

Enos Costantini (ed.), *Storia della vite e del vino in Friuli e a Trieste*, Forum, Udine, 2017, pp. 702.

If you search for “wine” or “vineyard” in the digital archives of *The Journal of European Economic History*, you’ll find that the *Journal* has dealt with this sector repeatedly, including the very first issue in 1972, with a report by Charles Higounet of the University of Bordeaux on the conference *Wine Production and Trade in the History of Europe* (Pavia, 17-20 September 1971). With Carlo Cipolla as coordinator, the conference included such speakers as of the *Journal*’s founder, Luigi De Rosa (on the South of Italy), Federico Melis (on Tuscany), and Mario Romani (on Lombardy). Since then the wine industry has drawn growing attention from economic historians, notably but not solely Italian, who have produced a number of worthy monographs (see the volume by F. Dandolo, *Vigneti fragili. Espansione e crisi della viticoltura nel Mezzogiorno liberale*, Naples, 2010). Historiographical interest in the subject has turned sharply upward in recent years, in connection with the economic importance of the sector.

A recent addition to the Italian school of research is this volume edited by Enos Costantini on the history of vineyards and wine in Friuli and Trieste. A “choral” yet regional work, this is a hefty, 700-page tome, accompanied by a wealth of images: frescoes, maps, labels, posters, daily newspapers, landscapes all relating to the book’s subject. The text and the illustrations are interwoven right from the start – the cover, with a photo of rows of Tocai vines in autumn. The book consists of 30 articles, five by Costantini himself, plus a section on the province of Trieste. The period covered in the more general part runs from Roman Aquileia to the present, and for Trieste from the 14th century. All the works have an extensive bibliographical and footnote apparatus. This is the ninth in a series of independent regional histories of wine published since 1996 with the support of the *Accademia Italiana della Vite e del Vino*. Significantly, this is the first whose title includes the phrase “Storia della vite e del vino” and not only, like its predecessors,

the name of the relevant region (Veneto, Piedmont, Sardinia, Tuscany, Puglia, Valle d'Aosta, Umbria, Trentino).

To get an idea of the importance of the wine industry for the region of Friuli, the first essay cites two key pieces of data: wine-growing accounts for a substantial share (15 percent) of the region's total agricultural GDP; and DOC and DOCG wines make up 70 percent of the region's vineyards by land area – the highest percentage in Italy.

The book touches on multiple aspects of the matter, going beyond the economy and economic history. The articles examine material culture with its tools (Isabella Reale), the insects that live alongside men in the vineyards (Pietro Zandigiacomo), the various measures and units of measure for wine (Enos Costantini), and ethnographic museums that recount the story of wine and winemaking (Veronica Tomasettig), to cite but a few. This is a well-rounded work that reconstructs the "world" of wine and vineyards.

Some of these articles are closer to the interests of economists and economic historians, and we will inevitably dwell more on these, but no disparagement of the value of the others is intended. I refer in particular to the essays of Andrea Cafarelli, Francesco Marangon, and Mario Robiony; in addition one cannot fail to mention Gabriella Buco's essay on labels and the graphic firms that produce them, with its wealth of illustrations, a piece that cannot fail to attract anyone interested in marketing from the historical standpoint.

The essay by Andrea Cafarelli, based on sources found by digging deeply into the State Archives of Udine and Venice and into specialized libraries, deals with wine and vineyards in the journalistic publications of Friuli in the 19th and 20th centuries. The work brings out the importance of the "economic culture" of wine – that is, a mindset focusing on efficiency, quality, and rational production processes – and the spread of that "culture" via almanacs, bulletins, handbooks, and journals, and on down to radio programs in the period after World War II. These were perhaps the media that best portray the most common, pervasive, and persuasive aspect of that "culture of wine."

The essay spotlights not only the technical aspects – such as the backwardness of the techniques for producing and conserving wine – but also the cultural side: “small and medium-sized producers, who were the majority, combined poor systems and inadequate instruments for winemaking with ‘a stubborn refusal to progress’” (p. 228). These two aspects – technical and cultural – go hand-in-hand and, together, determine the poverty or wealth of a territory. If a “cross-border” geographical reference is permissible here, it was the Lombard Carlo Cattaneo (1801-1869), with his profound knowledge of the rural economy, who emphasized the importance of a “fourth factor” along with the classical productive factors of land, labor and capital: namely, public intelligence, diffused throughout a territory.

The essay by Francesco Marangon reconstructs developments in the wine economy in Friuli over the past century, essentially since the end of World War I. He takes us through the two decades of Fascism, with the general census of agriculture in 1930, the farm price crash of 1933-34 and the emigration of many families to the newly reclaimed Pontine lands south of Rome or to Ethiopia, the war, postwar recovery, and the general census of agriculture of 1961, which confirmed a key historical fact: the prevalence of direct family operation. This brings us to the last few decades, marked by the drive for efficiency and multiple functions in an environment of fierce competition both domestically and internationally. Here we find the author’s stress on the value of the vineyard-cultivated space in purely economic terms: “Deterioration in the quality of the landscape,” Marangon writes, “diminishes the benefits that the territory produces both for residents and for outside visitors. These benefits derive from the intimate relationship that exists between the landscape and the recreational and cultural enjoyment of the rural space, whose importance has increased considerably with the progressive detachment of the population from the countryside” (p. 311). This is a vast problematic – the depopulation of the countryside – that goes far beyond regional or national borders; for that matter, beyond the physical dimension; it also has an “existential” and “social” dimension,

the dangers of which Pope Francis has pointed out repeatedly ("Address of Pope Francis to the participants in the World Meeting of Popular Movements," 28 October 2014).

The essay by Mario Robiony deals with cooperatives in the winemaking industry, making an important contribution to our knowledge of the "biodiversity of forms of enterprise." The period covered here stretches from the 1920s when the first cooperatives began to be formed in the sector (later than in other sectors, but not later than in other areas) through the 1950s, when "most owner-farmers, with their generally small holdings ... were no longer able to keep up with the pace of quantitative and qualitative growth in the production of wine" (p. 324), and on to the most recent transformations, in connection with the growth of export markets: through networks of agents, agreements for cooperation with local companies (in Australia, Greece, Spain), and finally through stakes in new companies (France, United States). In short, the winemaking cooperatives of Friuli have neither gained nor lost ground with respect to other forms of enterprise, continuing to account for around 20 percent of the regional wine output.

In a word, this is a wide-ranging volume that cannot even be satisfactorily summarized in the limited space available here. The work is invaluable both for content and for method, with its strong interdisciplinary orientation and search for dialogue among scholars. It raises general questions relating not only to the specific region or economic sector (some are mentioned above: opening to foreign markets, forms of enterprise, the relationship between man and environment). As noted, the book recounts not only the economic aspects of vineyards, wine and winemaking but also their anthropological, social, and in some ways even psychological aspects. To take the liberty of another cross-border reference, let me cite the reflections on the "psychological aspects of the land" of an eminent Piedmontese, the economist, statesman, and winemaker Luigi Einaudi (1874-1961). In the light of his own personal experience, Einaudi wrote: "Apart from its economic product, the land also produces benefits that do not consist in fruits

properly so called, [such as] the physical pleasure of possession, which consists in walking upon the land, contemplating it, touching its plants and seeing them grow, the joy of a labor that does not consist in fixed working hours ... that also consists in working for a purpose, which is to fill one's granary with golden, resonant wheat, one's cellar with wine, with its lovely color, dispenser of delight."

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