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DO TRADITIONAL WESTERN EUROPEAN DRINKING PRACTICES HAVE ORIGINS IN ANTIQUITY?*

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Over the last few decades, alcohol consumption patterns have been changing in western European cultures (FAO 1991; Hupkens et al, 1992). Many nations have begun to embrace non-traditional beverages and drinking (1) practices. There are arguments for both cultural change and for persistence of drinking norms over time or across generations. Indeed, some recent reports suggest both rapid change and persistence (Heath, 1992; McGowan et al, 1992) in some drinking patterns.

The northern and the southern regions of Western Europe have traditionally been seen as having different drinking cultures.(2) Moreover, these preferences and patterns appear to have persisted from a more distant past. Could it be possible that the traditional western European drinking norms, attitudes and practices may have persisted over the centuries and have origins in antiquity?

To explore the question of the etiology of western European drinking cultures, some tentative hypotheses will be offered. It is hoped that these speculations will generate discussion and a more thorough examination of the inception of drinking attitudes, practices and norms in many cultures. Although a many faceted hypothesis is presented, there is space in this paper only for a focus on one aspect, namely the reasons why different patterns formed in the first place. Questions concerning the process of Romanization and the Germanic influences of the early Middle Ages upon drinking patterns will have to wait for another time. In short, this paper is a tour through some questions, and extremely tentative hints of some answers. Because this paper is a social-science comment synthesizing material from many fields of study, both primary and secondary published sources are used.

INTRODUCTION

Some contemporary scholars suggest that the foundation of modern Western European society was due to the integration of Roman, Christian and Germanic culture during the Early Middle Ages (Anderson, 1974:154-155; Holister, 1990:25). If this idea is found viable, it is likely that drinking practices, attitudes and norms were among the many aspects of culture affected by this synthesis. Others could argue, that it is common knowledge that the ecology and ecosystems led to different beverage preferences in various areas of Western Europe. However, these factors alone do not explain the contrasting attitudes towards drinking and the use, or non-use, of alcoholic beverages, within ancient and modern Western societies. Therefore, the following tentative hypotheses are suggested as possible reasons for some traditional western drinking attitudes and patterns.

Statement of Hypotheses

From antiquity, different drinking cultures concerning alcohol developed in the northern and in the Mediterranean areas of western Europe due to the ecosystem, seasonal variation and socio-political structures. During the expansion of the Roman Empire, rural areas of west central Europe became Romanized.(3) As a part of this process, indigenous inhabitants adopted some customs from urban Roman culture, including wine drinking with meals. When Rome's influence declined in the west, former provinces which retained Roman culture also retained drinking patterns characterized by moderation. The Germanic cultures beyond the Rhine, untouched by direct Roman influence, continued their traditional heavy, feast drinking patterns. "Malt liquor" and mead, not wine, were the preferred alcoholic beverages. Britain lost its veneer of Romanization and returned to pre-Roman Celtic, mixed with Germanic, practices; Gaul integrated some aspects of Germanic drinking into its predominantly Southern patterns. These patterns congealed during the early Middle Ages and became the underlying drinking cultures for the regions overlaying these areas into modern times.

"Traditional" Western European Drinking in Modern Societies

Before background information which suggests these tentative hypotheses is discussed, modern drinking patterns need to be defined. Several recent authors have suggested, or implied, two traditional norms, attitudes and practices for Western European cultures (4) (Davies, 1984:26; Heath and Cooper, 1988; Hupkins et al., 1992). The southern European ("Mediterranean", "wine drinking" or "wet") patterns are typically found in Italy, Spain, Portugal, southern France and Greece. The northern European ("Nordic", "beer/spirits" or "dry") patterns tend to be found in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Britain, and north and eastern Germany. A blend of the two norms, appear to be found in northern France, southwestern Germany, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland. Of course, some could argue that these norms are over-generalized, and do not, or have not, even existed. However, for the purpose of this paper, a basic assumption is that these traditional patterns can be found today.

