CHAPTER TEN

WINE AND MEDICINE IN ANCIENT GREECE

In an attempt to dispel the grief caused by the death of loved ones, Helen pours into the crater that was used for drinking an ingenious remedy that came from Egypt, the land of the most knowledgeable doctors in the world, who descend from Paeon, the doctor of the gods. This passage from the *Odyssey* (4,219 ff.) is well known, and is the first attestation in Greek literature of a remedy against love sickness. However, what is less well known is the reading of this passage by a Greek doctor who lived between Hippocrates and Galen, Rufus of Ephesus (first century AD), in a discussion of wine preserved in Oribasius:¹

Wine is more praiseworthy for health than any other thing; however, anyone who drinks it must be wise, if he does not wish to suffer some irreparable ill; for wine can encourage heat, fill the body with strength and digest food from all parts; and there is no wine that is not harmful so as not to produce these effects; but it has, as all other things, some inferior qualities and some superior qualities. Wine can also give pleasure to the soul in a certain state, since it is the remedy (*φάρμακον*) against grief and, in my opinion, it is what Helen poured into the crater.

This *interpretatio graeca* of the Egyptian remedy is most certainly incorrect, but it clearly shows the important place that wine occupied in the medical thought of ancient Greece.

Wine was believed to be relevant to medicine in several ways. Just as for modern doctors, wine was held to be a possible cause of problems and even diseases, particularly when drunk excessively; thus, ancient doctors laid out precautions necessary for its use. However, what is most unexpected is that wine was considered as a therapeutic agent not only for the mind, but also for the body; thus, doctors made extensive use of wine in their prescriptions, both for internal and external uses.

The two richest corpora of medical writings on the use of wine by Greek doctors are undoubtedly those attributed to Hippocrates and to Galen.²

¹ Oribasius, *Coll. Med.* 5.7.1–2 (ed. Raeder, Vol. I, p. 126,26–33).

² To give some idea of scale, we find the term *οἶνος* 867 times in the Hippocratic Corpus. There is still no study on wine in Hippocrates; see the remarks by J.-H. Dierbach,

Other Greek doctors whose works are preserved are historically less important, although we should not ignore the work of Aretaeus of Cappadocia (first century AD), who mentions wine some sixty times,³ of Rufus of Ephesus (first-second century AD),⁴ of Soranus (first-second century AD) in his work on diseases of women,⁵ or the pharmacology of Dioscorides, a military doctor under Claudius and Nero.⁶ For many Greek doctors, their work is unfortunately known only through fragments.⁷ For example, the work

Die Arzneimittel des Hippokrates, Heidelberg, 1824 (medical use of wine: pp. 59–62); cf. J. Jouanna, *Hippocrate*, Paris, 1992, p. 237 f. The works of Laurence Villard have filled part of this gap by studying wine and women: “Le vin et les femmes: un texte méconnu de la *Collection hippocratique*” (*Revue des Etudes Grecques* 1997, pp. 362–380); “Tant de vin pour soigner les femmes” (Proceedings of the IXe Colloque international hippocratique, Pisa, 1996, pp. 219–234). The article by D. Micallella, “Vino e amore: Ippocrate, *Antica medicina* 20,” *Quaderni Urbinati* 24, 1977, pp. 151–155, is of little value, since the interpretation offered there rests on a word (ἀσθενέα) which is not found in the ancient manuscripts.

Similarly, there is no study on wine and medicine in Galen; see the paper by J.-M. Jacques, quoted in footnote 48; on diet in general in Galen, see V. Nutton, “Galen and the traveller’s fare,” in J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and Mike Dobson, *Food in Antiquity*, University of Exeter Press, 1995, pp. 359–370 (wine p. 363).

³ For attestations of the word ‘wine’ (οἶνος) in Aretaeus of Cappadocia, see the index of the edition by C. Hude, *CMG* II, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1958, p. 247 f.

