

# ***RESEARCHES REGARDING THE ROLE OF THE MONASTERIES IN NORTHERN OLTENIA IN VINE GROWING IN THIS AREA***

(Abstract)

The doctoral thesis is presented on 114 pages, it contains 20 tables and 7 photos and is structured in 5 chapters: Chapter 1. Highlights of the beneficial influence of vines, grapes and wine on human life and preoccupations; Chapter 2. Testimonies of wine as a fruit of the vine in the church tradition; Chapter 3. The purpose of the research, the research objectives, the method of work and the material used; Chapter 4. Obtained results; Chapter 5. General conclusions and recommendations; prefaced by an introduction.

## **Highlights of interdependence between man and vine growing**

In the harvesting phase, the man, walking from one place to another, became acquainted with the pleasant taste of the fruits, drew his attention and suggested the idea of favoring and protecting the trees, shrubs and lianas that offered him good fruits, removing by “cutting” those who prevented their development. In the gardens that emerged in the place of the forest cleansing “runcus”) made in this way, penetrate the fruitful vineyards and trees with forest fruits - the man was drawn to sit - at the beginning probably temporarily. In such places the first cottages (I.C. Teodorescu, 1964) could appear.

The agglomeration of larger quantities of grapes harvested from these vines has inevitably led to the crushing of many with the formation of a juice that amazingly began to boil without fire – at cold! And so he knew the wine ... undoubtedly, considered by him a “gift” of the divine forces, which, consuming it, could come into contact with them. The strong impression created by this drink has made the growing of the vine to be one of his major concerns (Teodorescu C. Ștefan et al., 1987).

The fact of being less pretentious, with easy multiplication, with vegetative multiplications in different ways - are the elements that extended the vine. In this way it was one of the first plants to be cultured. These multiplications have been an extra link for the steady settling of man. With its radically powerful system, exploring large masses of soil in a remarkably long lifetime, the vine continually appealed to man for

preoccupations, and by its rewarding satisfaction it became a precious, transportable in the future asset, pushing its fixation to permanence (Popa A., 2016).

The man soon realized that, due to the fragility of the grains, transporting the grape harvest at longer distances is possible only with significant losses - the preparation of the wine must therefore be as close as possible to the place of cultivation of the vine. This human settlement, which remains valid until now, was demanded by the large number and variety of care work that must be applied to plants. By preparing the wine, the cultivator man has stepped up an important step - becoming a producer, not of a raw material, but of a finite product, one of the most valuable. Along with other goods, it could be changed, easier and more convenient, by purchasing other things to help him lead a better, safer life.

In order for wine to be better it has been inferred that the grapes have to be sweeter, better ripen and has become more and more careful to the fruit of different vines, meaning to multiply the ones that show added qualities. He especially took into account the importance of the place where they are cultivated, thus remarking the settlements more favourable to the need for multiplication. (Teodorescu C. Ștefan et al. 1987

The new drink, the wine, caused the man to feel the need to get close to other neighbours, to enjoy together, thanking to the God's forces for the gift received. It is considered, with all due justification, that "the most appealing gesture in human history was the first invitation to the table, made to the first stranger who was, until then, separated by an implacable fear. Without this first step towards the other, nothing of his wonderful story would have happened" (I. Matheescu, 1984).

Facing the difficulties man began to be more conscious, more confident in his own forces, began to reflect with more emphasis on his future work, gained a much greater sensibility. The proof is that it has gradually become able to make not only useful objects but also plastic representations - clay, incised or excised, painted or not, in a veritable form or zoo - or anthropomorphic, related to religious beliefs, magic practices, of manifestations and traits specific to human experience, representing hieratic pose, affection, meditation, laughter, emphasis on sex elements, etc. (Teodorescu C. Ștefan et al., 1987).

