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Charles University
Faculty of Arts

Institute of World History

MĚLNÍK WINES D.O. LABEL: SELF-
IDENTIFICATION AND THE PERCEPTION OF
CULTURAL HERITAGE

Master's Thesis

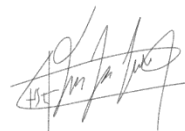
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Budapest and Prague, 2023

Hereby I declare that I worked out this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature, and I did not present it to obtain another academic degree.

Prague, May 15, 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. F. Molina Aguirre', written over a grid of lines.

Giovanni F. Molina Aguirre

Abstrakt a klíčová slova

Tato diplomová práce si klade za cíl prozkoumat historický a současný vývoj vinařství a jeho vliv a podíl na sebeidentifikaci obyvatelstva na Mělnicku v Čechách. Práce hodnotí míru regionální identity, vinařského dědictví a vazby na vinařský průmysl v regionu. Pro získání přesnějšího obrazu o současném stavu místního vinařství byl proveden terénní výzkum se subjekty navázanými na vinařskou profesi na Mělnicku. Dále bylo provedeno dotazníkové šetření formou klíčových slov vyplývajících z volných asociací skupiny českých studentů, které odhalilo jejich představy a obecné vztahy k mělnickému regionu.

Výsledky odhalily vývoj, výrobní proces a výzvy mělnického regionu s ohledem na konkurenční evropský trh, stejně jako jejich snahu o zachování a zhodnocení dědictví regionu a udržení rovnováhy mezi cestovním ruchem a výrobou vína. Blízkost Prahy ovlivnila i vznik zeměpisné ochranné známky VOC Mělník, která byla v České republice zavedena jako poslední v roce 2015.

Klíčová slova

víno; dědictví; identita; Čechy; Mělník

Abstract

This thesis aims to examine the historical evolution of wine production and the population's sense of self-identification in the Mělník region of Bohemia, Czech Republic. In addition, assess the extent of regional identity, wine heritage, and ties to the wine industry presence in the region. Field research was conducted with Mělník wine industry stakeholders to obtain a more accurate picture of the current state of the wine business. In addition, another field questionnaire was administered to Czech students regarding their emotions and general associations with the Mělník region.

The results revealed the development, productive process, and challenges of Mělník concerning a competitive European market and their efforts to preserve and enhance the area's heritage and maintain a balance between tourism and wine production. The proximity to Prague has also influenced the development of the wine geographically protected label VOC Mělník, which was the last one to be implemented in the Czech Republic in 2015.

Keywords

wine; heritage; identity; Bohemia; Mělník

Résumé en Français

Ce mémoire vise à examiner l'évolution historique de la production de vin et le sentiment d'auto-identification de la population dans la région de Mělník en Bohême, République Tchèque. En outre, il évalue l'étendue de l'identité régionale, du patrimoine viticole et des liens avec l'industrie du vin dans la région. Des recherches sur le terrain ont été menées auprès des acteurs de l'industrie viticole de Mělník afin d'obtenir une image plus précise de l'état actuel de l'industrie viticole. De plus, un questionnaire sous forme de mots-clés résultant d'associations libres d'un groupe des étudiants tchèques a été mené, mettant à jour leurs associations, affinités et les relations générales qu'ils entretiennent avec la région de Mělník.

Les résultats ont révélé le développement, le processus de production et les défis de la région de Mělník concernant un marché européen compétitif, ainsi que leurs efforts pour préserver et améliorer le patrimoine de la région et maintenir un équilibre entre le tourisme et la production de vin. La proximité de Prague a également influencé le développement du label de protection géographique du vin VOC Mělník, qui a été le dernier à être mis en œuvre en République Tchèque en 2015.

Mots-clés

vin; patrimoine; identité; Bohême; Mělník

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I want to thank the TEMA+ European Territories - Heritage and Development program for allowing me to participate in this experience. Thank you to all my mentors at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and Charles University in Prague for sharing their knowledge with me over the last two years. I would also like to express my appreciation to my supervisors, Mgr. Eva Hajdinová, Ph.D., and Péter Erdősi, Ph.D., who gave me guidance and certainty in times of doubt. I would also like to offer my gratitude to the faculty and staff of Charles University, who have provided me with an intellectually engaging environment and the resources necessary to finish my research.

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My family and my friends deserve the greatest amount of gratefulness for their unwavering support during my entire educational path. Their unflinching affection and encouragement have been an ever-present source of drive and determination for me.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the people who took part in this research and were willing to share their experiences and time with me. This study would not have been able to proceed if the participants had not been willing to take part in it. I would want to thank each and every one of you for your encouragement and support, as well as for helping to make this trip a genuinely worthwhile experience.

Table of contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	8
1.1 Research question	
1.2 Personal motivation	
1.3 Methodology	
1.3.1 Interview sample	
1.4 Thesis overview	
Chapter 2: Definitions and Framework	16
2.1 Region	
2.2 Heritage and its Actors	
2.3 Identity	
2.4 Wine labeling	
2.4.1 APPELLATION, VOC, and other labels	
2.4.2 Czech Wines: Definition and productive regions	
2.4.3 Czech Wine Label and national brand: <i>Vino z České Republiky</i>	
2.4.4 Institutions Involved and Legislation.	
Chapter 3: Mělník Wine Position in The Czech Wine Scenario: Production and Generalities	38
3.1 Description of Mělník	
3.1.1 Location, Size, Population, and Density	
3.1.2 Climate and Landscape	
3.1.3 Transport	
3.1.4 Historical Importance and Evolution	
3.2 Mělník Region Wine Industry	
3.2.1 Mělník VOC -Vína Originální Certifikace- Label	
3.3 Current situation	
3.4 Actors	
Chapter 4: Mělník for the Tourists	56
4.1 Material available for tourists	
4.1.1 Brochure Mělník Town Guide	

4.1.1.1 Wine History and Religion	
4.1.2 Mělník Town Map	
4.1.3 Mělník Regional Museum exhibition	
4.2 <i>Věnné Město</i> , Mělník Castle and the Lobkowitz Family	
4.2.1 Chateau <i>Hořín</i>	
4.3 Tourism in Bohemia	
4.3.1 Cycling tourism	
Chapter 5: Mělník at a Locals' Perspective	96
5.1 Identity in Mělník in Theory	
5.2 Analysis of the Interviews	
5.2.1 Relation of the Interviewees to wine production in Mělník	
5.2.2 Feeling of Association with wine production in Mělník	
5.2.3 Mělník VOC/WOC Label	
5.2.4 Feelings towards the Mělník VOC/WOC Label	
5.2.5 Sense of pride related to wine production in Mělník.	
5.2.6 Extent of identification with local wine production in Mělník.	
5.2.7 Events Related to wine production in Mělník.	
5.2.8 History and development of wine production in Mělník.	
5.2.9 Innovations or Changes to Mělník Cultural Wine Heritage	
5.2.10 Additional inquiries	
5.3 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaires	
Conclusions and Final Considerations	130
References	135
Annexes	139

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research question

Most of the European wine industry today revolves around regional geographic labeling status. This phenomenon results from the need to differentiate and position European Wine among others while facing fierce global competition between diverse types and origins. With the evolution of wine technology, all the global production dynamics have changed. Technology has allowed nontraditional global spread regions to produce high-quality wines; this transition has increased the number of competitors in the industry, challenging the traditional ones to cope with the new scenario. Labeled wines assure quality and distinction and distinguish the wineries under this label by allowing them to position their product globally with excellent added value.

Regional wine labeling recognition has become one of the paths to have a product able to compete internationally for a portion of the selling and tourism markets. Cases like Tokaj in Northeastern Hungary are the example of first, having a regional label and second, having pursued a cultural heritage status recognition which has assured them a double certification on their wines. The cultural landscape of Tokaj¹ demonstrates a long tradition of wine production in this region of low hills and river valleys of Tisza and Bodrog. The intricate pattern of vineyards, farms, villages, and small towns, with their historic networks of deep wine cellars, illustrates every facet of the production of the famous Tokaj wines, the quality and management of which have been strictly regulated for nearly three centuries. Therefore, the concept of cultural heritage is intrinsically entangled with studying and planning current policies for developing a wine region. Vineyards worldwide have undertaken the challenge of working towards either an origin label certification or a cultural landscape recognition (or both) to attract more visibility and market shares.

This thesis focuses on one of the cases of Origin label recognition in the Czech Republic: The wine-producing sub-region of *Mělník WOC* "Wines of Original Certification"

¹ Description of Tokaj Cultural Landscape by UNESCO is available under license CC-BY-SA IGO 3.0 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/licenses/6>. From <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1063/>

in Bohemia. The historical development of the wines of Mělník and its population's perception of possible regional identification, the wine heritage, and the regional label status are the focus points of this thesis, which aims to address the main research questions:

- How has the production of wine in Mělník affected the locals' sense of regional identity?
- Has the Mělník VOC label had an impact on Mělník's wine identity?
- What is the heritage status of the region?
- Which keywords do Czech students from Charles University associate with Mělník?
- What are the challenges for the future of the region?

1.2 Personal Motivation

A desire I've had for a very long time is to learn more about wine, particularly on a theoretical level, as it's one of my favorite subjects. Since the production of wine is relatively recent in my country, it is difficult to find an academic program that will allow you to examine wine through the lens of heritage. This is because we do not consider winemaking to be an issue that falls under the purview of heritage. The viability of the idea was improved by the TEMA+ Heritage and Identity program concept. I was able to find the missing connection of their significance in the process of winemaking because the program provided me with the tools to evaluate the case through the various players and practices that were involved. By doing so, we are moving one step closer to our goal, which is to discuss a conventional product and its associated people, together with how these elements are portrayed in the bigger picture. Because we view the production of wine not as a simple industrial process but rather as an integrated collection of knowledge, practices, historical events, and products, we are better able to comprehend the requirements of the region and incorporate them into the formulation of more effective public policy. If I accomplish this, I will put this knowledge to use and be able to contribute to the growth of many areas within my nation. The creation of a certain cheese, jam, or wine is often an important focal point in regions that are primarily focused on agricultural production. My ability to migrate some of

these practices internationally is ensured by the fact that I am nourishing myself academically with this firsthand private and public contact as well as regional solidarity.

1.3 Methodology

This work proposes a qualitative analysis of the following topics:

- Analyze the Czech Wine labels and national brands to comprehend the wines' visual branding and use.
- Analyze available wine production reports² and understand better the state of the local wine industry: Location, size, and current production.
- To analyze the Mělník Regional Museum exhibition brochure. To understand how the Mělník Regional Museum presents its Wine history.
- To better understand which information is passed to the general visitor regarding the region's winemaking, analyze the tourism brochure/map (available at the authorized information center).
- Interview Mělník local stakeholders connected to wine production to understand the local perspective and contrast it with the one presented to the tourists.
- A questionnaire to students from the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague. To try to evaluate, although on a limited set of correspondents, the image of the Mělník region present among Czech University students in Charles University Prague regarding Mělník wines and heritage. It was requested that questionnaires be answered freely. There was no stress placed on the relevance of the wine area, only free associations with the Mělník region as a whole.

As stated in this list, this work will include a qualitative analysis to help create a profile of the Mělník WOC sub-region regarding its position in the Czech Republic's wine production using statistical reports from the Czech Ministry of Agriculture and the *Národní Vinařské Centrum*. These sources include the legislation on WOC and local policies

² This work includes the analysis of the following reports: Ministerstvo Zemědělství. 2020. Situační a výhledová zpráva. Réva vinná a víno.; Národní Vinařské Centrum, o.p.s. 2022. Vinařské Centrum.; Svobodová, Ilona, Věžník, Antonín and Král, Michael. "Viticulture in The Czech Republic: Some Spatio-Temporal Trends" Moravian Geographical Reports, vol.22, no.1., and Vinařský Fond. 2022. Vinařský Fond.

regarding wine labeling in the Czech Republic and data production statistics published by the Ministry of Agriculture.

A second analysis will identify the historical and cultural elements in the brochure edited and published by the Mělník Regional Museum, using information from physical and online archives. This analysis includes the physical exhibition, printed documents, and the vast Wine labeling historical archive at the Mělník Regional Museum, the region's history literature regarding establishing a traditional wine-producing in the area. It will also include the analysis of the map tourists get when visiting the town.

In terms of the comparative strategy proposed in this study, further research is necessary with the help of the secondary literature to gather evidence and have a better knowledge of the components that contribute to acquiring a broader range of perspectives of the people immersed in the winemaking process.

In addition, to complete the information gathered from a local point of view, this work proposes interviews with stakeholders involved in the cultural, policy-making, and wine production spheres to get a firsthand perspective of the region.

I propose a semi-structured interview with the relevant actors in the local wine industry. Semi-structured interviews frequently have an open-ended format that promotes flexibility and a sense of order while adhering to a specified theme framework. The study subject's exploratory nature led to this methodology's selection.

The target group comprises five interviews with people related to the subject—winemakers, local museum workers, and political decision-makers.

Among them are Mělník Regional Museum Staff, Mělník political actors, and wine producers. The interviews were conducted offline or online, entirely in English, between January 2023-March 2023.

The questions for the students were conducted in April 2023 at Charles University in Prague.

The following is the sample of the interview proposed:

1.3.1 INTERVIEW SAMPLE

WINES FROM MĚLNÍK RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

- Thank you for agreeing to help with this research project.
- The interview should take around 45 minutes.
- This project aims to analyze the state of the current wine production in the Mělník area.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Topic: state of wine production in Mělník

- Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?
- Which changes have you perceived in the local wine industry/production since 2015?
- What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [*Vína Originální Certifikace* – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].? What does it mean to you?
- In the case of YES, how does this label make you feel?

Topic: Personal relations to wine production in Mělník

- How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job or hobby? How?
- Are you proud of it?
- Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?
- To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?
- Can you please describe how you identify yourself with local wine production? (occasions).
- Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.?
- How are they related to the wine-production process?

- What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

1.3.2 STUDENTS' SAMPLE AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Young individuals frequently contribute a new point of view to a discussion, giving it a "fresh perspective." They might have had varying experiences, perspectives, and ideas in the past, all of which could be beneficial to our research. Their point of view can offer a fresh viewpoint on a subject that may not have been taken into account previously. In order to guarantee that the interview process represents a varied variety of viewpoints and histories, it is important to conduct interviews with participants of all ages, and one way to do this is by including young people. This can be of utmost significance if the subject matter being addressed is relevant to young people or if the interview is geared toward a younger demographic of readers. Young people are the future of society, and their participation can help ensure that any research has a future-oriented perspective.

In the matter of Mělník, and in light of the fact that the series of interviews were carried out with an older professional group, we came to the conclusion that it was necessary to go with the questionnaire so that the students would have material to compare and examine various points of view.

We selected a group of twenty-seven students from the Charles University of the Humanities area who are not part of research pertaining to the regional economy, agricultural advances, regional administrative studies, or cultural heritage. This piece of work operates under the hypothesis that the individuals in question have a fairly strong general cultural understanding as well as an open-minded curiosity in traveling, visiting places, and experiencing them both from the point of view of their history and culture and also from the point of view of the consumer.

The following is the sample of the questionnaire proposed:

SAMPLE

Dotazník-volná asociace na téma Mělnický region

Podklad pro magisterskou práci programu Tema Master+European Societies: Heritage and Development
Téma: Wine labeling in Mělník wine subregion and self-identification towards cultural heritage (Giovanni Molina Aguirre)

Dotazník:

Křestní jméno studenta:

Místo narození:

Studijní obor:

4-5 slov/sousloví na téma region Mělnicko:

TRANSLATION

Questionnaire-free association on the topic of the Mělník region

Basis for the master thesis of the Tema Master+European Societies: Heritage and Development

Subject: Wine labelling in Mělník wine subregion and self-identification towards cultural heritage (Giovanni Molina Aguirre)

Questionnaire

Student's first name:

Place of birth:

Field of study:

4-5 words/phrases about the region of Mělník:

1.4 Thesis Overview

This work proposes an analysis of the various forms and objectives of contemporary regions, with a particular focus on Anssi Paasi's region theory as part of the theoretical references. This theory describes regions as intricate institutional structures that are reliant on human agreement and the operations and choices that are made within the context of social institutions.

This study will adhere to the premise that up until this point, the "cultural landscape" and "resilience" methods have been different frameworks for appreciating the effects of the processes and how they may be modified or managed. This is how the cultural landscape theory will be applied to this work. Global interconnection has become a highly powerful phenomenon that is driving cultural landscape change, as Plieningeran T and Bieling C. demonstrate in their study titled "Connecting cultural landscapes to resilience." This is because, as events and decisions from distant regions increasingly dominate landscapes, global interconnectedness has become a highly influential phenomenon. According to Plieningeran (Plieningeran 2012), globalization influences the appearance of landscapes through the proliferation of technology, increasing investment in land information flows, patterns of migration, and increased international commerce and trade.

As part of the identity theory, the leading work to be followed is the research conducted by Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, which casts doubt on the concept that identity is a fixed and indispensable characteristic that must be possessed by all individuals or members of a group. They think that the idea of identity is complex and multidimensional and that it is generated by the interaction of components that are social, cultural, and historical. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) contend that the concept of identity ought to be seen more as a process than as a predetermined quality and that it is in the process of being continuously negotiated and redefined in relation to other identities.

Checking to see if these theoretical conceptions can be applied and, if they are, if they have altered Mělník's heritage, environment, physical restrictions, and opportunities through external and internal social, economic, and cultural elements will be the subject of this thesis analysis.

Chapter 2: Definitions and Framework

The following chapter aims to refine concepts such as region, cultural landscape, identity, and wine labeling notions and categories in the Czech Republic and frame the research on the *Mělník* VOC label.

2.1 Region

In the context of this work, the region ought to be considered critically important, both academically and practically, for undertaking an examination of an area. If we investigate the process by which modernity emerged in human cultures, we will find that a significant number of elements contributed to the evolution of Europe's various areas. The region began to disintegrate beginning in the nineteenth century, and state-centric spatiality was a contributing factor. During the eighteenth century, many national governments failed to recognize the significance of regional differences. Numerous states' governments, including those of France, Italy, and Spain, have made attempts, with varying degrees of success, to do away with the regional or provincial particularities that exist within their territories.

On the other hand, regions have a long and storied history of exerting significant influence in federal states such as Germany and Austria. Because of their influence and primacy in the process of constructing national identities, regions were, in general, impediments to the establishment of the modern state and the construction of national identities during that time period. The economic development, political history, and modern "identity" of the various areas of Europe are very different from one another.

One of the specialists who intensively analyzed the regional phenomenon, and its identities is Finnish geographer Anssi Paasi.³ He considers that regions constantly reflect uneven power relations because they serve as the products and the constituents of social action, the regular participation of some players in creating local imagination, awareness, and

³ Paasi's research has focused on the social construction and identity of Finland and its regions, territorial theory and the changing meanings of territory, territories and borders in political geography, globalization theory and geopolitical imagination, regional Europe and regional planning, among other topics.

space. Instead, most people reproduce or "consume" them. Thus, regions may not even matter to them. Politicians, business owners, media and cultural industry players, teachers, and researchers—to mention a few—are frequently activists who play a crucial role in establishing and sculpting the identities and meanings of local regions. This idea is unquestionably true regarding how "Europe" is defined but also holds true at smaller sizes. Activists are crucial in forming attitudes, organization of movements, and even separatists in political regionalism (Paasi, *Regions and Regional Dynamics* 2009).

According to Paasi, the terms "region" and "social" cannot be separated because the processes, underlying motivations, and power connections that are discussed here have an effect on the administration, politics, economy, or other aspects. They may originate from within the region under consideration or from another location entirely, and they engage in a myriad of interactions throughout the process of constructing each territory. Alterations are also being made to the objectives and considerations that led to the development of space. Therefore, regions are not isolated islands; rather, they are made up of networks and activities that extend far beyond the confines of each region's borders. At this point in time, this setting is primarily where the global neoliberal environment can be found. In addition to having beginnings and endings, regions are also distinct in both time and space.

Darko B. Vukovic from Tomsk Polytechnic University, and Dmitry M. Kochetkov from Ural Federal University, consider that regional studies are right at the center of scientific and political discourse at the moment; regional issues acquire a special significance in countries with a transition economy. However, they still have no clear definition of "region." In their work, they approach many definitions of the region, one in particular from Hans-Jürgen Puhle, a German historian and political scientist, who defines a region as any territory larger than a district but smaller than a state. In the traditional historical sense, "region" refers to both the geographical area and the classic French institutional landscape unit. It can also refer to some traditional territories or administrative provinces, such as Lombardy, Catalonia, Wales, or Franconia. The same author claims that regions can also be manufactured. The state can regionalize a portion of the federal government with a single political decision. The historic regions, conversely, have their own regional identity, coherence, tradition, shared history, experience, and unique language (Vukovic 2017, 78). The region's definition may be

a natural-geographical determinant. According to Carl Ritter (Vukovic 2017, 80), a region is an ideal structure where nature and man unite. This author claims that a region is a chronological unit comprising a particular geographic area and its content that emerged in a specific past/historical moment. The earth's surface is uneven and made up of many different regions; each is produced as a result of how humans adapted to living in societies with specific environmental conditions. The region's determinants include more social factors, with historical, political, economic, cultural, and other factors predominating.

The study of the Mělník wine region demands paying closer attention to the region's structure in order to determine which, if any, of the previously discussed region concepts are applicable to the specific situation of the Mělník wine region. In addition to developing a cohesive and distinctive vision, one must investigate each to identify traits that are compatible. According to Puhle's idea of region, Mělník satisfies the requirements for a territory because it is larger than a district while at the same time is smaller than a state. This dichotomy is what allows it to fulfill these requirements.

After several visits to the town and having talked to the people there, as well as, more formally, through planned interviews, I dare say that politicians, business owners, members of the educational/cultural space, and scholars all contribute to the framing of identities and meanings in the Mělník area in accordance with Passi's concept. As a part of this analysis, giving close and thoughtful attention to the following aspects: the constituency of the actors; the genuineness of the social actors; local imagination, awareness, and space creation, this work will contrast this hypothesis because wine production spaces are traditionally constrained to a regional scale/unit, not the national one. This is because wine production spaces are similar to many other specific agricultural products.

2.2 Heritage and its Actors

The natural splendor, historical importance, and cultural customs that come together to form the unique culture of winemaking in the Czech Republic are incomparable to anything else. The land that produces the country's wine is divided up into many distinct regions. Each one features a distinctive landscape and cultural traditions. In recent years, efforts have been made to protect and promote the wine culture of the Czech Republic as an

important part of the country's legacy as a cultural nation. The history of wine production in the country has been displayed in a wide variety of museums and cultural institutions.

Additionally, there are programs that assist regional vintners and promote tourism for the wine industry. Wine holds a significant place in the cultural history of the Czech Republic and plays an important role in many of the country's traditions and rituals. For the purpose of this study, the proposed case of Mělník will be examined in subsequent chapters, in which the Mělník Regional Museum and its exhibition regarding the history of wine and its presence in the configuration of Mělník's identity will be dissected and evaluated.

Heritage-rich areas have interesting stories to share about their past. These tales have much to teach us about people's identities on a local, regional, or global scale, as well as about the past. Regional development experts should pay particular attention to their region's legacy because it is such a major asset. The heritage of a location is what conveys its history, identity, and significance; in other words, what sets it apart from other places. According to Eversole, the most obvious application of heritage for people who are involved in the process of regional development is to attract tourists to the area, particularly those who are interested in historical tourism. However, the role that heritage plays in the development of a region is significantly more important than heritage tourism. An investigation into the concept of heritage can provide more information on the qualities, identity, and history of the region.

Additionally, there are programs that assist regional vintners and promote tourism for the wine industry. Wine holds a significant place in the cultural history of the Czech Republic and plays an important role in many of the country's traditions and rituals. For the purpose of this study, the proposed case of Mělník will be examined in the subsequent chapter, in which the Mělník Regional Museum and its exhibition regarding the history of wine and its presence in the configuration of Mělník's identity will be dissected and evaluated. (Eversole 2006, 303)

Eversole adds that according to anthropology, a group of people's common understandings, values, laws, structures, meanings, and other characteristics are referred to as their culture in the broadest sense possible. The entire "triple bottom line"—economic, social, and environmental—is influenced by culture, including how people interact with one another and the environment. Environmental, social, economic, and "cultural" in the sense of

cultural expression, all essential elements of sustainable regional development, are firmly embedded in a cultural setting. Culture is the unnoticed, unseen medium with much to tell us about how development programs succeed or fail. So, the cultural framework supporting the places the project targets must be considered in any meaningful attempt at sustainable regional development. Initiatives for regional development can suffer misunderstanding and misinterpretation in terms of the requirements and aspirations of the local communities, leading to the proposal of initiatives that conflict with their priorities and methods of operation. Attempts to place regional development initiatives in their more significant cultural context risk misunderstanding and misinterpreting the goals and needs of communities in the region and proposing initiatives that clash with these communities' priorities.

UNESCO has played a fundamental role in the matter of heritage worldwide through the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)⁴ and subsequent standard-setting instruments, such as the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), UNESCO encouraged discussions that significantly impacted how the concept of heritage was reformulated. This initiative brought new material and immaterial elements changing the status of Heritage and traditional monuments. This process has involved public bodies such as municipalities, governmental departments of culture, and other international bodies, such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the academic scene. Material and immaterial legacies such as structures, artifacts, landscapes, songs, fables, foods, and ways of doing things—have been incorporated as cultural heritage.

However, none of these items, a priori, are but a result of intentional, political choice: an object becomes a heritage because a group of people decides to invest it with an extraordinary value. According to Cavicchioli, when an object operates as a common symbol for a group of individuals, it represents that group's culture. It is a part of the forging of identity and becomes heritage (Cavicchioli 2018, 525).

⁴ For more information visit the UNESCO World Heritage Convention Text. Available on <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

The nature of wine's preparation and consumption reveals a great deal about social, economic, and cultural relations. In this sense, wine gained heritage status by identifying these symbols; it gains even greater appreciation when linked to a long tradition; history considered a collective past is also a critical legitimizing element of cultural identity.

I propose an analysis under the scope of a heritage standpoint. In this research perspective and following Medina Abadejo and his colleagues, heritage is understood as an image that can explain a relationship between wine and a territorial context. It may include personal property, buildings, and landscapes. According to a generally accepted definition (Medina Albaladejo, Ramon-Muñoz e Martínez-Carrión 2013), pursuing heritage and including a wine region as a heritage status site can offer enormous potential for wine tourism and funding of cultural programs, becoming significant assets for a region's development. This work will also consider the self-identification of a region, assuming it can be a framing factor for winemakers' regional representation. In this context, a wine-producing area can be an integrator and an administrator of cultural and scenic heritage and tourism propaganda. It can offer multiple possibilities for developing enotourism in rural areas dedicated to its making.

2.3 Identity

The Czech Republic has a long history of both producing and consuming wine, which has played a vital role in the country's remarkable cultural inheritance. Wine plays an important role in the traditions and customs of the country and is commonly associated with parties and other types of social gatherings. Wine events and harvest festivals play a key role in the cultural calendar. During these events, both locals and tourists are able to gain an understanding of the region's wine culture and traditions. Common activities at these events include tastings of local wines, as well as live music and food from the area.

Wine regions all around the world place a significant emphasis on their local heritage and traditions. Both natural and man-made elements can be found within a wine area. The distinctive characteristics of a wine area can be broken down into several categories, including the climate, soil, grape types grown there, and winemaking practices that have been passed down through the generations. Wine regions often develop distinctive identities and

cultural settings over the course of time, which are frequently impacted by the region's topography, history, and regional customs. Cultural landscapes play an important part in the identity of the region, and they are usually commemorated in a variety of ways, including via festivals, cuisine, music, and other forms of cultural expression.

Wine-producing regions typically have strong linkages to regional traditions and customs, which play an important role in articulating the culture of the region. For instance, in some regions, the grape harvest is commemorated with large-scale festivals that include live music and entertainment, dancing, and food from the local area. Locals and visitors alike are invited to participate in these activities in order to learn more about the region's particular cultural landscape and winemaking traditions. Regional identities are reportedly being expressed all around the world nowadays, as stated by Anssi Paasi. Whether or whether regional linkages bring people into conflict with their state, they often overlap their affiliation to "nations" (Paasi, *Regions, and Regional Dynamics* 2009, 469). Belonging to an area may develop an identity that contradicts the mainstream identity narratives. It might be difficult to define what exactly makes up regional identity and how that identity influences collective behavior and politics, despite the fact that regional identity is an essential part of the development process. The most important question is with the regionalization of political fervor. In this context, the importance of variables that contribute to the formation of regions (such as the economy, the government, and the media) and the underlying power relations cannot be overstated. According to Paasi, it is possible to determine the regional identity of the population by analytical means. Regional identity refers to the identification of people with a region, and it is frequently referred to as regional consciousness.

Wine also contributes to developing a region's cultural identity by associating the population with geographical regions' wines, its traditional products in the past, or specific grape regional varieties. By being the product that articulates regional pride and history around it, in this sense, the notion of consciousness is pertinent. Thus, wine creates a feeling of place and identity rooted in the region's winemaking history. Wine regions' cultural landscapes are vital parts of the region's heritage. Some of them commemorate through a range of cultural expressions. Some examples of these types of events are the following:

The Saint Emilion Wine Festival is an event that takes place every year in the town of Saint Emilion, which is situated in the Bordeaux wine region of France. The illustrious history of winemaking in this region is honored at this festival, which is a highlight on the calendar of cultural events in the community. The Romans are recognized as being the first people to grow vineyards and manufacture wine, but the success of the wines of Saint Emilion, which are primarily composed of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, is largely attributed to monks. In the eighth century, a monk named Emilion arrived in the area and immediately began sculpting a gigantic monolith in the middle of the town. Underground, the town of St. Emilion is home to a labyrinth of tunnels, catacombs, passageways, and wine cellars. The caves, church, and medieval alleyways of St. Emilion were the primary factors that led to the town being recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The month of September marks the beginning of the wine harvest season, and at this time, a unique festival known as Heritage Night is held. After making their way through the neighborhood while clad in scarlet robes and white capes, members of the Jury winemaking guild ascend the church tower to make the official announcement that the harvest has begun. During the course of the festival, guests will have the opportunity to sample an extensive selection of wines from the region, including some of the most celebrated vintages that have been created in the vicinity.

In addition to that, tasters of the local meats, cheeses, and other items that pair well with wine are provided for guests to try. In addition to the food and drink samples, the festival also features a wide variety of other events and activities. There will be a variety of activities, some of which include live music performances, art displays, cooking demos, and even grape-stomping tournaments. The St. Emilion Wine Festival is a celebration of the region's long tradition of viticulture and a destination that wine enthusiasts from all over the world should not miss.⁵

The Fiesta del Vino de La Rioja, also known simply as the Wine Festival of La Rioja, takes place once a year in the Spanish municipality of Haro, which is located in La Rioja. The festival can be distinguished from similar events by a number of key qualities. During the "Wine Battle" portion of the festival, participants don white clothing and attempt to drench one another with red wine utilizing water pistols, buckets, and hoses as their weapons

⁵ For more information view <https://www.saint-emilion-tourisme.com/uk/>

of choice. The objective of the wine competition, which will take place on San Pedro Day, June 29, is to draw attention to the wines produced in this region. During the festival, there are a number of booths spread out over the town where guests may try regional dishes and drinks, such as pintxos and chorizo. Additionally, there is live music and traditional dances, such as the jota, that are performed. Many of the attendees are dressed in traditional gear, such as the txapela, which is a typical Basque hat, and alpargatas, which are traditional espadrilles. The festival's beginnings can be traced back to a dispute in the 13th century between Haro and Miranda de Ebro over a vineyard. This dispute took place in the region of Ebro. Since that time, residents of two different villages have continued to settle their disagreements by hosing each other down with wine. The Fiesta del Vino de La Rioja is a one-of-a-kind and fascinating event that attracts travelers from all over the world due to its combination of wine, food, music, and history.⁶

The Fenavinho Festival, also known as the National Festival of Wine or *Festa Nacional do Vinho*, is a celebration that takes place every year in Bento Gonçalves, Brazil, typically in the months of June or July. The festival is notable for the importance it places on promoting the local tradition of winemaking, and it is the most important wine-related event that takes place in Brazil. One of the most notable aspects of the festival is the opportunity for attendees to participate in wine tastings, during which they can try sparkling, red, and white wines, all of which were produced in the Bento Gonçalves region. At this fair, you can also purchase traditional Brazilian foods like churrasco (barbecue), cakes, and cheese. Throughout the course of the festival, various cultural activities such as dances, concerts, and parades will take place. During the course of the event, local vintners compete in a number of different competitions for the chance to win prizes in a variety of categories.

In addition, guests have the opportunity to participate in wine tastings, workshops, and discussions centered on the history, culture, and production of the region's wines. The festival takes place in Bento Gonçalves, a city that has a long history of immigration from Italy and is known for its Italian culture. The festivities of the festival pay homage to this cultural past by displaying a wide range of customary activities and customs that are indigenous to Italy. The Fenavinho Festival is a celebration of the wine culture of Bento

⁶ For more information view <http://www.batalladelvino.com/>

Gonçalves, which is located in Brazil. It offers locals and tourists alike a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, including wine tasting, regional cuisine, cultural events, and educational programs.⁷

During the month of September, the city of Mendoza in Argentina plays host to the *Vendimia* Festival. During this time, all of the city's cultural institutions put on a wide range of events, many of which are free to attend. These activities can be enhanced for both tourists and residents by the outstanding cuisine and wine that can be found in both urban and rural settings. The end of December marked the beginning of the season of departmental celebrations and grape harvests, which will culminate at the end of February with the beginning of all of the official festivities for the National Grape Harvest Festival. The National Grape Harvest Festival comprise hundreds of celebrations, the first of which takes place in each and every district and community across the province. The Grape Harvest is a space that welcomes people of all backgrounds. This building serves as a declaration of identity and beliefs, as well as a reaffirmation of the determination of the people of Mendoza, and its creation embodies all of these things. Fiestas de la *Vendimia* was the name given to the festival when it was first started on April 18, 1936. Despite the fact that there is evidence of Afro-American roots dating back to the 17th century, the celebration did not begin until that year. As time went on, the festival increased in production, spectators, and significance until it evolved into a celebration of international projection that culminates in the Central Act and takes place in a setting that is completely unique: the Frank Romero Day Greek Theater.

A one-of-a-kind performance that blends music, drama, and dance, the Central Act of the National Grape Harvest Festival is a highlight of the event. Every year, it tells a fresh version of the same story about the harvest, their land, and their people. It is a show that is known all around the world. The splendor of the stage, the dances, the costumes, the music, and the light boxes, a scenographic resource that emerged from this event and is recognized internationally, continues to astound tourists and residents of the province year after year.⁸

⁷ For more information view <https://bento.tur.br/vindima-bento-Goncalves/>

⁸ <https://vendimia.mendoza.gov.ar/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/vendimia2023.pdf>

The Barossa Vintage Festival is an event that takes place once every two years in the wine area of Barossa Valley in South Australia. With a history stretching all the way back to 1947, it is one of the wine festivals in Australia that has been running the longest. The celebration is held to honor the completion of the grape harvest and the start of the season dedicated to manufacturing wine. During the Barossa Vintage Festival, attendees can participate in a variety of activities, such as wine tastings, vineyard tours, street parades, live music, and experiences that pair food and wine together. In addition, guests have the opportunity to participate in masterclasses and seminars that focus on the region's wines and the techniques used in winemaking.

