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The Synergy of Wine and Culture: The Case of Ariousios Wine, Greece

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Introduction

Designing and providing experiences is no longer an optional way to gain differentiation and provide value added. Instead, experiences are nowadays a mandatory element of any tourism offering. Wine tourism is not an exception from such trends. It is well established that what attracts tourists and wine lovers to wineries and wine destinations is not just good quality of wine for wine tasting and purchasing (Kim and Bonn 2015; Quadri-Felitti and Fiore 2012), which is nowadays taken for granted. Instead, research has shown that wine tourists' satisfaction and positive future intentions are generated when wine experiences possess the following characteristics: experientially distinctive and extraordinary activities (Thanh and Kirova 2018); memorable and authentic wine experiences (Dowling and Getz 2006, cited in Carlsen and Charters 2006); and interactive customer engaging activities that trigger not only behavioural and sensorial customer engagement, but

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they enable customers to re-think of themselves, their identities and their connections with the place, as well as rediscover and develop themselves (Joy et al. 2018). Indeed, it is the wine experiences that can nurture and instill transformational learning and self-development through high level cognitive and spiritual engagement, which in turn can generate high levels of customer loyalty, bonds and attachment to the winery and wine destinations.

There are numerous studies (e.g. Quadri-Felitti and Fiore 2012; Thanh and Kirova 2018) investigating a great variety of wine experiences and categorizing them based on the 4Es model, i.e. aEsthetic, Escapist, Educational and Entertainment. However, the literature has failed to examine so far how to augment and enrich wine experiences in order to make them memorable and meaningful experiences that can in turn contribute to the self-development and transformation of wine tourists. This chapters aims to address this gap by showing how by combining culture and wine, one can create transformative wine experiences that can involve many other senses than just 'gaze'. To achieve that, a multi-disciplinary approach is adopted by reviewing and linking research in the fields of: agri-food, social innovation; cultural studies; wine tourism; and story-telling and marketing. The inter-sections and commonalities in these fields of research advocate that culture and story-telling can be used as a way to augment and differentiate service offerings as well as frame and present them in a way that enables the consumers to re-think, find a meaning and purpose in life by re-connecting themselves with the system and place.

The applicability and the implications of combining wine and culture are demonstrated by analyzing the case study of Ariousios Wine, a winery in Chios, Greece, that has built its business model, concept and experiential offering by reviving an old Greek grape varietal. Greece represents a country with a rich culture and long wine and viticulture history. The case study shows how this winery has blurred and use the Greek culture and heritage in order to develop: (1) a wine story for presenting and framing its business concept and for positioning its business with a compelling differentiation competitive strategy and (2) transformational wine experiences that embody the natural, built, human and cultural heritage of its wine region and enable the wine tourists to experience the (wine) place/scape and traditions, interact with and learn

from the history and the life of local communities, re-think of their values, systems and roots, and transform themselves, and ultimately, convert themselves from wine drinkers to ambassadors and lovers of the Greek (wine) culture and heritage.

Overall, by reviewing a multi-disciplinary literature and analyzing a case study, the chapter explains and demonstrates the potential and the power of wine tourism to generate a sustainable developmental for both wineries and wine destinations by linking and creating synergies amongst three inter-related sectors: wine, tourism and cultural industries.

Innovating Wine Tourism Experiences: A Multi-disciplinary Approach

Research in the agri-food field (Moser et al. 2011; Wirth et al. 2011; Sogn-Grundvåg et al. 2014; Viegas et al. 2014) increasingly advocates the additional opportunities to add value to wine products and increase their competitiveness by offering wine products that do not only provide insights into the different flavour attributes of the wines but that they also convey attributes reflecting the quality and sustainability of their production as well as authentic cultural attributes related to the grape varieties and the wine terroir more generally. Indeed, studies (e.g. Sogn-Grundvåg et al. 2014) show that consumer wine purchase behavior and preferences are determined by three product attributes namely, physical, credence and cultural. Physical attributes include factors such as taste and texture. Credence attributes relates to factors such as animal welfare and environmental stewardship. Cultural attributes include factors such as indigenous authenticity, long-history of wine making tradition, a passionate family-run enterprise. Consequently, the literature highlights the need of wine/food producers to engage in transformational innovation by including and combining all three attributes into their products in order to enhance the value and appeal of their products and extract a higher price and preference from consumers. Transformative innovation in food/wine is defined (Hall et al. 2016) as

products that combine physical, credence and cultural attributes that are highly valued by consumers in global markets and that can drive radical innovation by advancing the economic, social and environmental frontiers of the agricultural sector.

