



The terroir of vineyards – climatic variability in an Austrian wine-growing region

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The description of a terroir is a concept in viticulture that relates the sensory attributes of wine to the environmental conditions in which the grapes grow. Many factors are involved including climate, soil, cultivar, human practices and all these factors interact manifold. The study area of Carnuntum is a small wine-growing region in the eastern part of Austria. It is rich of Roman remains which play a major role in tourism and the marketing strategies of the wines as well. An interdisciplinary study on the environmental characteristics particularly with regard to growing conditions of grapes was started in this region. The study is concerned with the description of the physiogeographic properties of the region and with the investigation of the dominating viticultural functions.

Grape-vines depend on climatic conditions to a high extent. Compared to other influencing factors like soil, climate plays a significant role. In the framework of this interdisciplinary project climatic variability within the Carnuntum wine-growing region is investigated. On the one hand microclimatic variations are influenced by soil type and by canopy management. On the other hand the variability is a result of the topoclimate (altitude, aspect and slope) and therefore relief is a major terroir factor. Results of microclimatic measurements and variations are presented with focus on the interpretation of the relationship between relief, structure of the vineyards and the climatic conditions within the course of a full year period.