The Barossa Vintage Festival Parade is considered to be one of the most exciting parts of the festival. The parade contains floats, bands, and other entertainers from the surrounding community. After the parade, there will be a street party where people will be able to enjoy eats, drinks, and live performances. The Barossa Wine Auction and the Barossa Gourmet Weekend are two additional popular events that take place during the Barossa Vintage Festival. At the Barossa Wine Auction, attendees have the opportunity to place bids on rare and one-of-a-kind wines produced in the region. The Barossa Gourmet Weekend highlights the finest examples of the region's food and wine. In general, the Barossa Vintage Festival is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the rich history and tradition of the region while also gaining exposure to the one-of-a-kind wine culture of the Barossa Valley.⁹

Wine is significant because it helps define the identities of a place and its people. This can be accomplished by honoring the traditions of the people who live there and ensuring that the particular cultural landscapes of wine areas are protected. Wine is an important component in the formation of the cultural identity of a place because it embodies local traditions as well as its history. The practice of associating wines with particular geographical places and grape varieties contributes, in many different wine regions, to the formation of a sense of place and identity that is founded on the history of winemaking in the region. In general, the cultural landscape and personality of wine regions are significant components of the region's heritage and are celebrated through a variety of cultural expressions. Respecting these traditions and preserving the distinctive cultural landscapes of wine regions might help

⁹ For more information view <https://www.barossavintagefestival.com.au/>

us gain a deeper understanding of the role that wine plays in defining the identities of a place and the people who call that place home.

It is natural to assume that winemakers will go to all lengths necessary to safeguard their laborious products, given the protracted and painstaking nature of the winemaking process, which is sometimes unique to each geographical area and rural community.

2.4 Wine labeling

The making of wine involves a number of steps, all of which have the potential to have an effect on the final product's quality. These steps include the selection of the land on which the vines are grown; the varieties; the climate; the geography; the methods used to process the grapes, which are typically handed down from one generation to the next; aging; storage; bottling; and distribution. Therefore, labels that establish a particular Denomination of Origin for wines ensure that those wines fulfill the requirements and processes that guarantee their quality and their exclusivity within a particular region. The members of these exclusive clubs are the only ones who are allowed to put this particular recognition on their wines and sell them under this emblem or brand.

In the wine industry, labeling can have a variety of meanings and tiers; the primary goal of this study is to investigate these meanings and tiers in relation to Czech legislation, the market, and the individuals involved. By delving deeper into these ideas, we can gain a better comprehension of the evolution of particular regional wines produced in the Czech Republic.

2.4.1 APPELLATION, VOC, and other labels

When thinking about wines, one would undoubtedly recall names such as Champagne, Bordeaux; Prosecco; Porto, among others, since they are the most famous *Appellations* in the wine world. *Appellation* denotes the place of Origin of a specific product. It also depicts other names depending on the country's legislation. In France, one of the leading countries regarding legislation of the wine labels, for example, *Appellation d'Origine Controlée* (AOC) [controlled designation of Origin] is the standard certification for

agricultural origin products, including wines. Thus, there is also *Appellation d'Origine Protégée* (AOP) [protected designation of Origin (PDO)]. AOC /AOP designate products that meet the criteria and protect their name on French territory. According to the *Institut National de L'origine et de la Qualité*¹⁰, France has 101 PDO agricultural products, including 51 dairy products (mainly cheeses). Regarding alcoholic beverages, 363 AOC/AOP wines and 17 AOC spirits (Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité 2022).

VOC in Czech stands for *Vina Originální Certifikace* – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification label in English¹¹]. And it is the equivalent national label to the French AOC label. Regarding the Czech Republic, the VOC *Vina Originální Certifikace* [Wines of Original Certification (WOC)] label regulates that the grapes come exclusively from vineyards on approved sites of a region. Strictly selecting sites with a suitable soil composition gives the Wine unique properties. Grape varieties typical of each specific region are in the VOC system. The VOC designation in the Czech Republic traditionally follows the so-called Germanic system for classifying wines: quality, quality with unique attributes, etc. The VOC trademark is analogous to the *appellation* system used in wine-producing countries like France (AOC/AOP) or Italy (DOC/DOP). (Situační a výhledová zpráva 2020).

Under an appellation, the quality of the wines includes specific natural conditions, unique soil compositions, and the declared Origin of the grapes. All this, supported by the local winemakers' skills, care, and sensitivity, gives the VOC wine its specific and original character, meaning it will not alter from bottle to bottle. The customer especially appreciates that the VOC will be as expected every year. The wines of VOC express a typical nose and palate of the variety for any given wine region.

VOC labeling gives the wines a unique and unmistakable character. VOC wines must meet strictly controlled qualitative and quantitative criteria. This classification system sits on

¹⁰ The *Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité* is the French governmental organization in charge of regulating French agricultural products with PDOs (protected designation of origin).

¹¹ Wine of Original Certification or WOC is a Czech domestic nomenclature. It is one of the possible labels of the Czech Appeal System. There are different appeal systems in the world. Appeal refers to the area of origin of a product. Through this VOC label, producers certify that their wines have been produced from grapes originating exclusively from vineyards situated in approved areas in a given wine region and follow standards according to the Czech agriculture legislation.

the differentiation of wines according to their origin – the locality in whence the wine originated according to the *Situační a výhledová zpráva. Réva vinná a víno*. (Situační a výhledová zpráva 2020). (*Situační a výhledová zpráva, Ministerstvo zemědělství 2020*)

Along with VOC identification, the so-called Germanic way of labeling wines, still prevalent in the Czech Republic, is based on quality classification based on the distinction of wine quality according to sugar content grapes. The classification's basis consists of categorizing wines according to the grape's ripeness at its harvest, determined by the sugar content in the must and measured in degrees of the standardized must-meter (°NM), which states the range of natural sugar in kilograms per 100 liters of must. Both wine labeling systems now operate independently on the market.

2.4.2 Czech Wines: Definition and productive regions

The Golden Age of Czech wines corresponds to the period between the 14th and the 16th centuries when vineyards surrounded many towns and monasteries multiplied. The Bohemian King and Roman Emperor Charles IV significantly influenced viticulture development by making Moravian and Bohemian wines known and demanded by noble and bourgeois houses all over the old continent. This winemaking importance persisted over the years until a tragic episode that, here, as elsewhere in Europe, was caused by the vine aphid *phylloxera* significantly damaged the vine roots at the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries (Národní Vinařské Centrum 2022)¹², triggering a global wine production catastrophe.

In the 20th century, viticulture was redeveloped in today's Czech Republic, and vineyards regrew thanks to new grafting techniques, including American vine roots, helping overcome the *phylloxera* crisis. In the second half of the 20th century, during the Socialist period, the mechanization process increased production numbers. The restitution of

¹² Národní Vinařské Centrum is The Czech National Wine Centre. Its aim is to promote and support Czech wines and winemaking not only through the competition and tasting exhibition of the Wine Salon of the Czech Republic, but also by publishing specialized literature, organizing training and seminars, as well as general promotion of Moravian and Czech wines in cooperation with other wine organizations in the Czech Republic, for more information visit <https://www.vinarskecentrum.cz/en/o-nas>.

vineyards and privatization after the Socialist period led to the revival of family wineries and the establishment of new ones.

According to a report published by the National Vine Center (Situční a výhledová zpráva 2020), winemakers who work with soil are aware of the ways in which the chemical composition of the soil and the mineral content of the soil affect the flavor of the wine. On the other hand, the physical properties of the soil, such as its ability to retain heat or water, are the most significant factor in determining the final product in terms of its quality, quantity, and style. Moravian soil formed on top of loess as well as deposits from freshwater and marine environments. Along with the rocky topography of the landscape, they make it possible to create wines that are entirely unique to their region and come in a wide variety of styles. The calcareous soils in the Pálava region, the premium vineyards on gravelly soils in the Znojmo region, the clay and humic clay soils in the Velkopavlovická Wine Sub-region, the sandy soils in the Morava River valley, and the flysch, which is a combination of clay and sand layers in the northern areas of the Slováck region all contribute to the distinctive flavor of Moravian wines.

The majority of the calcareous subsoil that is found beneath the siltstone strata, which is sometimes covered by loamy and sandy alluvium, is what distinguishes the Mělník Wine Sub-region. There are two types of soil: those that are lighter and warmer, which are perfect for producing red varieties, and those that are heavier and cooler, which are better for growing white varieties. On the lower slopes of the vineyards in Litoměřice, as well as in the majority of the locations in the surrounding area, the subsoil is calcareous and frequently basalt.

Moravia and Bohemia are the two areas of the Czech Republic that are known for their wine production. The majority of vineyards in the Czech Republic are located in southern Moravia, which accounts for approximately 96% of the country's vineyards. As a result of these production numbers, Czech Wine is more generally referred to as Moravian Wine. However, there are some vineyards that produce in the Bohemia region. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, in the information contained in the 2019 yearly report of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture about wine production 2019 (Situční a výhledová zpráva

2020)¹³, the cultivated area of vineyards in the Czech Republic was roughly 18,200 hectares. This information was taken from the report that was issued by the Czech Ministry of Agriculture regarding wine production. Production centers on local grape varieties, the most frequently grown vine varieties in 2019 were: Veltlínské Zelené [Gruner Veltliner], Muller Thurgau [Rivaner], Ryzlink Rhine, and Riesling of white varieties; Frankovka [Lemberger, Blaufrankisch], Svatovavřinecké [Saint Laurent], Zweigeltrebe [Zweigelt], and Pinot Noir of red varieties.

FIGURE 1

MAJOR WINE-PRODUCING REGIONS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

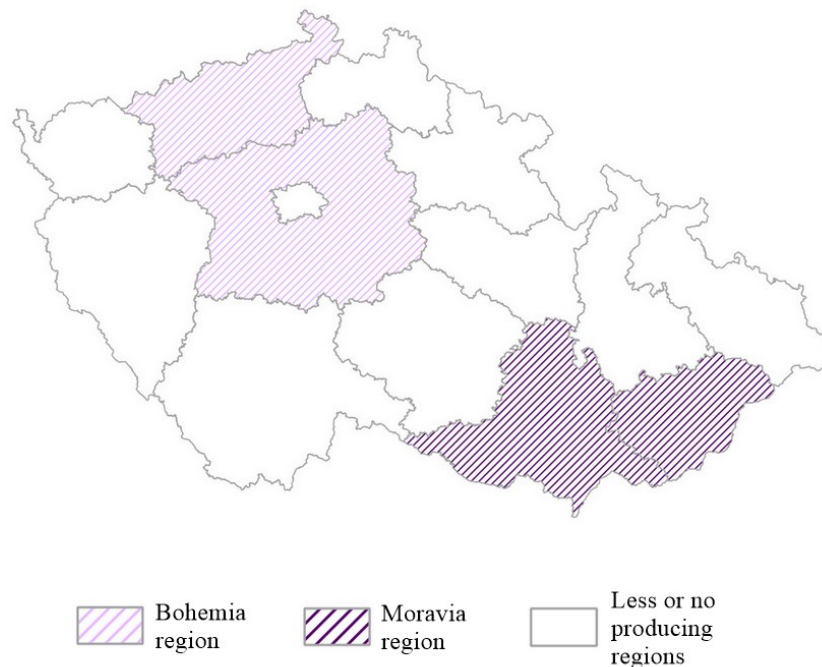


Figure 1. Major wine-producing regions in the Czech Republic. By the author.

Most wine production is concentrated in southern Moravia, accounting for around 96% of the country's vineyards; Czech Wine is commonly referred to as Moravian Wine due

¹³ Information contained in the 2019 yearly report of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture regarding wine production. The information provided in the report was issued in December 2019. The data contained in the submitted SVZ were processed based on information and data available as of 31 December 2019.

to production numbers, although some vineyards produce in the Bohemia region. According to the Ministry of Agriculture.

FIGURE 2

PLANTED AREA OF VINEYARDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC BY REGION

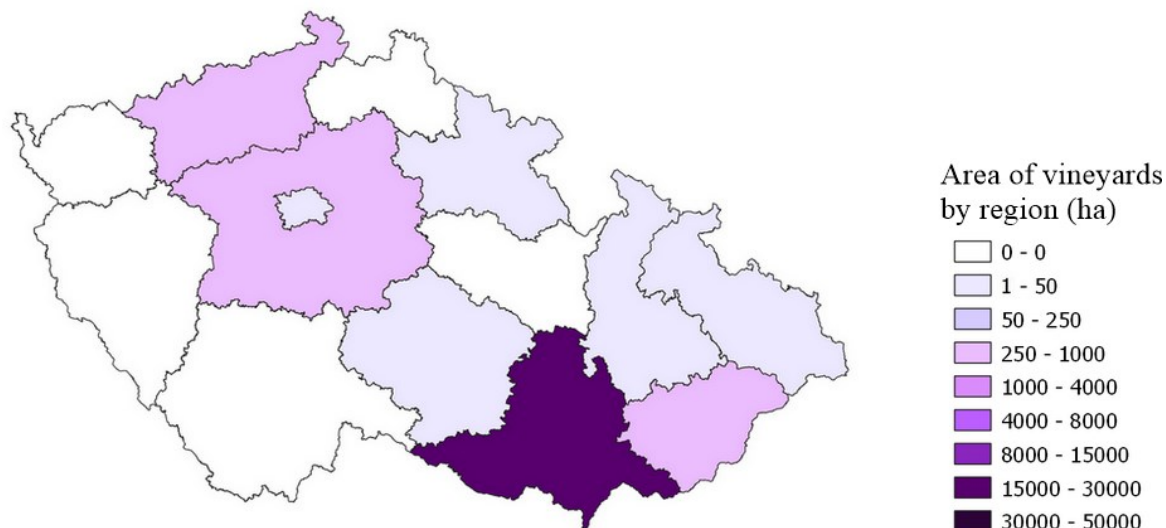


Figure 2. PLANTED AREA OF VINEYARDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC BY REGION. By the author.

Figure 2 shows the planted area of vineyards by region in the Czech Republic. Moravia's leading predominance is represented by the darkest purple color, with 15.794 hectares of vineyards planted. Bohemia comes in second place with 640 hectares of vineyards planted (Situační a výhledová zpráva 2020), *Situační a výhledová zpráva. Réva vinná a víno.*) The *Mělník* subregion is part of Bohemia.

Bohemia now produces less wine than other Czech Republic regions due to the small number of vineyards in production. Yet, Bohemian wines continue to be praised for their distinctive characteristics and are rising in popularity nationally and globally.

2.4.3 Czech Wine Label and national brand: *Víno z České Republiky*

When referring to the meaning of the word label, the most common use is as a brand of commercial recordings issued under a usually trademarked name. In the case of Czech wines, they depict a standard label representing the Wine and the colors of the Czech flag. According to the Vinařský fond¹⁴, since 2017, winemakers have used uniform labeling of wines with guaranteed Origin in the Czech Republic brand in connection with the amendment of the Czech Wine Act, valid from April 2017. According to Section 16, Paragraph 4 of the Wine Act of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic: the logo is displayed on the packaging in color on a white background. In the case of bottle-type consumer packaging, it appears on the top of the closure or a label in the principal field of vision (Vinařský Fond 2022).

14 The Wine Fund was established by the Czech Viticulture and Enology Act in 2002. The model was like institutions in neighboring wine-growing countries (Germany and Austria). The main purpose of his activities until the Czech Republic's accession to the EU was to support the planting of vineyards. Since 2004, the Fund has been supporting wine marketing, the development of wine tourism, and informing the public about viticulture and enology (see the provisions of Section 31 (4) of the Viticulture and Enology Act). More information on <https://vinarskyfond.cz/>.

FIGURE 3

VÍNO Z ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY BRAND



Figure 3. VÍNO Z ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY Brand. Source (vinazmoravyvinazcech 2022).

Figure 3 shows the Wines from the Czech Republic logo/brand. It is used in the bibliography, propaganda, advertising, and printed and online material to illustrate the origin of the wines. It is the same for all wine producing regions in the Czech Republic. It is a way to strengthen the image of a national product; this logo shows the Czech national flag colors in the Czech wines.

FIGURE 4

CZECH BRAND APPLIED: AN EXAMPLE



Figure 4. CZECH BRAND APPLIED: AN EXAMPLE. Source (vinazmoravyvinazcech 2022).

The label for a popular brand of Czech wine is shown in Figure 4. This label is widely used and may be found in any store or supermarket that sells the product.

When it comes to VOC labels, personal experience has shown that they are harder to find in conventional stores or supermarkets, which is the first visible outcome of on-site visits to supermarkets and wine stores in the Czech Republic. This was discovered during the on-site visits. Wines bearing the VOC label are more likely to be found at specialized shops or in restaurants of a particularly high caliber.

2.4.4 Institutions Involved and Legislation.

The Czech Agricultural and Food Inspection Authority is one of the major regulatory agencies in charge of controlling wine production in the country. This organization is in charge of keeping an eye on and enforcing laws about wine production, such as those governing the caliber of grapes used in production, winemaking techniques, and labeling requirements. There are three primary classifications of wine recognized by Czech law: table, high-quality, and wine with a protected indication of Origin. The most fundamental type of wine is table wine, which may be produced using any grape variety. Wine must adhere to quality criteria, including a minimum alcohol concentration and particular production procedures. Wine with a protected designation of origin has to originate from a specific area and adhere to strict quality requirements.

One of the essential subjects to identify is the standard classification of Czech wines: table wine – the lowest-quality wine; wine with a geographical mark (land wine) is made from domestic wine varieties; wine with a mark of origin (quality wine) made from domestic varieties must be harvested and produced in the same wine area; quality wine with a predicate; wine of original certification (VOC) – wine must have the character of a particular region and follow the rules of VOC. From this classification, this work will focus on the last category, the one that refers to the wine of original certification (VOC).

In the Czech Republic, wine labels must include details, including the producer's name and address, the wine category, the grape varieties employed, and the harvest year. The name of the region where the grapes are cultivated must also be included on labels for wines with protected designations of origin. Generally, the laws in the Czech Republic are designed to ensure that customers have access to fine wines that are correctly labeled and uphold specific quality criteria. These regulations are standard for most European countries regarding wine production in general, thus to ensure that geographical designation is protected, there is specific legislation as follows:

According to § 23 of Act No. 321/2004 Coll, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic supervises the establishment of VOC associations and their activities. There is also

a regulation¹⁵ within the framework of the common agricultural policy of the E.U. (Situační a výhledová zpráva 2020), as shown in the report *Situační a výhledová zpráva. Réva vinná a víno*, according to the Czech Agriculture Ministry, European regulations introduced the possibility of VOC protection¹⁶. Through Regulation (E.U.) No 251/2014, there is extended Protection to the wines as follows:

1. Geographical indications protected under this Regulation may be used by any operator marketing an aromatized wine product that has been produced in conformity with the corresponding product specification.

2. Geographical indications protected under this Regulation and the aromatized wine products using those protected names in conformity with the product specification shall be protected against:

(a) any direct or indirect commercial use of a protected name:

(i) by comparable products not complying with the product specification of the protected name; or

(ii) in so far as such use exploits the reputation of a geographical indication;

(b) any misuse, imitation, or evocation, even if the true Origin of the product or service is indicated or if the protected name is translated, transcribed, or transliterated, or accompanied by an expression such as 'style,' 'type,' 'method,' 'as produced in,' 'imitation,' 'flavor,' 'like' or similar;

(c) any other false or misleading indication as to the provenance, Origin, nature, or essential qualities of the product on the inner or outer packaging, advertising material, or documents relating to the wine product concerned, and the packing of the product in a container liable to convey a false impression as to its Origin;

(d) any other practice liable to mislead the consumer as to the true Origin of the product.

¹⁵Commission regulation (EC) No 607/2009 of 14 July 2009 laid down certain detailed rules for implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms, labeling, and presentation of certain wine sector products. Available on <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex:32009R0607>

¹⁶ Regulation (EU) No 251/2014 Chapter 20 available on <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R0251&qid=1653839437686>

Chapter 3: Mělník Wine Position in The Czech Wine Scenario, Production and Generalities

This chapter provides an introduction to the contemporary scenario of the wines produced in the Mělník area, outlining their features and examining their production as well as their current state. At the close of the 20th century, a new approach to viticulture in Mělník was developed. Following the fall of the Soviet era, vineyards were returned to their original owners, and subsequent privatization of the land resulted in the revitalization of family-owned wineries as well as the establishment of brand-new businesses. The analysis of the report *Viticulture in the Czech Republic* by the European Development Agency displays that the Region of Bohemia comprises 4% of the vineyards in the Czech Republic located mainly through the rivers: Vltava, Labe, Berounka, and Ohře. It also asserts that this region has two smaller subregions: Mělník and Litoměřice. This productive cluster (Bohemian region) is one of the most northern outposts in Europe.

3.1 Description of Mělník

3.1.1 Location, Size, Population, and Density

Mělník is a small town on the northern edge of the central part of the Czech Republic at the confluence of the Vltava and Labe (also known as the Elbe) rivers. It is in the Central Bohemian Region, about 30 kilometers from Prague. The city has a total area of 2497 ha with a population of 19,472 and a density of 780 people per km².

The city of Mělník, according to information from municipal administration¹⁷, consists of two cadastral areas: Mělník (2,118 ha) and Vehlovice (379 ha). The river Povka, the Elbe's western border, forms the axis of a more considerable portion of the region. The soil point of the Turbovický ridge, on which the city was established, is located between these two waterways. Human activity significantly impacts the entire territory of Mělník and Vehlovice. A modest percentage of forests and sporadic greenery is typical.

¹⁷ <https://www.Mělník.cz/o%2Dmeste/ds-52/p1=61>

It is necessary to differentiate the city of Mělník and the region of Mělník. The area just around Mělník is relatively small and therefore functions in a more or less intensive way with the surrounding centers. In close connection, these are other important subregions of Polabí: Roudnice nad Labem and Neratovice, Kralupy nad Vltavou a Kokořínsko (Natural Protected area). These regions are connected by the river, sharing not only economic bonds but moreover a past and cultural heritage. The population of Mělník region has a population combined of 109,354 inhabitants, and it is not a specific administrative region. Still, it constitutes a conglomerate that, for the analysis in this work, will be referred to as district Mělník comprising the municipalities of Mělník, Liběchov, and Kly.

According to the number of inhabitants, Mělník, with its 19,472 inhabitants, ranks seventh in the Central Bohemian Region. Kladno, Mladá Boleslav, Příbram, Kolín, Kutná Hora, Beroun, and Mělník are the most populated cities in the Central Bohemian Region according to the number of inhabitants.

FIGURE 5

NUMBER OF INHABITANTS IN THE CITY OF MĚLNÍK

Area	Number of inhabitants as of 1/1/2022			City share (%)	Average age
	in total	men	women		
Czech Republic	10,516,707	5,183,775	5,332,932	0.2	42.8
Middle Bohemia	1,386,824	685,492	701 332	1.4	41.5
Mělník district	109,354	54,244	55 110	17.8	41.7
The city of Mělník	19,472	9,456	10,016	100	43.2

Figure 5. NUMBER OF INHABITANTS IN THE CITY OF MĚLNÍK. Source CZSO¹⁸

FIGURE 5 shows the population comparison in the Czech Republic, Bohemia, Mělník Region, and Mělník City.

Vast areas of arable land prevail in regions closer to the city, vineyards, and intensive orchards. The sparse network of watercourses given by natural conditions is degraded by

¹⁸ <https://www.Mělník.cz/o%2Dmeste/ds-52/p1=61>

modifications (straightened paved navigations) and a high level of pollution (sewer outlets, chemical flushes from fields). The situation is better now than in the last four decades due to the Ministry of Environment and some private activist groups' improvements in managing residues. The locals consider the environmental issues in the area as one of the heritage sites of the communist era. Since its ending, the site has been continually modified for over thirty years.

3.1.2 Climate and Landscape

In terms of the weather, the territory surrounding the city has a warm environment, with an annual average temperature of over 8 degrees Celsius and an annual precipitation level of less than 800 millimeters. The winds that blow in from the western quarter predominate in this part of the world. However, the geomorphology of the ground has a significant impact on the flow of wind in the urban environment. Inversions occur more frequently in the valleys of the Elbe and the Povka rivers because of the decreased wind speed and increased air humidity in those locations. The climate of Mělník is characterized as being temperate, with mild summers and cold winters. The warmest month of the year is July, with an average temperature of around 18 degrees Celsius (64 degrees Fahrenheit), while the coldest month of the year is January, with an average temperature of approximately -2 degrees Celsius (28 degrees Fahrenheit). The climate is described as transitional, with a tendency toward a continental climate and occasional intrusions of the more humid conditions brought by the Atlantic air. However, it is typically characterized by summers with greater heat intensity, which helps to abbreviate the vegetative periods of the vine and thereby enables the cultivation of grape varieties that ripen later. This is because the shorter vegetative periods of the vine allowing for the vine to produce more fruit per vegetative period. The substantial differences in temperature that occur during the ripening process—ranging from warm, sunny days to cool, autumnal evenings—lead to the production of wines that have their own characteristic fragrances. Because of the optimal ripening phase and the precise timing of the harvest, the grapes have managed to keep their exceptional acidity and perfume. It is possible that we do not find wines of such intensity and vibrancy anywhere else, and that is because we are at the very northernmost tip of Europe's wine regions.

The landscape that surrounds Mělník is comprised of undulating hills and fertile plains, and agriculture and wineries can be found in all of the neighboring areas. The village is perched on a hill with a view of the rivers and provides stunning panoramas of the landscape that surrounds it. The picture-perfect medieval neighborhood of Mělník is widely known for its hilltop castle that commands a commanding view of the surrounding countryside and looks out over the town and the rivers that are close by. The Mělník Castle, which was constructed in the tenth century but has had various renovations over the course of its existence, is now the location of a museum as well as a cultural center.

The architecture of the town is a magnificent combination of Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles. It consists of winding roads and alleyways that are filled with colorful residences and structures. One of the most well-known landmarks in the city is the St. Peter and Paul Church, which is distinguished both by its imposing Gothic tower and its ornate Baroque interior. Mělník is famous all over the world for its vineyards and wine production, as well as its extensive history and stunning architecture. This region is responsible for the production of some of the finest white wines in the country, particularly the aromatic and fruity white wines that are made from the Muller Thurgau grape. Visitors have the opportunity to tour the local wineries, taste the wines, and learn more about the production process.

Visitors also have the opportunity to learn about the tradition of wine production and its importance for local, regional history, and national. Wine is one of the strongest symbols of this civilized and Christianized settlement. Some of the highlights of the visit may include the proximity of the hill Říp and its mythological and historical past, with the rotunda of Saint-George and Saint-Adalbert from the 12th century at the top of the hill. The link with the lineage of saint patrons is crucial for understanding the history of Mělník as, for example, the role of Saint Wenceslas in the Christianization of this land and others. Examples of the use of wine include serving it in the liturgy of the Eucharist and other religious expressions, as Christianity considers the transformation of the wine into the blood of Christ as a symbol of martyrdom, resurrection, and salvation.

3.1.3 Transport

When it comes to traveling to other parts of the Czech Republic, Mělník has excellent train and road links to other places. The settlement may be found alongside the significant D8 highway, which travels across Germany all the way from Dresden to Prague. In addition, there are train and bus connections that connect Mělník to Prague as well as other cities in the area. Due to the fact that Mělník is a relatively tiny town in the Czech Republic, the transportation alternatives that are accessible to residents are quite restricted. On the other hand, there are a number of different ways to move around the town and the surroundings immediately encircling it.

Walking is the best and most convenient way to see the town center and all of the attractions it has to offer because Mělník is a very small town. The restaurants, wine cellars, and historical landmarks are all within easy walking distance of one another, making it convenient for tourists. In addition to walking and driving, cycling is a common means of transportation in Mělník, as I noted previously in this paragraph. Bicycles are available for rent in the town center at a number of different stores, and tourists can use such bicycles to cruise around the surrounding countryside. Mělník is serviced by a bus system that links it to the cities and towns that are in the surrounding area. The bus station can be found in the middle of the town, and it provides multiple departures each day to locations in the surrounding area, such as Prague, Litoměřice, and other destinations. Taxis are offered in Mělník; nevertheless, when compared to the costs of other modes of transportation, taxis can be quite pricey. It is strongly advised that the fare be negotiated before entering the cab. If you prefer a more personalized experience, you may book private transfers with one of the local tour operators or transportation providers. This is a practical choice for tourists who want to travel to particular locations according to their own timetables, as it enables them to do so independently.

3.1.4 Historical Importance and Evolution

Even though the establishment of Mělník as a VOC happened in the 2010s, addressing the asynchrony of time regarding wine production in this region is imperative.

Bohemia has a long-time tradition of wine production; the Mělník area was a fortified settlement called *Pšov* that appeared in archaeological research from the ninth century. In the "History of Wine and Water," a traveling exhibition prepared by Mělník Regional Museum, its author Lukáš Snopek states that during the transition from ancient times to the Middle Ages, barbarian hordes brought with them to Europe, the Eastern European strain of vine belonging to the Hunnic species. The beginnings of wine growing in Bohemia at the turn of the 9th to the 10th century relate to the adoption of Christianity. In 883, the Bohemian Duke Bořivoj I was christened by St. Methodius in Moravia, and soon after, his wife, Ludmila, also accepted the new faith. According to Snopek, tradition has it that afterward, she established the first vineyard in Bohemia near the present-day Mělník, between the villages of *Nedomice* and *Dřísy* (Snopek, Lukáš s.d.). Saint Ludmila's grandson, Saint Wenceslas, also devoted himself to winemaking and became both patron saint of Bohemia and wine producer. Regarding the origin of the wines in the Czech Republic, the report by the EDA cites that grapevines in today's Czech Republic have a solid connection to the Roman legions. Thus, Czech viticulture was grown up primarily by Charles IV (14th century) as he invited the farmers to fund the vineyards around Prague.

Princess Ludmila is still a significant figure in the region; statues, streets, and churches are devoted to her memory. That importance is still present in the wine industry of *Mělník*; some of the best wines of *Chateau Mělník* producer have her name on their bottles.

FIGURE 6

LUDMILA WINE FROM CHATEAU MĚLNÍK WINERY



Figure 6. LUDMILA WINE FROM CHATEAU MĚLNÍK WINERY Source (Zámek Mělník 2022)

Figure 6 depicts the label of the Chateau Mělník Ludmila wine 2015. It is the flagship wine of the Lobkowitz family winery. This label presents the image in the Chateau Mělník's watermark, the town's most iconic construction; it also shows the family coat of arms and the inscription "*Grand Vin de Boheme*." It reinforces the image of the traditional castle in the region's winemaking with the words "*Depuis 1753*," which shows the long existence of this product. Significantly, this inscription is partly in French; it is fancy and traditional and evokes quality since French producers are famous connoisseurs.

The booklet Mělník Town Guide, a comprehensive guidebook, presents a liaison between Mělník history and its wine, as visible on its very first page. Quotes from P.D. Bartoni's Eulogy to Mělník Wine from 1694 say: "... let's hurry on without stopping – to

drink my excellent Mělník wine..." (Mělník Town Guide 2007) For our analysis, it depicts that Mělník had, in 1964, vineyards in the broader ring from the historic core, in which, however, we have many opportunities to sample its wine. Regarding history portrays that the past of the medieval walled town (perhaps called *Pšov* before the name Mělník appeared) has archaeological records from the ninth century. A second pertinent date is the marriage between Prince *Bořivoj* and Ludmila in 875. These names, especially Saint Ludmila's, will extensively appear through all our findings regarding historical sources and records. Another recurrent name in the town's history is Saint Wenceslas, Ludmila's grandson, and ruler of this land. After presenting the town's historical rulers and their relation to the history of Catholicism, the following appropriate fact for our analysis happened in 1885, the foundation of the Fruit and Vintner's School, which reflected – according to this work- the growing interest in viticulture.

Another influential monarch under whose rule the practice of winemaking flourished was Bohemian King and Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV. He had French grape varieties brought to Mělník and raised its production to a new standard. The majestic *Mělník Château* also stands testament to the noble past, as does the town itself, having undergone many different rebuilding periods, all of which have left their mark on its unique architectural legacy. Today, it belongs to the aristocratic Lobkowitz family, boasting the beautiful interiors of the château and wine cellars.

In the 20th century, there was a redevelopment of viticulture in the (actual) Czech Republic area, and vineyards regrew thanks to new grafting techniques, including American vine roots, helping overcome the *phylloxera* crisis. In the second half of the 20th century, during the period of the Soviet predominant influence in the country, the mechanization process increased production numbers. The restitution of vineyards and privatization after the collapse of the Soviet period led to the revival of family wineries and the establishment of new ones.

3.2 Mělník Region Wine Industry

The majority of the vineyards in the Mělník Wine area are located on gravel-sand alluvium or soils with calcareous subsoil. Both of these types of terrain are ideal for growing

grapes. White and red varieties can coexist in abundance on soils that are lighter and warmer. The six varieties of grapes that are typically planted by wine producers have been expanded to include Saint Laurent, Traminer, and Pinot Noir. On the other side, the most planted varieties are Pinot Noir, Riesling, and Muller-Thurgau.

The town of Mělník, Bohemia's most famous wine center, is where the name of this subregion was derived from. The city that sits at the confluence of the Elbe and the Vltava rivers is home to a number of interesting tourist destinations. Legend has it that the legendary Ludmila Wine was made after the Bohemian princess had established the vineyards. There is a strong connection between Prague and the Bohemian wine business because Prague is home to the oldest vineyard in the country, known as "*Svatováclavská vinice*" (St. Wenceslas Vineyard).

In the town of *Karlstejn*, which is situated to the Southwest of Prague, there is a research station for wine that is committed to the protection and study of the gene pool of Czech grapevines. The wines of the region have earned the VOC Mělník label for their individuality.

3.2.1 Mělník VOC Label -*Vína Originální Certifikace*-

The following maps will assist in locating the area of interest for this study, which is the Mělník wine-producing subregion, which is located inside the larger Bohemian macroregion.

