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Identity markers for wine producers: terroir and beyond

Abstract:

The article investigates how wineries have used different markers as an effort to differentiate themselves from other producers and support their self-identity. The most dominant markers perceived by the respondents are tied to different forms of regional/geographical markers, such as terroir including the AOC, and organic production. They stress the vine and agricultural aspects of winemaking. In addition, some markers also include special wine, such as old vine as a special aspect of identity as quality producers.

The empirical basis is 23 face-to-face in-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews with owners and winemakers in wineries in New South Wales, Australia, Provence, France and by the river Duero, Spain; and two wine experts in Australia and in Spain.

The analytical perspective includes the notion of boundary objects, and the role of technological actors in an Actor-Network theoretical approach. We also make use of the framework of small business identity as production oriented. The main conclusion of the paper is that wine producers in the market of quality wine tie their efforts to differentiate their quality wine to their identity work.

Keywords: Identity markers, terroir, AOC, old vine, organic wine

1. Introduction

The article discusses how wineries in France, Spain and Australia perceive and utilize regional and other identity markers of quality for wine. The use of markers in discourses of wine producers is

important for the differentiation of the products of the wineries and is linked to the self-identity of wine producers.

In this study, we have emphasized what the wine producers do, that distinguishes them from their neighbours in order to show the unique features of their product. We have tried to obtain an understanding of the entire wine-chain. There is a lack of research exploring what differentiation strategies growers and winemakers use and that the research at the same time take into account if the differentiation strategies are in sync with their beliefs and values (Sigala, 2019). This research is trying to make a first attempt at filling this void.

The project investigates the research question: How do wineries use markers to differentiate themselves from other local producers? Our original assumption in this study was that differentiation is tied to innovative efforts that could be conducted in the vineyard, in the wine cellar and in the actual marketing of the wine. The assumption was based on the existing literature on wine and strategy, that would give a hypothesis that wine producers link innovation in the three ambits (Barham, 2003; Jenster, 2008; Beverland, 2005, Lavandoski, Tonnini, and Barretto, 2012). However, when interviewing wine producers about how wineries distinguish themselves, they make no reference to marketing efforts, nor a link to the other two ambits. Quite on the contrary, the interviews are seen as rehearsed claims to self-identity of wine producers, where they use markers in on-going debates, all of which contribute to articulating and sustaining such an identity. The most salient debates between actors in the field of wine production, as reflected in our interviews, identify a number of markers for differentiation: AOC as a certified marker, terroir, organic farming and thus the agricultural aspects of wine production. Henceforth, the wine producers make various kinds of efforts to show that they did something extraordinary to differentiate themselves in one or more of these areas. In chapter 2 we will discuss the literature on markers and identity. In chapter 3

the methods in our study are outlined. In the fourth section we illustrate how the markers are used by the interviewees. The analysis is not only part of section 7, but will also be tied to the discussion of the empirical data as they pertain to the various themes of AOC, regional markers, organic production and old vine. In chapter 4.1-4.2 we are presenting at length the different strategies for differentiation that the interviewees are having in relation to the debates on AOC and terroir. The identity markers used in the debates of organic farming and old vines are not as frequent as the above and will be presented in chapter 5 and 6.

2. Literature

The literature on quality wine producers is mainly on the concept of terroir and markers. The concept of AOC in innovation studies is usually tied to the region (Rocchi & Gabai, 2013; Lundvall, 1992; McIntyre, 2015) and then used in marketing (Barham, 2003; Jenster, 2008; Beverland, 2005). Hence, these studies operate at meso levels, and have collective identity as unit of analysis.

By contrast the present study aims to fill out a void and instead focus on the identity and self-perception as articulated by the individual wine-producers, and provides a unique possibility to grasp their self-identity and how they used organisational identity such as AOC and terroir (Leitch & Harrison, 2016). We, thus, found it important to investigate what the wineries perceive to be important markers for their self-identity work while producing extraordinary wine, who to our surprise are not focusing on the marketing perspective.

We are distinguishing between certified markers and non-certified markers used to signal identity and quality. We performed a thematical analysis of all the interviews and the creation of identity developed as an important category, and thus an analytical interesting concept.

2.1 Geographical markers of wine

At the core of the concept of terroir which is certified in the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOCⁱ) is the importance of preserving the sensorial expressions such as taste, smell and colour of the terroir (Spielmann & Gelinac-Chebat, 2012). The terroir concept is considered important in France, Italy and Spain, more so for certain high profiled wine areas. As a concept, terroir is basically production-based i.e. it refers to the location or site where the grapes have grown and the taste of the soil in the wine. However, a terroir discourse is increasingly present in wine marketing (Spielmann & Gelinac-Chebat, 2012; Barham 2003) or integrated as a strategic choice of consumer experience in vineyard visits (Sigala 2019). Terroir could also be understood as regionality and the understanding of the drivers of regionality, such as specialisation, much discussed by opinion formers, and a well-defined wine style, as studied in Australia (Easingwood, Lockshin & Spawton, 2011, p. 19), however their focus is on the customers perception (ibid.).

The basic idea of terroir, is an indication of “a given quality and reputation” (Barham, 2003, p. 127). Previous research on terroir and AOC in the wine business has had high focus on rational strategies for economic benefit of the wine producer or region (Capitello, Agnoli, Charters and Begalli, 2016; Couderc & Marchini, 2011). Barreré (2007) is using an institutional framework to study how AOC as a rational strategy has evolved. The individual strategies of wine producers seem to be a mere result of a rational pay off matrix. For some authors terroir is seen as an image that France can sell as commodification of local tradition. Bohling (2013) sees “terroir as a forward-looking battle over global markets rather than a nostalgic rear guard action to protect local

agriculture”. Such war metaphor in the strategic use of terroir is commonly used in debate and research on AOC and terroir (Sigala 2019). Taking as point of departure that the French region Loire needs a new marketing strategy Terblanche, Simon & Taddei (2008) recommend that Bag-in-box “fine Loire wine” is introduced on the market. The marketing and strategizing literature on wine (e.g. Delmas and Grant 2014) falls into the trap of reducing the wine producer to Economic Man, thus ignoring the values that build his or her identity.

The terroir or geographical origin are important linguistic markers in the wine sector and we will investigate how they are integrated into innovation activities. We find these considerations important, because it is the wine producers themselves who spontaneously bring up terroir, terrain and geography in our interviews. In the GATTⁱⁱ agreement, geographical indications are seen as: “indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a [m]ember [country], or a regional locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin” (Barham, 2003, p.127). The GATT specifications reflect an effort to identify a distinctive quality to the product and “taste of history” (ibid, p. 132), even if “at the same time, terroir also reflects a conscious and active social construction of the present by various groups concerned with rural areas in France” (ibid.; Farmer; 2014). This is a kind of commitment to ‘terroir’ and thus a sense of uniqueness of the geographical conditions. (Beverland, 2005, p. 1018).

