

## **“*Mon docteur le vin*”**

### Wine and Health in France, 1900–1950

The title for this chapter comes from an elegant booklet, *Mon docteur le vin* that was published in 1936 by the Nicolas wine firm.<sup>1</sup> Raoul Dufy provided illustrations, which has made *Mon docteur* something of an art collectible. Nineteen eminent doctors provided testimonies to the health benefits that could be expected from drinking moderate amounts of wine. Among these nineteen medical experts was Doctor Georges Portmann, Dean of Medicine at the University of Bordeaux and Senator from the Gironde, who was at once a distinguished eye, ear, nose, and throat surgeon and a staunch advocate of wine’s role in medical practice. Portmann assured the clients of Nicolas that “More than all other medications ... wine revives one’s strength and acts like a heroic remedy” presumably for a wide range of ailments. In this illustrated booklet art and medical science combined to promote wine consumption, and it reflected an ongoing discussion of wine’s importance as part of a French national identity that had emerged at the turn of the century.

As for the military benefits of wine consumption Marshal Philippe Pétain composed an “Hommage à vin” as preface to the booklet in which he assured readers that “of all the supplies sent to the army during the war, wine was surely the most highly anticipated and appreciated by the soldier.”<sup>2</sup> Wine was thus presented not only as a pleasure (Dufy’s illustrations) and healthy drink (the doctors’ testimonies) but also as a martial tonic that had contributed to a national victory over beer-drinking Germans in the Great War.

The notion of wine, and alcohol more generally, as therapy has had a long history.<sup>3</sup> In making the argument for wine’s therapeutic value medical proponents regularly cited opinions from the ancients (Hippocrates) to the early moderns (Rabelais and Montaigne) and to more scientific moderns (Pasteur) to bolster their claims for wine as a healthy drink (*boisson hygiénique*). These arguments became particularly intense at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> This was the *belle époque* when, according to Michael Marrus, “Frenchmen drank the most.”<sup>5</sup> This high level of alcoholic consumption alarmed social critics, and some doctors became involved in the debate when they pointed to alcoholism as not only a social but a medical problem as well. Faced with growing criticisms of alcoholic consumption, certain doctors rallied to the defense of wine as a healthy drink and an exception to the pernicious consumption of hard liquor.

This paper examines how and why the linkage of wine and health emerged at the turn of the last century in France as an argument in favor of wine as “the healthy drink.” It discusses a discourse that has as much to do with a constructed social and cultural belief in the importance of wine as part of a distinct French identity as it does with the scientific evidence presented to support the claims of wine’s health benefits.

Beginning at the turn of the century a number of doctors wrote theses on the medical benefits that moderate consumption of wine could provide. The chemical composition of wine was scrutinized and data obtained to show that wine-drinkers lived longer and were less susceptible to a wide variety of illnesses. Although some historians of science, such as Harry Paul, have questioned the scientific basis for the exaggerated claims for wine as therapy, the discourse connecting wine consumption and health acquired a national importance within the context of discussions about French national identity. Wine was seen as the national drink and an important part of what it meant to be French.<sup>6</sup> When consumption of alcohol came under attack in the 1890s, a number of doctors rallied to exempt wine from this condemnation, and in 1903 the French Chamber of Deputies proclaimed wine to be a healthy and hygienic beverage.<sup>7</sup>

The prestige of medical science supported the idea that wine could provide an antidote to the illnesses of the individual and could serve as an elixir for a nation concerned about decadence and decline. The authority of science could be invoked to find in wine consumption not a source of degeneration but of regeneration. In this sense the defense of wine consumption as healthy for the individual and the nation was a response to the French cultural crisis of the *fin de siècle*.<sup>8</sup> Wine as the healthy drink served to reassure that consumption of the national beverage was at once patriotic and good for you.<sup>9</sup>

Why was a “defense”<sup>10</sup> of wine necessary at the turn of the century? One of the principle reasons to defend wine consumption was in response to the anti-alcohol crusade that began in the aftermath of the Paris Commune, which reflected republican, middle-class anxieties about the threatening, revolutionary behavior of drunken Communards.<sup>11</sup> This class fear was part of a broader, culturally driven debate over France’s decline in the aftermath of defeat during the Franco-Prussian war and in light of a French static birth rate that also seemed to show a nation that had become “decadent.” Signs of decadence and social dislocation could be found in the alarming increase of alcoholic consumption, particularly absinthe, at the end of the nineteenth century. By the 1890s a number of doctors began to recognize alcoholism as a medical as well as a social problem, and some joined the anti-alcohol crusade that had emerged among middle-class reformers.