FIGURE 7

LOCATION OF *MĚLNÍK* VOC

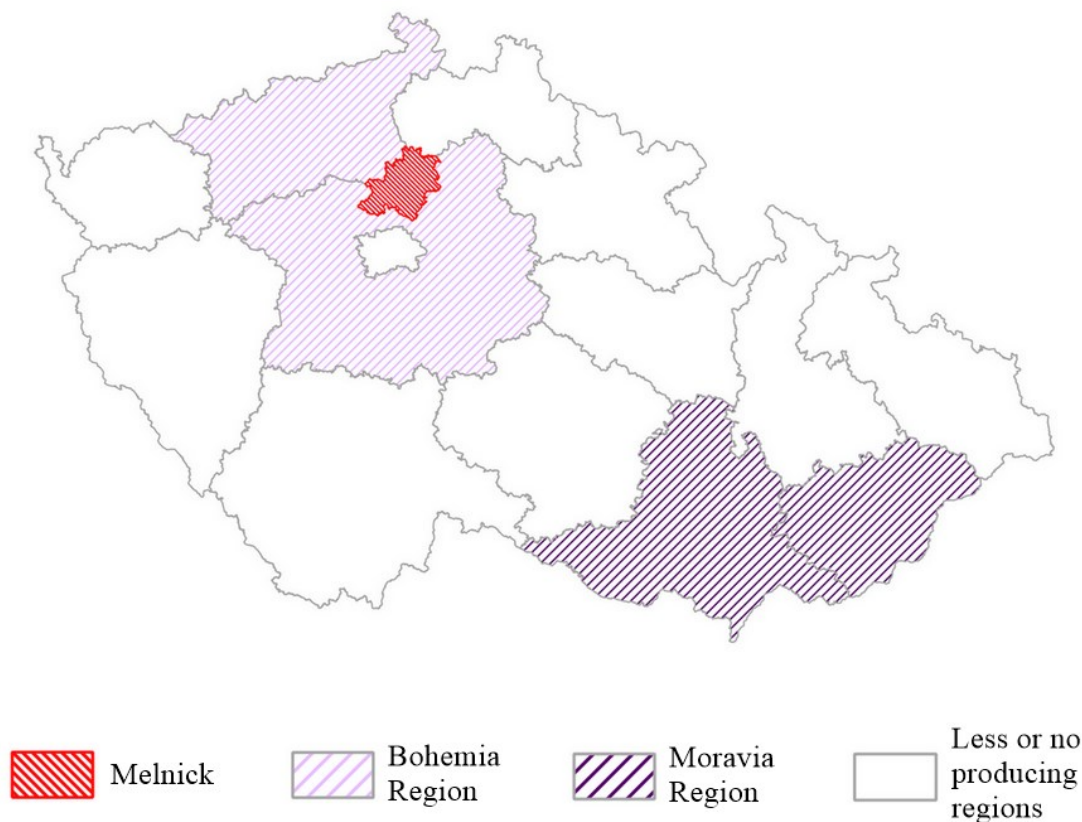


Figure 7. Location of Mělník VOC. By the author.

Figure 7 shows the Location of Mělník VOC *vína originální certifikace* Label in the Czech Republic; as mentioned above, it is part of the Bohemia Region, in red color the Mělník area and shows its proximity to Prague.

The first-ever appellation system in the Bohemia wine region was created in 2015 in the *Mělník* sub-region under the name of *Mělník VOC vína originální certifikace* – [WOC wines of original certification]. This label aims to increase the prestige of *Mělník* as a wine producer in the Czech Republic. It includes *Rhine Riesling*, *Müller Thurgau*, *Pinot Noir*, or a blend of the two white varieties. The grapes must be grown in approved vineyards in the municipalities of *Mělník*, *Liběchov*, and *Klý*. VOC *Mělník* is the seventh appellation system in

the Czech Republic. It is the first and, so far, the last VOC established in the wine-growing region of Bohemia.

FIGURE 8

MĚLNÍK VOC



Figure 6. Mělník VOC. (vinazmoravyvinazcech 2022).

Figure 8 shows the municipalities of *Mělník*, *Liběchov*, and *Kly*, where the VOC *Mělník* wine producers are. Currently, most of the vineyards are around *Mělník*, *Litoměřice*, and *Most*. The territory of this area planted with vineyards is not continuous. Still, it consists of individual localities located on protected southern slopes at lower altitudes, mainly spread around the Czech rivers *Vltava*, *Elbe*, *Berounka*, and *Ohře*. More significant weather

variability has led Czech winemakers to preserve and mature wines in barrels for individual years. Most *Mělník* vineyards have a calcareous base of marl layers, sometimes covered with aluminous sand alluvium. The soils are light and warm, providing excellent conditions for growing red varieties (Vinařský Fond 2022). These specifications are documented by local winemakers as early as the Middle Ages and focused mainly on growing the Pinot Noir, which came here from Burgundy, along with the local winegrowing families, from whom the local population learned to grow vines in the Burgundian way.

FIGURE 9

MĚLNÍK VOC LABEL



Figure 9. *VOC Mělník* label. Source: (Vinařský Fond 2022).

Figure 9 shows the *Mělník* VOC *vína originální certifikace* label. Each VOC has a label that turns into a brand, used in the product itself, and printed / online material regarding the VOC and its legacy.

FIGURE 10

MĚLNÍK VOC LABEL USE EXAMPLE



FIGURE 10. MĚLNÍK VOC LABEL USE EXAMPLE. Source: (Vinarske Centrum 2022)

Figure 10 shows an example of using the VOC MĚLNÍK label in the final product. It appears twice, once on the main label (white), near the winery logo, and again at the top of the bottle, covering the cork. This image also shows medals and awards that this Wine has won; they symbolize good quality recognition, especially for the general (not specialized

connoisseur) customer. This Riesling from Vinařství Vondrák Winery 2018 also depicts the silhouette of a castle to help close the storytelling about the long-time tradition of Bohemian wines and highlight the *Mělník* terroir.

The VOC *Mělník* association, established at the end of 2015, currently has four members producing original certification wines: Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague, *Pobočka Mělník*; School farm Mělník: family wine producer Ludek Vondrak; and producer Bettina Lobkowicz. One of the association's goals is to support cultivating typical vine varieties for *Mělník*. Furthermore, this association aims to help with marketing support for VOC wines and their producers. It aims to increase the prestige of *Mělník* as one of the oldest wine-growing villages in the Czech Republic.

3.3 Current situation

As is the case in the majority of wine-producing regions in the Czech Republic, Mělník is confronted with a number of difficulties. The primary one is a general lack of awareness. A lack of awareness on the part of potential tourists is one of the most significant challenges facing the wine tourism industry in the Czech Republic. There are lots of people who are unaware of the lengthy history of winemaking in the Czech Republic as well as the outstanding quality of the wines that are produced in this country. In addition to this, there is a lack of essential infrastructure. Infrastructure for the wine tourism industry in the Czech Republic is still being built, particularly in the Bohemia region. This can present challenges for both travelers and businesses. In rural areas, there aren't many wineries or tasting rooms, and getting around might be difficult because there aren't as many options for transportation. If you visit the city of Mělník on a weekend, holiday, or during non-business hours, you will find that the majority of the vineyards are closed. This reduces the number of tourists, particularly those who are there for leisure activities.

The obstacle of a language barrier is a separate issue. Even though English is a widely spoken language in the Czech Republic, it can be challenging for tourists to communicate with natives, particularly in more rural areas such as Mělník. Because of the language barrier, it could be difficult for tourists to immerse themselves in the culture of the wine industry

fully. In addition, wine tourism in the Czech Republic is typically seasonal, with the harvest season (September to November) being the busiest period of the year. Because of this, it may be challenging for firms that deal in wine to maintain a consistent level of revenue throughout the year. In spite of this, the proximity of Mělník to such a significant metropolis as Prague ensures a consistent flow of tourists through the town.

Additionally, because many Czech wineries do not have a significant marketing presence, it may be difficult for them to attract customers to their establishments. This case mostly concerns family-owned and operated wineries that are on the smaller side and may be short on financial resources for various marketing campaigns.

In conclusion, due to the concentration of chemical businesses in the area, Mělník is located in one of the most polluted parts of the Czech Republic. Because of the nearby industrial districts, the neighborhood suffers from a substantial amount of air pollution as a direct result of the presence of factories that generate a variety of chemicals, including PVC. Over a long period of time, the factory has been a significant contributor to the pollution in the surrounding area. The neighboring Labe River has also grown contaminated as a result of industrial operations that have taken place in the region. The river's water quality has deteriorated as a result of the discharge of chemicals and waste from industrial processes that occur at businesses and wastewater treatment facilities.

The region is plagued not only by air and water pollution but also by soil pollution, which is characterized by extremely high concentrations of heavy metals such as lead and cadmium. These metals pose a threat to both human and environmental health and should be avoided. Neratovice is a town located adjacent to Mělník, and its residents have voiced their concern with the noise caused by the industrial activity in the surrounding area. People who live in the area may have their quality of life diminished as a result of the excessive noise caused by the nearby factories and trucks.

3.4 Actors

In accordance with the prevalent situation in the majority of the Czech wine-producing regions, regarding the components that make up the Mělník wine production scenario, we are able to categorize them into the following four categories: The first group is the wineries that produce and sell the wine under their own brands; this group is the most

important actor, and its leading voice is the VOC Mělník Association; the second group is the local and national authorities that regulate all of the legal and technical aspects and work as the natural bridge between the government policies and the producers, i.e., the Czech Ministry of Agriculture; and the third actor is the population of Mělník's region (not only the town but also the surrounding area).

And finally, the cultural and educational institutions, most notably the Czech *Zahradnicka Akademie* in Mělník and the Mělník Regional Museum. Academic institutions and cultural players, such as regional museums and cultural agencies, are connected to the process of building and growing the Mělník region. These cultural institutions, including museums and galleries, are knowledge generators. Therefore, one of their goals and functions is to translate the scientific knowledge produced by the scholars into a discourse that can be understood by the general public, despite the fact that, in most instances, this discourse is more likely to be directed toward a more specialized audience. However, museums and other cultural institutions ought to be aware that the people who visit them come from a variety of backgrounds and require content accessibility. Their story provides their followers with reassurance that the information they have been given is correct. Therefore, the presentation of content in cultural institutions has a significant impact on the minds of their audiences, which makes it an extremely useful tool when discussing self-identification and belonging as a member of a group.

When translating the interactions between the actors mentioned above, we need some theoretical notions to guide the understanding of such complex relations; a key concept to frame this can be the Cultural Landscape concept. As UNESCO states, cultural landscapes reflect specific techniques of land use while others, associated in the minds of the communities, could embody a relationship of people with nature. They reveal and sustain the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment, to protect traditional cultures (UNESCO 2021)¹⁹. The *Mělník* region is an open laboratory where nature and some people interact to consolidate a unified cultural regional identity. To better

¹⁹ UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Cultural Landscapes worldwide list. This document defines the characteristics and importance of the recognized cultural landscapes. For more information visit: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/>

understand this concept of the cultural landscape, knowing more about what constitutes a region is necessary. According to Anssi Paasi, regions are today understood as complicated institutional structures since they depend on human agreement and the operation and decisions made in the context of such social institutions as a political organization, governance, economy, media, or education systems. These institutions operate across scales, contesting traditional concepts of regions as isolated, bounded units (Paasi 2020). Wine associations have had enormous importance in creating and consolidating a connection between the past and present of their people. Still, they are not the only ones immersed in this complex web of interactions.

According to Sara McDowell, in her text entitled "Heritage, Memory, and Identity," places are locations with which people connect, physically or emotionally, and are bound up in notions of belonging, ownership, and, consequently, identity. Following this line of thinking, a 'sense of place' relates to individuals' or groups' socially constructed perceptions and beliefs about a particular location (McDowell 2012). A region like *Mělník* is walking towards a common goal in which the visual features of its cultural landscape, such as its public buildings; monuments; plaques; plinths; graffiti; street names, and tourism propaganda, are a tangible representation of its cultural landscape. There are selective interpretations of the past and present in public places. Therefore, following this evaluation, the cultural landscape is a fundamental resource for understanding the complex connections between heritage, memory, and identity.

Notions of power are central to the construction of heritage and, consequently, Identity, giving weight to the argument that heritage 'is not given; it is made.' Therefore, those who wield the most significant power can influence, dictate, or define what is remembered and what is forgotten. In McDowell's work, landscapes are valuable documents on the power plays from which social life is constructed materially and rhetorically, illuminating their potential to reflect struggles within the heritage process (McDowell 2012). In the case of *Mělník*, symbols of power are present everywhere. Like most medieval towns in the area, everything revolves around the image of a castle; Chateau Mělník is still presented as the symbolic articulator of the local wine due to its noble roots from the splendid past.

Chateau Mělník Winery is not part of the VOC Mělník Association but still is one of the most important actors in the Mělník wine-producing region. There is still the need to analyze how much influence this traditional family business still has in the matter of wine in Mělník and which is its role in supporting visibility and marketing.

According to Paasi, region has traditionally been the most powerful term in geography. However, he recognizes that little serious research has been done on the possibilities for conceptualizing the region and a place together to reveal the complex dynamics of the socio-spatial world (Paasi, 2020). These happen due to the similarity between the two terms and their tendency to overlap. In the case of *Mělník*, the region may be more closely related to particular regional units than others, but not inevitably. This work aims to investigate the role of areas and regional geography of the wine production territories in a globalizing world characterized by new regional and scalar divisions of space in economy and culture, regional integration processes, reorganization, and re-scaling of provincial regions governance, regionalization processes, and place marketing. Hence, this project contemplates research on heritage influences in the winemaking industry. Wine is a common subject associated with international labels of quality. It is also a product around which many associations and organizations gather to assemble statistics and promote studies. The concerns with the market interests tend to be first; nevertheless, heritage appears as one of the main characteristics analyzed by specialists regarding wine tourism. A little further on, a rich bibliography can also be found exploring the cultural aspects of traditions developed by winemaking communities.

Chapter 4: Mělník for the Tourists

The purpose of the next chapter is to represent and analyze the information that is available to tourists in general who travel to the Mělník region. It contains a review of brochures and studies that can be found in the tourism office in Mělník and online and discusses the current state of the wine tourism sector as well as the many destinations one may visit. In addition to this, it intends to acquaint the reader with the existence of primary components in the cultural heritage imagery of Mělník, such as the Mělník Castle and renowned names that have been a part of Mělník's past and history.

The Mělník Town guide brochure and the Mělník city map, both of which are available to tourists at the visitors' center of the town, are among the objects that are going to be looked at. In addition, the exhibition at the Mělník Regional Museum (*Regionální Museum Mělník*) will be investigated in order to gain an understanding of the manner in which the history of wine is presented to the general audience.

According to the report *Vinarstvi v Ceske Republice Brozura 2022* (Národní Vinařské Centrum 2022) Czech wines are now well recognized and are considered to be among the best in both Europe and the rest of the globe. White wines from the Moravian and Bohemian areas are known for having a diverse variety of intriguing aromas, abundant extractive compounds, and a seamless blending of full-bodied flavors with crisp, lively acidity. These characteristics make these wines stand out from others produced in the region.

This description, which can be found above, is a component of both management and advertising. There is a close connection between managing and the use of descriptive language in advertising. The process of arranging, planning, and exercising control over one's activities and resources in order to accomplish one or more predetermined objectives is referred to as management. On the other side, descriptive advertisements are commercials that focus on delivering specific information about the features, benefits, and advantages of a product.

In order to manage effectively, one must have a comprehensive awareness not only of the product or service that is being provided, but also of the requirements and preferences of the target market.

For instance, a descriptive advertisement for a new product could give information about the product's attributes, such as its dimensions and weight, as well as its capabilities in terms of performance. The managers of the company or industry can use this information to decide how to best position the product in the market, as well as which pricing and distribution strategies will yield the best results. In addition, descriptive advertisements can also provide insights on client preferences and behavior, which can assist administrators in making decisions regarding how to improve their products or services to better fulfill the requirements of their target market. Advertisements that are descriptive have the potential to play an essential part in management because they can supply managers with useful information that can be put to use in order to make well-informed decisions and accomplish their objectives. In the case of Mělník, having a sound understanding of management will most definitely be beneficial to the region's efforts to consolidate and expand.

In recent years, consumers have shown a growing preference for red wines. Because of modern scientific processing, these wines have a delightful fruity bouquet, a full-bodied and expressive texture, a smooth and silky texture, and a smooth and silky texture. Rosé wines are also progressively gaining popularity as the style of the future; they are stunning not only for their color but also for their extraordinarily vibrant youth. Rosé wines are particularly beautiful not only for their color but also for their exceptionally vibrant youth. This information is common knowledge and is included in the majority of brochures, websites, journals, and other publications that present or discuss wine in the Czech Republic, with a special emphasis on the Bohemian region and on Mělník. The tourist information office is located next to the city hall of the town, and it is there that guests can obtain information regarding wine.

Wine tasting is the primary source of revenue for the tourism industry in Mělník. This is due to the town's illustrious history in the winemaking industry, which dates back to the Middle Ages. Visitors have the opportunity to try local wines produced from uncommon grape types, including *Rulandské šedé*, *Tramín*, and *Svatovavřínecké*, while seeing the town's various wine cellars. In addition to the wine that is produced in the region, tourists may also sample the typical Bohemian cuisine, which features traditional dishes like smoked ham, roasted pork, and dumplings.

Not only is Mělník a recognized destination for those with an interest in wine tourism, but it is also famous among those with an interest in environmental preservation and historical research. The town is home to a variety of significant historical structures, some of which include the Gothic Church of St. Peter and Paul, the Renaissance-style Mělník Castle, and the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, both of which were constructed in the Baroque style.

One of the most recognizable features of the community is Mělník Castle, which can be found sitting on a hill with a view of the point where the Elbe and Vltava rivers meet. It was originally constructed as a medieval castle in the 10th century, but it was subsequently expanded and reconstructed in the style of the Renaissance in following centuries.

St. Peter and Paul Church is a Gothic structure that is one of the oldest and most significant places of worship in the surrounding area. The church can be found in the heart of the city. It has a stunning interior design with frescoes, stained glass windows, and a spectacular altar in the center of the room. In addition to that, it features a tower that provides breathtaking views of the city and the countryside in every direction. It was constructed in the 14th century. The St. Peter and Paul Church has a vault that may be found just underneath the principal altar. It is home to the crypt of the Lobkowitz family, who were the original proprietors of Mělník Castle and were significant figures in the development of the community throughout its history.

The vault is a fascinating place to visit because it contains the tombs of many prominent members of the Lobkowitz family, such as the renowned composer Joseph Frantisek Maximilian, 7th Prince Lobkowitz, who is buried in a stunning white marble sarcophagus. The vault also contains the tombs of many other prominent members of the Lobkowitz family. In addition, the vault houses a number of priceless items of art, including statues, frescoes, and paintings. As part of a guided tour of the church, guests have the opportunity to explore the church's vault and gain insight into the history of the Lobkowitz family and their relationship to the community of Mělník.

In spite of the fact that it has been subjected to numerous modifications and restorations throughout the course of its history, St. Peter and Paul Church continues to serve as an essential landmark and a well-liked tourist destination in Mělník. Mělník subterranean is a one-of-a-kind attraction consisting of a subterranean maze of tunnels and cellars. Guests have the opportunity to investigate the enigmatic corridors that were originally utilized for the storage and transportation of wine. Mělník is famous for the quality of its wine, and there are a number of wine cellars and vineyards in the surrounding area where guests can sample and purchase local wines.

Since 1992, the region of Central Bohemia in the Czech Republic has been granted the status of "*památková zóna*," which literally translates to "a monument zone." This designation is bestowed upon regions that have been determined to be historically significant, architecturally significant, or culturally significant and that are in need of protection in order to maintain their worth for future generations. The Central Bohemia Region is designated as a *památková zóna*, which means that it is subject to particular regulations and restrictions that are designed to preserve the region's distinctive cultural and architectural legacy. These regulations may contain recommendations for the preservation and restoration of historical buildings and landmarks, as well as restrictions on construction and development. Additionally, these regulations may place limitations on the ability to create new structures.

Central Bohemia is home to a large number of historically and culturally significant sites, such as castles and palaces from the Middle Ages, Gothic churches, and Baroque mansions. The classification of these areas as *památková zóna*²⁰ contributes to the protection and preservation of them so that future generations can take pleasure in visiting them. As a "*památková zóna*" in the Czech Republic, the Central Bohemia Region is subject to a variety of regulations and restrictions that are intended to preserve its historical, cultural, and architectural heritage. These regulations and restrictions are designed to protect the region's cultural, architectural, and historical landmarks. These limitations and constraints can be illustrated by the following examples:

²⁰ More information regarding the *památková zóna* in the Czech Republic can be found on the website of the Czech Ministry of Culture (available only in Czech). <https://www.mkcr.cz/pamatkove-zony-cs-265>

- Building Restrictions Within the Protected Area, there are stringent regulations governing the construction, renovation, and modification of existing buildings. Any sort of construction work necessitates getting a special permit and adhering to a set of guidelines in order to guarantee that it will not have a detrimental effect on the historical or architectural significance of the area.
- Restrictions on Signage: In order to ensure that signage within the protected area does not have a negative impact on the overall visual look of the area, there are regulations regarding the placement of signage. When it comes to the planning and installation of signage, companies and property owners are required to adhere to certain requirements.
- Restrictions on the Landscaping and planting within the protected area are required to adhere to certain rules in order to ensure that they are in keeping with the historical and architectural character of the region.
- Historical Buildings and Landmarks that are located within the protected area are required to be kept and maintained in as close to their original state as is practicable. Any repairs or alterations to the structure need to be carried out with extreme caution to prevent doing any harm to its historical integrity or changing the appearance of the structure.

The law of the Czech National Council regarding the care of monuments by the state is known as *Zákon. 20/1987 Sb*²¹. The Czech Republic's cultural monuments are governed by this law, which was enacted on the 20th of February 1987, and provides regulations for their protection and maintenance. The law creates a framework for the preservation, restoration, and upkeep of cultural monuments, which can include historical and culturally significant buildings, structures, and places. This law also protects culturally significant artifacts. In addition to this, it specifies the roles and obligations of the various government agencies, as well as those of private individuals and organizations, in the execution of these responsibilities.

²¹ Full text of this law available on <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=NIM%3A221114>

The law sets a system for the registration and classification of cultural monuments, as well as processes for obtaining licenses for restoration and maintenance work. Additionally, the law mandates that cultural monuments be maintained in a suitable condition. In addition, it establishes the penalties for breaking the law, which include monetary fines and the possibility of jail time. The overarching goal of the law is to raise public knowledge of and respect for the history and culture of the Czech Republic, as well as to secure the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the Czech Republic for the benefit of future generations.

In addition to the exposed historical buildings, Mělník offers other kinds of sights. The National Nature Reserve of *Kokorinsko*, located close to Mělník, provides visitors with breathtaking vistas of the Czech countryside, in addition to pathways for hiking and bicycling, as well as chances for rock climbing and other types of outdoor activity. Mělník visitors are also able to enjoy a variety of water sports and boating opportunities on the neighboring Elbe and Vltava rivers, as well as routes for hiking and cycling in the surrounding area. Mělník is a town in the Czech Republic that outstands because of its remarkable combination of cultural attractions, historical sites, and stunning natural scenery.

4.1 Material available for tourists

When a person visits a place, you can obtain information from a variety of sources, including the following: Travel guides are books or online resources that provide information on a location's history, culture, attractions, restaurants, lodgings, and transit alternatives. Travel guides can be physically found in book form or accessed via the Internet. Lonely Planet, Fodor's, and Rick Steves are a few examples of well-known and widely used travel guides. Most vacation spots have official websites pertaining to tourism, which contain information about local attractions, events, lodgings, and modes of transportation. These websites are a terrific place to begin organizing your vacation, and you can usually find them by Googling for the name of your destination followed by the words "tourism" or "visitor information." Tourists are able to leave evaluations of hotels, restaurants, and attractions on websites such as TripAdvisor and Yelp. These reviews can be read by other tourists. These

assessments have the potential to provide insightful information into the quality and worth of a variety of solutions.

When you arrive at your destination, local resources such as tourist centers, tourism offices, and hotel concierges can help you with maps, brochures, and recommendations for things to do and see in the area. Likewise, the internet and its various social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, can also serve as a source of travel ideas and information for a certain location. You can get suggestions and ideas by conducting a search for hashtags that are associated with the location that you will be going to or by following local tourist boards and travel blogs. When planning your trip and gathering information, it is essential to draw from a wide range of resources. If you do this, you can ensure that you have a comprehensive awareness of the location, which will allow you to make knowledgeable judgments regarding the destination.

4.1.1 Brochure Mělník Town Guide

FIGURE 11

MĚLNÍK TOWN GUIDE BROCHURE



FIGURE 11. MĚLNÍK TOWN GUIDE BROCHURE. Source: Scanned by the Author

Figure 11 shows the cover of the Mělník Town guide brochure. Issued by The City of Mělník, the Mělník Town Guide is a thirty-six pages brochure that has an introduction, town history, prominent personalities, buildings, main sights, and general information for the visitor of Mělník. The version the tourist gets is the first one ever printed. It was issued in 2007, and sixteen years later, the visitor of Mělník still gets the same first edition of the brochure with 36000 printed copies (Mělník Town Guide 2007, 38) (p.38). This fact is relevant to measuring the maximum number of handouts given to visitors in the last sixteen years since its printing. It can probably help estimate the flux of visitors that have visited the town and requested an English version of this brochure guide.

The major element of the cover of the brochure is a picture of the center of Mělník, with the Mělník Castle serving as the focal point. In the background of the photo is the Labe River, which has a strong connection to the town. In addition to that, it demonstrates the topography of the town and provides miniature depictions of the principal structures found there.

Subsequently, there are clarifications about personalities, local buildings, churches, and monasteries. Regarding public buildings, the Mělník Regional Museum, founded in 1888, is one of the oldest in the Bohemian lands. According to this booklet, the museum's specialization is the documentation of viticulture in the Bohemian lands. It forms the basis of part of its exhibition, which is also housed in the accessible medieval cellars preserved on three levels (Mělník Town Guide 2007, 11)(p.11). The exact publication details that in this museum, it is possible to learn things and sample wine, sit in the café, and in the moat, which formed part of the town's medieval fortifications and is linked to the courtyard.

4.1.1.1 Wine History and Religion

This comprehensive Mělník Town guide guidebook presents a liaison between Mělník history and its wine, as visible on its very first page.

Quotes present from Bartoni's Eulogy to Mělník Wine from 1694 say: "... let's hurry on without stopping – to drink my excellent Mělník wine....". Václav Bartoni, wrote a poem titled "Bartoni's Eulogy to Mělník Wine." The wine made in the Mělník region of the Czech Republic, which is renowned for its superiority and one-of-a-kind flavor profile, is the subject of this poem's celebration. Bartoni sings the wine's praises in the poem, praising its color,

perfume, and flavor and comparing it to the best wines that France and Italy have to offer. In addition to this, he discusses the region's vineyards and the labor that its inhabitants put in to cultivate them. The wine-making tradition holds a significant place in the cultural history of the Mělník region, and the people who live there are justifiably proud of the wines they produce. This is reflected in the poem. It has grown to be seen as a representation of the identity of the area and has been honored at a variety of cultural gatherings and festivals. "Bartoni's Eulogy to Mělník Wine" is a wonderful tribute to the wine-making traditions and cultural history of the Mělník region. It is also a testament to the necessity of conserving and promoting the unique personality of the Mělník region.

For our analysis, this brochure depicts that Mělník had vineyards in 1964 in the broader ring from the historic core in which; however, we have many opportunities to sample its wine as it happens today.

Regarding history, this brochure portrays the past of the medieval walled town (perhaps called *Pšov* before the name Mělník appeared) (Mělník Town Guide 2007, 2) has archaeological records from the ninth century. A second pertinent date is the marriage between Prince Bořivoj and Princess Ludmila in 875. These names, especially (later) Saint Ludmila's, will extensively appear through all our findings regarding historical sources and records. Another recurrent name in the town's history is Saint Wenceslas, Ludmila's grandson, and ruler of this land. After presenting the town's historical rulers and their relation to Christian history, the following appropriate fact for our analysis happened in 1885, the foundation of the Fruit and Vintner's School, which reflected – according to this work- the growing interest in viticulture. We are able to make the connection between Christian nobles from the Middle Ages Ludmila and Wenceslaus, who later became saints, and the significance they held for the people who lived in the area, not only in terms of the religious beliefs they held but also in the physical landscape of the region. This is because these saints were believed to have the power to protect or avert local floods, poor harvests, animal and human illness, menacing war, and other such calamities due to their status as "land patrons." It has had an effect on the town as a significant portion of it now contains buildings, statues, street names, and other tangible aspects that demonstrate this connection to its past.

Both religion and wine are significant aspects of the background and development of the culture and history of the Czech Republic, and they continue to have important positions in the traditions and rituals that are practiced there. It is not just apparent in the brochure that was just described, but it is also evident in other materials, and it is a part of their people's day-to-day lives, as we can see when examining the perspective that locals have on wine and its history.

FIGURE 12

RELIGIOUS COMPONENT EXAMPLE



FIGURE 12. RELIGIOUS COMPONENT EXAMPLE. Source: (Národní Vinařské Centrum 2022)

Figure 12 image is incorporated on the second page of the brochure entitled *Vinarstvi v Ceske Republice Brozura 2022* (Národní Vinařské Centrum 2022). It is clear that there is a connection between religion, wine, and nobility in every region of the Czech Republic. It becomes increasingly more evident that the location of this photograph in an official brochure that is intended to show the population the qualities and actual status of the wine has this essential component in a predominant spot. This leaflet is sent to the general public in order to educate people about the characteristics and current standing of the wine.

It is not just about people's beliefs but also how transcendental it still is in their imagination, which contrasts with the knowledge that the Czech Republic is one of the least religious countries. Religious considerations defined and shaped the landscape of wine in Mělník, despite the fact that the country has a strong tradition of religious tolerance and secularism²². In the wine-growing region of Mělník, religious considerations have had a key influence in molding the landscape of wine. Due to the fact that the Catholic Church has a long and intimate history with wine, it has been a significant factor in the development of winemaking techniques in this area. Wine and the Catholic Church go way back. One of the reasons for this association is the part that wine has traditionally played in the rituals and

²² The most recent statistics that are available from the Czech Statistical Office indicate that the majority of the population in the Czech Republic considers itself to be either irreligious or unaffiliated with any specific religion. The following is a breakdown of people according to their religious affiliation, based on data from the 2021 Census:

No religion: 3,894,718 (35.9%)
Unknown: 2,688,835 (24.8%) of the total
1 870 386 people belong to the Catholic Church [17.2%]
Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren: 52 721 members (half of one percent)
Czechoslovak Hussite Church: 49,823 (0.5%)
39,164 people belong to the Orthodox Church (0.4%)
Other religion or belief: 14,841 (0.1%)

People who may have a religious affiliation but did not specify it on the census are counted as belonging to the "unspecified" category. This is an important point to keep in mind about the census results. The data also demonstrates that over the past few years, the proportion of Czech citizens who self-identify as having no religious affiliation or none at all has been continuously growing in the Czech Republic.

The information supplied regarding the religious statistics in the Czech Republic is based on the most recent data that is available from the Czech Statistical Office, which is the official government agency responsible for collecting and publishing statistical information about the country. The information was compiled from the Census of 2021 and is available on the website of the relevant agency.

Link of the original article: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/scitani2021/religious-beliefs>.

ceremonies of the Catholic faith. During the celebration of the Eucharist, which serves as the focal point of worship in the Catholic Church, wine plays an important role. As a direct consequence of this, the production of wine has traditionally been an essential industry for several religious orders, including Catholic monasteries.

In the case of Mělník, the Catholic Church was instrumental in the development and management of vineyards in the region. For instance, the Church established the Benedictine abbey of St. George in the (then) town of Prague, which was located close and possessed huge vineyards in the Mělník region in the 12th century. The role that the Church played in the production of wine in Mělník over the course of several centuries contributed significantly to the physical appearance of the region. In order to give the best possible growth conditions for the grapes, vineyards were planted on south-facing slopes. Furthermore, stone walls were built in order to form terraces and protect the land from erosion. In addition, the Church was involved in the process of setting quality standards for Mělník wine, which contributed to the development of a reputation for the region as a producer of high-quality wine.

Even in modern times, the Catholic Church remains actively involved in the production of wine in Mělník, and a significant number of the region's vineyards and wineries are owned and maintained by Catholic orders and other religious groups. Even in modern times, the impact that religious principles had on the development of the wine industry in the region of Mělník can be seen, and this has become an essential component of the cultural legacy of the area.

4.1.2 Mělník Town Map

Maps and brochures are examples of printed products that can be used in the tourism industry to give information about a location, such as the available activities, lodgings, food establishments, and modes of transportation. They can be of great assistance to travelers who are unfamiliar with the region but are interested in discovering what it has to offer. Maps designed for tourists often offer an overview of the region and draw attention to notable sights and attractions. They might include information about available modes of transportation, like

bus and subway routes, as well as points of interest, like museums, parks, and shopping districts. The majority of tourist maps may also be accessed online or downloaded as applications for smartphones, making them convenient for travelers who are constantly on the move. Visitors also frequently have access to tourism brochures as a popular type of resource. They include further information on particular attractions, such as historical sites, parks, and cultural events, in greater depth. Additional information about tours, dining establishments, and lodging establishments might be included in brochures. In most cases, maps and brochures pertaining to tourism can be obtained at airports, hotels, and information centers specializing in tourism. They are frequently given away free of charge and can serve as a helpful resource when it comes to getting information from a place.

Also available at the tourism office, The Mělník visitors center offers a variety of maps. There is an English and German versions of this map additionally to the Czech main version. The following is a scanned version of the current map at the tourism office.

FIGURE 13

MĚLNÍK TOURISM OFFICE MAP 1



1 Socha Karla IV. / Statue of Charles IV. / Statue von Karl IV. 2 Zámek Mělník / Castle Mělník / Schloss Mělník / www.jobkovicz-melnik.cz 3 Vyhlička na soutok Labe a Vltavy / View of confluence of Moldau and Elbe / Aussicht auf den Zusammenfluss von Elbe und Moldau 4 Kostel sv. Petra a Pavla / Church of St. Peter and Paul / St. Peter and Paul Kirche / www.fornostmelnik.cz 5 Kostel sv. Ludmily / church of St. Ludmila / St. Ludmila Kirche / www.fornostmelnik.cz 6 Evangelický kostel / evangelical church / evangelische Kirche / melnik.evangelnet.cz 7 Masarykův kulturní dům / Masaryk Culture House / Masaryk Kulturhaus / www.mekuc.cz 8 Náměstí Karla IV. / Charles IV Square / Platz von Karl IV. 9 Prážská brána / Prague gate / Das Prager Tor / www.mekuc.cz 10 Náměstí Miru / Peace Square / Platz Náměstí Miru 11 Radnice / Town hall / Rathaus 12 Regionální muzeum / Regional Museum / Regionalmuseum / www.muzeum-melnik.cz 13 Mělnické podzemí a studna / Underground Mělník and well / Mělníker Untergund Brunnen / www.ticmelnik.cz

MĚLNÍK

Prohlídka města je nejlepší začít z Turistického informačního centra Husovo ulici, okolo pseudo-gotické vily Karoly k vyhlídce na České středohoří u sochy Karla IV. 1. Odtud nad vlnící sv. Ludmilou okolo zámku Mělník 2, proskleného větrných sklepy a vinem Ludmila, pokračuje chodník pro pěší až k dalekohledu na vyhlídce na soutok Labe a Vltavy 3 a pletvární komory v Horkíně. Neopakovatelný rozhled nabízí i věž chrámu sv. Petra a Pavla 4, jedná z nejvýznamnějších sakrálních staveb České republiky. Navštívit je možné i zdejší kostelík. Prohlídka pokračuje malebnou Svatováclavskou ulicí a mezi domy U Zlatého hrázce a U Zlaté hvězdy z dochovaným původním polychromovaným renesančním portálem do ulice S. května a dále přes náměstí Karla IV. Pražskou ulicí ke kostelu sv. Ludmily 5, kde na sebe v parku upoutá pozornost dřevěná zvonce. Okolo evangelického kostela 6 vede ulice Krombholcova k parku, v němž žije světlá budova Masarykova kulturního domu 7, architektonické památky ve stylu funkcionalistického purismu. Zpět přes náměstí Karla IV. 8 a novodobými stavbami se do historického jádra města prohlídka vrací Pražskou bránou, v níž se nachází originální galerie a kavárna 9, mezi malebné mládežnické domy na náměstí Miru 10, jímž dominuje mohutná radnice 11 a barokní věž. Mezi ní a kostelem Osmácti svatých patronů se v podloubí ukrývá vstup do Regionálního muzea Mělník 12. Do středověké studny pod náměstím je dnes možné nahlédnout pouze z podzemní chodby přístupné z Turistického informačního centra 13.