⁴ On medicine in Rufus of Ephesus, see recently H. Thomssen and Ch. Probst, “Die Medizin des Rufus von Ephesos,” *ANRW* II. 37. 2 (1994), pp. 1254–1292. However, there is only a very brief mention of the use of wine in dietetics (p. 1285 and n. 215). Rufus spoke about the use of wine not only in his work on *Regimen* (from where the extract cited here by Oribasius is taken), but he had written a treatise *On wine*, mentioned in the *Suda* and confirmed by three independent Arabic witnesses; see M. Ullmann, “Die arabische Überlieferung der Schriften des Rufus von Ephesos,” *ANRW* II. 37. 2 (1994), pp. 1293–1349 (particularly p. 1318 f. VIII *Der Wein*); fragments of the treatise *On wine* were translated into German by M. Ullmann, “Neues zu den diätetischen Schriften des Rufus von Ephesos,” *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 9 (1974), pp. 30–37.

⁵ The term is used some thirty times.

⁶ Dioscorides, *Materia Medica* 5 (particularly 7–11). To Dioscorides’ comments on the therapeutic virtues of wine, we should compare, in Latin literature, the corresponding discussion of Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* 23.31–51; see also book 14 on vines and wine, with the notes in the edition by J. André) and Celsus, *De medicina* (2.11 to 13, with the notes in the edition by G. Serbat, 1995); cf. also Columella, *De agricultura* 12.19 ff. To Greek medical literature we may add the sparse comments found in literature on the symposium (Plutarch, *Quaestiones Convivales* and particularly Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* 1–2, 25f–40f). On wine in Dioscorides, see J.M. Riddle, *Dioscorides. On Pharmacy and Medicine*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1985 (wine in Dioscorides, pp. 142–146). Useful comparisons between these diverse sources on the different varieties of wine can be found in the dissertation by H. Bruns, quoted in footnote 8.

⁷ On wine in the fragments of Greek doctors, see particularly Diocles of Carystus, a doctor from the fourth century BC (frag. 48, 69, 130, 131, 141 Wellmann *[frag. 114, 120, 237, 238, 182 van der Eijk]); see also, in the same period, the Athenian doctor Mnesitheus (frag. 41, 45, and 47 Bertier), with the commentary by J. Bertier, *Mnésithée et Dieuchès*, Leiden, 1972, pp. 57–86

on wine by Asclepiades of Bithynia (first century BC), which earned him the surname of 'giver of wine' (οἰνοδότης)⁸ and which, according to Pliny the Elder, had given rise to innumerable commentaries, has regrettably disappeared.⁹ Asclepiades' enthusiasm for wine was such that he thought it rivalled, or very nearly rivalled, the power of the gods.¹⁰ When medical knowledge became encyclopaedic, notably from Oribasius, the doctor of the Emperor Julian (fourth century AD), Galen became the fundamental source of reference to wine. Since Galen takes his great precursor Hippocrates as his basis, unknowingly adding decisive innovations, it is clear that the Hippocratic position on wine remains essential in the history of Greek medicine and should serve as a basis for a discussion of wine in the medical thought of ancient Greece.

"There is no topic more difficult to handle, or more full of detail, seeing that it is hard to say whether wine does good to people rather than harming them," declares Pliny the Elder in his discussion of the therapeutic properties of wine.¹¹ Despite the importance and abundance of material on the subject, it is surprising to see that no study has been published on wine in Greek medicine.¹² This paper does not pretend to fill this gap, but to

("L'enseignement de Mnésithée sur le vin"); also Praxagoras of Cos (frag. 39 Steckerl). For the Hellenistic period, see Erasistratus (frag. 158, 164, 167, 283 Garofalo) and Herophilus (T 256 Von Staden).

⁸ Anon. Lond. XXIV 31; cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 7.123 ("reperita ratione, qua vinum aegris mederetur"). On wine in Asclepiades, see H. Bruns, *Quaestiones Asclepiadeae De vinorum diversis generibus*, Diss. Rostock, 1884, 52 p. (for testimonia on wine found in Asclepiades, pp. 40–52). This aspect of Asclepiades' work is not discussed in J.T. Vallance, *The Lost Theory of Asclepiades of Bithynia*, Oxford, 1990.

⁹ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.32.

¹⁰ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.38.

