

Managing Change in Traditional Environments—The Case of the Viennese *Heurigen* Wine Taverns/ Veränderungsprozess in traditionellem Umfeld – der Fall der Wiener *Heurigen*

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Zusammenfassung

Ein Heuriger ist ein traditionelles österreichisches Weinlokal. Heuriger bedeutet wörtlich übersetzt „von diesem Jahr“. Der Begriff steht für den Wein des letzten Jahrgangs und den Ort, wo Eigenbauweine verkauft und konsumiert werden (Robinson 2006). Die Zahl der Heurigen in Wien fiel zwischen den sechziger und achtziger Jahren von über 500 auf ca. 250, und im Jahr 2011 dann weiter auf 125 (Landwirtschaftskammer Wien 2011). Die Gründe für dieses Phänomen sind zahlreich und liegen bei steigenden Personalzusatzkosten, unattraktiven Arbeitsbedingungen (Abende, Wochenenden), sowie einem Wandel der Verbrauchsgewohnheiten der Menschen. Die Industrialisierung und Globalisierung von Nahrungsmitteln und Wein steht im Gegensatz zu „alten“ heimischen Gepflogenheiten. Laut Aussagen eines Wiener Weinbauern und Heurigenbesitzers ist die Bewältigung des Wandels bei traditionellem Angebot zu einem wesentlichen Erfolgsfaktor geworden. „Wer nicht mit der Zeit geht, geht mit der Zeit!“ Der offensichtliche Gegensatz zwischen dem ‚Mit-der-Zeit-Gehen‘ einerseits und ‚Tradition, Authentizität und Bräuchen‘ andererseits bringt mit sich, dass dieser Sektor eine gewisse Gratwanderung durchführen muss, um zu überleben. Diese Studie wird das Beispiel der Wiener Heurigen analysieren, das zwar ein Nischenthema ist, aber als Vorbild für viele andere Lokale traditionelleren Stils wie das englische Pub, die elsässische Winstub, die bayrische Braustube, den Bouchon

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Lyonnais, die italienische Trattoria usw. dienen kann. Die Frage ist, wie der Wandel im traditionellen Umfeld der Wiener Heurigen erfolgen kann, ohne Gesetze zu verletzen, auf Traditionen zu verzichten und an Authentizität zu verlieren. Der vorliegende Beitrag wird zuerst einen kurzen historischen Überblick über die soziale Bedeutung der traditionellen Heurigen geben, und dann die gesetzliche Lage erklären. Fachliteratur zu diesem Thema ist ziemlich selten. Problemzentrierte, halbstrukturierte Interviews nach Witzels Modell (1982, 1996), die bei verschiedenen Wiener Akteuren durchgeführt wurden, sollen bei der Beantwortung der Frage helfen.

Schlüsselwörter

Heurigen Wine Taverns · Traditional Environments · Change Management

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9.1 Introduction

A *Heuriger* is a traditional Austrian wine tavern. *Heuriger* (ˈhøʀɪgəʁ, sing.) literally means “this year’s”. The term stands for wine from the recent vintage and the venue where homemade wines are sold and consumed (Robinson 2006). The amount of *Heurigen* (ˈhøʀɪgən, plur.) in Vienna fell from over 500 in the 1960s to around 250 in the 80s and about 125 in 2011 (Landwirtschaftskammer Wien 2011). Reasons for this phenomenon are numerous and include rising non-wage labour costs, unattractive work conditions (evenings, weekends) as well as changes in people’s consumption habits.

The industrialisation and globalisation of foods and wines in contrast to “old” locally grown and consumed produce is progressing rapidly. In addition the availability of sugar and fat at all times, low versus high calorie diets, reduced consumption of alcohol, the desire for a healthy lifestyle, the fast food trend, the avoidance of red meat or the avoidance of meat altogether are some of the developments we face in the western world today. “Managing change in traditional offers in today’s rapidly changing consumption environment has become a crucial part of our business” states a wine grower and wine tavern patron from Vienna and adds: “wer nicht mit der Zeit geht, geht mit der Zeit!” (who does not move with the times will be removed over time). The obvious contradiction between “changing, developing and moving with the times” on the one hand and “tradition, authenticity and customs” on the other, implies that this sector has to fulfil a cer-

tain balancing act to survive. While analysing the example of the traditional wine taverns called *Heurigen* in Vienna, this study, although dealing with a niche topic, may serve as a blueprint for many other old-style market offerings such as the traditional English Pub, the Alsatian Winstub, the Bavarian Braustube the Bouchon Lyonnais, the Italian Trattoria and many others.

