

legislation was revised, although as the Post Familie Vineyards website explains, “We currently aren’t allowed to directly ship to anyone in our own state!”⁶

The rest of the book is divided into chapters that trace the details of the industry’s development up to the present. These include a discussion of the viticultural research undertaken to find grape types adaptable to the varied growing conditions of the heterogeneous Eastern states, the development of wine trails, wine festivals, and other marketing devices, and the advent of publications and associations aimed at Eastern producers. In some ways, the various states act as laboratories for experimentation, and I think wine producers in fledgling wine regions would do well to learn from the lessons Cattell recounts that came from other, more highly developed, regions. One recurring issue is the web of state legislation that continues to act as a regulatory brake on viticultural development and winemaking.

One refreshing aspect of this book is its nonjudgmental character. The flavor profiles and price points of many wines made from hybrid or muscadine varieties appeal to some consumers, and Cattell does not take them to task for their preferences. No doubt these wines will not be showcased in the *Wine Advocate* (now owned by a Singapore syndicate) or the *Wine Spectator* (owned by Shanken Communications, along with *WhiskeyAdvocate.com* and *Cigar Aficionado*), but those who consume them are not likely to care.

But Cattell’s nonjudgmental approach is also a weakness because it offers him no way to discuss the quality of the Eastern wines he describes. There is no doubt that some of the Eastern wine producers are making great progress and, as a result, can command premium prices for their wines. And there are no doubt many other Eastern wineries whose wines, still undiscovered, represent especially good value. However, you will not learn much about this aspect of the story from *Wines of Eastern North America*.

Orley C. Ashenfelter
Princeton University
c6789@princeton.edu
doi:10.1017/jwe.2015.5

CHARLES LUDINGTON: *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2013, 360 pp., ISBN 978-0230238657, \$130.

Great wine books, like great vintages, are often more hyperbole than reality. In fact, they are both rare. Charles Ludington’s 2013 book, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A*

⁶<http://www.postfamilie.com/wines.htm>, downloaded 2-20-2015.

New Cultural History, is unlike anything that has come before it in its depth of research and its particular focus. At the risk of taking the analogy too far, Ludington has written a wine book for the ages.

The Politics of Wine in Britain analyzes what is arguably the most significant era in the history of wine, though in a locale that may surprise us: England. Using the years 1649 and 1862 as his bookends (weighty years in global wine history, as it turns out), Ludington bucks the trend of ascribing taste making to growers and distributors of wine. Instead, he hounds Britain's politicians and consuming elite through an impressive array of sources to trace the changing nature of taste (as in a taste *for* something). In addition to turning his gaze on the consumer, Ludington is at pains to show that changes in tastes were not driven by the palate or liver but, rather, reflected and constituted political power and legitimacy. Though not without flaws, *The Politics of Wine in Britain* challenges our understanding of vinous history and destabilizes our assumptions about politics and power in the early modern wine trade.

As any historian of Europe knows, early modern Britain was greater than the sum of its parts. The exclusive focus on England, and then Great Britain after 1707, is not the limitation that it may appear. Ludington's wine men are traders, consumers, and politicians in what was becoming the world's premier economic and imperial power. If "wine was integral to British political culture," as Ludington claims, then we may justifiably ponder the extent of the wine trade's impact on industrialization, the spread of liberal capitalism, and even imperialism. Although Ludington is not interested in pursuing his argument this far, he dexterously shows that politics created the public's taste for wine. In doing so, Ludington challenges existing arguments of wine scholars, including those who ultimately suggest a similar politically laden relationship between taste and wine.

The Politics of Wine in Britain is divided into four sections, each of which is thorough enough to warrant its own book. Part I, titled the "Politicization of Wine," grounds the story in the heady days of the mid-seventeenth century during the Anglo-Dutch Wars, the rising tides of Francophilia and Francophobia, and the critical need to import wine for both tipping and taxing. Against the wishes of the king, Charles II, the House of Commons viewed French wine, particularly the popular claret (Bordeaux), with increasing suspicion. Wine had become a politicized tool in the disputes between Tories and Whigs—the former associating claret with aristocratic wealth and a strong monarchy and the latter launching accusations that importing claret benefited France at the expense of England and that it led to effeminizing, immoral, and childlike drunkenness.

