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## Hopgrowing in the Vineyard

### NEW ASPECTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WINE AND BEER REGIONS IN BAVARIA AND FRANCONIA FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

During my research work on the development of monastic wine-production in Bavaria, Austria and South-Tyrol (Italy) from 8<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century AD i became aware of a mayor change of southern Germany – especially Bavaria – from a wine consuming and producing region to a beer consuming and producing region in the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. This development made it possible that Bavaria is today nearly a synonym for good beer. Names like *Hofbraeuhaus*, *Kloster Andechs*, *Loewenbraeu*, *Spaten* and *Oktoberfest* dominate the imagination of drinks made in Bavaria. Because of this the also famous wines which grow in Franconia (the northern part of today's *Freistaat Bayern*) very rarely leave the country's borders and play hardly any role in the public image of Bavaria. For this cause it is important to state that the whole Bavaria (Franken and Altbayern) was a wine-country in the middle ages.

Long before the rise of beer as the main drink of the general population we can find local wine production as an important factor for regional economics in many parts of the country, where today only the toponymics give evidence<sup>2</sup>. A fine example is the famous city of Bamberg in the North: the seven hills this city was built on were planted with vines until at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup>. No sin-

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas OTTO WEBER (1999), Studien zum Weinbau der altbayerischen Kloester im Mittelalter. Altbayern – Österreichischer Donauraum – Suedtirol (Vierteljahrschrift fuer Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Beiheft 141), Stuttgart: Steiner, p. 375f.

<sup>2</sup> WEBER (1999), pp. 351-358.

<sup>3</sup> In 1602 Peter ZWEIDLER drew a map of Bamberg showing many vineyards within the city's borders. Edited in: Hans VOLLET (1988), Weltbild und Kartographie im Hochstift Bamberg (Die Plassenburg 47), Kulmbach, p. 82f.

gular vineyard has survived, but Bamberg became a city of big beer production. Another example is Weihenstephan: a monastery situated on a hill close to the bishop-seat of Freising (north of Munich). This monastery owned vineyards in South-Tyrol (near Bozen/Bolzano) and in Austria<sup>4</sup>. Today it is only known as the name of the «oldest brewery of the world».

To give an impression of this lost viticulture, I first want to show where wine was cultivated in Bavaria in the middle ages, then turn to the decline of wine-production and the development of beer-dominated regions by giving specific examples and I will try to explain the reasons of this development.

Medieval monasteries in general needed wine for table and liturgy. So there was need for either buying wine or producing it by themselves. The monasteries in Bavaria produced wine within the country, relatively near to their locations and far away in Austria and South-Tyrol (today part of Northern Italy) at least since the 8th century<sup>5</sup>. The wine from the far away possessions had to be transported over the mountains of the Alps or on the river Danube for 200 to 400 km. In the following I will give a short overview on the development of the cultivation of wine in these regions and then present the forms of organisation of monastic wine-production and wine-transportation.

## THE BACKGROUND: WINE PRODUCTION IN BAVARIA, AUSTRIA AND SOUTH-TYROL 8<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Vines were already cultivated in South Tyrol and parts of Austria and presumably also in southern Bavaria in the time of the roman empire. Continuity of this culture into the early middle ages is propable, but cannot be proven in written documents<sup>6</sup>.

In the early middle ages all the three described regions: the southern part of today's Bavaria, Tyrol and most of today's Austria were part of the bavarian dukedom (*Stammesherzogtum*)<sup>7</sup>. Bishop-churches and monasteries within this dukedom give us the first informations about the cultivation of wine in the regions. In the first decades of the 8th century we find vineyards in the valleys of the river Danube, Amper and Isar, in the hills between the rivers Inn and Danube and in the alpine basin of Bozen in South Tyrol<sup>8</sup>. In 788 AD King Charlemagne dethroned

<sup>4</sup> WEBER (1999), p. 129f.

<sup>5</sup> WEBER (1999), pp. 351-353.

<sup>6</sup> WEBER (1999), pp. 28-39.