9.2 Background

The history of wine in Austria goes back to 276 AD when the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (in Austria also called “Probus”) cancelled an edict that forbade wine growing outside of Italy i.e. in the Roman provinces. Today Austria’s vineyards cover a surface of 45.000 hectares. The popular wine and wine tourism regions are located in the east of the country around the city of Vienna, the danube valley, lake Neusiedl and in the province of Styria. The west of Austria is occupied by the Alps. The most important grape varieties are the autochthonous Grüner Veltliner, Welschriesling and Zweigelt.

Vienna, Austria’s capital, is a city with 1.8 m inhabitants on the Danube with a long and important wine history. Today vineyards cover 612 hectares on Viennese’ hills (Arbeithuber et al. 2011). The outskirts of Vienna to the south, east, north and west are wine growing areas. Nevertheless 87 % of all vineyards are located in the hills of the 19th and 21st Viennese districts in the north-west where they form the right and left bank of the Danube. This is also where the famous wine and Heurigen villages like Grinzing, Neustift and Stammersdorf are situated.

The very old Viennese tradition of having many different varieties planted “mixed” in the vineyard and harvested together delivers wines with unique styles and flavours. For the so called *Gemischter Satz* (“mixed set”) wines up to 15 different varieties are planted indiscriminately in one vineyard and are also harvested and fermented together. The big advantage of this method was and still is that quantitative and qualitative vintage variations are compensated due to the fact that different varieties have different susceptibilities regarding weather conditions, diseases, pests or vermin. Early-ripening varieties deliver exotic fruit flavours and, in years with botrytis, aromas of honey along with a creamy character whereas the late-ripening grape varieties which are harvested before their complete maturation perfectly complement the wines and contribute freshness, acidity and liveliness to the *Gemischter Satz*. Today these dry white wines are cult, have a protected appellation of origin and witnesses a much respected revival recently.

The *Heurigen*, Austria’s and, in particular, Vienna’s traditional wine taverns, have played and still play an important role in both the local wine & food culture and in wine tourism (Keen and Robinson 2001). The term *Heuriger* (‘høʀɪgəʀ) in singular, literally meaning “this year’s”, has three distinct meanings: young (this year’s) potatoes, this year’s wine and the traditional wine tavern where the latter is sold (Robinson 2006). The *Heurigen* is subject to many laws. Some of them that date back as early as the time of Charlemagne, who was unique in the quantity of regulations he imposed concerning viti-

culture and wine (Keen and Robinson 2001). A verdict of 795 AD declares that “vintners should have ready at least three to four grape wreaths each year” (Sinhuber 1996). A (pine) wreath is still used today in Austria to indicate that the wine tavern is open and that wine and food is served. In 1784, Austrian Emperor Joseph II, son of Maria Theresia and brother of Marie Antoinette, issued the most important law regarding *Heurigen*. The law of Joseph II from 1784 allows winemakers to open their facility, which was usually the stall or wine cellar in those times, to the public to sell their own wines. The particularity of Joseph’s law lies in a small but significant detail: the sale of wine made from one’s own produce was and still is quasi-free from taxes. Small wineries in Austria are taxed on a flat rate basis and wine and food sales at the *Heurigen* are included in these “all-in” regulations. Traditionally Austrian wine taverns primarily use their own facilities to sell their wine, secondly are mostly run by family members and thirdly pay no additional taxes on their off-trade sales in the *Heurigen*. These three factors make it possible that in a *Heurigen* wine and food can be offered at much lower prices than in a restaurant. But Austrian wine taverns must comply with a number of important limitations whose specific details vary from region to region. The most significant regulations concern opening times and the food and drink that is served. A *Heurigen* does not have the right to be open all year round. Depending on the region it can only be open from two to four weeks in a row and a limited number of weeks per year. Furthermore, a traditional (tax free) wine tavern does not have the right to sell hot food, coffee, beer, non-traditional soft drinks such as Coca-Cola or Fanta as well as purchased (not home-made) wines or spirits. In a *Heurigen* the young, dry and mostly white wine is accompanied by bread and hearty food such as Liptauer (a cheese spread made of soft cheese, paprika and spices), cold, thinly cut pork roasts (Schweinsbraten, Kümmelbraten and Surbraten) as well as sausage products such as black pudding or liver sausage. A real Heuriger is therefore very limited in its actions in order to respond to consumption trends. Neither is it allowed to offer wine which was bought elsewhere (e.g. from another region that is fashionable at the moment), nor does the *Heurigen* manager have the right to provide non-traditional foods such as Sushi, Spanish style tapas or Italian antipasti, even if they are only cold dishes.