The AOC in France is important for wineries only if the area is already well known and can be used in a terroir discourse as a quality stamp of good reputation to keep prices high compared to other areas; this is clearly the case with high status areas such as Bandol, Bordeaux, or Bourgogne. The basic principle of terroir is that the soil and local conditions are extremely important for organoleptic aspects (Spielmann & Gelinias-Chebat, 2012), whereas AOC has more restrictions also

on grape variety, cultivation and harvesting methods. The limitations of the AOC mentioned by the winery Triennes, and by the Australian and Spanish producers in our material, are also found in other studies. There is some evidence that the rather rigid laws and regulations of some AOCs are conservative in nature and can stifle innovation (Jenster, 2008, p. 94; Gardner, 2014; Patel-Campillo & DeLessio-Parson, 2016).

Soil is important for the quality of grapes, but it is also, as is the case of terroir or AOC seen as a part of the quality of the wine in marketing (Rocchi & Gabbai, 2013; Beverland, 2005). We have used Bandol as an example, as interviews from Bandol showed how the AOC discourse is constructed.

It should be noted that there is a difference between terroir, terrain, and geographical region. The interest in regionality is increasing apparently also in the New world (Easingwood et al. 2011). For some wine producers, it is important to distinguish the geographical indicator and the terrain from the social construction of terroir or as Erica Farmer phrase it “social meaning of place” (p. 132, 2014).

Geographical conditions of terrain such as the area, the hills, mountains, exposure to sun and wind, microclimate, and soil composition are mentioned as important for all the wineries as regional conditions for their choice of region, types of grapes cultivated, and types of wines produced. This is not a social construction of terroir, but very basic geographical conditions that influence the quality of the grapes.

AOC is used by some regions as a joint marker for a quality region, where growers and wineries must follow the rules of the AOC. When branded as a certified AOC, the winery can use this as a marker and brand for obtaining higher prices. The AOC can be used as what Susan Leigh

Star (2010) calls a “boundary object”. The concept of boundary object has to our knowledge not been used in connection with wine and we find it a relevant perspective and worthwhile for further study. But AOC could also be seen as an actor in an Actor-Network-Theory perspective.

AOC is, of course, a social construction, and the AOC often provides a foundation for marketing (Spielmann & Gelinias-Chebat, 2012; Barham 2003). The AOC is “a construction site” for the building up of the brand, and often entails mobilization of growers to obtain the certification. The AOC and the terroir concepts not only entail factors of geography and soil. They have a technical and a social dimension as well (Ballantyne, 2011).

There has been some research interest in how the AOC or region is used as a collective competitive advantage in the consumer market (Rocchi & Gabbai, 2013; Patel-Campillo & DeLessio-Parson, 2016, McCutcheon, Bruwer & Li, 2009, Nallaperuma, Bandyopadhyay & Lockshin 2017). In the Rioja region, the large wineries create the AOC as a strategy to obtain quality branding (Brémond, 2014). Erica Farmer stresses the collective effort of legal protection: “AOC status is fundamentally linked to community interest. Rights are held communally, defined by producer groups, and reflect a consensus about values; and once status is granted, conforming to standards gives producers the ability to belong, allowing AOC protection to possess powerful possibilities to connect producers.” (2014, p. 133). However, there has been less focus on how individual wine producers use the AOC as a marker, both as a type of organisational identity and for their individual differentiation strategy.

The AOC functions as a marker for signifying the relative attractiveness of that particular wine vis-à-vis other wines that might be an option for the consumer. The producers expect consumers to value this aspect. However, producers know that such markers are perceived very differently by different consumers (Viot, 2012, Nallaperuma et al., 2017). Wines belonging to the

same region with the same AOC (e.g. Orange or Côte de Provence) might have the same objective quality or rating, but their individual prestige will depend on other factors. Hence, when competing in an open market with other AOCs, rosé wines from Côte de Provence will be at a disadvantage compared to wines from Bandol or Tavel, which possess higher status in the market for rosés. There is some evidence that quality producers will benefit from having access to other quality demarcations, such as medals in competitions “objective quality information” (Smith & Bentzen, 2011).

2.2. Literature beyond geographical markers

There has been little attempt to investigate the link between markers and identity. However, Beverland (2006) describes a series of attributes of authenticity that experienced wine consumers appreciate. These include “heritage and pedigree”, “relationship to place” and “method of production”. Beverland (2005 and 2006) shows that wine producers strive for these same attributes. Beverland (2005) furthermore distinguishes between formal and informal classifications, however the distinction is described as a tool that marketers in the wine company purposefully use to label their wine. Some evidence is provided that a connection to a formal classification, such as Martinborough Terraces is also part of building the identity of the winegrower (ibid.).

Most of the wineries are small firms, and they resemble many other small family firms by their production orientation, their pride in their product and their limited interest and professionalism in marketing (Penrose, 1995; Klostén & Michaelsson, 1998, Alonso & Liu, 2012, Mønsted, 2003). All of the wineries in the small and medium sized quality wineries however do own some, if not all, of their production facilities. Luckman and Andrew (2019, p.91) has showed how very small-scale craftsmen use owning a separate studio as an important marker for the identity

of being a maker. There is also sporadic evidence that histories are used in marketing as a “cultural marker of authenticity” (Beverland, 2005).

Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) presents the ideas of viewing all actors in the development, not only the social actors (Latour, 2005, 1996). In our analysis of especially organic production, both the restrictions in technology and legal framework could be involved as important actors. We also find that terrain, technology, and AOC are important explanatory actors for the strategy and behaviour of the wineries.

Inspired in how Georgakopoulou (2008) uses identity claims we define markers and identity markers as narrative positioning of the speaker in a particular discourse in the field. The interviewee will refer to an on-going debate and position herself in the debate with the use of language to mark her position. Making such a mark in a debate in the field has a double purpose: It answers the immediate question of how the interviewee feels about a certain innovation effort. At the same time the marker is also a building block in the identity work that the wine producer is undertaking. Roughly speaking the debates that the wine producer enters can be divided into two sets of debates with their attendant markers. Debates that can speak for or against certified markers, as would be taking a stand for or against ascribing to the values of an AOC and non-certified marker such as positioning oneself in a debate of the value of hand-picking grapes, or production orientation of avantgarde wine producers, as opposed to the institutionalized norm of the modern wine market, as Beverland (2006, p. 257) would put it.

During the interviews, the interviewees used different markers to position themselves in an on-going debate of rivalling discourses in the world of wine. Identity is perceived as a combination of the meaning of their individual identity as a unique winemaker and the collective identity of the sector and the region (Leitch & Harrison, 2016; Nelson, Nelson, Huybrecht, Dufays, O'Shea 2016;

Berglund, Gaddefors & Lindgren 2016). The engagement and strong identity as an entrepreneur and wine producer were strong indicators for us, that the markers of wine producers are much more than pure marketing efforts and very close to the discussion of entrepreneurial identity (Leich & Harrison, 2016), and with the identity and authenticity in Beverland's study (2005 and 2006).

