

WINE GROWING AND WINE MAKING AS A RESERVE OF FREEDOM FOR VASSALS

The Social and Economic Dimension of the Terroir of Moravian-Made Wine

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This study deals with wine growing in Southern Moravia. It utilizes the so-called “Terroir” theory, which rests on the assumption that the qualities of a specific wine are determined not only by natural factors, but also by economic and social developments. This is demonstrated using sources from around Znaim (Znoimo) and Nikolsburg (Mikulov) from the middle of the 17th century to the early 19th. Among the decisive factors the author discerns is freedom, resulting from the fact that vineyards and publican licences were not connected to a specific estate of the realm. In contrast to Bohemia, wine making in Moravia in this period increasingly became a peasant trade. Thus, vassals growing wine on micro plots became the leading force in wine growing and wine trade. At the same time, new technical developments arose, taking the form of cellar alleys on community fringes. The terroir of Moravian wines, and Moravia’s vivid wine culture, were shaped by this mixture uniting long-term legal phenomena, developments restricted to a specific time, and strictly local peripeteia (the author singles out a particular rebellion).