Nutriscore, collateral damage to the pandemic?

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 16 Marzo 2022



Luckily, the vote in plenary at the European Parliament on the plan of action for the fight against cancer has given back a much reassuring and less worrying text, since the approach that did not distinguish between the ordinary and aware wine usage and the abuse of alcoholic substances has been delated.

Nevertheless, as I already underlined in my previous editorial, the approach that our sector has on **the communication of wine and health should be modified.**

Times change, people's culture evolves (or it regresses, it depends), society segments more and more and the pandemic we having been living in for more than 2 years is profoundly conditioning also our attitude towards the central topic of our existence, the one about health.
In an historical phase like this, **imagining for wine to be left unharmed was maybe too optimistic.**

Of course, **we are witnessing an attack to the wine consumption**

that has no precedents and this, according to me, can be attributed to a scientific world that, in some measure, more or less consciously, want their voice be heard after two years during which they have been questioned.

And maybe this is the kind of **strong confrontation between societies**, companies and representatives of the scientific world, that actually plays the game. A difficult game in which the wine consumption is involved.

It seems that the sanitary organizations are saying: “If you demand us certainties, then **we respond with strictness on every level,** nobody excluded, highlighting all the possible risks that may emerge from any food typology, maybe even from water”.

So, we have entered a “risk zero” research era where in the name of prevention we are willing to actualize politics that lack common sense. It is clear that this is not a great news, even if, from some aspects, **it seems a sort of “collateral damage” to the situation that we are living in.**

Of course, it may be objected that the wine sector has been fearing those kind of risks for years, starting from the so called Nutriscore that equalizes wine to any other food (with all the following “ingredient perversion”).
However, if the pandemic did not come, **along with its heavy baggage, also in the scientific world in its whole we probably would not have arrived to this point.**

All of this, from my point of view, **forces to bring the discussion back to the cultural front, instead of the legal one.**
In fact, if we demand legal answers to objections and worries from a sanitary level, I think that it will be a lost cause no matter what we do.
Instead, if we try to reason on cultural elements, then there may be some hope.

Macron talked about wine like “French cultural heritage” making it, to some extent, “untouchable”.
I am not yet convinced that this is actually the right path to take since we risk to intensify even more the polarization inside our societies between those that see wine as a true cultural heritage and those that, instead, (it is useless to pretend they do not exist) consider wine simply as an alcoholic beverage.

For this reason, **I think that it must be found a new way of communication and story for our extraordinary product,** in order to grow its knowledge inside different countries, both producers and non-producers.
I am well aware that it is not easy and, for some aspects, we are even late since for too long we have lingered on an elitist communication, with the result that today, also in a country with a long wine tradition like our own, there are not many wine lovers left.

It is sufficient to talk to some relative or friend to realize the depth of the wine “ignorance”.
If a referendum on wine protection was to be made by the sanitary organizations, I am not really convinced that there would be and actual majority in our country.
This is a topic to think over.

It must not be forgotten – and the varieties of public notices that we are receiving lately are a testimony – that **not even in front of a common danger our wine world is able to unite.**

Every organization fight its own battle on their own and even if they are all saying more or less the same thing, they want their voices to be heard singularly.
I say this honestly: **this is not a great signal if we want to fight a battle with the right weapons.**