Individual identity of the wine producer has not been directly linked to the innovation strategy of the winery, however other perspectives on wine and identity has been investigated. In an interesting study Lavandoski *et. al.* (2012) have associated the collective identity of wine producers in Serra Gaúcha (Brazil) with their relation to wine tourism, while collective identity is also associated with cluster building in California (Beebe, Haque, Jarvis, Kenney and Patton 2013). The collective identities of two old-world wine regions are in a study by Riviezzo, Garofano, Granata and Kakavand (2017) connected to marketing strategies.

Focussing rather on individual identity the current study aims to add dimensions to the literature on identity and wine production.

3. Method

The study is based on 23 face-to-face interviews: 11 with wine producers in New South Wales (Hunter Valley, Orange, and Riverina), also one additional interview with an expert in Orange, and a representative for the growers' association in Riverina. There are seven wine producers in Var in the south of France, and five in the river Duero area in north western Spain. In addition, a wine expert was interviewed in Spain. In all three countries we have selected one region, where we had access to wine-experts and competent insider performance to increase validity of findings (Neuman 1991). But they cannot create a real representative comparison between the three countries.

Table 1 Observations by country and size

The interviews were all conducted *in situ*, and observations in the vineyards and cellars were noted and served as useful contextual supplements to the interviews. In nearly all the interviews, the conversations were conducted in the main building or cellar, but we also visited the fields, enabling us to discuss the different methods for differentiating the wine production during the observations.

We have employed snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961) or respondent-driven sampling (Heckathorn 1997) combined with theoretical sampling as the version of grounded theory methods presented by Glaser (1992) (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Amsteus, 2014). We used referrals from experts and from other wineries to find wineries with a distinct profile in order to avoid the standard table-wine producers in the area, who would have dominated, if we had a representative sampling (Beverland, 2006). In a continuous effort we have organized our sampling to look for new patterns that have emerged in the field. For example, in Domaine Tempier in the Bandol region in the South of France, a sommelier from one of the local restaurants who purchases wine in the tasting room, and in the discussion of who is innovative and extraordinary in the Bandol area, both he and the owner recommended the Domaine La Bégude winery.

Our interview guide was thus structured in few themes void of a sequential order. Our point of departure was a pre-conceived idea of where differentiation, innovation, and extraordinary methods could be found, e.g., in the field, the cellar or in the marketing of the wine. That made up for a broad interview theme concerning the innovation of the wine producer with the subthemes of innovation in the vineyard, the cellar and marketing. The design would allow the data to produce analytical categories and could generate themes from the interviewees' references and discourses as they were generated most frequently. Identity was not the original perspective of our research design, but came clearly out of the interviews as an important analytical category.

Most of the interviewees are in the middle range quality wine of small producers. The identity of the owner or wine maker tells us about what distinguishes them from the neighbouring wine producer, thus at the same time describing their innovation profile.

In gathering data, we quickly observed “What the wine producers mentioned as efforts of differentiation and innovative efforts”. However, our focus increasingly shifted to “How the wineries addressed these efforts”. This theme concerns their identity and self-assessment, and is not a neutral or objective quality marker.

After the analytical categories emerged during the interviews, a literature review was conducted, and the categories have been placed in a framework of identity claims inspired by Georgakopoulou (2008).

The interviews with all the smaller wineries stress the vine and the agricultural aspect, and thus a production orientation, whereas the link to marketing and branding is much weaker for most. In this way the findings resemble other small companies from classic studies of small firms (Penrose, 1995; Mønsted, 2003). An example of such a discourse is “the importance of terroir” as a geographical quality identity. Because, the vast majority of these markers belong to the agricultural field, we have thus focused on the presentation of markers in debates of agricultural aspects of wine production.

Qualitative interviews were used in order to obtain more substance in how the wineries profile themselves. This methodology was deemed essential (Potter & Hepburn, 2005), as only a series of qualitative interviews would allow the researchers to investigate across wineries in different contexts, with a sensible economic expenditure on field research, and with naturalistic records that could show the interaction between researcher and research object.

Interviews were conducted in English, French and Spanish, where the choice of interview language depended on the situation in which the interviewees felt most at ease, allowing for ecological validity (Neuman 1991). Interviews of about 1-2 hours' duration were recorded and transcribed, and quotes and extracts from these are translated into English for use in the analysis. Observations and discussions during the field and cellar visits were written out just after the visit, and in France and Spain the authors interviewed together. Following Potter & Hepburn (2005), we acknowledge interviews as interactional, and we present larger extracts of the interviews to show the reader how the speech employed came about. This is inspired by the confessional and impressionistic tales of van Maanen (1988) in his ethnographic methods, where “the soft subjectivity of the fieldwork experience begins to slip into fieldwork confessions in a way it does not in the realist versions of a culture” (p. 91). Thus, we have sought to maintain the actors' subjectivist roles and insights as important for our interpretation of how markers are perceived. The interactional interviews implied that we are not just collecting data, but that we are generating stories never told before, as we tried to get their stories of the extraordinary (ibid.). The reproduction of large interview excerpts with dialogue between researchers and interviewee should also help to improve the validity of the research. Leaning on Richard Jenkins (2002) we work on validity, as to secure that “the concepts, reasoning and interpretive frameworks informing the research, and the data-collecting procedures which are employed, actually mean or ‘get at’ what they are believed to.” (Jenkins, 2002, p. 99; see also Neuman, 1991, p.364 on the concept of “natural history”). The systematic methods and transparency become essential (Jenkins, 2002). It is empirically founded research, where we indicate markers of AOC and terroir as boundary objects, inspired by Susan Leigh Star (2010). Star & Griesemer (1989) define boundary objects as “objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties

employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites” (Star & Griesemer, 1989, p. 393).

The interview situations were set up with clear roles from the start. The interviewees were either "winemaker" or "owner" or both, and the interviewers are "researchers". We began all the interviews with a declaration of our intentions in the research: to hear about how they treated the subject of differentiation and innovation in their particular wine production.

A table of profiles of the wineries can be found in the appendix.

4. Findings on AOC and terroir

We have identified both positive identification with AOC as quality stamp, but also very negative feelings about AOC due to the many restrictions in the production.

We found that the markers were used very differently in different areas, and by different wineries. Wine is a sector where many quality claims have been developed, from the AOC and terroir to the point systems of Parker (Winespectator 2016) and Halliday (Halliday 2014). However, we observed no use of identity markers *vis a vis* Parker's and Halliday's point systems, even if we asked about this.

