

Routledge Handbook of Wine and Culture

Editors: Steve Charters, Marion Demossier, Jackie Dutton, Graham Harding, Denton Marks, Jennifer Smith Maguire, Tim Unwin.

Contributor Briefing

Introduction

Taylor and Francis have commissioned us to produce a ‘Handbook of Wine and Culture’ for their Routledge handbook series. This will be a major publication and we expect it to be the benchmark on the topic for some years to come. There have been a number of other excellent works on wine and culture over the last few decades but the defining feature of this one is that it is to be multidisciplinary and especially wide ranging. We are hoping that you will consider contributing to this undertaking.

The Scope of the Book

The attempt by academics to place wine in a social context is of comparatively recent origin. Starting primarily in France with the work of historians (e.g. Dion, Lachiver) and subsequently geography (Pitte, Hennewinkel) it has been a later arrival in the English-speaking world. However, in the last thirty years works which examine the history of wine, its social geography and its anthropological or sociological context have proliferated. Nevertheless, these have often tended to have been written within a single disciplinary perspective so, while often excellent and instructive studies, have had a limited focus. The aim of this book is to examine the relationship of wine to culture from multiple perspectives and to encourage a multidisciplinary approach to the links between them. In doing this we intend to offer the broadest possible exploration of current thinking on the subject.

The publishers, Taylor and Francis, see this as being a substantial work which will become the benchmark for the subject for the next five to ten years at least. What is also required, is an authoritative overview of as many aspects to the topic as possible. We are looking for contributions which are broad, engaging with theory and/or empirical, with a wide application and a significance beyond any one context (geographical or social) which is studied. We do not want chapters which focus only on a very narrow time-period or place.

It’s impossible to contribute to a book on wine and culture without having a definition of what culture is (we assume you know what wine is – though we’ll stress at this stage that we are limiting it to grape wine). However, the notion of culture is contested both within and between the humanities and social sciences which use the term. We will be engaging with the idea in the introduction to the handbook, and as a basis for that introduction, and to give contributors some parameters for what we expect, we are suggesting what follows.

Culture

The term culture implies the idea of ‘cultivation’; thus created in an environment but external to the human body. It comes from the Latin *cultura* (growing, cultivation). In middle-English it is

about the soil. In the 16th century it comes to be associated with the cultivation of the mind (*reasoning ability, subtlety*), the faculties (*artistic appreciation*) or manners (*behaviour, social norms and structures*) (OED).

Yet 'culture' has become, in Raymond Williams' words (1983, p.87), 'one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language'. In the 19th century the term developed connotations of plurality. Contemporary definitions may be traced back to anthropologist Edward Tylor in 1871 who talked of 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities or habits acquired by man as a member of society' (Burnett Tylor, 1871, vol. 1, p. 2.).

Consequently, the term has acquired different meanings within different disciplines. In Archaeology it is patterns of behaviour inferred from the material culture left behind. Anthropology on the other hand focuses not only on the material but also on behaviour, social interaction, and the norms and values of social groups - ideas which are transmitted down the generations. Historians consider the reasons for and implications of changes in culture(s) over time in communities or societies. All of these disciplines particularly situate culture in a historical moment.

Sociology sees culture as 'the symbolic and learned, non-biological aspects of human society, including language, custom and convention' which can incorporate a 'belief system', 'system of values' or even 'ideology' (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 1994, p. 98f.) Within Geography the focus is on cultural landscapes from which societies emerge but which are also moulded by those societies. With its focus on ways to allocate scarce resources to meet the goals of a society Economics studies the recognition, production, consumption (and perhaps preservation) of cultural resources and the transactional behaviour related to those processes. Meanwhile, Philosophers tend to consider it as the way of life which a people or society may adopt, including ways of thinking, attitudes, ideological assumptions and scientific and artistic achievement.

Traditionally culture also denoted an aspect of social, artistic and ideological superiority, often linked to the concept of civilisation; none of the disciplines which study it now would adhere to that notion.

For this volume we consider culture to be the way in which a society organises itself, including beliefs and values, formalised structures of behaviour and informal norms, all of which are mediated in its ideology, ritual, customs, and language. It has a material dimension which links to technology, art and scientific development. Consequently, in this Handbook, the focus will be on wine as a product of the intersection between the natural and the cultural; how and why have humans over time and place made a 'natural' product into a potent societally-specific cultural symbol.

Synopsis

We expect to have about 30-50 chapters of between 4000 and 6000 words each, including references. If you think you may need more words than this please let us know when you submit your abstract. The structure of the book is as follows, and your contribution should fit into one of the sections 1-10.

Introduction

To be written by the editors.

Preliminary Section – Disciplinary Context.

This is to set the scene for the way that the varying disciplinary approaches to understanding wine and culture, including a review of recent literature on the subject, key themes and concepts and openings for further study. These contributions are likely to be by invitation but if you feel that you have something useful to contribute to a chapter please let us know.

