Wine Magic
Consumer Culture, Tourism and Terroir

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This article explores strangeness-familiarity relations in the context of global wine consumer culture. While observing wine as a deeply familiar foodstuff and consumer commodity that is part of their quotidian life-worlds, wine consumers equally emphasize the particularity, hence implicit separation and distance with symbolically elevated wine production areas and terroirs. Our argument is that wine therefore belongs to a wider class of magical stuff believed to transform the qualities and powers of a specific place of origin into ordinary consumer life contexts. We suggest that the tension between strangeness and familiarity points to the persistence of magic as a wider relational idiom fundamental to modern consumer culture.

Key words: wine, consumer culture, terroir, magic

This work explores the relation between strangeness and familiarity in the context of contemporary wine consumer culture. It approaches this relation through the conceptual prism of magic as a socially embedded belief regarding the ability of matter that has been separated from a body of origin to continue to exert power on each other (Mauss 2001). Examples have been richly documented by anthropologists, ranging from the believed ability of body parts or fragments of a corpse—a bone, a hair, a fingernail—to evoke and actually bring alive the spirit that has once inhabited it to the power of objects brought into contact with a shrine or sacred ground to capture and transport the latter's spiritual powers and qualities into other contexts, or even the power of words invoking an absent person, object, or reality (Greenwood 2009). While often critiqued for exoticizing Others in the context of classical anthropology, the concept of magic has in recent years seen a prominent return to anthropological debate as a tool to study a range of social phenomena, including film, fashion, food, luxury brands, architecture, contemporary art, or tourism as specific forms of modern consumer culture (e.g., Arnould et al. 2017; Meyer and Pels 2003; Picard 2011, 2015). In line with these works, the aim of this article is to employ magic to study contemporary wine consumer

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culture, especially the construction of the social category of terroir as a somewhat magical place of provenance that perpetuates its presumed qualities and powers in the material culture of wine drunk thousands of kilometers from the source. Physically the concept of terroir includes soil, climate, topography, latitude, and so on. We will argue that something akin to magic relies in this case on the double principle of strangeness and familiarity: the very value of wine is defined by a specific place of strangeness—its all-important provenance whose socially attributed specific properties are commonly summarized by the notion of terroir, usually amplified by associations with exceptional vintage years (an aspect that remains to be discussed in further work)—and by familiar home environments in which it is purchased and consumed—for example, wine shops and supermarkets, restaurants, cafés, weddings, and dinner parties.

Subsequently, the key importance in wine consumer culture of an authentic link to an actual place of provenance constitutes a fundamental difference with other forms of magic in contemporary consumer culture (Ulin 2004, 2013). Certainly, geographical places are frequently evoked in cinema (locations of filming), in fashion (London, Milan, Paris), and other consumer culture, yet never to the extent to which they are central in wine consumer culture. Indeed, it does not really matter if a fashion dress, sneaker, or movie is actually produced in Paris or California. Moeran (2017) notes that fashion, for instance, sources magical value from the authoring and actual self-replication by famous designers or artists. Similarly, cinema magic is created through plot and the evocation of illusive worlds that capture the imagination and create very real emotions in viewers (Meyer 2003). With wine this is different, because wine without recognized and authenticated place of provenance and vintage year would be stripped of most of its magic. It becomes cheap booze ("plonk") or cooking wine.

This apparent centrality of place (and, as a secondary category, vintage) has two major implications. Firstly, what consumers will eventually be prepared to pay for a bottle or case of wine depends on the value they associate with a specific place of origin, its terroir and particular vintage years. Value hence directly depends on a socially mediated and often carefully curated image or myth of a given place or vintage year that allows certain wine regions or wineries to stand out in a highly competitive global market. These images or myths are not universal but are bound to specific networks of wine connoisseurs and frequently also to national wine-consumer segments. Certain wineries or vintages can gain in value in some consumer markets (e.g., the sudden rise of certain Bordeaux appellations and vintage years among Chinese consumers during the late 2000s), while being widely ignored in others.