The best place to start a tour of the town is from Tourist Information Centre via Husovo Street around the Karola pseudo-gothic villa to the viewpoint of

the Central Bohemian Uplands (České středohoří) at the statue of Charles IV. 1. From here, the pedestrian walkway leads over the vineyard of St. Ludmila past the Mělník Chateau 2, renowned for its wine cellars and Ludmila wine, and then it continues on to the binoculars at the viewpoint of the confluence of the Elbe and Vltava rivers 3 and canal lock in Horkín. The tower of the St. Peter and Paul Church 4, one of the most important religious buildings of the Czech Republic, also offers an unforgettable view. It is also possible to visit the local assuary. The tour continues through picturesque Svatováclavská Street and between houses U Zlatého hrázce and U Zlaté hvězdy with its preserved original polychromed renaissance portal, on to S. května Street and further through Charles IV Square via Pražská Street to the Church of St. Ludmila 5, where a wooden belfry attracts attention in the park. Passing the evangelical church 6, Krombholcova Street leads to the park, in which the Masaryk Culture House 7 building shines white, an architectural monument in the style of functionalist purism. Through Peace Gate with art gallery and coffee bar in the interior 9, the tour makes its way back through Charles IV Square 8, the tower modern buildings to the historic core of the town between picturesque townhouses on Peace Square (Náměstí Miru) 10, which are dominated by a huge town hall 11 with a baroque tower. The entrance to the Mělník Regional Museum 12 is hidden in an arcade between the town hall and the Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. Today, the medieval well under the square can only be seen from underground tunnels accessed from the Tourist Information Centre 13.

Den Stadtrundgang beginnt man am besten am Touristinformationszentrum in der Straße

Husova. Vorbei an der pseudogotischen Villa Karola gelangt man zum Aussichtspunkt auf das Böhmisches Mittelgebirge an der Statue Karl IV. 1. Von hier führt ein Weg oberhalb des Weinbergs der hl. Ludmila vorbei am Schloss Mělník 2, das für seine Weinkeller und den Ludmila-Wein berücht ist, bis zum Fernglas am Aussichtspunkt auf den Zusammenfluss von Elbe und Moldau 3 und die Kammerstube in Horkín. Einen einzigartigen Ausblick bietet auch der Turm der St. Peter und Paul Kirche 4, eines der bedeutendsten Sakralbauten der tschechischen Republik. Auch das hiesige Rathaus kann besichtigt werden. Weiter geht es durch die idyllische Straße Svatováclavská zwischen den Häusern „Zur Goldenen Traube“ und „Zum Goldenen Stern“ mit seinem erhalten gebliebenen ursprünglichen polychromierten Renaissance-Portal. Nun kann man in die Straße S. května einbiegen und über den Platz Karl IV. durch die Straße Pražská zur St. Ludmila Kirche 5 gehen, in deren Park ein hölzerner Glockenturm die Aufmerksamkeit fesselt. Vorbei an der evangelischen Kirche 6 führt die Straße Krombholcova zu einem Park mit dem weiß leuchtenden Masaryk Kulturhaus 7, einen Architekturdenkmal im Stil des funktionalistischen Purismus. Über den Platz Karl IV. 8 mit seinen neuzeitlichen Bauten gelangt man durch das Prager Tor mit Kunstgalerie und Café im Inneren 9 wieder zurück in den historischen Stadtkern zwischen malerischen Bürgerhäusern auf den Platz Náměstí Miru 10, dessen Dominante ein stolches Rathaus 11 mit Barockturm ist. Zwischen ihm und der Kirche der vierzehn heiligen Helfer liegt in einem Laubengang verborgen der Eingang zum Regionalmuseum Mělník 12. Der mittelalterliche Brunnen unter dem Marktplatz kann heute nur über einen unterirdischen Gang besichtigt werden. Der Zutritt befindet sich im Touristinformationszentrum 13.

FIGURE 13. MĚLNÍK TOURISM OFFICE MAP 1. Source: Scanned by the Author

FIGURE 14

MĚLNÍK TOURISM OFFICE MAP 2



FIGURE 14. MĚLNÍK TOURISM OFFICE MAP 2. Source: Scanned by the Author

Figures 13 and 14 show the example of a map that tourists get at the Tourism Office. They include information about the city and its vicinity as well as points of interest, like museums, churches, castles, parks, wineries, and shopping districts.

Due to the compact nature of the town, the particular map in question includes a route that is suggested may be completed on foot. It takes part in most of the activities, and one of its distinguishing features is that it provides links to the websites of the majority of the tourist destinations and wineries.

4.1.3 Mělník Regional Museum exhibition

A visit to the local museum is often an excellent method to gain insight into the region's past, as well as its culture and its inhabitants. Exhibits in museums frequently highlight the works of art, artifacts, and historical accounts from the surrounding community. By going to the museum of a location, one can learn about that location in a number of different ways. Museums are able to provide the historical background that can assist you in gaining a deeper understanding of the location that you are now visiting. One can develop a more profound appreciation for the people and culture of the region and its history.

The art and culture of a particular area are frequently displayed at museums to learn about the styles and techniques of local artists and how they have been affected by the history and culture of the area. Many museums feature exhibits that highlight the contributions of local individuals or groups, such as inventors, artists, or community leaders.

As part of the information collection for this project, it was required to make various visits to the Mělník Regional Museum. The initial one occurred in March of 2022. It consisted of touring all of the expositions and cellars in a comprehensive manner. In addition to that, it incorporated a one-on-one meeting with Mgr. Lukáš Snopek, the historian of the Mělník Regional Museum. On this occasion, he provided an explanation of the purpose of the museum, which can be summed up as follows: The act of collecting and preserving artifacts and other things that are significant to the history and cultural heritage of the region, including works of art, historical documents, photographs, artifacts, and other objects that shed light on the history of the area; Carrying out studies and scholarly study on the history and culture of the area being studied. This can involve forming partnerships with educational institutions, independent researchers, and other groups in order to investigate and publish discoveries that contribute to a better knowledge of the history and culture of the area;

Displaying collections, and hosting educational events that encourage participation from the general public and foster an awareness for the cultural heritage of the area; The promotion of the cultural assets and historical past of Mělník by promoting partnerships and cooperation with other organizations and institutions. This can involve forming collaborations with local schools, businesses, and other groups in the area with the goal of fostering economic growth and tourism in the community: Organizing wine tasting that makes Mělník wines visible to the public in general. However, it is required a reservation and a minimum number of participants and has to be done in advance.

It is important to provide local communities with the tools and support they need to conserve and celebrate their own cultural history. Local communities can benefit from the expertise, training, and assistance that regional museums can provide for community-based cultural preservation programs. Regional museums can act as resources for local communities.

As a result of these encounters, the personnel at the museum handed over a folder that contained 12 separate papers that offered a summary of the information that was exhibited in the permanent collection of the museum. These are abstracts of the exhibitions and expositions. It is available at the museum -upon request-. They summarize various aspects regarding the wine history, culture, and practices consisting of the following subjects:

- The story of wine and water (or else growing grapevines in Bohemian River Valleys - A traveling exhibition)
- Bohemia – The heart of Europe opens up to the grapevine (or else Natural Conditions for Winegrowing in Bohemia)
- Wine and Water in ancient cultures (or else how vines made their way from the Mediterranean to Central Europe, 3rd to 8th centuries)
- Water for Christening and Wine for Holy Mass (or else The origins of Czech Winegrowing as a Result of Christianization. 9th and 10th centuries)
- Cistercian wine and Trade on the River Labe (or else Developments of Viniculture in the 11th to 13th centuries Influenced by Monastery-Related Colonization)

- Vineyards around the Imperial Metropolis on the Vltava (or else Efforts by Charles IV to support Commercial Winemaking by towns, 14th century)
- “Lakes” and “waterfalls” of vineyards surrounding Czech towns (or else the Boom in Urban Viniculture in the Late 15th and 16th centuries)
- The years of peace and the growth of Viniculture in the countryside (or else Stagnation in the towns and Commercial winemaking by the Bohemian Aristocracy, 17th and 18th centuries)
- Renaissance of Bohemian vinicultures in the Labe River valley (or else The decline of Viniculture in Bohemia and attempts at reviving it, 19th century)
- Vineyards amidst the white waters of the river of time (or else The Plight in Bohemian Viniculture during a “Short” 20th century [1914-1989])
- Bohemian Wines: a drop in the ocean but a unique one (or else The state of the viniculture in Bohemia)
- Where the past and present of viniculture meet (or else the Steps by the Mělník Regional Museum to popularize viniculture in Bohemia)

On the other hand, the physical display is a larger collection of materials, artifacts, panels, photographs, bottles, and labels that convey the narrative of the history and manufacture of wine in the Czech Republic from the middle ages up until the present day. This exhibition is housed in a building that was once used to store wine in the Czech Republic.

In order to accomplish the goals of this work's analysis, we will concentrate on the collection of summaries that were distributed by the museum and conduct a concise study of each subject:

The story of wine and Water (or else growing grapevines in Bohemian River Valleys - A traveling exhibition)

“The Story of Wine and Water or else growing grapevines in Bohemian River Valleys.” A traveling exhibition” prepared by Mělník Regional Museum, funded by the Central Bohemian Region, written by Mgr. Lukáš Snopek provides a historical

account of the geographical area in the center of Europe that is today known as the Czech Republic. This pamphlet features seven photographs of Mělník, the most prominent of which is taken at Mělník Castle. In addition, it lists the names of those who assisted with or contributed to the exhibition.

FIGURE 15

MĚLNÍK REGIONAL MUSEUM EXHIBITION LEAFLET EXAMPLE

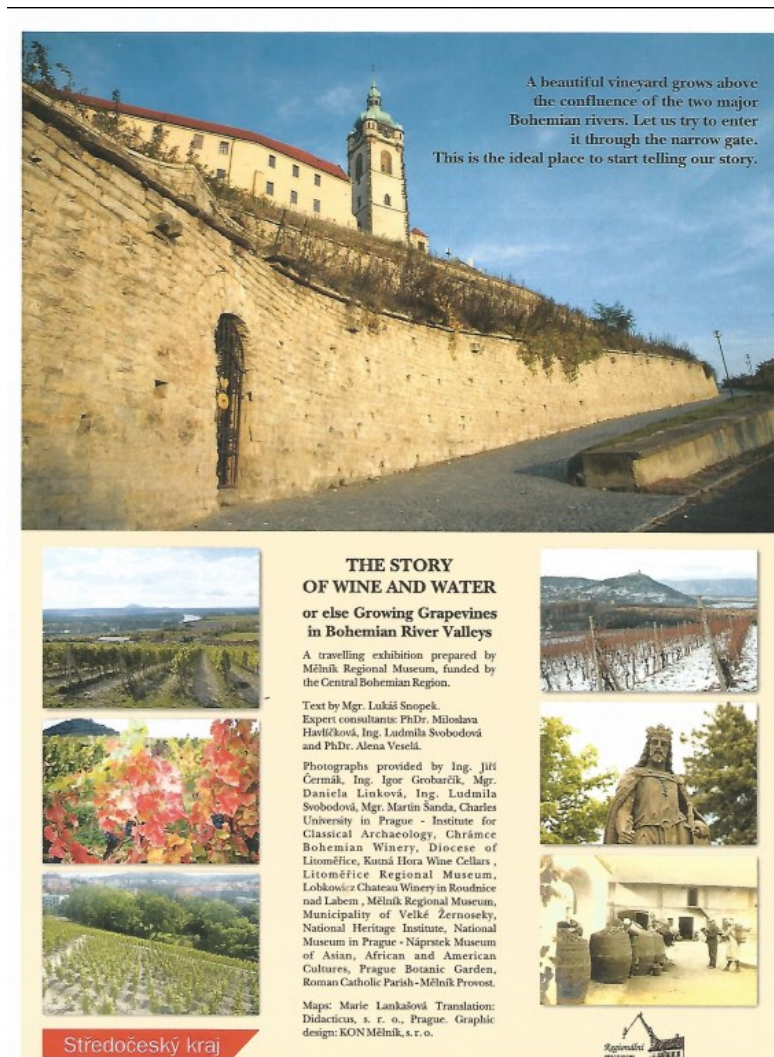


FIGURE 15. MĚLNÍK REGIONAL MUSEUM EXHIBITION LEAFLET. Source: Mělník Regional Museum.

Scanned by the Author

Bohemia – The heart of Europe opens up to the grapevine (or else Natural Conditions for Winegrowing in Bohemia)

According to the assertions made in this pamphlet, the Bohemian basin is set apart from the rest of the region by a natural boundary consisting of mountain ranges. The majority of Bohemia's interior topography may be attributed to the Vltava and Labe rivers, in addition to their respective tributaries. The Vltava joins the Labe in Mělník, and then the Labe flows into Germany, where it changes its name to the Elbe, and then it empties into the North Sea. The Czech Republic is located at the heart of Europe's most important watershed. The majority of Bohemia's vineyards may be found on the south-facing slopes of the valleys formed by the Vltava and its tributary, the Berounka, as well as the Labe and its tributary, the Ohře. These four rivers form the Vltava and Berounka watersheds.

There are four distinct photographs of rivers, and a map of the Czech Republic depicted on it. The purpose of this project is to map the locations of the rivers and provide the general public with a geographical reference of the area.

Wine and Water in ancient cultures (or else how vines made their way from the Mediterranean to Central Europe, 3rd to 8th centuries)

This leaflet focuses on several ancient cultures all across the world. It consists of a relief of two men carrying a large grape and five photographs of objects (ceramics) that were found in Old Town Prague. The emphasis is placed on demonstrating that the vine is a very old and cultivated plant that people have been growing for a specific reason since at least the sixth millennium before the common era. It makes a historical transit from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt to Central Europe in order to focus on how wine arrived in Bohemian regions. The journey begins in ancient Mesopotamia and ends in Central Europe. The objective of the photographs is to demonstrate both the accessibility of wine in the region and the close relationship that exists between religious observances and wine.

Water for Christening and Wine for Holy Mass (or else The origins of Czech Winegrowing as a Result of Christianization. 9th and 10th centuries)

A bird's-eye view of the town of Mělník serves as the primary illustration on this leaflet. It is intended to introduce the reader to the period of transition from ancient times to the Middle Ages, with an emphasis on the Christianization of Europe during that time period and the beginnings of wine growing in Bohemia. The Bohemian Duke *Bořivoj*, Saint Wenceslaus, and Saint Ludmila are depicted in images taken from reliefs, and the text provides an account of the accomplishments they attained.

The process by which Christianity became the dominant religion in what is now known as the Czech Republic is referred to as the "Christianization of the Bohemian Lands." This refers to the method by which Christianity expanded over the region. The process started in the 9th century and continued on for several more centuries before it finally resulted in the foundation of the Catholic Church as the preeminent religious institution in the area.

The Byzantine Empire was responsible for sending the first Christian missionaries to the regions that are now known as the Czech Republic; nevertheless, their efforts to convert the native inhabitants were unsuccessful. Christianity did not start to develop a foothold in the region until the advent of Christian missionaries from the Latin Church in the 9th century, particularly Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. Christianity began to spread throughout the governing elite of Bohemia during the reign of Duke *Bořivoj* I, the first known monarch of Bohemia. Gradually, it spread throughout the rest of the population as well. Saint Ludmila, *Bořivoj's* wife, was a significant figure in both the propagation of Christianity and the indoctrination of her children into the Christian religion. However, Christianity did not become firmly established as the dominant religion in the region until the reign of Duke Wenceslaus I, who was also later canonized as a saint.

There were numerous clashes and disagreements between the ruling elites of the Bohemian lands and the Catholic Church during the process of Christianizing the

Bohemian lands. This made the process neither easy nor straightforward. The Hussite movement, which occurred in the 15th century and was a protest against the corrupt practices of the Catholic Church as well as the Church's rule over the regions that are now known as the Czech Republic, was the most important of them. In spite of these obstacles, the Catholic Church maintained its position as the most influential religious institution in the area, and its impact could be seen and felt in many facets of life, including the arts, architecture, and education. The process of Christianization of the Bohemian lands played an important part in the formation of the culture and identity of the region, and the impact of this process can be seen even now in the Czech Republic.

Cistercian wine and Trade on the River Labe (or else Developments of Viniculture in the 11th to 13th centuries Influenced by Monastery-Related Colonization)

Winemaking in the regions of Bohemia and Moravia owes a significant amount of its early development to the contributions made by Cistercian monks. The monks were renowned for their knowledge of viticulture and winemaking, and they were responsible for the establishment of a large number of vineyards and wineries around the region.

The Cistercian monastery at *Zlatá Koruna*, which was situated in the area of South Bohemia, is recognized as having been one of the most important locations for the production of wine in the Czech Republic. Wines of exceptional quality were produced there, and these wines enjoyed widespread renown and appreciation throughout the region. In addition to their work in the production of wine, the monks of the Cistercian order were also engaged in the buying and selling of goods along the River Labe (Elbe). The Bohemian territories were connected to other regions of Europe, such as Germany and the Netherlands, by means of the river, which served as a significant commercial thoroughfare in medieval Europe.

Along the River Labe, the Cistercian monks created a number of river ports and commercial facilities, which enabled them to participate in commerce and trade with other parts of Europe. They dealt in a wide range of items, including wine, wool,

lumber, and salt—all of which were considered to be of exceptional worth throughout the medieval period in Europe. The Cistercian monks had a significant role in the expansion of the region's infrastructure, which included the building of roadways, bridges, and canals, among other things. These enhancements made it simpler to transport goods down the River Labe, which in turn contributed to the expansion of trade and business in the area.

Vineyards around the Imperial Metropolis on the Vltava (or else Efforts by Charles IV to support Commercial Winemaking by towns, 14th century)

During the 14th century, King Charles IV of Bohemia was an instrumental figure in the expansion of the country's winemaking industry. As a wine connoisseur, he recognized the potential of the area to produce wines of high quality and was excited about the prospect. Charles IV is credited with developing a number of significant advancements in the winemaking process, which helped to establish Bohemia as an important region for winemaking.

His achievements included the creation of vineyards in the region surrounding Prague, notably in the areas of Karlín and Vinohrady, one of the most significant contributions that Charles IV made to the production of wine in the area. He also fostered the production of new grape types, such as the Riesling grape, which was well-suited to the climate and soil characteristics of the local area. Riesling grapes are grown in Germany. Charles IV also pioneered innovative approaches to winemaking, such as maturing wine in oak barrels, which are still in use today. The quality and flavor of the wines that were produced in the region were able to improve as a result of this. Additionally, he established regulations to ensure that wines were produced to a high standard, and he personally oversaw the production and sale of wine in Prague. Both of these responsibilities fell under his purview.

Wines from the Czech Republic developed a reputation for excellence across Europe as a result of Charles IV's support; as a result, they were frequently served at

royal banquets and diplomatic engagements. The personal excitement for wine that the monarch had helped to enhance the prominence of winemaking in the region, and the support that he provided helped to create the reputation of Bohemian wines as being among the greatest in all of Europe. The many vineyards and wineries that dot the landscape of Bohemia today are living testaments to Charles IV's legacy as a patron of the wine industry in the region. Wine aficionados in a variety of countries take pleasure in the consistently high-quality wines that are being produced by the Czech Republic's wine sector.

“Lakes” and “waterfalls” of vineyards surrounding Czech towns (or else the Boom in Urban Viticulture in the Late 15th and 16th centuries)

This leaflet pays attention to the urban viticulture industry in Bohemia, which had a tremendous expansion throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, particularly in the region surrounding Prague. At this time, a large number of prosperous merchants and nobles established vineyards and wineries on the outskirts of the city, taking advantage of the rich soil and favorable climate of the region to cultivate grapes and produce wine. The vineyards of the Lobkowicz family in Roudnice nad Labem and Nelahozeves, as well as the vineyards of the *Španělský dvůr* estate in Prague, were among the most notable urban vineyards in Bohemia during this time period. Nelahozeves was also home to vineyards owned by the Lobkowicz family. These vineyards were known for producing wines of exceptional quality, which were greatly prized by the wealthy and influential members of Bohemian society.

The increase in urban viticulture that occurred throughout the 15th and 16th centuries led to the development of new methods and technologies for the production of wine. These included the utilization of presses and barrels in the process of winemaking. This contributed to the improvement of the quality and consistency of Bohemian wines, which in turn contributed to the developing reputation of Bohemian wines as being among the best in Europe. Today, the legacy of urban viticulture in Bohemia is still visible throughout the region in the form of the numerous vineyards and wineries that can be found there. Wine connoisseurs from all over the world

continue to place a high value on Bohemian wines, and the winemaking industry in this region continues to play an essential role in both the regional economy and the cultural heritage of the area.

The years of peace and the growth of Viniculture in the countryside (or else Stagnation in the towns and Commercial winemaking by the Bohemian Aristocracy, 17th and 18th centuries)

According to the information presented in this pamphlet, the profitability of urban viniculture took a significant nosedive around the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. The cause for this was a lack of labor as well as insufficient investment. The Thirty Years War, which took place between 1618 and 1648, was a significant factor that had an impact on the local economy. As a direct consequence of this, a good number of vineyards have been abandoned.

Baroque culture flourished during this time period in Bohemia, which saw a lengthy era of peace and stability between 1650 and 1740. The process of creating wine in Bohemia went through a period of stasis because there were no big innovations taking place, but the region continued to produce great wines throughout this time.

Renaissance of Bohemian vinicultures in the Labe River valley (or else The decline of Viniculture in Bohemia and attempts at reviving it, 19th century)

According to this pamphlet, the area that was covered with grapes started to grow slowly again in the 1870s, and by 1890, it had increased to approximately 150 hectares. It was in the year 1882 that the Czech and German sections of the Winegrowers Association of the Kingdom of Bohemia were established. In the year 1885, the town of Mělník became home to the first viniculture vocational school. Near the end of the 18th century, there was a discernible decrease in the total area of Bohemian vineyards. The customs restrictions that had been in place to protect domestic wines have been removed for some years now, and the development of

railways has made it much simpler to bring in wine from other countries. It also claims that the collapse in viticulture was also attributable to the obsolete knowledge and skills of Bohemian winemakers. This information is found in the document.

Vineyards amidst the white waters of the river of time (or else The Plight in Bohemian Viticulture during a “Short” 20th century [1914-1989])

The beginning of World War I had a tremendous influence on the winemaking industry in Bohemia. There was a lack of labor in the vineyards and wineries as a result of the large number of young men who were called up to fight in the war. This resulted in both a decrease in output as well as a fall in the quality of wines produced in the Czech Republic. The war also caused disruptions to trade routes, which made it more challenging to ship wines from the Czech Republic to other regions of Europe. This resulted in a decrease in demand for wines produced in the Czech Republic, which had a detrimental effect on the industry that produces wines in that region. In addition, the war resulted in the destruction of or damage to a significant number of vineyards and wineries, particularly in regions that experienced extensive fighting. Because of this, the region's production capacity was cut even further, and it was challenging for winemakers to get back on their feet after the war.

The winemaking industry in Bohemia went through a period of transition and modernization after the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. The newly elected Czechoslovak administration saw the expansion of the country's wine industry as an opportunity to both stimulate the economy and strengthen the country's sense of national identity. The government developed research institutes to investigate and improve winemaking procedures, as well as cooperatives to assist small-scale winemakers in marketing and selling their products. Additionally, the government established research institutions to study and improve winemaking techniques. Furthermore, the government encouraged the production of wines of high quality that were capable of competing favorably with those of other countries in Europe. During this time period, Bohemian winemakers shifted their attention to producing wines that were more uniform in terms of both quality and style. They experimented

with new grape types as well as different winemaking procedures in order to produce wines that were one of a kind and distinctive so that they could stand out on the global market. The emergence of the Central Bohemian wine area during this time period was one of the most important advances in Bohemian winemaking that took place at the same time. This region, which is located surrounding Prague and includes the distinguished vineyards of Mělník, was known for producing wines of exceptional quality that were highly regarded both within the country and in other countries.

Due to the political and social instability that was brought about by the emergence of Nazi Germany and the occupation of Czechoslovakia during World War II, the years 1933 to 1945 were a challenging time for winemaking in Bohemia. This was the case despite the fact that Bohemia is known for producing some of the world's finest wines. Some winemakers in Bohemia were able to keep up their production of wine despite the many obstacles they faced during the war years. Due to a lack of supplies and labor, they frequently had to rely on ancient methods of winemaking and make do with the resources at their disposal, which were severely limited. On the other hand, the wine business in Bohemia suffered tremendously as a result of the Nazi occupation. During the war, a substantial number of vineyards and wineries were destroyed, which led to a major drop in production. Additionally, during the war, many winemakers were either forced to flee the country or were killed, resulting in a loss of expertise and knowledge within the industry.

Bohemian Wines: a drop in the ocean but a unique one (or else The state of the viticulture in Bohemia

The overthrow of the communist dictatorship in 1989 made it possible for families to start their own enterprises for the first time. The new Viticulture Act of 2004 established two sub-regions inside Bohemia, and they were given the names Litoměřice and Mělník. In addition, a comparison between Litoměřice and Mělník is shown in this document. In conclusion, it demonstrates that the Mělník sub-region possesses 42 winegrowing districts, 90 winegrowers, and 335 hectares of productive vineyards in the year 2010. In addition to this, it is mentioned that the Lobkowicz

Mělník Winery, the Kutná Hora Wine cellars, and the Kraus Winery are the primary producers of grape wine in this particular subregion. Other producers include the local Viticulture College, as well as the Czech Agricultural University and the Mělník School State.

Where the past and present of viniculture meet (or else the Steps by the Mělník Regional Museum to popularize viniculture in Bohemia)

This last document focuses on the Mělník Regional Museum. It was founded back in 1888. It is housed in the former Capuchin Friars hospice nearby Mělník Townhall. In addition to Bohemian winegrowing, the exhibition in the hospice building attempts to familiarize the visitor with life in a medieval town, a day in a 19th-century village, and the wealth of nature in Mělník County. The museum's focus lies not only on winegrowing but also on its collection of historical prams, to which a separate exhibition is devoted in Ostruhová Street (Snopek, Lukáš n.d.).

The museum administrates and expands its collection, documenting the history of viniculture in Bohemia. It also has a library of viniculture and occasionally organizes conferences in the field of viniculture. According to the article "Where the Past and Present of viniculture meet: or else he steps by the Mělník Regional Museum to popularize viniculture in Bohemia." The museum attempts not only to document the past and present of the profession but also to support contemporary winegrowers and their produce. For this reason, it offers visitors the opportunity to book a wine tasting of domestic wines with a talk given by a sommelier. And not only this: the museum café has around 50 types of whites, reds, and rosés from Bohemia. After all, according to the same article, Bohemian winegrowers perform excellent work and therefore deserve the interest of wine connoisseurs and any help possible.

4.2 *Věnné Město*, Mělník Castle and the Lobkowitz Family

Since the middle of the 18th century, the Lobkowitz family has been connected to the Mělník Castle and estate ownership. However, nobility connections go further. Mělník was

a *věnné město*. The ancient custom of giving a dowry (or " *věno* " in Czech) to a bride, which could consist of a property such as a home or a piece of land, is referred to by the Czech phrase *věnné město*, which translates to "dowry town" in English. This practice was common in the Czech Republic. This tradition led to the introduction of specific legal provisions in some regions, such as Mělník, which allowed for the joint ownership of the dowry property by the husband and wife as well as their heirs. Mělník is an example of one of these locations. In the 16th and 17th centuries, when young couples were trying to secure their financial futures, the practice of *věnné město* became particularly popular and widespread. As a result of the fact that they were co-owners of the property and could collect rent or other revenue from it, some women were able to keep a certain degree of financial autonomy despite being married. This was of utmost significance in light of the restricted employment options that were available to women during that era. The practice of *věnné město* is mostly considered historical at this point. Despite this, it continues to play an important role in the cultural legacy of the Czech Republic and is honored in a number of different festivals and events held throughout the country. In particular, the town of Mělník is famous for its historic dowry houses, which were constructed between the 17th and 18th centuries and served as examples of the tradition of *věnné město*.

As representations of femininity, fertility, and political authority, Bohemian queens have enjoyed significant status and privileges throughout the course of history. In Bohemian society, the primary responsibility of a queen was to procreate children to the crown, but she also served as the kingdom's official envoy in diplomatic affairs and as a patron of the arts.

Saint Ludmila was the wife of Duke Bořivoj I and the grandmother of Saint Wenceslaus. She is considered to have been one of the most influential Bohemian monarchs. It is believed that she was the first queen of Bohemia, and she was later canonized as a saint for her piety as a Christian as well as the role she played in the propagation of Christianity in Bohemia. Her legacy in the Czech Republic lives on today in the form of celebrations honoring her reign as a powerful and revered monarch.

Maria Theresa was another prominent Bohemian queen who ruled as Holy Roman Empress from 1740 till 1780. She was the mother of Emperor Joseph II, who was also King of Bohemia, despite the fact that she herself was not born in Bohemia. In addition to being a stalwart supporter of the rights of her citizens, Maria Theresa was famous for instituting

changes in the areas of education, agriculture, and healthcare during her reign. She also had a considerable influence on the arts and architecture in Bohemia, and she was responsible for the creation of a number of significant palaces and buildings during her reign.

It was expected of Bohemian queens to give birth to heirs to the throne, given their roles as emblems of femininity and fertility. In addition to this, it was expected of them that they would personify the qualities of motherhood and domesticity, and they were frequently expected to serve as role models for other women in the kingdom. In spite of the traditional gender duties that were expected of them, several Bohemian queens were able to wield enormous political power and influence, particularly during times of unrest or conflict.

The Lobkowitz dynasty is often regarded as being among the most renowned and illustrious of all the aristocratic families in Bohemian lands and, today the Czech Republic. The family was known by its original name in the past, which was the Lords of Křivoklát, and its history can be traced back to the 14th century. The family became well-known over the course of many years and eventually became known as one of the wealthiest and most important families in the country. They controlled the military as well as the administration, and they owned large estates, castles, and palaces (Zámek Mělník 2022).

One of the family's most well-known members was William Lobkowitz (1535–1616), who was both a trusted counselor to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II and a pivotal player in Prague's political and cultural life during the Renaissance. By the 18th century, they were able to reclaim their estates and titles, and the family continued to play a significant role in the political and cultural life of the Bohemian lands during this time.

During the Nazi occupation and the Communist era in the 20th century, many members of the Lobkowitz family were subjected to persecution, imprisoned, or forced into exile, which caused a great deal of suffering for the family as a whole. With a history that can be traced all the way back to the 14th century, the Lobkowitz family holds the distinction of being one of the most renowned and oldest aristocratic families in the Czech Republic. The family has collected a substantial fortune and property over the course of many centuries, including a great number of castles, palaces, and estates throughout the Czech lands.

On the other hand, throughout the course of the 20th century, the Lobkowicz family endured several instances of property expropriation at the hands of the Czechoslovak and, later, the Czech government. The emergence of communism in the country and the subsequent nationalization of private property led to the need for these confiscations, which were the outcome of political and social shifts that took place in the country. The Czechoslovak government took possession of a number of the family's castles and estates in 1945, not long after the end of World War II, marking the beginning of the first significant act of property confiscation against the Lobkowicz family. This action was taken as a component of a larger program of land reform, the purpose of which was to redistribute land from wealthy landowners to a more impoverished rural populace. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia took control of the government in 1948 and immediately instituted a policy of nationalization that was intended to touch every facet of the economy, including the ownership of private property. The Lobkowicz family was once again the focus of the government's attention, and as a result, the state took possession of several other castles and estates.

Following the fall of communism in 1989, members of the Lobkowicz family were able to reclaim some of their property through the use of legal channels and through negotiations with the Czech government. The family is now active in a wide range of commercial and cultural pursuits, and some of their castles and palaces have been renovated and made available to the general public in the form of museums and other cultural centers. The confiscation of property from the Lobkowicz family in the Czech Republic, along with other noble families in the country, was an important event in the history of the nation and had long-lasting effects on both the economy and society. The question of whether or not confiscated property should be returned to its original owners is still a sensitive one in this country, even in the present day, as evidenced by the ongoing debates and court battles around this topic. In spite of this, the family has made a remarkable comeback in recent years, with many of its members achieving success in business and becoming generous contributors to their communities. Charity work, artistic pursuits, and efforts to preserve and enhance the cultural inheritance of the Czech country have brought the Lobkowicz family widespread renown in modern times. In addition to this, they established the Lobkowicz Palace Museum in Prague, which is located within Prague Castle. This museum preserves the history of the

Bohemian lands and the family that founded them through a collection of art, antiques, and records.

4.2.1 Chateau *Hořín*

The Mělnico Region of the Czech Republic is home to the baroque Chateau *Hořín*, property of the Lobkowicz. The castle came to the property of today's owners in the mid-18th century, and today it belongs to Jiří Lobkowicz (Forbes 2022). During this time, they made considerable improvements to the chateau through renovations and extensions. It is approximately 35 kilometers to the north of Prague. The chateau is located within sight of *Říp*, near the main road to Mělník as well as the confluence of the Elbe and Vltava. The structure of the chateau dates to the 14th century, but it has undergone significant reconstruction and renovation work throughout its existence. It was constructed in the Baroque style, which is now recognized as one of the most important architectural styles in the Czech Republic.

The chateau, its stunning gardens, sizable park, and its inside -which features lavish rooms filled with genuine Baroque furniture, paintings, and sculptures- are no longer accessible to the general public as it is stated on the official website of the castle (*Zámek Mělník a vinné sklepy Jiřího Lobkowicze* 2023). The area surrounding Chateau *Hořín* is one of the first known sites in the Czech Republic to have been used for cultivating grapes, which is one reason why the wine produced there is so recognized.