¹¹ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.31.

¹² Although there are numerous studies on wine and the symposium in Greece (see in particular F. Lissarrague, *Un flot d'images. Une esthétique du banquet grec*, Paris, 1987; O. Murray, *Symptica. A symposium on the Symposium*, Oxford, 1990, with an excellent bibliography, pp. 321–344; P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet. Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques*, Coll. de l'Ecole française de Rome 157, Rome 1992, particularly pp. 342–348 for wine, with the bibliography quoted p. 342), and although there is a study on wine and the sacred (K. Kircher, *Die sakrale Bedeutung des Weines im Altertum*, Giessen, 1910), there is none on wine and health in Greece. The work by R. Billiard (*La vigne dans l'Antiquité*, Lyon, 1913) remains fundamental on vines, the varieties of wine and also the diseases of wine; but there is no discussion about wine and diseases. The only study on wine in antiquity (Ch. Seltman, *Wine in the Ancient World*, London, 1957) contains practically nothing on wine and medicine. On wine and intoxication in Greece, see the thesis of P. Villard, *L'ivresse dans le monde grec*, Aix-en-Provence, 1988; on wine and *euthymia* ('good humour'), see J. Pigeaud, *La maladie de l'âme*, Paris, 1981, pp. 477–521. F. Salviat in his excellent article, "Le vin de Thasos, amphores, vin et sources écrites," *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*

outline the role of wine amongst Greek doctors in pathology and, above all, in treatment, distinguishing between internal and external use.¹³

Wine has a power (δύναμις),¹⁴ an ardour (μένος),¹⁵ which, when consumed in excess (πολλὸς ποθείς)¹⁶ or drunk unmixed with water (ἄκρητος),¹⁷ can cause physiological disorders. The first of these disorders is, of course, intoxication;¹⁸ there are numerous expressions to refer to this first cause of trouble amongst patients in Hippocrates (ἐκ μέθης, ἐκ πόσιος, ἐκ πύτων, ἐκ κραিপάλης, ἐξ οἴνου, ἐκ θωρήξιος or ἀπὸ οἶνοφλυγίης).¹⁹ The Hippocratic doctors are particularly interested in the physical effects of intoxication, although they do not ignore its effects on thinking. However, they preserve the attitude of an objective observer. It is striking to note that the medical writings of the Hippocratic Corpus never condemn intoxication. We must look to Plato's *Symposium* to find such condemnation from a doctor:

Suppl. XIII, pp. 145–196, stresses the need for a history of Greek wine, comparable to that which exists for Rome (cf. A. Tchernia, *Le vin de l'Italie romaine*, Ecole française de Rome, 1986; cf. also M. Gras, "Vin et société à Rome et dans le Latium à l'époque archaïque," in *Modes de contact et Processus de transformation dans les Sociétés anciennes. Actes du Colloque de Cortone* [24–30 mai 1981], Coll. Ecole française de Rome 67, 1983, pp. 1067–1075). On wine in Rome, see also J. André, *L'alimentation à Rome*, Paris, 1981, pp. 162–174; and on wine and medicine in Rome, G. Dumézil, *Fêtes romaines d'été et d'automne*, Paris, 1975 (chap. 'Médication du vin et santé des hommes', pp. 98–107) and J.-M. André, 'Vertu thérapeutique du vin et pathologie de l'ivresse à Rome, de Lucien à Plinie l'Ancien', *Actes du XII^e congrès de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, Paris, 1989, pp. 450–452. In P. Scarpi (ed.) *Storie del vino. Homo edens II*, Milan, 1991, there is a no discussion about wine in medicine.—The present study was meant as a contribution to a Greek publication as part of a collaborative project on *Wine in Greece* led by F. Salviat but which, due to reasons beyond his control, will never come to light. I thank François Salviat for having requested my collaboration. He is the cause that prompted this study, its πρόφασις.