It is amazing the attention and skill our ancestors led the cultivation of the vine and the subtlety with which they interpreted the influences of the different

environmental factors, deducting the sense in which the shortcomings caused by them can be eliminated or, against their use, the advantages offered by them. We can tell this if we observe: the large number of native varieties with various and valuable attributes that they have created by selecting mutations; different and original cultivation modes, such as plant density, with cutting and tendril leading system, all adequate to local climatic peculiarities; the association of the varieties in judiciously gathered assortments, as in some cases they aimed not only on economic and technological grounds but also on the compensation of some floral deficiencies - and which remained until the phylloxera disaster. We have, in particular, the evidence in the well-thought-out settlement in our country, in the hilly area or near the Black Sea. (Popa A. 2008; Popa A. et al. 2015).

It's hard to say what another plant could "tie" man to the vine as much. Its perennality - a plantation being inherited from several generations, from father to son - the great volume of work that he has almost the entire year, has fixed man as deep as the one generated by the pleasure and use of its fruits, the grapes and the wine.

Therefore, the cultivation of vine and the preparation of wine is one of the oldest occupations of man. The use of a large number of years of a plantation and close ties to a confusion between the place where the grapes were produced and the place of obtaining of the wine by one and the same person contributed to the accumulation of a rich experience in the perpetuation throughout the centuries of a significant number of practices, processes, customs, which have become traditional. The continuing desire for refinement in wine production has greatly stimulated the taste for better, more refined of man. In this way, wine has become the product that, more than any other in agriculture, has identified itself with the producer, with everything he has accumulated more valuable and enjoyable, and has identified himself with the place of production, giving an everlasting celebrity to many regions and lands on the globe. (Teodorescu C. Ștefan, 1970).

## **Purpose of the research**

There are many vestiges and preserved testimonies that prove the age of the vine growing in Oltenia. Certainly in this province, as a result of its central position in the Dacian State, of the more intense Roman colonization, its blessed position (the elbow of the Carpathians, the Danube and the Olt), which defended it from the many

uninterrupted invasions that wreaked the lands of Moldova and Wallachia during the first millennium of our era.

The presence of this preoccupation, the vine growing, is closely related to the favourable conditions offered by climate and soil in the areas on the sub-Carpathian hills of Oltenia.

Throughout the ages, the vine growers of Oltenia have attached themselves to this plant, that it is part of the very purpose of their life. It has contributed to their civilization. This explains why in northern Oltenia there is no house where the vine is not present, either for economic purposes or for decorative purposes. In no part of our country we can see this beautiful intimacy between man and vine.

Certainly monasteries in northern Oltenia played a major role in the development of viticulture on the axis Baia de Arama, Tg. Jiu, Horezu-Rm. Vâlcea-Călimănești-Jiblea, where the most famous cult institutions of our orthodoxy, such as the monasteries Vodița, Tismana, Polovragi, Horezu, Bistrița, Govora, Cozia, etc., have long been in possession of a significant patrimony wine.

As a consequence, we decided to carry out research on the “role of the northern Oltenia monasteries in the vine growing” during 2015-2018.

### **Research objectives.**

In order to materialize the research program, we set the following objectives:

- a) Knowledge of the criteria for establishing the vocation of an area for the vine growing;
- b) Survey of the climatic offer of the area under study for vine cultivation;
- c) The pedological offer of the vine growing;
- d) Wine-growing heritage on the axis: Baia de Aramă, Tg. Jiu, Horezu-Rm. Valcea, Calimanesti-Jiblea;
- e) Knowing the monasteries in Oltenia and their wine-growing heritage.

### **Working methods and material used.**

In order to outline the vocation of an area used for the vine growing, it was used to calculate the Oenoclimatic Aptitude Index, which proved to accurately express the vocation of an area for the vine growing. An index that includes the sum of temperature degrees (T), the duration of sunshine (I) minus the amount of precipitation (P), less 250,

representing the excess rainfall. In this way we have the answer for,  $A = T + I - (P-250)$ , the degree of favourability and the direction of harvesting the grapes.

