

The Importance of Designations of Origins of Italian Wines for Consumers in United Kingdom

Silvia Gatti
Dipartimento Scienze Statistiche
Università di Bologna
Italia
silvia.gatti@unibo.it

The construction of Designations of Origin in Europe and in the World originates from a masterful reworking of the soil and climate potentials of a territory through the culture and the organizational and entrepreneurial capabilities of the populations [Ashenfelter, 2008].

This process yields products (such as wines) of unique quality that meet the specific tastes (and history) of each population, but that also become both a communication tool among different cultures and a vehicle for transmitting an overall wellbeing.

In Italy the strengthening of the systems of protection and promotion of Designations of Origin took place during the post-World War II period, when the Italian society and economy needed to find strong points on which to base the country's social and economic growth [Sylos Labini, 1956]. The creation of agro-food cooperation in the field of Designation of Origin productions was perhaps one of the most significant paths toward finding effective and supportive organizational forms of production, with a distribution of wealth that included all social classes, reducing inequality [Heckman, 2010].

Today, through this process, the Italian Designations of Origin, and in particular those of Emilia-Romagna, are for the population not only a way to produce, but also a stable element of their economic, social, and environmental wellbeing.

The research work proposed for presentation winds up the first cycle of study on the importance of the Designations of Origin of Italian wines for the consumers of the three most important countries to which Italy directs the export of its wines (United States, Germany, and United Kingdom). The study is conducted through an analysis of the texts of the interviews granted by foreign commercial operators to one of the most well-known magazines of the wine sector in Italy: the "Corriere Vinicolo" published by the Unione Italiana Vini, and which has existed since 1928. The analyses for the United States and Germany have already been presented, now we would present the results for United Kingdom.

Within the limits due to the type of information utilized for this study, we will identify the aspects of the Designations of Origin of the Italian wines that are most valued by British consumers and that most contribute to their wellbeing (as men and women, fathers and mothers, and citizens) [Layard, 2006], while evaluating what kind of bond there is between the two cultural systems, and how strong it is.

In light of this analysis, some proposals for an evolution of the public and private strategies of the Designations of Origin in Italy and at the international level will then be presented.

The buyers report that Designations of Origin of Italian wines are perceived by Americans, Germans and British as a vehicle for a positive reality stigmatized by pleasant scenery, delicious

food, open people. But Americans, Germans and British show in this way also that supports this (and that they apparently do not see): labor protection, social guarantees and environmental rules. To explicitly incorporate in the regulation of Designations of Origin at the international level these components, and guarantee them, can allow to clarify the determinants of a relationship that persists and grows between Designations of Origin and (the wellbeing of) individuals, and can allow producers to have access to sales prices that adequately remunerate this project.

The results of this study make use of the direct surveys conducted at large-scale retailers of the London area during two research stays at the Centre of Economic Performance of the London School of Economics and Political Science this past year.

References

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