¹³ Given the breadth of the subject, we will not discuss the therapeutic properties of the by-products of wine (for example, the verjus left by green olives and vinegar), nor of wines made from plants outside vine. On the by-products of wine and their use in medicine, see M.-C. Amouretti, "Les sous-produits de la fabrication de l'huile et du vin," in M.-C. Amouretti and J.P. Brun (eds.) *La production du vin et de l'huile en Méditerranée*, BCH Suppl. 26, 1993, pp. 463–476.

¹⁴ Hippocrates, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 20 (1.622,15 L. = CUF ed. Jouanna p. 147,7).

¹⁵ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases* 17 (2.362,2 L. = CUF ed. Joly p. 64,16).

¹⁶ Hippocrates, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 20 (1.622,15 L. etc. = CUF ed. Jouanna p. 147,7).

¹⁷ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 5.86, (5.252,11 L.) etc.

¹⁸ On intoxication amongst the Greeks in general, see the thesis of P. Villard, quoted in footnote 12. Compare, for drunkenness in Rome, J.M. André, quoted in footnote 12.

¹⁹ For these references, see J.-H. Kühn/U. Fleischer, *Index Hippocraticus*, Göttingen, 1986–1989 s.v.

For me, said the doctor Eryximachus, whilst we are determining how many cups should be drunk at parties, medicine has shown me a very obvious fact, that drunkenness is harmful to man.²⁰

Hippocratic doctors themselves seem to consider intoxication as just another cause of sickness. According to the Hippocratic writings, excessive consumption of wine can cause two types of effects, since wine affects above all two parts of the body. Its most frequent effect, most specifically associated with intoxication, is on the head; but wine can also act on the 'cavities' of the body, especially on the 'lower cavity'. Whatever the affected part, the fundamental effect is that of warming, a general property of wine upon which all doctors agree. The clearest statement of this belief is found in the Hippocratic author of *Regimen*, who contrasts the properties of wine with those of water: "water is cold and wet; wine is hot and dry."²¹ Galen's view is the same.²² According to Rufus of Ephesus, wine "arouses heat" in the body;²³ he believes that, if the same diet were given to two men and one was made to drink water and the other wine, we would find a large difference between them regarding the quantity of heat in their body.²⁴

Doctors sometimes seek to explain the evident fact that wine acts with predilection on the head. For example, the Hippocratic author of *Affections* declares that the head, when it is warm, attracts wine.²⁵ However, normally they content themselves with the observation as such. The excessive use of wine leads to heaviness of the head (καρηβαρή)²⁶ and to pain in the head.²⁷ However, wine can also have far more serious effects on the head and can lead even to death. Three Hippocratic case histories record intense fevers following excessive drinking, the last case ending in death.²⁸ The first of these patients suffers a "shaking of the head and particularly of the lower lip"; all three are subject to hallucinations. Indeed, wine leads to disturbance

²⁰ Plato, *Symposium*, 176 c–d.

²¹ *Regimen*, ch. 52 (6.554,7 L. = CMG ed. Joly p. 172,17).

²² *On the Powers of Simple Drugs* 7.15,2 (12.88 K.).

²³ Rufus of Ephesus, quoted in Oribasius, *Coll. Med.* 5.7.

²⁴ Rufus of Ephesus, *On Wine*, frag. I § 2 (ed. Ullmann, quoted in footnote 4). If we can rely on the longer version of the fragment preserved at the end of a treatise on diet by Ishaq ibn Sulaiman al-Isra'ili (quoted by Ullmann, "Die arabische Überlieferung ...," p. 1319), the heat given off by wine can be beneficial, particularly for digestion.

²⁵ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 2 (6.210,6 f. L.).

²⁶ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 10 (2.302,1 L. = CUF ed. Joly p. 51,18).

²⁷ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 2, 6th sect., ch. 30 (5.138,9 f. L.).