Apart from its tourism, marketing and culinary importance, the music which was created at the “fin de siècle” by the Schrammel brothers in Vienna and which is still played in the city’s wine taverns is part of the rich European cultural heritage (Notley 1997). The *Heurigen* or Schrammelmusik is a musical genre in itself and was originally played by three to four musicians (violin, button accordion and contraguitar). The melancholic lyrics of the songs mostly deal with drinking (wine), fun in life and, ironically, death. The *Heurigen* songs are said to express the “... whole sweet carefree Viennese love of life and at the same time a deep despair to have to be wiped out some time,” (Sinhuber 1996, p. 195). This type of music can be compared to the Portuguese Fado (literally meaning fate, destiny). This type of music constitutes an important part of Viennese musical identity and self-conception.

Furthermore, the *Heurigen* has an important social function which could best be compared with the British Pub, the Bavarian Braustube or the Trattoria in Campania, Italy. In the tavern everybody sits together to eat, drink and talk, regardless of socioeconomic status (Kopsitsch 2008) and is treated in the same friendly but informal way by the landlord and his family or staff. The tables are generally big, simple wood tables without tablecloths. Instead of chairs there are wood benches. Very often strangers share a table which is for six to ten people. Doctors, lawyers or managers sit side by side with workers, students, pensioners or tourists.

The **research question** addressed in this research concerns the necessity for change in a rapidly changing environment as described in the introduction:

How can change be managed successfully in the traditional environments of Viennese *Heurigen* without violating laws, renouncing traditions and losing authenticity?

In a first step it seemed important to explain the history along with the social importance of traditional Viennese wine taverns and also provide an explanation from the legal perspective to help answer the research question of how to manage change in traditional environments accordingly. In order to address the research question, problem centred interviews focusing on change management and following Witzel's model (1982; 1996) were conducted in a second step. All together eight semi-structured interviews with different actors were conducted.

9.3 Literature review

As mentioned previously, related literature is scarce. Nevertheless, some interesting books and papers have been published on the topic. Strobl (2002) investigated the importance of *Heurigen* in Vienna as a channel of distribution for local wineries. She categorised the wineries of Vienna for the first time depending on the actual "stage of development" and labelled the four clusters ("winery only", "small tavern", "traditional tavern" and "developed tavern"). Along with other figures, she provides an insight concerning the pricing structure of Viennese taverns. As mentioned before, the *Heurigen* offer wine and food at much lower prices than restaurants or bars. In 2002 the average glass of wine in a *Heurigen* (a quarter = 0.25 l) was EUR 1.64 for white (Grüner Veltliner) and EUR 1.78 for red (Zweigelt or other); a glass of sparkling water was between EUR 0.40–1.30 with an average price of EUR 0.90 (n = 150). Furthermore, her work shows that in 2002 120 out of the 150 *Heurigen* investigated had a *Heurigen* and buffet concession. Only 30 had a full restaurant license and therefore the right to sell beer, coffee, hot food, etc. Those with a full restaurant license, however, did not benefit from the tax advantages mentioned in sec. 2.2. (Legislative regulations and prices). Over all, Strobl's (2002) findings emphasise the importance of the traditional taverns as a distribution channel for Viennese wine. Baumgartner (2004) investigated the situation of *Heurigen* in one specific neighbourhood of Vienna (Grinzing) and compared traditional taverns (*Heurigen* or *Buschenschank*) with those having a full restaurant license (*Heurigenrestaurant*). Her findings indicate that

traditional taverns are mostly frequented by locals (60 %) whereas restaurants in a wine tavern style attract mostly tourists (62.5 %). *Heurigen* regulars were fifty or older (48 %) and had all heard about the *Heurigen* via word-of-mouth recommendation (100 %, multiple response allowed) whereas tavern style restaurants had 60 % of clients who, above all, searched for information and addresses on the Internet (multiple response allowed).

Baumgartner (2004) compared traditional taverns with ones operating with a full gastronomy license. To this end, ten traditional *Heurigen* (Buschenschanken) and eight restaurants of a similar style were analysed. Results show that 73 % of the restaurants are open all year round whereas, due to legislative regulations, most traditional taverns are open nine months maximum (80 %). The majority of *Heurigen*-style restaurants work with staff (62.5 %), whereas traditional taverns only employ additional service or kitchen aid (40 %) in the high season (summer and autumn). Music is played mostly in restaurants (75 %), traditional taverns mostly go without music. The average visitor to a *Heurigen* style restaurant is significantly younger than the typical visitor to traditional taverns, where nearly 50 % are fifty years of age or older. The majority of visitors to real *Heurigen* are regulars (60 %), who are mostly Viennese, whereas restaurants only have 12.5 % regular visitors. Guests to *Heurigen*-style restaurants are mainly tourists who come from Asia, Germany, Italy Spain or the rest of the world. Vienna has 12.3 million tourists per year (Statistik Austria, 2012). Of the restaurants 62.5 % have established agreements with travel agencies and tour operators whereas only 30 % of the taverns have something similar. Baumgartner (2004) resumes that tavern owners intentionally change their legal status when they want to expand opening times, expand the menu (hot food, vegetarian or not so typical dishes, beer, coffee or wine from other producers), and attract a younger clientele and tourists.