The southern drinking culture accepts wine, the most commonly consumed alcohol beverage, as a normal part of the daily diet. Wine is generally consumed with meals, drunkenness is not accepted, even at celebrations, and children are often given diluted wine with meals. In these cultures there are few perceived psycho-social problems and few strict control policies regarding use. Moreover, there is little social pressure to drink. Latin based languages are spoken, viticulture is a major industry, and all of these countries were provinces within the Roman Empire (Jellinek, 1962:388; Heath and Cooper, 1988; Garnsey and Saller, 1987; Davies, 1984:26, 45; Davies and Walsh, 1983:264; FAO, 1991; Lolli et al., 1958; Smith and Hanahan, 1982:19).

In contrast to these Mediterranean attitudes, patterns and norms, the northern attitude concerning alcohol consumption is one of ambivalence (extremes of heavy drinking vs. abstinence). Grain-based drinks of beer and spirits are the most commonly consumed and manufactured alcoholic beverages. They are often consumed on occasions other than with meals. Heavy, often episodic drinking occurs on weekends or special occasions. Some people drink for the purposes of getting drunk. Public drunkenness is more or less accepted, but a high percentage of the population abstains. Age limitations are often established for legal alcohol consumption and alcohol is generally prohibited for children even at family functions. There are many perceived psycho-social problems related to drinking. With the exception of Britain, none are former Roman provinces. They speak a non-Latin (in most countries a Germanic) based language and do not have commercial viticulture (Davies, 1984:26, 45, 55; Davies and Walsh, 1983:264; FAO, 1991; Jellinek, 1962:383-384, 387; Smith and Hanahan, 1982:18-21). Moreover, temperance movements have primarily occurred in these cultures (Levine, 1992).

The "Blended", or "mixed" pattern" is characterized by frequent drinking of wine, and sometimes beer, with meals. These beverages, along with spirits, are consumed at other times, often without food. Per capita alcohol consumption is high but public intoxication is generally frowned upon. Both Germanic- and Latin-based languages are spoken, suitable climatic areas produce wine and all are former Roman provinces (FAO, 1991; Jellinek, 1962:385, 388).

Of course, "traditional" drinking patterns have been changing, particularly since the 1960's. Inspection of Table 1 illustrates these changes over a twenty year period. Southern Europeans are drinking less wine and consuming more beer and spirits at Discos while Northern Europeans are consuming more wine with meals. These rapidly changing trends may soon forecast a blended pattern throughout Western Europe (Hupkens et al., 1992; FAO, 1991).

POSSIBLE ARGUMENTS FOR THE ETIOLOGY OF THE NORTHERN AND THE SOUTHERN DRINKING CULTURES IN ANTIQUITY

There are several hypotheses as to why traditional practices found in the north and the south may have developed in antiquity.

Episodic Drinking and Grain Based Beverages

The Weather and Scarcity of Alcohol in the North. Cunliffe (1986) suggests that infrequent, but heavy, drinking to intoxication may have developed among northern Celtic and Germanic tribes in antiquity, because alcoholic beverages were not always available due to variations in the weather. Even today, unpredictable weather patterns, including drought and floods, can produce lean years for fruit or grains in the north. If alcohol production was limited, due to the grain supply, a "feast or famine" situation may have occurred leading to sporadic bouts of heavy drinking to intoxication whenever any alcohol was available. This behaviour is suggested by the many descriptions of overindulgence when wine was imported to the northern inhabitants by Mediterranean traders to be discussed in more detail later.

Table 1 Western European countries ranked from Lowest to Highest by 1984–1986 per capita wine consumption.* Per capita consumption of total alcohol (including spirits) plus wine and beer consumed for both 1964–66^b and 1984–86^a along with spoken language group^c (Germanic, Romance or other), commercial viticulture^d and former Roman province^e status.