Secondly, although one cannot visit the place of origin of sneakers or brand-name clothing (one can only visit brand-name stores), one can visit the place of origin of wine because, precisely, its place of provenance is geographically located. Building on Bruner's (2005) approach to tourism as a form of ritual performance, we observe that many wine consumers temporarily become wine tourists, traveling to and through major global wine regions and hence bringing alive the mythical image of terroir as provenance in a concrete ritual setting.

From these preliminary observations, we suggest a study of wine consumer culture through the classical anthropological approach of myth and ritual. The data we collected include an assemblage of different narratives, models, and techniques that are common within the professional wine world, accessed through participant observation as wine-making students in Portugal and Germany. (David Picard and Catarina Moreira underwent training in viticulture and oenology at the MSc level at the universities of Lisbon and Geisenheim between 2013 and 2015.) Comparative empirical research on wine tourism in Portugal, Switzerland, China, South Africa, France, Austria, and the United States between 2015 and 2017 by all three authors produced a systematic study of wine tourism spatial set-ups, discourses, and practices, with the aim of observing public narratives, ritual performances, and mythical invocations. This second part of the study was based on a dual approach, initially of participant observation taking on the role of ordinary wine tourists followed by an investigative study of producers and their facilities through interviews and desk research. Participant observation through work as a professional winemaker in Portugal and Switzerland since 2015 allowed Catarina Moreira to observe the complex interplay between the wine industry and terroir mediators such as journalists and wine critics and wine tourists from an insider perspective.

TERROIR FOR WINE EXPERTS

Most wine scientists and experts, including the widely published Jancis Robinson (1999), contend that the taste profiles of wines do, to a humanly detectable level, reflect or express the particular bioclimatic and geological conditions of, and production environments in, a specific wine region or winery company, and vintage year. In short, they express the specificities of a production place's particular terroir and the year-specific bioclimatic set-up conditioning grape production. Yet, only a relatively restricted number of trained wine experts has the experience and skills to detect and meaningfully compare such actual wine terroir specificities across several wine regions. Priilaid (2007) shows that wine experts are able to identify what grapes a blind-tasted wine is made of, in which type of climate it was produced, which production processes were employed, and roughly how old it is.

When we (David Picard and Catarina Moreira) were trained in sensory analysis at the University of Geisenheim in Germany, we were taught a standard protocol allowing us to judge and eventually identify the origin of a blind-tasted wine. Wine experts usually do not identify a wine's origin or producer per se, but they can do so through a process of elimination. Comparing the blind-tasted wine against previously memorized terroir typicality profiles of specific wine regions or companies allowed us to locate its specific profile within an (imaginary) global wine landscape. For the most sensitive and experienced tasters among our student group it became possible to identify the grape varieties, the bioclimatic conditions in which these grapes had been grown, and certain terroir-specific production processes that, in sum, would allow a guess on what the wine was and where it was from. Evidently, we got it mostly wrong, yet still became

progressively more sophisticated in identifying certain terroir profiles—say, cold climate versus warm climate, New World versus Old World. At the same time, with the use of technology, we realized that these categories were actually socially produced conventions of wine regions rather than naturalistic expressions of terroir. Under similar bioclimatic conditions, a Bordeaux-style red or white could easily be produced in California or Portugal. And vice versa: fruit- and extraction-driven New World wine styles could easily be replicated almost anywhere when the appropriate technology is applied. In a way, at the end of our training, terroir itself partly dissolved as a meaningful category for talking about larger wine regions or entire countries. However, it remained highly meaningful to talk about terroir-typicality conventions and associated wine styles, and also about the distinctive quality of grapes harvested in specific plots. Jean-Christophe Barbe, oenology professor at the Vine and Wine Sciences Institute in Bordeaux, pointedly proposed the definition of *terroir* as a consensual vision among wine producers and critics about how wine from a given region or plot ought to look, smell, and taste (personal communication, 2016). In the professional wine world, a clear shift can hence be observed from the earlier, naturalistic visions of terroir as a true expression of the character of land and people toward a rather constructivist understanding of terroir as an artful expression of human genius and taste politics.