Faced with criticisms of alcohol abuse within the medical profession, other doctors rose in defense of wine by arguing that moderate wine consumption was not only no social threat or source of alcoholism, but was actually a *boisson hygiénique*. They argued that wine consumption was not only healthy but in moderation served to counteract alcoholism that stemmed from such drinks as absinthe and hard liquor. They claimed to have empirical evidence to back their claims.<sup>12</sup> Wine

became an antidote to alcoholism if drunk in moderation.<sup>13</sup> Concern with national decline and the connection between alcoholism and criminality also occurred in Italy at this time.<sup>14</sup> A revealing contrast between the debate over alcoholism and the role of wine is that the anti-alcohol movement in Italy did not separate wine and hard liquor, as did medical defenders of wine consumption in France. The contrast suggests the importance attached to wine as part of a French national identity.

The arguments in defense of wine were several, but the argument about wine as an antidote to alcoholism revealed ways in which its defenders made wine an exception to the implicit dangers of alcohol. During the discussions over alcoholism doctors defended wine consumption on the basis that such practice might produce drunkards but not alcoholics.<sup>15</sup> This distinction became part of an argument that dated from before the Commune when the French believed they were immune from alcoholism.<sup>16</sup> There was a qualitative difference. Those who became drunk from wine were described as being cheerful, *bon enfant*, with an open, lively expression. This “gallic drunkenness” differed from the alcoholism of the 1890s in which the victims were seen to be sullen, hostile, and condemned to an early demise. A later study described the pallid complexion, haggard, closed, and sullen expressions on the faces of those who became alcoholic from hard liquor. Wine drinkers on the other hand, could anticipate long, active, and relatively cheerful lives. Emmanuel Régis, a psychiatrist on the Bordeaux medical faculty claimed “never to have seen an alcoholic who drank only wine.”<sup>17</sup> Moderate wine consumption represented no threat to the social order, and it contributed to the formation of a French character.

Even more, the consumption of wine was seen to be a patriotic duty, implying that the anti-alcohol crusaders threatened the French (male) character and what made France distinctively French. According to Dr Edouard Bazerolle, wine “is one of the ingredients from which our race and national temperament was formed.” If the French should give up wine, “the French race would lose its true character and become a bland people without any personality.”<sup>18</sup> The Gallic rooster, Bazarolle declared, was a rooster who drank wine.

Wine consumption became promoted as a weapon to be used to combat the consumption of industrially produced distilled alcohol. During the phylloxera epidemic, wine became scarce and expensive. Consumers, particularly among the working class, turned to hard liquor, including absinthe or the pernicious “green fairy,” which was much less expensive. The consumption of alcohol particularly distilled liquor jumped during the 1890s. Wine was promoted as a healthy substitute for what the medical profession generally deplored as the harmful effects of absinthe drinking, which led to degeneration and an alarming increase in alcoholism in the 1890s.<sup>19</sup> The medical defense of wine consumption at a time of growing concern over alcoholism gave wine consumption respectability.<sup>20</sup> Even some doctors who were part of the anti-alcohol movement came to make an exception for wine.

One of the basic arguments was that wine differed from industrially produced alcohol in that it was a natural product, a food that was fermented. As Patricia Prestwich has noted, by 1916 medical research had built a strong case that

consumption of industrially produced alcohol was dangerous. The consumption of wine was not, mainly due to the complexity of the constitution of wine.<sup>21</sup> This became a standard argument in favor of wine consumption. The composition of wine provided nutrients and ingredients that had a range of benefits from combating tuberculosis to protection against cancer to calming the nervous system to improving muscular strength or to assuring greater longevity. The different chemical elements to be found in wine, particularly red wine with its tannins, meant that wine also differed from other, naturally fermented drink, cider and beer. The process was less important than the basis, grapes rather than hops or apples, in distinguishing wine as a healthy beverage.

While the medical theses showed some rigor in their analyses of wine, some of the scientific methods employed to support the claims for wine consumption rather than hard liquor were less than rigorous. The use of regional comparisons became standard practice, for example. Each region could defend its own natural product, cider or beer, but the advocates of wine as particularly beneficial used these same regional differences to support wine as the *boisson hygiénique* for France. Not surprisingly inhabitants of the Gironde came out ahead of those from the non-wine-producing areas of France in these comparisons. The medical advocates of wine consumption noted that the incidence of alcoholism was lower in wine regions, such as the Gironde, than in Calvados or Brittany, areas prone to a higher consumption of hard alcohol.<sup>22</sup> Incidence of psychological disorders was shown to be more common north of the Loire than in the wine-drinking areas.

To demonstrate that wine consumption favored longevity, studies looked at vital statistics to show, for instance, that there was a higher proportion of eighty-year-olds living in the Gironde in 1921 than in France as a whole.<sup>23</sup> Another study demonstrated that within France those who drank water had a life expectancy of fifty-nine years while the average life for a wine consumer was sixty-three.<sup>24</sup> The medical proponents considered such methods to be scientific although they suffer from what we would call an “ecological fallacy” since other factors might contribute to relative, regional longevity.<sup>25</sup> Whatever the flaws of the argument wine continued to be recommended to promote better health, including a healthy old age, or *la verte vieillesse*.<sup>26</sup> These were comforting words for an aging population and reassured French readers of the virtues and strengths of French cultural practices.