In a similar vein, research in the management field advocates that innovation is not a merely technological issue but a socio-technical challenge that should consider the wider socio-cultural system and values in which innovation takes place, is adopted and evolved. To that end, researchers highlight the need to engage in social innovation which happens when a firm not only develops a new technical offering but it also tells a story about it and/or frames its business and offerings in new (socio-cultural) values' paradigm (van der Have and Rubalcaba 2016). For example, Airbnb currently frames its offering and business models based on the following system value (from 'you are what you own' to 'you are what you share'). To that end, social innovation moves the attention from the output (technical/physical content of innovation) to the sense-making and social processes of constructing values and meanings. To implement social innovation wine (tourism) companies increasingly adopt story-telling techniques and use signs and language in order to present and frame their wine offerings and tourism experiences with symbolic meaning and value. For example, wine firms use and tell stories that: link specific wines and wine terroirs/places with the family wine tradition and history; frame and present a wine based on a traditional wine making technique; and that link wine tourism experiences (e.g. grape stepping and picking activities, wine festivals) with local cultural heritage and rituals. In doing this, wine firms augment their technical/physical offerings with credence and cultural attributes that not only effect the consumers' wine (experience) selection and evaluation processes, but they also influence the people's sense-making processes by enabling them to actively participate or consume a meaningful wine tourism experience.

Studies in wine research and wine tourism increasingly recognize and provide evidence of the separate impact of each individual attribute (physical, credence and cultural) on consumer choice, purchase behavior and preferences. For example: Francis and Williamson (2015) provided a review of literature showing how functional wine features and

sensory elements impact wine consumer choice and behavior. Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) reviewed a wide literature and showed how country-of-origin is a cue for product quality in food, but they also found that the impact is smaller if other quality indicators are available, including physical, credence attributes and cultural attributes. Famularo et al. (2010) showed how country-of-origin influence wine selection and drives wine demand to the wine destination. Wine studies (Pomarici and Vecchio 2014; Delmas and Grant 2014) and wine tourism research (Poitras and Donald 2006; Gázquez-Abad et al. 2015) show how the inclusion of credence attributes related to environmental stewardship and sustainable production addressing climate change and constraints of natural terroir resources influence wine (tourism) preferences and purchase behaviour.

However, Sigala and Dimopoulou (2017) recently found that wine preference and country-of-origin are not the only factors driving tourism demand to wine destinations (as found by Brown and Getz 2005), but on the contrary winescape, touristic elements and authentic tourism experiences are equally important to increase motivations and intentions to visit a wine region. This is not surprising, as wine tourists are not solely driven by the quality of the wine and so, the quality of the wine terroir that can produce high quality physical attributes of the wine. Instead, research has increasingly recognized the importance of winescape (i.e. the natural, cultural/heritage, human and environmental resources of the wine terroir) in attracting and determining wine tourism satisfaction by allowing tourists to visit, experience, immerse themselves and learn about and from the history and the culture of the wineries' landscape. As, Charters (2006, p. 214) pointed out wine tourists seek an experience that *"is a complex interaction of natural setting, wine, food, cultural, and historical inputs and above all, the people who service them"*. A series of studies have also demonstrated the impact of winescape to develop a strong brand and image for the wine region and the wine destination, which in turn can drive wine tourism demand (Bruwer and Johnson 2010; Bruwer and Lesschaeve 2012; Bruwer et al. 2016). Other studies (Kim and Bonn 2016; Cubillas et al. 2017) have also recognized the role of winescape for creating an authentic wine (tourism) offering (e.g. local food/wine products, local wine rituals and

traditions, local wine related stories) and influencing consumer choice and behavior. Thus, wine firms should not only exploit the technical characteristics of the wine terroir, but also the natural, human, cultural/heritage and physical elements of the winescapes/touristic terroirs by embodying all of them within wine offerings so that they can provide memorable and meaningful wine tourism experiences.