TERROIR AS CONSUMER MYTH

A study by Aurier, Fort, and Sirieix (2005) shows that, compared with trained wine professionals, the overwhelming majority of wine consumers use significantly less-developed sensorial memory to categorize blind-tasted wines according to specific wine style, grape varieties, or origins. Todd (2012) stresses that this does not mean, of course, that these wine consumers do not have a pertinent sense of wine appreciation; it only means that they have little or no training in the specific frameworks of reference established by wine professionals (such as the Wine and Spirit Education Trust, WSET). Subsequently, for the vast majority of consumers, the concept of terroir remains in its sensorial essence elusive and, as we will argue, shifts its signification into the domain of ritualized wine consumer behavior. In other words, wine terroir becomes a narrative element performed as part of wine-drinking ceremonials. Aurier and colleagues (2005) argue that in a context of relative incertitude about the sensorial essence of wine, most wine consumers use terroir rather as a brand or seal of quality that provides security with regard to social conventions and, following Bourdieu (1984), also social distinction.

In wine tastings in various wine tourism settings observed as part of this study, although the majority of wine tourists were rather discreet about their tastings, the more experienced and—under the influence of alcohol—also the more talkative amateur wine tasters regularly engaged in rhetoric performances explaining to themselves and others the aromatic and sensorial profiles of the wines. We observed two modes of engagement, one serious and the other rather ironic. A good example of serious engagement is supplied by our observations of a middle-aged German couple with whom we

spent an entire day of visits and tastings in the Stellenbosch area in South Africa. After the tastings, back in the minivan, the husband engaged us and others who were on the same tour in conversations about the wines sampled. He liked reds in particular, he said, and stressed the intensity of the color and the fruity aroma. His wife responded that she preferred the white wines' lighter, fruit- and flower-driven aroma profiles. Without being able to say much more about their specific travel motifs or social context back home, the observations of this couple point at more general ways in which wine and wine tastings generate experiences that challenge tourists to position themselves within a social field—for example, with regard to socially conventionalized, gender-specific taste profiles (i.e., the cliché among many European wine consumers that males drink red, and females drink white wines [Editor's Note: also true in the United States]).

In a similar but reverse way, other wine tourists reacted ironically. For instance, a group of friends from Ireland with whom we shared a minivan during another day of observations in Stellenbosch or a couple of American tourists met during a tour in the Bordeaux region almost systematically engaged in an ironic performance of wine consumer ritual parody. The tastings and reactions usually followed a similar sequence of tasting and then talking in an exaggerated way about the multiple flavor associations sensed in the wine. Once one person started to engage in the tastings in this way, others usually followed, trying to make the group laugh. For instance, during the Stellenbosch tour, one man started to explain the strawberry and vanilla aromas in a wine. A woman responded that she could sense green grass. The group laughed. Another man responded he could sense the sheep that were farmed on the green grass, the smell of the wet wool. With increasing amounts of alcohol consumed the conversations got more animated and self-entertaining.

Engaging in such wine-tasting ritual performances was usually actively encouraged by the wine educators who directed the tastings and explained, often quite literally, what the tasters ought to see, smell, and taste. Overton and Murray (2013) explain that being able to talk publicly about wine in a seemingly meaningful manner by using certain terms and key words has been an element of class-related communicative action since at least the eighteenth century, when wine appreciation became a proxy to reaffirm social inclusion among European urban elites. Michalski (2015) contends that the principle of this distinction largely remains in today's class-based consumer societies. Then and now, wine consumption becomes a delicate act of balance among very personal pleasures of tasting, ceremonially performed pretentions of knowing about terroir, and concealing one's technical inability to say much about it. It seemed to us that both serious engagement and irony were ways to deal with the insecurity regarding a connoisseur wine culture that was at once present and in its essence unattainable in these tourists' everyday lives. For the overwhelming majority of wine tourists observed during this study, the question about "the real" in wine terroir (detected by wine experts and mediated through wine journalism) seemed to remain as elusive as that of—say—"the real" during a Holy Mass or a séance for a spirit invocation. Just as for

most churchgoers or participants in spirit ceremonials it does not matter if God or spirits actually exist, for most wine consumers it does not matter if terroir exists—as long as it fulfils its role in the wine consumer ritual. It becomes what the German philosopher Kant called a "social reason." In this sense, the magic of terroir is grounded in collective belief. It stems as much from the experience of the ritual performance of wine drinking and wine tourism. In a way, terroir becomes a medium to articulate a wider cosmology in which the proximity of home is connected with enchanting images of places of distanced strangeness.