<sup>7</sup> Kurt REINDEL (1981), *Grundlegung: Das Zeitalter der Agilolfinger (Bis 788)*, in: Max Spindler, *Handbuch der bayerischen Geschichte I*, Muenchen 2nd edition, pp. 101-245.

<sup>8</sup> WEBER (1999), pp. 40-66

the bavarian duke Tassilo III and by this ended the Bavarian tribal-dukedom (*Stammeshertzogtum*) and lead to an inclusion into the empire of Charlemagne<sup>9</sup>. After the conquest of the eastern territories of the defeated Awarish people, the newly conquered land had to be organized and partially repopulated. The royal monasteries and the seats of bishops of Bavaria were the most important factors in this organisation. Especially in the Wachau-region, today Austrias most prestigious wine-region, the monasteries of Bavaria were the founders and promoters of wine cultivation. Whole winegrowing villages were founded and organized within the widespreading monastic seigniorialty.

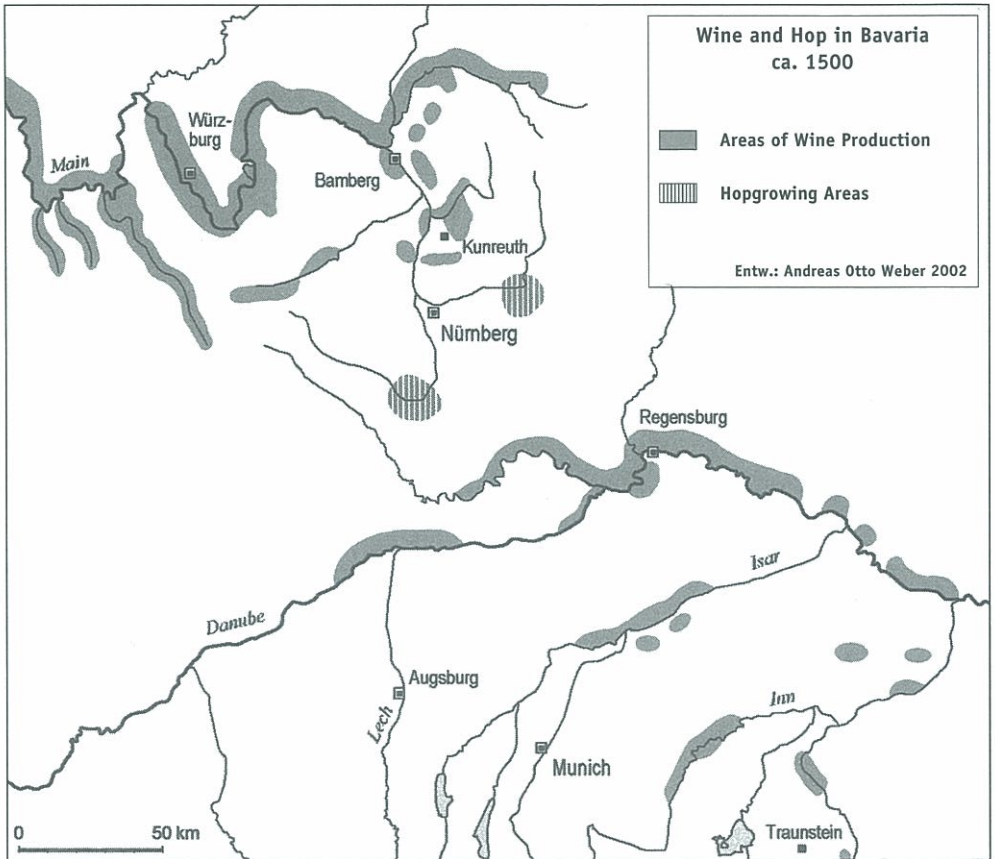
In this time we also find the first proofs for vinegrowing in the North of Bavaria, in the region which is today called Franconia<sup>10</sup>. The earliest center of wine-production here in the valley of the Main-River certainly was the city and castle of Wuerzburg even if we do not have documents. Due to attacks of the Madjars from Hungary the documentation for the 10<sup>th</sup> century is very sparse, but after their defeat near Augsburg in 955 we can assume a recovery of wine-production too, especially in the reconquered regions in the east (Austria). As in most parts of Europe the 11<sup>th</sup> century is a time of big expansion of the cultivation of the vine in Southern Germany, especially in the valleys of the Danube and Isar in Bavaria, in Austria in the Wachau-Valley and its environs and in South-Tyrol in the basin of Bozen. This expansion of the vine is still exceeded by that of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Main factors of this development were the growth of population and the many new founded monasteries which all developed their own wine-production be it near or far from their own location. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century wine-production begins to concentrate around the wine cities Regensburg in Bavaria, Bozen in South-Tyrol and Krems in Austria. In some cases we can see a doubling of the vineyards since the later 11<sup>th</sup> century. Even less favoured terrains are now being used to grow vines.

