

## ABSTRACT

### Wine adulteration in the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the early modern times in Germany

Lukas Clemens

Today, state regulations, increasingly those by the EU, create basic conditions which shall protect specific wine qualities. This way, the consumer is meant to be protected and he or she is meant to be guaranteed a certain minimum quality. At the same time, wine farmers are obliged to keep to specific wine criteria. Against the background that a multitude of factors decide over the wine's quality, modern quality protection can obviously always only regulate some elements which are decisive for the quality of a wine. At the moment, quite a few are under the impression of an over regulation and demand – also with regard to the globalisation of the wine markets – a larger self responsibility for the wine farmers and to leave the decision on wine qualities mainly up to the market as well as to competition. Others insist on state standardised wine-growing policies which lay down minimum quality and punish violations of state standardisation. Just the current discussion makes clear that no durable agreement on the numerous elements of qualitative wine production exists. With regard to the wine scandals this means that here exposed and punished violations of state standardisation regarding wine-growing cannot refer to constant and also always valid quality criteria. In the case of wine production, what is considered to be true and what false is subject to the cultural change.

Whereas this principle must be watched with regard to the regulation of state sanctioned standards and power monopolies this is even more the case for pre-modern centuries where neither standardised legal protection existed nor executive authorities accepted on all sides. In a multitude of legal collections of different quality – from the Carolingian Capitularies to the high medieval municipal statutes, from legal regulations for the *Reich* to the municipal police regulations for the *Reich* of the late Middle Ages – regulations for the wine-growing and wine preparation can be found. The examples discussed in the following refer especially to the western and south-western areas of the *Reich* and mainly take in the view of the development until the 16<sup>th</sup> century.