Regional comparisons suggested differences in health within France, which raised questions about the relevance of this research within the context of wine as a “national” beverage. As wine distribution became national in the latter part of the nineteenth century, wine was more available as the national drink.<sup>27</sup> To show that the healthy effects of wine might be found on a French national level medical wine advocates readily compared France as a wine-drinking country with Germany, a land of beer drinkers, England, a country of tea-sippers, and the United States with a predilection for cocktails and whisky. Not surprisingly wine was far less harmful. In a widely cited study of soldiers marching after consuming either wine or beer, it was shown that wine drinkers were less fatigued and sang cheerfully as they

marched along while beer drinkers were sluggish afoot and exhausted at the end of the day.<sup>28</sup> France had lower cancer rates than countries where hard liquor prevailed, such as the United States. And the French character was much more cheerful than the sober and frigid British. Although a healthier France was identified with winegrowing regions, wine was portrayed as a national resource that contributed to the development of a distinctive national culture.

In this turn of the century debate over wine and health there was always an element of class distinction. Good wine rather than *vin ordinaire* would be more likely to promote health. The wine that was good for people was wine of good quality and consumed in moderation. The middle class, it was assumed, would be more likely to show restraint and have the proper taste to appreciate good wine. Popular consumption of mediocre wine and the nutritionally deficient white baguette, one argument went, was bad for the health of the masses.<sup>29</sup> However, some doctors recognized that consumption of wine might be just as beneficial for the working class as for the bourgeoisie. In recommending “moderate” wine consumption, a number of medical authorities suggested limits on consumption, usually a half or three-fourths liter for those involved in sedentary work and up to two liters for those engaged in manual labor. Just as wine stimulated the intellect, so could a glass of wine provide a “start-up kick” (*coup de fouet*) for the worker.<sup>30</sup>

Yet it was in the trenches of the Great War that the benefits of wine for the ordinary French soldier became apparent. Just before the war one of the leading pro-wine propagandists, Raymond Brunet, claimed that the soldier’s *pinard* would provide the *poilu* with the physical and moral strength necessary to assure victory over the *boche*.<sup>31</sup> Thus the *pinard* was considered an essential ingredient of victory and became a defining, almost romanticized, characteristic of the *poilu*. Wine drinkers had prevailed over the guzzlers of beer, and the *pinard* acquired a “mystical status” in the minds of the French with the triumph of 1918.<sup>32</sup> This mystique of the *pinard* would become part of a French legend and would be stressed again as assurance of French strength when the threat of war developed twenty years later.

The *pinard* for the soldier came to be praised in the interwar literature as a positive benefit. No longer was alcohol in the hands of the popular classes seen to be a potential social threat or even a social problem. Insofar as can be determined, the *pinard* was not blamed for the mutinous behavior of soldiers in 1917. In this sense the discourse about wine had escaped any identification with alcoholism as a cause of revolutionary or anti-social behavior as a result of the Great War. If anything the *pinard* reinforced the comradeship of the trenches. There was even a mild revisionism in the interpretation of the relationship between wine consumption and the war of 1870–1. In one of the better theses on wine and health Dr Israel Jager argued that Parisian wine drinkers were better able to withstand the rigors of the siege of Paris in 1870–1.<sup>33</sup> Jager considered wine particularly effective in resisting respiratory diseases.

Wine emerged as a unifying element in the French experience of the war, at least according to one wine advocate, by revealing the value of wine to northerners. Dr Max Eylaud, one of the militant Girondin propagandists for wine, wrote a rather

bad novel, *Dans les vignes*, in which the hero, Lieutenant Roger Lansac, distributes “this wine of France (which is) so consoling in moments of weakness” to stir the bravery of his company’s soldiers. After the war his companion in arms, René Mongin from northern France became enamored with the healthy life of the vignerons and married Lansac’s sister. Even Will Burky, “the worthy son of dry America,” became a determined adversary of Prohibition. In the novel Eylaud had nothing but praise for his partner in the interwar campaign on behalf of wine, health, and national identity, Dr Georges Portmann, who was thinly disguised as Dr Lesportes. Portmann/Lesportes was praised for his intellect and his activity as a determined propagandist who “shakes up the apathy of the medical profession” by insisting upon wine “as one of the best elements of physical and moral health.”<sup>34</sup>

Support for the soldier’s wine ration resulted from the success of the impressive publicity campaign in favor of “natural” alcohol waged between the wars by such wine advocates as Georges Portmann and his ally, Max Eylaud. They participated in a number of organizations to promote wine consumption as a healthy practice. In 1924 the *Office International du Vin* was created, which published its *Bulletin de l’organisation du vin* to promote wine consumption. As a result of American prohibition and the loss of the Russian market, particularly champagne, after the revolution, French winegrowers again contended with surplus production. The doctors were soon to follow in their campaign linking wine and health. In 1933 the first congress of the *Médecins amis des vins du France* was held. Portmann, Eylaud, and Dr. Georges Fagouet were pioneers in this organization, which met every two years until the outbreak of war in 1939.<sup>35</sup> As its name implies, the organization was intended to promote wine and encourage the medical profession to consider its benefits for maintaining health.