The pedological offer was established with the support of the OSPA laboratories in the Mehedinți, Gorj and Vâlcea counties, establishing the main types of soil and their physical-chemical, morphological and biological properties.

With the support of the statistical data from the County Agricultural Directorates: Mehedinți, Gorj and Vâlcea and depending on the proximity or the remoteness of the areas to the mountain, 3 (three) areas were formed in Mehedinți and two in Gorj and Vâlcea, where vine is grown (even today) on appreciable surfaces.

Based on the consultation of the archives at the main monasteries, the Archiepiscopate of Râmnic and the State Archives have outlined the wine-growing heritage of the monasteries until Secularization (1860), in the geographical area of Oltenia.

## **Obtained results**

### **1. The degree of favourability of the pedo-climatic conditions in northern Oltenia for the vineyard culture**

The climatic offer of the areas studied gives the vineyard the opportunity that by the quality and composition of the grapes to be obtained:

a) In the Polovragi area, belonging to the cooler oenoclimatic zone  $A_0$  : table grapes, grape must or grape juice, white wines with geographical indication; raw materials wines for sparkling and distillate; sometimes white wines with a designation of origin like Fetească albă, Crâmpoșie, Italian Riesling.

b) In the areas: Târgu Jiu, Horezu, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Jiblea - Călimănești, belonging to the oenoclimatic area  $A_2$  : table grapes, grape must and grape juice, wines with a geographical indication, mistel, wine alcohol, concentrated must and especially dry white or semi-dry wines with a designation of origin; rose or red wines of quality, dry, with a designation of origin (Priority varieties Fetească neagră, Pinot noir, Merlot); semi-dry wines, semi-sweet and sweet or liquorice wines (especially if noble rot is to be

installed, old distilled wines with a designation of origin, still wines or sparkling wines with a designation of origin (aromatic).

c) In the areas of Corcova and Drobeta Turnu Severin: Quality wines, red, with a designation of origin; quality semi-dry wines; sweet and liquorice natural wines (especially when noble rot is installed) with a designation of origin; quality sweet wines - natural flavour, with a designation of origin.

It is noted that in the studied areas, which belong to the hills of Oltenia under the mountain, where the vine is grown: Turnu - Severin, Corcova, Polovragi, Târgu Jiu, Horezu, Râmnicu Valcea, Jiblea - Călimănești, 11 types of soil are present. In each area one of these soils prevails. Soil types belong to the brown soils, rendzinas and podzols. The latter being encountered as predominant in Horezu soils and less spreaded in Ramnicu Valcea and Jiblea - Calimanesti.

The characteristics and attributes of the soils present in the 7 areas are capable of supporting the vine growing, which is also confirmed by the important surfaces of vines present in these locations.

Although the vast majority of soil types have texture and structure that can be considered good, they must be ennobled by different and appropriate agro-technical measures for each situation.

It is worth noting that all soil types have a very good drainage, a very important aspect, especially since we find ourselves in an area where precipitation is significant over a year.

In all areas, vine plantations are situated on slopes of small inclination, so they do not require landscaping on terraces.

An aspect also worthy of emphasis is that vineyards occupy the sunniest slopes, which is why the vine is carrying out its physiological processes under the best conditions.

## **2. Wine-growing heritage of the monasteries in Oltenia, before secularization (1860).**

In the Archives of the State in Râmnicu Vâlcea and in the archive documents of the Râmnic Archiepiscopate there are numerous documents that can define the wine-growing heritage of the monasteries in Oltenia. In 2011, Dumitru Cauc publishes the work "Contributions to the knowledge of the monastery domain in Oltenia", which

constitutes a real monograph of this field. Starting from the ones published in this monograph and looking by ourselves in the archives of the state, the Archiepiscopate of Râmnic and the main monasteries in Oltenia, we could outline the wine domain of the monasteries in Oltenia, which, in our opinion, had a great influence on the development of this sector in this part of the country and especially the cult cultivated by viticulturists regarding the vine culture, and it was found that this occupation played a major role in human civilization.