These chapters will be as follows:

- Anthropology, wine and culture.
- Economics and business, wine and culture.
- Geography, wine and culture.
- History, wine and culture.
- Philosophy, wine and culture.
- Politics, wine and culture
- Sociology, wine and culture.
- Text, wine and culture.
- Tourism, wine and culture.

The following sections give indications of some of the key themes we expect to be covered by contributors but there are others that may also be relevant and we are open to many suggestions.

Section 1 – Production practices and sites

1. Nature and environment
2. Vines
 - Cultivation and management processes
 - Choice of variety / rootstock
3. Wineries
 - Wine-making practices (see no. 4 below)
 - Choice of technologies (e.g. why choose ‘concrete eggs’ or amphorae over stainless steel)
4. The construction of a scientific framework for representing wine.
5. Specific wine styles .
6. Climate Change.

Section 2 – Intermediaries and intermediation

1. The representation of wine
2. Intermediaries
 - Sommeliers
 - Writers, critics and shows
3. Business and distribution practices and sites

- Wine merchants / online / supermarkets / cellar door / winery tasting rooms
 - Labels and packaging
 - Advertising
4. The culture of allocation mechanisms.
 5. Wine and health
 6. Specific wine styles.

Section 3 – Consumption practices and sites

1. Wine tastings (amateur and / or professional)
2. The performance of taste / connoisseurial practices / rituals of taste
3. Wine collecting / collectors (e.g. collecting as fetish / collecting as taxonomy)
4. Gendering of wine: Male / female consumers and how they compare
5. Wine in popular culture (e.g. representation in media)
6. The dark side of wine consumption
7. Specific wine styles
8. The colour of wine (red, white, pink – perhaps sparkling).
9. Wine and generations
10. Wine tourism / travel and wine.

Section 4 – Material culture

1. Glasses / bottles / corkscrews etc.
2. Brands and labels
3. Wine media: magazines / TV programmes / books / personalities
4. Wine memes: Mother's little helper' (c.f. all those T shirts and birthday cards such as 'Any time is wine time' which are explicitly gendered)
5. Architecture of wine production and/or consumption.

Section 5 – Place

1. Terroir
2. Territory
3. The worlds of wine (old and new)
4. Wine tourism and travel and wine.
5. Personal place attachment
6. Island and volcanic wines.

Section 6 - Belief, ritual and metaphysics

1. Religion and wine, including offerings and libations

2. Wine, transformation and transcendence
3. Ritual consumption processes
4. Celebration
5. Festivals.

Section 7 - Food and the arts

1. Wine and food matching / wine at table / wine as food and nutrition
2. Wine as metaphor
3. Wine in the arts: music, visual art, film, poetry, other literature
4. Wine as inspiration and the cultures of inebriation.

Section 8 - Power and institutionalisation

1. Wine industry institutions
2. Appellations and classifications
3. Authenticity
4. Legitimation
5. Representation
6. The codification and transmission of wine knowledge.

Section 9 Contested wine

1. Natural / organic / biodynamic
2. Fine wines and luxury wines
3. Industrialised / branded wines
4. Utopian wine
5. Wine and other alcohols
6. Wine and health.

Section 10 – Wine and culture in the future

1. Cultural change
2. New wine cultures (East Asia, China, India, Russia etc.)
3. New wine styles
4. New ways of drinking.

Conclusion

To be completed by the editors.

Illustrations

There will be scope for illustrations as well as graphics, probably limited to one per chapter. If you wish to include an illustration – and particularly if you would like more than one – then please let us know.

9. Timeline

November 2019	Call for abstracts (short proposals for contributions).
31 January 2020	Return of abstracts.
13 March 2020	Acceptance of abstracts.
31 July 2020	Return of chapters for peer reviewing.
30 September 2020	Return of chapters to authors for revision.
30 November 2020	Final chapter submission.
28 February 2021	Delivery of final manuscript by editors.

The next steps

We hope you will be willing to contribute an abstract of up to 250 words which will summarise how you will develop your chapter. The deadline for this will be the 31st January 2020. We will review your proposal, and if we feel it has a place in the Handbook we will get back to you confirming as soon as possible. In any event you will hear from us by the 13th March 2020 at the latest. Submitting an abstract means that you commit to working to the timeline above.

Please can you communicate with in the first instance with the editor designated for your discipline:

Anthropology - Marion Demossier,

Business (including hospitality and tourism) - Steve Charters,

Cultural Studies - Jackie Dutton,

Economics - Denton Marks,

Geography - Tim Unwin

History - Graham Harding,

Sociology and Gastronomy - Jennifer Smith Maguire,

Any other not specified – Steve Charters

If you need to get a feel for what a Routledge Handbook is like, look at the following: [The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Tourism](#).