²⁸ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 3, 2nd sect. n. 5, 3.46–48 L.; *ibid.*, 3rd sect. n. 10, *ibid.*, 130–132 and n. 16, *ibid.*, 146–148.

of thinking, which is located in the head.²⁹ It causes delirium and madness³⁰ or an attack of aphasia.³¹ We even find a most extraordinary case of death due to intoxication, but this time for completely accidental reasons:

A youth who had drunk much neat wine was sleeping on his back in a tent. A snake called *arges* slithered into his mouth. Not realising what he felt, he ground his teeth together and bit off part of the snake. He was seized by a great pain and brought up his hands as though choking, tossed himself about, and died in convulsions.³²

We may suppose, from the mention of the tent, that this young man was undertaking military service. Drinking was probably common in these circumstances, if we refer to the *Against Conon*, where the litigant, according to the writer Demosthenes, complains about the humiliation at the hands of Conon's sons whilst they were doing their military service together:

They had encamped near us ... These men constantly used to spend the entire day after lunch drinking ... At whatever time the others might be having dinner, these men were already drunk ... they used to beat them and empty their chamber pots over us, or befoul us with urine; there was no rudeness or outrage that they did not commit.³³

Wine affects not only the head, but also the 'cavities' of the body. Although less noticeable than drunkenness itself, its effects are equally damaging. Wine is not only dry and hot, but "its dregs are also purgative."³⁴ Thus, doctors warn against accidents of diarrhoea which can be caused by an excess of wine.³⁵ This occurs particularly amongst heavy athletes subjected to a compulsory diet, in which they eat a lot of meat and drink a lot of wine.³⁶ Various pains in the 'lower cavity', i.e. in the stomach region, are attributed to wine.³⁷ An outbreak of hepatitis or jaundice is also attributed to an excess of wine.³⁸

²⁹ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 17, 2.362,2 f. L. (= CUF ed. Joly 64,16 f.).

³⁰ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 4, ch. 15, 5.154,3 f. L.; *Epidemics* 5, ch. 2, 5.204,7 L.; cf. also *Regimen*, ch. 35, 6.520,20–522,1 L. (= CMG ed. Joly 156, 5 f.).

³¹ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 2, ch. 22, 7.36,14 L. (= CUF ed. Jouanna 156, 10); *Diseases* 3, ch. 8, 7.126,18 L. (= CMG ed. Potter 76, 11 f.).

³² Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 5, ch. 86, 5.252,11–15 L., transl. Smith, modified.

³³ Demosthenes, *Against Conon* 3–4.

³⁴ Hippocrates, *Regimen*, ch. 52, 6.554,7 f. L. (= CMG ed. Joly 172,17 f.).

³⁵ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 7, ch. 82, 5.436,22–438,1 L.; *Affections*, ch. 27, 6.238,10 L.

³⁶ The 'choleric' complaint of the pugilist Bias in Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 5, ch. 71, 5.244,20 f. L.

³⁷ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases App.*, ch. 17, 2.476,11–478,1 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 87,17 f.).

³⁸ Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 28, 7.240,11 L.; ch. 37, *ibid.* 258,19.

According to Galen, wine, when it is soft and concentrated, is bad for the liver (especially in cases of ‘cirrhosis’) and for the spleen.³⁹ Most exceptionally, wine is considered to be an efficient cause of afflictions of the ‘upper cavity’: empyema of the chest,⁴⁰ erysipelas of the lung,⁴¹ pleurisy and peripneumonia.⁴² The diffusion of wine through the body, in the case of intoxication, leads to other unexpected consequences: according to Soranus, injuries received in an intoxicated state heal less easily, and the seed of a foetus is attached less easily; thus, a woman should not be intoxicated if she wishes to conceive.⁴³

Although aware of the harmful effects of an excess of wine, doctors qualified their examinations by considering both the different varieties of wine and the different varieties of individuals. Not all wines are equally dangerous, and doctors were careful to differentiate their properties. The dietetic catalogues of Hippocratic medicine⁴⁴ distinguish between numerous varieties of wine according to their colour (white, dark, straw-coloured), their feeling on the palate or their consistency (thin/concentrated, light/full, hard/soft, smooth/sharp), their smell (odorous, with a honeyed smell, without smell), and their age (old, young). The author of *Regimen in Acute Diseases* clearly arranges his catalogue according to the harmfulness or usefulness of the diverse varieties of wine and proudly points out that he is teaching new things compared to his predecessors.⁴⁵ However, Galen, in his commentary on this treatise, complains that the catalogue of wines lacks order and is incomplete.⁴⁶ Thus he reorganises the catalogue of wines, distinguishing five categories of differentiation (colour, taste, consistency, odour and property), and enriches in each of the subdivisions the already subtle Hippocratic palate, taking into consideration, more so than Hippocrates,⁴⁷

³⁹ Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates' Regimen in Acute Diseases* 3, ch. 2, 15.633, 9 ff. K. (= CMG V 9, 1, ed. Helmreich 221,26 ff.).