This development continues in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century, more and more showing the concentration of vine-cultivation around the named cities and other younger wine-cities like Vienna or Meran. In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Century we have sufficient informations about the Wine-Regions of Franconia. Vines are now planted all along the river Main and it's side-rivers<sup>11</sup>. Around 1500 in Bavaria and Franconia wine is an important product of nearly all climatically favoured valleys and the main alcoholic drink of the general population (see map 1).

<sup>9</sup> REINDEL (1981), p. 175f.

<sup>10</sup> Winfried SCHENK (1994), 1200 Jahre Weinbau in Mainfranken – Eine Zusammenschau aus geographischer Sicht, in: Wuerzburger Geographische Arbeiten 89, pp. 179-201 (with further literature).

<sup>11</sup> Wilhelm STOERMER/Andreas OTTO WEBER (2001), Weinbau und Weinhandel in Staedten und Maerkten des Mainvierecks, in: Helmut Bauer/Elke Schlenkrich (ed.), Die Stadt als Kommunikationsraum. Beitrage zur Stadtgeschichte vom Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert (Festschrift fuer Karl Czok zum 75. Geburtstag), pp. 740-742; SCHENK (1994), p. 185f.



A fine proof for this statement can be found in the Bavarian Chronicle of the important humanistic historian Johannes Aventinus. In a description of the Morals of Bavaria at the beginning of his Chronicle Aventinus shows the general habits of the Bavarian population around 1533:

*«The Bavarian does what he wants to do, sits around drinking wine all day and night, he is shouting, singing, dancing, playing cards and games, carrying long knives. To celebrate big and unnecessary weddings, funerals and church consecration-festivals is honorable and not forbidden...»<sup>12</sup>*

<sup>12</sup> Original text: Der Bayer «tut sonst, was er will, sitzt Tag und Nacht bei dem Wein, schreit, singt, tanzt, kartet, spielt, mag Wehr tragen, Schweinspieß und lange Messer. Große und ueberfluessige Hochzeiten, Totenmahle und Kirchweihen zu haben ist ehrenhaft und unstraeflich, gereicht keinem zum Nachteil, bekommt keinem uebel» (Georg LEIDINGER, (Hg.), Johannes Aventinus, Bayerische Chronik, München 1988, S. 58).

How did Bavaria and parts of Franconia become beer-countries?

One of Bavaria's oldest and biggest monasteries, the abbey of St. Emmeram in Regensburg, used to be a mayor wine-producer and owner of vineyards on the steep banks of the Danube since the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In an inventory of possessions and tenures of the monastery from 1349 we find the first information on the possibility of hopgrowing in a vineyard: the tenants who were producing wine in their vineyards had to pay 1/3 of their harvest of grapes to the landlord. Tenants who were growing hop in the same location had to give 50% of the harvest. This shows: the monastery does not promote hopgrowing in vineyards, but it does accept the tenant's will to plant hop. Wine is still dominating the monastery's income here, but the city-market of Regensburg already requires hop-production for beer-brewing. This tendency to hopgrowing in the vineyards shows us the existence of a change of taste within the drinking habits in Bavaria. More and more people seem to favour beer instead of the until then common wine. Was a climatic change which made the wine worse and worse the reason for this development? Until today this is the common explanation in many regions of lost viticulture<sup>13</sup>. If we consider our document of 1349 and compare it with the latest researches on climatic change in middle-Europe we can definitely state, that the change of the drinking habits in Regensburg took place during the so called «medieval climate optimum», more than 100 years before the so called «little ice age»<sup>14</sup>. Therefore climatic influences on wine-quality cannot be the main reasons for the populations turn to beer instead of locally produced wine in this period.

