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Mojca Ramšak

Wine Queens

Understanding the Role of Women in Wine Marketing



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Mojca Ramšak
Centre for Biographic Research
Ljubljana
Slovenia

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The book is dedicated to young women who enter into the wine industry in good faith with honorary titles, but without being aware of the potential threats for their emancipation. I wrote the book for those women who think that the exposure in the name of the profit in any industry is going to be useful for them.

It is also dedicated to my son Izidor who recognized and pointed to the phenomenon of gender display as a child when he was observing the performance of wine queens in the rituals, or when they were in the media. It is my wish that he will be able to resist the omnipresent temptation to judge women as objects.

And finally, I owe my gratitude to my mother and father for bringing me up with a firm notion of my own worth.

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Ljubljana, January 2015

Contents

1 The Initiation into the Wine Kingdom	1
Reference	3
2 The World History of Wine Queens	5
2.1 Europe	6
2.2 Americas	11
2.3 Asia	12
References	13
3 The Lessons from the Slovene Case	15
3.1 The Distant, General View	15
3.2 The Closer, Detailed View	17
References	19
4 The Material Inventory of Wine Queens	21
4.1 The Visual Inventory	21
4.2 The Wine Queens' Metaphoric	22
4.3 The Wine Queens in the Media	25
References	26
5 The Marketing Approach in Wine Kingdom	27
5.1 The Wine Queen and the Wine King	27
5.2 The Wine Queen's Wine	29
References	30
6 The Wine Queen and the Beauty Queen	33
6.1 The Beauty Pageant Contests	33
6.2 The Rituals of Wine Queen Selection	35
References	36

7	The Objectification Makes the Profit	37
7.1	The Promotion as Failed Mishmash.	37
7.2	The Wine Queen as an Object of Desire	38
7.3	The Wine Queen as Unpaid or Underpaid Workforce	40
	References	41
8	Concluding Thoughts	43
	References	45
	Index	47

Figures

Fig. 3.1	The structure of the “wine kingdom” of Slovenia (Ramšak 2015)	19
Fig. 3.2	The types of wine queens in Slovenia (Ramšak 2015)	19
Fig. 5.1	The King of Cviček, the Ambassador of Cviček and the Princess of Cviček constitute the Cviček Court, whose missionary work is the promotion of red Slovene wine Cviček (Ramšak 2015)	28

Table

Table 2.1 Timeline with the emersion of the first national wine queens (or the first wine queens of the region). 10

Chapter 1

The Initiation into the Wine Kingdom

Abstract Since a global wine market became extremely competitive, wine producers were trying to increase their gross revenue. To attain this aim they connected wine with national, regional or local identities to distinguish their products from their rivals. It helped them to strengthen their brands or create new effective brands. Ace of the brands, related directly to identity, is a wine queen. It has spread from Europe to the Americas and to Asia and everywhere is responsible for the promotion of wines, countries and wine consumption. All over the world wine queens represent national, regional and local wine cultures.

Keywords Wine queen · Wine king · Wine · Heritage · Tourism · Gender · Wine marketing · Identity · Wine culture · Wine ritual

This volume explores the ways in which the wine, heritage, identity and marketing overlap and incorporate more extensive topics of gender and wine in an interdisciplinary approach. Presented aspects of gender in wine marketing help to realize how diverse wine traditions create a community of wine queens and what functions they hold in a dynamic and very competitive wine market. The combining of the interconnecting areas with an emphasis on gender, heritage and wine marketing has not been researched in an academic literature to date.

Since a global wine market became extremely competitive, wine producers were trying to increase their gross revenue. To attain this aim they connected wine with national, regional or local identities to distinguish their products from their rivals. It helped them to strengthen their brands or create new effective brands. Ace of the brands, related directly to identity, is a wine queen. The wine queen institution is global. It has spread from Europe to the Americas and to Asia and everywhere is responsible for the promotion of wines, countries and wine consumption. All over the world wine queens represent national, regional and local wine cultures. We like to say that wine tourism shakes hands with wine queens. In the wine growing areas of Europe, like in Germany, Austria, France and Spain, the wine queen's selections are almost obligatory accompanying events during the biggest

winemakers festivity, the grape-harvesting.¹ In other states where wine tourism was rooted in the 19th century, we can trace the evolution of wine queen's phenomenon of the early 20th century. In the countries, which got independence at the closing of the 20th century, like Slovenia, Slovakia and Croatia, wine queens are new phenomena.

In that respect, the rituals associated with the wine queens draw on similar issues as in Germany and France. Otherwise the earliest stories date back to the beginning of the 20th century in the United States of America and to the 19th century in Croatia. Apart from the Wine Queens institution, there is also the recognition of the Wine King, although, unlike the wine queens, it is not his general and indirect knowledge of wine, physical appearance or communication skills that are evaluated, but the quality of the wine of that region that has largely economic significance.

Queenly titles are popular also in other branches of the food industry. There they promote the existing brands, for instance, in the milk industry and in other agricultural outputs. Queenly titles are often conferred also in the tourism industry.

Inauguration of wine queens from anthropological and ethnographical perspectives of gender is an enactment of culture, which may include: parades, carnivals, formal celebrations, national and international wine competitions, fairs and other public events. In addition, the enthronement of wine queens is also a form of enactment of social rituals, visual codes, dress codes, use of make-up, forms of expression of competitiveness towards other candidates, submitting to the jury and the management of protocol behavior. Adverse to the statement of the organizers of such contests that their main object is the promotion of wine and drinking culture, this volume also puts them in the realm of beauty pageants.

¹ The English word *queen* comes from Old English *cwen* meaning either woman or wife. It is a cognate with the Greek root *gyne* (as in gynecology, misogyny) meaning woman or wife, and with the Sanskrit *janis* meaning woman. English is unusual in having a word for female rulers that is rooted in a woman-oriented word. In many languages, the word for a woman ruler is derived from a word for male rulers: Roman *Augusta* (for women related to the emperor); emperors were titled *Augustus*; Spanish *reina*; king is *rey*; French *reine*; king is *roi*; German for king and queen: *König und Königin*; German for emperor and empress: *Kaiser und Kaiserin*; Polish is *król i królowa*; Croatian is *kralj i kraljica*; Finnish is *kuningas ja kuningatar*; Scandinavian languages use a different word for king and queen, but the word for queen is derived from a word meaning "master": Swedish *kung och drottning*, Danish or Norwegian *konge og dronning*, Icelandic *konungur og drottning* (Johnson Lewis 2014). The wine queens are spread worldwide, so the similar naming: *la reina de la vendimia* (Spanish), *Rainha da Festa da Uva* (Portuguese), *la Reine de Vins* (French), *regina del vino*, and even *regina del bio-vino* (Italian), *Weinkönigin* (German), *grape queen* or *queen of grape* or *grape day queen* (English, American), *kráľovná vína* (Slovak), *vinska kraljica* (Slovene, Croatian), *borkirálynő* (Hungarian).

Reference

Johnson Lewis J (2014) Queen as a Title. Women's History Glossary. About.com Women's History. Retrieved 11 Sept 2014, from <http://womenshistory.about.com/od/glossary/fl/Queen-as-a-Title.htm?nl=1>

Chapter 2

The World History of Wine Queens

Abstract The oldest information about a kind of personification of “wine queen” goes back to the 14th century to the Madonna of the Grapes or *Traubenmadonna*. Later the autumn customs of vine growing areas were frequently associated with women, beauty and the initiation before the marriage. The first formal awards of a wine queen title happened in the USA in the beginning of the 20th century, followed by Germany, France, Brazil, Argentina and other big exporters of wine in 1930'. And so the wine queen selections splashed to other Central European countries, like Austria, Hungary, Slovenia and Slovakia, and to Asia.

Keywords Wine queen · Wine king · Wine · Tourism · Europe · Americas · Asia · Wine rituals · Religion · Wine marketing

The commercial importance of grapes and wine began with associations of wine with religious rites in the Near-East. From its humble origins grape production has developed into the world's most important fresh fruit crop. Wine has an archaeological record dating back more than 75 thousand years. The earliest suspected wine residues come from the early to mid-fifth millennium B.C. from northern Iran. The first evidence of intentional winemaking appeared in the representations of Egyptian wine presses some 5000 years ago. Wine making was discovered or evolved in southern Caucasia. This region includes parts of present-day northwestern Turkey, northern Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Grapevine domestication also may have occurred independently in Spain. From Caucasia grape growing and winemaking spread to Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia. From this base wine consumption, and its socio-religious connections, spread winemaking around the Mediterranean. In more recent times, European exploration and colonization has spread grapevine cultivation in most of the temperate climatic regions of the globe. The area planted under grapevines in 2002 was estimated in about 7.9 million hectares and went down from a maximum of 10.2 million in the late 1970s. Approximately 66 % of the production was fermented into wine. The use varies from country to country, often depending on physical and politico-religious (wine prohibition) dictates of the region. Despite its world importance, vines only cover about 0.5 % of agriculture land and its produce

constitutes 0.4 % of global household expenditure. Grape production is largely restricted to climatic regions similar to those of the indigenous range of *Vitis Vinifera*. This zone approximates the area between 10 and 20 °C annual isotherms. Grape culture is further largely restricted to regions characterized by Mediterranean-type climates. Extensions into cooler, warmer, or the more moist environs are possible when local conditions modify the climate or viticultural¹ practice compensates for less than ideal conditions. Commercial production even occurs in subtropical regions, where severe pruning stimulates nearly year-round vine growth. In Europe, where 61 % of the world's vineyards are located, about 77 % of the crop is fermented into wine (Jackson 2008: 1–5).

2.1 Europe

The oldest information about a kind of personification of “wine queen” goes back to the 14th century to the festivity of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (15.8.), when Madonna of the Grapes (in German *Traubenmadonna*) was elected in St. Valentine's church in the Rheingau, in one of the thirteen designated German wine regions. Of course, this religious depiction is only symbolically linked to wine queens and has nothing to do with contemporary wine queens. The Holy Mary is the patron of the Catholic Church, as well as the restaurant owners, chefs, furriers, cloth makers, potters, sailors, gingerbread bakers, silk workers and vinegar brewer. Many centuries ago, she was selected as the most desirable patron saint of the winery in the Rheingau and she was worshiped as the Madonna of the Grapes. She stands at the top of all the wine saints and enjoys the special confidence of the wine growers. In the wine regions of Germany, Austria and South Tyrol she is seen as the protector of grapes and wine and is drawn with an infant Jezus in her arms and grapes in hand. Sometimes her statue is wrapped with vine leaves, if it's standing in the outdoor chapel. The grape is since ancient times a symbol of fertility and motherhood, it symbolizes the blood shed on the cross, infant Jesus is the symbol of the Incarnation.

Even if there is no direct link between the wine queens and the Madonna of the Grapes, we can understand the symbolic connection through the attempts of the arrangers of the wine queen events. Fundamentally, the wine queens enhance the recognizability of wines, they promote wines, they also continue the old, and create new rituals connected with wine. Women in the role of wine queens, with their manifestations and ritual ceremonies, have come out from the background of a largely male industry, where they had been obliged traditionally to remain on the side, although they acted as a crucial labor's role.