Schiener (2007) investigated the expectations of visitors to traditional *Heurigen* in the province of Burgenland, south of Vienna. To this end, he interviewed 279 guests from 13 different taverns. Results were derived from cluster analysis, cross tabulations and significance levels. Female respondents made up 53.4 %, the majority (47.7 %) between 41 and 60 years old, married (60 %), with an average level of education (22 % had only compulsory school, 10 % a university degree) and were mostly from the region (64 %) or from another Austrian province (30 %); only 3.6 % were foreigners. As for the frequency of their visits, 34 % of the interviewees visited a *Heurigen* at least once per week, 22.2 % at least twice per month. Schiener (2004) then formed three clusters, named them and described their respondents' views and expectations. Even today, smoking is not entirely banned from Austrian restaurants and bars, a highly relevant factor in this type of client's decision to visit a *Heurigen* and to return.

Type 1, the "No-smoke, No-music" type, is the smallest Cluster (26.5 %); not a regular *Heurigen* visitor and married (65.5 %). They are almost equally distributed across the sexes (49.2 % male; 50.8 % female). This group is generally very satisfied with what *Heurigen* offer and accepts the limitations to house made wine and traditional (mainly cold pork roast and sausage) dishes. They would like a general non-smoking policy and

prefer places without music. Possibilities for children (outdoor) are very much appreciated. Only 50 % of the “No-smoke, No-music” type comes from within the region.

Type 2, the “*eager music lover*”, is the biggest cluster (44.8 % of the sample). They welcome none-smoking areas but are against a general ban. They visit a *Heurigen* about two times per month, prefer places with music and totally accept the limited offer of food and drinks. The vast majority, 70 %, come from within the province. Type 2 also appreciates when there is playground for children to entertain themselves.

Type 3, the “*demanding smoker*” is a regular (at least once per week), primarily male (66.2 %) and single (51.5 %). The “demanding smoker” wants a broader offer regarding food and drinks and is the least satisfied with the overall wine quality and the current situation. Furthermore, he is totally against a non-smoking policy.

More recently, Beiglböck (2007) also analyzed the visitor structure of traditional taverns in the same region, pointing out that measures to attract young people and tourists would absolutely be necessary.

9.4 Methodology

After summarising the different types of *Heurigen* guests and their claims, as emphasized in the existing research literature, and in order to answer the research question on management requirements to face the challenges connected with new ways of consumption and the resulting necessities for change management, expert interviews appear to be an appropriate method due to the fact that some taverns operate very successfully while others don't. As previously mentioned, consumer observations have been carried out by Schiener (2007) and Beiglböck (2007). Nevertheless, they did not help in finding answers to the issues addressed in this paper. Furthermore, consumer observations in this field are limited to those visitors who do visit traditional taverns but do not seem to provide new insights concerning the ones who don't. The expert interviews lasted between one and three hours and were all transcribed. They followed some general guidelines concerning questions about the current situation, new challenges for wine growers and *Heurigen* owners, adapting and anticipating future ways of consumption and measures undertaken to face the changing consumer demand. Changing lifestyle and consumer expectations, altering purchasing contexts, new quality standards and innovative marketing concepts were explicitly discussed. Problem centred interviews following Witzel's model (1982; 1996) were conducted with different actors and at different places in Vienna. Between November 2012 and May 2013, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with Viennese wine growers as well as with owners of wine taverns, as with the project leader for wine- and fruit growing at the Agricultural Chamber of Vienna (Landwirtschaftskammer Wien) (who is coincidentally a wine grower and owner of a wine tavern), managers of the Vienna Tourist Board (Wien Tourismus), the official destination marketing agency of Vienna, and an Austrian wine specialist, who organised a *Heurigen* tour for the authors. To get a clear overview, it was imperative to visit wine