⁴⁰ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 1, ch. 15, 6.166,15. L.

⁴¹ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 2, ch. 55, 7.86,5 f. L. (= CUF ed. Jouanna 194,1 f.).

⁴² Hippocrates, *Diseases* 1, ch. 26, 6.192,11 ff. L.; compare Aristotle, *Problemata* 3.1 and 3.6.

⁴³ Soranus, *Diseases of Women* 1.38 Ilberg (= CUF ed. Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas, ch. 12,95–100).

⁴⁴ Hippocrates, *Regimen*, ch. 52, 6.554,8 ff. L. (CMG ed. Joly 172,18 ff.); *Regimen in acute diseases*, ch. 14, 2.332,3 ff. L. (= CUF ed. Joly 57, 19 ff.); *Affections*, ch. 48, 6.258,16–19 L.

⁴⁵ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.334,12–14 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 58, 19–21): “These are the facts concerning the usefulness and damage of wine, all facts that were unknown by my predecessors.”

⁴⁶ Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates' Regimen in Acute Diseases* 3.1, 15.626,4 f. K. (= CMG V 9, 1 ed. Helmreich 218,6 f.).

⁴⁷ Several vineyards are quoted in the *Hippocratic corpus*: the “old wine of Thasos” (*Diseases* 3, ch. 17, 7.160,5 L. = CMG ed. Potter 98, 26); the “strong wine of Crete” (*Regimen in*

the different vineyards, whether those of Asia Minor, from where the physician of Pergamon originated (Ariousia in Chios, Arsysis, Lesbos, Tibas, Tita-czenos, Tmolus, etc.) or those of Italy, the country where the majority of his medical activity took place (Caecubus, Mt. Falernus, Faustianum, wine of the Sabine hills, Sorrentum etc.). Galen is one of the ancient authors who quote the most varieties of wine, along with Athenaeus, Dioscorides and Pliny the Elder.⁴⁸ The interest for vineyards became such amongst doctors after Hippocrates that they seem to have sometimes contributed to the 'promotion' of a vintage. The Hellenistic doctor Erasistratus provided the origin of the celebrity of the vineyard of Lesbos.⁴⁹ We may add the catalogue of Dioscorides to those of Hippocrates and Galen.⁵⁰ According to all these catalogues of wines established by Greek doctors, certain wines affect the head more than others. According to Hippocrates, 'concentrated' wine leads to a heavier head and more troubles of thinking than soft wine.⁵¹ According to Dioscorides, hard wine causes headache.⁵² According to Galen, straw wine, which is the warmest wine after yellow wine, affects the head and thinking more so than dark wine, precisely because it is hotter.⁵³ What further emerges from these catalogues is that certain wines are more harmful than others for the digestive tracts. According to Hippocrates, soft wine inflames the spleen and liver and produces wind in the intestine.⁵⁴ According to Dioscorides, soft wines trouble the stomach and intestines.⁵⁵ According to Galen, soft and full wines travel through the body slowly and aggravate rather than diminish the obstruction of swollen organs.⁵⁶

Acute Diseases App., ch. 14, 2.470,8 L. = CUF ed. Joly 86,8: uncertain text); the white wine from Mende (in Chalcis, and not Mendes in Egypt as the Bailly dictionary suggests!), frequently recommended by the author of *Internal Affections* (chs. 13, 16, 17, 18, 24 [7.200,20; 206,4; 208,20; 212,16; 228,12 L.]); the "hard and very dark wine from Cos" (*Internal Affections*, ch. 25, 7.232,3 L.); wine from Pramnos (*Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 52, 8.112,1 L.; *Diseases of Women* 2, ch. 90, *ibid.*, 216, 5; ch. 192, *ibid.*, 370,16; ch. 199, *ibid.*, 382,7 f.).