In the traditional German wine regions autumn customs of the second half of the 19th century were frequently associated with women, beauty and the initiation before the marriage. Examples of these customs were Autumn Queens (*Herbstköniginnen*),

¹ Viniculture is the cultivation of grapesvines for wine; viticulture is the cultivation of the vine.

Autumn Brides and Autumn Grooms (*Herbstbraut, Herbstbräutigam*), or decorating girls with the last grapes. At the same time Flowers of Vinodol (*Ružice Vinodola*) were documented in Croatia.

In the recession year 1929 when beer was more expensive than wine, the consumption of the wineries was higher than their revenues. At the start of the 1930s the wine consumption in *Germany* was 3 l per capita per year. At the same time the French drank 153, Italians 118, Austrians 16 and Egyptians 9.8 l per capita per year. Over 200 wine festivals were renowned in Germany at that time, but they lacked a brilliant action, a high point of the celebrations. A group of wine lovers founded that they urgently need a queen. This is how the idea of a wine queen was born. There were no statutes or other patterns available. Thus, they thought that the prettiest girl at the annual fair in the city Neustadt an der Weinstraße should be elected to the Wine Queen. In 1931, the five most beautiful girls from the hall were put in front of a newspaper publisher and he chose the most beautiful one by his judgement. Ironically, the first wine queen became a resident of Pirmasens, which is known as the city where vine does not flourish. For a young woman who in 1931 became a wine queen, the organizers claimed that this is the first wine queen in the world (Junglas 2008: 8; Ramšak 2013). So the selection of wine queens in Germany, in the region Pfalz, which was enough wine conscious and enterprising, though not the greatest wine-growing and most known, began in 1931. Then the Pfalz district wine queens were elected all thirties and with wartime interruptions all the fortieth year. The Pfalz region wine queen unofficially represented the wine of her province and she slowly became a symbol of all German viticulture. Other German wine regions didn't longer stand aside. In 1949, the Pfalz district wine queen was elected according to the tradition and became also the first German Wine Queen (*Deutsche Weinkönigin*). When the Germans recognized that the institute of the wine queen can be useful, they addressed the matter in German, that is to say, severe and careful way, and with an incredible attention to detail. From 1950 onwards, each of the thirteen German wine regions elects its regional wine queen. In 1956, the German Wine Queen won three companions, wine princesses (*Weinprinzessinnen*), i.e. those girls who have been immediately after the Queen by the number of points. Conditions for the selection of the Queen have been specified. It was essential, however, that the young woman was unmarried, professionally engaged in the wine, and that she was from a winemaking family. Later, these thirteen finalists each grappled for the title of the German Wine Queen on the German-wide festival of wine in Neustadt an der Weinstraße, where it all began and where is so today. Every year on the second weekend in October they choose the German Wine Queen out of the finalists. The German Wine Queen as well as the Wine Queens of other regions or wine areas is respected person. The German Wine Queen is an institution that regularly attends the highest state protocol events, as well as the wide variety of national delegations take her on official visits. Afterward, the fashion of the Wine Queen's selection splashed from Germany to other Central European countries, like Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Slovakia (Ramšak 2013).

In Germany, where the wine production is higher than the consumption, the title the Queen of German mulled wine (*Deutsche Glühweinkönigin*) was invented in

Trier in 2009. Her mission has been to eliminate bad reputation of mulled wine, both white and red. For this mission the queen has a two-year term, which was shortened to one year in 2011. Activities of the Queen of mulled wine are limited to four weeks before Christmas, when the Trier Christmas Market takes place (Reichert 2009).

German Wine queens are well documented by the sociologist and wine journalist Junglas (2008), who has researched cultural history, catalogued biographies of the German Wine Queens from 1949 to 2008, entertaining stories from the royal wine world and German wine market in all thirteen wine areas. His book is full of anecdotes, photos and memories, attempting to show German wine industry from the charming side.

Austrian wine queen (*Die Österreichische Weinkönigin* or *Bundesweinkönigin*), like in Germany represents wines and vineyards. Selection is alternately running since 1971 in two provinces in Burgenland and in Lower Austria.

The Luxembourg Wine Queen (*Lëtzebuurger Wäikinnigin*) is chosen from 1950. Every year in September she is crowned at the grape and wine festival (*Luxembourg Drauwen- a Wäifest*; German *Trauben- und Weinfest*; French *Fête du Raisin et du Vin*) in Grevenmacher. Distinctiveness of the Luxembourg Wine Queen is that she must undergo a four-year learning period at her royal predecessor.

The Wine harvest queen of Spain (*Reina de la Vendimia*) in Requena, Valencia, in the east of the country is chosen from 1948. In 1949 the Spanish began to publish the magazine *El Trullo* arising a few times a year on the feast of harvest, in which they present the queens. In 1962 it was succeeded by a museum exhibition at the Museum of wine, today's *Museo de la Fiesta de la Vendimia*, the Museum of the feast of the harvest (Fiesta de la Vendimia Requena 2012). The queens of the harvest are also chosen in the other Spanish wine-producing places, for example in Jerez in southern Andalusia.

French winemakers have started to promote their wines in 1933. The first feast of French wines with a selection of wine queens was in the eastern French region of Burgundy in Mâcon en Bourgogne, in 1933. Then it was moved to other wine-producing regions in France: in Bordeaux, Reims, in Alsatian Colmar and then in Angers in the lowlands of western France, with agricultural industries, such as viticulture and fruit growing. In 1937 the Queen of French wines (*Reine des Vins de France*) was crowned in Angers. She was a seventeen-year-peasant girl who was initially not really much interested in the selection. The wine queen candidates from the wine-growing regions were driven 10 km in the parade with fifteen decorated carts. Before the Palace of Justice, the President of the Republic Albert Lebrun awarded the title of queen of wine, and then the procession continued on the banks of the river Maine and ended with dancing. During the next year, and all the way to the new selection in Avignon a young French wine queen received a number of gifts (Bertoldi 2012). In addition, besides the French national title for the Wine Queen, there are other, regional, linked in particular to the wine-producing areas. The most notable is the title of the Wine Queen of Alsace (*Reine des vins d'Alsace*), which is awarded since 1954 in Colmar in Burgundy, and the selection of the wine queen in the canton of Nuits-Saint-Georges since 2001.

After independence in 1991 Slovene winemakers started to emphasize their identity by creating various honorary wine institutions, which in some other wine

regions go back to the early 20th century. The first local wine queen—Queen of Teran²—was crowned in 1979 in former Yugoslavia and after that the other local titles were given elsewhere. In 1995, the coronation of the first Wine Queen of Slovenia was held in Vipava upon the foreign, mostly German and Austrian models. In Ljutomer, where the first Slovene Wine Growing society was founded in 1872, the Wine Queen of Ljutomer was crowned in 1986; in Svečina the first Wine Queen of Svečina was crowned in 1987. In the same period other winemakers in certain districts or in wine growing areas also crowned their queens, princesses and kings. In 1992, Novo mesto granted a title to the Cviček (see footnote 2) King for the first time; the town of Maribor won the title of Queen of Maribor Wine Growing Region in 1996; the titles of Wine Queen of Radgona-Kapela Hills, Princess of Cviček and Ambassador of Cviček were awarded in 1999; since 2005 Ptuj has its Wine Queen of Ptuj; from 2006 to 2008 there was the Queen of Zelén (see footnote 2) Wine and in 2009 she was renamed to Vipava Wine Queen; since 2008 the new titles were awarded to the Wine Queen of Slovene Istria, the Wine Queen of Metliška Črna (see footnote 2); the Wine Queen of Kog; and the Wine Queen of Cerkevnik (Ramšak 2014). In addition to these titles the award Cider Girl title was added in 2011. The outpouring of wine queens could also be associated with the Act Restricting the Use of Alcohol from 2003, which had limited advertising and sales of alcoholic beverages. Can we make a parallel between the restriction and prohibition of alcohol with the growing interest and developing involvement in wine queens? Equally we can determine from the Table 2.1 and the history of wine queens in the United States, where they became very popular just in the time of prohibiting the manufacture, storage, transportation and sale in the 1920s.

The award of the honorary title of the Wine Queen takes place also in *Croatia*. The inaugural selection of the Queen of the Wine or Wine Queen of Zagreb County has been granted since 2003. Candidates must satisfy professional requirements and pass an examination before an expert commission. The first selection of Wine Queens of the Republic of Croatia was in 2006. Selections of wine queens are also held in other counties such as in Krapina-Zagorje (since 2007) and Sisak-Moslavina (since 2009). In Croatia, the appointment of queens is accompanied by a special ceremony with the participation of many winemakers and growers, Minister for Agriculture and friends of the candidate. In Croatia, in the 19th century, there were similar selections, though not for the wine queens, but for the Flowers of Vinodol wine-producing area (*Ružice Vinodola*). The last such selection was in Novi Vinodolski in 1880, just before the invasion of phylloxera and Peronopora, which contributed to the collapse of viticulture in the area. Limited data is preserved about this selection. But in the 20th century on the foundation of tradition became known a legend of the Turkish kidnapping of one of the “flowers” and one of the selected “flowers” and a description of the vineyard location where the ritual took place. In 2004 the selection of the Flowers of Vinodol was restored. The difference between the selections from the 19th century and today is the fact that in one case it was enough that the young ladies were young and

² Recognised traditional denomination.

Table 2.1 Timeline with the emersion of the first national wine queens (or the first wine queens of the region)

19th century	Croatia <i>Ružice Vinodola</i> ?—1880			
1920s	California <i>Grape Day Queen</i> 1923			
1930s	Germany <i>Deutsche Weinkönigin</i> 1931 (1949)	France <i>Reine des Vins de France</i> 1933	Brazil <i>Rainha da Festa da Uva</i> 1933	Argentina <i>Reina Nacional de la Vendimia</i> 1936
1940s	Spain <i>Reina de la Vendimia</i> 1948			
1950s	California <i>Vintage Queen</i> 1950	Luxemburg <i>Lëtzebuenger Wäikimmigin</i> 1950		
1960s				
1970s	Austria <i>Weinkönigin</i> 1971	Slovenija <i>Vinska kraljica</i> (1979) 1995		
1980s				
1990s				
2000s	Slovakia <i>Kráľovná vína</i> 2003	Hrvaška <i>Vinska kraljica</i> (2003) 2006	Germany <i>Deutsche Glühweinkönigin</i> 2009	
2010s	India <i>The Wine Queen of India</i> 2013			

The emergence of the first wine queens coincides with the mass production of wine when the supply exceeded the demand and this has resulted in a need for new wine marketing. *Source* Ramšak 2015

beautiful, and that they could harvest grapes as quick as possible. Then, the best “flower” was brought into the city, all topped with vine leaves and accompanied by music. Today they must be familiar with the viticultural and enological theory, tasting skills of assessment and recognition of wines and compete in the night harvest, barefoot pressing of the grapes, grape stuffing with a plunger, wearing water in tall wooden tubs carried on the shoulders, make the fruit juice, etc. (Vinska kraljica 2012; Ružica 2012; Deranja 2012).