taverns located in diverse districts, and various types of taverns in the Austrian capital. Therefore, the interviews with *Heurigen* owners led the authors to the districts Neustift am Walde, Döbling, Grinzing and Stammersdorf. Among the places visited there was a small family business, some bigger wine taverns, and taverns orientated to bus tourists. The confrontation of traditional taverns with *Heuriger* considered as innovative, and of conventional taverns dedicated to package holiday tourists and tavern proprietors trying to attract younger consumers will help to better perceive the differences and the changes. Two interviews were carried out with the Vienna Tourist Board, emphasizing marketing strategies for Austrian and foreign tourists, and measures undertaken to defy potential risks and to promote the Viennese wine culture. The meeting with the project leader of the Agricultural Chamber furnished information about the role of the city of Vienna with regard to its vineyards, wine growers and *Heurigen* owners, and the development of the offer in the Austrian capital. The discussion with one of the best known Viennese wine growers who uses innovative growing methods completed the enquiries.

9.5 Findings

In the past, the *Heurigen* wine taverns served mainly as a profitable way of commercialisation for winemakers (Fritz Wieninger). This was facilitated by the fact that wine producers and wine tavern owners belonged and still mostly belong to the same family. For a long time the prevailing rule for Austrian wines was quantity before quality, but after the infamous wine scandal in the eighties, a reorientation became necessary and customers had to be reassured. Since this time, the consumers' wine awareness has continuously increased, and quality constitutes one of the major criteria for choosing their wine. Terms emphasizing "quality, wine of certified origin and quality", efforts to obtain quality as well as adjectives like "dynamic, uncompromising" or "selective", used in the discourse of young winemakers, seem to take into account the new demand. The allusion to quality also appears in the official documents of the young tavern owners and wine growers, which emphasises that this is a rather new phenomenon. Nowadays, Viennese soil is too expensive to be used for the production of cheap wines, even if the *Heurigen* wine is still the most consumed beverage in the *Heurigen* taverns. In the past, nearly the whole production was drunk in traditional wine taverns, whereas today top restaurants and specialist suppliers have become key purchasers and suppliers of high quality wine. The direct sale of bottles in the traditional wine taverns has lost importance. Today, Viennese wine can be consumed outside the traditional wine taverns, transferring thus a part of the consumption from districts outside of the capital to modern taverns and *vinothèques* in the city centre. In fact, young consumers often enjoy drinking the regional wine in a more stylish atmosphere instead of in wine taverns which often have more dated decoration and are more family orientated. Whereas the Viennese wine was essentially a locally sold product, today the top-on-the range winemakers export a third of their production to countries as Germany, the USA, Japan, the Netherlands, Finland and Switzerland, but

also, in smaller proportions to reputed wine producing countries like France, Italy and Spain. To increase awareness of these local wines, the Vienna Tourist board invites win-growers to foreign countries in order to familiarise international consumers with Austrian wines, and to tell stories about their products.

As aforementioned, consumers are not only looking for high quality concerning wine. They are simultaneously looking for fine gastronomy and expect to find low-calorie products, such as salads, instead of fatty roasted pork in the traditional taverns. Further, they pay more attention to pairing their wine and their meals. The traditional *Heurigen* buffets were substantial and had to neutralize the high consumption level of alcohol. Today, public campaigns about a healthier diet, the vegan, vegetarian and organic trends, the ecological and the Slow Food movement and sustainability claims have changed traditional habits. People eat lighter products, appreciate the recipes of modern cooks and drink smaller quantities of wine, and non-alcoholic drinks have to be proposed in every wine tavern. Stricter regulations and frequent security controls of the police in the streets also shape the consciousness of the consumers.

To keep old and to attract new visitors, traditional wine taverns have to adopt new marketing strategies. People don't just go to any wine tavern, they make their choice based on the name of the tavern owner such as Wieninger, Mayer am Pfarrplatz or Fuhr-gassl-Huber. The name of the tavern owner, generally the head of the family, is a quality guarantee transmitted from generation to generation and took over the function similar to a trademark. This means, that the family names of renowned and successful winery and Heurigen owners have become valuable brands.

Tavern owners and wine growers have to find various forms of communication having a strong impact on both traditional and younger customers. They must present themselves and their business on their homepage, send newsletters and participate in wine competitions and wine presentations. Six of the young wine estate and tavern owners, called also the 'young wild' who produce about half of the Viennese high quality wine have undertaken proactive strategic measures in forming the 'Wien Wein' group (Fig. 9.1). In brochures and on the organisation's homepage they practise intensive personal branding in presenting themselves in a flattering way in different places around Vienna, or in doing their job in the vineyard, in the winery or in the wine tavern. The synergy between the winemaker and the wine tavern is very profitable, and Fritz Wieninger is generally considered a pioneer, developing strategies for the coming years.