However, although research has recognized and studied the individual impact of these three attributes on wine (tourists) behavior, preferences and decision-making processes, there is no research investigating the combined effect of these three attributes. Research has also failed to explain how wine (tourism) firms should combine and embody all these three elements for innovating their offerings and designing compelling wine tourism experiences. These gaps are very important, as research also shows that wine tourists: (1) appreciate the multi-dimensional aspects of wine (tourism) offerings (Gustafson et al. 2016; Thanh and Kirova 2018) and (2) increasingly seek transformative wine tourism experiences that will enable them to develop a sense of themselves and meaning/purpose in life by engaging themselves spiritually and cognitively. To address these gaps, the following section analyses the case of Ariousios, a winery in Chios, Greece, which engaged in social or transformational innovation by developing its business strategy, concept and offering around the revival of an ancient Greek grape varietal. The case of Ariousios shows how the firm combines the three elements in order to augment its wine offering and wine tourism by providing transformational and meaningful experiences that promote its winery as a worthwhile and attractive place to visit but also learn.

Ariousios: Synergizing Wine with Culture for Augmenting Wine (Tourism) Experiences

The Context of Ariousios

Greece is a country with a winemaking tradition dating since the early ancient times. The Greek vineyards are characterized by a great diversity

of soils ranging from mountainous, hilly, continental, coastal and volcanic regions. Every viticulture zone has its own microclimate, while the viticultural and winemaking techniques developed in every region also represent a combination of tradition, knowledge, experience and personal intervention of each winemaker (Sigala and Dimopoulou 2017). All these features compose the Greek terroir that make it quite unique and different from several other (competing) wine regions. Hence, in relation to its wine (tourism) competitors, Greece possesses two distinctive characteristics that, if appropriately valorized, can provide to the wine region and its companies a unique competitive advantage: (1) a rich and long oenological wine making tradition that is linked to the Greek history and even mythology with numerous stories, rituals and fables; and (2) a wine terroir that does not only grow and features distinctive, high quality and indigenous grape varieties (e.g. Malagouzia, Assyrtiko, Athyri, Xynomavro), but it also represents a culturally and geologically rich, attractive and diversified winescape/touristic terroir.

Ariousios represents a wine venture of a micro-entrepreneur, who used the cultural heritage of wine making of the island of Chios in order to re-develop the wine production industry and the offerings of Chios as well as to position and make Chios island as an attractive and interesting wine tourism destination. Ariousios is an indigenous grape variety from Chios, whose cultivation has disappeared during the last century despite its importance and recognition as a high quality wine during the Hellenistic, Roman and byzantine eras. The revival of Ariousios and its viticulture based on the rich cultural heritage and history of wine making and trade in Chios provides an illustrative case of the synergies that can be built between wine and culture for augmenting wine offerings, winescapes and wine tourism experiences as well as for converting and positioning a wine region as an attractive destination that enables the tourists to learn and embed themselves within the history and local culture of the place.

The Ariousios Story Combining Culture with Wine to Augment the Wine Tourism Offering

The story of Ariousios is developed into a book published by the wine company and available online (<http://www.ariousios.gr/images/ARIOUSIOS-OINOS-TO-KRASI-TIS-XIOY.pdf>) as well as into a video played on TV channels and also distributed online (<https://vimeo.com/155959688> and <http://www.themonitor.gr/ariousios-oinos/>).