In Table 18 are presented, in summary, the vineyard areas belonging to the monasteries, the skets and the Episcopate of Râmnic, in 1860, before the secularization of the monasteries (1863).

Tab. 18.

***The surface of the vineyard plantations in the ponds, owned by the monasteries of Oltenia around the middle of the nineteenth century (1860), taken after Dumitru Cauc, 2011:***

Locality Village	Area (acres)	
	Undedicated monasteries	Monasteries dedicated
<b>1. DOLJ</b>	-	-
Amaradia	62	-
Balta	72	-
Câmpu	-	170
Jiul de Jos	860	141
Dumbrava	179	420
Ocolu	259	140
TOTAL I	1432	891
TOTAL COUNTY	2323	
<b>2. GORJ</b>	-	-
Ocolu	46	-
Jiu	95	-
Amaradia	56	-
Gilort	20	-
Plaiul Vâlceanu	244	-
TOTAL I	461	-
TOTAL COUNTY	461	-
<b>3. MEHEDINTI</b>	-	-
Baia de Aramă	62	-
Motru de Sus	59	-
Motru de Jos	1032	-
Dumbrava	263	-
Câmpu	866	-
Blahnia	1650	50
Ocolu	1331	-
Plaiul Cloșani	-	74
TOTAL I	5263	124

TOTAL COUNTY	5387	
<b>4. VÂLCEA</b>	-	-
Râmnicu	71	-
Oltețu	210	-
Oltețu de Sus	294	-
Oltețu de Jos	28	86
Ocolu	83	-
Cozia	21	-
Horezu	22	-
TOTAL I	729	86
TOTAL COUNTY	815	
<b>5. ROMANA</b>	-	-
Oltul de Sus	710	-
Oltul de Jos	340	100
Oltețu	131	80
Ocolu	220	50
Balta	1030	-
TOTAL I	2431	230
TOTAL COUNTY	2661	
<b>TOTAL OLTENIA</b>	<b>1 +2 +3 +4 +5 = 11,647</b>	

The Oltenia worship places had 11,647 acres of vine (5823 ha), during the same period (1859) the whole kingdom had 83,000 ha (Cătălin Galau, 2005), so the Oltenia worship places held 7% of the vineyard area of the kingdom and 50% of the Oltenian vineyards. We also specify that C.C. Giurăscu (1861) signals that the monasteries in Muntenia held 23,252, 5 acres (11626 ha), vineyards.

In Dolj county, the monasteries in Oltenia had 2323 acres. Significant areas are at Jiul de Jos (860 acres), Ocolu (259 acres) and Dumbrava (179 acres).

The area of 461 acres of vineyards of the Oltenia monasteries was located in Gorj County. The largest areas are located in the famous plain Vâlcanu (244 acres). Surfaces of 20 to 95 ha were in Gilort, Ocolu, Amaradia, and Jiu.

The largest vineyards owned by the monasteries in Oltenia were in Mehedinți County (5387 acres). Appropriate surfaces are located at Blahnița (1650 areas), Ocolu (1331 acres), Câmpu (866 acres), Motru de Jos (1032 acres), Baia de Aramă (62 acres) and Motru de Sus. It is worth mentioning that all these settlements were in the northern part of Mehedinți county.

In Valcea county, the monasteries in Oltenia had an area of 855 vineyards planted with vines. Oltețu de Sus (294 acres), Oltu (210 acres), Ocolu (83 acres), Râmnicu (71 acres), Oltețu de Jos (114 acres), Cozia (21 acres), Horezu (22 acres). It is noticed that in Vâlcea county the vineyards held by the monasteries were located in the northern part of the county, with appreciable areas being on the valley of Olteț and Olt.