But not only personal branding is necessary to seduce the developing requirements of the consumer. The fabrication methods are changing in an attempt to satisfy consumers' latest expectations. Current wines are not as heavy as in the past, and young wine growers not only take over the production methods of their forefathers, but also test innovative techniques, leading often to conflicts between the generations. Organic production and new growing and vinification methods have been adopted by some, allowing wine growers the possibility of proposing biodynamic and bioorganic wine, following the teachings of anthropologist Rudolf Steiner. Plants are treated with homeopathic products and teas, and compost is fabricated by respecting the rhythm of stars and the moon, like



Fig. 9.1 Wien Wein Group

thousands of years ago. Organic agriculture becomes a philosophy, modifying the offer in the wine taverns. Ecological labels, recycled paper and reduced product packaging, lessen wastefulness and are welcomed by the visitors.

Another aspect which has always existed which modern consumers in traditional Heurigen wine taverns appreciate is the search for terroir and preserved nature. The taverns are mostly situated in districts with large green spaces or on the foothills of the Viennese woods. Many of them propose walks in the neighbourhood or organise a wine hike day once a year. Ecologically-minded consumers are also reassured by the fact that most of the taverns are easily accessible by public transport. Some of the tavern owners or winemakers succeed in attracting new targets by intentionally uniting the traditional heritage with modern architecture, appreciated by visitors looking for 'wine and design'.

Customers are permanently looking for new, or long forgotten and rediscovered products. Global influences on the one hand, and old regional recipes on the other are welcome. Since 2006, the collaboration of the 'Wien Wein' group with Slow Food International has helped to promote the old Viennese blend wine Wiener *Gemischter Satz* which is considered a slow food product. This wine is composed of at least three types of grapes from one Viennese vineyard. The main type of grape must not exceed 50 %, and the third type of grape must amount to at least 10 %. This variety only exists in Vienna, and every traditional wine tavern offers its own version. In the last years, Wiener *Gemischter Satz* has become a very trendy product, appreciated by all types of wine-drinkers.

In a changing world with evolving consumption behaviour, even very traditional and renowned wine institutions have to follow new trends to survive. In order to study modern solutions, we decided to focus on wine growers and wine taverns belonging to the ‘Wien Wein’ group. To attract younger, more urban and international consumers, their communication stresses a new identity between tradition and modernity, regionalism and globalisation. This is a very delicate undertaking, wine taverns having to take care not to lose their typical atmosphere constituting a still important part of their attraction. Moreover, Austrians are very proud of their country and particularly their wine growers, who enjoy the best image among all professional groups. Wine taverns have to cater more cosmopolitan and international customers. Therefore, a certain patriotic feeling has to be respected while transmitting a modern image open to new trends and customers. Reinforcing Vienna’s identity as a capital of wine seems to offer the ideal opportunity to fulfil this balancing act.

The best examples incorporating this double orientation are the logos of wine growers and wine taverns. For example, the logo of the Wieninger brothers Fig. 9.2 (Fritz Wieninger is the winemaker and his brother Leo the tavern owner) is composed of the skyline of Vienna, discovered by chance by Fritz on a postcard some years ago (in black and white showing the simplified skyline of ‘Vienna by night’), followed by their family name. The logo addresses not only the local wine consumer, in using the famous skyline with Vienna’s most well-known emblems, St. Stephen’s cathedral and the Giant Ferris Wheel, can easily be remembered by wine drinkers who come from outside Vienna.

Another example is the logo of Mayer am Pfarrplatz (Fig. 9.3), showing the profile of the old wine tavern, placed above the name of the *Heurigen* written in a rectangle makes an allusion to traditional Viennese street signs.

In pointing out the traditional vocation of the logo, stressed by the mention of being one of Vienna’s oldest wine estates, the *Heurigen* wants to remain “an absolute must for both Viennese and tourists alike”. The third wine estate of the Wien Wein group is in a unique position since it is owned by the City of Vienna itself. It goes without saying that the name of Vienna appears, and that the logo (Fig. 9.4) aims to reflect a typical Viennese symbol, the coat of arms of the capital, offering the possibility of identification by traditional and modern consumers.

The two other wine growers and *Heurigen* taverns limit themselves to a modern typography of their name. Whereas Christ (Fig. 9.5) adds his name in Russian and in Chinese, signalling to consumers his international orientation.



Fig. 9.2 Logo of the wine tavern and wine grower Wieninger



Fig. 9.3 Logo of the wine tavern and wine grower Mayer am Pfarrplatz



Fig. 9.4 Logo of the wine estate Weingut Wien Cobenzl

Edlmoser (Fig. 9.6) uses a simple writing style for his name, which is followed by the word ‘Wien’, Vienna.