An important document of the changing drinking habits and tastes in the next 200 years is an act of Duke Albrecht V. of Bavaria from 1567, in which the duke declares that the wheatbeer is gaining importance all over the country of Bavaria. He considers this beer as a very unuseful drink, which does not *«feed nor lead, that doesn't give strength nor power. It only makes those who drink it want to drink more and more, so that more and more money is spent on beer than on wine, from which a poor and hardworking man has more refreshment and nourishment»*<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Winfried SCHENK (1994), pp 187-189 gives a good overview on the different opinions for Franconia.

<sup>14</sup> Ruediger GLASER (2001), *Klimageschichte Mitteleuropas. 1000 Jahre Wetter, Klima, Katastrophen*, Darmstadt, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Muenchen, Bestand Kurbayern, Mandatesammlung, Nr. 1567/XI/22; I thank Karl Gatteringer M.A. for giving me information about this record. Original text: *Das Weißbier, das allerorten im Land ueberhand nehmen will, ist «gar ein vnnuez getranck / das weder fuuert noch nert / weder sterck / krafft noch macht gibt / vnd dahin gericht ist / das es die Zechleut / oder diejenigen dies trincken / nur zu mehrerm trincken raizt vnd vrsacht / also das mehrer gelts darum vertroncken wirdet / als imm wein / dauon doch ein armer arbeitamer Mann ein mehrere erquickung vnd narung hett/...».*

We see that Duke Albrecht is definitely favouring wine as the general drink for his people, but he realises the change of taste is in a high stage of development. This changes totally during the reign of his son and successor, Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria. Unlike his predecessor he now promotes the production and consumption of wheatbeer in his dukedom with all his power. Maximilian is in my opinion highly responsible for the decline of Bavarian wine-culture. By founding court-breweries in Munich, Kelheim and Traunstein he begins to make beerbrewing an important factor in the dukedoms financial income<sup>16</sup>. To promote beer consumption he even organized market-analyses and marketing for the wheatbeer his breweries brewed in monopoly. Free beer was given to the population of Traunstein, which at that time was used to wine from Austria. The documents of this marketing-actions show that the population appreciated the new kind of beer. In the next decade the taverns within the dukedom were forced to tap beer brewed by the duke.

Through this wheatbeer was literally pushed into the country and wine became less and less important for the average Bavarian. As a result the duke gained financial income not only by taxing consumption, but also from the original production of the beverage!

This seems to have been the duke's main point of interest. At this point it is important to note, that this development took place mainly before the 30-Years-War, in which many authors have seen the reason for the decline of bavarian viticulture.