In Romanati county, the monasteries in Oltenia held 2431 acres, cultivated with vines, large areas being found in Oltul de Sus (710 acres), Oltul de Jos (440 acres), Ocolu (270 acres), Oltețu (210 acres), and in Balta 1030 acres.

It is important to underline that the undedicated monasteries had the largest vine area (7885 acres) of the 11,647 acres in total.

In Gorj county there were only undedicated monasteries. The worshiped monasteries had vines, mainly in the southern part of Oltenia (Dolj, 891 acres); (Romanati 230 acres). If we judge through the vocation for quality, we find that the undedicated monasteries had more favourable areas.

In the National Archives of Râmnicu Vâlcea there are documents that capture the vine areas owned by the undedicated monasteries of Vâlcea county, which are located in the actual area of the Drăgășani vineyard (in 1863).

The areas of vineyards (in acres) in the possession of the undedicated monasteries of Vâlcea in 1863 (According to the National Archives - Rm. Vâlcea):

Tab. 19.

***The areas of vines (in the pogons) from the possession of the uninhabited monasteries of Valcea in 1863 (According to the National Archives - Rm. Vâlcea***

***Surface of the vines (in acres) from the possession of the undedicated monasteries in Valcea in 1863 (According to the National Archives - Rm. Vâlcea***

No.	Settlement	Property name	Vineyard surface (acres)
1	Arnota Monastery	Drăgășani	6½
2	Bistrița Monastery	Drăgășani	12½
		Mitrofani	4
3	Cozia Monastery	Gârdești	14
4	Govora Monastery	Drăgășani	10
		Călina	10
5	Sărăcinești Skete	Sutești	7
		Crețeni	3
6	Mărculești Skete	Drăgășani	4
7	Șerbănești Skete	Ștefănești	12
8	Jitianu (Dolj) Monastery	Gușoeni	15½
9	Hurezi Monastery	Sutești	9
		Crețeni	14
		Valea Răii	14
		Izvoru	5
		Fumureni	4
		Nemoiu	2½

10	Surpatele Monastery	Sutești	8½
		Călina	8
11	Mamu Monastery	Lungești	11½
12	The One Wood Monastery	Mitrofani	12
		Bârsanu	20
		Sutești	3
13	Archiepiscopate of Râmnic	Drăgășani	44
		Mahalaua Cetățuia	24
TOTAL = 270 acres			

The total area owned by these monasteries was 270 acres. The largest areas were in the property of : Archiepiscopate of Râmnic (68 acres), the Hurezi Monastery (64, 5 acres), the One Wood Monastery (35 acres), the Govora Monastery (20 acres), the Cozia Monastery 14 acres, the Bistrita Monastery 16.5 acres), Jitianu Monastery (Dolj), 15, 5 acres, Surpatele Monastery (16, 5 acres), Serbanesti Skete (12 acres), Mamu Monastery (11, 5 acres), Sărăcinești Skete (10 acres).

It is noted that the location of these plantations was on the hills with a great vocation for the quality of the wine production, together with the plantations of other owners, who together with the monastery staff ensured the Drăgășani vineyard the celebrity it deserves.

Historical monasteries in Oltenia were worshiped with 48 villages, inhabited by 3062 families.

### **3. General conclusions and recommendations**

As a result of the research carried out on the role played by the northern Oltenia monasteries in the vine growing, the following conclusions and recommendations can be found:

1. Oltenia is located in the south-west of Romania, under the influence of barometric centres of action in the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, the Great Russian Plain, North of Africa, the Scandinavian Peninsula and even Greenland. The types of air circulation that predominate over Oltenia, for the most part of the year, are the ones with southern, western and eastern components, the other types are less frequent.