TERROIR MAGIC AS METANARRATIVE

In a work on the relation between wine and the making of national identity in France, the historian Guy explains how narratives of wine terroir came to describe the "holistic combination in a vineyard environment of soil, climate, topography, and the 'soul' of the wine producer" (Guy 2007:2). She relates her observation to the common popular-science belief prevalent among social elites in France at the turn of the twentieth century that a life-giving spirit animated the land and its produce (Guy 2002). She notes that those who worked the land and the produce it generated came to be seen as material transfigurations of, and vehicles for, such an animating spirit; they are considered to be mobile entities transporting quite materially a socially inscribed sense of place beyond its spatial confines. To illustrate the belief about such protomagical qualities of wine terroir and wine, Guy (2002) recounts the popular nineteenth-century tale of two Burgundy wine amateurs visiting the German wine region of Rheingau. The core of the story is built around the frightening experience by the two Frenchmen who, during the night after drinking several bottles of wine, vividly dreamed that they consumed the body of the local lord mayor. The next day they learned that the grapes used to make the wine they had drunk were harvested from vines planted on the grave of the lord mayor, who had passed away some time before. The tale expresses the basic structure and plot of a metanarrative that continues to organize the cosmological understandings of the world in contemporary consumer culture. The soul of the local mayor traveled into the wine produced from grapes grown on his tomb and inhabited those who consumed it. Wine becomes a particular expression of an essence and ontological extension of the specific qualities or inhabiting spirits of an enchanted land that nevertheless remains at a distance. The structural similarity between this metanarrative and previous Western cosmologies—the biblical tale of Eden and Eden lost, or the Hobbesian natural state replaced by a society governed by a social contract—seems obvious. In each case, an estranged nature is located at a distance from a quotidian home context. Ritual performances allow consumers what the French anthropologist George Bataille (1962) calls a ceremonial transgression that brings into contact what is otherwise separated and simultaneously reaffirms geographical and ontological distance.

This works certainly through the immediate consumption of wine in one's home context. "The wine tastes like a holiday in Italy" is a dinner-table expression that we

have often heard among northern European wine amateurs in their home contexts and also while on tour. Similar sentences, such as "you can feel the power of the sun, the ripened fruit, the saltiness of the sea, the minerality of the rocky grounds," operate analogous extensions between the character attributes of a given land and wine as its produce. Once the specific qualities of such lands are materially extended to the fermented produce, wine becomes a kind of magical elixir that enables wine drinkers to assimilate and dissolve such presumed qualities into the human body. The power of the Italian sun, the solidity of terroir rock, or the sweet flavors of foreign fruits become an energizing part of Self.

THE HISTORIC PRODUCTION OF TERROIR

The association between terroir and magic is neither spontaneous nor innocent. Following David Inglis (2015), the naturalist narrative of wine terroir and its underlying strong mystical dimensions linking a national, regional, or even ethnic soul to a specific land (or grape variety) emerged in the context of French nation-building during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From early on, a clear distinction was made between wines destined for export and global trade and wines destined for local consumption (Campbell and Guibert 2007; Inglis and Gimlin 2015; Ponte 2009). Inglis (2015) argues that the specific formulations and articulations that terroir took in these different contexts almost always stemmed from a multiscalar process linking—broadly said—local supply and global demand. Specifically, they articulated the productive resources and capacities of wine-producing regions in Europe and the European colonies in South Africa, South America, and Asia with the global demand for fine wines by a relatively small social elite located in the major European capitals. In a study on Burgundy, Demossier (2010, 2011) demonstrates how, during the twentieth century, regional wine stakeholders strategically sponsored the notion of local terroir as an idiom of national French belonging. In this interscalar process, terroir wine from Burgundy transformed from a local rural product into an international brand sourcing value from its symbolic assimilation to a romantic and luxury lifestyle master-narrative associated with products of French provenance. In a similar study, Charters (2006) explains how Champagne managed to impose an exclusive global brand through a tight political self-organization of the different stakeholders involved in the wine-making sector. A crucial role in these—usually controversy-driven—value-defining processes is taken by different types of mediators: wine merchants and traders, and nowadays prominent wine journalists and critics who become the key influencers defining aesthetic standards, value, and global wine styles (Jackson 2015). A prominent game-changer in this context is the American wine journalist Robert Parker, whose very personal taste for highly extracted, fruit-driven wines (which he ranked on a scale of up to 100 points) has become a major reference for global wine critics, wine buyers, and eventually winemakers since the 1990s. The changes this introduced to the dominant conceptions of specific wine terroir styles did not take place without controversy. Bordeaux wines in particular, traditionally cultivated with a rather lighter color and body (hence the famous