Slovakian wines are barely known abroad as the Slovaks produce only 0.3 % of the total quantity of wine in Europe, for the most part they consume, but some of

it they export. Wine makers are well organized and they set up several events (e.g. A selection of wine queens, competition for the best sommelier and winemaker). A country's wine-growing areas border to Austria's wine-producing region, where a diverse range of wine events is well-developed. (Protner et al. 2006: 252–253) The title Wine Queen of Slovak Republic (*Kráľovná vína Slovenskej republiky*) is awarded since 2003. Initially, the award was declared as a separate activity, but after it came under the auspices of the Association of Winegrowers and Winemakers of Pezinok (*Združenie pezinských vinohradníkov a vinárov*). The specialty of Slovak selection is that it is also open to minor candidates (from 16 to 25 years), who at the regional, national or international level represent the wine and traditions of the Little Carpathians region. Young ladies must pass the test of viticulture and enology, practical skills (e.g. tastings), but must also be familiar with the songs, dances and cuisine from the wine region (*Kráľovná vína* 2013). There is also a regional Little Carpathian Museum in Pezinok near Bratislava with a strong accent on viticulture, grape growing and wine from this viticulture region.

2.2 Americas

From the documents about the cultural history of wine queens it is not evident that in the early wine queens' crowning there were any connections between European and American wine-producers. Nevertheless, there were several waves of economic and political migrants coming from Europe to United States in the 20th century and it's possible that they have brought some knowledge and exchanged the experiences about it.

In Escondido, the Southern *California* valley, the Grape Day started in 1908 as a way to celebrate grape harvest and promote the city. Celebration of grapes was a symbol of the agricultural abundance of the region. In 1913 the first Grape Day Queen in the festival's parade was selected. The Grape Day attracted thousands of guests who could see the valley, farms, a grand parade, and entertainment while eating grapes. It was huge in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, with trains bringing people north from San Diego for the event. It was second in size only to Pasadena's Rose Parade. The community festival wasn't complete without crowning a queen, and in Grape Day's original heyday the honor was given to silent film star Agnes Ayres in 1923. During World War II, from 1942 to 1946, the Grape Day festivities and parade were cancelled, and the polio epidemic of 1948 led to no celebration that year, either. The Grape Day started to wane after World War II. It was neither war nor pestilence that spelled the near-demise of Grape Day and its festivals in 1950. When water became available, citrus and avocados replaced grapes, and many of the vineyards became housing sites during the construction boom of the 1950s. The final original Grape Day Festival was held in 1950. The Grape Day was revived in 1996 by the local history center (Jones Berk and Covey 2010; Breier 2011). Elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s, wine queens reigned over the California vineyards. Each October, at the California State fair in Sacramento, a Vintage queen was chosen during the National Wine Week. For seven days, the newly crowned Vintage Queen would take her

position as wine's goodwill ambassador, making appearances at vintage festivals, attending dinners and proclaiming the excellence of California wines (Caputo 2007).

Another United States area, with a long story of wine industry starting back to the 19th century, is Ohio River Valley to the Lake Erie islands. In Sandusky, *Ohio*, at the Ohio Grape Festival with 75,000 visitors, Ohio Grape Festival Queen is selected since 1940. At the annual Little Italy Festival in Clinton, Indiana, A Little Italy Festival Queen of Grapes has been crowned since 1966, as well as Re (King) and Regina (Queen) (Little Italy Festival Town 2012; Ohio Grape Festival 2011).

In the Canadian province, *Ontario*, there is a Niagara Grape and Wine Festival, which draws up to 100,000 tourists. Since 2001, a reward for top quality wines, wine promotion and wine industry are awarded to a Grape King. The title is not exclusively for men, women can obtain it, too, though it's a rare occasion (so far only one woman in 2010 won this title) and it doesn't give them a title with a feminine gender. They are not wine queens, only wine kings (Grape Growers of Ontario 2015).

In the grape growing *South American* countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Peru and Brazil, they select the National Queen of the Harvest (*Reina Nacional de la Vendimia*) and the Queen of the Grapes (*Rainha da Festa da Uva*) at the national festive harvesting (*Fiesta de la Vendimia*). In Brazil, in the city of Caxias do Sul, they select the Queen of Grapes (*Rainha da Festa da Uva*) on the national feast of grapes since 1933. The early beginnings of awarding the queenly wine titles and the wine marketing in South America, goes back to the 30s of the 20th century. This is not surprising, as the South American countries are one of the largest wine exporters in the southern hemisphere (Argentina, Australia, South Africa, Chile, Brazil), but not necessarily the greatest consumers of wine (in Brazil, for instance, annual wine consumption per person are less than 2 l, but it's growing, especially in the middle class). In Brazil, in the area of Rio Grande do Sul, Portuguese Jesuits started with viticulture in the 17th century, but the wine knowledge, which led to the popularity of Brazilian wines, has been brought by the Italian migrants in the late 19th century (Maresch 2011; A História das Rainhas 2012; Fiesta de la Vendimia Requena 2012; Naudascher 2012).

Famous wine crowning events take place in the Argentine Mendoza since 1936, although the first harvest celebrations are known from the 17th century. Events at the end of February or early March, when is autumn in the southern hemisphere, is attended by 200,000 spectators. Queen of the harvest becomes the most beautiful woman of all submitted. They are driven by the special carriages in Mendoza, accompanied by a man dressed as a cow herder (Gaúcho) and dancers from different Argentine provinces and other Latin American countries. Unlike other European countries, the queen of the harvest in Mendoza was also chosen during World War II.

2.3 Asia

In Asia, the ways of wine marketing and wine queens were mostly imported from Europe. The advertising of wine with female figures, for example, belongs to the early 20th century. Japanese poster for red Akadama Port Wine allegedly from 1907

is the first known marketing example where the wine was advertised by a half-naked woman. This poster, which propagated European wine and made it Japanese, is one of the most striking examples of advertising in Japan. In the poster's picture there is a woman of Caucasian appearance, which does not seem very Japanese, she is lascivious-sensual, has a half-open mouth, partly showing her teeth, and having a glass of red wine in hand (Berndt 2008: 334–342; Wade and Sharp 2011: 164).

One of the top 10 wine importing companies in *India* imported also the crowning of the wine queens. Their owners, who studied and worked abroad, in Europe and United States of America, and had a solid head for business, hoped to break Indian stereotypes associated with drinking wine.³ They added their wine importing business a new value with a festival India Grape Harvest (2013–), which is a home to the Annual Wine Queen Pageant, the brand ambassador for the Indian wine industry. India Grape Harvest celebrates the beginning of the harvest of the grape season in February in India's grapes and wine capital Vinchur, Nashik, in western India with westernized style fashion and beauty contest. Its original objective is to promote fresh grapes, grape processing, raisins, Indian wines, wine tourism, food pairing, cooking with wine, wine and art and wine accessories. Different performances, such as the wine tasting, exhibition of wines from India's top wineries, grape stomping, vineyard visits, moonlight harvesting, live rock music bands, helicopter rides, camping, barbeque and other gourmet food, skating, cycling, are parallel events to the most glamorous show of all, crowning of The Wine Queen Of India.

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³ India is resistant to wine drinking. Its 1.2 billion inhabitants drank an average of two teaspoons each—0.01 l—of wine in 2009 (while British drank 22.7 l and French 45.2 l). There is little imported wine, and only ultra rich Indians can buy it. Grape wine isn't really popular in India for the same reason continental food isn't—they just not please the Indian taste. There is a lot of hot and spicy food, so Indians prefer a sweet wine, which is repellent to the most of international consumers—the fact that producers and marketers continue to neglect. Meanwhile, Indians continue to drink whisky, rum, beer, and local brew (Burke 2012).

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Chapter 3

The Lessons from the Slovene Case

Abstract After the Slovene independence in 1991 winemakers took the example of wine queens from German-speaking countries, because of the lack of any joint promotion of small-scale wine growers and the fright that the wine will be edged out by other, more fashionable alcoholic beverages. Over the years, the title of the wine queen got a certain prestige and the coronations multiplied. This sort of wine marketing rests in the delusion of “old tradition” and royalty. Such comprehending and connecting the beauty pageant ceremonies with royalty and wine, has created the mists of time around the wine queens and increased profits in the wine industry.

Keywords Wine queen • Wine kingdom • Slovenia • Invented tradition • Heritage • Wine marketing • Food promotion • Research methods • Brand recognition • Tourism

3.1 The Distant, General View

Wine Queens are a contemporary marketing phenomenon, which spread throughout Slovenia with the expansion of small private wine makers in the years after the independence in 1991.

By 2015, more than forty royal titles were bestowed in Slovenia, mostly in relation to food and beverage. Almost half of these titles went to wine queens. Even though organizers claim that such local contests are truly original and the result of their own creative efforts, it is safe to say that in Slovenia the institution of the wine queen sprouted from a foreign seed, from the German-speaking countries. This invented tradition, or an invention of tradition after a foreign model, is based along the concept of beauty pageants, and on the fear that despite of the wine’s increased quality and output, it will be eventually edged out by other, more fashionable alcoholic beverages.

Most of the Slovene traditions associated with wine queens have been newly invented, mainly during the period after Slovenia's independence in 1991. This indicates that at that time there was an increased need for a shared Slovene identity associated with the new Slovene state. Invented traditions of wine queens were in a service of a nation-building strategy. The heritage, even if taken from the country to the cities, was a way for larger social and national cohesion. The invented tradition of the wine queens has evolved rather haphazardly. Initially organized by local initiatives, it was mostly the consequence of the lack of any joint promotion of small-scale wine growers. Over the years, as the tradition has become well established and the title of the wine queen has got a certain prestige, such coronation rituals multiplied following the requirements of the wine industry. The wine industry detected or created the need for the wine queen invented traditions. They rest in the delusion that such rituals are old and on the common knowledge on how people devour royal spectacles in the media. Through this brilliant comprehending and connecting of the beauty pageants ceremonies with royalty, the wine industry has created the mists of time around the wine queens.

The number of wine queens of Slovenia has increased in proportion with the march of capitalist values and with the demands of the newly rich who have emerged after Slovenia's independence. The winemakers feel the need to further modernize the image of the wine queen, which is indicated by a number of extra actions that support the institution of the wine queen, but are only superficially based on the Slovene heritage. The heritage, as a mere secondary component in the many rituals and events related to the wine queen, has been mostly replaced by modern requirements of the winemaking business, in particular the marketing of the wine as a conspicuous commodity. Although the wine queens identify with their newly-acquired identity of promoters of wine and the wine-drinking culture, and are in the public eye during their term, they cannot transcend their role of a visual prop with very little public influence. Once they hand their crown to their successors even that influence vanishes. In the light of the veritable multitude of coronations of wine highnesses in Slovenia, the critical voices of the heritage experts, has abated. As a consequence, the Slovene wine heritage is permeated with tawdriness, references to the national identity are frequently false, the wine queens are largely sexist symbols, and the wine kingdoms are too big.