Country	KG/year 1964–66			KG/year 1984–86			Spoken language	Grape vines	Former province
	Total	Wine	Beer	Total	Wine	Beer			
Finland	32.2	2.9	26.9	74.2	2.6	63.5	Other	No	No
Ireland	68.6	na*	na	94.3	3.4	78.3	Germ	No	No
Norway	30.9	1.5	30.7	56.0	5.1	48.2	Germ	No	No
UK	96.5	na	na	121.8	10.2	109.8	Germ	South	South
Sweden	52.5	4.4	40.8	55.9	11.4	39.5	Germ	No	No
E Germany	89.7	na	na	168.8	11.6	142.2	Germ	No	No
Netherlands	42.8	3.4	na	104.9	15.1	85.2	Germ	No	No
Denmark	90.9	4.0	80.1	150.5	19.2	127.0	Germ	No	No
Belgium/Luxem.	132.4	9.6	na	150.0	21.7	124.0	Both	No	Yes
W Germany	141.9	15.1	124.4	176.3	24.9	195.8	Germ	Yes	Yes
Austria	129.8	30.8	97.3	153.8	35.1	113.9	Germ	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	127.1	36.3	75.7	126.1	48.3	70.4	Both	Parts	Yes
Spain	91.2	74.8	23.6	115.3	48.5	56.8	Rom	Yes	Yes
Portugal	72.1	83.8	6.0	107.3	67.7	37.5	Rom	Yes	Yes
Italy	118.7	112.5	9.8	98.7	74.4	21.5	Rom	Yes	Yes
France	178.9	118.8	41.4	133.7	76.5	38.9	Rom	South	Yes

*FAO 1991
^bFAO 1971
^cRenfrew 1987
^dJan de Blij 1983
^eGarnsey and Saller, 1987
 *Data not available

Also, "malt liquor" produced without preservatives tends to spoil quickly, thus inducing people to consume it while still fresh. Mead, which depends upon a honey supply, was likely to be scarce. Because grain and fruits also needed to be used as food supplies, is it likely that alcoholic beverages may have been, scarce in the northern European region for most of its early history, and even later history (Brun-Gulbrandsen 1988:13,19). Could this scarcity have influenced a pattern of episodic drinking to intoxication in the North among some of the population? Could

episodic drinking and its ensuing problems have resulted in an attitude of ambiguity towards alcohol?

People tend to stay indoors during cold damp weather which is more common in the north compared to the sunny south. Could heavier drinking have developed as a means of relieving the distress of crowded dank conditions?

Extremes of Seasonal Light and Dark Cycles

In extreme northern areas of Europe, including Scandinavia, north eastern Germany, Britain and Ireland, there are wide seasonal variations of light and darkness due to the latitude. For much of the winter many of these areas are almost in perpetual darkness. At least one study has implied that higher alcohol consumption occurs in mammals when it is dark compared to when it is light (Geller, 1971). Some proportion of the population becomes depressed in the winter months when it is dark with Seasonal Affective Disorder. Heavier drinking has also been found among depressed people (Smyth, 1991; Parker et al., 1987). Could extremes in northern seasonal cycles have been a factor in episodic heavy drinking?

Wine and a More Mellow Lifestyle

A Suitable Ecosystem for Viticulture. A likely factor in the development of wine as the beverage choice in the southern region was an ecosystem suitable for viticulture. The vine grew naturally in the southern Mediterranean, but not in the more northern areas of Europe. Lack of northern viticulture was noted by many classical authors including both Diodorus Siculus (V.26.3) and Strabo (IV, 5.5) in the 1st Century B.C. Even today commercial viticulture is not found in Scandinavia, most of Britain and northern Germany. The natural limit for modern viticulture is between 30 and 50° North Latitude and 10°C (50°F) and 20°C (60°F) annual isotherm (De Blij 1983:13-15).