There has been contention regarding the ownership of the historic Chateau *Hořín* property for a significant amount of time. The property in question was taken by the Czechoslovak government as part of a nationalization initiative shortly after the end of World War II, which was the spark that set off the conflict. Following the fall of communism, the property was given back to the original owners before the war.

There have been attempts to sell this property to private individuals, and some legal and political considerations have contributed to the conflict's increased complexity. The disagreement has been going on for some years, and both parties have engaged in court battles and other legal challenges.

The property is still on sale according to real estate websites, one of them mentioning the possible future uses of the castle. “Thanks to its favorable location not far from Prague

the château invites to the construction of an extensive hotel with a luxurious restaurant that would preserve late baroque elements with early rococo and would lure the guests by its historical touch. The spacious cellars can be used as unique space for wellness. In the extensive château park the orangery spaces can be used, other buildings can be transformed into stables with a riding hall. There is enough space for parking. There is a project to rebuild a luxury hotel. In case of interest we can show it. Another possibility is changing the chateau into a luxurious senior house or into an Alzheimer center²³. The price is undisclosed and future contact needs to be taken for further information

It is of the utmost importance to present the circumstance surrounding the ownership of the castle and the restoration of it in an open and honest manner. More importantly, it is essential to investigate how this issue has the potential to severely damage the fragile link that exists between the identity of the region and its illustrious noble owners and benefactors. It is not officially recognized, nor does the mainstream media have the power to uncover it due to the importance of this aristocratic family and its connections and power. As of today, the property is closed, and a few pictures circulating the internet show its decadent status (mainly Twitter posts that cannot be confirmed 100%). In light of the fact that these kinds of properties cannot be regarded as an issue pertaining solely to their proprietors, awareness should be raised. They depict and have a background of national heritage on their backs, and legislation should focus on its protection and conservation-related ownership to ensure that it is preserved. Since the presence of these castles and historical buildings is in close contact with wine history or, moreover, with vineyards as an entire estate, legal protection of the Mělník cultural landscape safeguarding the legacy for future generations must be a priority on the agenda of local policymakers.

Locals often blamed the decay of the area on Jiří Lobkowicz, who, according to them, after the restitution, focused mainly on the development of the Mělník castle to the detriment of the Hořín castle. Jiří Lobkowicz presented plans to build a residential project called The Royal Mělník Park for seven billion crowns, in which the castle of Hořín was to be the

²³ Information available at <https://www.chateau.cz/en/zamek-horin-prodej/>. CHATEAU.CZ specializes in complex services connected with a complete renovation of historical compounds including the purchase of the property , plan for the prospective use , consultancy and designing activities, procuring the appropriate authorizations up to the reconstruction and interior furnishing.

dominant feature. But it only ended up with plans, and the current efforts to sell are a de facto confirmation that no opulent residential project in the vicinity of Mělník will be done. The fact is that the castle gate remains locked, and the chateau will have to wait for its reconstruction and new future use. In the meantime, there have been a few events happening at the castle. According to Marta Dušková²⁴, the village of Hořín annually revives this beautiful place with a music festival and thus allows you to get closer to the moment of the past. The festival certainly suits this place. In her article, the mayor of Hořín, Jaroslav Vrba, stated that: “Hořínfest is an element of a different kind of musical culture of live stage music, and the venue is the ideal, beautiful almost perfect setting of the chateau with excellent acoustics. We organize the event with the permission of the owner, Mr. Lobkowicz, and we want to make the chateau accessible and present to as many people as possible. After all, it is a wonderful example of the art of architects, although we hope that in the future the castle will be lucky to be in the repairs that are necessary. The municipality will try to find common ground with Mr. Lobkowicz. But it is clear to us that the reconstruction of the castle is not and will not be a matter for a crown”. This is an example of the caution that local politicians show towards the main issue exposed here, the lack of strong agenda for protecting and preserving the local heritage regardless of who the owner is.

According to the material provided by Zámek Mělník, the Lobkowicz family has produced a significant number of influential politicians, diplomats, soldiers, scientists, intellectuals, poets, and travelers over the course of its lengthy history. A good number of them contributed to the improvement of the construction industry, as well as the economy, culture, and arts. The highest honor, the Order of the Golden Fleece, was bestowed upon seventeen of these individuals, and throughout the history of the monarchy, they have fought for the rights of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. (Zámek Mělník 2022)²⁵

When visiting the area, the most mentioned site to be seen is *Zámek Mělník*, also known as *Chateau Mělník* or *Mělník Castle*, as it is one of the most important producers of the area

²⁴ Complete article “Festival otevřel brány zámku Hořín” 2019, about the music festival available on: https://melnicky.denik.cz/kultura_region/festival-otevrel-brany-zamku-horin-20190901.html

²⁵History of the Chateau *Mělník*, *Mělník Castle*, or *Zámek Mělník*. This winery property of the Lobkowicz family is a traditional producer of wines but is not a member of the VOC *Mělník* Association. For more information, visit: <https://www.lobkowicz-Mělník.cz/en/2639-2/>

and a must-visit spot. It is essential to mention that Chateau Mělník is a winery that is not a member of the VOC *Mělník* origin label and never has been despite being the most renowned in Mělník. Mělník history is intrinsically connected to the Chateau. Analyzing the tourism information brochure Mělník Town Guide, we can see that two entire pages (p.15-16) depict the Chateau Mělník history and characteristics. It states that the Lobkowicz family owned the Chateau from 1753 onwards. The Chateau Mělník was used for wine-making operations until 1986. In 1992 the Chateau was returned after 44 years to the Lobkowicz family in restitution (Mělník Town Guide 2007, 16).

There are some members of the Melnik Lobkowicz family who are now acting independently. Bettina Lobkowicz was the spouse of Jiří Jan, Prince of Lobkowicz, who currently presides over the management of the Mělník castle. Mrs. Lobkowicz continued making wine on her own after the couple's divorce under the label Bettina Lobkowicz Wines, which is now one of the four members of the VOC Mělník.

Both brands can be found existing side by side in the market. An examination of two of their goods, which were each developed using a unique methodology, is presented below:

FIGURE 16

WINE LABELS FROM MĚLNÍK



FIGURE 16. WINE LABELS FROM MĚLNÍK. Source: From the Author

The winery known as Bettina Lobkowicz produced the bottle with the first (red) label. This label features a coat of arms that conveys a sense of majesty as well as a traditional air. In addition to that, it includes the name of the Lobkowicz family within the mark on the bottom. The Lobkowicz family is the proprietor of the winery known as Chateau Mělník (sometimes spelled "Mělník Castle"), which produces the wine with the other label. At the very bottom, it has a picture of the castle and the vines. Additionally, the words “*Tramín červený*” are rendered in a typeface that conjures up images of nobility. This label also features the coat of arms of the Lobkowicz family at the top, along with the inscription

"*Grand Vin de Boheme*." This conjures images of French quality, as French winemakers are known for their discerning palates.

In general, more people in the community are familiar with Chateau Mělník wine than any other brand. This is due to the fact that it has the image of a traditional wine and is made by the most prestigious winery in the area.

4.3 Tourism in Bohemia

Bohemia is a historical region in the Czech Republic that is recognized for its scenic landscapes, lovely cities, and rich cultural legacy. Bohemia is located in the center of the country. Because of the region's ability to consistently draw in millions of vacationers year, the tourism industry is one of the most important in the area. The city of Prague, which is the capital of the Czech Republic, is widely regarded as one of the most appealing vacation spots in the state of Bohemia.

Other tourist destinations in the Bohemian region that are worth mentioning due to the pull that they have on visitors are: Český Krumlov, which is a historic town and can be found in the southern portion of the region, is yet another popular location in the Czech Republic. The town is recognized for its historically significant core that has been meticulously kept, its charming side streets, and its breathtaking castle complex, all of which make it a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Karlovy Vary is another well-known tourist attraction in Bohemia. This city is renowned for its therapeutic spas and natural hot springs. In addition to touring the town's ancient buildings, such as the magnificent Grandhotel Pupp, tourists can take advantage of the town's natural hot springs to unwind and rejuvenate. Additionally, Bohemia is notorious for the breathtaking natural scenery that it possesses, such as the Giant Mountains and the Bohemian Forest. Hikers and skiers, as well as anyone who simply appreciates being surrounded by beautiful scenery, will adore these regions because of the opportunities they provide. In addition, Bohemia is well-known for the quality of its beer and wine, and visitors have the opportunity to tour the region's breweries and vineyards as well as try some of the region's delectable regional specialties.

In this general scenario, Mělník stands out because of its proximity to Prague and because it is able to provide visitors with all of the cultural and natural wonders that Bohemia has to

offer within a very short trip from the capital city. As was stated earlier, this region is nowhere as developed as the Moravia region is. According to data provided by CzechTourism²⁶, in the past ten years, more people from the Czech Republic have traveled to South Moravia than any other region in the Czech Republic, making it the most popular tourist destination in the country.

The South Moravian Region is most frequently visited by people from Slovakia, Poland, Germany, Austria, and Lithuania. Other countries that send visitors to the region include Poland, the typical length of time spent here is about three days. Because of this, the Tourism Centre – the different regions of South Moravia focus on its "Don't stop, travel" campaign in the hopes of encouraging more tourists to remain in the region for more extended periods of time. People have the opportunity to look around the interiors of wine buildings, learn about the process of making wine, and discover how architecture may enhance the enjoyment of wine tasting.

In other sources, more especially the Land of Wine 2021-2022 report (Národní Vinařské Centrum 2022) is said that there is more than 1200 km of wine trails in the Moravia region (in 10 rounds). This is one example of the difference that exists between regions in regard to wine tourism. When we take into consideration the fact that the same study indicates that there are other wine trails in the Bohemia region, we see that this assertion is contradictory. There is no indication of the overall number of kilometers that make up the wine trails in the Bohemia region. The information only highlights two trails: one from Litoměřice to Mělník and the wine trail in Kutná Hora with a 6-kilometer-long wine trail that begins at Palackého's square in Kutná Hora and ends at the hill Sukov. Both trails are in the Czech Republic.

4.3.1 Cycling tourism

Mělník has a lot of beautiful scenery and excellently maintained bike paths, so it's no surprise that cycling is one of the city's most popular pastimes. The area is home to a number of different marked cycling routes, which vary in difficulty from easy to challenging and are appropriate for riders of all skill levels. The Elbe River Trail, which is a component of the

²⁶ This information was collected from the following website: <https://www.czechtourism.cz/en-US/c178b31b-db92-4826-a4f3-ca0e046a706a/article/cesko-v-hledacku-celeho-sveta-zacina-czechia-trave>

network of cycle routes around Europe, is consistently ranked as one of the most popular cycling routes in Mělník. This route travels from the Czech Republic into Germany along the Elbe River and goes through Mělník, which provides some breathtaking vistas of the river and the landscape in the surrounding area.

The Mělník Wine Trail is yet another well-liked path for cyclists to follow, as it provides tourists with a panoramic tour of the town's several wineries and vineyards. This route is ideal for wine enthusiasts because it includes stops at a number of local wineries where guests may sample and purchase local wines. In addition to these trails, guests have the option of venturing out into the surrounding countryside on their own or with the assistance of a local guide. In Mělník, there are a number of different rental shops where vacationers can rent bicycles, helmets, and other types of equipment. In addition, tourists have the option of going on guided bike excursions, which offer them insight into the history, culture, and ecology of the area from the point of view of a local. In general, going for a ride on a bicycle in Mělník is a wonderful opportunity to see the town and the area around it while taking in the wholesome environment and stunning landscape.

There are new opportunities, particularly for frequent visitors who prefer to explore lesser-known spots and trails that are also tied to the history of wine. Specialized websites²⁷ offer new routes and adventures and function as collaborative sites where individuals can contribute new routes, maps, and information. These websites offer a database of bicycle routes and trails, which provides precise information on the distance, amount of difficulty, and points of interest along the way. Cyclists are able to search for routes depending on their location, distance, and difficulty level, which makes it simple for them to choose a route that meets their requirements and satisfies their interests.

Additionally, this kind of website offers details on various cycling competitions and events in the Czech Republic, such as cyclocross events, road races, and mountain bike

²⁷ Cykloserver.cz is a website in Czech Republic that is entirely devoted to cycling. The website offers a multitude of information and tools for cyclists, such as riding routes and trails, news and articles on cycling-related topics, reviews of cycling equipment and accessories, and a forum for cyclists to communicate with one another and share information. Cykloserver.cz is a website that not only provides resources for cyclists, but also provides a number of services for businesses that are related to cycling. Some of these services include advertising options, event marketing, and product reviews. Because of this, the website is an valuable resource not just for individual cyclists in the Czech Republic but also for the larger cycling community there. Source: www.cykloserver.cz

competitions. Cyclists can use the website to register for events, as well as keep up with the latest news and results, all in one convenient location.

Chapter 5: Mělník at a Locals' Perspective

The analysis of this chapter includes dialogues with local stakeholders in the wine industry through a semi-structured interview. The data-gathering method known as semi-structured interviews is based on the practice of asking questions within a preset thematic framework; however, the questions themselves are not predetermined in terms of their order or their wording. The ability of the interviewer to probe and follow diverse routes as information emerges is the defining characteristic of the semi-structured interview. This ability includes the flexibility to change the order in which questions are asked while yet retaining the organizing emphasis that was decided upon in advance. Interviews that are just semi-structured are typically qualitative in nature and are employed for the purpose of gathering in-depth information about a certain topic or experience.

The interviewer establishes goals and objectives, creates questions, and makes an effort to keep things straightforward and succinct while wording questions correctly. The format of the semi-structured interview promotes communication in both directions and enables the use of open-ended questions, both of which can result in responses that are more in-depth and nuanced. In general, semi-structured interviews are a suitable method for gathering qualitative data and can provide valuable insights into a particular topic or experience. For the case of the Mělník analysis, the questions were previously presented in the introduction chapter of this work. The exploratory character of the research topic was a factor in the decision to use this methodology.

The target group consists of five interviews with agents who are connected to the topic in some way, including people who work at local museums, political decision-makers, and winemakers. The interviews took place in-person or online, and they were carried out entirely in English. The scheduled dates for the interviews were the months of January and March of 2023.

5.1 Identity in Mělník in Theory

At the start of this investigation, it is necessary to describe the identity traits that are apparent in the prospective group of people interviewed. We will discuss some theoretical works that will serve as a guide for this step in order to assist in determining which aspects of the interviews disclose topics pertaining to identity. The study of Anand Swaminathan in *The Role of Location and Identity in the U.S. Wine Industry* demonstrates that identifying characteristics of specialist and generalist organizational forms has a crucial influence on the development of specialist organizational forms. The fact that farm wineries are typically rather small and have a strong reputation for producing high-quality wine that is directly correlated to the vineyards they own are two of the most essential identifying traits of farm wineries. Farm wineries that diverged from the identity traits of their organizational form had poor performance as a result. Mass producers who successfully breach the borders between the generalist and the specialized subpopulations are those who cultivate a robust identity through the spread of their brands and invest more money in advertising. A higher level of advertising intensity is found to be associated with a lower founding rate and a higher mortality rate among farm wineries. This is found in conjunction with the fact that mass producers produce more wine. These findings point to the possibility that mass producers may adversely affect the fortunes of the farm winery subpopulation by building a superior image for their own products through strong advertising, an image that may offset the quality image cultivated by farm wineries (Swaminathan 2001, 1181). If we continue along this line of thought, we might conclude that the size of the winery directly correlates to the amount of influence it has in the process of creating a marketing strategy and identity for the company, as opposed to the situation with smaller wineries, who do not have as much power to bargain.

Rogers Brubaker, a sociologist, and professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, is a prolific writer who has done substantial research and writing on the subject of identity. Brubaker's study raises questions about the idea that identity is a stable and necessary quality shared by all members of a group or an individual. He contends that the concept of identity is convoluted and multidimensional and that it is formed by the interaction of social, cultural, and historical elements. Rogers Brubaker and his colleague from the University of California Frederick Cooper suggest that identity should be viewed as a process rather than a fixed attribute and that it is continually being negotiated and redefined with

respect to other identities (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). All parties involved in the production of Mělník wines have been subjected to periods of negotiation and redefinition of their identities prior to arriving at their current standing. This further supports the notion that there is always a negotiation taking place between the various parties involved in the production of Mělník wines.

The research conducted by Brubaker and Cooper has had a significant impact on the development of the academic discipline of identity studies and has led to a more nuanced comprehension of the function of identity in social and political life. The article that would later become "Beyond Identity" was written by Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper in collaboration and was first published in the year 2000 in the journal *Theory and Society*. The authors of this study propose a more nuanced understanding of the role that identity plays in social and political life and criticize the idea that identity is a stable and essential trait that can be attributed to individuals or groups.

For the purpose of analyzing the Mělník area, we will focus on their concepts of Commonality, Connectedness, and Groupness. The term "commonality" refers to the existence of a shared set of characteristics, "connectedness" to the existence of relational relationships between individuals, and "groupness" to the feeling of belonging to a defined, bounded, and solidary group (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 19).

The abovementioned authors also suggest that identity should be understood as a process rather than a fixed characteristic and that it is continually being negotiated and redefined in connection to other identities. In addition, they argue that identity should be understood as a process rather than an attribute. In the case study of this work, it is understood that Mělník has passed through this process.

We can apply Brubaker's and Cooper's thesis about the interaction of various socio-historical elements to our case study; since all the elements they propose are present in the narratives of the history told by official publications about Mělník and Mělnicko to tourists. The writers propose a more complex perspective of the function that identity plays in both social and political life and take issue with the idea that identity is a stable and essential trait that can be ascribed to individuals or groups. They also contend that one's identity is a "production" that is never fully finished and is subject to ongoing transformation.

According to Cornelis van Leeuwen, professor of viticulture at Bordeaux Sciences Agro, and Bordeaux University's *Institut des Sciences de la Vigne et du Vin*, wine is the only agricultural product that has such a close connection to the ground it grows in as does it. The link is readily apparent upon first glance at the label, as most wine bottles include the name of the region from whence the wine was produced. A wide variety of wines, each of which is distinctive in flavor and quality, are made in a wide variety of regions, each of which has special qualities with regard to the soil and climate on which it is grown. There are a few climatic aspects that lend themselves very well to the cultivation of grapes and make it possible to create wines of exceptional quality. The consumer market recognizes these disparities in quality and accepts the notion that some wines are worth tenfold, or even one hundredfold, the price of those cultivated in settings with fewer favorable conditions. The hierarchy of wines has gotten increasingly complex over the course of time, which has led to the demarcation of production regions and the classification of famous growths (van Leeuwen 2009, 454).

According to the research that Steve Charters of Edith Cowan University in Australia has conducted, the idea that a nation's wine can be used to represent the nation's identity is most likely a very recent one. An analogy of climbing steps on a ladder is one way to think about his body of work. One could picture a ladder with a number of rungs that ascend to an increasingly lofty level. Each stage denotes an increasingly complex level of the wine's identity related to a place. You might have a fundamental familiarity with a particular and local wine if you start at the bottom of the ladder. It is possible that the following phase will be a regional wine, and so on, with the national wine being one of the glories of locals and regional wines for a large number of years previous to then. Following this line of thinking, it is also a matter of time. To our understanding, the Mělník region can be somewhere in the middle of this analogy regarding the identity level. The powerful qualities of Mělník wines have earned them a reputation as wines of regional significance. They are completely submerged in the Bohemian Region framework; hence, their identity cannot be called into doubt. Regarding the passage of time, the numerous centuries of manufacture that have gone into them have ensured their position in the market.

Mělník also has its identity linked to religion, as stated in Chapter 4, History and Religion. There is no doubt about the fact that wine has a deep historical connection to several religious practices. Mělník fits this theory for our analysis due to its historical-religious symbolic wine beginnings. Charters states that during the time that the Ottomans were in control of Greece, one of the things that set the Greeks apart from other people living in the area of Peloponnese was the fact that they were Christians and drank wine (in fact, drinking wine was also an integral part of the eucharist, which was one of the outward symbols of their faith). Wine was strictly prohibited for Turks because they were Moslems. However, it has taken significantly more time for the specific connection between a nation's self-image and wine to develop (Charters 2006, 62). This appears to be applicable to the study of European countries that had been Christianized in general, which had as its essential point the religious beginnings and turned out to be a symbolic product. In the same way as other European countries, because of their Christian history, it applies to the case of the Czech Republic.

For Charters, France is where the relationship can be seen to have the clearest expression. There is a long history behind the notion that French food is more sophisticated and delicate than the cuisine of other countries. Also, the term "French" wines referred solely to those produced in the Paris region until the fifteenth century. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the production started to spread in provinces, and the idea that wines were a "jewel in the French crown" rather than a symbol of solely the *Île de France* emerged. This led to the concept of "the wines of France," which came into existence around the same time. Although this may have had more to do with distribution than quality, it was perhaps inevitable that the reputation of their wine would follow that of their food at some point (Charters 2006, 62).

Even centuries after, and in the Czech Republic, a country where the French language is scarcely widespread, we can see remains of its importance in the world of wine through an analysis of the label of Ludmila Wine from Mělník Chateau Winery (on the Historical Importance and Evolution of Chapter 3). This analysis serves as an example of the importance of this relationship between being French and having quality wines. It's possible that this is why some of the labels still used today in Mělník have terms in French. It is also possible that this helps explain why the use of French still has an effect comparable to quality.

The wines of France, according to Charters, were able to be transported to wealthy export markets like London, Hamburg, and St. Petersburg with greater ease than the wines of other Mediterranean countries, and to some extent, reputation followed trade. The prominence of France's wines was elevated to that of the nation itself once the monarchy was deposed in that country. In the year 1872, a French academic named Professor Planchon, who was a leader in the fight against phylloxera, stated that "[Burgundy] wines are one of the glories of our nation." If Burgundy were to vanish, along with Bordeaux, it would be possible to conclude that France as a whole had been overthrown". In this example, we can go back again to the offered analogy of the ladder when untangling Charters's work. First, there existed a regional wine (Burgundy or Bordeaux), and then it was taken to the next step on the identity ladder until it became a national "French" wine.

This is the case in France, where it was remarked in 1965 that "without wine, France would probably not be France." This statement is supported by the fact that France produces a significant amount of wine. The concept is also well received throughout a significant portion of the remaining world (Charters 2006).

It would be incorrect to say that the association of wine with national identity is something that is only an issue for the French. Although it may be most obvious there, the relationship unquestionably exists in other places as well. Hungary's national anthem includes a reference to Tokaj, the country's most renowned wine. This way of thinking about the relevance of wine to a nation is echoed in the belief that a person's physical location determines their character just as much as their history or their upbringing does (Charters 2006, 62).

The making of wine is an industry where the idea of identity is significant. Several articles discuss the methods that winemakers use to establish their authenticity and set themselves apart from competitors. Additionally, there are legal standards of identity for wine, which specify the requirements for the composition, production, and designation of wines. These standards were established by law. Finally, as we evidenced, a number of articles highlight the significance of preserving and promoting the unique characteristics of wine.

Daniel W. Gade from the University of Vermont, in his work about the manifestation of a country's identity through its wines, appoints a coalition of some intellectuals, urban

consumers, and agricultural syndicates and says that they have an interest in patrimonialization because it expresses their desire to safeguard rural landscapes, traditional food items, and other essential components of national and regional history. It's possible that rescuing genuine agricultural goods that have distinct identities could be compared to saving a language or a species of plants from going extinct. This would be a salvage attempt. France has, to a greater extent than the majority of other Western countries, put the patrimonial principle into practice, particularly as it relates to agriculture. It should not come as a surprise that France is also the country in which the rationality of the globalization tendencies that are sweeping the world has been subjected to the most consistent criticism (Gade 2004, 848).

For Gade, the designation of Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC), in his analysis of his case study of Cassis (Provence region, department Bouches-du-Rhône, France), is evidence of a patrimonialization that covers the fact and conjuncture in addition to the myth and reality that are shared by this category of French viticulture. Not only does the piece's setting—which is more commonly referred to as its environment—play a significant role, but its history does as well. Perhaps this is due to the fact that its history is so in-depth. Both aspects are held together by the confined space that has existed for at least 500 years (Gade 2004, 861)

5.2 Analysis of the Interviews

Following the proposed methodology section of this study, the subsequent set of quotations was derived from a series of interviews that were conducted with various stakeholders in the wine industry in the town of Mělník. The names of the participants have been changed to “SUBJECT X” to protect their anonymity. All personal communications are included in the Annex of this work.

When doing research, the pronoun "they" might be helpful in retaining participants' anonymity. It is imperative that participants' personal information and privacy be safeguarded and that their participation in the research be kept secret if it concerns human subjects. This involves the use of pseudonyms or other means to avoid identifying participants by name or by other personally identifying information. Anonymity was sought from those who

participated in the research because it was possible that interviews with public figures connected to politics or prominent aristocratic figures would be conducted.

When referring to participants, a gender-neutral alternative to using gendered pronouns like "he" or "she" is to use the pronoun "they" instead. This is one technique to avoid using gendered pronouns. It is also possible to contribute to the promotion of inclusivity and respect for gender diversity by making "they" the default pronoun. It is possible that some people do not identify as either male or female; if this is the case, employing language that is gender-neutral can assist in making the research environment more welcoming and inclusive for everyone involved.

It is essential to keep in mind that the pronoun "they" should not be used outside of the context in which it is respectfully suitable. If a subject has indicated a preference for a particular pronoun, then the researchers need to pay attention to and respect that preference. Additionally, while selecting whether to use "they" or another gender-neutral pronoun, researchers should use their best judgment, taking into mind the context as well as any cultural or linguistic conventions that may be relevant.

5.2.1 Relation of the Interviewees to wine production in Mělník

During an interview, it is necessary to use a combination of observation, inquiry, and evaluation in order to determine how a candidate relates to a specific subject or issue. This study made the decision to ask in-depth, open-ended questions of the candidate, which required them to make extensive responses in order to assist in determining the candidate's degree of knowledge and experience with the topic. The following question was posed to better understand the direct relation that the subjects have to the wines in Mělník: How do you relate to wine production in Mělník?

Subject A It is my job. I have been 30 years in it. (SUBJECT A 2023)”

Subject B gave the following response: They like to think of themselves as a hobbyist who approaches their work with a professional perspective. They are not paid to work with wine. The financial profession is where they get their daily bread. On the other hand, they

have been a professional sommelier for the past five years, and they have been recommending wines to their friends and coworkers for about 20 years (SUBJECT B 2023).

Subject C responded that there is some viticulture involved in their job, but it's not the main focus. Other aspects include the history of the local area, as well as exhibitions, historical anniversaries, and other such events. (SUBJECT C 2023)

Subject D responded that, at first, they were more interested in wine, wine grapes, and wineries, so you could say that it was more of a pastime for them, but later on, after that, they started running restaurants. As someone who works in that industry, they were more interested in wine than other beverages. They used local wines, mostly wines that were described as "interesting," and they delivered some of those wines even to restaurants in Prague that were awarded Michelin stars. And as of the year 2018, they started their own business as a winemaker, which not only involves production but also includes distributing, purchasing, and selecting fascinating wines (SUBJECT D 2023).

Subject E responded: I am a sommelier, a wine optimist, and an "aficionado" (is that the current word for someone who is passionate about wine?). The wine is my life. Both professionally and recreationally, I make use of it. If you reside in this area, it is nearly impossible to avoid coming into contact with wine. Wine may be found at almost every establishment in our town. (SUBJECT E 2023)

From the above-exposed answers, we can affirm that all the interviewees are closely related to the wine production of Mělník, given their jobs or their affinities. They also can be considered a homogenous group since it is a group of individuals who share similar characteristics, qualities, or attributes. These members of a homogenous group are similar to one another in some meaningful way, such as occupation or expertise in a particular subject.

Based on the responses, we are able to draw the conclusion that each of them has a background in wine-related subjects. Homogenous groups can be useful in certain situations, such as in research studies or marketing campaigns that require a specific demographic to participate. However, they can also limit diversity and create echo chambers, which can lead to narrow thinking and a lack of innovation. Therefore, it is important to balance the benefits of homogeneity with the need for diversity and inclusivity.

5.2.2 Feeling of Association with wine production in Mělník

The purpose of this inquiry was to map out whether or not the subjects felt an association with the Mělník wine production by inquiring as to whether or not the subjects felt affiliated with the local wine industry by asking the following question: "Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?"

SUBJECT A: Of course. Yes, I am. Yes.

SUBJECT B answered the following: Yes, by many means. Even if it is not my job, I am really active in the community. I personally know most of the winemakers in Mělník as well as their wines.

SUBJECT C mentioned: "The local wine industry is a part of the life of our town; it is also important for the activities of my employer (traditions of the Region)."

SUBJECT D stated: "I'm not just involved in that part of selling and buying or producing, I am also part of some educational activities about the Mělník history, and that has been important for the winemaking processes, so it's not just winemaking, it's not just business itself, but there's lots of educational stuff and some charities as well."

SUBJECT E responded: "Yes, as I told you, it is difficult not to feel immersed in the wine scenario here. Our town is known by everyone for its wines. I don't know if there is a unified industry as a whole, but we are a reunion of producers and consumers, and at some point, we are related to wine.

All of the subjects gave positive responses to the question, which indicates that at some point in their lives, they have had the experience of feeling affiliated with the local wine business.

5.2.3 Mělník VOC/WOC Label

This part of this study will attract attention to the Mělník VOC/WOC Label. The purpose of this question was to determine how well individuals are aware of the label's existence and how they feel the label is perceived to be important in the field.

When asked about the perception in the local wine industry or production since 2015 and the Mělník VOC/WOC label, SUBJECT A believes that this label no longer exists

because "we are part of it, we wanted to get the certification, and we could not get it because it was not working, so I decided that I could not wait for the others and I abandoned it" In response to the additional question of whether or not the label is still in use, the respondent stated, "From my side, I think the most important wineries are not part of it anymore." While this statement avoided providing a clear answer, it did leave the implication that the label had lost its significance²⁸ (SUBJECT A 2023).

When SUBJECT B was inquired, their response was "Mělník VOC "appellation" was chartered in 2015 by only four winemakers in Mělník. It allows the use of the mark for three wines giving the most characteristic wines for our area. Unfortunately, the idea did not materialize into common practice; the organization did not attract other winemakers, and those in the appellation produced only a few wines under the appellation label. Only one of them continues to make VOC wine occasionally. For me, personally, it's a failure of hope. But if one considers the actual situation on the market, economy, local situation, etc., the conclusion is inevitable: it could not work in that manner²⁹" (SUBJECT B 2023).

The assumption was that the actors who decided to get the label were wrong. According to them, because of the low adhesion to the project in the long run. It started with only four producers, and this group failed to include other new members. The VOC label authorized the use of the symbol for three wines, which resulted in the production of the most representative wines of the Mělník region. Moreover, those in the appellation label group produced only a small number of wines. One of them is the only one that occasionally continues to create VOC wine.

When SUBJECT C was inquired, their response was, "The existence of the Mělník VOC/WOC label I had registered. I think it was thanks to (in Moravia issued) magazine *Vinarský Obzor*, probably the top journal for vintners in the Czech lands. But since I am not a vintner, there was quite no practical consequence for me. The VOC label is interesting to me, especially in connection with the process of creating the museum collection. My possibilities to create the collection are limited, so I must say, I don't register any new label with the Mělník VOC emblem³⁰. (SUBJECT C 2023)"

²⁸ Interview with SUBJECT A, interview by author, March 03, 2023. (See Annex for detailed information).

²⁹ Interview with SUBJECT B, interview by author, February 16, 2023. (See Annex for detailed information).

³⁰ Interview with SUBJECT C, interview by author, February 16, 2023. (See Annex for detailed information).

When SUBJECT D was inquired, their response was, "It didn't have any impact whatsoever. It seems to have stayed sort of on paper. It has not really worked. For me personally, nothing really changed. It doesn't make any impact because the public is not really that interested in that label or labeling process or in the results because Mělník's Production is fairly small, so the wider public doesn't even get to drink Mělník's wine because most of the production seems to be consumed by local people so the certificate didn't seem to have any. It doesn't really mean much³¹ (SUBJECT D 2023)."

When SUBJECT E was inquired, their response was, "I know that is a very important step our Region achieved, but they left it behind. I think it is a very good idea, but here in our Region, it was seen as something external to please some specific people, so it was not embraced. I see Moravian cases where a label is really important, but for our Region, it is not³². (SUBJECT E 2023)"

As a consequence of analyzing these responses, we can draw the conclusion that none of the subjects have made any comments regarding the applicability of the Mělník VOC/WOC label in the present day nor in the near future as it is established at the moment. It appears to be a project that was significant at one point in time, but as time has passed, its significance has decreased, and it has become more or less obsolete. The idea that wine labeling is crucial in the wine industry because it functions as an effective channel of communication that sends a message on the legacy and winery tradition, production process, grape, and other technical information is contradicted by this information. In contrast to the notion that geographical recognition is one of the essential aspects of the wine business and production process, Mělník may have failed to continue with the use of labeling since most of the actors were not involved in the process. This would be in stark contrast to the notion that geographical recognition is one of the most significant aspects of the wine business and production process.

5.2.4 Feelings towards the Mělník VOC/WOC Label

The question "How does this label make you feel?" was at the center of this topic. The intention behind this question was to ascertain how the individuals who were aware of

³¹ Interview with SUBJECT D, interview by author, February 20, 2023. (See Annex for detailed information).

³² Interview with SUBJECT D, interview by author, January 31, 2023. (See Annex for detailed information).

the presence of the geographical label felt about it. The following are the answers of the interviewees.

Subject A spoke on the significance of having the majority of the players engaged in the production participate in the process, as well as how the absence of a union may have contributed to the current predicament, and they said: “You know that the thing is that if you put together a label like this, you really need the most important producers on board. I would say almost 90% because it makes sense for a label like this; almost everybody, or 95%, participates in this and has the same goals. Then you can formulate the goal for the whole wine region and build a brand or build something. But it's not 3 of us or more, not the majority, then you have an influence on the image of a wine region. You understand you need everybody on the boat, and if not everybody is on it, then it doesn't make sense. So, then you say, if not everybody is on the boat, I have my own brand. (SUBJECT A 2023)”

Subject B gave the following response: I believe you mean, "If you drink VOC Mělník wine," and they affirmed that they had the pleasure of tasting it multiple times. Regarding the wine, they consider wine unique and able to perfectly capture the character of the Mělník region, but according to them, these wines are not likely to appeal to typical customers, which places them in a distinct subset of the market. At this point in time, for them, the actual label does not have any bearing on the quality of the wine (SUBJECT B 2023). This subject did not answer the question in a sufficient manner and instead provided an illustration of his opinion regarding the quality of the Mělník wine.

Subject C responded the following: “What does it mean to me? Yes, I am glad that there is a group of VOC vintners among the Mělník producers, but my feeling about it, I can describe it with words like "distant" or "abstract." (SUBJECT C 2023).