In order to understand the social-cultural role of wine queens we need to know: which women are allowed to join the competitions or selections and for what reasons; what beliefs and what experiences do they have; how, where, and when are wine queen selections performed; who pays them and who expects to benefit from them? Within the answers to these questions, asked in specific socio-cultural circumstances, lies the answer to how wine queens and other harvest queens are

situated between representation and consumption, and how they become symbols of identity, like Triglav,¹ Bled Island,² potica nut roll³ and kurent.⁴

To be better acquainted with the functions of wine and other queens, I used several sources. Foremost of all, I acquired the personal views on the 'reign' of nine queens and princesses from different parts of Slovenia. In addition, I take their published diaries or accounts, formal contracts, the conditions of participation, policies, and newsprint articles. I also visited the wine queen events several times, where either new wine queens were chosen or where they played a central part in the cultural program. And in the end, since there were so many wine events which I could not visit, I observed open online communities of wine queens of Slovenia and Croatia on Facebook. Offline and online observation complemented each other, because I had enough time—three years, from the start of 2012 to the end of 2014, for observation. These methods offered me plenty of data across perspectives, time and in the phenomenon's different settings.

3.2 The Closer, Detailed View

After independence, some local associations that take care of educational, social and cultural life and of adaptation to new circumstances in the field of agriculture also organize contemporary festivals celebrating nature and those that cultivate it. One such municipality with twenty years of granting crowns is Juršinci in Prekija, where girls received honorary queen's titles from 1993 to 2012 in events called Autumn Thanking (Toplak 1997, 2004, 2010; Ramšak 2012: 102, 2013: 80, 2014: 48): Queen of the Autumn, Queen of Bread, Queen of Wine, Queen of Fruit, Queen of Cheese, Queen of Poultry, Queen of Agriculture, Queen of Flowers, Queen of Housewives, Queen of Wine, Queen of Music, Queen of Hearts, Queen of Horses, Queen of Hospitality and Tourism, Queen of Nature and the Hunters,

¹ The highest summit in Slovenia (2864 m). The origin of the name *Triglav* (three-headed) owes its name to its characteristic shape, and to the highest Slavic deity who was supposed to have its throne on the top of the mountain. Triglav is a national symbol and is featured on the national coat of arms and the flag.

² The only natural island in Slovenia, which is in Lake Bled in Julian Alps, with the pilgrimage church and a 99 steps stairway leading up to the building. It's the most frequent picturesque depiction of Slovenia.

³ *Potica* is popular Slovene festive cake, usually with nut filling, followed in popularity by a number of others, such as filling with poppy seed, cottage cheese and tarragon.

⁴ Traditional Slovene folk art mask, which chases winter away and brings up the spring. It's the central figure of the annual *Kurentovanje* festival, during which groups of Kurents (*kurenti*) dress in sheepskins with cowbells hanging from their belts, furry caps with horns, streamers, feathers and sticks. They go from house to house to scare off evil spirits.

Queen of Custom, Queen of Honey, Queen of Water, Queen of the Castle, Queen of Slovene Hills, and Queen of the Queens.⁵

Slovene tourist associations, fruit or hop growers' associations, public or private tourism agencies bestowed yet other titles. For example: Hop-Princess in Savinja Valley (since 1962), Cider Girl in Mežica Valley (since 1999), Queen of Cherries in Šmartno and Dobrovo in Gorizia Hills (since 2009, before that it was Miss Cherry—cherry blossom) and in Lower Carniola (since 2000), Pumpkin Queen in Lipovci near Beltinci (since 2010), Queen of Woodenware in Ribnica (since 2011), Queen of Bograč⁶ in Lendava (since 2011). The food industry has engaged with Honey Queens in Gornja Radgona⁷ (2009) and Dairy Queens of Slovene brands (e.g., Green Valley Slovenia, since 2008), which promote the regular consumption of dairy products, raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating, promote the consumption of milk and dairy products, warn of the dangers of buying milk and milk products and raise the quality of Slovene milk, free of genetically modified organisms. (Ramšak 2012: 102, 2013: 80, 2014: 49).

In addition to the queen's wine names the cellar of Vinakoper introduced the names of the godfather and godmother of native grape varieties of Istrian Malvasia and Refosco at St. Martin's day in 1998. These wines get every year a new godmother, a wine lover who comes from business, hospitality, media, culture or music. All of the above and similar queen's titles have been introduced to promote tourism awareness and brand recognition.

The mandate of the Wine Queen of Slovenia and other regional or local wine queens lasts one year, except in the case of Styria and Prekmurje wine queens (Queen of Maribor Wine Growing Region,⁸ Wine Queen of Radgona-Kapela Hills, Wine Queen of Ptuj, Wine Queen of Kog, Wine Queen of Cerkevjak, Wine Queen of Prekmurje), where the title lasts two years. Wine Queens must be single/unmarried. However, there are exceptions. The Wine Queen of Svečina must be married or living in a consensual union and her husband/partner becomes the keeper of the Svečina village vine with her election. Marital status is not an impediment for Prekmurje Wine Queens. Wine queens can be elected several times; they can be local, regional as well as national (e.g. The Wine Queen of Slovenia) (Fig. 3.1).

⁵ In the 20th Autumn Thanking ceremony in the fall of 2012 the twentieth queen was crowned: the Queen of the Queens of Slovene Hills. The title was won by the president of the Society for the Preservation and Development of Heritage that had led the project and prepared the queens to their duties for all the twenty years.

⁶ Recognised traditional denomination. Prekmurje stew is made of beef, pork, game, potatoes, onion, garlic and paprika. It has its origins in Hungarian goulash (its name is taken from the clay-pot called *bograč*).

⁷ The first Honey Queen, who was awarded by Pomurje beekeepers, was crowned in 2009 and the second was crowned in 2012 at the International Fair of Agriculture and Food (AGRA) in Gornja Radgona. Slovene Beekeepers Association didn't want to join in this project, which was copied by Pomurje beekeepers from Slovene wine growers.

⁸ So far two Queens of Maribor Wine Growing Region had exceptionally longer mandate: one from 2001 to 2005 and the other from 2005 to 2008.



Fig. 3.1 The structure of the “wine kingdom” of Slovenia. *Source* Ramšak 2015



Fig. 3.2 The types of wine queens in Slovenia. *Source* Ramšak 2015

The regions with the most wine queens overlap with the wine growing areas in the northeastern, western and southern Slovenia, with the exception of non-wine growing areas (Kuljaj 2005: 186; Šoštarich 2011: 9; Curk 2011: 17–25; Pavček et al. 2003; Ramšak 2012: 101, 2013: 79–80, 2014: 48) (Fig. 3.2).

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Chapter 4

The Material Inventory of Wine Queens

Abstract The visual and metaphorical inventory of the wine queens is a carrier of different cultural meanings which are analyzed and carefully steered to the interests of the wine industry. The time wine queens spend on their costumographic image shows that they have, in addition to marketing functions, also sexual dimensions. The appropriate verbal and visual metaphors, attached to the wine queens, aim to work wonders in promoting the wines. Branding of wine queens is powered on the queens' images, their body language, facial expressions, and gestures, and on understandable metaphors and slogans, used in wine advertising.

Keywords Wine queen · Insignia · Metaphor · Branding · Gender role · Sex appeal · Winespeak · Wine marketing · Media · Identity

4.1 The Visual Inventory

In the initiation ritual of wine queens their material inventory is a very significant factor. This, with only minor variations, consists of several insignia, such as: a gold crown or diadem with motifs of grapes and vine leaves, sometimes with a coat-of-arms¹ which is a symbol of power; sash,² ring, gown or/and coat, queen's throne (for example, in selecting the Wine Queen of Slovenia), queen's key (in Juršinci), queen's wine, glass with the emblem, a flag (for example, with motifs of apples and grapes in Svečina), vinicultural scissors (for husbands or partners of wine queens in Svečina), queen's escort, for example page boys. The material inventory of wine queens does not always incorporate all these elements, it depends on a queen's ingenuity, the financial capability of sponsors, the duration of the title awarded, attributing importance to the tradition of the event, and other circumstances.

¹ As in the case of the Austrian Wine Queens who distinguish themselves by wearing federal or state coat-of-arm on the crown; *Bundesweinkönigen* and *Landesweinkönigen*.

² Which can be in the colors of the national flag, like in the case of some German wine queens.

Invented traditions that have shaped, formally introduced and adapted the main characters of the wine queens, princesses and kings, are closely linked to the need for new local, regional and national identities, which came along in defining time at the end of the 20th century and quickly established themselves as a part of the new Slovene identity, which is certainly linked to the creation of the country.

The time wine queens spend on their costumographic image shows that the selection of queens also has, in addition to marketing functions, sexual dimensions. The queens' material inventory, their new social roles, and the rule, that, exceptional cases aside (e.g. Wine Queen of Svečina, Wine Queen of Prekmurje and the Queen of Woodenware in Ribnica), only unmarried young women get into the selection. We sense that adornment can also mean that they place themselves on approval with a hope to find a suitable husband (Lozica 2000: 77–78). An attractive appearance is an important element in the selection of wine queens. They have to attach their photo to the application, which is also helpful in identifying candidates in the exam. It seems that the selection of wine queens has a ritualistic purpose in the life cycle of the girls that are associated with wine, and that this rite of passage is virtually impossible without attractiveness. Selection of wine queens as a rite of passage marks the transition from one status (or phase) to another. It is not a passage from girlhood to womanhood, but more a transition from the state with fewer social roles and responsibilities to the situation where the wine queen takes many new roles in a year or two of her reign. So, being a wine queen has also educational functions for the young ladies.

Since alcohol is very important element in many cultural rituals, it also coincides materially and symbolically with wine queens rituals. On the other hand the beauty and alcohol are a recipe for social drinking, which purpose is sometimes directly connected with flirtation and sex. Wine queens are, in fact, the new priestess of Bacchus, who stir up the illusion of sexual availability—real or supposed.

4.2 The Wine Queens' Metaphoric

The symbolism of the material inventory is also apparent in the conceptual foundations of the clothing image of wine queens and in their way of make-up and hairdos. The gowns of wine queens are a metaphor for their sexual and moral status, where the eroticism of a covered body and accented women's curves are mixed with a decent, but attractive and sexy manner. Metaphors referring to the wine queen costumes at the coronation are playing with colors, forms and materials, and therefore attempt to influence the response, mood, perception and imagination of the beholder. The semblance of the wine queens' gowns is the same as color of wine they represent: red and white or burgundy, purple, beige, yellowish, or greenish shades. Materials are shiny and rarely dim. The length and tight shapes of festive dresses are reminiscent of a wine glass or a bottle of wine; they also symbolize a female figure. Ornaments of the wine queen's dress illustrate aromas of wine queen's wine, such as fragrance and flavor, which can be tasted only

sensory. In other cases the ornaments are taken from the nature: stylized grapes and vine leaves or beads of grapes.

Wine queens never dress trousers when they protocolarily present wines, their postures are charged with moral significance. As Bourdieu stated (2001: 28–29), the femininity is measured by the art of 'shrinking' and women are held in a kind of invisible enclosure circumscribing the space allowed for the movements and postures of their bodies. This symbolic confinement is secured practically by their clothing which constrains movement in various ways, like high heels, and above all the skirt which prevents or hinders certain activities (running, various ways of sitting, etc.), or because it allows them only at the cost of constant precautions, as constantly pulling at the skirt, or have to perform acrobatics to pick up an object while keeping their legs together. These ways of bearing the body, which are very deeply associated with the moral restraint and the demureness that are appropriate for women, continue to impose themselves unconsciously on women even when they cease to be imposed by clothing.