During classical times there were several texts for wine manufacturing (Cato I, XXXIX; Varro I; Pliny HN XIV, XVII; Columella III, XI, XII). Archaeological evidence attests to viticulture, and even trade, in Mediterranean regions beginning at least by the late 7th Century B.C. and even earlier in the Middle East. It continued into the early Middle Ages (Cunliffe, 1988; Dietler, 1990; Balder et al., 1991). Does evidence of wine trade, even in early times over long distances, also suggest the relative stability and durability of the product for frequent use?

An Abundance of Wine for the Romans? Cunliffe (1988:75) suggests that beginning in the late 2nd Century B.C., a large amount of Italian wine began to be produced for domestic consumption and trade. By 100 B.C. wine in some form was thought to have become the daily drink of all Romans both rich and poor (Younger, 1966:169; Hyams, 1965: 130-131; Pliny HN XIV.14.91; Cato XXIII, XXV). Thousands of wine amphorae, drinking cups, and other evidence of frequent drinking, from all social economic groups, have been found throughout the Mediterranean and more northern provinces. These artifacts suggest the wide availability of

wine during Roman expansion and domination (Cunliffe, 1988:71-78, 81-87; Tchemia, 1983:95; Galliou, 1984:29; Younger, 1966:151-226).

Purcell (1985:13) calculates per capita consumption to be about 250 liters per year by the 2nd Century. This high consumption may have spanned the time period from the late Republic to the end of the Western Empire. Over this 500 year period, inexpensive and even free wine, was often made available to the general public. Wine was even used as payment by the state (Jellinek. 1976:1736-1739; Jones, 1976:704; Purcell, 1985:14-15). Could this apparent availability have lead to moderate drinking with meals?

The Scarcity of Alcohol and Wine Argument. Of course, some could argue that traditional moderate drinking among southern Europeans was due to the scarcity of alcohol. Brewing and malt liquor drinking, by Romans, was rarely mentioned. Brewing requires fuel for boiling prior to the mashing stage. Since deforestation dates from early antiquity this process would have been difficult in southern Europe. It also could be argued that viticulture takes skill and is a very risky venture, because of weather and a highly irregular labour regime, leading to scarcity as it is produced only once a year (Purcell, 1985:2). However, most archaeological interpretations appear to suggest, at least during the time of Roman expansion and control, wine in some form was widely available for some segments of the population.

Differences in Socio-Political Structures

Dietler (1989,1990) implies that differences in traditional drinking patterns between the north and the south may be related to different Iron Age socio-economic systems. The northern areas of Europe had a "hierarchical" system in which only the very rich were able to consume alcoholic beverages on a regular basis and rare wine was considered a status symbol. On the other hand, the southern areas had a "hieratic system" where good wine was given out as payment to fulfill social obligations leading to all strata of society having frequent access to wine. Could these unique social structures have led to different drinking cultures between the more northern and southern regions of western Europe?

POSSIBLE EVIDENCE FOR NORTHERN DRINKING PATTERNS FROM ANTIQUITY

Most early classic authors describe northern Europeans as drinking to intoxication. It is not known if there was a lack of moderate drinking among these Northerners, or if the Mediterranean writers were biased in their reporting for political or military reasons when describing the "Barbarian" "noble savages" and their enemies. Perhaps, compared to their own practices, it was unusual behavior and thus considered interesting information to report?

"Beer" and Heavy Feast Drinking

Some of the first known descriptions, of Northern Celtic and Germanic inhabitants, describe their drinking practices. Several classical authors suggest that "beer" (malt liquor),(5) cider and mead were the indigenous beverages and that heavy drinking to intoxications was common. Diodorus Siculus (V.26.1-27),(6) the early 1st Century B.C.7 historian, describes the Gauls-Celts-as drinking "beer" (zythos) made of barley and "the washings of honey, probably mead", and becoming drunk on imported wine. Tacitus (Germ. 23), in the early 2nd Century, states "their drink is a liquor made from barley and other grain" and also describes drinking to intoxication. Other authors over a span of several centuries including Polybius (11.9.4), in the mid 2nd Century B.C. and Ammianus Marcellinus (XY.12.4-5) in the 4th Century A.D., describe the Northern Gauls as drinking to excess.