The doctors also published their own journal, *Bulletin des Médecins Amis des Vins*. These voices continued to defend wine consumption against the “so-called” science of those trying to destroy the reputation of wine as the French national drink. Important political connections were enlisted in the cause. A number of doctor-deputies formed a lobby in support of wine producers, and Edouard Barthe, who was a member of the board of the OIV, headed the viticulture group in the Chamber of Deputies. His counterpart in the Senate was Albert Sarraut, seconded by Georges Portmann.<sup>36</sup> Art was enlisted in the cause, in the promotion of the elegant illustrated booklet from Nicolas, *Mon docteur le vin*, and in a series of posters that linked wine with the good, healthy life. Through advertising, such as the elegant booklet from Nicolas, wine consumption increased in the 1930s in France.<sup>37</sup>

During the interwar period Dr Portmann became one of the staunchest advocates for wine consumption, continuing the battles within the medical profession to get acceptance of wine as the healthy drink. He continued to deplore those colleagues who promoted mineral water as healthier for the individual, claiming that these doctors were linked to the mineral water industry. At the same time he denied any connection that he might have to the winegrowers of Bordeaux despite his staunch advocacy of their interests in the Senate. From his perspective the objective

scientific research into wine's healthful properties meant that the propaganda that he and his colleagues pursued was disinterested and concerned only with the welfare and well-being of the French people. In an early intervention in the French Senate, Portmann made his position clear. He called for doctors of good will who were not connected to any commercial interest to engage in a propaganda effort on behalf of moderate wine consumption. "This propaganda," he intoned, "more than any other will have an influence because it will be scientific, disinterested, and in the final analysis will be concerned with health."<sup>38</sup> A compilation of his speeches indicates no less than eighty-four interventions on behalf of wine and the wine trade during his political career. Although Portmann's efforts may have had limited impact within the medical profession, as Harry Paul argues, his role as a leading member of the wine lobby within the Senate combined with his medical credentials assured that his views would be influential in a political and economic sense.

With the threat of war and the outbreak of hostilities in the late 1930s the *pinard* became the object of political attention and praised as a boost to morale that would again assure victory. Already in *Mon docteur le vin* Dr Amerlink had argued that the largest, best developed, and most coordinated recruits came from the wine-growing regions of France. Dr Armand Gautier from the Academy of Medicine and the Academy of Science assured readers of *Mon docteur le vin* that moderate doses of wine helped the soldier to make an extra effort. Wine protected him from certain illnesses. Others added their scientific opinions that wine would kill the microbes that caused typhoid fever and cholera and again acted as an antidote to depression.<sup>39</sup> In the Senate, Dr Portmann held forth on the importance of "le vin chaud pour nos soldats."<sup>40</sup>

Armed with these reassurances, the French Army made sure that there would be an adequate supply of *pinard* for the soldier. Supply depots began to fill with abundant supplies of wine from the cheap wine-producing regions of the Midi. Rolling stock was requisitioned to meet the military need for wine. Over 36 percent of the French railroad cars capable of transporting liquid (3,450 out of a total 9,500) were requisitioned to distribute approximately 2 million liters of wine daily to the troops.<sup>41</sup>

During the phony war Edouard Barthe, a deputy from Hérault and an ardent advocate for wine interests, established an organization to promote "le vin chaud du soldat." The campaign of the "Oeuvre du vin chaud" opened with a gala on November 23, 1939 with a large, elegant, and politically connected crowd present, including the Minister for Agriculture, the Labor Minister, the Undersecretary for War, and the military commander of the Paris district. The invited soldiers came forward to be served their *vin chaud* by "femmes du monde en costume noir et bleu ciel" from vats of "fort odorant" mulled wine according to a report in *Le Temps*. In the aftermath of this kick-off gala, all municipalities were asked to contribute to a fund for the soldier's wine. By March 1940 4.5 million francs had been raised. "Our soldiers will be happy," Barthe boasted.<sup>42</sup>

During the cold days in the Maginot line the soldiers did appreciate warm wine, which caused the anti-alcohol movement to question expending funds to

encourage drinking. The wine and alcohol lobby counterattacked. The intrepid Barthe succeeded in getting legislation passed that again designated naturally fermented beverages, wine, beer, and cider, as hygienic drinks. Barthe reassured his colleagues that wine and cider were “antidotes to alcoholism.” And the *pinard* would once more assure victory. To a cheering Chamber of Deputies he predicted that the *poilu* would again triumph over those who drank beer. “Wine,” Barthe declared, “gives the soldier courage,” and added, “wine, the pride of France, is a symbol of strength; it is associated with warlike virtues.”<sup>43</sup> The value of the soldier’s *pinard* had become politically popular.<sup>44</sup>