Ariousios has developed a story, because it is not simply a set of facts, but it communicates and incorporates facts within the context of a narrative (Table 15.1). The narrative explains numerous facts including: the history and evolution of wine making in Chios; the history of the place cultivating the wine; the mystery of the current location of the place producing Ariousios wine (the land of Ariousia); the relation of the wine with the economic development of the island; the health and medical features of the wine; the connections of the wine with socio-cultural events like Roman symposia and Byzantine emperors; and the story explaining the vision, efforts and the passion of the micro-entrepreneur to revise the Ariousios wine in Chios. The narrative uses metaphors and connections with mythical people, gods and places to establish the quality, the precious value, international recognition and importance of the Ariousios wine (e.g. “*Wine of Homer*” or “*Homeric nectar*” or “*Homer’s Vine*”, the son of the god of Wine). Historical documents, citations, names and symbols help establish an authenticity and persuasiveness to the story. Ariousios admits that it is difficult to claim and/or try to establish objective authenticity (i.e. authenticity of the taste and the quality of the current wine with original wine produced in the past, since we do not know how the original wine tasted like). However, Ariousios aims to establish authenticity through constructive or symbolic authenticity and existential authenticity (Wang 1999). Constructive or symbolic authenticity is created through: the explanations, interpretations of the wine related stories told by staff and written in the book; the wine museum of Ariousios wine exhibiting items related to the wine (e.g. pots for storing and transporting wine, historical documents, paintings and other visual artifacts related to Ariousios

Table 15.1 Ariousios wine: a long story short

<p><i>"In ancient times, the island of Chios was so famous for its wine that the Greek god of wine, Dionysus, gave his personal blessing to the island and its storied nectar"</i></p> <p>The table describes the islanders were taught the art of wine cultivation by Oenopion (the wine god's son)</p> <p>The special microclimate of the Mount Pelinneeon (west of Chios island) is optimum for winemaking and is referred to as the land of Ariousia, i.e. one of the most famous wines in Greek history</p> <p><i>"... In the Aegean and beyond, the name Ariousios rang in the ears of wine lovers just as Bordeaux has rung in the ears of connoisseurs for the last 150 years"</i></p> <p>Ariousia wines became famous all over ancient Greece and beyond</p> <p><i>"... The Chian ships transported it throughout the Mediterranean and it was served at the most exclusive and luxurious symposiums (ancient drinking parties) in the ancient Greek and Roman world"</i></p> <p>Ariousios wine was also associated with Homer, the greatest poet of all ages. Ariousios wine was also called "the nectar of the gods" and people believed that Ariousios wine have contributed to the enhancement of Homer's intelligence.</p> <p>Homer had tasted Ariousios wine and called it <i>"afrizonta aithopa oino"</i> (which means: foaming black wine)</p> <p><i>"... A circle of intellectuals would have cultivated the theory of the existence of the "Wine of Homer" or "Homeric nectar" or "Homer's Vine"</i></p> <p>Overall, <i>"... the wine's fame lived for more than 1500 years into the rise and fall of the Byzantines"</i></p> <p>Nowadays, "Ariousios" is also called "wine of Kourouni," a village in Chios that has kept the ancient Greek tradition of wine making</p>
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Source Adopted from <http://www.ariousios.gr/index.php/en/o-ariousios-oinos>

wine). Existential authenticity is supported through the wine related activities and experiences in which the tourists are engaged with while visiting the cellar door, the wine museum and the winescape. The story also uses characters, existing and historical heroes (i.e. the entrepreneurs, historians, gods, Homer etc.) in order to elicit emotions, connections and affinity to the characters, which in turn can create a positive aura and attitude associated with the wine brand.

The story combines and blends all the three attributes (physical, credence and cultural) for augmenting the wine offering and the wine experiences of Ariousios wine. Physical attributes are established by stories talking about the wine terroir, its minerals and soil all responsible for the specific and characteristic quality of the wine. Metaphors and connections of Ariousios wine with various historical and mythical elements are used for establishing the high technical quality of the wine: e.g. Ariousios used in Roman symposium replacing high quality Italian wines, by Byzantine emperors, by traders as a currency. The credence attributes of the wine are established by discussing and highlighting: the microclimate of the wine region that enables wineries to produce without chemicals; the medical capabilities of the wine; its connection with the cognitive abilities of Homer; the revival of Ariousios as a way to promote sustainable economic development in a rural location of Chios that has been abandoned by its local population. The cultural attributes of Ariousios are based on numerous elements including: the history of the wine; the oenological tradition of Chios; the myths, fables and stories related to Ariousios; the connection of Ariousios with socio-cultural events; the tradition and family roots of the entrepreneurs reviving Ariousios.