⁴⁸ Some sixty local varieties; see J.-M. Jacques, "La conservation du vin à Pergame au II^e siècle après J.-C.," in *La vigne et le vin dans la littérature*, Actes du XII^e Congrès de l'Association Guillaume Budé (Bordeaux 17–21 août 1988), Paris, 1989, p. 462.

⁴⁹ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 14.73.

⁵⁰ Dioscorides, *Mat. Med.* 5.6.

⁵¹ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.332,5–7 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 57,22 f.).

⁵² Dioscorides, *Mat. Med.* 5.6.3.

⁵³ Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates' Regimen in Acute Diseases* 3, ch. 7, 15.646,10 f. K. (CMG V 9, 1 ed. Helmreich, 228,17 f.).

⁵⁴ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.332,8 ff. L. (= CUF ed. Joly 57,25 ff.).

⁵⁵ Dioscorides, *Mat. Med.* 5.6.2.

⁵⁶ Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates' Regimen in Acute Diseases* 3, ch. 2, 15.633,14–17 K. (= CMG V, 9, 1, ed. Helmreich 222,2–4).

The harmful effect of wine also varies according to the age and temperament of individuals. As far as age is concerned, children should not be given unmixed wine, but wine mixed with much water so that "it heats and parches the stomach less."⁵⁷ Like the doctors, Plato varies consumption of wine according to age: he prohibits wine amongst young people under eighteen, recommends a moderated consumption until thirty, abstaining from excessive intoxication, but sees wine as a "remedy" (φάρμακον) for the elderly.⁵⁸ Likewise for Galen, "wine is unhelpful for children, but very useful to the elderly."⁵⁹ As far as temperament is concerned, Hippocratic doctors had noted that certain constitutions coped with wine better than others: "If the head copes well with wine, neat wine is fitting; if not, not," declares the author of *Epidemics* VI⁶⁰ in the case of heavy and frequent nose bleeds. Galen more systematically advises against wine in the case of people with a very hot nature, since it produces heat and dryness. It is better for them to drink water than wine, or a light and moderately hard wine.⁶¹ For the same reasons, he advises against wine that is too warm in cases of bilious people, or those who live in a hot country or during a hot season. Conversely, according to the principle of contraries, such wine is favourable for cold and wet constitutions, i.e. for phlegmatics and those who live in a cold country or during a cold season.⁶² Besides temperament, doctors took gender into account: since women have a wet and cold nature, it is advised, according to the principle of contraries, to drink undiluted wine instead.⁶³

⁵⁷ Hippocrates, *Airs, Waters, Places*, ch. 9, 2.40,5–7 L. (= CUF ed. Jouanna 211,1–4); see also *Nature of Man*, ch. 21, CMG ed. Jouanna 214,14–18 (*Regimen in Health*, ch. 6, 6.80,18–82,2 L.).

⁵⁸ Plato, *Laws* 666, a–c. On wine in Plato, see P. Boyancé, "Platon et le vin," *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, Lettres d'humanités, X, 1951, pp. 149–227; and more recently E. Belfiore, "Wine and Catharsis of the Emotions in Plato's *Laws*," *Classical Quarterly* 36, 1986, pp. 421–437, and M. Tecusan, "Logos Symptotikos: Patterns of the Irrational in Philosophical Drinking: Plato Outside the *Symposium*," in O. Murray, *Symptotica* ..., pp. 238–260.

⁵⁹ Galen, *On the Preservation of Health* 2, ch. 5, 6.334,6 f. K.

⁶⁰ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 6, 6th sect., ch. 7, 5.328,2 f. L.

⁶¹ Galen, *On Good and Bad Juices*, ch. 11, 6.808,4–7 f. K.

⁶² Galen, *On Good and Bad Juices*, ch. 11, 6.803,1 ff. K.