His self-proclaimed “innovative” *Heurigen* wine tavern is run by himself and his family, an additional dichotomy of tradition and modernity.

The managerial implications presented in our paper can be useful to those running and/or planning to open a *Heurigen* in Vienna or something similar i.e. offering traditional



Fig. 9.5 Logo of the wine estate Christ



Fig. 9.6 Logo of the winery and Heurigen Edlmoser

food, drink and atmosphere. The *Heurigen* business concept, after all, is both very attractive and with a promising future if done properly, and highly profitable for those who are able to face and respond to the challenges resulting from new ways of consumption.

9.6 Discussion

Our findings show that change management in this specific field involves a number of delicate decision making processes and differs significantly from the change management processes in big enterprises or other business sectors. Despite the decrease of active *Heurigen* wine taverns in Vienna due to the reasons outlined in the introduction, the above described wineries and their taverns can be seen as best practices in managing change. This is because they not only managed to survive in spite of all the changes in food and wine consumption in the 21st century but even achieved to grow and to establish prospering businesses. Reasons for their success is the will to change and the insight that an ongoing change process is crucial even in traditional offerings and environments. Furthermore, they were capable to overcome resistance to change from regular wine tavern guests, steady winery customers (b2c and b2b), their employees, the media and often even their families. The *Gemischter Satz* wine, for example, was completely out of fashion, even forgotten until the *Wien Wein* group in the new millennium rediscovered its potential and accomplished its revival. The ability of the outlined best practice companies of being able realize need for change and also to implement change in all the different areas of change – strategy, people, organizational culture, technology and structure (S-P-O-T-S) – is the crux of the matter (Heath and Heath 2011). Nevertheless, a structured change process, described for example by authors such as Kotter (2011), Doppler and Lauterburg (2008) and Higgs and Rowland seems to be appropriate. According to many authors, up to 70 % of change initiatives fail (e.g. Kotter 2011; Hammer and Champny 1993; Higgs and Rowland 2000). However, there is a growing need for organizations to implement major changes in order to be able to respond in a business environment that is becoming increasingly volatile and complex. Especially for very small businesses such as the *Heurigen* framework conditions are becoming more difficult. We therefore propose a five-step change process for *Heurigen* change management:

Step One: Investigative Research

A group of university researchers began investigating the issues associated with *Heurigen* and published their findings. Strobl (2002) studied 150 *Heurigen* in Vienna and developed a classification system based on level of development. She found that some *Heurigen* had obtained a license to be a full restaurant, and though they lost the tax advantage, they benefited from being able to offer other beverages and food. She also verified the critical importance of the *Heurigen* as a distribution channel for Austrian wine.

Baumgartner (2004) took a more in-depth look at traditional Heurigen versus those that had become restaurants and realized that the marketing tactics used by each were quite different. Whereas the traditional Heurigen relied on word-of-mouth and attracted an older clientele, the more modern tavern style restaurants utilized the Internet and other modern methods of marketing communication that attracted tourists and a younger clientele. She discovered the modern taverns used trained staff, whereas the Heurigen were run by the owner and family. Also an advantage to being a modern tavern was the ability to stay open more days of the year and offer more diverse types of cuisine and beverages, which was attractive to tourists.

Schiener (2007) interviewed 279 guests visiting 13 regional Heurigen and discovered they were mostly locals from the age of 40 to 60, and came to listen to music and/or smoke. Research conducted by Beiglböck (2007) highlighted the need for Heurigen to attract young people and tourists in order to survive in the long run. More recently, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in creating some of the strategic changes to help revamp Heurigen (Stöckl et al. 2014). The results of these interviews were used to identify the best practices described here.

Step Two: Development of New Marketing Strategies

Eventually some of the Heurigen began to adopt new marketing strategies in order to lure new consumers to their premises. A key aspect of this was clear branding, with the owner's name linked to the reputation and high quality of wine and food offered by the Heurigen. With this change, more consumers began to make their choice based on the name of the tavern owner. Strongly branded Heurigen such as Wieninger, Mayer am Pfarrplatz, or Fuhrfassl Huber became more popular. In this way the name of the Heurigen owner became a quality guarantee of a strong brand, which could be transferred to new generations (Bachmayer 2012).

