

<b>Institution:</b> University of Southampton		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
<b>Title of case study:</b> 26-01 The Cultural Dimension of Terroir: Challenging the Assumptions of Wine Producers, Wine Critics and the Wider Public		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> January 2012 – September 2018		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Marion Demossier	Professor of French and European Studies	January 2012 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> August 2013 – December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Professor Marion Demossier's research illuminates the cultural, political and social dimension of <i>terroir</i>, which has previously been defined as an area or terrain whose soil and micro-climate determine the distinctive qualities of wine. Through demonstrating the complex human dimension of the relationship between wine production, place, and taste at a time of increasing competition around heritage and authenticity in the global wine industry, her work has transformed how wine producers and communities understand <i>terroir</i>. Her research has been a driving force in fostering transnational conversations and has influenced the thoughts and behaviours of wine producers. The impact can be seen in changes at a collective (heritagisation and politics of place) and an individual (practices and marketing strategies) level in key wine-growing regions. These include Burgundy (through UNESCO 2015 climats de Bourgogne), Italy (UNESCO 2019 Prosecco wine area) and New Zealand (GI-Geographical Indications 2016 Central Otago). Moreover, it has initiated a transnational public debate about <i>terroir</i> in the wine industry and beyond.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Demossier's research is based upon a long-term immersion through multi-sited ethnography in the global wine industry, evidenced by a string of publications and other scholarly contributions. These culminated with her 2018 monograph 'Burgundy: a global anthropology of place and taste' [3.1]. The book challenges the geological interpretation of <i>terroir</i> and argues that quality wines are the result of the interplay between natural elements that make up the myriad environments in which fine wines grow. By illuminating the <b>cultural, political and social dimension</b> of <i>terroir</i>, her research demonstrates the complex human dimension of the relationship between wine production, place and taste at a time of increasing competition around heritage and authenticity in the global wine industry [3.2].</p> <p>The major conclusions arising from this research are twofold:</p> <p>1. <b>Terroir is the result of human endeavour as well as the natural and geological conditions of the vineyard.</b></p> <p>Demossier's monograph provides a new understanding of place-based quality products by bringing a unique historicised human dimension to the discussion of wine and quality at a time of intense competition between Old (France and Italy) and New World (New Zealand) wine regions [3.1]. Her research has challenged the dominant discourses of place in food production by disrupting the determinist model of <i>terroir</i>. While most <i>terroir</i> literature to-date is focused on debates around nature or culture, Demossier's analysis situates the producer as the key negotiator at the heart of all <i>terroir</i> components, mitigating such factors as soil, climate, and local knowledge – from vineyard management to marketing know-how, but also playing a key part in the production of highly localised and differentiated wines [3.1, 3.4 and 3.5]. Her book has been described as "The most revealing study to date of the social construction of the concept of</p>		

terroir... A landmark work on the politics of identity in the present age of food and drinks globalization.” (Dr Julie McIntyre, University of Newcastle, Australia).

## 2. The cultural and heritage dimension of terroir plays a major role in enhancing the market value of terroir globally.

Since 2012, Demossier has built on her fieldwork in Burgundy to develop a critical perspective of the process of heritagisation undertaken by wine regions internationally [3.3]. Her work shows how local stakeholders have used ‘cultural diversity’ (constructing micro-differences in wine production systems) and UNESCO heritage categories (cultural site or landscape) to craft a unique relationship between place and taste [3.3]. Despite the elitist nature of heritagisation, Demossier argued for the enhancement of ‘cultural diversity’ of local human heritage in the Burgundy application, acknowledging the central role of wine-growers in constructing micro-differences under the same Protected Designation of Origin (PDO). Her chapter published in ‘A Companion to Heritage Studies’ (2015) critically unpacked the cultural work behind Burgundy’s application and the challenges it brings to the local and regional wine industries in a competitive global context [3.3]. Demossier’s argument has influenced other wine and agricultural regions (Prosecco and Central Otago) to adopt the construction of quality through terroir, including the cultural dimension and provenance, as a global heritage strategy for the wine industry [3.4].