By its position in the “sack” of the Carpathian-Balkan Depression, Oltenia, compared to other regions in southern Romania, has a temperate continental climate,

with lower thermal contrasts. The winters are milder and the summers are characterized by dry and drought phenomena that alternate with the excess moisture period. Spring is earlier due to the warm Mediterranean winds that sometimes cause sudden snow meltdowns and floods. The autumns are warmer and wet, for the same reasons, sometimes the shift to the winter is sudden;

2. Wine-growing areas along the sub-Carpathian axis: Baia de Aramă, Tg. Jiu, Horezu, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Călimănești-Jiblea, depending on the geographical location (closer or further away from the mountain) are 3 in Mehedinți and two in Gorj and Valcea. The vineyards in these areas occupy the area of 2800 ha (1100 ha in Mehedinți, 1425 ha in Gorj, 199 ha in Valcea);

3. The vocation for viticulture of these areas is justified by the values of the Oenoclimatic Aptitude Index, which oscillates between 3978 (at Polovragi) and 4929 (at Drobeta Turnu Severin);

4. Depending on the value of the Oenological Aptitude Index, the wine areas in this area belong to the following oenoclimatic zones:

- In the Polovragi area, belonging to the cooler oenoclimatic zone A<sub>0</sub> : table grapes, grape must or grape juice, white wines with geographical indication; raw materials wines for sparkling and distillate; sometimes white wines with a designation of origin like Fetească albă, Crâmpoșie, Italian Riesling.

- In the areas: Târgu Jiu, Horezu, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Jiblea - Călimănești, belonging to the oenoclimatic area A<sub>2</sub> : table grapes, grape must and grape juice, wines with a geographical indication, mistel, wine alcohol, concentrated must and especially dry white or semi-dry wines with a designation of origin; rose or red wines of quality, dry, with a designation of origin (Priority varieties Fetească neagră, Pinot noir, Merlot); semi-dry wines, semi-sweet and sweet or liquorice wines (especially if noble rot is to be installed, old distilled wines with a designation of origin, still wines or sparkling wines with a designation of origin (aromatic).

- The areas of Corcova and Drobeta Turnu Severin pertain to oenoclimatic zones A<sub>3</sub> (hills) and A<sub>3</sub> (hills-Meridional) where one can obtain: quality wines, red, with a designation of origin; quality semi-dry wines; sweet and liquorice natural wines (especially when noble rot is installed) with a designation of origin; quality sweet wines - natural flavour, with a designation of origin.

5. In the vineyards of northern Oltenia, 11 species of soil were identified and studied, each of which prevailing in one or several of these soils. The characteristics and attributes of the soils present in the seven areas are capable of supporting the vine growing, which is also confirmed by the important vine surfaces present in these locations. Although most soil types have texture and structure that can be considered good, they need to be enriched by different and appropriate agro-technical measures for each situation. It is worth noting that all soil types have a very good drainage, a very important aspect, especially since we find ourselves in an area where rainfall is significant over a year. In all areas, vine plantations are situated on slopes of small inclination, so they do not require landscaping on terraces. In other words, vineyards occupy plants with high sun exposure, which is why the vine undergoes the physiological-biochemical processes under the best conditions, ensuring quality and widespread conditions;

6. The monastic life on the right side of the Olt River is closely related to the efforts made to strengthen the young medieval state, Wallachia.

Inspirational to deep religious life were those local ascetic, eremites coming from the right of the Danube, often to escape the persecution of the Turks or who came for evangelical missionary purpose from Mount Athos.

7. In Oltenia below the mountain, from Vodița to Cozia, there were and still are countless places of worship, each with its true story, with its well-defined role for the civilization of man. Exaltation in all the villages, the towns, the mountains, the hills and the fields of the country, the places of worship proved to be both altars of faith and proofs of steadiness;

8. The emergence of the main monasteries in northern Oltenia is signalled as follows:

- Arnota Monastery, founded by Matei Basarab (1632-1654), as a sign of gratitude to God and these wild places, but benevolent to him and to the picturesque, equally, in 1663, after he had overcome a struggle with the Turks at Bechet". Also during this period it was built the cornerstone of the Sadova Monastery;