The rich wine queens' metaphoric is not a surprise, because the language of wine, or winespeak, is considered as highly sophisticated. To the non-connoisseur, wine drinking is above all an aesthetic experience which calls for creative and inspired use of language. At the other extreme, the idiom used by the wine-expert community (oenologists and professional wine tasters) reflects a large repertoire of technical lexis which should rely on criteria and standards whose aim is to be as objective and measurable as possible. While in most instances, the expert and the layperson differ substantially in their linguistic rendering of the wine tasting experience, there is one aspect of language which is common to both—the ubiquitous use of metaphors. For instance: there is a differentiation between three different types of wine connoisseurs: the professional taster, the wine journalist who writes for the readers of a wine magazine, and the informed amateur. The expert's style of writing about wine is precise and economical, while the amateur's vocabulary is limited and full of metaphors and allusions. Anthropomorphic metaphors, especially the metaphor »Wine is a human being« (which has a body, grow old, is senile, it has diseases, it is charming, sophisticated, noble, rich, lovable, generous, and so on), appears often in wine tasting discourse. In the metaphor »Wine is a human being«, terms which draw on the domains of body and age are mostly descriptive, while those which come from the domain of human personality and behavior are largely evaluative (Bratož 2013). By knowing the use and characteristics of the anthropomorphic metaphors in the wine tasting discourse we can go deeper in reading the wine queens' appearance.

Similar metaphors as for the wine queens' dresses can be ascribed to the hairstyle of wine queens, where hair tied up together, symbolizes seriousness, while loose and curled hair symbolizes playfulness, which can be compared with a heavy wine, or one that need some time to be animated in a glass, and light, maybe a bit sweeter wine. The hairstyle opposites "tied up" versus "loose" are only one of the orientational metaphors in which concepts are spatially linked to each other, as in the following ways: up versus down, in versus out, front versus back, on versus off, deep versus shallow, central versus peripheral, where all good

things are up and bad are down (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). This pattern in which concepts are characterized by an upward orientation, while their opposites receive a downward orientation, is visible and advertised also through other orientational metaphors, such as, the “a wine queen is the crown of wine growing”. In this case the crown is in the upper position of the body, what expresses excellence. Another often advertised orientational metaphor is, “wine queens are raising the drinking and wine culture”, meaning figuratively, that both, drinking and wine culture, are rising and improving with their help.

Make-up, which is part of the costumographic image of the wine queen, is associated with certain social codes that allow the wine queen to access secondary benefits, such as power, prestige, sex appeal and increased self-confidence. Photographic comparison of the make-up styles of contemporary wine queens with queens from past decades and from different countries shows that they reflect the global trend from more to less make-up, from noticeable make-up techniques to more concealed ones. Metaphorically, this can mean three things: a return to nature and to a healthy and environmentally-conscious society; the message of a well-kept young woman who gets a new prominent role in society, which increases her self-esteem and reputation; and internalization of a not quite overcome excessive paternalism censuring the morality of artificial girls.

The outstanding use of cosmetics, and the presence of a cosmetician, make-up artist, hairdresser and dressmaker also illustrate the importance of a new temporary social status of the wine queen. Information on cosmetic products and services are often exchanged on social networks or in person, and become part of wine queens' identity even after they have handed over the crown to their successors. A higher grade the wine queen in the hierarchy has—on the scale from local, regional to national—the more she emphasizes her physical appearance. Senior wine queens, married queens, the queens with children—if allowed by the selection's rules—and the former queens, who long ago handed over the crown, devote less time to exchange beauty tips. For them, beauty is not the central preoccupation, because they've already lived their experience of being exposed and marked for their beauty together with their knowledge on wine. Lastly, the metaphor of the whole image of the wine queen potentially bears the last hidden message, namely that the wine queen is ready for consumption, like the wine she represents. It is associated with the ritual of transformation that is certainly well personified through the character of the wine queen. It is not simply the passage from adolescence to young woman and the period when the young woman is more visible in her roles, but it is also the transition into the period of becoming a sexually desirable woman.

The dimensions of the whole costumographic metaphors of wine queens are always culturally specific; sometimes elements, from which it may be referring to national identity, climatic conditions, etc., are added, but we can rarely deduce out of these elements any individual characteristics of the wine queen. Even the wine queen must represent a model of beauty and femininity, which applies to that is considered normal in her surroundings, and not her own beliefs that may depart from this paragon. Initially, some Slovene wine queens arranged about the dress,

the diadem, etc. themselves and according to their own beliefs, but eventually their image has become an important side business at the coronation of wine and other queens. Wine queens are a more cultural and ideological than individual brand, which is represented through intangible, imagined assessments connected mostly with national, regional and local identity and gender roles. Personal branding of wine queens emphasizes their attitude, character and communication skills. Cultural and personal branding of wine queens are sources by which allows others to box them into categories: she's beautiful, she's witty, she has working morale, etc.

The appropriate verbal and visual metaphors, attached to the wine queens, aim to work wonders in promoting the wines, to attract the attention of the viewers and to communicate culturally available meanings. Branding of wine queens is powered on the queens' images, their body language, facial expressions, and gestures, and on understandable metaphors and slogans, used in wine advertising. All these arouses customer interests and make them believe that consuming the wine is fine and interesting experience.

4.3 The Wine Queens in the Media

The metaphors and slogans can be used in a positive, but also in a negative way, especially in the media with more trivial contents. On one side, the media relate the novel parts of wine queens with the metaphors and synonyms, they bear after the election: "queen of Slovene land", "the first lady of winemakers", "connoisseur and lover of wine", "ambassadress of Slovene wines", "harbinger of the nobility of Slovene wines", "bouquet of Slovene wines", "crown of Slovene wine-producing and wine country", "legate of Slovene tourism and cultural heritage". When two generations of women from the same family are crowned as wine queens, the older gets the title "Queen Mother". It is probably an allusion to a British queen whose son or daughter is currently ruling and she is called a Queen Mother. For the Queen's provenance journalists like to reiterate the phrase "love of the vine, wine or wine culture was placed in her cradle". Such positive metaphors represent the honor and value of the wine queens in an environment where they live and are again alluding to the monarch's life.

However, when at the coronation incidence of various complications arise, such as to the ownership of the license in the event, the media publish, that the wine queen lacks autonomy and metaphorically ask "who harvests her grapes", or "who drank her wine", although wine queens have nothing to do with this. In some examples, the media also reported in an extremely offensive way and portrayed the wine queens as "drunken wine flies", gave sensational highlights in the titles of articles, for example, "Wine Queen Topless", or "Wine Queen drank on Mount Triglav" when they scaled it to point what are their educational functions. In the case of other elections in agriculture, they stick ambiguous and sexist labels on them. For instance, they labeled the Dairy Queen, as "a beautiful dairy." Although

this metaphor can be seen as a beautiful vendor or distributor of milk and dairy products, on the other hand, in Slovene language, this is also a cow that gives milk, the milker. The context and photos in the article suggest the second meaning, depicting her in a cut out photo with the low-necked dress. Therefore, it is not surprising that many wine queens write and design the media messages themselves, and are therefore responsible for their own visibility and dissemination of knowledge about their importance (Ramšak 2013, 2014).

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Chapter 5

The Marketing Approach in Wine Kingdom

Abstract The significance of the characters wine queen and wine king is not only symbolic, but also economic. Unlike the wine queens, it is not the king's general and indirect knowledge of wine, physical appearance, age or communication skills that are judged, but instead the quality of the last year's wine. Economic sight that must be shown by the kings can be similarly shown by wine queens with Wine Queen's Wine. It is the wine which she presents in protocol-educational events. The Wine Queen's Wine is a marketing niche for smaller wine makers who lack the sources for mass advertising.

Keywords Wine queen · Wine king · Wine queen's wine · Wine marketing · Emotional brand marketing · Consumer behavior · Diving for the wine · Invented tradition · Wine ritual · Wine storytelling

5.1 The Wine Queen and the Wine King

In addition to the institute of the wine queen, there is also a title for the grape or wine king. Examples of the best grape growers of the year and wine producers of the year are from Ontario, where they award the title of Grape King since 2001, and from Slovenia, where they award the title The King of Cviček since 1992. The last is given in the context of the Week of Cviček¹ event each May, in Novo Mesto.

Unlike the wine queens, it is not his general and indirect knowledge of wine, physical appearance, age or communication skills that are judged, but instead the

¹ Besides the Italian Chianti, Cviček is the only wine in the world made of both red and white grapes. Etymologically, the name is close to the Croatian word *cvič*, meaning whey, because of its excessive sour tones, a consequence of over-early harvesting, bad cellaring and inadequate sorting, which were marks of Cviček up to a hundred years ago. Soon after the turn of the 19th century, Cviček became a type. For a long time it was a synonym for cheap wine. Thus it was until Slovenia's independence in 1991, when the winemakers of Dolenjska decided Cviček would once again be on the wine lists of fine Paris restaurants (Ajlec 2014).

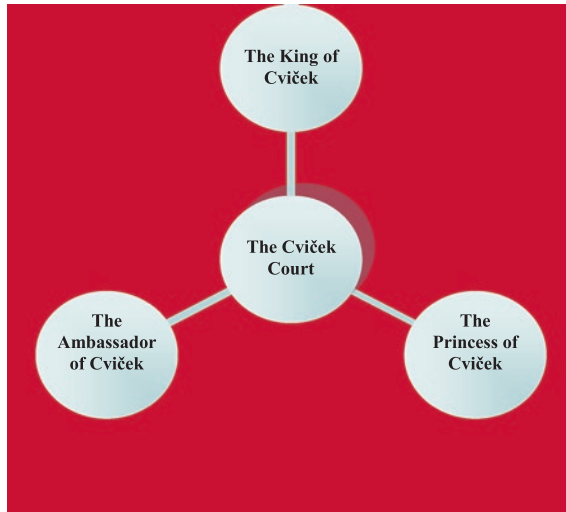


Fig. 5.1 The King of Cviček, the Ambassador of Cviček and the Princess of Cviček constitute the Cviček Court, whose missionary work is the promotion of red Slovene wine Cviček. *Source* Ramšak 2015

quality of the last year's Cviček of Lower Carniola region. The King of Cviček can be only the winegrower from this region with the best rated Cviček from the last vintage. Hence the title The King of Cviček is an award for the quality work and has economic significance, particularly if the winegrower lives only from the wine sale. It's interesting that the first title for The King of Cviček was won by a woman in 1992, and then again for the second time in 1996, but she did not get the nomination The Queen of Cviček. Besides her only one other woman won this title, in 2004. The same happened in Ontario, in the independent farming organization Grape Growers of Ontario. The title of Grape King was acquired by a woman for the first time in 2004 and then again in 2010, but they did not carry the name wine or grape queens.