"claret," as it is known in England), have undergone a technological revolution. With extensive pre-fermentative cold soak (encouraging pigment extraction) and use of oak barrels (giving wine more body and structure), many Bordeaux wines now present intense color and body profiles. For some producers and critics, these new styles have nothing to do with the classic Bordeaux style. For others they are the expression of technology and overall wine conceptions adapting to changing consumer markets.

WINE TOURISM ON THE GROUND

If the trade of wine defines the circulation of a perceived magical essence extracted from a given terroir, as suggested in the first sections of this article, (wine) tourism can be seen as an inverse circulation in which wine consumers become tourists and travel to wine terroirs. In the first case, terroir is circulated toward consumers; in the second, wine-consumers-as-tourists are circulated toward terroir. Both forms of circulation seem complementary instances of the same social phenomenon, both grounded in the above-described cosmological metanarrative opposing a magical place of distance to a quotidian place of ordinary life.

Galloway et al. (2008), Hall et al. (2009), and Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) define wine tourism as travel to and through wine regions with the aim of tasting wines and enjoying wine landscapes, including highly ceremonialized gastronomic events such as picnics in the vineyard, the visiting of wineries, and often the acquisition of wine to be transported back home. Part of this study shows that wine tourism services offered in wine regions in various parts of the world include a relatively consistent range of offers, typically comprising wine tours organized by tour operators, wine tastings in specially arranged tasting environments offered by vinyards, wine cellar visits, restaurant and event facilities, and the organization of wine festivals and associated musical and cultural events. More sporadic are vineyard visits, wine tasting workshops, and participative wine-making events.

Wine tours are usually organized by private tour companies based in or near major tourism clusters. Tours are typically prearranged as self-drive and self-guided, guided bus tours, and also bicycle tours. Tours can last a half day, full day, or multiple days. They usually include three tastings per half day, so up to six in a full day, and sometimes also include lunch. Farms offering tastings usually have commercial agreements with these private-sector tour operators and use a voucher system. In some cases, tourists would pay for their tastings directly at the farms. Prices per person for full-day guided wine tours in a nine-seat minivan, including lunch, vary between €30 and €80 depending on the company and the country. To reduce travel time and boost the tourist experience, wine tours work best where different vinyards are clustered, ideally in an aesthetically pleasing landscape. Private guided tours can be far more expensive. Our (really costly) tour in the emerging Ningxia and Shandong wine region in China was actually custom-made and targeted at wine investors and journalists since amateur wine tourism remained in a budding stage.

The visitor environments in various countries are mainly custom-built tasting rooms located in vinyards or urban environments, sometimes framed by spectacular and ostentatious architecture, including boutique-style design bar-lounges and hospitality facilities. Many of these tasting rooms are located in carefully manicured gardens or landscapes, often including a vineyard (be it only as a relatively small-scale garden device). A common feature observed in many of these tasting rooms is the integration of a glass wall giving a view of adjacent cellars with aging barrels, carefully curated with pleasing arrangements, light effects, and even the decorative use of dust. The actual wine production cellars, with their steel tanks, presses, filters, and workspaces, are commonly hidden from the visitors and in many occasions actually located in other, more industrial sites (Figures 1 and 2). Unexpectedly, the frequently most visible part of this industrial pro-

Figure 1. Catarina Moreira preparing fermentation tanks (© David Picard 2014)

Figure 2. David Picard inoculating yeast (© Catarina Moreira 2014)

duction space is the bottling line that visitors can gaze at through protective glass windows.