Subject D was clear and gave an answer that was straightforward: Yes, I am proud (SUBJECT D 2023).

As for the feelings towards the Mělník label, we could find evidence that a lack of participation of the members of the organization VOC Mělník is present in the answers of one subject, for whom this could have conditioned the objective for the entire wine region as an established common brand with mutual goals. The keywords Subject C used for describing the feelings towards the mentioned label are: "distant" or "abstract." This could give an idea about how this subject thinks about people's perception of this wine region.

Subject A was asked (additionally) one more question In order to gain a deeper understanding of their feelings regarding the geographical label Mělník.

Regarding the opinions involving the Mělník label, we were able to find evidence that a lack of participation on the part of the members of the organization VOC Mělník is present in the responses of one subject (SUBJECT A 2023). For the individuals in question, this may have conditioned the objective for the entire wine region as an established common brand with mutual goals. Subject C used the terms "distant" and "abstract" (SUBJECT C 2023) to describe how they felt about the label that was given in the previous sentence. It's possible that this gives some insight into how the subject in question feels about how other people view this wine region.

Subject A was questioned (additionally) one more question in order to acquire a more in-depth comprehension of their feelings in relation to the geographical label Mělník.

Because of how they felt about the label, the following statement was included: "I think this label, if you ask me, is not existent anymore because we're part of it, we wanted to get the certification, and we could not get it because it was not working, so I decided that I could not wait for the others and I abandoned it (SUBJECT A 2023)." This statement was included because of how they felt about the label. The further inquiry was this: "So, has it already been abandoned?" And the response was, "From my side, and I think the most important wineries are not a part of it anymore (SUBJECT A 2023)." The fact that significant participants in the Mělník wine production sphere are not participating in this initiative demonstrates that it no longer has the same level of relevance as it previously had and that it is no longer a priority for them.

5.2.5 Sense of pride related to wine production in Mělník

The level of pride that exists within a group can be difficult to ascertain because pride is an emotional state that is difficult to define. As a result, this can be a complex and difficult endeavor. However, in order to assist in the process of determining the level of pride that exists within this group, we applied a question to measure how much pride they have in being a part of the Mělník wine production and their reasons for feeling that way.

People in the group who are actively involved and driven, who take the initiative to do things on their own, and who demonstrate excitement can be indicators of high levels of pride in the group. Through conversations with the members of the group, we were able to get a better understanding of their feelings regarding the subject as well as the significance it holds for them. Following the completion of the interviews, the next step was to search for objective signs of pride. Some examples of such signs include an increase in the number of people attending meetings or events, an increase in the number of people participating in activities involving the group, or positive feedback from stakeholders or customers. We adopted a qualitative research approach in order to acquire a better understanding of the dynamics of the group, which allowed us to get a more accurate picture of the level of pride that is present inside the group.

Subject A mentioned the following statement: “Yes, I mean you're always proud when you try to produce something from Earth. You know you have a vineyard, and you are planting the grapes, and you decide on the grapes, and then the grapes give you some wine, and then you're planting the wine, and they give you some grapes, and the grapes some wine. And it's a menu when I'm bottling it and labeling it. It's our product, from us altogether, and it's something it's different from giving advice or giving a bottle of wine. (SUBJECT A 2023)”

Subject B interrogated the specific topic of the question: “About wine production in Mělník? Definitely, yes, even if I do have only minuscule involvement in it. Some of our wines may peer or even beat the wines of the best regions all over the world. Our Pinot Noir is in the other galaxy than *Romanée Conti*, but I tasted many Burgundy red wines, which were very inferior to ours—the same with Rhine Riesling. (SUBJECT B 2023). This statement demonstrates a substantial amount of information regarding the various varieties of grapes that are grown in the region, as well as a thorough awareness of French wines as a point of comparison for quality.

Subject C gave some examples of why they are proud of Mělník by giving the following statement: I moved to Mělník from Prague, where I had been studying, and I had moved to Prague from Moravia, where I was born. Therefore, I have a profound and favorable connection to the field of viticulture. People say that St. Ludmilla (+921) is the founder of viticulture in Bohemia. I am proud of our town, Mělník, of St. Ludmilla (+921),

and I am proud of the landscape of Mělník, which includes its vineyards and vintners. (SUBJECT C 2023)

Subject E said: Yes, without a doubt. People (Czech people) have a tendency to say that our wines are poor, but we have shown them that they are wrong by winning a significant number of competitions and prizes, and not just that. Our wine can be found in a good number of homes not only in the Czech Republic but also in other countries. The quality of our wines has earned them a very solid reputation. They are not only drinkable wines, but also wines that are taking on an increasing number of characteristics that set them apart. Despite this, we have a long way to go before we are as well known on a global scale as Prosecco or *Bordeaux*. For instance, I don't believe it's due to the quality but rather their tradition and visibility in the community. (SUBJECT E 2023)

The question was answered by four of the subjects, and it seems as though each one of them takes a great deal of pride in the wines that come from Mělník, as well as the wines that come from the Czech Republic in general.

5.2.6 Extent of Identification with local wine production in Mělník

The level of identification with a certain brand, product, or service is referred to as the degree to which individuals feel a connection or a sense of belonging to that particular brand, product, or service. This can be measured in a number of different ways. This connection can be made on the basis of a wide variety of factors, such as the quality, design, image, or distinctiveness of the object, in addition to the personal values, lifestyle, and identity of the person making the connection. In the scenario that we are studying, the purpose of this question is to determine how closely they are identified with Mělník Wines as a product and when exactly this connection takes place..

Subject A mentioned the following statement: You know that there's the *Košť*. We have in August, we have a tasting day that is called *Mělnický košť* when all the wine producers come together, and we have one day of tasting, and normally that about 5000 to 7000 people attend this event, and it was, I am the one who started it 17 years ago. I'm really kind of trying to promote Mělník wine, and not my wine but Mělník's as a region. (SUBJECT A 2023)''

Subject B questioned about the specific topic of the question: I would like to call myself a local expert, but it is fairly exaggerated (SUBJECT B 2023).

Subject C I identify with the local production to such an extent, which is possible during the activities of the museum. Viticulture is deeply connected with the historical feature of Mělník; it is impossible to ignore it. Mělník wine is famous in the whole Republic. (SUBJECT C 2023)

Subject D stated that they identify with the (whole) winemaking process. “I see from the very beginning I grow the grapes. The historical process without machinery, without chemistry, and still using the old method of wines, the one might even from 100 years old, so it's still the same type. Regarding the ones that are typical for our location, I would say ours is a local wine production fully; it's part of the community and very well known. I will show you the old typical 200-year-old design if you are interested”. (SUBJECT D 2023).

Subject E said: I am more a consumer than a producer, but thinking about the whole chain, I am part of the industry. Mělník has several wine events throughout the year where we all feel part of it. We come from people interested in wine and have been producing it for centuries. (SUBJECT E 2023).

The degree to which an individual experiences a sense of attachment or connection to the product is referred to as their level of identification with it while they are involved in a determined industry. This may be of particular importance in sectors in which individuals play a direct part in the production process or the commercialization of the end product.

When people can identify with the products they are working with, they are more likely to experience a sense of ownership over the product's quality as well as its success. This can lead to feelings of pride. It also can result in increased motivation and engagement in their work, in addition to a stronger commitment to the organization as a whole. In the case of Mělník and based on this particular interview, the identification can be associated with three topics: history, production, and consumption of wine. Despite the fact that our sample was rather small, we are still able to gain a sense of this interaction; however, we must not lose sight of the fact that more people are active in the sector.

The growing of grapes in fields designated as vineyards is the first step in the creation of wine. After being picked, the grapes are either crushed by hand or put through a machine

in order to extract the juice. Afterward, yeast is added to the juice to start the fermentation process, which turns the sugars present in the juice into alcohol. Subsequently, the wine is stored for an extended period of time in barrels or bottles and may go through further processing, such as filtration or blending. Grape farmers, winemakers, cellar hands, and bottlers are just few of the many individuals whose jobs are involved in the creation of wine. The procedure calls for a significant amount of experience and expertise, in addition to meticulous attention to detail and stringent quality control.

Everyone from grape farmers and winemakers to distributors and merchants is involved in the wine industry in some capacity, whether it be in the production or consumption of wine. In addition to these basic functions, the wine business also relies on the contributions of a large number of other professionals, including wine critics, sommeliers, and marketers. There is also a direct connection between the tourism business and the wine industry. This is only a small contribution, but it will help us get a better sense of how people in the area feel about wine. Additional study will be required to map the feelings toward the identification of the persons listed in the sentence.

5.2.7 Events related to wine production in Mělník.

The purpose of this question is to better understand the situations in which the interviewees have been involved and with whom in events when the wine is involved. They were required to provide an answer to the following inquiry: Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.? How are they related to the wine-production process?

Subject A was concise in their answer regarding the public involved in such events: People from Prague and around Prague are interested in wine and, of course, also people from Mělník (SUBJECT A 2023).”

Subject B exemplified an event where the wine community gathers by saying: At first, I organized wine tastings for my friends. These events happened irregularly every month for 15-30 people. Second, I distribute local wine products to my friends and colleagues. I get

the orders, buy the wine in wineries and haul them to the people. The volume differs from year to year, but it may represent a few hundred thousand CZK (Czech Korunas³³) per year.

For the last five years, I have led the degustation tent on the Mělník's wine fests twice a year. My assistants and I present wines selected according to the given theme to the festival visitors. I became regarded as a valuable attraction to the event. Except for the wine fests, most of my events include only friends. But since the last fall, I have agreed to perform a sommelier role in several commercial events of small size. (SUBJECT B 2023).

Subject C was a little reluctant towards wine events due to their family-oriented profile where alcohol doesn't have a prime role by saying: "I have small children, so wine events like *Melnický kost*, *Vinná Noc* or *Melnické Vinobraní*, are actually "nothing (relevant)" for our young family. It is also weighty that I am a Catholic (wine in holy mass). (SUBJECT C 2023).

Subject D stated the following: "So it is a mixture really, so it can be the tourists, who are most interested in all the historical stuff, so they are interested in, you don't know, all these old bottles, you know, the specific type of bottles from Mělník. Then there is the public from restaurants, the owners, and the wider public, but it's a mixture (SUBJECT D 2023)

Subject E responded: "Yes, most of them. I don't see many tourists, but the locals, including my friends and family, try to attend most of the events. There are many visitors from Prague and nearby cities, but we don't consider them tourists. I mean international tourists. Even though Prague receives many (international), tourists, they don't come much to Mělník. (SUBJECT E 2023).

Based on the responses to these questions, we can deduce that there are numerous wine-related activities held in Mělník and that the majority of the people who were interviewed take part in these events. The most frequently occurring terms were friends,

³³ The Czech Republic currency is the Czech Koruna (abbreviated as CZK). As of the 6th of May 2023, the current conversion rate for the Czech Koruna to the United States Dollar is around 22.2 CZK for every 1 USD. It is essential to keep in mind that currency exchange rates are subject to frequent shifts for a variety of economic and political reasons; in addition, the rate that is actually in effect at any one moment may differ from one source to another.

tourists, and locals. It is possible to gain a better understanding of the attendees of these events through these keywords.

5.2.8 History and development of wine production in Mělník

Interviewees were questioned about their knowledge of the historical development of wine in Mělník and their perspectives on the current circumstances because this was a topic that was pertinent to the work being done. The purpose of this question was to determine whether or not the official history discovered on the studied brochures and the exhibition held at the Mělník Regional Museum had approaches comparable or different to what they think and remember about the history of wine in Mělník. The proposed question was: Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

SUBJECT A stated: “I can; Meaning, Mělník used to be a red wine area; when you look at the 19th century, it was basically 90% red wine, so this has changed because, in the 20th century, the ownership changed. As you have to imagine, between 39 and 45 during the II World War, it was under German rule. Meaning for example, in the winery: there were Germans in charge, the family had no right to make any decisions about the winery, and so they restituted it, or they gave back its ownership in 45 because it was between 39 and 45 there were forced, it was a forced administration by the Germans, and so it's after the war, as the Germans lost the war, the administration was given back to the family, so it's started in 39 this, let's say this, not family influence and in 48 the winery was nationalized and this until 89. And in those years between 48 and 89, this is 41 years, a lot of changes have occurred, meaning that there were more white wines and red wines, more Riesling and so on, and they lost, let's say, that history because Mělník used to be a Pinot Noir area and the Burgundy grapes, so this was a little bit lost. Then in the 90s, they started again planting Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Gris, keeping Riesling as a local grape and also Traminer. But it changed at the end of the 20th century again. And then, of course, as we are, since 2004, a part of the European Union, we are exposed to European competition, and so we are in a different market. And, of course, climate change has an impact as well. So we are forced to look after other varieties and, for example, we decided that we would have resistant varieties like Safira and Solaris. For the red wines, not yet, but for the white ones, we have

already updated for more varieties. We have a lot of Chardonnay and a lot of Pinot Noir, but we also have Modrý Portugal” (SUBJECT A 2023).

SUBJECT B affirmed that the “Mělník wine sub-region is the biggest (of two) in the Bohemia wine region. It comprises many wine villages mainly spread in the warm lowlands along rivers Labe and Vltava. Mělník itself, with neighborhood villages Liběchov and Kly, represents almost half of the sub-region. This heart of the area is cultivated by around 15 winemakers, which could be recognized as regular producers making wine as a business. There are also many hobbyists producing wine in small quantities for fun or their own consumption. The total production could be around five hundred thousand bottles per year. Documented history of winemaking in Mělník dates back to the 10th century when princess Ludmila founded a monastery in village *Pšov* (now part of Mělník), which started making wine from the vineyards on the slopes above the Labe river. The oldest vineyard of St. Wenceslaus (son of Ludmila) dates to 980 and still exists near the village Dřísy east of Mělník. Winemaking in Mělník surged significantly under the reign of King Charles IV. who gave privileges to Mělník's townspeople to grow and produce wine on their own and provided them with vine varieties brought from the Burgundy. Winemaking reached its biggest extent by the start of the 18th century, with then pictures showing vineyards spread all over the Mělník hill and closest neighborhoods during the cold period vineyards greatly shrunk and cleared space for the growth of town and industry. The era around the Great War was characterized by the hegemony of Lobkovicz castle winery, with only a few of the wealthiest businessmen who could play a peer to them. After WWII, all vineyards except small ones were confiscated by the communist government; winemaking was subordinated to the planned economy and the need for quantity instead of quality. After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, most of the vineyards were returned to the original owners, and wine production in Mělník started the long journey back to the back then glorious. The vineyards were spread among well-established owners, and the area of vineyards grew steadily by the allowed percentage. The quality of the production of most regular producers increased as well. Few new varieties established their place among the classic ones concerning the changing environmental conditions. Still, almost all winemakers somehow pay attention to the varieties giving the best wines in our area (SUBJECT B 2023).

SUBJECT C recalled a personal conversation before the interview and stated the following: "We spoke about the history of local wine production in October, and you also have a pdf copy of the exhibition panels in English. I think about the museum exhibition "The history of Wine and Water." The current wine production in the Mělník area is connected primarily with the Lobkowicz Family, with *Česká Zahradnická Akademie* (School Vineyards), and with the Czech University of Life Sciences (District wine center in Mělník -Chloumek). It is also necessary to mention other private companies: Kraus, Chorouš, and Vondrák. The span between a group of traditional (big) producers / Chateau-Lobkowicz, School, University, Kraus, and smaller producers is an important feature of today's viticulture in Mělník. For me -also from a historical view- was the very important event of the 2010s (unfortunately) the divorce between Bettina and George Lobkowicz in 2011, which was followed by the division of their family company (SUBJECT C 2023).

SUBJECT D mentioned that: "The history goes back to Charles IV, so maybe even before. Charles IV made an order to plant grape wines in the vineyards above the river, so if you come to Mělník, you'll see them there's a hill above the river, so that's the most original vineyard in Mělník. That goes back to Charles IV. It has been more or less successful since then and has also been interrupted by wars. You know, I'd resolved to when there was a war, the wine production was interrupted, and the most important year would be 1848. This year was important because the Lobkowicz family came to Mělník and started growing wine, so the most important person would be Joseph Lobkowicz, who brought a professor from Austria. Anthony Schmidt was a Czech- Austrian professor. In this period, the Lobkowicz family based the winemaking in Mělník on scientific research and scientific base. They brought modern technologies. They started planting vines and started statistics on the growth and then started to implement all the knowledge in the wine cellars. Local winemakers and workers were quite skeptical about all these scientific methods in the beginning, so Professor Anthony Schmidt brought his own students from Austria to help him with the beginning and the start of the growth of the scientific winemaking process in Mělník. Before Anthony Schmidt started working here, they were able to produce about 1000 Kg of grapes per 1000 m², but after introducing these methods, it must have increased, so then he gained the respect of the local winemakers, and they accepted his methods after they saw they were actually working really well. Based on this knowledge and on this progress, Anthony Schmidt's

followers based the starting of a winemaking school in Mělník in 1853. it's the only school of this type in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire that was taught in the Czech language. Until about 1948, they were the really golden ages of Mělník winemaking. In 1916 Lobkowicz family was successful in mimicking French champagne, and from that time, we still can find letters that he was sending; this agent will send letters to the family (SUBJECT D 2023).

SUBJECT E was very brief in this question, stating, "I am not very familiar with the history. I know it started with Charles IV, and then after the war and during the Soviet era, we lost control of production. It was restituted afterward, and since then, it has been increasing yearly in numbers and quality. Over the last few years, we have been competing at a European quality level, so we have had to step up our game; sometimes, we are unaware of the competition. That is because Mělník is close to Prague, so our main consumer is close; we don't care much about attracting others, and it is comfortable to have a loyal consumer" (SUBJECT E 2023).

Even the interviewees that were not very familiar with the history in depth gave a very proximal answer to what we already discussed in this work, which means that the answers, one way or another, fit in the official narrative about the history of the wine in Mělník. The information given in an extended version by most of the interviewees was accurate and very similar to the one that we presented as a historical analysis in previous chapters. The history as it was told by the interviewers is, for the most part, and with a few notable exceptions, very comparable to the history that was previously examined by us.

5.2.9 Innovations or Changes to Mělník cultural wine heritage

As the last part of the interview, the proposed subjects were asked to react to a question about their perspectives on the future and modifications or innovative actions that should be implemented to boost Mělník cultural heritage. The question that they were requested to answer was as follows: What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

SUBJECT A responded: "I think heritage is always a good thing, but you have to adapt to the present and to the future. So you can't rely only on heritage, meaning that you have to consider what is the heritage and see also the dangers or the new opportunities we

are facing right now. Climate change is rather positive for us, but on the other hand, we should stick to our identity. Not trying to become a mainstream wine region, so stick to the kind of the smallest wine region closest to Prague. I think if we do such and try to make drinkable wine, even very good drinkable wines, we have a chance because we are very close to a very attractive city with a lot of people who, not only tourists but also Czech residents who, have a power, consumption power is above the average in this country. The area around Prague has a very high income, and so I think if we try to make a reasonable wine, we can sell it locally. I think Mělník is so close to Prague we should do more and exploit the possibility that people can visit our wineries can visit our vineyards. Because people want to know where it comes from. And this is something we have which is an advantage because it's so close. I think we should have; we should be more accessible for visitors, meaning we should have that the cyclists can go through our vineyards and so on. That our sellers are more open to the public, so I think we should work more on this. About the local legislation, the problem is that if we want to have our wines certified, we need to go through a commission that gives us the approval stamp, and this is in Brno, it's in Moravia, and so, for us, from the Czech region it's a huge disadvantage, and I think that's the reason why a lot of local wineries opt to produce land wine and not the quality one because of this problem with administrations and so on. I think tourism has always played a huge part. As I said, the nearest wine region to Prague is Mělník. Within a 1/2 hour or 40 minutes, you are here, so that has potential, but once people are here, they need to have an offer, and I think that is still lacking. You know people are interested in wine when they are on vacation or leisure time. Meaning for us wineries, we have to be at their disposal when they are free, meaning we have to work when they have leisure time so, and I think this is still a problem in Mělník. When you come on the weekend, there are very few wineries that are open. We still have to work on this; we have to be at their disposal when the customer has time. And this is in the evening, over the weekends, or during vacation time. On the other hand, I think with these bicycle tours, you know, along the river, we became more attractive. I noticed this in the last 30 years. In the nineties, in the summer, there was basically nobody here, and now, in the last 15 years with these bicycle tours, we have a lot of people in the summer. And you know we are in the very, I mean Mělník is the most southern wine region on the Elbe, and the Elbe is a very important river, so I think we are an attractive area, but we have to work on it still (SUBJECT A 2023).

SUBJECT B said that it is “Hard to tell. Definitely, Mělník is not a big sign on the wine map. Even if Mělník is mentioned in many historical resources regarding winemaking in the Czech region, it does not attract crowds of tourists to visit and taste or vines. Winemakers of Mělník are fairly satisfied with their business and do not see the future in becoming stars in the wine sky. The production is diversified among many varieties, which makes particular wine batches small to attract a big market. The economic situation of winemakers prevents them from disrupting actions with doubtful outcomes. So, promoting Mělník cultural wine heritage through wine production itself is a long journey. I think that any type of spreading information about our wineries in literature, marketing, and social media may help to seed the desire among people. And this may subsequently lead to more interest in tasting and buying wines and then sharing the experience among people in touch (SUBJECT B 2023).

SUBJECT C stated, “In my opinion, we here need to reconstruct our national and regional self-confidence. It is a key” (SUBJECT C 2023).

SUBJECT D, when asked the same question, reacted with the following statement: There is a little bit of a problem, really, because the basics are the town has to protect the vineyards and the vineyards tours. It happened in the past, mainly in the nineties, the local vineyards being destroyed due to the developers, you know, buying the lands and then destroying that, so we don't haven't got enough vineyards. We also seem to like a little bit of positive marketing, so we need to approach the tourists; we need to be able to offer them wine-tasting facilities, which is a big task for the new leadership. And also, the winemakers are getting older and not much younger. Even though we have a winemaking school in Mělník College, we see people going abroad, which can be quite positive in the beginning, but then they're not coming back to the winemaking industry, or they go and do something else. Even though wine is a massive tradition, we seem to have a lot of tasks in front of us in the future.

SUBJECT E showed concern about: “Visibility. We don't have young leaders, we still have the last generation ruling us, and that may be a problem. They don't like changes; they don't cope with new trends. The world is changing rapidly, and I don't see those changes being implemented in our Region. You don't see much on Instagram or social media, people don't care, and they don't pay attention to the needs of the younger. Check for yourself; if

you look at Mělník wines online, you can not find a lot of information, and when you do, it is mostly in Czech. We need English and viewers and influencers; they are not here anymore; most young people leave the town and don't come back. It is a shame because we do have a very big potential. I think we need to work with our leaders to change this, and that is why we lose to Moravia, not because of the wines but because of our need to stick to the past and our traditions, and sometimes it is not enough. Have you been here on the weekend? There is nothing; everything is closed. If you go to the Moravia region, things are different, there you can have fun, here not. Wine is not just buying a bottle, it is an experience, and we fail to provide it.

SUBJECT A emphasized the significance of Mělník's location in close proximity to Prague in order to drive home the point that Prague is an essential component of Mělník in the eyes of the general public. Mělník is a small wine area, and SUBJECT A believes that the region should keep this status. It indicates that the subject believes that Prague is the most important market for their company and that maintaining their identity involves maintaining their status as a "small region." This is based on the assumption that the opposite, when referring to the mainstream, means avoiding an association with a more prominent actor, which we assume, in the frame of Czech wine, is the Moravian region, which is a more formidable type of rival due to Moravia's size and significance in the Czech wine scenario. The most important thing to them is to limit themselves to the closest small wine region possible that is located closest to Prague.

SUBJECT A indicated once more that Mělník ought to be marketed in a manner that is more appealing to bikers. As was discussed in earlier chapters, the region is seeing a rise in the number of tourists interested in cycling. This is the kind of audience that frequently travels to the Mělník area because of its proximity to Prague. However, according to SUBJECT A, the wine businesses in the region are not equipped to cater to this type of tourism despite the fact that there are several established trails and more new ones that draw this kind of public due to the wonders of Mělník's nature and the natural beauties it possesses. This is due to the fact that the opening hours of the wine establishments are limited, and it is extremely difficult to fully make the most of a visit to Mělník if you don't go during commercial hours; that means that on holidays or weekends, the majority of the vineyards

visitation options are closed, and they don't have the infrastructure to cope up with the number of tourists they receive.

According to SUBJECT A, another issue is legislation. All decisions regarding wine are made in Brno. An analysis of their statement shows disruption between this center of decision-making and the region. Apparently, this geographical issue contributes to the inability to serve the local demands of Mělník, which is why they opted to work in an independent manner that genuinely fulfills their wants and the reality of their situation.

Following this claim, it is imperative to mention the location of two of the leading wine-related institutions in the Czech Republic: The National Wine Center is located in the town of Valtice in the South Moravian Region of the Czech Republic, near the border with Austria; and The Czech Association of Sommeliers and Wine Professionals is located in Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic and the capital of the South Moravian Region. Despite this fact, there is a need to mention that the headquarters of the Czech Wine Fund is located in Prague.

SUBJECT B is skeptical of the potential of heritage in Mělník when they state the following sentence: “Promoting Mělník cultural wine heritage through wine production itself is a long journey.” They are expressing their pessimism over the possibilities of Mělník's heritage in a short time.

SUBJECT D appointed a generational issue stating that young generations leave town when stated: “The winemakers are getting older and not much younger. Even though we have a winemaking school in Mělník College, we see people going abroad, which can be quite positive in the beginning, but then they're not coming back to the winemaking industry, or they go and do something else. Even though wine is a massive tradition, we seem to have a lot of tasks in front of us in the future”. This demonstrates their concern that there may not be enough young people in the future to take over the firms that are already in operation.

SUBJECT E expressed concerns about two topics, the age of the people managing the region and the language. By saying: ” We don't have young leaders, we still have the last generation ruling us, and that may be a problem. They don't like changes; they don't cope

with new trends. The world is changing rapidly, and I don't see those changes being implemented in our Region. You don't see much on Instagram or social media, people don't care, and they don't pay attention to the needs of the younger. Check for yourself; if you look at Mělník wines online, you cannot find a lot of information, and when you do, it is mostly in Czech. We need English and viewers and influencers; they are not here anymore; most young people leave the town and don't come back. It is a shame because we do have a very big potential. I think we need to work with our leaders to change this, and that is why we lose to Moravia, not because of the wines but because of our need to stick to the past and our traditions, and sometimes it is not enough". Concern about elderly (wine industry) rulers who are averse to new ways of thinking and change is common in traditional scenarios. This phobia may originate from the misconception that elderly people are more resistant to trying new things and more set in their ways. Additionally, there may be a great emphasis on respect for authority and deference to elderly individuals in traditional regions. This might make it difficult to oppose older rulers' opinions because they are expected to be respected. This unwillingness to update their beliefs can be problematic in a society that is always changing because new ideas and perspectives are required to address growing difficulties and possibilities. Aged rulers who are resistant to change may discover that it is difficult to adjust to new conditions or respond to changing requirements, leading to a deterioration in both their relevance and effectiveness. However, it is essential to keep in mind that not all elderly rulers in traditionally governed regions are averse to the introduction of new ideas and practices. Some senior citizens might be more receptive to novel concepts and points of view, and they might be more likely to take an active role in efforts to modernize and adjust to shifting environmental conditions. In addition, younger generations in traditional regions frequently have a strong desire to take on new challenges and offer novel points of view on issues that have been there for a long time.

The experience of living under communism in the Czech Republic has had a lasting impact on society, particularly on older generations who lived through that period of history. This can be especially true for aged managers of businesses, who may have difficulty adapting to new approaches due to their past experiences. Under communism, there was often a rigid and centralized approach to management, with strict rules and regulations governing business practices. This can be quite different from the more open and flexible approach that

is common in many modern businesses. As a result, aged managers who are accustomed to the more traditional approach may struggle to adapt to new approaches, such as agile management or digital transformation. Additionally, the experience of living under communism may have instilled a sense of caution and risk aversion in some aged managers, making it difficult for them to embrace new and innovative ideas. They may be more comfortable with established processes and systems and be resistant to change.

A widespread problem in the Czech Republic is a lack of English language competency in the business world, particularly among older generations who may have grown up during the period of communist control when the focus was placed on Russian language education. This is especially true among older generations in the corporate world. This can provide difficulties for companies that are functioning in an increasingly worldwide environment, particularly one in which English is frequently the language of choice for international business.

Due to a lack of English language competency, one of the primary issues that organizations confront is difficulty interacting with overseas partners and customers. Because of this, engaging in various forms of foreign commercial transactions, such as negotiating contracts, forming partnerships, and making other types of business deals, can be difficult. Due to the fact that English is frequently used as a lingua franca in international business contexts, it may be challenging for companies to recruit and keep talented individuals from other countries who are unable to communicate effectively in Czech. On the other hand, there are currently initiatives under progress in the Czech Republic to boost the country's level of English language ability. As a result of the increased emphasis placed on the study of English in today's academic institutions, many members of today's younger generations are rapidly improving their command of the language. In addition, persons who are interested in enhancing their command of the English language can choose from a wide variety of English language schools and programs located all throughout the country. These schools and programs provide students with instruction and coursework.

5.2.10 Additional inquiries

Due to the fact that it is an open-ended questionnaire, the interviewees were asked some additional questions in order to clear up any uncertainties that may have arisen during the course of the interviewing process. The first one is: Are you aware of any plans in terms of cultural and agricultural development from the government for the Mělník area?

SUBJECT D: Currently, there is a couple of projects still on paper about creating a small-town vineyard that would be owned by the town with its own brand. There need to be wider discussions about it because it is not just about setting it up but also, you know, looking after, after the production. At the moment, as I see it is a little bit tight financially as well. So yeah, there is a couple of projects on paper so far, but they will be discussions. There needs to be a consensus across all political subjects, and it's a long-term thing, not just for one election period.

The second question was: Are there any legislation issues regarding wine production in Mělník?

SUBJECT D Answered: No.

The third question was: Is there a unanimous image of the Mělník wine nowadays?

SUBJECT D said: I think there is such a feeling in the wine society because Mělník wine is very specific. It has always been very dry, so it's not a very popular wine; if you like, you need to understand wines and not be afraid of drinking very dry wines. It was always quite demanded, and also, it has been delivered to the Prague castle. Presidents and their guests taste it, so there is probably an image in people's minds, sort of Mělník wine.

The answers to any and all of the questions did not shed much light on the subject. Nevertheless, the staggering answers demonstrated a willingness on the part of the local administration to address issues that are important to the community, such as new public policies and projects, even though these were not articulated. The fact that there are no serious problems with the legislation in Mělník was another consideration on this topic. The most intriguing response was that there is a picture of Mělník wine being served at Prague Castle, which provides us with an idea of the significance of such a product and the role it plays in official gatherings.

5.3 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaires

We anticipated that the Word Associations method would yield responses from the participants that would disclose their instant links between the stimulus words or concepts and other words or concepts. These responses would be useful in revealing the participants' immediate linkages. These linkages may be the result of personal experiences, feelings, outside cultural influences, or internal mental processes. Free association questions can be used to elicit emotional and attitudinal responses that are connected with specific words or concepts. These data have the potential to shed light on the participants' subjective experiences, preferences, prejudices, or beliefs in relation to the stimuli that were shown to them. In addition, free association questions have the potential to elicit responses from the participants that reflect their unconscious or subconscious cognitive processes. Researchers have a better chance of unearthing implicit biases, deeply rooted views, or cultural effects.

The questionnaire was conducted in Czech to ensure that all the students were able to respond regardless their knowledge of English.

Twenty-seven students from the Charles University of the Humanities area who were not involved in any study of the regional economy, agricultural advancements, regional administrative studies, or cultural heritage made up our sample. More succinctly, the group is enrolled in the following courses: European Studies, Czech Language and Literature, English Language, Chinese Language, and History.

According to our data, most of the students were from Prague when it came to their place of birth. Eleven of the students that were polled said that they were born in the city of Prague. Neratovice is brought up by two other students as the second location. The remaining percentage originates from a variety of other cities, as demonstrated in the infographic that is presented below:

FIGURE 17

ORIGIN OF THE STUDENTS

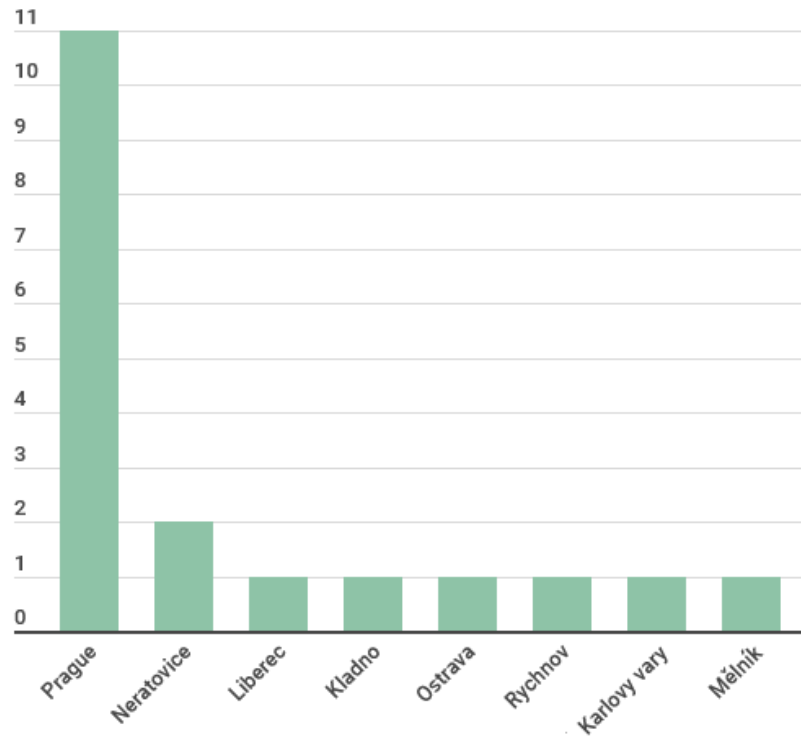


FIGURE 17. ORIGIN OF THE STUDENTS. Source: by the Author

Concerning the topic that we were most looking forward to discussing when we conducted this questionnaire when the prompt Mělník was presented to our sample, according to the findings, the very first connection that people draw is with the noun "wine," which is mentioned in sixteen of the responses. This demonstrates both the widespread recognition of the region and the significance of wine in the students' minds. The second and third are in accordance with the physical characteristics of the location. Two rivers called "Labe" and "Moldau" (the German name for the river Vltava) meet in the location of Mělník. This demonstrates that the students have a strong sense of locality about the region and also reveals general knowledge since both are very important watercourses in the country.