A discourse about the healthy benefits of wine that began at the turn of the century had become a political discourse about wine’s importance as part of a French identity on the eve of World War II. Much of the language of this discourse was gendered in male terms with reference to the martial, as well as the health benefits that wine consumption provided. There was some discussion of the ways in which wine consumption was also beneficial for women’s health, but this was a secondary theme. Champagne, for instance, was recommended for pregnant women and moderate amounts of wine were also suggested for women recovering from childbirth and for daily consumption in more limited quantities than recommended for men.<sup>45</sup> At the 1935 Congress of the International Medical Committee for the Propaganda for Wine, Dr Guénard discussed the usefulness of champagne for women in labor, having the effect of reducing thirst and easing the mother’s labor pains.<sup>46</sup>

Alas, the *pinard* did not save France from defeat in 1940, and Marshal Pétain’s new, authoritarian government at Vichy blamed alcoholism for France’s decline and collapse by undermining the will of the Army.<sup>47</sup> At the Riom trial Professor Heuyer, who was the head doctor for the prefecture of police in Paris, testified that alcoholism caused France’s defeat, seen in the panic of May 13 when French troops retreated pell-mell in the face of the German breakthrough on the Meuse.<sup>48</sup> Defeat opened the way for the anti-alcohol movement to influence Vichy legislation, which taxed industrially produced alcohol heavily. However, wine and fermented drinks with an alcoholic content below 16 percent were exempt from this tax.<sup>49</sup>

The success of the wine industry in escaping Vichy’s anti-alcohol campaign may be attributed to the continued activities of the wine lobby and its medical advocates. One of the most influential voices at Vichy was Dr Portmann. In the debacle of the 1940 defeat, Portmann was one of a group of conservative and moderate politicians who persuaded President Lebrun not to leave Bordeaux aboard the *SS Massilia* in order to continue resistance from North Africa.<sup>50</sup> After joining those who voted full powers to Marshal Pétain on July 10, 1940, Portmann became a member of the Vichy government when his political ally, Pierre-Étienne Flandin, appointed him Undersecretary for Information in his government. Portmann remained at this post after Flandin was dismissed. He eventually offered discreet assistance to the Resistance, although this was not sufficient to save him from punishment in the purge trials following liberation. Portmann was one of only twenty deputies or senators from the discredited Third Republic to have served Vichy

before November 1942. After his mentor and close political ally, Flandin, left France in October 1942, Portmann remained in the government. In the postwar purges he was banished from public life until he was pardoned in 1949.<sup>51</sup> Although there is no direct evidence of Portmann's role, a reasonable assumption is that he pursued his interests and lobbied for wine's protection under Vichy.

Other wine advocates, such as Max Eylaud, argued for the beneficial effect of wine under Vichy. In time of shortage wine was seen to be a source of nourishment and calories.<sup>52</sup> Eylaud also adjusted his writings to the priorities of Vichy's New Order, publishing a pamphlet that demonstrated the value of moderate wine consumption for young people and athletes, again linking wine to national renewal in the spirit of Vichy's call for regeneration.<sup>53</sup> The *Médecins amis des vins de France (MAVF)* continued to publish its *Bulletin* during the first years of Vichy, much to the dismay of the anti-alcohol movement, which asked that public health officials "stop this kind of pro-wine propaganda" but to no avail. In the Free Zone the *MAVF* successfully lobbied to have Radio Santé cease its "unjustified propaganda" campaign against the wines of France, and in December of 1941 French National Radio abandoned its campaign against wine drinking. At the same time doctors on the faculties of Bordeaux and Paris continued to offer courses on "La Vigne plante médicinale" or "Le vin dans l'alimentation."<sup>54</sup>

Not all was smooth sailing, however, in relations between *MAVF* and Vichy. Édouard Barthe, who also had voted full powers to Pétain in 1940, got into trouble with Vichy when he protested the requisition quotas demanded by the Germans. He was imprisoned in Vals-les-Bains from October 1941 to February 1942 for having advised the winegrowers in the Midi not to deplete their stocks. He was subsequently released and placed under house arrest in Nice, but he was banned from any travel in winegrowing regions.<sup>55</sup>

The *Bulletin de la Société des Médecins Amis des Vins de France* also got into trouble despite the presumed protection of Georges Portmann. The *Bulletin* published freely under Vichy until the appearance of the twenty-third issue, which contained a poem in which the *pinard* was praised as the source for France's liberation and renewal.<sup>56</sup> The editorial board decided to cease publication rather than submit to censorship.