Most facilities offer their visitors a range of wine-tasting packages, usually between three and five wines. In some cases, the tastings are mediated by a sommelier or trained host. Many offers include pairings of wine with gastronomic finger food, but also cheese, chocolate, cakes, and so on. Although the tourists are offered spittoons, many actually drink the wines. As one can imagine, this has the potential to provoke steadily louder and more animated conversations.

Cellar tours are offered in many wineries yet are in some countries places constrained by strict health and safety rules for tourist visits (especially Switzerland). Many smaller wineries informally invite visitors into the actual production cellar and organize tastings in the staging cellars, at times at the legal limit of visitor safety rules. Moreover, a number of larger and even very large producers offer dedicated guided or self-guided

walks through the production cellar, usually using the upper-level boardwalks on the steel tanks (which are also used by cellar workers). Signage and interpretation boards are used to help visitors understand the wine-making process and the related machinery they see. A commonly observed way to resolve the health-and-safety issue is the installation of glass walls, separating the production space from the visitor space.

The provision of restaurant services—often at gastronomic level—and event facilities is a common feature in regions with a relatively high degree of wine tourism agglomeration (e.g., Stellenbosch, Bordeaux, Douro, Napa). Where well-managed, these facilities can generate a considerable complementary income and in some cases become major moneymakers. Their success depends greatly on the ability of owners to create commercial relations with tour operators so as to guarantee a steady flow of visitors and events (most notably weddings, business meetings, company "retreats" and workshops). Many vinyards that have seen considerable success in this subsector have increased their capacity by developing additional products, such as luxurious picnics, delis, and gastronomic tours on the property. Especially for those who offer event facilities, the development of a quality accommodation offer is sometimes central.

Additional products are often of a more eventful nature, organized throughout the year or at specific times, especially around harvest. Many producers organize annual "open cellars" (not actually taking place in the cellar), which invite regular clients and offer special deals (and sell stock before bottling the new wine). Some farms, especially smaller ones with a strong emphasis on terroir wines, organize regular vineyard visits in the company of the winemaker/viticulturist, with educational and experiential components (the visits usually terminate with a collective meal in a restaurant or even in the vineyard). Similarly, some wineries offer pedagogic wine-tasting workshops and also participatory events such as grape picking, stomping grapes during harvest, or bottling individual bottles with customized labels.

For professional wine associations and regional development agencies, wine festivals are a very common means to bring the various professional actors, buyers, and wine consumers together in a festive environment. The aims are multiple, including direct sale, branding and customer relationship marketing, social festivity, and the reinforcement of a sentiment of regional wine and gastro terroir among producers and clients.

What this study shows is that wine and its production sites become a specific type of attraction structuring the journey and giving it a name ("wine tourism"). In most cases observed here, other visits complement the trip, including treks to cultural sites, festivals, urban or rural centers, landscapes, heritage sites, and restaurants. Wine tourism hence supplies a particular case and variation of the more general cultural phenomenon of tourism and its relation to contemporary consumer culture. MacCannell (1976) suggests that we think about tourism culture in terms of a ritual driven by a protoreligious mythical quest for an authentic condition. For MacCannell, this quest is embedded in the metanarrative of a lost primordial natural condition. He proposes that tourism generates the particular time and space that allows consumer society to ceremonially reanimate this myth and by that means recreate the social and cosmic