FIGURE 18

ASSOCIATION OF WORDS WITH MĚLNÍK

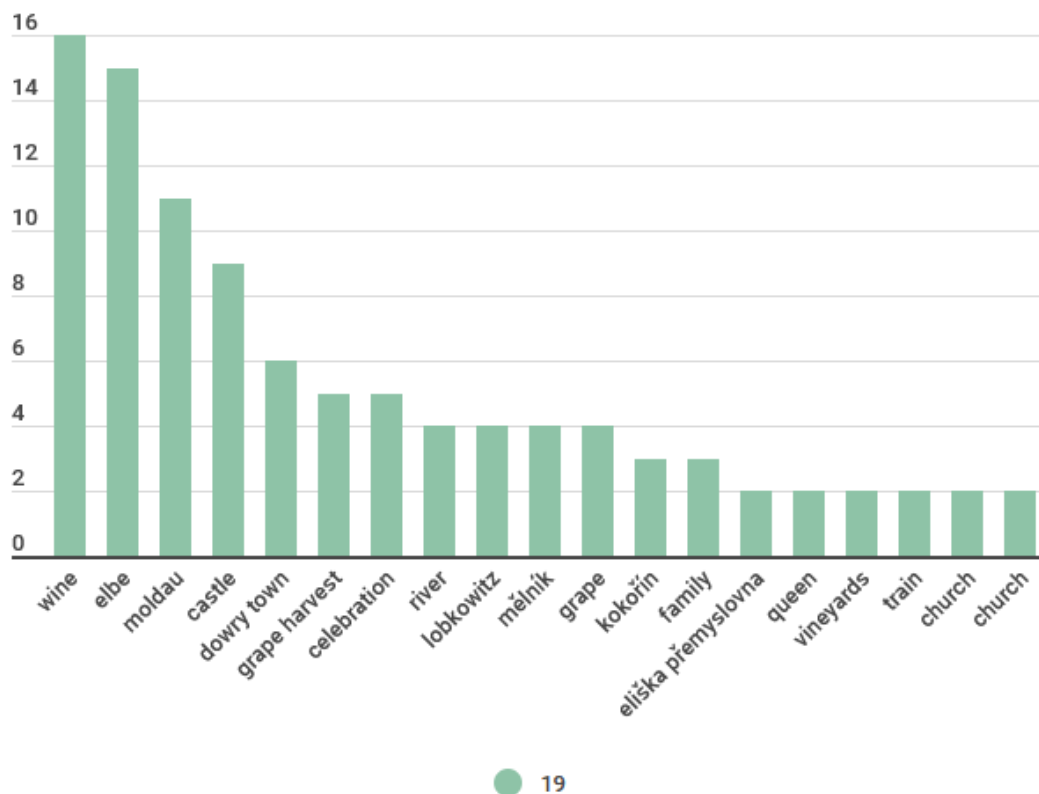


FIGURE 18. ASSOCIATION OF WORDS WITH MĚLNÍK. Source: by the Author

The keyword "castle" appears nine times, which places it in fourth place among all the words. Because of this fact, we can assume that the image of the castle is much more valuable and significant to the heritage of the region. It is also immediately identified with the landscape of Mělník, as is the case in a number of other wine-producing districts in the Czech Republic.

The term "dowry" appeared in the fifth spot. From the beginning of the 14th century, royal dower towns were bequeathed by Bohemian kings to their wives. Therefore dower towns had special legal status and were a source of income and a personal refuge for the Bohemian queens. The importance of "věnná města" declined during the early modern period. Many ex-dower towns, however, still recall this ancient legal status today, as it is part

of local and national history, and it is perceived as something that made the town a special role, status and prestige. This is the reason why some other keywords as “queens,” and “*Eliška Přemyslovna*“ (referring to Elizabeth of Bohemia), continue to emphasize the connection to the Bohemian queens. The students' awareness of this indicates that it is still very much present in their thoughts. Additional less recurrent terms such as “harvest,” “celebration,” and “river” reinforce the narrative of a wine-producing region strongly connected to its geography. Furthermore, terms such as “Lobkowicz,” “family,” and “queens” strengthen the connection of Mělník with nobility as it was established in the previous chapter and demonstrates that this association is still very prevalent in the present day.

Conclusions and final considerations

Following the tasks that were outlined for this work, we investigated the printed material that is offered to visitors at the Regional Museum and the Tourism Office. Our goal was to learn about the history of Melnik wine and how it is officially presented to a wider audience. Additionally, we hoped to discover connections between the production of wine and the identity of the region. In addition to this, we spoke with several stakeholders in the wine-producing, culture, and political sectors gathering their perspectives. And a survey was given to students from Charles University to determine their emotions and level of knowledge regarding the Melnik region. This exploratory method was combined with a theoretical description of the definitions of region, identity, and heritage in order to gain an understanding of the practicability of evaluating the region also from a theoretical vantage point and to validate whether or not those definitions are appropriate for the case study being investigated.

How has the production of wine in Mělník affected the locals' sense of regional identity?

VOC and identity

In contrast to the working premise of this study, the available evidence demonstrates that VOC Mělník is no longer significant among wine producers; hence, it has not been a significant element in the development of a sense of identity among makers of wine in Mělník. Instead, as a result of this analysis of history, printed material, people's perceptions, and interviews with local stakeholders, it is possible to see a predominant connection between the centuries-old tradition of Bohemian wines and the Mělník region. This is to the detriment of the initially assumed idea that a VOC may have a bigger role in frame identity in this region. It opens the door for further investigation into why this occurred and into whether the traditional component is stronger across the entirety of the Czech Republic or only in this particular region.

A second point that is also essential to bring to the reader's attention relies on the fact that the proximity of the Mělník region to Prague gives it a particular distinction. This seems

to be because the presence of a regular flux of customers all year long is ensured to visit the region and consume its products the local population of Prague. Additional or extraordinary efforts to attract new customers are not part of the priorities to be taken to develop the region, as evidenced in the sentiments and statements of the stakeholders. This feature sets this location (Mělník) apart from others and gives it its individual character. For the aim of this inquiry, this has shown to be a substantial influencer, and there is no other location in the Czech Republic that has this advantage.

The low-importance line shown towards the Mělník VOC Label goes against all the odds of the hypotheses of this research but, at the same time, contributes to the overall richness of this piece of work. If we look at it in comparison to other instances, we might find that it is one of the few locations worldwide that, after obtaining such a labeled status, has not continued with it. It is necessary to conduct additional research in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the factors that led to the occurrence of such a remarkable incident.

Regarding the VOC Label abandonment, it was important to ask in order to gain a better understanding of the position of this label in the thoughts and politics of the owners of the wineries involved in the project. The answers to this question have left evidence that it is no longer a priority, and even the individuals who initially conceived of the idea have either recanted their statements or given up on the endeavor. During the process of investigating what led to the cancellation of the Label project in the Mělník region, more questions than answers were uncovered in the course of the investigation. Additional research is required in order to understand the reasons why this occurred. Our interview findings proved that a red signal was raised when the founding members failed to include new wineries in the project. Inadequate resources are another probable explanation, given that continuing work on a project may require significant resources such as time, money, and people. However, there may not be enough resources available to meet these requirements. If the people who started the initiative are unable to secure the necessary money to keep it operating, it is possible that they will be forced to abandon it. If this occurs, the initiative will cease to exist. Additionally, the founding members of the project have decided to step away from their roles for various reasons, including but not limited to shifts in their ideas, missions, or demands, as well as changes in their professional aspirations. The individuals who first conceived the

project may have divergent views regarding the direction in which the project should proceed. If these individuals are unable to find a way to settle their differences, it is possible that they will opt to stop working on the project altogether.

Alternatively, they could decide to collaborate in order to find a resolution to the creative differences that exist between them. In the instance of Mělník, as well as through the analysis of the interviews, we were able to see that autonomous actions had been made in opposition to the idea of an organization combining interests and working toward a single goal. It's possible that over the course of time, the people who started the project may either lose interest in it or become disenchanted with it, which will force them to give up on it.

Concerning the heritage related to the studied region, according to the interviews carried out for this work, the stakeholders of the Mělník wine production do not make the region's natural heritage stand out. Thus, we must consider that it was not the most highlighted prompt we asked for them to express an opinion. Analyzing the available historical material, at least in English, heritage appears to be one of the most repetitive terms when regarding all Bohemian subregions. The wine-related stakeholders in Mělník appear to be more focused on the industry's commercial aspects. They pay little attention to preserving and boosting the heritage attributes and benefits the region offers, especially regarding historical buildings. They do not talk predominantly of the potential the region has regarding historical, natural, and cultural aspects that can help improve and boost their economy and revenues, as well as conservation for future generations.

The heritage protection issue is one alarming subject that all the interviewed stakeholders failed to mention. There have been some local government measures regarding the construction of real estate projects in heritage sites in Mělník. A lack of implementation of legislative protection debate for the cultural landscape of Mělník with regard to the legacy for future generations is also apparent. When analyzing the prompts of the students, words such as heritage or cycling did not appear. Regarding heritage, the only term was “castle,” and the only nature related other than the rivers was *Kokořín* in reference to the protected natural area located near Mělník.

The Czech society as a whole, and particularly the older generations who were alive during the Soviet occupation, has been profoundly altered as a result of the experience of living under the Soviet administration. Change is something that many Czechs who lived

through the Soviet era view with a sense of caution and skepticism because they equate it with the instability and uncertainty that prevailed during that era. There may be a sense of longing for the Soviet era among older generations who lived through it and remember its relative predictability and stability. These individuals had firsthand experience with the era. Because of this, there is often a fear of the unknown as well as a need to cling to what is familiar and predictable. This can result in an unwillingness to accept new ideas or changes. On the other hand, it is essential to keep in mind that younger generations in the Czech Republic may have a distinctive perspective since they were not subjected to the same degree of Soviet influence and hence may be more receptive to new ideas and developments. There is a growing sense of optimism and enthusiasm among younger Czechs, who see a future full of possibilities and potential as the country continues to progress and develop.

Regarding the historical matters, when interviewing the stakeholders, all religious and noble connections were present, especially the patrons' Saint Ludmila or Saint Wenceslaus and King Charles IV as the people they helped frame the wine production at the beginning. When compared to the students, not the majority of them mentioned words such as Ludmila or Wenceslaus but still had references to queens and noble families.

The wine was present in both surveys, and subjects did mention it all the time, which brings us to the conclusion that wine is the product that defines the identity of Mělník, not a geographical label but the product and its history, its heritage, and its people. (Forbes 2022)

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Annexes

Annex 1

SUBJECT A, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, MAR 03, 2023

Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

I can; Mělník used to be a red wine area; when you look at the 19th century, it was basically 90% red wine, so this has changed because, in the 20th century, the ownership changed. Meaning, as you have to imagine, between 39 and 45 during the II World War, it was under German rule. Meaning for example, in the winery: there were Germans in charge, the family had no right to make any decisions about the winery, and so they restituted it, or they gave back its ownership in 45 because it was between 39 and 45 there were forced, it was a forced administration by the Germans, and so it's after the war, as the Germans lost the war, the administration was given back to the family, so it's started in 39 this, let's say this, not family influence and in 48 the winery was nationalized and this until 89. And in those years between 48 and 89, this is 41 years, a lot of changes have occurred, meaning that there were more white wines and red wines, more Riesling and so on, and they lost, let's say that history because Mělník used to be a Pinot Noir area and the Burgundy grapes, so this was a little bit lost. Then in the 90s, they started again planting Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Gris, keeping Riesling as a local grape and also Traminer. But it changed at the end of the 20th century again. And then, of course, as we are, since 2004, a part of the European Union, we are exposed to European competition, and so we are in a different market. And, of course, climate change has an impact as well. So we are forced to look after other varieties and, for example, we decided that we would have resistant varieties like Safira and Solaris. For the red wines, not yet, but for the white ones, we have already updated for more varieties. We have a lot of Chardonnay and a lot of Pinot Noir, but we also have Modrý Portugal. Do you know that variety?

Which changes have you perceived in the local wine industry/production since 2015?. What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [Vína Originální Certifikace – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].? What does it mean to you?

I think this label, if you ask me, is not existent anymore because we're part of it, we wanted to get the certification, and we could not get it because it was not working, so I decided that I could not wait for the others and I abandoned it.

So is it already abandoned?

From my side and I think the most important wineries are not part of it anymore.

How does this label make you feel as a wine producer?

You know that the thing is that if you put together a label like this, you really need the most important producers on board. I would say almost 90% because it makes sense for a label like this; almost everybody, or 95%, participates in this and has the same goals. Then you can formulate the goal for the whole wine region and build a brand or build something. But it's not 3 of us or more, not the majority, then you have an influence on the image of a wine region. You understand you need everybody on the boat, and if not everybody is on it, then it doesn't make sense. So, then you say if not everybody is on the boat, so I have my own brand.

How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job or hobby? How?

No, It is my job (hehe). I have been 30 years in it.

Are you proud of it?

Yes, I mean you're always proud when you try to produce something from Earth. You know you have a vineyard, and you are planting the grapes, and you decide on the grapes, and then the grapes give you some wine, and then you're planting the wine, and they give you some grapes, and the grapes some wine. And it's a menu when I'm

bottling it and labeling it. It's our product, from us altogether, and it's something it's different from giving advice or giving a bottle of wine.

Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?

Of course. Yes, I am. Yes.

To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?

You know that there's the *Košť*. We have in August, we have a tasting day that is called *Mělnický košť* when all the wine producers come together, and we have one day of tasting, and normally that about 5 to 7000 people attend this event, and it was, I am the one who started it 17 years ago. I'm really kind of trying to promote Mělník wine, and not my wine but Mělník as a region.

Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.?.How are they related to the wine-production process?

People from Prague and around Prague are interested in wine and, of course, also people from Mělník.

What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

I think heritage is always a good thing, but you have to adapt to the present and to the future. So you can't rely only on heritage, meaning that you have to consider what is the heritage and see also the dangers or the new opportunities we are facing right now. Climate change is rather positive for us, but on the other hand, we should stick to our identity. Not trying to become a mainstream wine region, so stick to the kind of the smallest wine region closest to Prague. I think if we do such and try to make drinkable wine, even very good drinkable wines, we have a chance because we are very close to a very attractive city with a lot of people who, not only tourists but also Czech residents who, have a power, consumption power is above the average in this country. The area around Prague has a very high income, and so I think if we try to make a reasonable wine, we can sell it locally.

I think Mělník is so close to Prague we should do more, exploit the possibility that people can visit our wineries, can visit our vineyards. Because people want to know where it comes from. And this is something we have which is an advantage because it's so close. I think we should have; we should be more accessible for visitors, meaning we should have that the cyclists can go through our vineyards and so on. That our sellers are more open to the public, so I think we should work more on this.

About the local legislation, the problem is that if we want to have our wines certified, we need to go through a commission that gives us the approval stamp, and this is in Brno, it's in Moravia, and so, for us, from the Czech region it's a huge disadvantage, and I think that's the reason why a lot of local wineries opt to produce land wine and not the quality one because of this problem with administrations and so on.

I think tourism has always played a huge part. As I said, the nearest wine region to Prague is Mělník. Within a 1/2 hour or 40 minutes, you are here, so that has potential, but once people are here, they need to have an offer, and I think that is still lacking. You know people are interested in wine when they are on vacation or leisure time. Meaning for us wineries, we have to be at their disposal when they are free, meaning we have to work when they have leisure time so, and I think this is still a problem in Mělník. When you come on the weekend, there are very few wineries that are open. We still have to work on this; we have to be at their disposal when the customer has time. And this is in the evening, over the weekends, or during vacation time. On the other hand, I think with these bicycle tours, you know, along the river, we became more attractive. I noticed this in the last 30 years. In the nineties, in the summer, there was basically nobody here, and now, in the last 15 years with these bicycle tours, we have a lot of people in the summer.

And you know we are in the very, I mean Mělník is the most southern wine region on the Elbe, and the Elbe is a very important river, so I think we are an attractive area, but we have to work on it still.

Annex 2

SUBJECT B, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, FEB 16, 2023

Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

Mělník wine sub-region is the biggest (of two) in the Bohemia wine region. It comprises many wine villages mainly spread in the warm lowlands along rivers Labe and Vltava. Mělník itself, with neighborhood villages Liběchov and Kly, represents almost half of the sub-region. This heart of the area is cultivated by circa 15 winemakers, which could be recognized as regular producers making wine as a business. There are also many hobbyists producing wine in small quantities for fun or their own consumption. The total production could be around five hundred thousand bottles per year.

Documented history of winemaking in Mělník dates back to the 10th century when princess Ludmila founded a monastery in village Pšov (now part of Mělník), which started making wine from the vineyards on the slopes above the Labe river. The oldest vineyard of St. Wenceslas (son of Ludmila) dates to 980 and still exists near the village Dřísy east of Mělník. Winemaking in Mělník surged significantly under the reign of king Charles IV. who gave privileges to Mělník's townspeople to grow and produce wine on their own and provided them with vine varieties brought from the Burgundy.

Winemaking reached its biggest extent by the start of the 18th century, with then pictures showing vineyards spread all over the Mělník hill and closest neighborhoods during the cold period vineyards greatly shrunk and cleared space for the growth of town and industry. The era around the Great War was characterized by the hegemony of Lobkowitz castle winery, with only a few of the wealthiest businessmen who could play a peer to them. After WWII, all vineyards except small ones were confiscated by the communist government; winemaking was subordinated to the planned economy and the need for quantity instead of quality. After the Velvet Revolution in

1989, most of the vineyards were returned to the original owners, and wine production in Mělník started the long journey back to the back then glorious.

Which changes have you perceived in the local wine industry/production since 2015?

In 2015 wine industry in Mělník was well stabilized, and no significant change has happened since then. The vineyards were spread among well-established owners, and the area of vineyards grew steadily by the allowed percentage. The quality of the production of most regular producers increased as well. Few new varieties established their place among the classic ones concerning the changing environmental conditions. Still, almost all winemakers somehow pay attention to the varieties giving the best wines in our area.

What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [Vína Originální Certifikace – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].? What does it mean to you?

Mělník VOC "appellation" was chartered in 2015 by only four winemakers in Mělník. It allows the use of the mark for three wines giving the most characteristic wines for our area. Unfortunately, the idea did not materialize into common practice; the organization did not attract other winemakers, and those in the appellation produced only a few vines under the appellation label. Only one of them continues to make VOC wine occasionally.

For me, personally, it's a failure of hope. But if one considers the actual situation on the market, economy, local situation, etc., the conclusion is inevitable: it could not work in that manner.

In the case of YES, how does this label make you feel?

I suppose you mean, "If you drink VOC Mělník wine," I tasted it several times. They are specific and exhibit the spirit of our area, but they could hardly attract ordinary consumers, making them a niche on the market. The label itself currently has no importance to the quality of the wine.

How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job, or hobby? How?

I consider myself a hobbyist with a professional attitude. Wine is not my job. I feed my mouth in the banking industry. But I got a professional sommelier certificate five years ago, and I have served my friends and colleagues with wines for almost 20 years.

Are you proud of it?

About wine production in Mělník? Definitely, yes, even if I do have only minuscule involvement in it. Some of our wines may peer or even beat the wines of the best regions all over the world. Our Pinot Noir is in the other galaxy than Romanée Conti, but I tasted many Burgundy red wines, which were very inferior to ours—the same with Rhine Riesling.

Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?

Yes, by many means. Even if it is not my job, I am really active in the community. I personally know most of the winemakers in Mělník as well as their wines.

To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?

I would like to call myself a local expert, but it is fairly exaggerated.

Can you please describe how you identify yourself with local wine production? (occasions).

At first, I organized wine tastings for my friends. These events happened irregularly every month for 15-30 people. Second, I distribute local wine products to my friends and colleagues. I get the orders, buy the wine in wineries and haul them to the people. The volume differs from year to year, but it may represent a few hundred thousand CZK per year. For the last five years, I have led the degustation tent on the Mělník's wine fests two times a year. My assistants and I present wines selected according to

the given theme to the festival visitors. I became regarded as a valuable attraction to the event.

Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.? How are they related to the wine-production process?

Except for the wine fests, most of my events include only friends. But since the last fall, I have agreed to perform a sommelier role in several commercial events of small size.

What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

Hard to tell. Definitely, Mělník is not a big sign on the wine map. Even if Mělník is mentioned in many historical resources regarding winemaking in the Czech region, it does not attract crowds of tourists to visit and taste or vines. Winemakers of Mělník are fairly satisfied with their business and do not see the future in becoming stars in the wine sky. The production is diversified among many varieties, which makes particular wine batches small to attract a big market. The economic situation of winemakers prevents them from disrupting actions with doubtful outcomes. So, promoting Mělník cultural wine heritage through wine production itself is a long journey. I think that any type of spreading information about our wineries in literature, marketing, and social media may help to seed the desire among people. And this may subsequently lead to more interest in tasting and buying wines and then sharing the experience among people in touch.

Annex 3

SUBJECT C, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, FEB 16, 2023

Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

We spoke about the history of local wine production in October, and you also have a pdf copy of the exhibition panels in English. I think about the museum exhibition "The History of Wine and Water."

The current wine production in the Mělník area is connected primarily with the Lobkowicz Family, with Česká Zahradnická Akademie (school vineyards), and with the Czech University of Life Sciences (District wine center in Mělník -Chloumek). It is also necessary to mention other private companies: Kraus, Chorouš, and Vondrák. The span between a group of traditional (big) producers / Chateau-Lobkowicz, School, University, Kraus, and smaller producers is an important feature of today's viticulture in Mělník.

Which changes have you perceived in the local wine industry/production since 2015?

For me -also from a historical view- was the very important event of the 2010s (unfortunately) the divorce between Bettina and George Lobkowicz in 2011, which was followed by the division of their family company.

In the year 2015, I don't connect with any special wine events.

What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [Vína Originální Certifikace – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].?

The existence of the Mělník VOC/WOC label I had registered. I think it was thanks to (in Moravia issued) magazine Vinarský Obzor, probably the top journal for vintners in the Czech lands. But since I am not a vintner, there was quite no practical consequence for me. The VOC label is interesting to me, especially in connection

with the process of creating the museum collection. My possibilities to create the collection are limited, so I must say, I don't register any new label with the Mělník VOC emblem.

What does it mean to you?

What does it mean to me? Yes, I am glad that there is a group of VOC vintners among the Mělník producers, but my feeling about it, I can describe it with words like "distant" or "abstract."

How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job or hobby? How?

Yes, viticulture is part of my museum job, but only a part. Other parts are regional history, exhibitions, historical anniversaries, and so on.

Are you proud of it?

I came to Mělník from Prague (my study) and Prague from Moravia (my birthplace). So my relation to viticulture is deep and positive. I am proud of our town Mělník, of St. Ludmilla (+921) - people say (she is) the founder of viticulture in Bohemia; I'm proud of Mělník landscape and their vineyards and vintners.

Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?

The local wine industry is a part of the life of our town; it is also important for the activities of my employer (traditions of the Region).

To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?

I identify with the local production to such an extent, which is possible during the activities of the museum. Viticulture is deeply connected with the historical feature of Mělník; it is impossible to ignore it (Mělník wine is famous in the whole Republic).

Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.? How are they related to the wine-production process?

I have small children, so wine events like Melnický kost, Vinná Noc or Melnické Vinobraní, it is actually "nothing" for our young family. It is also weighty that I am a catholic (wine in holy mass).

What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

In my opinion, we here need to reconstruct our national and regional self-confidence. It is a key.

Annex 4

SUBJECT D, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, FEB 20, 2023

Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

The history goes back to Charles IV, so maybe even before. Charles IV made an order to plant grape vines in the vineyards above the river, so if you come to Mělník, you'll see them there's a hill above the river, so that's the most original vineyard in Mělník. That goes back to Charles IV.

It has been more or less successful since then and has also been interrupted by wars. You know, I'd resolved to when there was a war, the wine production was interrupted, and the most important year would be 1848. This year was important because the Lobkowicz family came to Mělník and started growing wine, so the most important person would be Joseph Lobkowicz, who brought a professor from Austria. Anthony Schmidt was a Czech- Austrian professor. In this period, the Lobkowicz family based the winemaking in Mělník on scientific research and scientific base. They brought modern technologies. They started planting vines and started statistics on the growth and then started to implement all the knowledge in the wine cellars.

Local winemakers and workers were quite skeptical about all these scientific methods in the beginning, so Professor Anthony Schmidt brought his own students from Austria to help him with the beginning and the start of the growth of the scientific winemaking process in Mělník.

Before Anthony Schmidt started working here, they were able to produce about 1000 Kg of grapes per 1000 m², but after introducing these methods, it must have increased, so then he gained the respect of the local winemakers, and they accepted his methods after they saw they were actually working really well.

Based on this knowledge and on this progress, Anthony Schmidt's followers based the starting of a winemaking school in Mělník in 1853. it's the only school of this type in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire that was taught in the Czech language.

Until about 1948, they were the really golden ages of Mělník winemaking. In 1916 Lobkowitz family was successful in mimicking French champagne, and from that time, we still can find letters that he was sending; this agent will send letters to the family.

What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [Vína Originální Certifikace – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].? What does it mean to you?

It didn't have any impact whatsoever. It seems to have stayed sort of on paper. It has not really worked. For me personally, nothing really changed. It doesn't make any impact because the public is not really that interested in that label or labeling process or in the results because Mělník's Production is fairly small, so the wider public doesn't even get to drink Mělník's wine because most of the production seems to be consumed by local people so the certificate didn't seem to have any.. it doesn't really mean much.

How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job, or hobby? How?

In the beginning, I was more interested in wine and wine grapes and wineries, so it would be considered a hobby, but then, after that, I started running restaurants. As someone in that sort of business, I was more interested in wines. I was using local wines, mainly "interesting" wines, and I was delivering some of them even to places in Prague, Michelin restaurants. And from 2018, I became a winemaker myself with a wine business so, producing but also delivering, buying, and choosing the most interesting wines.

Are you proud of it?

Yes, I am proud.

Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?

I'm not just involved in that part of selling and buying or producing, I am also part of some educational activities about the Mělník history, and that has been important for

the winemaking processes, so it's not just winemaking, it's not just business itself, but there's lots of educational stuff and some charities as well.

To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?

With the winemaking process, I see from the very beginning I grow the grapes. The historical process without machinery, without chemistry, and still using the old method of wines, the one might even from 100 years old, so it's still the same type. Regarding the ones that are typical for our location, I would say ours is a local wine production fully; it's part of the community and very well known. I will show you the old typical 200-year-old design if you are interested.

Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.? How are they related to the wine-production process?

So it is a mixture really, so it can be the tourists, who are most interested in all the historical stuff, so they are interested in, you don't know, all these old bottles, you know, the specific type of bottles from Mělník. Then there is the public from restaurants, the owners, and the wider public, but it's a mixture.

What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?

There is a little bit of a problem, really, because the basics are the town has to protect the vineyards and the vineyards tours. It happened in the past, mainly in the nineties, the local vineyards being destroyed due to the developers, you know, buying the lands and then destroying that, so we don't haven't got enough vineyards. We also seem to like a little bit of positive marketing, so we need to approach the tourists; we need to be able to offer them wine-tasting facilities, which is a big task for the new leadership. And also, the winemakers are getting older and not much younger. Even though we have a winemaking school in Mělník College, we see people going abroad, which can be quite positive in the beginning, but then they're not coming back to the winemaking

industry or they go and do something else. Even though wine is a massive tradition, we seem to have a lot of tasks in front of us in the future.

EXTRA QUESTIONS

Are you aware of any plans in terms of cultural and agricultural development from the government for Mělník area?

Currently, there is a couple of projects still on paper about creating a small-town vineyard that would be owned by the town with its own brand. There need to be wider discussions about it because it is not just about setting it up but also, you know, looking after, after the production. At the moment, as I see it is a little bit tight financially as well. So yeah, there is a couple of projects on paper so far, but they will be discussions. There needs to be a consensus across all political subjects, and it's a long-term thing, not just for one election period.

Are there any legislation issues regarding wine production in Mělník?

No.

Is there a unanimous image of the Mělník wine nowadays?

I think there is such a feeling in the wine society because Mělník wine is very specific. It has always been very dry, so it's not a very populist wine; if you like, you need to understand wines and not be afraid of drinking very dry wines. It was always quite demanded, and also, it has been delivered to the Prague castle. Presidents and their guests taste it, so there is probably an image in people's minds, sort of Mělník wine.

Annex 5

SUBJECT F, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, JAN 31, 2023

Can you please describe the current wine production in the Mělník area? Can you tell me about the history of local wine production?

I am not very familiar with the history. I know it started with Charles IV, and then after the war and during the Soviet era, we lost control of production. It was restituted afterward, and since then, it has been increasing yearly in numbers and quality. Over the last few years, we have been competing at a European quality level, so we have had to step up our game; sometimes, we are unaware of the competition. That is because Mělník is close to Prague, so our main consumer is close; we don't care much about attracting others, and it is comfortable to have a loyal consumer.

What do you know about the Mělník VOC/WOC label [Vína Originální Certifikace – [WOC - Wines of Original Certification].? What does it mean to you?

I know that is a very important step our Region achieved, but they left it behind. I think it is a very good idea, but here in our Region, it was seen as something external to please some specific people, so it was not embraced. I see Moravian cases where a label is really important, but for our Region, it is not.

How do you relate to wine production in Mělník? E.g., Is it part of your job, or hobby? How?

I am a wine optimist, a sommelier, and an "aficionado" (is that the dingo trendy word for it?). My life is wine. I work with it and use it as a hobby. It is difficult not to have contact with wine if you live here. Wine is present in most of our town.

Are you proud of it?

Yes, absolutely. People (Czech people) tend to say that our wines are bad, and we have proven them wrong, winning many competitions and prizes, but not only that. Our wine is present in many households in the Czech Republic and abroad. Our wines have a very good reputation. They are not only fair wines but now are becoming more and more wines with a specific characteristic. However, we are still far from being known at a world level as prosecco or Bourdeaux. For example, I don't think it is because of the quality but their tradition and visibility.

[Do you feel associated with the local wine industry?](#)

Yes, as I told you, it is difficult not to feel immersed in the wine scenario here. Our town is known by everyone for its wines. I don't know if there is a unified industry as a whole, but we are a reunion of producers and consumers, and at some point, we are related to wine.

[To what extent do you identify yourself with local wine production?](#)

I am more a consumer than a producer, but thinking about the whole chain, I am part of the industry. Mělník has several wine events throughout the year where we all feel part of it. We come from people interested in wine and have been producing it for centuries.

[Do any wine-related events you attended include customers, friends, tourists, etc.? How are they related to the wine-production process?](#)

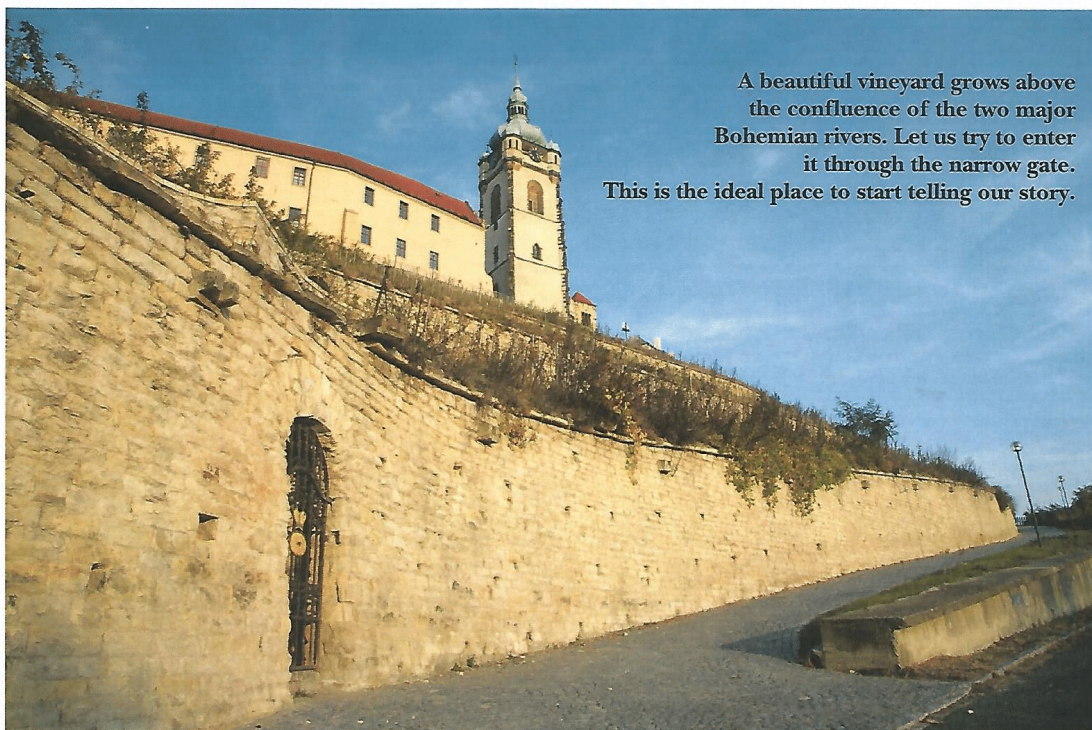
Yes, most of them. I don't see many tourists, but the locals, including my friends and family, try to attend most of the events. There are many visitors from Prague and nearby cities, but we don't consider them tourists. I mean international tourists. Even though Prague receives many tourists, they don't come much to Mělník.

[What other steps, innovations, or changes could be added to the present way of promoting the Mělník cultural wine heritage?](#)

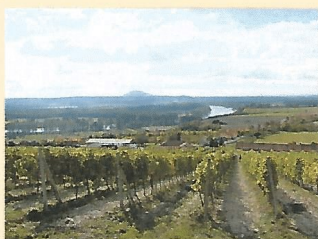
Visibility, we don't have young leaders, we still have the last generation ruling us, and that may be a problem. They don't like changes; they don't cope with new trends. The world is changing rapidly, and I don't see those changes being implemented in our Region. You don't see much on Instagram or social media, people don't care, and they don't pay attention to the needs of the younger. Check for yourself; if you look at Mělník wines online, you can not find a lot of information, and when you do, it is mostly in Czech. We need English and viewers and influencers; they are not here anymore; most young people leave the town and don't come back. It is a shame because we do have a very big potential. I think we need to work with our leaders to change this, and that is why we lose to Moravia, not because of the wines but because of our need to stick to the past and our traditions, and sometimes it is not enough. Have you been here on the weekend? There is nothing; everything is closed. If you go to the Moravia region, things are different, there you can have fun, here not. Wine is not just buying a bottle, it is an experience, and we fail to provide it.

Annex 6

Mělník Regional Museum Exhibition booklet



A beautiful vineyard grows above the confluence of the two major Bohemian rivers. Let us try to enter it through the narrow gate. This is the ideal place to start telling our story.



THE STORY OF WINE AND WATER

or else Growing Grapevines in Bohemian River Valleys

A travelling exhibition prepared by Mělník Regional Museum, funded by the Central Bohemian Region.

Text by Mgr. Lukáš Snopek.
Expert consultants: PhDr. Miloslava Havlíčková, Ing. Ludmila Svobodová and PhDr. Alena Veselá.