## 3. References to the research

**3.1** Marion Demossier. *Burgundy: A Global Anthropology of Place and Taste*. Berghahn, Oxford and New York. (2018). ISBN 978-1-78533-851-9. Listed in REF2.

**3.2** Marion Demossier. ‘Following *Grands Crus*: Global Markets, Transnational Histories and Wine’ in *Wine and Culture: Vineyard to glass* edited by Rachel Black and Robert C. Ulin (Berg, 2013): 183-199. ISBN 9780857854209. Available on request.

**3.3** Marion Demossier. ‘The Politics of Heritage in the Land of Food and Wine’. *A Companion to Heritage Studies*, edited by William Logan, Máiread Nic Craith, Ullrich Kockel (Wiley-Blackwell Companions to Anthropology Series, 2015): 87-100. ISBN: 978-1-118-48666-5. Available on request.

**3.4** Marion Demossier, Terroir, Wine Culture and Globalisation. What does terroir do to Wine? *Europe now*, Council for European Studies CES, (5<sup>th</sup> September 2018). <https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/09/04/terroir-wine-culture-and-globalization-what-does-terroir-do-to-wine>

**3.5** Marion Demossier. ‘Réflexions d’anthropologues. Les climats de Bourgogne comme patrimoine de l’humanité’. *Pays de Bourgogne*, n° 231, (January 2012): 57-62. Available on request.

## 4. Details of the impact

Demossier’s work on terroir has reached multiple stakeholders in the wine industry, benefiting significantly the traditional regional economies in Burgundy, New Zealand and Italy.

### Enhancing Cultural Diversity and Crafting Local Heritage Claims

In 2008, the *Association des climats de Bourgogne* commissioned Demossier to write the anthropological report which led to the successful listing in 2015 of the *climats de Bourgogne* as a UNESCO world heritage site [5.1]. For **Burgundy**, winning UNESCO status enhanced the region’s economic prestige and value translating into a 25% rise in local tourism, while simultaneously providing benefits in terms of heritage, conservation, regeneration as well as enhanced civic pride and social capital. Its socio-economic impact has been significant as Burgundy represents 5% of world trade value and 20,000 direct jobs as well as 100,000 in indirect activities (e.g. glass-makers and coopers). Local stakeholders described the publication of Demossier’s book in 2018 as ‘a significant contribution’ to the region’s heritage (Alain Suguenot, mayor of Beaune; Aubert de Villaine, director of the *Association des climats de Bourgogne*) [5.2].

The **Italian Prosecco Consortium** consulted Demossier in July 2017 about their UNESCO application because of her ongoing research into the process of heritagisation. The Italian

Prosecco Consortium is composed of the main wine-producers of the Prosecco Denomination of Origin growing region, and the Prosecco-producing towns of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene. Demossier advised them on the necessity of a collective strategy to succeed as the region was characterised by a strong opposition between a handful of elite producers and small artisanal wine-growers. Professor Salvemini of the Scuola di Direzione Aziendale Bocconi who led the team creating the dossier for the cultural aspects of the bid explained: 'the time span of her study (25 years) has been very useful to understand informal strategies undertaken by the stakeholders of the Burgundy territory in order to reposition the whole region and its products in the worldwide market' [5.3]. The Prosecco region obtained World Heritage status on 7 July 2019.

In 2014, Professor Marinella Carosso (sadly since deceased) invited Demossier to join an international workshop in Alba (UNESCO Langhe wine region) to discuss Burgundy wine cultural heritage because of her work on terroir. The event was attended by local stakeholders and politicians and served as a springboard to prepare the 2015 Universal Exhibition. The presentation led the Feltrinelli Foundation to later commission Demossier to write a report for the **2015 Universal Exhibition on Food Heritage** in Milan which contributed to the final Expo 2015 report on sustainability and terroir as local food heritage [5.4] The Expo 2015 theme was "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life" encompassing technology, innovation, culture, traditions and creativity and how they relate to food and diet aimed at informing the international food industry.