4.1 How an AOC is used as an active innovation strategy: the case of the Bandol area

The AOC serves as a boundary object especially among Bandol producers. The growers in Bandol make a collective, concerted effort in the AOC committee to define the criteria and, thereby, the meaning of “Bandol”. As a group, they are very conscious of the meaning of “Bandol” and its

importance in their work. Individually, meanwhile, they use this certification to distinguish their wines from those of other regions, and to give their own wine a special status and a higher price. In their construction of the brand, the “terroir” serves as the foundation upon which a number of other building blocks, such as grapes used, and their production methods, are assembled. When speaking about the wine, the Bandol AOC is stressed prior to other markers in the debates concerning the quality of wine.

The case of Bandol has some resemblance to that of Cognac or Bourgogne, as the product is high status and the development services tied to the profiling and branding of the AOC have benefitted the entire region (Frochot, 2002). The step from just labelling the geographical region into designating it a high-status AOC is one where a group of wine producers decided to create a quality marker for good wine production in the region.

Domaine Tempier is a Bandol estate that dates back to the Nineteenth century. One of the family owners, Veronique Rougeot-Peyraud, clearly embodies Tempier’s long tradition of winemaking. Veronique is the daughter of Lucien Peyraud. Lucien was, apart from being owner and working at the estate, one of the founding fathers of establishing the AOC Bandol. Madame Rougeot-Peyraud welcomes us into a very small, yet elegant tasting room; there are a few photos on the wooden wall, one of them showing her great grandmother, Léonie, who projects a commanding presence into the room. Veronique Rougeot-Peyraud weighs her words carefully and answers our questions with authority. The winery employs ten people, and this surprises us given the size of the estate, which covers only thirty-eight hectares. They employ an oenologist (trained winemaker), but she emphasizes that only the family decides the blend (*assemblage*) of grapes that go into a wine. They “make the blend the first year and thus have to make the right blend decision at that time. Later on, we taste during the maturation and can opt for shorter or longer wood contact.”

The value of the AOC lies not only in the region, but also in the social construction of the concept, including other features of the production, as in AOC Bandol, where the 1941 decree (Décret du 11 Novembre 1941) specified what is needed to be an AOC Bandol winery. The specifications delimit the types of grapes to be used especially for red wine; this is also seen in Douro (Inhan, Ferreira, Marques and Rebelo, 2013). For example, the amount of mourvèdre has to be minimum 50% and maximum of 95%, for rosé from 20% to 95%. There are a number of other requirements to be fulfilled: red wine has to age at least 18 months in oak, mechanical harvesting is prohibited, specified densities, rules for trimming, maximum production per hectare, no irrigation, minimum sugar in pressed grapes per litre, maximum sugar per litre in final wine, and minimum natural alcohol per litre (Cahier des charges de L'appellation d'Origine Contrôlée "Bandol", 2008). The interviewee also stressed the limitations on using pesticides. Part of Bandol's microclimate is that the valley forms a spatial amphitheatre, with dry winds that help avoid many diseases and insects. The winery plants flowers between the rows of vines in order to attract bees for pollination. All of these measures indicate that this is not only geography and terrain, but a social construction of requirements that need to be accepted to be a member of the "club" of good winemakers in the region.

In the interview at Tempier, it is proclaimed that 15 estates worked on the making of the AOC Bandol for the "titre noblesse". In this way, the founder of Domaine de Tempier in Bandol had a broker role as that accorded to René Barbier is given in Priorat (Bou, Sauquet & Canestrino, 2008). Madame Rougeot-Peyraud describes her vineyards with the same insistence on its quality as when she speaks of the AOC Bandol at large:

The soil is important, but it is not the same [soil everywhere] and [the soil is] not exposed in the same way. The soil is clay and limestone.[...] And the soil is very draining. It is only natural fertilizer.

Later in the interview about Bandol, she explains, “the soil is very different, and we have vine in different heights, where some are very close to the sea. [...] So there is always an ‘air marin’.”

On leaving Mme Rougeot-Peyraud, we were surprised by how much she emphasized the values of the AOC Bandol brand as being the strength of her own wine (San Eugenio-Vela & Barniol-Carcasona, 2015). This appraisal of the AOC Bandol is confirmed in an interview with a winemaker at Domaine de la Bégude.

Domaine de la Bégude lies at the very northern edge of Bandol, in the mountains. Frederic Tamayan, who is employed as oenologist, explains that

Bandol is a small area, it is a niche, only 1500 hectares, 53 winegrowers, and then 3 major sellers. The main grape is mourvèdre, We have planted 85% mourvèdre, and a little grenache, those two we have to blend to get Bandol Appellation. We also have a bit of white; major claret 60%, and rolle. The rosé comes out of the red, and basically mourvèdre and a little bit of cinsault (shiraz). Two rosés are mainly mourvèdre.

By embracing the virtues of AOC Bandol wine, he is marking a position very close to the AOC in the debate for or against following the collectively agreed limitations of the AOC. They are not able to irrigate, and this creates problems. They work very scientifically in the laboratory to meet the standards of the AOC. They test for sugar and acid and carry out experiments. They have a very red rosé, which differs from other quality rosé-wines, and is quite expensive even for Bandol. The decision to produce a red rosé is expressed as a distinction from other rosés from the area, and articulated as a positive marker for using rosé wine with food and not only as a light refreshment in the summer. Mr. Tamayan has written a booklet for the Swedish market emphasizing the versatility of wine-pairing of rosés with different foods.

4.2 Perceptions of limitations in AOC as a marker

It is not everywhere in France and Spain that wineries see AOC as an interesting option, as the stringent requirements and standardisation also have their costs.

Rémy Laugier from Triennes, is very clear on his evaluation of AOC:

Interviewer: So this is not only Var-grapes but also from other regions, or...?

Rémy Laugier: All the nearby neighbours, but as I need more than I can find, we sell “Mediterranean”, that’s why we can go further to try to find grapes, that is why..

Interviewer: Yes because the others [labels on red and white] say “Var”

Rémy Laugier: Var is everything else, except from 13 [the Region of Bouches du Rhône]. We have everything “Mediterranean”, so we can make everything the same label, so we can make sure it is the same origin. From the beginning, we were in IGP [Indication Géographique Protégée]. We didn’t want to apply for the AOC, because we have grapes that are not allowed, Chardonnay is not allowed. Viognier is not allowed, Merlot neither, so we decided not to have the AOC.

In the example above, the winemaker is distinguishing his wine from the Var AOC because he finds the AOC certification system too restrictive in terms of what grapes to use, and because they are in a position where they can rely on other markers and brands. This allows them to position themselves as a credible avant-garde producer in the Bourdieuan term of the word (Bourdieu 2003). As an avantgarde producer, the winery of Triennes have actively sought to position itself at the boundaries of the local economic field (Bourdieu, 2003).

