

Abstract

Languedoc-Roussillon. When cooperation becomes strength: reevaluation of IGP wines through the communication of private and institutional actors.

Motivation for choosing this topic.

The appellation system in Languedoc has undergone significant changes. The weight of wines with IGP designation is tremendously important. What are the motivations of wine producers to make wine outside of AOC - is it a conflict of interests? What is the communication between private and institutional actors? What category is representative to regional terroir? What influence has this fact to the overall image of Languedoc-Roussillon wines? How to strengthen communication based on a link to origin? What measures are necessary to guarantee future profitability of Languedoc wine producers?

Problem and objective.

This paper is part of the vibrant debate going on in Languedoc between professionals. System of appellations is lacking clear delineation and remains rigorous. Regional appellations are confusing, as zones are overlapping each other and often do little in common in terms of geography and terroir. Languedoc is known for rebellion spirit of its winemakers. Only 11% of wines produced fall into the AOC category. Vignerons take violent and direct actions in protest against the organization of wine business. They are unhappy with appellation laws. The objective of this thesis is to understand the real perspectives of IGT wines in the region through exploring different facets of complex communication between professionals.

Methodology.

A broad review of scientific literature, academic papers, published opinions of wine experts have been made. In order to obtain technical elements and non-quantifiable data on a discussed topic various wine professional of a region have been interrogated. 18 wineries of different typologies have been identified, concerning their type, size and performance, situated in different appellations of Languedoc and commercializing wines under AOC/IGP/VdF categories. There were 4 obligatory questions asked. The rest of discussion was an outline of questions related to the studied topic. 3 Directors of Syndicats have been interviewed. 4 specialists about history and economy of Languedoc, genesis of appellations and terroir economy have been interrogated. For the second part of a research, the in-depth analysis of representative in terms of communication appellation - Pic Saint-Loup has been made. This appellation has been chosen because, despite its recent history, it has a level of notoriety and is an example to follow for producers in the region. Interview of Director and Animator of Syndicat de Pic Saint-Loup has been conducted as well as opinions of 18 producers of Languedoc have been analyzed. Names are not mentioned in the research paper, because the chosen topic is delicate and to get a better understanding of the situation the recordings stayed anonymous. To make analysis and identify the tendencies, all interviews have been further rewritten in the form of verbatim.

Content.

Section 1 – Introduction

VERESHCHAGINA Daria, 11 June 2018

- Motivation for choosing this topic.
- Problem, objective and structure of a research paper.
- Languedoc-Roussillon wine sector economy.
- Perception of IGP label by consumers in France.

Section 2 - Languedoc - Roussillon wine scene and its terroir

- Outline of a regional wine history. Languedoc and Roussillon - joined administratively in 1972, but historically, culturally and topographically two distinct regions.
- Transformation of Languedoc-Roussillon to high-quality wine region and role of cooperatives.
- Different concepts and definitions of terroir.
- Terroir concept in relation to Languedoc-Roussillon: soil, topography, climate, landscape, viticultural practices.

Section 3 - Interaction between social and institutional actors

- Private and institutional actors. Role of controlling bodies.
- Self-created classifications based on collective segmentation.

Section 4 - Implication of appellations approach in the region

- Overview of Appellation system in Europe.
- Organization of system of appellations and Crus in the region.
- Place of IGT wines in Languedoc-Roussillon dynamics and in French economy.
- When the AOC system becomes an obstacle to expression of terroir: the underlying philosophy and problems of producers.

Section 5 – Methodology and key findings

- Method.
- How to strengthen the communication based on the link to the origin, that leads to a better valorization?
- Key findings.

Conclusion.

Conclusion.

System of appellations is created to increase consumer recognition, therefore should be simple and easy to explain. It should favor development of a wine sector and do not create additional barriers. Lack of political transparency and bureaucracy detract from progress, so facilitate communication is necessary. Personal initiative on a communal (and regional) level could be an effective solution. Collective, rather than personal, interests have to be considered. And initiative should come from personal ambitions. Communicate collectively and globally. Objective of all actors is to increase recognition in international level, price per bottle of wine and insure protection of heritage. Proper functioning of appellation system is important, to be effective, it requires participation of all actors involved. Strategic communication plan, proper marketing are also needed. It is necessary to create proper and reliable brands. These measures are necessary to improve the image of Languedoc wines and, in consequence, guarantee future profitability of Languedoc wine producers.