Archaeological finds, and analysis of organic remains in drinking vessels, support the classical authors descriptions of ale and mead as the indigenous beverages of Northern Iron Age Europe (Biel, 1981:16-18; Dietler, 1990:392-393; Frere, 1987:7-8; Ross, 1988:20; Stjernquist, 1977:18-19). Moreover, several contemporary authors suggest that heavy, "feast" drinking, found among these groups, was important for religious and socio- political ceremonies (Arnold 1991:552; Davidson 1988:40-45).

A Continuation of Heavy Drinking into the Early Middle-Ages?

Some Gauls, by the early 2nd Century A.D., were described as becoming Romanized and adopting Roman customs and manners (Tacitus Agric. 21). By the end of the Western Empire (5th Century A.O.), there were few descriptions of drunken Gauls. On the other hand, unlike the Gauls, the Germanic groups were not seen to readily adopt Roman ways according to Thompsons (1982:245). Tacitus (Germania 23) suggests that a good way to conquer Germans was to first get them drunk. McKinlay (1948b:245), based upon the classics, describes several incidences in which the Romans easily slaughtered the Germans in battle because they had become intoxicated.

At the beginning of the Middle Ages, there are many depictions of Germanic drunken- ness suggesting a continuation of their indigenous patterns. Gregory, the 6th Century Bishop of Tours, describes intoxicated Germanic Franks throughout his History of the Franks. Descriptions of heavy feast drinking in the early Middle Ages, based upon Nordic poetry and myth, can be found in translations of Beowulf(Alexander 1984), Judith (Haley 1981) and the Gododdin (Jarmin 1988). Detailed discussion of Northern Celtic, Germanic and Scandinavian "feast drinking", from antiquity through the Middle Ages, are presented by some contemporary authors (Arnold, 1991; Davidson, 1988; Ross, 1986). On the other hand, there are few descriptions of drunken Italians or Gallic Franks.

POSSIBLE EVIDENCE FOR SOUTHERN DRINKING PATTERNS FROM ANTIQUITY

Many contemporary authors have discussed Roman drinking patterns, the development of Roman viticulture and the wine trade throughout the course of its history. (8) Therefore, only a brief description will be presented.

The Importance of Wine

Most classical works suggest that wine was the primary beverage of the Mediterranean (except Egypt) and Roman world. Wine, and in particular mature vintage wine, was considered an integral part of civilized life. Vineyards were also considered essential to the economics and the culture from the early Republic through the end of the Empire and into the early Middle Ages. Viticulture, and the urban custom on wine drinking, were in turn passed onto the indigenous people of the western Provinces and Gaul during Roman expansion. Even today many western European vineyard can trace their origins to the Roman past. The importance of wine is perhaps reflected by several classical texts which discuss viticulture, winemaking and categories of vintage wine (Cato I, XXXIX; Varro I; Pliny HN XIV, XVII; Columella III, XI, XII).

On the other hand, malt liquor and other northern beverages, were scorned by the rich. They were considered the drink of the poorer classes in Gaul, the Barbarians and mountain people. To call someone a "beer-swiller" Sabaiarius was considered a grave insult according to Ammianus Marcellinus (XXVI.8.2, XIV.6.26), the Roman historian of the late 4th century A.O.

Wine taverns and cafes were common throughout most of Roman history. In the late 3rd century B.C., the playwright Plautus (Rud. 11.529), describes the Thermopolium where hot wine drinks and snacks were served. These establishments, along with wine shops, were found in urban areas and along country roads from this period until the end of the Empire (Younger, 1966:166--167). Many remains, particularly in Pompeii and Herculaneum, of these establishments have been uncovered. Likewise wherever Romans settled, numerous wine amphora and drinking equipment have been found. Does this attest to the importance of wine to this culture?

A Drinking Culture of Moderation?