Photographs provided by Ing. Jiří Čermák, Ing. Igor Grobarčík, Mgr. Daniela Linková, Ing. Ludmila Svobodová, Mgr. Martin Šanda, Charles University in Prague - Institute for Classical Archaeology, Chrámce Bohemian Winery, Diocese of Litoměřice, Kutná Hora Wine Cellars, Litoměřice Regional Museum, Lobkowicz Chateau Winery in Roudnice nad Labem, Mělník Regional Museum, Municipality of Velké Žernoseky, National Heritage Institute, National Museum in Prague - Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, Prague Botanic Garden, Roman Catholic Parish - Mělník Provost.

Maps: Marie Lankašová Translation: Didacticus, s. r. o., Prague. Graphic design: KON Mělník, s. r. o.



Středočeský kraj



BOHEMIA - THE HEART OF EUROPE OPENS UP TO THE GRAPEVINE

or else Natural Conditions for Winegrowing in Bohemia

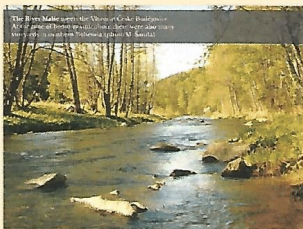


Where the Vltava flows into the Labe below Mělník. The town of Mělník is, along with the northern part, in the area of European winegrowing with vineyards on Bohemia (photo: J. Čermák)



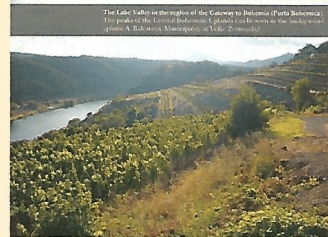
The Czech Republic and its historical lands. The map shows the Czech Republic and Bohemia which were the main subdivisions of wine in Bohemia.

Bohemia is an historical land in the centre of Europe which, together with Moravia and Silesia, makes up the territory of today's Czech Republic. The Bohemian Basin is separated from the surrounding landscape by a ring of mountain ranges forming a natural border, while the internal composition of Bohemia is dominated by two large rivers, the Vltava and the Labe and their tributaries. The Vltava joins the Labe at Mělník, and then the Labe flows on into Germany, where its name changes to the Elbe, thereafter emptying into the North Sea. The main watershed of Europe runs through Czech Republic. The vineyards of Bohemia are located chiefly on the south-facing slopes of the valleys of these four rivers: the Vltava and its tributary the Berounka, and the Labe with its tributary, the Ohře.

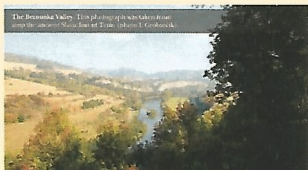


The river Mlýnský náhon (Mlýnský náhon) in the area of the town of Mělník. The river is a tributary of the Vltava and flows through the town of Mělník.

The hydro-geological structure of Bohemia is dictated by the Bohemian Cretaceous Basin. Groundwater, which in Bohemia usually filters through the chalk bedrock, is rich in calcium which is particularly suitable for vines. Grapevines also thrive on the underground mineral waters located in Mělník-Pšovka and in the surroundings of Žatec and Louny. Ideal soils for establishing a vineyard are those of volcanic origin. The long since extinct volcanoes of Bohemia are concentrated in the Central Bohemian Uplands (České středohoří). Here, the hills of Radobýl, Lovoš and Klapý are closely connected with viticulture.



The Labe valley in the region of the country to Bohemia (Příbram Bohemia). The picture shows the Central Bohemian Uplands (České středohoří) in the background. A Bohemian vineyard in the foreground.



The Berounka Valley. The picture shows the valley of the river Berounka in the area of the town of Beroun.

The winegrowing region of Bohemia lies on the notional edge of the viniferous part of Europe. The mild climate means that the average air temperature during the vegetative period for vines is only 14-15°C. Despite this, the natural conditions and the experience of the local winegrowers give rise to wines of a unique character in Bohemia. The aim of this exhibition is to introduce you to Bohemian winemaking tradition and to show how closely it is entwined with the cultural wealth of our country. To this day, the main centres of Czech viticulture are significant historical localities: Prague, Mělník, Karlštejn, Kutná Hora, Litoměřice etc.

WINE AND WATER IN ANCIENT CULTURES

or else How Vines Made Their Way from the Mediterranean to Central Europe, 3rd-8th centuries

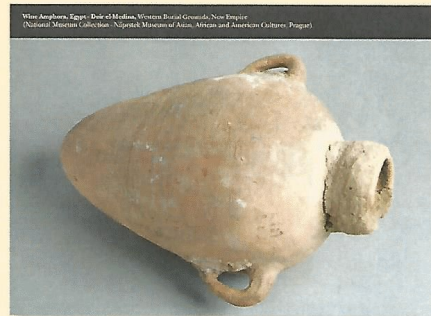


Troja, city district of Prague, is named after the Baroque villa of Count Salm-Reck. The church is built on the site of the 10th-century Roman villa. The vineyard has recently been planted. (photo: V. Jagerova)



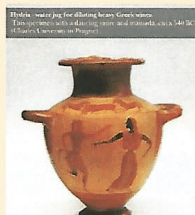
Jonah and Caleb bring a giant grape from the land of Canaan. Scene from the Old Testament on a Roman relief. Photo: Old Times (photo: L. Tomasko)

The vine is an ancient cultivated plant which people have been growing with a purpose since at least the 6th millenary BC. This crop, which used to be a wild creeper before being cultivated, was already known to the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia and Egypt. It occupied a special place in the Hebrew Bible where vineyards often symbolise the nation of Israel. Every time the Israelites succumbed to pride and wanted to turn their backs on God, their "vineyards" ceased bearing fruit and were laid waste to by their enemies. The ancient Greeks and Romans were highly cultured in their wine drinking habits and used to dilute it with water before drinking.



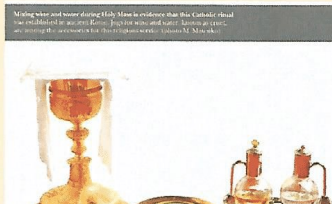
Wine Amphora, Egypt. Dakhel Medinet, Western Desert, Graeco-Roman Empire. (National Museum Collection, National Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, Prague)

The inhabitants of Central Europe of the time with their different prehistoric cultures, at first only came into contact with the finished product. They obtained wine through long-distance trade. With the expansion of the Roman Empire, knowledge of winegrowing spread to the province of Pannonia, in today's Hungary. Wine was drunk in Bohemia by its Celtic and later Germanic inhabitants, but there is no archaeological evidence of its cultivation. It was not until the Slavs learnt the art of cultivation from the inhabitants of Pannonia that they brought it to Slovakia and Moravia.



Phibolis water jug for diluting heavy Greek wines. The jug is decorated with a black figure, which is a black figure. (photo: M. Marek)

All ancient cultures, as well as prehistoric cultures of Europe had religious foundations. Wine and water had great significance for both for pagan and Jewish peoples. Our ancient forefathers revered water as the foundation of terrestrial life, while wine was seen to be connected with the intangible spiritual world, with godhead and the gods. The ancient habit of mixing wine with water survives to this day in Catholic services. During Holy Mass, this symbolic act symbolises the combination of divine and human nature in Jesus Christ.



Mixing wine and water during Holy Mass to celebrate that this Catholic ritual was established by our Lord Jesus Christ. (photo: M. Marek)

WATER FOR CHRISTENING AND WINE FOR HOLY MASS or else The Origins of Czech Winegrowing as a Result of Christianisation, 9th and 10th centuries

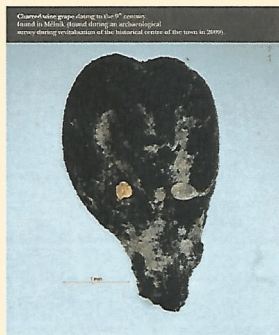


Aerial photo of the town of Mělník which rose on the site of an ancient Slavic fort. The St. Ludmila Vineyard, established in 1856, covers the slope below the church. (photo: Getty Images)

At the transition from ancient times to the middle ages, during the Migration Period, Europe was laid waste by raids carried out by barbarian hordes. They brought with them to Europe the eastern European strain of vine belonging to the Hunnic species. They were characteristic for their fertility, high juice content and excellent pressing properties. The civilisation boom in medieval Europe in the subsequent centuries was closely linked to the spread of Christian culture. The beginnings of winegrowing in Bohemia at the turn of the 9th to the 10th century are connected with the adoption of Christianity.



St. Ludmila is christened at the hand of Methodius. From the painting by Jan Štursa, 1877, in the collection of the National Gallery, Prague. (photo: M. Štursa)



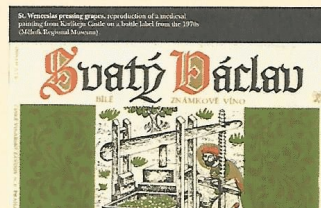
Charred grape, found in Mělník, believed during an archaeological survey during rehabilitation of the historical centre of the town in 2009.



St. Methodius - planting grapes. On the left, St. Cyril is shown presenting St. Methodius to the Christian ruler, Rostislav, in relief by A. Křížek, 1936, Mělník, street hall (photo: Getty Images)

In the year 882 or 883, the Czech Duke Bořivoj I was christened by St. Methodius in Moravia and soon after his wife, Ludmila also accepted the new faith. Tradition has it that afterwards she established the first vineyard in Bohemia near the present-day Mělník, between the villages of Nedomice and Drásky. The vineyards were established due to the need for a domestic source of wine for the Holy Mass. Wine plays an important role in Catholic services. According to Jesus' own words (e.g. Luke 22:20), wine represents the Blood of the Christ.

St. Ludmila's grandson, Václav († 935) (known to us as Good King Wenceslas) was influenced by Christianity more than was usual for rulers of the time. He was also instrumental in supporting the Church and, by extension, the creation of vineyards. According to legends of St. Wenceslas, which are the earliest pieces of Czech literature, he himself devoted his time to working in the vineyards because he considered it as an honour to make wine for the Holy Mass. Soon after his death he was canonised and became not only the Patron Saint of the Czech nation, but also the main holy intercessor of all those involved in the hard and uncertain profession of winemaking. You can find effigies of St. Ludmila or St. Wenceslas on many historical monuments connected with



St. Wenceslas pressing grapes (reproduction of a medieval painting from Kufříky Castle on a bottle label from the 1970s. (photo: Regional Museum)

CISTERCIAN WINE AND TRADE ON THE RIVER LABE

or else Developments of Viniculture in the 11th to 13th Centuries Influenced by Monastery-Related Colonisation



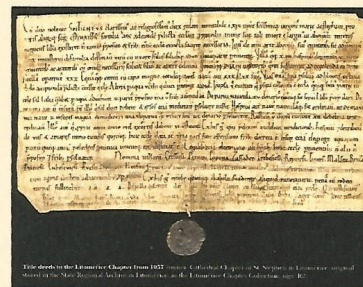
The Village of Velké Žernoseky is a significant north Bohemian wine region in this day (photo: J. Režala)



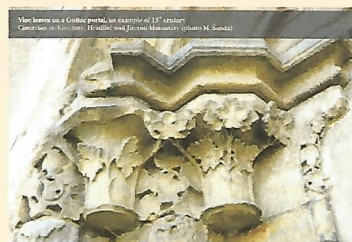
The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Sedlec near Kutná Hora has been on the UNESCO List of World Cultural Heritage since 1995 (photo: J. Čermák)

As the might of the Czech Dukes gradually grew and gained the right to the title of King in the 12th century, the number of Bohemian vineyards also rose. The first explicit written references to winegrowing in Bohemia date back to the 11th century. These tend to be deeds concerning bequests to the Church. Chapters and monasteries were often endowed with vineyards already bearing fruit, so that they could be used as a source of sacramental wine. Many Church institutions also intensively planted vineyards, very often together with orchards. Wine from grapes was also drunk at the court of ruler and of his potentates.

Active colonisation by Benedictine, Cistercian and Premonstratensian monasteries were instrumental in the initial development of Bohemian viniculture. In particular the Cistercians could draw on the agricultural experience of their affiliated monasteries in the Rhine Lands and Burgundy. In central Bohemia, the Cistercians are associated with winegrowing around today's town of Kutná Hora, where they established monastery of Sedlec in 1142. Cistercians from the Saxony monastery of Alzele acquired the village of Velké Žernoseky (1251) and gradually built up a winemaking estate with capacious cellars cut into the rock. The River Labe was used for exporting Bohemian wine to Germany. Vines were also grown with success by the Cistercians of Plasy in western Bohemia and their fellow brothers in Osek in the foothills of the Ore Mountains (Krušné hory).

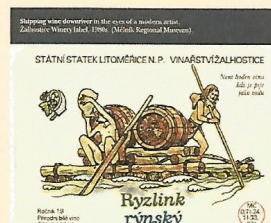


The deed in the Latin and Church from 1077 (today in the collection of the National Library in Prague) is the first written record of vineyards in the area (photo: M. Štábl)



The basins in a Gothic cellar, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Sedlec (photo: M. Štábl)

From the very beginning, vines did particularly well in northern Bohemia. The first written record of specific Bohemian vineyards and winegrowers come from this region. We find it in the title deeds to the Chapter in Litoměřice dating back to 1057. Ancient records also prove the existence of vineyards in central Bohemia: in Prague and its surroundings, and around the towns of Poděbrady, Kolín and Slaný.



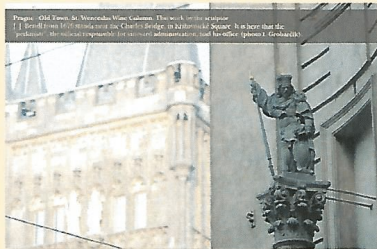
Shipping wine downstream in the era of a modern state, Zdeněk Nejedlý (1906, Národní výzkumný ústav)

VINEYARDS AROUND THE IMPERIAL METROPOLIS ON THE VLTAVA or else Efforts by Charles IV to Support Commercial Winemaking by towns, 14th century



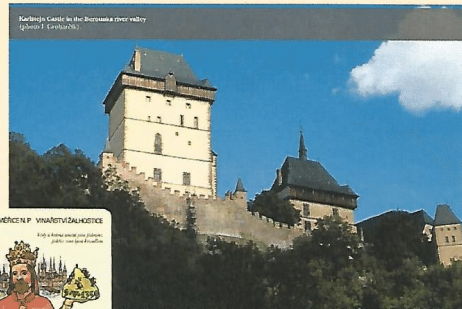
Prague - Lower Town-View of the St. Václav's Square below Prague Castle. Charles IV carried respect for St. Vitus' -Vltava- through his reign, in the 14th century of domestic viticulture (photo: I. Gorbachik).

As of the 13th century, townsfolk began to play an important role in viticulture in Bohemia. To begin with, burghers merely traded in wine and, like the monasteries, used the waterways to transport wine. Later, they themselves started to invest in founding new vineyards. Especially the towns in the Ohře river valley such as Louny and Kadaň had an abundance of hilly land which was hard to farm in any other way. The early stages of urban viticulture were equally a result of the "great colonisation" which took place in 13th century Bohemia.



Prague - Old Town, St. Václav's Wine Cellar. The work of the emperor Charles IV. The statue is a symbol of the emperor's support for the wine industry (photo: I. Gorbachik).

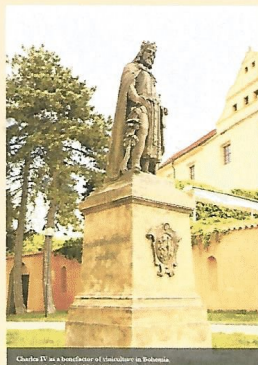
Development of commercial winemaking by Bohemian towns occurred during the reign of King Charles IV of Bohemia, also Holy Roman Emperor. In 1348 he furnished royal seat, Prague, with a university and on the right bank of the Vltava he founded the New Town. He also decreed that vineyards be planted in and around Prague and beneath Karlštejn Castle, construction of which he had already begun. He also had higher quality species of grape brought in from Austria, the Rhine Lands and possibly even from Burgundy. Tradition has it that it is since the rule of Charles IV that pinot noire has been cultivated in the Mělník region, the countryside at the confluence of the Labe and Vltava. This new species was at a disadvantage, however, due to late



Karlštejn Castle in the Bohemian Crown valley (photo: I. Gorbachik).



Charles IV's positive role in wine viticulture is recalled on a modern wine label. Historical literature is dependent on the fact that since the emperor supported commercial winemaking here by granting to the town the right to trade in wine (Mělník Regional Museum).



Charles IV as a benefactor of viticulture in Bohemia. (photo: I. Gorbachik).

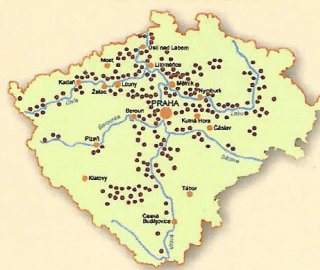
In 1358, Charles IV decreed the establishment of new vineyards in the whole country, stipulated the standard size of vineyard land plots and introduced the office of "perkmistr", who was a royal official responsible for viticulture. The burghers' privilege allowed them to plant vines even on land belonging to somebody else if this person had not shown an interest in commercial winemaking. The state treasury also enjoyed the benefits of the expansion of viticulture, since the king was entitled to a special tax called "perkrecht". However, wine producers were exempt from paying other taxes. Towards the end of his reign, Charles IV increased protection of the domestic wine producers by restricting imports of wine from abroad.

"LAKES" AND "WATERFALLS" OF VINEYARDS SURROUNDING CZECH TOWNS
 or else The Boom in Urban Viniculture in the Late 15th and 16th Centuries



Viewed from the Cathedral of St. Barbara in Kutná Hora. The vineyard in the foreground is a central vineyard, also in the vineyard of the city of Kutná Hora, S. P. O. J.

Deposition of the wine in Bohemia according to local names. The names marked are mentioned in the text. The cartographic map was prepared according to the map of J. Hladík & A. J. Universitní knihovna České republiky.

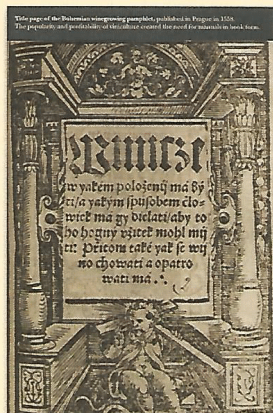


Preaching by the reformer, Jan Hus, at the beginning of the 15th century provoked civil war (1419-1436). The economy suffered significant losses; many monasteries ceased to operate, along with their vineyards. This gave burghers from royal towns greater influence in politics and expansion of the land they owned. This too was a reason for urban viniculture reaching the peak of its development in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. In those days, vineyards surrounded towns and cities in western and southern Bohemia as well: Plzeň, Klatovy, České Budějovice, Tábor etc.

In addition to the usual winegrowing centres, winegrowing thrived in central Bohemia around the towns of Beroun, Nymburk, Čáslav and Kutná Hora. In northern Bohemia this included the towns of Louny, Kadaň, Žatec, Most and Ústí nad Labem. Burghers involved in the winemaking trade grouped themselves into guilds and issued sets of directives for organising work in the vineyards, called orders of the guild. The burghers hired professional winegrowers to tend the vineyards, who had to collect together enough able workers and manage all work in the vineyard and processing the grapes correctly and at the right time. No wonder that winegrowers' wages grew in this period: for some towns viticulture was the main source of income.



The church of winegrowing cities is reflected in their architecture. The church of the Holy Spirit in Čáslav is a typical example of the Gothic style [Globe] Čáslav.



This page of the Bohemian winegrower's guild order, published in Prague in 1506. The production and processing of wine was central to the work of the winegrowers.

Town councils put great stock also in the common vineyard workers and often gave them tax benefits, so they would not be tempted to search for better terms elsewhere. The burghers' interests were under threat not only by rival neighbouring towns, but also by wine imports from Moravia, Hungary and Austria. Competition was particularly rife between vineyard owners in Mělník, Prague and Litoměřice since these three cities continued to be the most significant centres of Bohemian viniculture. The nobility active in



Green grapes. A harvest sign in Mělník is a symbol, reminder of the production of wine from the area of Bohemia [Globe] Čáslav.

THE YEARS OF PEACE AND THE GROWTH OF VINICULTURE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
 or else Stagnation in the Towns and Commercial Winemaking by the Bohemian aristocracy, 17th and 18th centuries



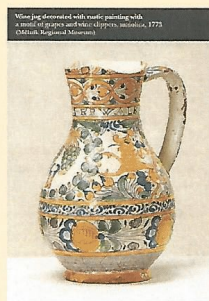
Vine terraces above the River Labe in Velké Žernoseky, designed by the counts of the Luxembourg family during the 18th century (photo L. Šolc) 11



Mělník, Grape press building "Dělnice"
 Photo by Department of Historical and Archaeological Research of the National Museum
 Photograph from the 1920s (Mělník Regional Museum)

Between the years 1650 and 1740, Bohemia enjoyed a long period of peace, accompanied by the blossoming of Baroque culture. And because viniculture remained a profitable field, both burghers and the nobility invested large amounts into its revival. The fact that, for instance, the famous artist Karel Škréta († 1674) bought several vineyards here testifies to the continuing good reputation of Mělník as a winegrowing town. The winegrowers' guilds continued in their activities while urban viniculture began to stagnate as a whole. The dark side of this period included persecution of protestants who held secret meetings among other places, also in vineyards and a rise in social tensions between the nobility and their subjects in the countryside.

At the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, the cost-effectiveness of urban viniculture fell dramatically. The main reason for this was insufficient initial investment and a lack of workforce, as well as their preferring eastern European grape species. A great blow was dealt to the domestic economy by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). It was not unusual for towns to be saved from pitiless sacking by offering their stocks of wine, because this noble drink formed a welcome part of a ransom. After the war, towns were under-populated and in debt due to extensive emigration of protestant families. Many vineyards were left to lie fallow.



Wine jug decorated with floral painting and a motif of grapes and bunches of grapes, Mělník, 1773
 (Mělník Regional Museum)



Barrel of oakwood of the seventeenth century from the village of Želčice, Mělník
 Photo by Department of Historical and Archaeological Research of the National Museum
 as a historical item in Mělník Regional Museum (photo L. Šolc)



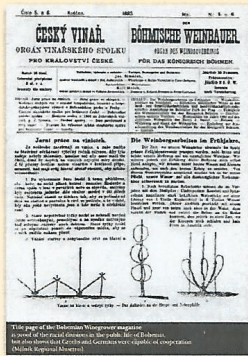
Mělník wine labels bearing the crest of the Dukes of Lobkowitz

The aristocracy had better opportunities for developing viniculture in Bohemia and the number of vineyards in the countryside therefore began to grow. Country winegrowers paid rent for using the vineyards while the gentry took care of further processing and sale of the wine. The aristocracy occasionally also bought up wine produced by burghers. The Counts of Nostitz conducted their wine business in Velké Žernoseky, while the Dukes of Lobkowitz did so in the surroundings of Roudnice nad Labem and Mělník.

RENAISSANCE OF BOHEMIAN VINICULTURE IN THE LABE RIVER VALLEY or else The Decline of Viniculture in Bohemia and Attempts at Reviving It, 19th century

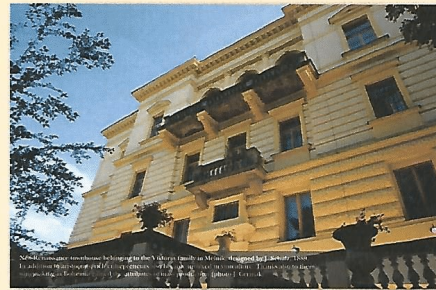


Technological improvements prepared by A. Schmidt for the main part finished the foundations of the 1st part of the same (photo by M. Amstutz, Graz, 1900)



The page of the Bohemian Winegrower magazine is one of the first documents in the world, in which the winegrowers of Central and German were reported on cooperation (Museum Regional Bohemia)

From the end of the 18th century, the number of vineyards in Bohemia began to fall. Townsfolk concentrated on trades and commerce. The aged vines bore less and less fruit and so their owners turned the vineyards into fruit orchards or left them to grow wild. The customs barriers protecting domestic wine had been abolished for some time already and construction of the railways meant importing wine from abroad was much easier. The boom in industry drained the workforce and the phenomenon of Pilsner beer made that frothy brew the favourite Bohemian beverage. Around the year 1750 there had been approximately 3,300 hectares of vineyards. A hundred years later they occupied less than a third of this area ...



Some of the most beautiful buildings in the city of Brno in Moravia designed by Johann Nepomuk Schwanhäusser (photo by M. Amstutz, Graz, 1900)

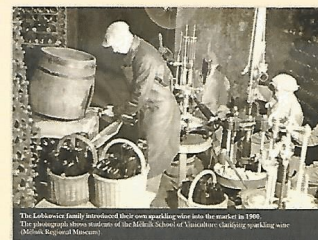
...The decline in viniculture was also due to the outdated knowledge and skills of Bohemian winegrowers. Revival of the profession through large-scale investments and the application of innovations in chemistry and botany was practicable only for aristocrats and entrepreneurs, but not for peasants. Viniculture became a specialised profession and small-scale winegrowers in the countryside decided to turn to growing sugar beet or hops. In 1866, Duke Josef Lobkowitz placed his trust in Dr. Antonín

The area covered with vineyards began to grow again slowly and by 1890 it had increased by about 150 hectares. Life in Bohemia, however, was afflicted by the deepening rift between Czechs and Bohemian Germans, which boded no good for the future. When, in 1882, the Winegrowers Association of the Kingdom of Bohemia was created, it had to have Czech and German sections. In 1885, a viniculture vocational school opened in Mělník. At the same time, a German school with the same focus opened



Dr. A. Schmidt took on the job of winegrower in the Moravia region of the present-day Czech Republic (photo by M. Amstutz, Graz, 1900)

Schmidt and let him try out his technological improvements on the vineyards in Dolní Beřkovice. Their winegrowing took off and, in 1876, Lobkowitz wines won an award at an exhibition in Maribor in Slovenia. Josef Šimáček carried on in the footsteps of A. Schmidt and initiated the publication of a professional magazine, **Bohemian Winegrower** (1870)



The Lobkowitz family introduced their own sparkling wine into the market in 1860. The photograph shows workers of the Moravia School of Viniculture classifying sparkling wine (Museum Regional Moravia)

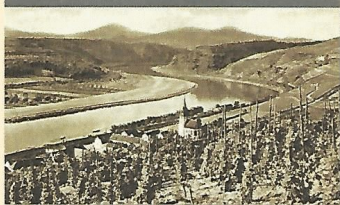
VINEYARDS AMIDST THE WHITE WATERS OF THE RIVER OF TIME

or else The Plight in Bohemian Viniculture During a "Short" 20th Century (1914-1989)



Prague-Vinohrady, Groboka Vineyard. This vineyard established at the end of the 19th century, has been used by the wine owners to produce more than 50 types of wine. The vineyard was managed by someone at the end of World War II and partially revived after 1989. (photo: I. Čecháček)

Velké Žernoseky between the wars. In the autumn of 1935, the village laid all the surrounding landscape (wines and vines) into a German alcohol distillery (see also the area of Jindřichovice (Dietrich Stara ves))



Instead of wine blight and other diseases, it was the dramatic political events of the 20th century which were the bane of winegrowing in Bohemia. Great damage had already been inflicted by the neglect of vineyards during World War I. After the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, the winegrowers of Bohemia had to face competition from the wines of Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. Viniculture in Bohemia survived thanks to large corporations based in Mělník and Velké Žernoseky. Although, on the one hand, the state established agricultural research institutes which supported viniculture, on the other hand it imposed significant taxes on commercial winemaking.

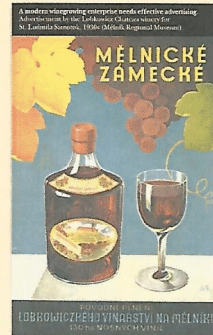
The greatest enemy of man are not taxes, however, but his propensity towards evil. With the coming of Nazism in Germany (1933), the grape harvest celebrations in Mělník began to assume a different hue. They became demonstrations of the determination of Czechs to defend their state. In 1938, the border region inhabited by Germans, known as the Sudeten Land, was annexed from Bohemia along with the vineyards and the traditional winegrowing areas such as Litoměřice and Velké Žernoseky located there. Due to the change-over of inhabitants which occurred after 1945, viniculture in northern Bohemia underwent a decline which lasted until the 1960s.

The beginning of mechanisation of winegrowing in Bohemia (see also the area of Velké Žernoseky)



When the government of Czechoslovakia was taken over by the Communists (1948), viniculture became part of the state-run economy. Not even then did the enthusiastic young winegrowers in the various corporations cease to strive for improvement of the quality of Bohemian wines. For instance, the wines

of Mělník won awards at the World Exhibitions in Brussels (1958) and Montreal (1967) and at international competitions in Budapest, Ljubljana and even in Vienna. The system of high-training of vines was introduced into winegrowing, facilitating the mechanisation of work. Further advances were achieved by cultivation stations in Karlštejn and Velké Žernoseky. The area occupied by vineyards grew between the years 1957 and 1989 from around 200 to about 520 hectares.



The Viniculture Cultivation Station in Karlštejn expanded its research in the 1950s and began to produce its own wine (photo of wine)



BOHEMIAN WINES: A DROP IN THE OCEAN, BUT A UNIQUE ONE

or else The State of Viticulture in Bohemia



1 Chrástce Bohemian Winery colonizes the vineyards around the city of Most in 1975; the Bohemia Winery was established on a closed slag heap from the local open-pit brown coal mines.

The fall of the communist regime in 1989 made foundation of family businesses possible. The new Viticulture Act of 2004 divided Bohemia into two sub-regions: Litoměřice and Mělník. The winegrowers of those regions harvested approximately 1 800 tonnes of grapes from 629 hectares of productive vineyards (2010). The most frequently grown variety of white grapes in the Bohemia Winemaking Region is Müller Thurgau and Rhine Riesling, while the most prevalent red varieties are St. Laurent and Pinot Noir. The interests of grapevine growers are represented by the Bohemian Winegrower's Guild, established in 1968.

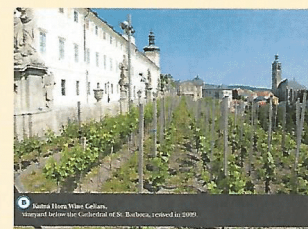


The Bohemia Winemaking Region is divided into the subregions Litoměřice (marked by red) and Mělník (in blue). Only specific localities are marked in these subregions (see table). Vineyard areas are in ha. Major rivers are in red.

2 Lobkowicz Chateau Winery in Roudnice nad Labem grows vines overlooked by Mount Říp, important in the legend of the Slavs in Bohemia.



3 Mělník School Estate, Czech Agricultural University, growing grapes used to produce wine for research purposes. 1 - Studenáček.



4 Kutná Hora Wine Cellars, longest historical Cellar of St. Barbara, founded in 1399.

Litoměřice Winegrowing Sub-Region

30 winegrowing districts, 51 winegrowers, 294 ha of productive vineyards (2010)

This sub-region encompasses Litoměřice, Velké Žernoseky, Roudnice nad Labem and Chrástce u Mostu. The winegrowing districts of Kadaň and surroundings (No. 1), Bělšany u Loun (No. 2), Ústí nad Labem (No. 3) and Malé Žernoseky (No. 4) belong to the Litoměřice sub-region as well.

The main wine producers in this area are Chrástce Bohemian Winery, Lobkowicz Chateau Winery in Roudnice nad Labem, Žernosecké Winery and Litoměřice Monastery Wine Cellars. Chrástce Bohemian Winery is the main producer of Kosher wine in the Czech Republic.

Mělník Winegrowing Sub-Region

42 winegrowing districts, 90 winegrowers, 335 ha of productive vineyards (2010)

The foremost localities in this sub-region are, in addition to Mělník and the neighbouring town of Liběchov (No. 5) the winegrowing districts of Kutná Hora, Prague and Karlštejn. Then we have Kralupy nad Vltavou (No. 6), Slaný (No. 7), Vinařice (No. 8), Loděnice (No. 9) and Vinaře u Čáslavi (No. 10).

The main producers of grape wine of this sub-region are Lobkowicz Mělník Winery, Kutná Hora Wine Cellars and the Kraus Winery, Mělník. The local viticulture colleges also produce their own wine: Mělník School Estate and Czech Agricultural University (the Mělník School Estate).

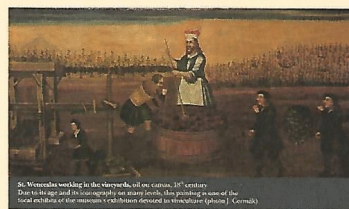
WHERE THE PAST AND PRESENT OF VINICULTURE MEET

or else the Steps by the Mělník Regional Museum to Popularise Viniculture in Bohemia

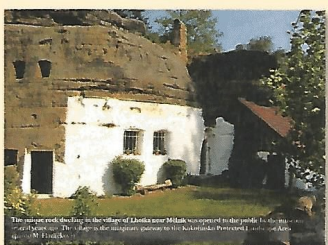


Mělník Regional Museum, Bohemian wine-tasting takes place in cave wine-tasting is historical in its roots, back to the 14th century (photo: Miroslav Svoboda)

As we have seen, winegrowing in Bohemia remains an economically unimportant field in this day and age. In spite of this, all those who come for a wine-tasting trip in the Bohemian wine region await not only a gourmet delight but also a taste of a tradition which took root in the early days of Bohemian culture and statehood. Popularisation of Bohemian viniculture is also one of the main goals of efforts made by the Mělník Regional Museum in collaboration with the Bohemian Winegrowers' Guild.



St. Wenceslas working in the deep cellars in the 13th century. Due to the age and its geographical location, the painting is one of the most valuable exhibits of the museum's collection devoted to viniculture (photo: J. Kormaník)



The museum and dining in the village of Lhotka near Mělník was opened in the year 1988. The building is the hospice, owned by the Kuznětský Převorek, built by King St. Francis.

The area of the Bohemian Winegrowers' Guild



The museum in Mělník was founded back in 1888. It is housed in the former Capuchin Friars hospice nearby Mělník town hall. In addition to Bohemian winegrowing, the exhibition in the hospice building attempts to familiarise the visitor with life in a medieval town, a day in a 19th century village and also with the wealth of nature in Mělník Country. The museum's focus lies not only on winegrowing, but also on its collection historical prams, to which a separate exhibition is devoted in Ostruhová Street.

The museum administers and expands its collection documenting the history of viniculture in Bohemia, has a library of viniculture and occasionally organises conferences in the field of viniculture. However, the museum attempts not only to document the past and present of the profession, but also to support contemporary winegrowers and their produce. For this reason, it offers visitors the opportunity to book a wine-tasting of domestic wines with a talk given by a sommelier. And not only this; the museum café has around 50 types of whites, reds and rosés from Bohemia. After all, Bohemian winegrowers perform excellent work and therefore deserve not only the interest of wine connoisseurs but also any help possible. Wine is an important part of the cultural wealth of Bohemia.



PS: Our country has a fascinating history, it is beautiful and fertile, and we are rightly proud of it. We shall be pleased to welcome you and your family.