As the vineyard Triennes is located just outside the Bandol area, the wine would be coté Varois, which is neither famous nor a marker of high status among AOCs. In this case, it is better to sell the wine using the name of the estate. The estate has other attributes/markers with high status. The three owners have a very good network from their wineries in Bourgogne. They are articulating their individual identity from their good reputation based on the wineries in Bourgogne, which then becomes the marker in the debate of quality of wine. The differentiation strategy and self-identity construction of Triennes is thus emphasized by making a demarcation (negative marker) in the AOC debate, and a positive marker in the importance of history and ownership to the quality of the wine.

Perception of quality and terroir or AOC varies in the different wine regions. By the river Duero, we encountered interviewees who had very strong feelings against the AOC and their many restrictions. A wine grower from the Fariña winery in Toro, elaborates on how he has found a solution, by establishing two production sites:

Manuel Perez: There we produce the Toro wines, here we produce Viña de la Tierra, sweet wines, sparkling wines that we can produce, we are allowed to produce out of the DO but not inside a DO.

Interviewer: Yes, okay.

Perez: This for me is one of the problems of the DOs. In Spain the DOs are not thinking in the market, are not thinking in... It is critical trying to be positive. The DOs in Spain used to copy what the French people do in a bad sense. Because here we don't allow irrigation, we don't allow the high-density plantations. We don't allow to produce sweet wines that is maybe the most important tradition in this land; sweet wines with Moscato,

Likewise, in Ribera del Duero, the wine producers complain that they cannot make a sweet wine or table wine within the same building that they make their famous red and still comply with the rules of the AOC. The wineries in the region referred to this as a limitation of the DO, but did not take the bold step of Manuel Perez. None of the Ribera del Duero wineries commercialized grapes from the region outside of the AOC.

In all countries, there are examples of vineyards that deliberately distance themselves from the standardisation of the AOC. Terroir also seems to have a different meaning in the different areas.

The role of terroir and AOC in the French sense of these concepts are not found in Australia (Spielman & Gélinas-Chebat, 2012). But the role of regional identity plays a role also in Australia (Easingwood et al., 2011), and region and soil are stressed everywhere, however, as conditions for different types of grapes. The idea of a certified and controlled marker of terroir or AOC as a branding strategy plays a much more limited role as a denominator of quality in Australia (Rasmussen & Lockshin, 1999; Aurifeille, Quester, Lockshin, and Spawton 2002).

In Australia, the terroir (as a social construction) is not seen as so important, but terrain and geographical conditions are perceived as extremely important for the wine. One of the owners of a winery in Orange County, Philip Shaw, made a demarcation from terroir, which he claims is "what you make of it", but he was very concerned and scientific about finding the site for his winery, and by chance was circling with his airplane over Orange. He had passed the area before, but then looked at the high mountains and slopes. He checked on the climate data:

There are lots of weather stations around Orange, so I could find out very accurately. I knew, pretty well what soil there was here. I had looked over all the data before I had even... I came over, and all I did was put the cuttings in the road

where I could see the soil exposed and drove around and looked for the right slopes. I found this site after a couple of hours, here. It wasn't for sale, so I just spent another 12 months convincing the guy he should sell it.

This terrain assessment is important for the vines to grow, for the types and quality of grapes, and for making the kind of wine, he wanted to produce. However, Shaw uses the concept of "terrain" and does not use "terroir" as a branding strategy or as a social construction of regional quality. The negative marker in the debate on AOC sets Shaw apart and is a building block in his strategy of differentiation and forms part of his identity.

The terrain and local conditions certainly play an important role in the minds of wine producers in Australia, though not in the same way as in France, but as an important social actor in the wine production (Latour 2005, 1996).

In Australia, it was clear to Bruce Tyrrell (Tyrrell's Wines), one of the major producers in Hunter Valley in NSW, that the French version of AOC entails numerous rules and places restrictions on the producer. Thus, Tyrrell focuses mainly on the barriers set up by the French AOC rules that prohibit the winemakers from deploying their expertise fully. He believes that it is good for Australian wines that the French are putting up many barriers on themselves. His winemaker can mix with any grapes, including grapes from outside the region. In Australia, the wine producer retains the discretionary right of combining grape quality and mode of production, whereas a French wine producer who wants to fulfil the AOC rules will opt for a combination that accord with the tradition and history of the AOC. Tyrrell sees the benefits for the winemakers in blending grapes, and he refers to Australia's flagship wine Grange Hermitage (from Penfolds), which is a blend of wine from many regions where the actual blend is not stated on the label. The example of Grange

Hermitage from Penfolds is excellent, as it is a high prestige expensive wine, but there are no terroir specifics about it. Here the liberty of assembling different grapes is seen as a huge advantage.

In another part of NSW, the Riverina region is dominated by very large wineries using water for irrigation. A number of wineries with Italian owners are very old family wineries and many of them are very large now. The largest is Casella, which is known mainly for the Yellow Tail box wine as a mass production, especially for the USA market. But some of the wineries also stress the quality of the wine, and all have both large bulk production in huge production facilities, and some good quality wines to be rated in the *Halliday Wine Companion* (2014). Nugan, Westend, and Casella also have both types.

In this area, the wineries do not grow most of the grapes themselves. They buy local and outside grapes, and many grape growers are supplying the large wineries. The winemakers in the wineries are very active in overseeing the vineyards and the grapes, and intervene in the production process at many stages. The growers complain about this, as the price continues to be stable, but the yield per hectare is lower or about half the volume of than it was ten years ago (Bellato, Riverina). Winegrower Tony Steffania from Westend Estates elaborates on the regional perspective:

Tony Steffania: Locally here, I don't think we have any vineyards much older than 40 years. It's probably got a lot to do with the history that back in, I guess after the war, a lot of vineyards had pulled out because they weren't profitable. ...Then I'd say probably the mid-'90s was when Riverina started being considered a premium region. So we've only been considered premium for the last twenty years or so.

The Australian winemakers whom we interviewed (Philip Shaw and Gerald Naeff) have similar criticisms of the uniqueness of terroir as it is used in France. There are, however, many references

in the interviews to terroir and to French wines. While they often refer to the constraints imposed by the French system, it is also used as an identity marker, so that similarities between their own wine and the wine of a famous French region will be used to differentiate themselves from the producer nearby or New Zealand wine. After indicating he did not want to sell bulk to China, Gerald Naeff went into the discussion of winemaking:

I suppose in winemaking that's probably one of the more innovative things. The other thing, I suppose, is that – I suppose this just shows the way I think – with sauvignon blanc I made, I didn't make it to what I saw as the popular style [here he is referring to a New Zealand style of fresh crispy sauvignon blancs]; I made it in a way that I thought would improve the wine. I made it in what, I suppose, is considered the “fumé”-style, which is the fumé, just meaning the smoke in French, I guess

Later on, Naeff adds:

It wasn't a new style by any means, it's something that... I think it's Pouilly-Fumé, in Sancerre, that's the way that they make sauvignon blanc.