The defense of wine resumed after the war. In 1949 the *MAVF* gathered in Bordeaux for its fifth meeting. Once again medical science was invoked against the "so-called" scientific arguments of the doctors who warned against the dangers of alcoholism. "With the same kinds of arguments, we must fight against them and show the inanity of such insults. Our duty as doctors is to rise to the podium ... to show why the wine of France, unadulterated wine of good quality, taken in moderate quantities is good for the healthy individual [and] is good for the sick person." Doctor Portmann again pronounced that moderate wine consumption was best way to combat alcoholism, and it was every doctor's duty was "to defend the healthy drink, which is wine." Technical papers followed this renewed call to arms in defense of wine as a *boisson hygiénique*. Half-century old arguments reappeared to

demonstrate the beneficial effect of wine on the health of the cardiovascular system, as a source for valuable vitamins and minerals, as a stimulant for digestion, and an aid in the functioning of the liver and pancreas. The scientific methods that backed such claims became more solidly grounded in the extensive research on wine and health in France and elsewhere than they had been in France at the turn of the century or during the interwar years. Recent research has demonstrated some scientific validity to the claim that moderate consumption of red wine increases longevity and offers some protection against coronary disease. And the superiority of wine over beer or hard liquor has additional scientific backing on the basis of surveys.<sup>57</sup> But the discourse about wine as the healthy drink also continues to be exploited in the commercial promotion of wine consumption.<sup>58 59</sup>

## Notes

1. Gaston Derys, *Mon docteur le vin*, watercolors by Raoul Dufy (Paris: Draeger frères, 1936). An English version of this elegant book has recently been published. Gaston Derys, *Mon Docteur le Vin (My Doctor, Wine)* trans. Benjamin Ivry with introduction by Paul Lukacs (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003).

2. Quotation from Gaston Derys, *Mon Docteur le Vin*, preface and cited in Jean-Louis Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l'an 40*, Vol. 2 *Ouvriers et soldats* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), p. 463.

3. Harry W. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine: Wine and Alcohol Therapies from Napoleon to the French Paradox* (NY and Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), ch. 3; Salvatore Pablo Fucia, *A History of Wine as Therapy*, forward by Sanford V. Larkey (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963). The tradition of connecting wine and health may be seen in Ken Albala's essay, "To Your Health: Wine as Food and Medicine in mid-sixteenth Century Europe," in this volume.

4. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. iv.

5. Michael R. Marrus, "Social Drinking in the *Belle Époque*," *Journal of Social History*, 7 (1973–4), p. 115.

6. In his article on "La vigne et le vin" in *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Pierre Nora, ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), Vol. 3: *Les France 2 Traditions*, p. 796, Georges Durand argues that although Spain and Italy are large producers of wine, viniculture is powerfully associated with France. He also cites a poll conducted by Jean-Pierre Rioux in *Histoire* (May 1987) which revealed that of the qualities that made one French, the liking of good wine was ranked fourth after being born in France, a determination to protect freedoms, and speaking French. Kolleen Guy points out that fermented drinks such as wine, cider and beer were not designated as "alcohol" in the French language. See Kolleen Guy, *When Champagne became French: Wine and the Making of a National Identity* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), p. 31.

7. Rod Phillips, *A Short History of Wine* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000), p. 277.

8. Robert Nye, “Degeneration and the Medical Model of Cultural Crisis in the French *Belle Époque*,” in Seymour Drescher, David Sabeau and Allan Sharlin (eds), *Political Symbolism in Modern Europe* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1982).

9. This is the formulation of Dr. Frédéric Cayla, *Le vin, le buveur de vin et le buveur d'alcool, les eaux-de-vie et les liqueurs* (Bordeaux: G. Gounouilhou, 1901) p. 9, cited in Marrus, “Social Drinking in the *Belle Époque*,” p. 120.

10. Dr. Edouard Bazerolle, *Défense du vin* (Paris: Rousset, 1902).

11. Susanna Barrows calls the campaign against alcoholism a “moral crusade” to reform the working class. Susanna Barrows, “After the Commune: Alcoholism, Temperance, and Literature in the Early Third Republic,” in *Consciousness and Class Experience in Nineteenth-Century Europe* John M. Merriman (ed.), (New York: Homes & Meier, 1979), pp. 205–8. Another perspective on alcoholism and the working class may be found in W. Scott Haine, *The world of the Paris Café: Sociability among the French Working Class 1789–1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) and on the anti-alcohol campaign, Patricia E. Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform: Antialcoholism in France since 1870* (Palo Alto: Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, 1988).

12. Paul discusses the sharp debate within the medical profession between a few doctors who supported the anti-alcohol crusade and the more numerous but by no means majority of doctors who rallied in defense of wine consumption in *Bacchic Medicine*, pp. 199–207. The pro and con medical arguments were summarized in Dr J.-A. Doléris, *Le vin et les médecins: Le pour et le contre* (Paris: Vigot frères, 1907, 1931). Among the medical theses defending wine as part of the struggle against alcohol were Dr Emile Mauriac, *La Défense du vin et la lutte contre l'alcoolisme* (Bordeaux: Feret et fils, 1901), Louis Izou, *La défense du vin dans la lutte antialcoolique* (Paris: Th. Medical, 1907), and Dr Joseph Vergely, *Quelques chiffres sur l'alcool et l'alcoolisme à Bordeaux* (Bordeaux: G. Gounouilhou, 1902).

