Giving Wine as a Present. Buying Process, Symbolism and Meaning for Brazilian Consumers

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ABSTRACT

"I know what I gave you. I do not know what you received "(Antonio Porchia, Voices, 1969)

Antonio Porchia, Argentine writer and poet, in one of his most celebrated thoughts illustrates the concern that everyone has when they give something to someone. Which are the impacts and the effects of this act? For more sensitive that a person can be and more intimacy has with the individual who will be presented, can never predict the effect that a present will generate to the receiver and to what level their relationship will be modified.

Marcel Maus, one of the most influential French sociologist and anthropologist, concludes in his work "Essay about the Gift" (1923) that the act of giving is not a disinterested process “behind the act of giving there is an interest of retribution”.

If the act of giving is a generous attitude, symbol of gratitude and reciprocity in our society; why it causes so much concern? Would this act carried consequences and negative effects?

This article aims to take advantage of the contributions that other authors were able to generate on the act of giving to explore the symbolism and meaning existing in the act of giving wine as a present. This beverage has gained more and more space in the lives of Brazilians in recent years. But unlike beer, wine, perhaps because of its complexity and because it’s European origins, seems to carry for Brazilians special meanings about itself and also, about individuals who consume it and those who understand it. If Brazilians associate wine with sophistication and culture, the knowledge an understanding of this beverage would provide consumers the same prestigious and differentiation position that this drink has towards others?

If the wine carries many meanings and a particular mysticism in relation to other beverages, what are the motivators for people present others with wine? What is the intention and desired effect that the gift giver searches choosing wine against other presents? How this the process of choosing wine as a present work? What challenges and difficulties faces the gift giver choosing a wine label from a universe of millions options? The price would be the most crucial attribute in this process? Or it will be the brand?

Perhaps the choice of a wine can be a very simple activity, especially if the individual’s relationship with the beverage is very intimate. We define this moment as intimate understanding of the different types of grape and what the main points in the
production process that influence the quality of the wine. But at what level this gift giver affinity influences the purchase?

Gift is a challenging journey where an individual has to deal and manage a multitude of variables and possibilities for the end synthesize their feeling with an object that will symbolized and will represent his feelings and intentions.

This paper proposes an immersion in this universe to understand how this journey happens.