Besides The King of Cviček there is an award for The Ambassador of Cviček, since 1999, who must also prove himself in an economic sense, for example if he puts Cviček on a higher level like produce Cviček's champagne. Ambassadors of Cviček became also wine professionals, farmers, businessmen, journalists and even musicians and writers. At that place was also one woman among The Ambassadors of Cviček, namely in 2002. The jury selects The Princess of Cviček, which is also awarded since 1999, similarly than other wine queens with regards to her knowledge on Cviček and the Cviček region, and on the basis of her persuasiveness and impression on the jury. All three awards: The King of Cviček, The Ambassador of Cviček and The Princess of Cviček constitute The Cviček Court, whose missionary work is the promotion of Cviček. The idea of all these ceremonies was to raise the quality of Cviček and promote it, because not so long ago, it was a despised wine known as the sorrel. The court ceremonies were invented to enhance the marketing, including financing the production, packing, processing, storing, advertising, offering for sale, selling, shipping, and transporting Cviček and thus put it into the higher position among Slovenian wines (Fig. 5.1).

5.2 The Wine Queen's Wine

Economic sight that must be shown by the kings of Cviček in their district can be similarly shown by other actual wine queens with protocol Wine Queen's Wine. It is the wine that is the dearest in a year or two of the wine queen's reign and she presents it in protocol-educational or patriotic events. The Wine Queen's Wine is a marketing niche for smaller wine makers who lack the sources for mass advertising. Besides the top-notch quality it must also have the symbolic and cultural value, which is generally expressed in fantasy name, stylish wrap, price and prestige because of the connection with wine queens. The Wine Queen's Wine is a luxury good that reflects the increased demand for the distinguishing consumption and self-confirmation what gives the consumers the feeling of superiority, exclusivity and elitism. The Wine Queen's Wines also build their identity along the feelings of national commitment, local patriotism, and understandable figurative repertoire of the personified wine. The Wine Queen's Wines are given personal characteristics, because customers should feel close to them, get positive, prettified, concrete and manageable messages about them in order to purchase them.

It is a marketing niche addressing mostly female drinkers, because they most likely identify with the story, events in wine kingdom, lifestyles of wine queens, the wrapping of the bottle and the selection of wine than men do. Wine Queen's Wine should be a bigger challenge for the vendors. The marketing plan should be based on the consumer's preference for the type of wine and wine packaging, consumer information search behavior and particular consumers, distinguished by gender.

The wine consumption and sales of wine to women is increasing and with this also the need to understand consumers choosing decisions. Different wine consumers have different types of experiences and expectations. There is no one rule what pleases consumers, but some variables have been considered. For example, the wine packaging, the label design and readable data on wine are very important factors consumers use in wine purchasing decisions. In terms of looking at wine labels as advertisements, men are attracted to bold coloring and images, whereas women want more data on wine and food pairing. A Californian study shows that common gender motivations include drinking wine to enhance food, and for relaxation. Gender differences in motivation indicate that men are more interested in discussing the technical aspects of wine and exhibiting knowledge, whereas women want to relax and socialize with friends over wine (Thach 2012). Another Californian study states that a colorful and unique wine label is still a top priority for consumers, both men and women, when looking at wine labels as well as a label that comes from a well-known brand. Consumers are more likely to purchase a wine with a brand they recognize or have heard of, paired with a colorful and unique label (Lombardo 2012).

Besides that, having a marketing niche in the Wine Queen's Wine means that it will be noticed by more wine snobs, because it is known that the name and wrapping influence the taste, and consequentially also the cost. If the same wine is

offered under the name “Wine from the domestic cellar” or “Wine Queen’s Wine” we would find out how the form essentially affects the perception of people who don’t know a good deal about the wine, but they would like to look like “the connoisseurs”, the knowledgeable.

Wine Queen’s Wines could address several wine buyer categories, but mostly image seekers, who choose wine as a status symbol and are willing to pay for quality, and experimenter buyers who are also interested in the story behind the bottle. To a certain extent they also address social drinkers, generally those who happen to visit the same wine tasting events as wine queens. The markets, which are more traditional, down-to-earth and the mass markets are less interested in Wine Queen’s Wine promotions. They purchase wine for casual home or formal fine dining in groceries or large supermarket chains, where they are bombarded with an almost infinite amount of choices, but also where Wine Queen’s Wines are usually not traded. In Slovenia, Wine Queen’s Wines are generally sold in the private wine cellars which produce them, in cooperative stores, they are set up at the state protocol events, in hotels, restaurants, wine shops, but only seldom in supermarkets, because they are boutique wines, produced in smaller quantities.

The brand of Wine Queen’s Wine needs a peculiar type of marketing, which appeals more to the emotions than to the logical and rational side. Emotional brand marketing of the wine tries to influence the consumer behavior by strengthening the ties of the consumer to the brand and taking the loyalty to another, more personal level. The storytelling and story sharing goes hand in hand with emotional branding, and no other content delivery method works equally well for creating emotional connections. Bellow, is another example of effective emotional branding of Wine Queen’s Wine from Slovenia through newly invented ritual of diving for the wine.

Special ritual, connected to Wine Queen’s Wine is the “Dive for the Wine”, which began in 2010. Then the Wine Queen of Slovenia, dove for the first time to get the champagne from Wine Cellar of Gorizia Hills, in the eight meters deep pool Krčnik (under the natural stone bridge made by the rapid river Kožbanjšček). The champagne had excellent conditions for maturing, and then the special champagne and trademark was given birth. In 2011 the wine queens 2010 and 2011 dove again to get the wine and the divers submerged Metliška Črnina into the pool (Žugelj 2012). Some others, especially Styrian wine growers, stared to experimentally mature their champagne selections on the bottom of the Adriatic sea or in the river Mura and thus produce special trademarks.

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Chapter 6

The Wine Queen and the Beauty Queen

Abstract From the first promotions of beauty pageants in the 1920s a full range of beauty pageant contest developed later. The fashion, cosmetics, nutritional and surgical industries supported the idea that young ladies and women are rated especially for physical beauty. Wine industry found the marketing niche in this beauty ideology, too, though the choice of wine queens is not quite the same as the selection of beauty queens. In the selection of wine queens in addition to the visual appeal the commission also takes into account the candidate's knowledge, language and communication skills.

Keywords Wine queen • Beauty pageant • Beauty as business • Wine marketing • Popular culture • Wine ritual • Identity • Gender role • Consumption • Media

6.1 The Beauty Pageant Contests

Differences and proximities between wine queens, other queens of crops or products and beauty queens testify about the characteristics of local identities, where the version of visual representations is not of trivial importance. Queen candidates became a part of pop culture what tells us a great deal about the power structures, gender roles, and national identity. Consequently, the selections for the queens of anything with idealized representations of women are crying out for clarification. On the one hand it seems that in the national or local selections of queens it's all about the selection of female beauty, but it is about much more than about the beauty title winners. Selections of the queens are rituals through which we tell stories about ourselves, they are the spectacle that is under the spotlight of the media and is involved in a specific time, culture, social meanings and consumption (Banet-Weiser 1998).

Various local pageants in the United States took place in the 1920s, although the first modern pageant was back in 1854. In particular, beauty pageants in a swimsuit have been popular, because they publicly revealed the female body and

caused excitement and panic at the same time. The promotion of beauty pageants in the 1920s helped the growing film, photographic and newspaper industry. Most of the world-famous beauty contests originate in the 1950s and later (e.g., Miss of the World 1951, Miss Universe 1952, Miss International 1960), from which it has developed a full range of beauty pageants. The fashion, cosmetics, nutritional and surgical industries supported the idea that young ladies and women are rated especially for physical beauty. During this time there were also pageants in various agricultural industries and fast food restaurants, for example, in 1956, Dairy Queen Beauty Contest and Miss Rodeo America, in 1965, Pumpkin Queen, etc. Every year around the world about three-quarters of a million women participate in various beauty pageants, from the Miss Potato Blossom in Maine, USA, to the Miss Landmine in Angola, the Rattlesnake Charmer Queen in Texas or the Miss Philippines Transgender. In beauty contests, the ideologies of gender, cultural perceptions of beauty and femininity, strategic and even political use of the beauty and power of ideology within which they operate are provided by the sponsors or by candidates themselves, and are clearly visible (Cohen et al. 1996; Sherk Savage 1998; Stein 2006). Beauty pageants promote a certain type of beauty, narrow the conception of diversity and reduce opportunities for individual expression (Cohen et al. 1996: 7). A beauty pageant or contest is a competition manifestly based on an evaluation of contestants' appearance, and contestants are typically young ladies or women. The beauty pageant contests most often pit one woman against another and evaluate all in a series of eliminations. U.S. Beauty pageants have claimed to also judge character and achievement, by adding evaluations of qualities or abilities like "personality", "poise", "character", "intelligence", and "talent". The origins of beauty pageantry in general can be found in the widespread European carnival and in seasonal celebrations like May Day, when the Queen of the May was crowned. Twentieth- and 21st-century beauty queens are the ostensible "queens," "princesses", "courtiers" or the "Miss", "Ms.", or "Mrs." governing and representing very different kinds of realms. Their rule is described as extending over specific events (e.g., a state fair or a race), geographical regions (e.g., city, region, nation, world, or universe), brands of commercial products (e.g., Miss Budweiser), special constituencies (e.g., Miss Black Deaf America), and farmers' or other workers' associations (e.g., Dairy Queen). No matter what social category is being contested, most beauty contests are expressly for girls and women, and most require of them, something that is not required of boys and men who are in the same social category, namely, demonstrable good character and sexual inexperience or, for married contests, at least modestly concentration on maternity and good works. Beauty contests have been analyzed as being based on the performance of "doing gender" for women. The winner of a beauty contest is termed a "beauty queen". Notably, there is a deficiency of a comparable term like "beauty king". Many other pageants have arisen from beauty pageant contests that similarly perpetuate the ideal embodiment of not only femininity, but of a product, business, or nation (Brooks Gardner 2009: 57–59).

6.2 The Rituals of Wine Queen Selection

Shows and festivals at which wine queens are elected and celebrated are also events where carefully selected foodstuffs and beverages are displayed for tasting, also showing local and national identity, which draws in tourists to smaller and otherwise rarely visited locations. Those identity symbols are transferred from the private or family sphere or events, such as baptism, marriages, funerals, birthdays, family reunions, vacations, etc., into the public sphere, which symbolically links the past with the present, privacy with openness to the world. The semiotics of the events at which the wine queen titles are awarded are orientated towards conferring and confirming local identity with unconcealed economic and also frequent religious interests, where sexualized young wine queens legitimately join the circle of church figureheads (e.g. In the ritual of wine blessing or participation of a priest in the folklore program). This is a game of manipulation with food and wine as with important identity symbols, and the phenomenon of the wine queen adds a third sensual element. Her public image is a costumographic and the dramaturgical manipulation of personal, familial, local-patriotic and national identity. She is supposed to address foreign visitors with her beauty, knowledge on wines, refinement, different skills and expertness; for the locals, she represents a congruity of tradition and the contemporary challenges of the economy.

According to the candidates and the assertions of the organizers, the selection of wine queens is not the same as the selection of beauty queens. In the selection of wine queens in addition to the visual appeal the commission also takes into account the candidate's knowledge, language skills, and excellent communication skills. Wine and other queens as well as organizers of the queen's award emphasize that the selection is not about beauty, but it is about spreading the drinking culture and consuming the food and beverage products.