13. Dr. Emile Mauriac, *La Défense du vin*; Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform*, p. 50.

14. See Paul Garfinkel's essay, “In Vino Veritas: The Construction of Alcoholic Disease in Liberal Italy, 1876–1914,” in this volume.

15. Cayla, *Le vin, le buveur de vin*, pp. 12–14.

16. Barrows, “After the Commune,” p. 206 and Marrus, “Social Drinking,” p. 117.

17. Bazerolle, *Défense du vin*, p. 32. The citation is from Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 203. A number of authorities made this claim and would continue to do so into World War I as part of the opposition to the anti-alcohol crusaders. Marrus, for example, quotes Joseph Reinach on the impact of wine on “our character, our abilities [and] our well-being in general,” in “Social Drinking,” p. 137, fn. 29.

18. Bazerolle, *Défense du vin*, p. 34. Robert-Yves-Jacques Constant, *Le Vin et*

*la longévité* (Bordeaux: J. Bière, 1935), p. 40–41.

19. Marrus, “Social Drinking,” pp. 122, 128–9; Haine, *The World of the Paris Café*, p. 95; Kolleen Guy, “Rituals of Pleasure in the Land of Treasures: Wine Consumption and the Making of French Identity in the Late Nineteenth Century,” in Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton (eds) *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 34–47.

20. Haine, *The World of the Paris Café*, pp. 114–15.

21. J. Alquier, “Valeur biologique et hygiénique du vin,” *Bulletin de la Société scientifique d’hygiène alimentaire*, no. 17, II (1929) cited in Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, pp. 223–4.

22. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 204.

23. The most detailed statistical analysis for this claim is to be found in Constant, *Le Vin et la longévité*, pp. 29–30, which cited a study showing that the fifty-seven communes of Médoc had 1.981 inhabitants/1000 who were over eighty compared with a figure of 1.053 for all of France. Constant approvingly cited M. Léon Douarce, director of the International Office for Wine (l’Office international du vin), who boasted that these octogenarians “provide a most dramatic illustration that on the blessed soil of Bordeaux’s vineyards longevity is stronger than in any other country.” Constant compared five departments: Calvados, where the drink was cider, had 6.625% of the population over seventy; Finisterre, where the drink was cider or water, had 6.526% of the population over seventy; Somme and Ardennes, where the customary drink was beer or wine, had 9.94% over seventy; and wine-drinking Gironde, which had 10.76% of its population over seventy. Constant’s thesis on wine and longevity was produced under the direction of Dr Georges Portmann whose colleague in wine advocacy, Dr Max Eylaud, used these statistics in their 1936 study of the physiological and therapeutic uses of wine cited by Harry Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, pp. 233–4 fn. 20. Other works dealing with the favorable impact of (moderate) wine consumption on longevity and in combating senility include, Dr Pierre-Henry Roeser, *Vieillesse et longévité* (Paris: Maloine, 1910) and Dr Alexandre Lacassagne, *La Verte vieillesse* (Lyon: A. Rey, 1920).

24. J. Alquier, “Valeur biologique et hygiénique du vin,” *Bulletin de la Société scientifique d’hygiène alimentaire*, no. 17, II (1929), cited in Constant, *Vin et la longévité*, p. 61.

25. As Harry Paul states with a touch of irony, “Although logic was applied with Ockhamite ruthlessness to anti-wine discourse, it played a very small role in the pro-wine arguments.” Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 235.

26. G. Ichok, “Sur la longévité, la sénilité et la vieillesse,” *Le Progrès Médical*, 16 mai 1931.

27. Durand, “La vigne et le vin,” p. 803, sees this as the point at which attachment to wine became an integral part of French history.

28. Marrus, “Social Drinking,” p. 120.

29. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, 227.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 230; Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform*, p. 19.