- Bistrița Monastery. Many consider that the place was built on the site of an old monastic land, or it was a skete for eremites, or a little monastery. Other researchers brought the beginning around the year 1300, linking it to the existence of hermits, who lived in Christ and prayed to the cave neighbouring the settlement. In the document

dated September 1, 1491 and August 31, 1492, Barbu Craiovescu, a great Ban of Craiova, wishes to leave his inheritors the knowledge of what he has given to the Holy Place of Worship;

- The Cozia Monastery, in 1383, the construction is initiated by Radu I (1377-1385) and was completed by his son Mircea cel Batran on May 13, 1388 with the support of the Moravian craftsmen;

- The Crasna Monastery, has its beginnings in 1636, founded by Dumitru Folișanu;

- The Dobrușa Skete, one of the oldest sketes in Oltenia, became a metoh of the Holy Episcopacy of Râmnic and New Severin. It is documentarily certified between 1500 and 2020;

- The Govora Monastery receives gifts in 1488-1489 from Vlad Călugăru, but it is considered the foundation of Radu cel Mare (1495-1508), the son of Vlad Călugăru. In the list of names in Monastery of Govora, it is said, "After he finds out that "God knows who founded or built it, he concludes that Radu "renewed it, embellished it and strengthened it";

- The Hurezi Monastery, the spiritual work of the great lord Constantin Brâncoveanu, begins its construction in the year 1690. It was sainted on 8 September 1693 in the presence of the ruler's family, without finishing the painting, being the largest monastery in Wallachia. The ruler provides full autonomy to the Metropolitan Church of Bucharest and to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, depending directly on the ruler, and the monks are allowed to choose their abbot with the knowledge and will of the founders. It was conceived to be not only a monastic settlement, but also a cultural-artistic one, which is why it receives many gifts from the ruler, which ensured it a beautiful evolution over time.

- Stănești Monastery, built in 1602 by the Buzești boyars;

- Tismana Monastery in 1376, St. Nicodemus supported by Radu Vodă (1377-1385), was the only archimandrite monastery in Wallachia, until the consecration of Argeș church;

- Vodița Monastery in 1366 during Vladislav Vlaicu (1364-1377), with the work of St. Nicodim;

9. Possession of a good part of the land by monasteries is a highly felt reality in the field of viticulture as well. Viticulture brought important income to monasteries,

so is explained the existence of the first money offering for the vineyards in the Romanian lands, the “perper”, as well as the numerous taxes in wine, “vinăriciu”, made to monasteries by lords and boyars.

10. The vineyards of the monasteries came from gifts, but also from the acquisitions, but it must be said that:

- Most of the Tismana monastery’s vine areas were concentrated in Vâlceanul-Gorj Plain (244 acres) and Amaradia (62 acres). So these are areas with great vocation for a good viticulture. The same emphasis is also given to the other monasteries holding large areas of vineyards in Mehedinti, Gorj and Vâlcea, which enjoyed and still enjoy a wide reputation, such as: Dealul Viilor Severin, Corcova, Bălănești, Drăgășani, Jiblea-Călimănești, and others;

- Besides the vineyards, the monasteries also possessed many villages and numerous families, where predominantly cultivation of the vine was practiced;

11. The wine-growing heritage of the monasteries in Oltenia before the secularization (1860) amounts to 11647 acres (823 ha), during the same period (1859), the whole kingdom had 83000 ha. Thus, the Oltenia worship places had 7% of the viticultural area of the kingdom and about 50% of the Oltenian vineyards. In the counties, the monasteries had the following areas:

- Dolj, 2323 acres, the highest being at Jiul de Jos (860 acres), Ocolu (259 acres) and Dumbrava (179 acres);

- Gorj, 461 acres, most of them were in Vâlceanu Plain (244 acres), and areas of 20-95 acres in Gilort, Ocolu, Amaradia and Jiu;

- Mehedinti (5387 acres). Large surfaces are located at Blahnița (1650 acres), Ocolu (1331 acres), Câmpu (866 acres), Motru de Jos (1032 acres), Baia de Aramă (62 acres) and Motru de Sus. All these localities are in the north of Mehedinti county;

- Vâlcea (855 acres), including Oltețu de Sus (294 acres), Oltu (210 acres), Ocolu (83 acres), Râmnicu Vâlcea (71 acres), Oltețul de Jos (114 acres), Cozia ), Horezu (22 acres). The location of the vineyards is mostly in the north of the county.