Regardless of this, the media consistently present wine queens as only beautiful (e.g. "Green-White Miss" for the Dairy Queen), and also among the wine makers the selections of wine queens are sometimes referred to as a "trend of the selection of wine beauties". The reasons for the belief that the selections of wine and other queens anchored in our consciousness as the selections of wine beauties are multi-dimensional. The concept of the selection of queens, which is done upon the model of the construction of women's competition and voyeurism, certainly urges us to think this way. This involves sexualized and eroticized young women¹; the entire iconography of beauty contests is in conjunction with the promotion wines and national identity.

¹ Some wine queens are also fashion models; one of the wine queens was Miss Styria in 2005.

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Chapter 7

The Objectification Makes the Profit

Abstract The wine queen selections are often prepared with lack of critical attitude and imagination and with an amateur approach towards the heritage, wine marketing or without the necessary decency to the queen candidates. Wine queens don't sell only wine; they also sell the socio-cultural significances. Some of the messages we get out the wine queen's selections as wine promoting acts are that women are objects and that they are underpaid or unpaid work force. They have entered into the public sphere with an insufficient awareness that wine capitalism strengthens on their shoulders, what is a questionable prospect for the emancipation of women.

Keywords Wine queen · Wine marketing · Wine consumption · Emancipation of women · Objectification of women · Media · Heritage · Gender role · Discrimination · Underpaid workforce

7.1 The Promotion as Failed Mishmash

The photos in the media and sponsorship photos of wine queens testify that the best intentions of the organizers can many times turn into the exploitation of girls' image for promotional purposes. Projects of the selection of wine queens, particularly at the local level, are often prepared with the lack of critical attitude and imagination. For example, in Slovenia who has so many wine queens at the local level and where the need to invent new queen's titles continues to grow, it is clear that the reputation and the promotional weight of wine queens often fall. The only queen with great visibility is the Wine Queen of Slovenia. Sometimes it happens that the girls at the local level do not want to run for queens' titles and the wine producers need to dream up new terms and conditions for them. Frequently they raise the age limit for candidates and eliminate single status as a criterion for candidacy. In some cases the wine queen is delegated by some local wine man committee that comes unannounced to her home and in a seemingly ceremonial

way imparts her new responsibility, which is then confirmed in a public coronation. Sometimes local winemakers choose only between two or three registered candidates, but it also happens that only one candidate signs in. Sublime advertising through the brand of wine and other queens is the least sophisticated in the case of the Pumpkin Queen and the Queen of Woodenware, probably because fewer candidates compete for these titles with no age limit and because the events are still young (the first was held in 2010 in Lipovci and the second in 2011 in Ribnica). The Pumpkin Queen has also more a carnival than aesthetic appearance; the Queen of Woodenware has no particular costume.

A low number of registered candidates for local selection of queens today testify not only about the lack of candidates and persistence at any price in the new promotional rituals, but also about the cautionary approach of the young ladies. Girls, from whom the nomination expects the considerable knowledge and independence, do not desire to come into the mill with a selection of local miss because they consider it as offensive, undervalued, kitschy and imbecile, especially if they are familiar with the tragicomic image of local disputes, resentment and scandals. A bunch of young women is aware that the promotion of wine or other products must be more imaginative and of better quality than the one that is met in some local wine and other selections of the queens. On the other hand, on that point are also young women who do not mind if there is only one registered candidate, which then becomes a queen, because they need an experience of media exposure and visibility in shaping their personalities.

7.2 The Wine Queen as an Object of Desire

Some selected queens mostly unwittingly consent to media images. They present them in a subordinate, passive body language, photographed from the top, from a position of the mightiness of the photographer or in the stylized poses on the farm or vineyard, preferably with a long ceremonial dress and other belonging decoration, beside a sponsorship car, on the football field in full ceremonial dress and high heels. This places them in the position of an object, which attracts the gazes, arouses libido, etc. The wine queens aesthetic images, for example, in a long, shiny festive dress with a crown on the head or with sash over the shoulder and across the chest at work in the vineyard or wine cellar, predominates over the images of the same tasks in everyday clothing.

Objectification of the female body in advertising is problematic, because it changes women into things without their own desires, feelings and preferences. Objects have no opinion and they only have to agree. If anyone wants them they can obtain them, their worth is determined by men. An objectivised woman is an object for someone, mostly for a straight man. Sex is 'sold' with the presentation of conventionally attractive and sexually available women. Her own sexual desires and unique personality are irrelevant (Wade and Sharp 2011: 163–167). Based on the advertising of wine queens we could say that the advertising of wine and its

cultural drinking is more aimed at men, since wine queens are used as a means to attract sexual attention, and the connection with the subject of advertising is low. The dynamics of power in the ritual of coronation of wine queen follow the logic of power of men who crown, award, have important speeches, hand gifts from the sponsors and, on the other hand, submissiveness and passivity of women who receive a crown, listen, accept gifts. Wine queens are changed into marketing messages that are symbolically oriented and who communicate through their image the social meanings, and only secondarily try to satisfy the consumers' desire for the wine. The more the wine queen is stylized and aestheticised, the less she is united with her specific wine and winery awareness-enhancing function. In this way, the entire image of wine queens becomes the advertising of a lifestyle where wine consumption through identification with female characters becomes a social spectacle, combined with youth, beauty and cultivated drinking of wine. With the indirect character of the wine marketing the wine queens get the possibility to draw attention on the information-saturated media landscape. The mode in which the essence of advertising—selling wine—is presented with the image of the wine queen, concerns not only gender roles, but also speaks to our understanding of relationships, a sense of fulfillment, friendship, success, traditions, identities, roles of work, personal autonomy, taste, and much more. Wine queens don't sell only wine; they also sell the socio-cultural significances. The worst rivalry of wine marketers are not the other producers, but those who do not consume the wine or only once in a while, and those who prefer to drink more fashionable alcoholic beverages. Thus, the wine marketing attempts to persuade to drink more wine through the character of a wine queen. The potential targeted audience favors the idea of getting together in scenic, glamorous gala events with a club atmosphere of degustation, where drinking wine is a special experience.

Identification with the figure of the wine queen encourages women to idealize its character and perceive the female body in a way where the working strong woman's body is ousted from the image and replaced by the omnipresent ideal slim body. Furthermore, it is not rare to see a representative image of the wine queen in evening dress and a crown on the tractor or at several sorts of farm work. This is an ingenious recycling of the sexualisation of young females who are placed next to agricultural machinery and the eroticization of heavy physical, predominantly male labor in farming.

The icon of the wine queen contributes to the consumption of goods associated with the transformation and training of the body, as it is evident from the sponsorship gifts received by some of the queens. It is hard to suppose that the donated fitness equipment reminds us of the wine queen's primary function of promoting the national assortment of wines or cultural drinking of wines. It more reminds us that the identity of the wine queen candidates meets the prevailing norms of seductive women, ranging from sexually attractive to a decent code of conduct.

From the media, sponsorship and self-images of wine queens we can define the desirable physical practices of self-control, orientated to slim shape, relevant decorations and ultimately determined posture and motions. Wine queens are the prey of the nutritional, cosmetic and fashion industries, without which they would not

be able to sustain the body practices of self-control, the expected image and the 'royal' worship. Agricultural industries are cleverly trying to advertise the beauty of women, which, at least apparently, they put on the side of knowledge, social skills and self-confidence. Although wine queens and some organisers generally enclose from the objectification of wine queens as sexual objects and even their usage for promotional purposes, the media have continued to add sexually explicit and tabloid contents and vulgarize wine queens by which they increase the readership and the profit to wine industry.

The organizers of the contests of queens' titles in viticulture should also consider the composition of the commissions that choose wine queens. At least half of the auditors should be women, especially because of their target market. Today the ratio at most events is in the benefit of men. Hence, the wine queens would play, perhaps less time the role of the decorations of wine marketing and more on the role of the actual promoters of wine and drinking culture.

7.3 The Wine Queen as Unpaid or Underpaid Workforce

The appealing look of the candidates is important and it derives from the beauty contests. The subsequent discrimination against women is in fact that the wine queen appears only as an unpaid volunteer or as underpaid workforce, but rarely as a professional, who has enough knowledge and independence to carry out promotional activities. Media machismo and misogyny with hidden or directly offensive and patronizing articulations strengthen this situation (Šribar 2012: 38). Unpaid and charity work of the wine queen derives from the concept of so-called domestic work (Renner 2000: 284–290; Švab 2001: 144–145; Hrženjak 2007: 24), within which it sits between the relational work and the consumer work. With this, wine queens deal with the emotions of others (e.g. Train young people how to drink wine)—what can be thought of as emotion work with market value or as a commodity, an essential component of the service economy; the organization of wine consumption; they learn how to manage to communicate with the institutions involved in the production, manufacture and distribution of wine (for example, presentations at wine fairs and other events). The quality of wines and quality of consuming alone no longer sells by themselves—they are merely the first step towards being involved in any marketing promotion. Hence, the communication-presentation skills of wine queens make the ways of marketing wines more significant.

The wine queens' work remains unpaid or underpaid, because it is defined as a social honor. Their work is partly compensated by the access to certain goods: wine queen, after the expiry of the mandate can buy the sponsoring car,¹ at a good price; ceremonial dress remains in her permanent ownership; similar is with some

¹ Sponsored car carries advertisements about the wine queen's function constantly for the time of her mandate, which serves to accomplish the greatest visibility and helps to stand out with the car's graphic design.

gifts from sponsors, for example sports equipment; on the symbolic level she has a network of people she met in her queen's career and later she can take advantage of the newly acquired connections and interactions, advance in her career, find new or better mates, friends, lovers, etc. Such opportunities should naturally nourish her fantasies or ambitions. Wine queens generally accept the unpaid or underpaid work as a fact. The unpaid work for the primary function of the wine queens, that is education and the promotion of culture of drinking wine and wine regions, joins the other unpaid functions that promote cosmetic and fashion industry. Wine queens themselves also disseminate information about the skills of their beauticians, hairdressers or stylists who prepare them for the wine events and they even consider it as a matter of prestige. Wine queens have apparently entered into the public sphere with their unpaid or underpaid work and insufficient awareness of the fact that wine capitalism strengthens on their shoulders, what is a questionable prospect for the emancipation of women.

The wine queens' aesthetic image in some way reinforces the traditional female identity, where singleness is expected to be a transitional phase in their life course, what is stated also in the regulations of the awarding of the queens' titles. New functions and networking, which is brought by the victory on the selection of the queen, should open up girls' gateway to the world, but it is used and misused by the thought of bringing profit to the wine industry. All other desired attributes which are beyond the beauty, like knowledge, communication skills, and so forth, are indirectly advertised as advanced aspects of selection, but they have no intention to remain a permanent alternative. Representation of staying single of the candidates, where the girl has the chance of getting to know herself and getting experience is abundantly highlighted in the media with the descriptions of candidate's other activities such as studies, hobbies, work and the participation in various organizations independent of a potential partner. At the same time, all these activities are annulled in the prospect that this is only the period of preparation for the subsequent relationship with a man; the aestheticized image will forever remember her of the period when she was the wine queen (Kobal 2011: 35).

