

## Padua 2017 Abstract Submission

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### Keywords

French wine labels, visual labelling, culturally specific market segments, cross-cultural marketing, symbolic content

### Research Question

This paper examines the strategies of visual labelling (or verbo-pictorial metaphors) on French wine labels for targeting culturally specific market segments in three cross-cultural examples.

### Methods

This paper focuses primarily on French wine labelling, analysing the visual elements with symbolic content that trigger responses and cues in culturally differentiated segments of the market.

### Results

This research establishes a framework for analysing strategies used by French wine producers in targeting culturally specific market segments.

### Abstract

Cross-cultural marketing has been applied to wine for centuries, ranging from Bordeaux's production of New French Clarets for English consumers, to the Veuve Clicquot's syrupy champagnes for Russian palates. In recent times, there is less manipulation of the product to correspond to culturally specific taste trends (the Parkerization of red wines is a worldwide phenomenon), and more emphasis placed on visual labelling to appeal to culturally specific market segments (Hall et al., 1994; 1996; 1997; Charters et al., 2011).

The use of visual labelling is a key strategy for branding wine, with image having the most impact, especially when charged with symbolic content (Jarvis, Mueller & Chiong, 2010; Bourdreaux & Palmer, 2007). This symbolic content can be defined and subsequently analysed as verbo-pictorial metaphors (Alousque et al., 2014; 2015; Forceville 2006; Caballero 2009). Typical examples of such verbo-pictorial metaphors are images of châteaux on French (and pseudo-French) wine labels, and pictures of "critters" like the wallaby on Yellowtail's label (Walker, 2006; Lehrer 2009). In line with the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), these verbo-pictorial metaphors are conceptual metaphors based on the mapping of features in the source domain (e.g. an animal, or a person) onto the target domain (here, wine).

In this paper, we examine the strategies of visual labelling (or verbo-pictorial metaphors) on French wine labels that rely on the cognitive connections between the source and the target that are usually accessible only to culturally specific market segments. These strategies therefore draw on cross-cultural marketing in particularly innovative ways, demonstrating a complicity or cross-cultural understanding inherent in the symbolic content of

their visual labelling.

The three cross-cultural examples that best display these strategies are: The Arrogant Frog in Australia; Château Lafite in China; and Albert Bichot Beaujolais Nouveau in Japan.

In 2005, Jean-Claude Mas of Les Domaines Paul Mas in the Languedoc region launched The Arrogant Frog label for export. Its success in Australia is second to none. Although it has also been embraced in the Netherlands, Canada and now Italy, its immediate uptake in Australia has been credited to its self-deprecating and simplistic humour and low price point, in line with the previous success of Yellowtail, an Australian budget wine with “critter” label.

In 2010, Château Lafite announced that their 2008 vintage would feature the Chinese figure 8 symbol in red (八) embossed into their glass bottles and magnums just above the front label. This innovation marks a pivotal moment in Bordeaux first growth wine marketing, signifying a shift in the hierarchy of producer and consumer. Whereas normally the consumer, in this case Chinese, is expected to decipher the cultural codes of French wine labelling, Château Lafite’s 2008 visual labelling attempts to cater to Chinese cues for value and status.

Over the decade from 2004-2014, the Japanese manga series *Kami no Shizuku* (The Drops of God) gained cult status with wine connoisseurs as well as novices who used it as an apprenticeship to learn more about fine wine culture. Beaujolais Nouveau had been highly successful in Japan since the 1980s, with the Japanese consuming approximately 50% of the region’s exports. However, given the decline in Japanese consumption of Beaujolais Nouveau, Albert Bichot decided to differentiate their product from the masses, adding visual value to the bottle in 2008, with an image designed by the writers and illustrator of *The Drops of God*. The manga series had already become a permanent part of the Japanese oenophile’s vocabulary, as wines that appeared throughout the series not only became known as but were also ordered as “*Kami no shizuku* wines”, the manga having served as a form of indirect marketing. The Albert Bichot label design allowed the writers and illustrator a direct line to consumers of Beaujolais Nouveau, fulfilling a need to repackage their wine in a year that represented a six-year low in Beaujolais Nouveau exports to Japan (Miyake, 2010).

Through comics and cues, these French wine labels have effectively produced cultural credibility, demonstrating complicity and/or cross-cultural understanding inherent in the symbolic content of their visual labelling.

Each of these strategies has clearly been successful in terms of sales and/or price points. However, the aim of this paper is to focus on the wine labelling itself, analysing the visual elements with symbolic content that trigger positive responses in these culturally differentiated segments of the market: Australia, China and Japan.

In this way, this research seeks to establish a framework for analysing strategies used by French wine producers in targeting culturally specific market segments. It will be a preliminary step towards assessing the economic impact of targeted visual labelling for cross-cultural market segments.

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- [Comics-Cues-and-Cultural-Credibility.pdf](#)

## **Title**

Comics, Cues and Cultural Credibility: French Wine Labels for Targeted Cross-Cultural Marketing

## **Authors**

Jacqueline Dutton (University of Melbourne), Nadine Normand-Marconnet (Monash University), Jason Jones (Monash University)

## **Keywords**

French wine labels, visual labelling, culturally specific market segments, cross-cultural marketing, symbolic content, The Arrogant Frog, Château Lafite, Albert Bichot Beaujolais Nouveau

## **Research Question**

This paper examines the strategies of visual labelling (or verbo-pictorial metaphors) on French wine labels for targeting culturally specific market segments in three cross-cultural examples: The Arrogant Frog in Australia; Château Lafite in China; and Albert Bichot Beaujolais Nouveau in Japan.

## **Methods**

This paper focuses firstly on the wine labelling itself, analysing the visual elements with symbolic content that trigger responses and cues in culturally differentiated segments of the market.

We also use primary resources including: press releases; marketing strategies; as well as information garnered from the marketing and PR teams of The Arrogant Frog, Château Lafite and Albert Bichot. This documentation is analysed to ascertain the implicit messages encoded in visual labelling.

## **Results**

This research establishes a framework for analysing strategies used by French wine producers in targeting culturally specific market segments. It will be a preliminary step towards assessing the impact of targeted visual labelling for cross-cultural market segments.

## **Abstract**

Cross-cultural marketing has been applied to wine for centuries, ranging from Bordeaux's production of New French Clarets for English consumers, to the Veuve Clicquot's syrupy champagnes for Russian palates. In recent times, there is less manipulation of the product to correspond to culturally specific taste trends (the Parkerization of red wines is a worldwide phenomenon), and more

emphasis placed on visual labelling to appeal to culturally specific market segments (Hall et al., 1994; 1996; 1997; Charters et al., 2011).

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In this paper, we examine the strategies of visual labelling (or verbo-pictorial metaphors) on French wine labels that rely on the cognitive connections between the source and the target that are usually accessible only to culturally specific market segments. These strategies therefore draw on cross-cultural marketing in particularly innovative ways, demonstrating a complicity or cross-cultural understanding inherent in the symbolic content of their visual labelling.

The three cross-cultural examples that best display these strategies are: The Arrogant Frog in Australia; Château Lafite in China; and Albert Bichot Beaujolais Nouveau in Japan.

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