

GRAPE VARIETY AS A PART OF TERROIR

Case Study: Slovakia and its Grape Varieties

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ABSTRACT

1. Motivation for choosing this Topic:

The author is an oenologist, wine importer, exporter and distributor, national and international wine judge, wine commentator and lecturer. She lives and works in Slovakia and during the last decade has been professionally and personally involved in the process of the creation of Slovak wine identity. Grape Variety (or Varieties) versus Terroir has been a hot issue, recently.

2. Objective:

The objective of this Thesis was to study and discuss the importance of Grape Variety (Varieties) as an undetachable part of Terroir, focusing on the interaction between different elements of Terroir and the Impact of Grape Varieties in the Style and Quality of Wines.

3. Methodology:

The autor carried out a complex research of different sources: historical documents, printed literature and internet sources, published and (yet) unpublished research materials, WSET study materials and lectures and personal communication with experts. Personal experience from different tastings (e.g. Master Classes, seminars), Expert tasting groups (where she was invited as a consultant, 2009-2014), Wine competitions and Wine trips was summarized with regard to the Topic.

4. Content:

In the Introduction, the purpose (objective, see hereabove) of the Thesis is stated and the question to be answered is formulated: How and to What Extent would GRAPE VARIETIES influence the expression of TERROIR and impact in the QUALITY of WINES?

Part One: Grape Variety versus Terroir? A definition of Terroir and its Elements has been outlined, focusing on Grape Variety as an important factor. As an example, some notorious wine regions and recently „discovered“ New World ones have been highlighted, discussing the role of their Grape varieties in relation to the Typicity and Originality of their wines, to answer the question about a VERSUS or a CONSENSUS between Grape varieties and the traditional concept of Terroir.

Part Two: Case Study: Slovakia and its Grape Varieties. A case study of Slovakia, an emerging wine region on the northern frontier of economically sustainable viticulture, has focused on the great diversity of its Grape varieties. Based on the research of Slovak Wine history and future situation in relation to GRAPE VARIETIES, the author has tried to discuss the potential of the traditional and new ones – original Slovak crosses. Their importance as a factor of ORIGINALITY for an economically sustainable wine industry as well as the promise of the country as a QUALITY WINE producer has been analysed.

Conclusion: Based on the literary search, personal research and experience, facts and findings and using the Case study of Slovakia and its Grape varieties as a background, the author has tried to answer the question: How and to What Extent would GRAPE VARIETIES influence the expression of TERROIR and impact in the QUALITY of WINES?

Bibliography: Structured list of sources of the research, references and citations (outlined as footnotes) used in the Thesis.

Appendices: Tables & Diagrams, Maps and Images referenced in the Thesis

5. Conclusion:

In general terms, it is a mark of quality in a Grapevine Cultivar that it is capable to produce Wines with distinguished flavours, although these could be induced by natural and human factors.

Wine Quality is maximized if the Grape Variety is well suited to the site in the terms of Terroir, notorious or emerging. If the match is perfect, the Quality of Wine might be defined as the best Expression of Terroir in the broader sense: a unanimity of Soil, Climate and Vine.