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Chapter 8

Concluding Thoughts

Abstract Very few wine queens own land, a vineyard, or agricultural machinery for the production of wine in the period of their sovereignty. In the absence of the autonomy of agricultural production and ownership of resources, such contests cannot bring any progress in any of these stages. Yet, some wine queens stay in the wine business after they give away the crown. In this sense they get a chance to contribute to the discipline and impart some hope that in a long term drinking culture might improve.

Keywords Queen titles in agriculture · Women in agriculture · Empowerment · Emancipation · Wine consuming · Wine queen · Alcoholism · Wine culture · Cultural aspects of drinking · Criticism of wine marketing

Taking all the above considerations regarding the award of the women's queen titles in agriculture, the question remains whether these selections in any way actually benefit women and empower them. It is well known that the role and extent of women's involvement in the agricultural sector are successful

- If women can largely decide themselves on agricultural production (sole or joint decision making as well as autonomy in wine production as winemakers);
- If they have access and the ability to make decisions about resources (such as land, equipment, consumer durables, and credit);
- If they have control over income and expenditures (vineyard managers);
- If they have the leadership roles in the community (active membership in economic or social groups);
- If their power is proportional to the power of men (Women's Empowerment and Agriculture Index 2012: 2–3).

Most wine queens become comfortable in public speaking, they prepare for the sommeliers and study food and wine affiliations, they become wine educators. Less of them are known as wine writers who could give a lasting mark on the history of wine, and shape its future.

It may be stated that the only significant progress in the selection of wine and other queens of agricultural activities is that young women have gained more public exposure and better chances for public speaking, but even this is mostly of a protocol and not decision making nature. Very few wine queens actually own land, a vineyard, or agricultural machinery for the production of wine in the period of their sovereignty. In the absence of these key elements, in particular the autonomy of agricultural production and ownership of resources, such contests unfortunately cannot bring any progress in any of these stages. Even the public speech production, which appears to be one of the obvious benefits of wine queen contests, is guided by others, mostly men. Therefore, the only possible emancipation for the wine queens is to become aware of the structures of symbolic domination and stop participating in them. With the Bourdieu's words: symbolic power cannot be exercised without the contribution of those who undergo it and who only undergo it because they *construct* it as such (Bourdieu 2001: 40).

A question needs to be raised whether enthronements of wine queens, which require a great deal of effort and expenses for all involved, and that in the long run do not yield any significant profit, truly and sufficiently popularize all that is being promoted by the wine queens, namely the wine drinking culture and normal, non-problematic enjoyment of alcohol, particularly among the young.

The statistics on excessive drinking of teenagers and young adults are getting more and more alarming, since more and more youngsters become alcohol addicted. Perhaps the organizers of the wine queen contest disregarded the fact that cultural and social aspects of consuming the alcohol are associated with values, attitudes and beliefs, which young people, especially men, may not easily identify through the figures, etiquette and ritual practices of wine queens. More attention should be paid on the defining the drinking situations, the role of social integration, bonding, ritual roles, the gender and social status of a special group, class or even the nationality and ethnicity of young drinkers.

Maybe then the wine queens' roles as the defenders of social propriety and self-control would come more to light. (Social and Cultural Aspects of Drinking 1998: 23–28) So far they have been successful mostly in the function of mascots who sell wine. Thus, from the standpoint of wine producers and wine vendors, they execute their task as unpaid force excellently.

Decreasing of drinking alcohol, which is closely linked with promoting of cultural drinking, is not really in the focus of the biggest wine producers at all. Yet, some wine queens stay in the wine business or wine tourism after they give away the crown. In that regard, they professionally specialize in wine promoting, advertising and selling, they contribute a voice to the minority groups of the small winemakers in regions where cultural heritage and reputation for indigenous wine production is also economically significant. In this sense they get a chance to valuable contribute to the discipline and impart some hope that in a long term drinking culture might improve; their former roles as wine queens makes more sense.

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Index

A

Advertising, 9, 12, 13, 25, 28, 29, 38, 39, 44
Akadama port wine, 12
Alcohol, 9, 22, 44
Ambassador of Cviček, 9, 28
Argentina, 10, 12
Attitude, 25, 37, 44
Austria, 1, 6, 7, 10, 11
Autumn Bride, 7
Autumn Groom, 7
Autumn Queen, 6

B

Beauty, 6, 13, 22, 24, 33–35, 39–41
Beauty pageant, 2, 15, 16, 33, 34
Belief, 16, 25, 35, 44
Body language, 25, 38
Brand, 1, 2, 13, 18, 25, 29, 30, 34
Brazil, 10, 12

C

California, 10–12
Canada, 12
Candidate, 2, 8, 9, 22, 33, 35, 37–39, 41
Career, 41
Character, 22, 24, 25, 34, 39
Chile, 12
Cider Girl, 9, 18
Coat, 21
Coat-of-arms, 21
Communication, 2, 25, 27, 35, 41
Competitiveness, 2
Coronation, 9, 16, 22, 25, 38, 39

Costumographic image, 22, 24
Croatia, 2, 7, 9, 10, 17
Crown, 8, 9, 11–13, 17, 21, 24, 25, 38, 39, 44
Cultural value, 29
Culture, 1, 2, 16, 18, 24, 33, 41, 44
Cviček court, 28
Cviček king, 9, 28

D

Dairy Queen, 18, 25, 34, 35
Degustation, 39
Diadem, 21, 25
Discrimination, 40
Domestic work, 40
Dress code, 2
Drinking culture, 2, 16, 35, 40, 44

E

Education, 41
Emancipation, 41, 44
Emotion work, 40
Emotional marketing, 30
Eroticism, 22
Escort, 21
Europe, 1, 6, 10–12

F

Female drinker, 29
Femininity, 23, 24, 34
Festival, 7, 11, 13, 35
Flag, 21
France, 1, 8, 10

G

Gender, 1, 2, 29, 34, 39, 44
 Gender difference, 29
 Gender role, 25, 33
 Germany, 1, 2, 6–8, 10
 Godfather of Malvasia, 18
 Godfather of Refosco, 18
 Godmother of Malvasia, 18
 Godmother of Refosco, 18
 Goods, 39, 40
 Gown, 21, 22
 Grape day, 10, 11
 Grape day queen, 11
 Grape-harvesting, 2
 Grape King, 12, 27, 28

H

Hairstyle, 23
 Herbstbraut, 7
 Herbstbräutigam, 7
 Heritage, 1, 16, 44
 Honey Queen, 18

I

Identity, 1, 8, 16, 17, 24, 35, 39
 India, 13
 India Grape Harvest, 13
 Indiana, 12
 Industry, 2, 6, 12, 13, 16, 34, 41
 Invented tradition, 15, 16, 22

K

Key, 21, 44

L

Label design, 29
 Leadership role, 43
 Lifestyle, 29, 39
 Little Italy Festival Queen of Grapes, 12
 Local patriotism, 29
 Luxury good, 29

M

Machismo, 40
 Madonna of the Grapes, 6
 Make-up, 2, 22, 24
 Mandate, 18, 40
 Marital status, 18
 Marketing, 1, 13, 15, 22, 29, 39

Marketing niche, 29
 Material inventory, 21, 22
 Media, 16, 18, 25, 26, 35, 38, 39, 41
 Metaphor, 22–26
 Misogyny, 40
 Miss Cherry—cherry blossom, 18

N

National wine week, 11
 National identity, 16, 24, 33, 35
 Networking, 41
 Niagara grape and wine festival, 12
 North America, 11

O

Ohio, 12
 Ontario, 12, 27, 28

P

Parade, 2, 8, 11
 Physical appearance, 2, 24, 27
 Popular culture, 33
 Power, 21, 24, 33, 39, 43
 Prestige, 16, 24, 29, 41
 Price, 29, 38, 40
 Princess of Cviček, 9, 28
 Private, 15, 18, 30, 35
 Profit, 40, 41, 44
 Prohibition, 5, 9
 Promotion, 1, 2, 12, 16, 28, 30, 34, 37, 38, 40
 Protocol, 2, 7, 29, 44
 Public, 2, 16, 35, 38, 44
 Pumpkin Queen, 18, 34, 38

Q

Queen of Agriculture, 17
 Queen of Bograč, 18
 Queen of Bread, 17
 Queen of Castle, 18
 Queen of Cheese, 17
 Queen of Cherries, 18
 Queen of Custom, 18
 Queen of Flowers, 17
 Queen of Fruit, 17
 Queen of Hearts, 17
 Queen of Honey, 18
 Queen of Horses, 17
 Queen of Hospitality and Tourism, 17
 Queen of Housewives, 17
 Queen of Music, 17

Queen of Nature and the Hunters, 17
 Queen of Poultry, 17
 Queen of Slovene hills, 18
 Queen of Teran, 9
 Queen of the Autumn, 17
 Queen of the Queens, 18
 Queen of Water, 18
 Queen of Wine, 8, 17
 Queen of Wine Zelén, 9
 Queen of Woodenware, 18, 22, 38
 Queen's Wine, 18, 21, 22, 29, 30

R

Relational work, 40
 Ring, 21
 Rite of passage, 22
 Ritual, 2, 9, 16, 21, 24, 30, 35, 39, 44

S

Sash, 21, 38
 Scissors, 21
 Self-confidence, 24, 40
 Self-control, 39, 44
 Senior queen, 24
 Sex appeal, 24
 Slovakia, 2, 7, 10
 Slovenia, 2, 7, 15–19, 21, 30, 37
 Social drinking, 22
 Social honour, 40
 Social role, 22
 Spain, 1, 5, 8, 10
 Sponsor, 21, 34, 39, 41
 Sponsorship, 37–39
 Submissiveness, 39
 Symbolic domination, 44

T

Taste, 29, 39
 Throne, 21
 Tourist, 12, 18, 35
 Tradition, 1, 7, 11, 16, 35, 39
 Traubenmadonna, 6

U

Unpaid work, 41

V

Value, 13, 16, 25, 40, 44
 Vine grower, 6
 Vintage Queen, 10, 11
 Visual code, 2

W

Wine competition, 2
 Wine consumer, 29
 Wine consumption, 1, 5, 12, 29, 39, 40
 Wine fair, 40
 Wine industry, 8, 12, 13, 16, 40, 41
 Wine king, 2, 12, 27
 Wine kingdom, 16, 19, 29
 Wine market, 1
 Wine marketing, 1, 12, 39, 40
 Wine packaging, 29
 Wine producer, 1, 27, 37, 44
 Wine promotion, 12, 30
 Wine quality, 2, 12, 40
 Wine queen, 1, 2, 6–10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 35, 37, 39–41, 44
 Wine Queen Pageant, 13
 Wine Queen of India, 10, 13
 Wine Queen of Metliška Črna, 9
 Wine Queen of Slovenia, 9, 18, 21, 30, 37
 Wine queen's wine, 22, 29, 30
 Wine snob, 29
 Wine tourism, 1, 2, 13, 44
 Work charity, 40
 Work consumer, 40