To support the branding efforts, some of the Heurigen adopted high quality marketing communication. They began to create webpages to show photos of the Heurigen and illustrate the family connection to the land and high quality of the wine. They also provided an online menu and began to adopt some social media tools, such as Facebook and Tripadvisor. There are also popular Apps in Austria which provide real-time information about which Heurigen are currently open and where. Heurigen owners now also send out newsletters to stay in touch with customers. Many also started to participate in wine competitions and communicate medals and awards they received for their wine.

Step Three: Link to Environment

Since appreciation for terroir and preserving nature has always been part of the philosophy of Heurigen, many began to communicate their relationship to the land and the methods they used to be environmentally conscious. For ecologically minded consumers they communicated the fact that most of the Heurigen were easily accessible by public transport. Heurigen that were using organic or sustainable farming and production techniques began to emphasize this more in their marketing, as well as recycling efforts in

production and packaging. Since the Heurigen are mostly situated in districts with large green spaces or on the foothills of the Viennese woods, some of them started organizing wine hikes through the vineyards and neighbourhoods to attract tourists.

Step Four: Powerful Partnerships

Fortunately, the Vienna Tourist Board and the Austrian Wine Marketing Board also recognized the importance of the Heurigen to both Austrian culture and wine distribution. Therefore, they began promoting Heurigen to international tourist groups, and communicating about the concept of Heurigen on their websites and international marketing trips. The Austrian Wine Marketing Board invites journalists and other media to visit Heurigen when conducting wine tours of the country. In addition, they began to develop campaigns to assist consumers in pronouncing some of the more challenging Austrian grape varieties, such as “groovy” for Grüner Veltliner.

Step Five: Innovative Thinking

During this period, several examples of innovative thinking emerged. Probably one of the most intriguing was the development of a new wine style. Called Gemischter Satz, it is based on an ancient Austrian field blend recipe. The wine must be composed of at least three types of grapes from one Viennese vineyard. The main type of grape must not exceed 50 %, and the third type of grape must amount to at least 10 % (wienwein.at). This variety only exists in Vienna, and now almost every traditional Heurigen offers at least one own version. In the last years, Gemischter Satz has become a very trendy product, appreciated by all types of wine-drinkers. At the same time, many producers began to craft wines that were lighter in style, and also adopted more organic and sustainable methods. More winemakers began to investigate biodynamic winemaking principles, created by their fellow Austrian, Rudolf Steiner. Another example of innovative thinking was the collaborative partnership called the Wien Wein Group. This was created by six young wine estate and Heurigen owners, who decided to work together to promote Viennese wine and wine taverns. They created a website called wienwein.at as well as brochures that emphasize the uniqueness of their wines and their pride in Austria. They use intensive personal branding in presenting themselves in a flattering way in different places around Vienna, or in doing their job in the vineyard, in the winery or in the wine tavern.

Wien Wein focus on attracting younger, more urban consumers as well as international tourists to their Heurigen, and use modern digital marketing methods to do so. In addition, they have made a clear effort to communicate the double orientation and connection of their role as wine growers and Heurigen owners. For example, the logo of the Wieninger brothers (Fritz Wieninger is the winemaker and his brother Leo the heurigen manager) is composed of the skyline of Vienna, discovered by chance by Fritz on a postcard some years ago, followed by their family name (Wieninger 2013). The logo addresses not only the local wine consumer, in using the famous skyline with Vienna's most

well-known emblems, St. Stephen's cathedral and the Giant Ferris Wheel, and can easily be remembered by wine drinkers who come from outside Vienna.

Future issues that the wine region Vienna must still tackle are above all the ever-rising non-wage labor costs, which make labor-intensive businesses such as the wine production itself, and running a wine tavern more costly from year to year. This development unfortunately has a second impact: working in these environments is not attractive any more for young, gifted and promising people and for many companies there are no successors. In addition, a great number of new laws and regulations lead to an over-regulation of food offering businesses. Labelling allergens in restaurant or bar menus is, for example, a new European wide law. Ongoing discussions about the traceability of ingredients in meals and a possible new packaging law threaten the industry and make it nearly impossible for small and regional suppliers to keep up with the new regulations. In Europe also new anti-smoking laws and alcohol restrictions (e.g. lowering the allowed blood-alcohol-level from 0.8 to 0.5 per mil in Austria in 1997) led to significant losses in revenue in the catering industry (Stöckl et al. 2014). The rising percentage of inhabitants in Vienna who are of Muslim faith (1991: 4.3 %; 2011: 11.2 %. Estimations for 2046: 21 %. Potancokova and Berghammer 2014) and therefore do not consume the two key offerings of Heurigen taverns – wine and pork – is another kind of challenge for the future of Vienna's traditional taverns.

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Teil IV

Culinary and Wine Tourism & Regionen/Regions