Several modern interpretations of classical sources suggest that for most of Mediterranean, including Roman and Italian, history, the primary drinking culture was probably one of moderation (Hyams, 1965; Jellinek, 1976; Purcell, 1985; Tchernia, 1986; Younger, 1966: Chapt. 4).

To avoid intoxication wine was usually mixed with water and generally consumed with meals. There are numerous classical references to wine mixing, in particular Athenaeus (Diep. X), and the importance of moderate drinking, along with the condemnation of drunkenness.(9) Does this suggest the importance of moderate drinking, at least, on the part of many Romans?

A Norm of Intoxication at the Banquet?

The Romans adapted many aspects of classical Greek civilization including the symposium or convivium. These elaborate dinner parties were an important aristocratic social institution referred to by many classical authors throughout Roman history. A recent publication edited by Slater (1991) presents various aspects of this social occasion. These banquets were primarily male affairs. The guests reclined on couches and were generally served mature vintage wine and elaborate food. For entertainment, toasting; drinking games, singing and discussion were common; participants often became drunk.

However, was drunkenness at symposia an acceptable drinking norm? Many classical authors, throughout Roman history, appear to disapprove of this drunken behavior. For example, Athenaeus (Deip. X, XI), in the 3rd Century, relates stories which suggest gluttony and drunkenness can lead to serious social problems. Pliny (HN XIV.28.136-139) admonishes his peers behaviors at symposia in the 1st Century. Perhaps references to drunken banquets suggest a norm of heavy drinking among rich banquet participants, whereas more moderate drinking was considered the usual practice in other circumstances.

A Period of Drunkenness?

Drunkenness was rarely discussed by early classic authors. However, in the 3rd Century B.C., Plautus (Mostel) does mentions inebriation in a play. Beginning in the mid 1st century B.C. and lasting until the early 2nd Century A.D., a discussion of drunkenness and rapprochement against this behavior, on the part of many classic authors, are found.(10) Public intoxication by all social classes appears to have peaked during the mid 1st Century according to some contemporary interpretations (Jellnick, 1976:1735; Purcell, 1985:5). In the late 1st Century A.D., both Plutarch and Suetonius praised prominent men of affairs for their moderate drinking whereas this behavior among public figures had not previously been singled out for praise. Did this reflect a change in attitude, or behavior, or both?

Many contemporary interpreters of Roman drinking patterns, however, feel that this pe- riod of drunkenness was the exception, rather than the rule, for most of Roman history (Hyams, 1965; Tchemia, 1986; Purcell, 1985; Younger, 1966; Jellinek, 1976). Purcell (1985:15) suggests, because there was a period of rapid urbanization and expansion during this period. social stress and anxiety may have fostered increased drinking and drunkenness. When rapid urbanization slowed, this pattern ceased and a resumption of more moderate drinking occurred. Purcell bases this explanation on other historical eras where rapid urbanization has been correlated with increased drinking and drunkenness (ie. The British Industrial Revolution and the Gin epidemic).

Younger (1966:215-217) further argues that even during the late Republic and early Empire, writings concerning heavy drinking and debaucheries could have been the exception rather than the rule. There is support for this argument in modern North American society. Much of the literature concerning drinking in the United states, during the 1980's, focused upon serious or sensational problems caused by alcohol. Few authors discussed normal drinking patterns or how alcohol has been an intrinsic part of Western culture. This is despite the fact that only a

small proportion of people who drink have alcohol-related problems, while the vast majority of drinkers (90%) consume alcohol in moderation without problems.

A Return to Moderate Drinking During the Late Empire?

At the beginning of the 2nd century, upper class moderate drinking began to be described again by classical authors. Tacitus (Ann. m.55) credits this change in behavior to the Emperor Vespasian. By the 4th century drunkenness was no longer seen as a problem of public figures or found in the Forum (Ammianus XVI.5.1, XXI.16.5-8) although wine was provided to Romans at a cheap price, during this era, and was used as payment (Jones, 1986:704).