Ludington takes an important stand against the accepted historiography here. An English embargo on French goods during the Nine Years' War (1689–1697) and a series of tariff hikes on French wine in the second half of the seventeenth century undermined claret's leading position in the English market. Wines from Spain and Portugal would concomitantly replace claret as the Englishman's "common draught" by 1700. In other words, claret's decline and port's rise in the English

market actually preceded the 1703 Methuen treaty, long thought to be the exclusive factor in determining this monumental shift in English drinking habits. In addition, Ludington shows with an impressive range of statistical and anecdotal data how the embargoes and tariffs imposed on claret gave way to fraudulent trade and false declarations. Despite the increasing relevance of Iberian wines and the difficulty in importing French wine legally, the English (even Whig) love for claret did not fade. The politicization of claret around 1700 did not end in England. Scottish parliamentarians irked their English counterparts by continuing to import claret, their preferred drink anyway. The Wine Act of 1703, which permitted the landing of French wine at Scottish ports (a thinly veiled snub against the English), and the Union of 1707, which joined the kingdoms of England and Scotland, were both cut from the same political cloth. Claret's symbolism in Scotland as a drink with which to flout the English had been established.

Wrangling between Tories and Whigs over foreign policy did not conceal the fact that wine from *somewhere* was necessary for Britain's elite and middling sorts (p. 61). Parts II and III recount the sensational eighteenth-century port revolution in Britain, a revolution embedded within the turbulent political economy of early modern Atlantic trade. Ludington's descriptions of the era's complications are engaging, but few are more exasperating than the writings of *Robinson Crusoe* author Daniel Defoe. Defoe was indecisive, first arguing for the greater importation of port because of the Portuguese willingness to purchase English manufactures, then for a loosened trade with France, not least because—as Ludington points out on multiple occasions—even political opponents of France generally preferred French wine.

For the men involved in these debates, both claret and port became usable political symbols. Over time, claret secured its reputation as the drink of the rich and fashionable while port solidified its association with the middle classes. Ludington is at his best when he ventures beyond the political to decipher societal pretensions and behaviors. Claret, we learn, was intimately bound with eighteenth-century conceptions of politeness and the emergence of wine connoisseurship—meaning the discourse of tasting and describing. In some sense, good taste replaced aristocratic lineage as a rationale for political legitimacy. In Scotland, claret remained a “common” drink longer than it did in England. In fact, Scottish masculinity, particularly in the face of English oppression, was tied to its consumption. In the words of John Home (1722–1808), a Scottish poet and Presbyterian minister: “Firm and erect the Caledonian Stood/Old was his mutton and his claret good” (p. 117).

In contrast to claret, port developed as a drink for the “middle ranks,” though Ludington is clever enough not to reduce its ascension to purely economic phenomena. While the terms of the Methuen treaty kept tariffs on French wine higher than those on Portuguese wine, this is not enough to explain why port (of all Portuguese wines) rose to the fore nor is it enough to explain why port became the patriotic drink par excellence for the English tavern man. To understand this, we must, as Ludington suggests, consider port's favorable price vis-à-vis claret, its ready

availability, and its strength (i.e., alcohol content). Ludington also considers the technological innovations and natural limitations of the Douro Valley to help explain port's success (most readers of this journal will know that port is not an ordinary red wine).

By the 1780s, port had experienced a kind of social ascendancy in England. Whereas it had previously been the favored drink of the "middle ranks," it was now, legitimately, the "Englishman's wine" (p. 145). Consumers had benefited from improvements in port production and in wine quality generally, including the invention of the wine bottle. The qualitative improvement in port wine coincided with the elite's need to fend off accusations of effeminate and, worse still, "French" behaviors. Robust port wine proved the ideal elixir. At the same time, port had overtaken claret as the preferred wine of most Scots. While port's incursion into Scotland hinged on many of the same reasons that had allowed it to rise to prominence in England, we must also consider the presence of Scots in the port trade (notably the Sandeman brothers) and the consolidating impact on British identity by eighteenth-century wars. Nevertheless, Ludington stresses that the Scottish turn toward port was part and parcel of the broader creation of British identity, a process that evolved slowly and steadily, not suddenly.