Story-Telling in Developing and Communicating Wine Tourism Experiences

Ariousios (<http://www.ariousios.gr>) has based its business concept, offering and strategy around the fables and the historical documents providing evidence of the wine production, trade and consumption of Ariousios wine. Story telling has been used for communicating,

presenting and positioning the Ariousios wine as a wine with a long history and tradition related to the socio-economic development of the island of Chios.

Story telling is not a new technique. The literature has well established and advocated the use of story telling for creating persuasive, attractive and memorable advertisements that can be very effective in changing consumers' attitudes, images and behaviors towards products (Woodside et al. 2008; Mossberg 2008). Stories are also used for building a firm's brand identity and culture, as well as for communicating a signature story that can guide and direct employees towards the strategic vision and mission of a firm (Aaker and Aaker 2016). The use of storytelling for promoting and marketing tourism experiences and destinations as well as for creating a positive and memorable tourism brand image is also well documented in the tourism literature (e.g. Tussyadiah et al. 2011).

The power and effectiveness of stories to communicate information, help in building brand image and identity and persuade and direct a positive behavior towards the brand are based on the fact that stories (Aaker and Aaker 2016; Woodside 2010):

- appeal to people's senses;
- elicit emotions;
- better explain facts and information by organizing information and/or linking with previous knowledge in order to be remembered rather than simply providing a list of facts;
- nurture social communication (online and offline word of mouth) if the stories are thought provoking, novel, provocative, interesting, informative, newsworthy, or entertaining;
- enable people to 'transport' themselves from existing reality into the story or narrative.

The role and impact of emotions and narrative transportation in the context of marketing are well debated in the literature. A "narrative" is the actual consumption of a story, while "transportation" is an engagement experience whereby all sensory capacities are focused on the story events (Green and Brock 2000). Narrative transportation occurs when

the narratives of a story create experiences that absorb the readers into it and 'transport' them into an imaginary world wherein they are left changed after becoming part of the story (Escalas 2004). Research (Green and Brock 2000; Mossberg 2008; Tussyadiah et al. 2011; Woodside et al. 2008) shows that narrative transportation is an essential part of the persuasion process of advertising/marketing that is based on building emotional linkages between the consumer and the product. Research also shows that emotions in advertising can increase attention to the advertisement, create a positive attitude towards the brand and purchase intentions (e.g. Escalas 2004). Stories frequently use empathetic characters and visual imagery to foster narrative transportation that in turn leads to: story-consistent beliefs, affective responses (liking), story-consistent attitudes, and story-consistent intentions plus a decrease in critical thoughts.

The metaphor of narrative transportation is very much related to wine tourism and can better explain the wine tourists' engagement and actions, because wine tours and itineraries are both literal and metaphorical journeys (Joy et al. 2018). Wine tourists literally move from one locale to another in search of knowledge, sensory stimulation and pure pleasure, and so many of them see themselves as being on a metaphorical journey toward wine connoisseurship or other knowledge (Joy et al. 2018). The story of Ariousios positions and frames its brand identity and offering around historical scripts related to the wine cultural heritage and the history of the place. The Ariousios story explains the historical, economic, socio-cultural, religious but also medical/health value and role of Ariousios wine. Stories about Ariousios wine explain its importance to the economic development of the island, its relevance to socio-cultural events like Roman symposia, its religion connection and fables, the commercial connections and exchanges between Chios and other regions/civilizations, as well as the medical capabilities of the wine to cure gastronomical and other illnesses. This use of storytelling helps to build wine knowledge and relations with the place and its history, cultural and identity connections, but also transformational learning to the consumers (i.e. nurture meaning-making processes and establish a sense/purpose of life). Consequently, the story of Ariousios enables the wine consumers/tourists to reflect on their own cultural

identity and values (re)-connect with the place, its history, traditions and wine products and ultimately, build a social obligation, cultural identity and emotional attachment between them and the wine brand and destination.

