within the wine world are presented not as a universe but, for me, more convincingly as a polyverse. We will all approach this book with our own preconceived notions which will make some chapters more readily digestible than others but one of the great things about this book is that while we sit and sip at the knowledge represented in the chapters, we may find our preconceptions challenged and our understandings shifted. Drink it in the way that suits you but be prepared for the impact it might have on your next selection and what you see as the wine’s significance.

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Wine has been widely studied under different angles in the professional and academic literature such as viticulture, winemaking, wine tourism, wine business or wine marketing but curiously, anthropological research is scant. This book addresses a number of critical issues in social sciences and humanities such as globalization, local agency, representation, social class, invention of the tradition, socialist and post-socialist cultures of wine, gender and the uses of history and culture to support the quality and authenticity of wine. The authors bring a new eye on the anthropology of food and alcohol. The book is structured around the following four broad themes where wine production and wine consumption are interacting a lot with many other variables:

(1) The first section “rethinking terroir” is looking beyond the geological and climatic definition of terroir. Having in mind the definition of OIV: “Viticultural terroir” is a concept which refers to an area in which collective knowledge of the interactions between the identifiable physical and biological environment and applied viticultural practices develops, providing distinctive characteristics for the products originating from this area (Resolution OIV/Viti 333/2010), the authors analyze the manifold interpretations of terroir with different case studies coming from different regions.

- First, they explore the production of collective knowledge based on locality in Bordeaux. Terroir is regarded as a set of knowledge specific to a place with differences between regions: in less prestigious regions, terroir is “playful” and inventive since there is no rigid standards whereas in more prestigious regions, terroir is used to explore science, technique and art;
- Then, they analyze the antagonist role of critics and academics to provide a definition of terroir in Australia where there is no precise definition of terroir since the concept is evocative and has different meanings. They pinpoint the concept of terroir entails a philosophic and spiritual belonging to a place and the reverence for place;
- Thirdly, they study how the Chilean industry uses this concept of terroir to improve the reputation of its wine in a country where the wine is produced with low cost. The challenge for the industry is to build a narrative around the concept of terroir and place. The narrative is not only romantic but is also driven by spaces of capitalist production and thus, power;
- Finally, they consider the ways in which the concept of terroir naturalizes human relations in wine production. Terroir is not only soil and climate but it allows to link wine with place and persons (or artisans) from viticulture to vinification. In that way, terroir through social, cultural and historical conditions is contributing to the ongoing improvement of quality and the management of soil and climate.

(2) The second section “relationships of power and the construction of place” is focusing on the co-existence of place, distinction and labor both in Eastern and Western European countries. Wine production has evolved from being part of daily alimentation to being a commodity for trade. Some growers become brands and gain some prestige whereas local people (especially in Burgundy and Bordeaux) don’t drink wine produced in the region because it is too expensive for the everyday consumption. This leads to the dislocation of local cultural practices. This section looks at the relationships of power embedded in wine production, consumption and regulation.

- First, the changing meaning of wine consumption in Slovakia and how wine drinking and wine tourism have become a mark of distinction are covered. This analysis moves from nostalgia of rural past for the middle class to the importance of developing a fine wine trade in the country. The challenge is to find a balance between the development of a lucrative wine tourism industry associated with social distinction and the conviviality of sharing wine locally;
- Then, wine is analyzed as a component of emergent collective memory and as part of public rituals in Poland.
- Next to that, Western Europe is analyzed in terms of changing patterns of consumption and social power. The authors analyze how globalization has changed and
shaped local, regional and national symbols in Galicia (with the importance of heritage preservation) and study the legal construction of wine in Bordeaux with a focus on the Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée system in France which shows us who is included and who is excluded from production areas.

– The bureaucratization of wine appellations is also studied in Bulgaria.

(3) The section on “labor, commodification of wine, and the politics of wine” looks at wine as a global commodity where both local and global shifts in consumption and the cultural meanings of wine drinking are studied. It also focuses on the importance of the growers and their workers who are often not taken into account in many popular press or journals’ articles.

– First, the grands crus consumption of Burgundian wines is studied and the authors show that soil but also labor are important factors to make wine. The concept of terroir is then deconstructed by showing how it fossilizes social relations, work and land ownership. Globalization and the underlying transnationalism has led to the emergence of new landscapes of wine cultures and tastes;

– Then, small-scale family farms are studied in Languedoc under the angle of succession among wine growing families and the role of gender and labor relations;

– Finally, the socialist and post-socialist eras are studied in Georgia with a focus on the changing political and production regimes from quantity to quality and its consequences on the cultural practices.

(4) The last section is focusing on “technology and nature” and its tensions in terms of wine production and consumption.

– First, the technical transfer of knowledge coming from French enologists in Lebanon is analyzed with a postcolonialist tendency.

– Secondly, the role of Jules Chauvet in France with the reinvention of postwar vinification is studied especially under the modern natural wine concept but also organic and biodynamic.

– Finally, the tensions between technology and nature are focusing on the Italian natural wine movement and the perception of nature in wine, in the vineyard, in the cellar but also in the glass for US consumers. The wine drinkers got the impression that wine brings them closer to the nature.

This book will be helpful for wine managers to better understand the diversity of terroirs, cultures but also the interactions of different variables where the work of wine-growers and their workers occupies a key role. This anthropologic analysis is complementary to the business approach since a new eye on a phenomenon is always important to take into account in order to take the right decisions.

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References