### **Influencing Wine Producers Thoughts and Behaviours**

Demossier's research has influenced how **Central Otago wine producers** engage with their professional practices and environments. Her work has inspired them to think about how they create and express a unique terroir for New Zealand's young wine industry and for their individual products how they can position themselves in an increasingly globalised market. In the context of the 2016 Registration Amendment Bill on Geographical Indications (Wine and Spirits) which created a GI Register and provided a regime for registering place names, the idea of different regional expressions of variety has been gaining ground, especially with small wine producers. These smaller producers, with a vineyard area of no more than 20 hectares (49 acres), represent over three quarters of New Zealand's wineries. Demossier's work has helped them to define terroir in differentiated ways as well as constructing micro-differences between both brands and wines.

Building on her invitation to the Pinot Noir festival in 2013 (Wellington, New Zealand), Demossier gave a seminar in Cromwell, New Zealand, organised by 15 wine-growers from the COWA (Central Otago Wine Growers Association). It resulted in a sustained and long-lasting collaboration. Demossier was invited in 2017 to join the Central Otago delegation of 12 winegrowers during their visit to Burgundy and to speak about terroir as they wanted to gain a grounded understanding of terroir (Burgundy acts as the worldwide benchmark of terroir quality wines) [5.5].

Consequently, Nick Mills, a leading Central Otago wine-producer and member of the executive committee of the 2021 Pinot Noir Festival in Christchurch made Demossier's recent paper 'What does terroir do to wine?' compulsory reading for all members of the festival committee. Nick Mills explained that Demossier's work 'encourage us to look at human aspects; the social, economic and political environments that shape us as people and then how we define, qualify communicate our relationship as people to place'. More specifically, 'As Pinot Noir producers, whilst we look to our craft's cultural and historical reference points in Burgundy, we must also look critically at ourselves (individuals, communities and broader cultures) to establish our own sense of identity now and what it might look like in the future. Accordingly, Marion's work has, wholly or in part, inspired us to carefully examine many aspects of our culture' [5.6].

Several other producers have cited Demossier's work as raising their confidence: 'The Central Otago producers are now more and more able to identify the attributes from their single vineyard sites and the discussions around their terroir are gaining in precision' (Lucie Lawrence, Aurum Wines Central Otago) [5.7]; Christopher Keys, Winemaker at Gibbston Valley Winery and Chair of the Central Otago Pinot Celebration 2020 (COWA) wrote: 'it is hard for me to overstate how important Marion Demossier's book Burgundy: A Global Anthropology of Place and Taste is to

me personally, but also the thematic direction of our event next year. {...} By revealing the foundations of Burgundy's historiographic and winemaking constructs, Demossier has provided us a way to understand Burgundy's mystery, simultaneously provoking questioning of self. No other text I have read on the subject has come close to doing that. I feel that those with the courage to sensitively yet directly question established paragons ought to be valued now more than ever' [5.8].

The impact of Demossier's work on Dry River Wines (Martinborough) is illustrated by the inclusion of her *Europe Now* article in their annual release brochure (2000 copies) for their private clients. Wilco Ham, Head Winemaker for the wine estate commented: 'The globalisation and corporatisation of society calls for increased protection of our identities'...'It resonated with me [...] I, in charge of a small producer who needs to export part of our wine, want to say exactly that, it provides a voice for my contribution to a culture and for farming' [5.9]. On a similar note, Nick Mills, owner of Rippon, has included the concept of terroir in his marketing.