12. The undedicated monasteries had the largest vine area (7885 acres) of the 11647 acres, and in Gorj only the undedicated monasteries had vines;

13. The dedicated monasteries held vines, mainly in the southern part of Oltenia (Dolj, 891 acres); Romanați (230 acres). If we judge through the vocation for

quality, we find that the undedicated monasteries had more favourable areas. We do not err if we appreciate that those who decided these worships knew the truth;

14. At the level of year 1722, the monasteries in Oltenia had dedicated 48 villages inhabited by 3062 families:

- Episcopate of Râmnic and New Severin, 9 villages and 691 families;
- Tismana Monastery, 18 villages and 719 families;
- Cozia Monastery, 4 villages and 261 families;
- Govora Monastery, 3 villages and 484 families;
- Bistrița Monastery, 9 villages and 594 families;
- Hurezi Monastery, 5 villages and 313 families.

15. The landmarks that constitute testimonies about the role of the Oltenia monasteries on the vine growing in this part of the country can be:

- In the Romanian Middle Ages viticulture was an important branch of agriculture;

- The importance of viticulture is evidenced both by the existence of the first money offering for the vine in the Romanian lands, the “perpel”, as well as numerous taxes in wine, “vinăriciu”, made to monasteries by lords and boyars;

- The interest of the monasteries for the cultivation of the vine is also apparent from the agreement between the Tismana hegumens and the villagers from Orlea who wanted to plant vineyards “... whoever he wants ... and “vinăriciu”, that is to say, the tenth of the earth not to be given up to seven years, and then fulfilling the term and when the vines are with fruits that they have to give to the Holy Monastery according to the custom of the earth; out of ten pots only one pot, but the straight pot of 12 pints, and not more”;

- Wine, in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, was highly sought on the markets of the towns, but also on export;

- The area of viticulture extension in those times, in Oltenia, in each of the dedicated villages or not, is the proof that viticulture was one of the basic preoccupations of the inhabitants of these villages. As such villages have enjoyed many privileges, it is understood that viticulture has gained, thus is explained the existence of this plant growing even today. In fact, many of these areas are being treated for a quality viticulture;

- The location of the vineyard plantations belonging to the monasteries and other owners on the hills with the vocation for the quality of the wine production together with the monastic staff ensured the celebrity they deserve in these lands;

- The monastery vineyard domain in Oltenia had a great influence on the development of this sector and especially on the amplification of the cult that viticulturists had with the vineyard and wine, being convinced that this occupation has a great impact on the civilization of man;

- The monastery vineyards have preserved and passed from generation to generation the secrets of an authentic viticulture, using autochthonic and local varieties, and adapting the entire culture technology and especially the dry cutting, the layers and works in the green, the local climatic conditions. All this is proof of the unmistakable intuition of our viticulturists;

- The man's attachment to this plant has led to practices, especially religious, by which viticulturists ask to be protected from the nature's vicissitudes (hail, storms, diseases, pests).

16. The area of spreading of the vineyards in northern Oltenia once and for all, the achieved performances, the traditional, unique habits and technologies, the presence of the wild forms of fruitful vine, are as much evidence that the cradle of the Romanian viticulture here was.

17. It is necessary that such research on the viticulture in northern Oltenia be continued and amplified, convinced that their results will constitute the landmarks of the identity of the Romanian viticulture.