The quotation is an example of a very impressionistic description (van Maanen, 1988).

In this sense, they are “emancipated” from the French AOC as a marker, but they still need other types of markers to position themselves as credible quality producers. In the annual regional competition, however, 80% of the grapes must originate from the region in order to be called a “regional wine” such as “Orange county wine”, and to be in the competition for best wines award in Orange (Tony Moody). The winners have more visitors to their cellar door retail outlet, and as this is the main outlet for small wineries in the Orange region, this makes it an important regional marker.

5. Organic production as a certified marker

The terroir in the form of AOC and DOC are certified brands, and the organic production is also based on certification. However, many wine producers now insist that they produce organic wine, though they do not brand it as certified organic. The Bandol wines are to a great extent organic, but are not certified and branded as such on the bottles. Only Domaine La Bégude is sold via marketing firms dealing with organic wine, and it is described as such on the homepage.

In Domaine de Tempier, the estate is approved organic (*bio-dynamique*), “but they do not want to use it on the labels”, as it does not contribute enough value (Delmas and Grant 2014), and did not qualify as organic in relation to the U.S. market. It appears to be a difficult strategy and full of ambiguities. It may indicate that the technological conditions do not work sufficiently well yet. It is clearly seen as a strategic perspective, but with lots of challenges.

In our data, the interviewees stated that they would have to consider whether they would like to strive for becoming ECO or organic certified. A few of them use the certification as objective criteria to mark their position as organic quality wine in the debate with the two extreme positions “natural wine” and “cultural wine”.

Jas D’Esclan is labelled Organic. From their homepage, this is explained as:

The vines recommended by the “Syndicat de l’Appellation des Côtes de Provence” are carefully maintained following traditional methods, with regular ploughing, without using weed killers or insecticides or synthetic chemical products, and the grapes are manually harvested.

This method of work, *unchanged since centuries*ⁱⁱⁱ has enabled us to get the recognition of professional organisations of Organic Agriculture. First in 1990 by NATURE ET PROGRES and after since 1992 by ECOCERT (SAS FR. 32600).

This certification is yearly controlled by extended visits on the property.

They use this demarcation as they approach the customers, building on the tradition of the winery, which has never been to use chemicals. The new estate they have purchased though was not organic and has to be cultivated toward organic production. However, they are eager not to be seen as purist, and they emphasize how well organic farming goes along with the tradition of the wine production on their estate. In this sense, the “ecological” certification can be seen as a boundary object (Star 2010); for the demarked majority, it is seen as a “purist”, altered way of farming and for others, as Jas D'Esclan as a certification of production techniques that have been used for decades, thus signifying winemaking as a traditional craft.

The organic profile does not appear to be dominant, but nearly all the wine producers interviewed have spontaneously emphasized their effort to minimize the use of chemicals.

Philip Shaw, in Australia's Orange County, is considering how far he should go:

Most of my wines are on a really huge scale while the wine ferments. They still are. I don't add acid. I'm making very much on a feel base, but believe that science should be a part of that. For instance, I've been moving towards organic and biodynamic now for at least, well really from the time I started here, which was 24 years ago, and I still haven't got there yet. I think that my main goal is to make great wines, and I really want to understand organic and biodynamic, and really find out which parts are valid and which are not.

Philip Shaw's account of "making [wine] very much on a feel base" is representative for the muddling through the respondents do between certified and non-certified markers in order to position themselves. The account becomes soft and impressionistic, rather than categorical and functional, and is as such becoming a subjective representation of the field (van Maanen, 1988).

The idea of organic wine is perceived quite differently, and some could call it holistic management, and closer to the idea of sustainable wine production, as in the case of Cargo Road Wine. Vineyard owner James Sweetapple elaborates:

So I have never used pesticides on the property. Now, to be clear, the definition of pesticide to me is a chemical that kills bugs. Sulphur I use for mildew but in high rates of sulphur, it can be classified as pesticide. I use copper and sulphur, which are natural elements to combat mildew. In the past, I did use Roundup [a herbicide] to control the weeds under the vines, but I've found through seasonality I haven't needed to use it for three years.

Interviewer: Okay, so how do you control the weeds, then?

Sweetapple: Doesn't need controlling.

Later on:

Bare earth is the enemy. If it rains on bare earth, it splashes and erodes and you can see some bare earth out there that I'm working on. I'm softening and I'm trying – when you have grass, the water hits it and soaks in. So I have an effective water cycle. I'm constantly trying to improve the water cycle. I'm basically unirrigated here.

Cargo Road does not have enough water for irrigation but is working on other ways to handle this.

James Sweetapple is thus using identity markers in the debate on organic farming as well as making a marker in the debate on irrigation to make a subjective positioning accounting for his impressions, rather than a realistic tale (van Maanen, 1988).

Phil Kearney emphasizes that all of the growers try to limit chemicals, and in his Ross Hill winery they do not use petrol-based sprays. However, they do have weed control and use copper and sulphur.

The agricultural perspective of organic production of wine came up in most of our discussions and interviews. Most still use sulphur and copper in the winery, but they are very concerned about chemicals in the growing of grapes. All still mention the stringent restrictions on organic certification in the USA. The wine producers tend to raise this topic on their own initiative, and they still have reservations about the role of “the organic” in the marketing. However “organic” is a distinguishing marker. This organic way of production is a marker that is constantly revisited, as most growers experiment with reducing their use of chemicals. It is surprising to us that certification does not play a larger role, even if it is complex and very bureaucratic. The organic characteristics obtained are not used as a certified marker on the bottle in most cases, even if cultivated organically.

6. Old vine as a marker

There are other markers mentioned in the interviews and thus relevant markers for the extraordinary perceived by the wineries. Here we will focus on special old vines that are part of the agricultural strategy for special or niche wine, and which are also related to the assessment of the quality of the wine.

The local conditions for growing this kind of grapes are tied to the history, soil, sun, access to water and temperature, which means that terrain is perceived as an important marker in the process of making wine.

Tyrell have old vines, as this is a family estate, where Bruce Tyrell is the fourth-generation owner, and his children are all involved as the fifth generation. However, local climate and soil are more tied to production conditions for the quality of grapes than are markers such as terroir or AOC. Tyrell has thus formulated identity markers to describe himself as a grape grower rather than winemaker in the ongoing debate in the local field as to whether it is the wine grower or the winemaker who is decisive for the quality of the wine. As such, Tyrell is distinguishing himself from those in the Riverina region, who are all buying grapes for the wine production. In Rueda, Javier Sanz uses the name Viticultor Javier Sanz to distinguish himself from new entrants to Rueda who buy their grapes.