Furthermore, the 2021 Pinot Noir Festival has chosen as its terroir motto the Maori 'Turangawaewae- *A place to put one's feet, A place to stand*. Kaitiakitanga- *Guardianship, stewardship and Whanaungatanga- Kinship, relationships, family culture*' seeking to construct a unique terroir in a highly competitive and changing context. For Mills: 'At the same time, our industry is currently in a state of flux. With the decline of the "expert" and rise of social media, no one is able to identify who the real trade and customer influencers are. Indeed, the future of alcohol consumption itself is equally unsure. It's difficult to imagine a positive future for the New Zealand Wine Industry if it is unable to capture the opportunity to connect with people and for them to connect meaningfully with our place. Marion's study of wine's connective aspects is therefore extremely important for us right now and it is for this reason that she has been invited to attend the next iteration of our country's premier wine event: Pinot Noir NZ 2021 [postponed to 2022 due to the pandemic]' [5.6].

### **Fostering Debate in the Wine and Food Industry**

Demossier's work has influenced how stakeholders in the food and wine industry understand terroir.

Her 2018 book was commented upon by John Barker, a lawyer and New Zealand wine policy advisor for the OIV (International Office for Wines): 'The theme that intrigues me throughout the book {...} is the relationship between conscious strategy and internalised 'beliefs' in the evolution of both Burgundy and Central Otago – how one supports, constructs and becomes part of the other over time' [5.10]. Demossier was interviewed for the newspaper *Le Monde* (circulation: 301,528) in the context of the UK cheese industry in August 2017 [5.11]. In November 2019, Demossier's work on terroir was presented as a keynote during a symposium held at Sheffield Hallam University and attended by 48 participants including WineGB, the national association for the English and Welsh wine industry, who circulated it to their members. Her book was reviewed in the prestigious international wine magazine 'The World of Fine Wine', website and app which reaches an international readership of over 1,000 wine lovers across 30 countries stating: 'this book has the potential to become a very important point of reference on issues well beyond winemaking and to capture a wide audience of educated readers and wine lovers' [5.12 and 5.13].

### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

**5.1** Corroborating statement from Krystel Lepresle, Vin et Société.

**5.2** Corroborating statement from Aubert de Villaine and Alain Suguenot.

**5.3** Corroborating statement from Prosecco Consortium for the preparation of an application to UNESCO world Heritage status. Professor Severino Salvemini and Constanzas Sartoris.

**5.4** Contribution to 'Anthropology Food Cultures', Foundation Feltrinelli.

**5.5** Media Report on 10th Anniversary of Mosaïque: Hawk Wakawaka

<https://wakawakawinereviews.com/2017/11/29/vignerons-as-the-mediators-of-modernity>; Elaine Chukan Brown 'Where Burgundy meets New Zealand' in Jancis Robinson blog.

<https://www.jancisrobinson.com/articles/where-burgundy-meets-new-zealand>; Le Bien Public

regional newspaper (20 October 2017) 'Des Néo-Zélandais viennent fêter dix ans de lien avec la Bourgogne'.

**5.6** Corroborating statement from Nick Mills, former president of COWA and owner of Rippon (Central Otago).

**5.7** Corroborating statement from Lucie Lawrence, owner of Aurum wines, Cromwell.

**5.8** Corroborating statement from Christopher Keys, Chair of the Central Otago Pinot Noir celebration 2020.

**5.9** Corroborating statement from Wilco Lam, Winemaker at Dry River Wines (Martinborough).

**5.10** Corroborating statement from John Barker.

**5.11** Article by Philippe Bernard in Le Monde, August 2017: 'le Stilton pris dans la tempête du Brexit'.

**5.12** Book Review, Fine Wine, 2 May 2019, <http://www.worldoffinewine.com/news/book-review-burgundy-a-global-anthropology-of-place-and-taste-by-marion-demossier-7182928>

**5.13** Blog of Course Hero: <https://www.coursehero.com/file/p2kvclj/Demossier-4-Table-1-Climates-role-in-the-expression-of-terroir-in-wine> and of wine lover: <https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/wine-grower/wg-general-news/reflections-on-authenticity-joburzynska>