order of social life. Graburn suggests that tourism follows a meta-ritual structure that anthropologists have previously observed in a wide range of other social contexts (Graburn 1983, 1989). At first sight, the experiential structure of wine tourism seems akin to that of a pilgrimage, whereby the travelers seek quite materially to connect with spiritually heightened places or sacred shrines that allow social and spiritual recreation (Picard 2013). Wine tourism away from home, but also wine consumption back at home, hence seem specific ceremonial instances that enable the material transfer of magical qualities between a terroir and the body of a consumer. They enable a connection with deeply cherished yet distanced and somewhat estranged places "out there" essential to perpetuate life "in here." In this sense, wine becomes a specific material medium to produce an authentic link (Stewart 1984) or sympathetic relation (Greenwood 2009) between the wider cosmological idea of nature as a primordial state and an often negatively connoted mundane present in which wealthy, urban Westerners live. Whether through tourism or wine consumption, terroir-as-other becomes a kind of sacred resource able to magically reenergize Self. Wine regions and their produce, while distanced and actually strange for most wine tourists and wine consumers, are at the same time perceived as an essential source for human life.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this work was to explore strangeness-familiarity relations through the prism of wine and wine consumption. The aim was to explore the relations through which wine consumers connect to wine and wine terroir. While observing wine mostly as a deeply familiar foodstuff and consumer commodity that is part of their quotidian life-worlds, these wine consumers generally emphasize the particularity of, hence implicit separation and distance from, specific wine production areas said to be inhabited by soulful spirits or forms of divine beauty. In other terms, wine terroir is imbued with magic that can be accessed either through the consumption of its produce or through actual travel and embodied immersion.

Analytically, for many consumers wine is an ontological extension of these production locales, carrying its particular magical qualities beyond its geographical borders. Wine in contemporary consumer culture can be thought of as belonging to a wider class of magical stuff that is believed to imply a sympathetic relation to a wider whole from which it has previously been separated (Greenwood 2009). The relation of wine to terroir is analogous to that of a nail of the Holy Cross to the kingdom of heaven or the seashells and beach sand brought home by tourists to the dream tropical island destination. It is a material metonym that is simultaneously a familiar consumer commodity and a connector to a separated and strange world that comes to inhabit us. We suggest that this tension between strangeness and familiarity reveals a relational idiom that is fundamental to contemporary consumer culture. Consuming wine, as a particular material and spiritual expression of the mythical realm of a primordial nature, becomes a social act of cosmological engagement and recreation.

The study allows us to conceptualize different approaches, narratives, and uses of the notion of terroir as a source of magic that varies widely between wine professionals and amateurs, but also between different consumer groups. Depending on to whom one talks, terroir magic can be territorial essence, distinction-providing commodity, the powerful number of a vintage year, an experience object to reaffirm or reconfigure social relations, an object-metaphor for national or regional belonging, or a professional raison d'être for wine professionals. We have tried to summarize this variety in a single table (Table 1).

An interesting question for further research is how the perceived magic of wine is actually produced. Most wine consumed worldwide comes from industrial wineries applying globalized technologies and production protocols. Typicality and genuineness, key terms in the wine world, are factually produced through technology rather than as naturalistic expressions of a God-given terroir. In wine journalism, advertisement, and wine tourism, this aspect of production remains widely concealed, which may precisely be a tool of magical enchantment (Taussig 2003). What is mostly shown to wine consumers and wine tourists are romantic or arty-modernist wineries and wine regions.

Table 1. Narratives, plot, and ritual contexts of wine terroir magic

Terroir narrative	Plot	Ritual contexts
Naturalistic: animating spirit of the land that transfigures in its produce and makes its farmers spiritual mediators	Wine as expression and material extension of a spiritually heightened land	Wine consumer representations of terroir as symbolically heightened place; ritual performance of wine tourism
Bio-geo-climatic: temperature, rainfall, soil, sunlight, seasons, choice of plant material	Wine as expression of geological and environmental conditions	Winemaking industry and economics, grape quality and grape production potential Consumer and wine industry magic of vintage
Socially conventionalized: a consensual vision among winemakers, producers, intermediaries, and consumers about the organoleptic specificities of specific wine terroirs	Wine as expression of socially conventionalized aesthetic ideals achieved mainly through technology in viticulture and oenology	Wine industry linked to science and technology, territorial and national terroir lobbies and wine markets Consumer expectations mediated by wine critics and buyers/distributers

Hence the globally evolving political economy of wine would seem to provide a great entry point into the study of global connections among the cosmological beliefs underpinning contemporary consumer society, social rituals, taste patterns, consumption patterns, policy, and consumer industry.

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