In Part IV, titled "Drunkenness, Sobriety, and Civilization?," Ludington pushes his examination into the nineteenth century. By addressing intoxication in the late Georgian era, Ludington convinces the reader that this overlooked period (nestled between the rambunctious eighteenth century and the Victorian era) was not a "valley of sobriety between two mountains of crapulence," as is often inferred (p. 189). Ludington leaves no doubt about social drinking and its association with the "warrior masculinity" of the late Georgian era (p. 191), an ideal cherished by both the elite and middle strata. In a welcome respite from the male drunkenness that Ludington scrupulously analyzes, we also learn of the increasing popularity of sherry in England, particularly among women, in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Although the book has no formal conclusion—an unfortunate weakness—the final chapter of Part IV serves as the story's finale. In a radical reversal of the previous two centuries' policies, British parliamentarians decided once again to coddle French imports, including wine. However, a change in policy did not necessarily give way to the anticipated changes in behavior, as drinkers across the social spectrum clung to their stubborn consumption patterns. The nineteenth-century "wine debate," as it was known, pitted those who supported a reduction in wine tariffs against those who were worried that such a reduction would negatively affect government revenue. While the tariff legislation of 1860–1862 helped catalyze French wine imports, it hardly ruined the trade in port and sherry, as some suggested at the time. Beyond the reduction in price, French wine had regained favor because its noble pedigree was beneficial in an era dominated by a hybrid of new and old money, commercial wealth and landed wealth, Victorian temperance, and free (or freer) trade.

It is a pity that Ludington does not analyze the drinking habits of Britain's lower social strata, as this would greatly enhance (or perhaps work against) his claims about politics and taste. There is also, somewhat surprisingly, an inadequate discussion of the robust historiography of consumption. These two shortfalls leave the casual reader with three false impressions: (1) the lower classes did not consume alcohol; (2) wine was certainly more ubiquitous than gin and beer; and (3) that consuming alcohol was *only* a political decision (i.e., Britain had a society without alcoholics). These are relatively minor flaws in a book that delivers so much.

In addition to the book's 30-plus figures, photographs, and reproductions from primary sources, there are more than 40 tables and graphs. An appendix traces English duties on foreign wine from the 1660s to the 1860s, including those placed on Rhenish and Cape wines. Ludington is competent enough to draw from a number of historical subdisciplines, including economic history, but it is the broad range of his analytical view as well as the impressive breadth and depth of research that make *The Politics of Wine in Britain* such an important contribution to the literature on early modern England, gender and alcohol, political economy, and, of course, the history of wine.

Kevin D. Goldberg
Kennesaw State University
kgoldbel@kennesaw.edu
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ANIL HIRA (ed.): *What Makes Clusters Competitive? Cases from the Global Wine Industry*. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2013, 264 pp., ISBN 978-0-7735-4260-0, \$39.95.

Economists have long tried to translate the concept of comparative advantage into a measurable concept: using Belassa's revealed comparative advantage measure makes it possible to reduce the competitiveness of an industry or a country to a single number. One can even go further and establish the causes of this comparative advantage, for example, does it arise because of government intervention, because of market factors, or from factors on the input side or on the output side, and so forth, with techniques such as the policy analysis matrix. The problem with these approaches, however, is that in the real world industries don't trade; firms do; and firms operate along value chains and within clusters that are as important at determining competitiveness as are the attributes of the individual firm and its environment. So the appropriate question is: "What makes clusters competitive?"

This is the title of a recent (2013) volume edited by Anil Hira, a political science professor at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. The book consists of an

Try the new Google Books. Check out the new look and enjoy easier access to your favorite features. Try it now. No thanks. Try the new Google Books. Try the new Google Books. My library. Help. A unique look at the meaning of the taste for wine in Britain, from the establishment of a Commonwealth in 1649 to the Commercial Treaty between Britain and France in 1860 - this book provides an extraordinary window into the politics and culture of England and Scotland just as they were becoming the powerful British state. Preview this book ».

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