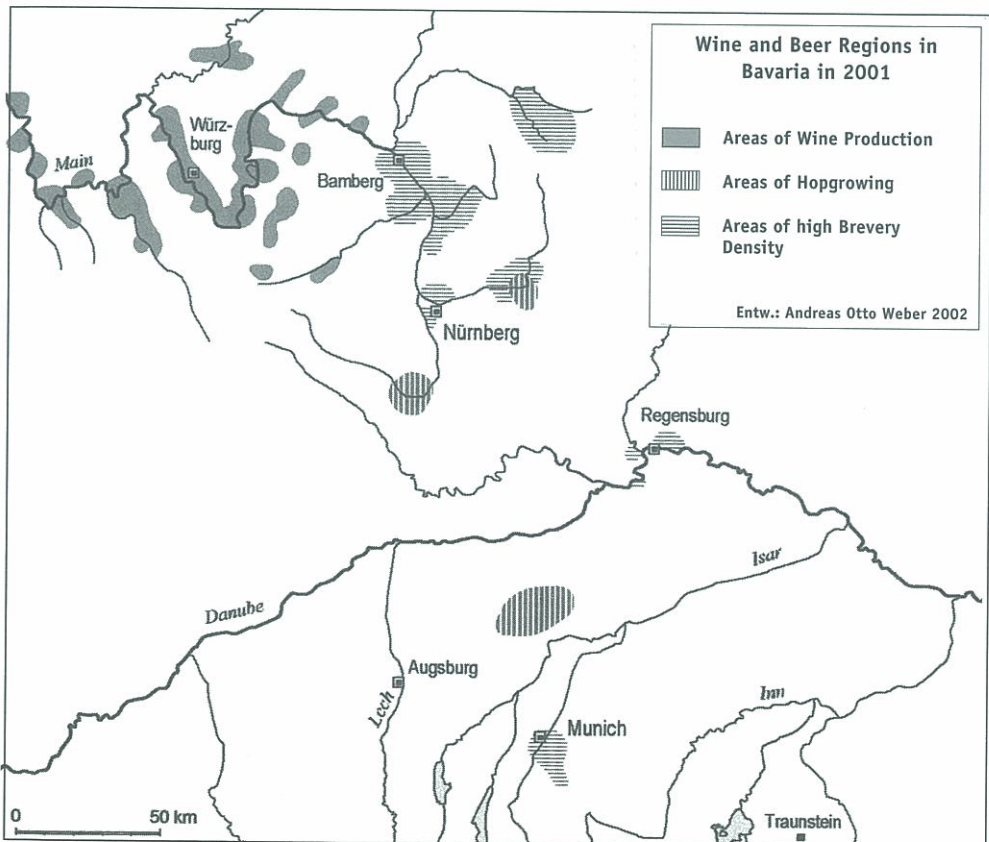
My next example is the little village of Kunreuth in Franconia. This village was dominated since around 1348 by the Barons of Egloffstein. This noble family owned a castle here and was landlord of all the families of Kunreuth and of several villages around. In 1556 the economic documents show that the village was a farming and handcraft dominated community with some vineyards<sup>17</sup>. These vineyards were divided between the Baron's own economy and the owner of the local tavern. There is no information about beer consumption nor beer brewing within this village in 1556, only wine consumption is taxed and mentioned. In 1728 Kunreuth still produces some wine in it's vineyards, but there is also a new factor: Within the inner courtyard of the castle the Barons have established a beer-brewery<sup>18</sup>. Brewing is reserved to the tenant of the local tavern and – only for his own needs – to the priest. The innkeeper may not brew elsewhere and may only tap beer from the castle-brewery. The beer he brews here is also sold to

<sup>16</sup> Karl GATTINGER (Munich) is currently preparing a thesis on Maximilian's brewery politics at University of Munich. All references will be published in his forthcoming book.

<sup>17</sup> Schloßarchiv Kunreuth, B 20 [b]: Urbar des Claus von Egloffstein (1556), fol. 27-40. I thank the family of the Counts and Barons von und zu Egloffstein for the opportunity to use their archive.

<sup>18</sup> Schloßarchiv Kunreuth, B 21 [a]: Urbar des Kastenamtes Kunreuth (1728), fol. 229f.

the surrounding villages where the Barons have land and tenants. No beer from other breweries may be brought into the village of Kunreuth. This example shows us how the feudal landlord tries to profit from the changing drinking habits and tastes from wine to beer. Like Duke Maximilian the Barons of Egloffstein gained financial income not only by taxing consumption of wine and beer, but also from the original production of the main beverage, which they controlled totally by building the brewery within their castle. Until 1780 this also leads to the end of the local viticulture: Hop is planted in the old vineyard, only the name «Weingarten» remains until today.



## CONCLUSION

My examples from Bavaria and Franconia show the importance of the changing drinking habits and tastes of the general population for the decline of viticulture in Bavaria and Franconia. Together with this the economic intention of local and

regional rulers to profit from this development in my opinion are important facts for the development of wine or beer favouring regions. The given examples certainly are not enough to exclude the common explanations for the decline of viticulture in middle Europe: climatic changes. But I think it would be very useful to research the drinking habits and tastes of the population before we argument with climatic change or war without having direct proofable links to this development.