

Book Reviews

Author, Title	Reviewer
Rod Phillips <i>French Wine: A History</i>	Vicente Pinilla
Caroline Gilby MW <i>The Wines of Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova</i>	Richard E. Quandt
Olivier Van Beemen <i>Heineken in Africa: A Multinational Unleashed</i>	Nick Vink
Pablo Lacoste <i>La vid y el vino en el Cono Sur de América Argentina y Chile (1545–2019)</i>	Emiliano Villanueva

ROD PHILLIPS: *French Wine: A History*. University of California Press, Oakland, CA, 2016, 335 pp., ISBN 978-0520285231 (hardcover), \$34.95.

For many centuries, France has played a fundamental role in the production, consumption, and trade of wine. Throughout the 19th century, when a veritable international market was taking shape, France's dominance was reinforced not only because it was the leading country in terms of production and exports, but also due to two important consequences of the phylloxera plague which hit the European wine-growing industry for the first time, precisely in France, during the final decades of the 19th century. First, the need to find a remedy for this wine disease led to the development of the science applied to the growing and production of wine. Second the country's need to supply wine for domestic consumption and to maintain its exports, gave rise to the development of wine production in traditional wine-producing countries, such as Spain but also in new producing countries such as Algeria or new world countries.

For the first time in English, this book comprehensively addresses the study of the production, consumption, and trade of wine in France from the beginning of the activity to the present day. Throughout the nine chapters, the analysis is carried out from a perspective of the country as a whole and also from a regional point of view. An international readership of academics interested in the subject or simply wine enthusiasts who do not understand the French language, are able to learn about this fascinating history and gain an insight into how France was able to obtain this central position and maintain it until today, despite the increasing challenges posed by old and new producing countries.

The chapters of the book address the issue in chronological order. Almost half of the book is concerned with the period before 1800 and the rest to the last two centuries.

This is a titanic task and to carry it out the author has had to go to great lengths to summarize all the literature, principally, but not exclusively, published in French on this subject. This is its greatest merit for those who do not know this literature in depth and also its weakness for those who have previously read and worked with this literature. However, even these specialized readers will enjoy it due to the quality of the summary, the access to studies that they have not consulted, the details that they will find to delve deeper into the subject, and the agility with which the book is written. In short, despite being based largely on secondary sources, the book constitutes an interesting contribution and an essential reference on the subject.

The book also highlights certain regularities or trends that can be detected throughout history.

First, the heterogeneity of the product that we call wine is made undoubtedly clear, a quality which forms part of the charm and attractiveness of enthusiasts. Different varieties, highly varied regional developments, different methods of production by winemakers have made wine, throughout history in France and the rest of the world, a diverse product which has evolved significantly over time. The difference between the type of wine that is drunk today and that of just a couple of centuries ago is enormous.

The commercial nature of wine in France throughout history is also unquestionable. Even though a large part of the harvest was consumed until the beginning of the 20th century by the producers themselves, its domestic and international trade is a key element for understanding the development and transformation of the product.

A third interesting feature is the fact that wine in France has historically been subject to a higher degree of public regulation and intervention than the majority of other products, if we exclude wheat-bread, which in most western European countries constituted the basis of the human diet and was regulated to prevent supply crises and famines. Throughout the 20th century, the regulation of the production and trade of wine has increased, reaching its climax with the control of the

volume of production or the establishment of controlled designation of origins, mechanisms of public intervention which has extended to the European Union from France.

Finally, the book also enables us to understand how wine has contributed to constructing the French identity. The avant-garde position of this country in terms of technology, production, and trade has been developed throughout its history and is intertwined with certain decisive moments of this history.

Obviously, in a book of this kind, we can identify certain minor problems, aspects that have been insufficiently addressed or small details, but this would draw attention away from the great work undertaken, which undoubtedly is the summary text of reference on French wine.

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CAROLINE GILBY, MW: *The Wines of Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova*. Infinite Ideas Classic, Oxford, UK, 2018, 364 pp., ISBN 978-1906821883 (paperback), \$39.95.

Most of us know very little, if anything, about Bulgarian, Romanian, or Moldovan wines, and the average wine store in the United States is unlikely to have an appreciable inventory of these. I did a casual search for Bulgarian wines in www.wine-searcher.com and in most instances have found either no stores in the United States that carried the wine or at most one. The situation is similar for Romanian or Moldovan wines and the average reader would encounter substantial difficulties in building a representative cellar of these wines. Nevertheless, some of these wines can be found in some western European countries.

In any event, this volume would be a most reasonable beginning for somebody who would want to deepen his/her acquaintance with the wines of these three Balkan states. The book is divided into three parts and each part follows the same basic pattern: after a brief introduction we have chapters on history, followed by discussions of the modern era, the relationship of the European Union (EU), the probable future, grape varieties the wine regions in the various countries, and profiles of the most important producers. Most importantly perhaps, these substantive chapters are followed by excellent summary statistics on wine production and related terms, and an equally useful bibliography. The tables provide a complete listing of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) for Bulgaria as well as the acreage planted, the vineyards harvested by geographic region, and the acreage devoted to the several major varieties. For Romania we get historical wine production trends and grape