



Varietals of Capitalism: A Political Economy of the Changing Wine Industry (Cornell Studies in Political Economy)

By Xabier Itcaina, Antoine Roger, Andy Smith

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Varietals of Capitalism shows that politics is an omnipresent part of the economics of wine and of economic activity in general. Based on a four-year research project encompassing fieldwork in France, Spain, Italy, and Romania, Xabier Itcaina, Antoine Roger, and Andy Smith examine the causes and effects of a radical reform adopted at the EU level in 2008. Regulatory change politically transformed the rationale of EU support to the wine industry, from shaping the supply side to encouraging producers to adapt to the demands of a supposedly "new consumer."

To explain the adoption and impact of the reform, the authors develop an analytical framework to capture the actors—their perceptions, preferences, and interdependencies—within an industry crisscrossed by institutions located at the global, European, national, and local scales. This framework combines concepts and lessons from historical institutionalism and regulationist economics, Bourdieu's field theory, and the sociology of public policymaking. The authors reject accounts that attribute policy change simply to material determinants and "the invisible hand of the market." They emphasize the crucial importance of institutions within sectors of the economy, and propose ways to bolster constructivist approaches to political economy by linking industrial change to scientific and bureaucratic balances of power. This book's novel focus on different levels of institutional impact should prove influential in the study of the politics of industry, and more broadly within the comparative analysis of capitalism.

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- Sales Rank: #2731805 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-02-02
- Released on: 2016-02-02
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Editorial Review

Review

"*Varietals of Capitalism* is a truly wonderful book bringing *Premier grand cru classé* scholarship to bear on the political economy of wine. Layered, rich yet subtle, substantial and lingering long on the intellectual palate, this should be required reading for all students of markets seen in their proper social and political context, all institutionally minded social and political analysts, and anyone interested in the social, political, and economic processes underpinning the production of the wine in their glass."?Colin Hay, Sciences Po, Paris

"The taste of wine is political. This is the main proposition offered by the authors of this remarkable book about the transformation of the European wine industry. Informed by a constructivist perspective, *Varietals of Capitalism* shows how traditions, some of them centuries old, were uprooted by recent legislative reforms at the European level based on new interpretations of the challenges facing the industry from global competition. The book goes beyond exploring this transformation, providing new landmarks for a political economy that navigates between structuralism and voluntarism."?Jens Beckert, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies

"*Varietals of Capitalism* persuasively portrays the major 2008 reform in European wine regulations as part of a longer, larger process of political-economic change. Based on a four-country study that is simultaneously broad and fine-grained, this book builds an appealing study of the politics of wine into an important statement on political economy."?Craig Parsons, University of Oregon

About the Author

Xabier Itcaina is a research fellow at the CNRS-Centre Emile Durkheim, Sciences Po Bordeaux, University of Bordeaux. He is coeditor of *Politics of Religion in Western Europe: Modernities in Conflict?* and author of two books in French.

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