By the end of the Western Empire did the more moderate pattern prevail, thus setting the foundation in the Early Middle Ages for the modern southern pattern of drinking wine with meals in the regions influenced by Romanization?

POSSIBLE INFLUENCES OF ROMANIZATION AND THE GERMANIC MIGRATIONS

The focus of this paper has been upon feasible origins and possible drinking patterns, in antiquity, among western European cultures. Details concerning the process of Romanization and the influences of the Germanic invasions, at the end of the western Empire, upon drinking patterns also needs to be discussed. However, because of space limitations, only the briefest suggestion as to their influences can be mentioned in this paper. In a future paper more depth concerning these factors and their possible influences on persistence, or change, on drinking cultures will be addressed.

Today, the major regions of western European viticulture, and daily wine-drinking, are former Roman provinces (See Table 1). As Romans conquered various areas of Western Europe, from the late 3rd Century B.C. through the mid 1st Century A.O., they brought urbanization, language, and viticulture. The earlier the settlement, and the longer the occupation,(11) the more likely the region appears to have retained vestiges of Roman urban civilization into modern times. The end products of Romanization, still seen today, include a Latin-based languages, viticulture in suitable ecosystems, wine drinking with meals, and Christianity. These attributes are found in Italy, Spain, Portugal and most of France. Of course, it could be argued that early occupation is a spurious nexus as ecological factors were favourable for viticulture in the geographic areas closest to and thus first occupied by the Romans.

However, the drinking culture of moderate wine consumption with meals is not necessarily found in the north-western area of France, southern Germany, parts of Switzerland, and Austria, nor in Britain. Neither is a Latin-based language found in some of these areas. Yet all are former Roman provinces. During the late Roman Empire and early Middle Ages, Germanic tribes settled in these areas (Wolfram, 1988; Jones, 1986). Anderson (1974:154-155) suggests, whereas the oldest Mediterranean cultures absorbed these groups, more recent colonies became a balance

of Roman and Germanic elements. Today these regions appear to have a mixed, or blended drinking pattern. Could modern patterns and attitudes found in these nations reflect both Mediterranean and Germanic customs?

Although there appears to have been viticulture in Britain, it did not readily thrive and wine was likely consumed primarily by rich villa owners and urban dwellers (Williams 1977:337; Frere 1987:284-5). Unlike southern Gaul, wine drinking did not appear to become part of the social fabric. With the disintegration of Roman power, there appears to have been a regeneration of Celtic culture which may have blended with the Germanic Anglo-Saxon customs (Frere 1987:367-375; Morris 1977:376; Salway 1981:654). The Scandinavian countries and Germanic areas, north of the Rhine, did not enjoy an ecosystem suitable for vine growth, were not Romanized and rarely drank imported wine. Even today grain based beverages are preferred and a Germanic based language, except for Finland, is spoken (Cunliffe, 1988:178-179; Fitzpatrick., 1985:311; Younger, 1966:164, 237-243).

SUMMARY

Several tentative hypotheses have been posited in this paper regarding the etiology of western drinking cultures. Some hints as to possible reasons have been contemplated. However, these ideas need to be clarified and more fully explored before conclusions re: meals, and Christianity. These attributes are found in Italy, Spain, Portugal and most of France. Of course, it could be argued that early occupation is a spurious nexus as ecological factors were favourable for viticulture in the geographic areas closest to and thus first occupied by the Romans.

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A Possible Statistical Argument

To see if there might be a statistical association between the characteristics associated with the northern and southern cultures, a Pearson-Rho correlation was calculated with the variables found in Table 1 for the latest (1984-86) data available.

The results found in Table 2 show a significantly positive ($p < .05$) association between being a former Roman province, Romance language, viticulture and per capita wine consumption. There is also a negative correlation between per capita beer consumption and Romance language. These associations tend to support the hypotheses that areas today which overlay former Roman provinces tend to still retain the wine drinking culture and Roman based Latin language. Whereas non-provincial areas tend to be beer drinkers and speak non Latin based languages. However, due to its small size ($N = 16$), this sample may have not had enough power for determining differences. Therefore, these associations must be viewed cautiously as they could be spurious.