31. Raymond Brunet, *La valeur alimentaire et hygiénique du vin* (Paris: Librairie agricole de la maison rustique, 2nd ed. 1914) cited in Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 251, fn. 5.
32. Durand, “La vigne et le vin,” p. 811. Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform*, p. 172.
33. Israel Jager, *La valeur alimentaire et thérapeutique du vin* (Paris: M. Lavergne, 1938), p. 28.
34. Max Eylaud, *Dans les vignes* (Bordeaux: Delmas, 1934) with a preface by Georges Portmann.
35. Comité national de propagande en faveur du vin, *Vème Congrès national des Médecins Amis du Vin de France* Bordeaux 10–12 septembre 1949 (Montpellier, 1951), p. 3. Additional meetings were held in Dijon, Béziers, Algiers (1937) with a fifth scheduled for Reims in September 1939 but not held due to the outbreak of the war.
36. The Office International du Vin had its headquarters on the Place du Bourbon next to the Chamber of Deputies. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 254.
37. Lukacs, *Mon Docteur (My Doctor)*, p. x, citing Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), p. 71.
38. Georges Portmann, *Son action parlementaire, scientifique, social*, Vol. 1 (Bordeaux: Delmas, 1955), p. 51.
39. Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l’an 40*, Vol. 2, p. 464.
40. Portmann, *Son action parlementaire, scientifique, social*, Vol. 1, p. 43.
41. Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l’an 40*, Vol. 2, p. 464.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 465–6, 474. Drs Portmann and Roustan lent their authority to the promotion of the soldiers’ *pinard* in the pages of the *Revue vinicole*, cited in Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform*, p. 245, fn 10.
43. Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l’an 40*, Vol. 2, p. 463.
44. Harry Paul observes that Portmann and Eylaud toured France in the 1930s pushing wine consumption to medical audiences that received their message with “condescending smiles and sarcasms”. Although the reception was lukewarm within the medical profession, the idea of wine and particularly wine for the soldier, was politically popular. Portmann was one of a number of deputies and senators who formed a lobby in favor of wine consumption generally and promoted the value of wine for the soldier. See Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, pp. 257, 259.
45. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine*, p. 242.
46. François Bonal, Docteur Tran Ky, Docteur François Drouard, *Les vertus thérapeutiques du Champagne: histoire, traditions, biologie, diététique* (Paris: Artulen, 1990), pp. 24–5.
47. Prestwich, *Drink and the Politics of Social Reform*, p. 247.
48. Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l’an 40*, Vol. 2, p. 475.
49. Léon Douarche, “Le vin et la vigne dans l’économie nationale française,” *Les cahiers de la réorganisation économique*, cahier 2 (janvier 1943): 68. Wine production was not entirely exempt. The Vichy government required those producing more

than five hundred hectoliters of wine set aside 20% of the crop for the production of sugar based upon grapes, producing a loss of four million hectoliters of wine. Another decree ordered that any vineyard over 5 hectares (12.35 acres) had to convert 10% of the land to cultivation of a crop other than grapes as of January 1, 1941.

50. François-Georges Dreyfus, *Histoire de Vichy* (Paris: Perrin, 1990), p. 159.

51. Olivier Wieviorka, *Les Orphelins de la République: Destinées des députés et sénateurs français (1940–1945)* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), pp. 36, 150, 217, 246, 405.

52. The trouble with this argument is that wine was in short supply due to German requisitions, problems of transportation, and a drop in overall production due to the lack of copper sulfate to control diseases and a poor year in 1941. The wine producers, particularly among the grands crus, used this opportunity to dispose of poor quality vintages at the expense of the Germans. Wine became quite expensive and an item for black market commerce placing it beyond the resources of most people.

53. Jean Max Eylaud, *Sports et l'éducation de la jeunesse*, pref. Colonel Duché (Mont-de-Marsan: Jean Lacoste, 1941). He also wrote a novel against Zola, *Le Nouvel assommoir*, cover and illustration by G.-J. J. Hosteins, preface by Édouard Barthe, and introduction by Professor Georges Portmann (Mont-de-Marsan, 1942), and a play in the spirit of Vichy's cultural ideology, "Rétour à la terre: comédie en 1 acte" (Mont-de-Marsan: Jean Lacoste, 1941).

54. Comité national de propagande en faveur du vin, *Vème Congrès national des Médecins Amis du Vin de France*, pp. 7–8.

55. Wieviorka, *Les Orphelins de la République*, p. 289.

56.

"Je suis le vieux pinard versé par Madelon,  
Qui faisait trouver beau le sort de la tranchée  
Chantaient le coeur d'airain et l'âme empanachée

Seigneur, sans moi demain la France y songes-tu  
Ne serait qu'un pays vaincu par la défaite.  
Par moi seul elle peut retrouver la vertu  
Qui lui rendra l'élan vainqueur qu'elle souhaite.

Cited in Comité national de propagande en faveur du vin, *Vème Congrès national des Médecins Amis du Vin de France*, p. 6.

57. See, for example, the editorial by J.-P. Broustet, cardiologist at *l'Hôpital Cardiologique Haut Lévêque*, Pessac, France in *Heart* 81 (1999): 459–60.

58. A recent wine promotion in a Paris included a pamphlet from *Vin & Santé*, an annual publication since 1995, that informed the public about ways in which polyphenols found in wine were effective in combating cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Several doctors were cited, including Dr Serge Renaud who announced, "Two or three glasses of wine a day reduce by more than 30% the mortality rate from all causes of illness taken together." For the ongoing scientific argument, see Nathalie Vivas de Gaulejac, *Vin et santé: les bases scientifiques du French Paradox* (Bordeaux: Éditions Féret, 2001).