Regional characteristics do not only consist of soil, rain, wind, and altitude. The age of the vineyards also affects both output and the quality of the grapes. Bruce Tyrell from Australia elaborates:

Bruce Tyrrell: As you drive up the hill, there's two blocks. The bottom one was planted in 1892 and the top one in 1879. Now, they're first generation cuttings from the hill of Hermitage. Those old vineyards that we have, we now make, I've got seven blocks over 100 years old. So we make those wines now as "stand-alone" wines, and are starting to charge a lot of money for them, because we only make a couple of hundred dozen of each, and they're rarities in the world, absolute rarities.

These old vines are not necessarily sign of terroir, but they nevertheless reflect the market for special good grapes from old vines in a specific local area, and become a social actor in the wine production (Latour, 2005). The productivity is very low, but the potential to make excellent and special wine is high, and the branding of the stand-alone wine permits branding of these special grapes and high quality.

In Domaine de Tempier, Veronique Rougeot-Peyraud describes that they:

have an old parcel of one hectare of very old vines 60 years old. The old vines have very small productivity, but make a beautiful wine.^{iv}

One of the Spanish producers (Antonio Arévalo) praised an old type of vine on sandy soils. Grapes lie on the sand without being spoiled. Each vine forms a circle of approximately three meters. In the 1980s, grapes were so cheap that many growers, with EU support, uprooted this type of vine, which was used as table wine. However, its roots are so deep (approx. four meters) that they have returned and are now harvested for very tasty grapes for unique differentiation of quality wine. The grower Antonio Arévalo (Bodegas Garciarévalo) explains:

You harvest it here. You take the creeping vine by hand, you lift up the vine, and then you harvest it like this. And if you pay attention, you see that the grape is touching the ground, yet it will not rot.

Interviewer: This is very different from other countries. In Germany this would...

Antonio Arévalo: Impossible. In France and Germany, this would be impossible.

The marker of old vine or one-field wine is not a certified marker, but described as a marker for quality branding of these tasty and rare old vine-based wines. This is also a part of authenticity

among some of the luxury wine producers with ‘single vineyard’ wine, where nature does its work. (Beverland, 2005, p. 1019)

The tales of old vine that needs to be lifted “by hand” and will result in “beautiful wine” is describing how respondents use impressionistic images to position themselves close to the marker of old vine. (van Maanen, 1988).

7. Discussion

We have been focusing on how wineries have used markers as a strategy to differentiate themselves from other producers. The most dominant markers are tied to different forms of regional/geographical markers, including the AOC, and organic production. In addition, some markers also include special wine, such as some grape types, which are not normal in the region or old vine as a special aspect of quality. The discussion of markers among the wine-producers is, thus tied to their perception of quality. In other words, where some wineries make a "linguistic marker" on the fact that they use a grape which is not typical of that area or recommended by the AOC, yet others would mark that their wine is composed of grapes that traditionally are used in the region, as a part of the AOC.

We have discussed certified and non-certified markers. One of the problems especially with AOC and terroir, is that the AOC is certified, but the terroir is not. Still AOC is a part of terroir, but not vice-versa.

Likewise, in relation to organic production very few are certified. A few French are certified with *Agriculture raisonnée* (reasonable farming), which is a contract with the Ministry of Agriculture to limit chemicals and pesticides. But nearly all the wineries spontaneously talk about the effort to limit chemicals, and get closer to an organic production of wine. The idea of bio and

organic is very tempting, but the technologies are not very easy to use, and the certification is costly and complicated. The certification of sustainable production has not been mentioned by our respondents, but seems to be coming up in both France and Australia (Moscovici & Reed, 2018).

The notion of seeing terroir or AOC as a boundary object is tied to the idea of communicating to different groups and countries the idea of terroir as an important indicator for wine characteristics. Star & Griesemer (1989) use of boundary objects, lends itself to be used on the social constructions of terroir and AOC. Ditter & Brouard (2014, p.11) argue that

The terroir is much more than a bounded area endowed with resources that are exogenous to its players; it is rather a “territorial institutional setting” a set of locally embedded institutions that make up its identity.

While this is true, the AOC seen as a terroir is still a boundary object in Star’s sense, as different individual actors within the region make different use of the AOC marker, even though they construct the AOC as a collective marker. The AOC is sitting at the boundary between growers, winemakers, legislators and consumers and can provide different knowledge to the actors. This is how it is organised as a jointly constructed marker both in Bandol (decret 11 Novembre 1941) and in Bordeaux (Farmer, 2014). Farmer underlines the collective and communal aspect of both terroir and AOC for a joint effort of legal protection of the area's characteristics (2014, p. 133) or what Leitch and Harrison (2016) call organisational identity.

When looking at the AOC, the terroir and regional branding, these concepts seem to show how these features evolve and are used in different contexts. However, they are used with the purpose of finding common identities across regions and cultures. Wineries within the same geographical boundary are using knowledge in their own unique ways, but they have succeeded in constructing a common, terroir-based core of identity (Doloreux and Lord-Tarte, 2013).

No attachment to an AOC or similar certification regime can allow the possibilities to create new markets or innovations. Yellow Tail of Australia (not belonging to an AOC) is reported to have created a new market segment in the United States. They started with a consumer analysis of the U.S. market and found that cheap wine with “toasty vanilla flavour that oak barrels release” was promising (Jenster 2008, pp. 164-5; see also Dufour & Steane, 2010). This is not, at all, a strategy attached to terroir identity, but a pure marketing approach for a large firm. One might expect to find that in the New World, the increased emphasis on technology and stable weather conditions would lead wine producers to neglect terroir altogether (Cox and Bridwell, 2007, p. 211). Our findings, show a more complex relationship.

Our findings show that the way wine producers talk about their wine is very much linked to the vine and how they work with the vine and grapes in the field. The type of grapes, the soil, and how the grapes can become the best are fundamental for their understanding of winemaking. This is related to a classic small business production orientation and identification with production and entrepreneurship, rather than marketing and sales (Penrose, 1995; Mønsted, 2003; Alonso & Liu 2012).

The analysis of the interviews has shown that wine producers use identity markers to position themselves in on-going debates in the field. In Figure 1 we have illustrated the five most frequently mentioned debates and how the wineries position themselves in these debates with identity markers. The wine producers in our study use markers to position themselves in a varying number of debates. The debates on how the notions AOC or terroir does any good for innovation purposes are the ones where most of the interviewees have used a marker. The list of debates where the interviewee uses an identity marker in Figure 1 is not exhaustive and the commas merely serve

as illustrations of markers. Taken together, the markers that the interviewees use in the debates make up their identity work.