Table 2 Results of Pearson Rho Correlation* for 1984–1986 total per capita alcohol consumption, per capita wine and beer consumption, spoken language group, commercial viticulture and former Roman province status.

	<i>Total per capita consumption</i>	<i>Wine</i>	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Spoken language</i>	<i>Viti-culture</i>	<i>Former province</i>
Total per capita consumption	1.0	.2	.8*	-.1	.3	.4
Wine consumption		1.0	-.4	.8*	.8*	.7*
Beer consumption			1.0	-.6†	-.1	.0
Spoken language				1.0	.6†	.8*
Viticulture					1.0	.8*
Former Province						1.0

*For the Pearson Rho calculations, Ordinal data described in Table 1 was coded as follows: Germanic language, no commercial viticulture and not being a former province = 1. Romance language, commercial viticulture and being a former Roman province = 3. For "both" or partial characteristics, 2 was used.

† $p < .05$

* $p < .001$

Footnotes

1. Drink and drinking are used in this paper to denote alcoholic beverages and their consumption and not consuming any liquid.
2. Culture is defined by Heath (1990:251) "as a convenient short hand label that subsumes broad patterns of thinking and behaving that are manifested in daily life by individuals". "Drinking culture", includes the most common consumption patterns, behaviours surrounding drinking, and attitudes towards alcohol and its use in a society.
3. Rome, Roman and Romanization designate the cultural, legal, political, religious, social and other influences and changes instigated by various aspects of the Roman Empire.
4. Secondary cultures spawned by European colonialism since the sixteenth century in other geographic areas of the world have tended to follow the patterns of the mother country. For example, Heath (1984: 158) suggests that Argentina and Chile are culturally Romani. ⁷ed wine-drinking nations with little evidence of major alcohol-related social problems. In contrast North America and Australia/New Zealand are primarily beer drinking countries with many perceived alcohol related problems.
5. Translators often use the terms "ale" and "beer" interchangeably. It is likely that the early Northern groups were drinking "ale", malt liquor made of fermented barley or wheat, and not "beer" made with hops. One author suggests that hops preserved and flavored "beer" was not found on the Continent until the 8th Century, and not confirmed until the 11th Century (Monckton 29:1969). Archaeological evidence for malt liquor remains have been found in several northern sites (Stjernquist 1977:69; Biel 1981:17).
6. Loeb Classical Translations used unless otherwise noted.
7. Only B.C. will be designated. Un-designated dates are A.D.
8. A selected list of contemporary authors who discuss Roman drinking, viticulture or the wine trade include: Cunliffe (1988), Dion (1977), Dietler (1990), Galliou (1984), Goudineau (1983), Hyams (1965), Jellinek
9. (1976), McKinlay (1948 a-c, 1949, 1950), Purcell (1985), Tchernia (1983, 1986), Wells (1980) and Younger (1966)
10. 9. A sample of a few classical authors who condemned drunkenness and/or condoned moderate drinking over several centuries include: Ovid *Fasti*. III.523; Seneca *Epist. Morales*. LXXXIII.24f; Plutarch *Cato*. III.2; Pliny (*HN*XIV.28.136-149; Petronius *Sat. I*; Martial *X.47*; Juvenal *Satires VI.298-305*; Athenaeus *The Deipnosophists X.426-427, XI.781*; Macrobius *III.16.14, 17.12*.
11. 10. *ibid*.
12. 11. The Roman military occupied much of Spain and Portugal by 133 B.C., southern France by 122 B.C., the rest of France, Belgium and the western Netherlands by 55 B.C., Austria, Switzerland and northern Spain between 28 and 13 B.C., Germany by 16 and England in 43. Much influence was exerted by the military in the western provinces and on the long frontier (MacMullen 1963, Jones 1986 and Drinkwater 1983).

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