The Signature Story of Ariousios

Overall, the story of Ariousios represents a signature story because (Aaker and Aaker 2016):

- it is an intriguing, authentic, involving narrative with a strategic message that enables a firm to grow by clarifying or enhancing its brand, customer relationships, organization, and/or the business strategy
- it represents an asset that can be leveraged over time and which can provide inspiration and direction both inside and outside the firm.

The Ariousios story is intriguing because it grabs attention by combining a thought-provoking, novel, provocative, interesting, informative, newsworthy, and entertaining story.

The Ariousios Story is authentic because it does not seem to be a phony or transparent selling effort. Historical documents, citations and characters make the story to feel real, to have a message and a substance to communicate.

The Ariousios story is involving as it draws people in cognitively, emotionally, cognitively, spiritually and behaviorally. The story elicits feelings, emotions and attachment to the empathetic heroes, characters but also to the historical place, wine terroir and its communities. Cognitively, wine consumers/tourists may change beliefs, perceptions and attitudes about Chios as a high quality wine production territory, a rich cultural winescape, as well as feelings, preferences and attitudes towards the wine brand of Ariousios wine. Spiritually, wine consumers/tourists are triggered to self-reflect on their historical roots, cultural values and systems, and re-define their purpose of life, their identities and connections with places, communities and heroes. Behaviorally, the story can precipitate actions by wine consumers/tourists such as,

spreading and disseminating the Ariousios story to their networks, including Ariousios in their wine consideration set when purchasing wine.

In other words, the Ariousios story supports the design of a transformative wine experience that embodies the natural, cultural, human and physical resources of the wine terroir/place, because it triggers and inspires the wine consumers/tourists to engage into thought provoking, emotional, and spiritual mental processes. There are several reasons and cognitive, self-reflection and transformative learning opportunities supported by the Ariousios wine story. Wine consumers and tourists may get involved and engage with the story cognitively, emotionally, spiritually and behaviorally, because this can be a way to:

- Reaffirm his own culture
- Confirm his own identity
- Observe, learn and self-reflect on cultural values and systems
- Reconnect with culture
- Consume culture passively and/or by immersing into it.

The Ariousios story has also a strategic message, since it:

- clarifies the features, image, identity and character of the brand
- explains the relationships that the firm wishes to establish with the wine consumers/tourists, the local community and the place
- describes the business concept, the philosophy and the strategy which is to revive the indigenous grape varietal, preserve and valorize the local wine producing history and culture with the aim to contribute to the sustainable economic development of the wine region by: empowering local communities to get a job and income; attract the young generation back to the rural area; and provide transformative wine offerings and tourism experiences that enable consumers to learn and appreciate the local cultural heritage and become their ambassadors.

Conclusions

Wine-tourism is not only about wine tasting. Instead wine tourism experiences are about intense sensorial, aesthetic, cognitive, and nowadays most importantly transformative experiences (Joy et al. 2018). However, although research in wine tourism experiences is rich with numerous studies identifying and categorizing wine experiences into the 4Es framework, research has failed to explain so far and provide practical guidelines how to design effective wine experiences. The current literature in agri-food and management science also highlights the need to engage in social and transformative innovation in order to augment wine offerings with credence and cultural elements. Nevertheless, this stream of research is also limited in explaining how firms can implement social/transformative innovation.

This chapter used the case of Ariousios wine in order to demonstrate how cultural heritage can be used for augmenting wine tourism offerings and enabling wine tourism firms to engage in social and transformative innovation. The case study also explains the use of story telling for communicating and framing the philosophy and the business concept/strategy of the ‘new augmented wine offering’ as well as for inspiring wine consumers/tourists to engage in transformative wine tourism experiences. The case study also shows how by synergizing culture and wine, wineries and wine destinations do not only satisfy the needs of the contemporary wine tourists by contributing to their socialization, escape, self-development and self-representation. Instead, the transformative wine tourism experiences also become an important way to achieve sustainable (tourism) development by: preserving and promoting the local culture/heritage; economically empowering local communities; and generating multiplier economic effects by creating synergies amongst various local sectors (e.g. arts, food, wine, and other cultural activities).

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