[Enter Figure 1 here]

Figure 1: Positioning for differentiation

We have identified a different and unique perspective on terroir, AOC and organic wine contrary to most studies, which focus the meso and regional level, or the marketing and branding (Capitello et al., 2016; Couderc & Marchini, 2011; Barreré, 2007). The perspective on identity markers and their perception of being artisan producers tend to resemble other entrepreneurial studies on technical entrepreneurs, who are engaged in their technology and products (Roberts, 1991; Klostén & Mikaelsson, 1998). It is a novel feature of the approach of this study that it has allowed us to identify strategies for profiling differentiated products, while at the same time highlighting the self-identity work of the wine producers. Thus, this focus avoids the pitfalls of the academic field of marketing, where the actor selects a differentiation strategy based merely on objective criteria. The markers approach allows us to link differentiation strategies to the project of constructing, changing and fortifying a self-identity.

Future research on wine and innovation also lends itself to an Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) perspective. The markers may reflect how the technologies, the terrain and soil could be analysed, and fruitfully be seen as social and technology actors in an ANT perspective. We have spontaneous comments on organic or almost-organic strategies from nearly all the wine producers, but we also get stories of the technological difficulties and challenges, as well as the limitations on “organic”, if they want to enter the US market, where the organic requirements are tougher. Even if “organic”

could be seen as an ideological perspective, most growers stress, how they are limited in the technology, and even the grower producing the most clearly labelled organic wine does not want to be seen as a “purist”. Also among luxury wine producers many invest in “integrated viticulture”, which as a non-certified marker seeks to remove the use of pesticides from the production of wine (Beverland, 2005).

The way the marker "organic" is described is like the technology is playing a very important role as a limitation to reaching the goal of organic production. It has a life of its own, and is thus in an ANT perspective a social actor (Latour, 2005).

The use of markers for identity work is opening up a unique perspective, but there is need for further research to understand the behaviour and identity of these types of entrepreneurs.

8. Conclusion

The present study has focused on markers in debates indicated by the wine producers themselves. They use markers to distinguish their wine from other local producers, while at the same time using these markers in ongoing debates as a piece in the puzzle of self-identity work. Contrary to strategizing approaches, we find that differentiation strategies are not chosen merely because of their market potential, but must align with the identity construction of the owner/winemaker as an artisan wine producer.

Based on interviews in New South Wales (Australia), the region of Var in the South of France, and by the river Duero in North of Spain, this study has shown how markers of quality in the agricultural production of grapes are perceived by wine producers. The role of terroir varies depending on the restrictions of the AOC in France and Spain, and the perceived role of special

quality benefits of both regional branding combined with the role of organic or nearly organic production of grapes.

We have found that many of the wineries in areas with a weak regional profile for wine are sceptical of the restrictions and limitations in the rules of the AOC. Nevertheless, they still stress the importance of terrain and geography for their vine. The high quality of some very specific small fields of old vine seems to be the most exclusive perception of the markers of quality, and perhaps of a special type of terroir.

In the perception of their own production, the wineries in our study do not necessarily identify with terroir demarcation, but they do identify with agricultural markers for growing good grapes. This is an individual strategy, whereas in the AOC Bandol the specificity of nature and culture of the small area is highlighted, this is done actively and collectively, both in their official marketing via the AOC, and it is also used in the way wine producers talk about the quality of their wines.

The technological restrictions of organic production have been a dominant theme. The challenges in the vineyards and wineries to obtain the organic label, however, are rarely used for marketing the wine.

We conclude that the owners and winemakers use linguistic markers to position themselves in ongoing debates of the field. The accumulated positioning contributes to their identity as quality wine growers and winemakers. The article is contributing with an individual level perception of identity as wine producers, and how they relate to regional identity markers. It has been paramount, that the wine producers themselves defined their own identity, and in many ways, it resembles the recent studies on entrepreneurial identity and studies of authenticity.

The relationship between identity and AOC as a boundary object merits further study. Further studies are needed of how these markers are deployed strategically, e.g. as positive branding, how markers act as limitations on wine producers' choice of strategy, and how markers can be used to create a self-identity as a wine-producer.

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Appendix: Profile of wineries researched.

Country area	Name, Winery	Position	Area	Bottles produced
Australia				
Hunter Valley	Bruce Tyrrell, Tyrrell's Wine	CEO	158 ha	4.8 mill.
Orange County	Philip Shaw, Philip Shaw	Owner	47 ha	300,000
Orange County	Phil Kearney, Ross Hill Wines	winemaker	18 ha	180,000
Orange County	Terry Dolle, Orange Mountain wine	Owner+ winemaker	5.5 ha	42,000
Orange County	Gerald Naeff, Patina Wines,	Owner	3 ha	36,000
Orange County	James Sweetapple, Cargo Road Wine,	Owner	16 ha	
Orange County	Tony Moody, Moody's Wine	Owner	2 ha	2,400
Riverina	Tony Steffania, Westend Estate Wines	winemaker	64 ha	3.6 mill.
Riverina	Les Worland, Casella wines	Public relations	1,397 ha	144 mill.
Riverina	Lindsay Gulliver, De Bortoli Wines	Environment manager, Food chemist	332 ha	36 mill.
Riverina	Robert Bellato,	Winegrower+ deputy chairman Riverina wine grapes marketing board	200 ha	
Orange + Sidney	Peter Bourne	Wine expert		
France				
Var	Anne Dor, Val d'Iris,	Owner +winemaker	8,5 ha	40,000
Var	Mylène Christine, Domaine des Selves	Owner	35 ha	
Var	Gwenaëlle de Wulf, Domaine Jas D'Esclans	Co-owner	75 ha	
Var	Rémy Laugier, Domaine de Triennes	Winemaker	46 ha	
Var	Amanda Chapelle, Château Roseline	Sales manager	108 ha	2 mill.
Bandol	Veronique Rougeot-Peyraud, Domaine Tempier	Co-Owner	40 ha	

Bandol	Frederic Tomayan, Domaine de la Bégude	Winemaker	17 ha	40- 45,000
Spain				
Ribera del Duero	Alberto Guadarrama & Remi Sanz ,Grupo Matarromera	Director and Communication manager	404 ha	
Ribera del Duero	Santiago Rivera Aparicio, Bodegas Epifanio Rivera	Owner+winemaker	20 ha	(100,000)
Rueda	Antonio Arrévalo, Bodegas Garciarévalo	CEO+winemaker	60 ha	
Rueda	Javier Sanz, Javier Sanz Viticultor.	CEO+winemaker	104 ha	
Toro	Manu Pérez, Bodegas Fariña	Owner+winemaker	300 ha	4 mill.
Toro	Rosa Zarza	Winemaker-expert		

ⁱ Denominación de Origen (DO) and Denominación de Origen Cualificada (DOC) in Spain. For ease of reading we will use AOC throughout the text.

ⁱⁱ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was established in 1948, and expanded and partly replaced by World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995

ⁱⁱⁱ Italics by the authors

^{iv} This is part of the marketing by the importer and wine merchant to Denmark (Theis vinimport)