⁶³ Hippocrates, *Nature of Man*, ch. 21, CMG ed. Jouanna 216,2 f. = *Regimen in Health*, ch. 6, 6.82,5 f. L.; cf. also *Regimen*, ch. 27, 500,2 ff. (= CMG ed. Joly 142,27 ff.). However, not all doctors understood women to be cold and wet. In the gynaecological writings of the Hippocratic corpus, women are said to be warmer than men in *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 1, 8.12,21 f. L. ("Women have warmer blood than men, and because of this are warmer than men"). This statement is by author C (according to Grensemann's denomination). This contrast was noted by H. King, "Food and blood in Hippocratic gynaecology," in J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Dobson, *Food in Antiquity* ..., p. 353.

Doctors also took into account the difference between the state of good and ill health. There are some diseases where wine is totally out of the question. To refer to this prohibition of drinking wine, a Hippocratic doctor, the author of *Diseases* 3, even uses a verb that is not attested elsewhere in Greek literature: ἀοινεῖν, 'to abstain from wine'.⁶⁴ The diseases in which wine is prohibited are particularly those associated with the head, since wine tends to affect this part of the body, or those which are accompanied by fever and delirium: of the eight prohibitions of drinking wine prescribed by the author of *Diseases* 3, five concern sicknesses of the head or brain (ch. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8); the others concern angina (ch. 10), a lung disease (ch. 7) and lethargy, which is an acute disease (ch. 5). During acute diseases in general (pleurisy, peripneumonia, phrenitis, lethargy), which are accompanied by heaviness of the head or an effect on thinking, one should abstain from straw or dark wine, according to the Hippocratic author of *Regimen in Acute Diseases*.⁶⁵ Wine is also prohibited by the Hippocratic author of *Affections* in cases of phrenitis,⁶⁶ and in all other cases where there is an effect on thinking. The prohibition of wine is sometimes accompanied by the prohibition of sexual relations: in a dorsal phthisis, these two prohibitions together should last a year.⁶⁷ In surgery, wine is prohibited during the first days following a fracture or luxation.⁶⁸

To conclude, wine is considered, from a certain point of view, as a drink whose ingestion can be harmful, or as a pathogenic agent. It is primarily an excess of wine that is harmful. Elsewhere, excess of wine is often cited amongst other possible excesses, essentially those of good food and sex. This excess renders the power of wine (δύναμις, μένος) too forceful. However, the power of wine, even if taken in reasonable quantity, is harmful to certain individuals in good health or to certain patients, since they cannot overcome the power of the wine, or because the properties of the wine accentuate the tendencies of their temperament instead of combating them. However, this power of wine, if it is used soundly, can also contribute towards

⁶⁴ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 3, eight times: ch. 1, 7.118,17 L. (= CMG ed. Potter 70,18); ch. 2, *ibid.*, 120,7 (Potter 70,28); ch. 3, *ibid.*, 122,3 (Potter 72,19); ch. 4, *ibid.*, 122,14 (Potter 72,28); ch. 5, *ibid.*, 122,21 (Potter 74,4); ch. 7, *ibid.*, 126,15 (Potter 76,10); ch. 8, *ibid.*, 128,2 (Potter 76,18); ch. 10, *ibid.*, 130,14 (Potter 78,18).

⁶⁵ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.334,14–336,1 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 58,22–24); ch. 17, *ibid.*, 360,10 f. (Joly 64, 11–13).

⁶⁶ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 10, 6.218,3–5 L.: "wine is not beneficial, since the mind is afflicted with delirium, neither in this disease, nor in any others."

⁶⁷ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 2, ch. 51, 7.80,7 L. (= CUF ed. Jouanna 189,6).

⁶⁸ Hippocrates, *Fractures*, ch. 7, 3.440,16 L.; ch. 11, *ibid.*, 458,9.

the re-establishment of good health. This explains why all doctors in antiquity considered wine as a remedy (φάρμακον); what is more, it is the most pleasant of remedies.⁶⁹

The idea that wine possesses some therapeutic properties may come as a surprise to us: the modern tendency is rather to view alcohol very negatively. However, some American doctors have recently highlighted statistics supporting the fact that moderate consumption of red wine at meals is an efficient prevention against cholesterol. Greek doctors did not know about cholesterol, but they did not doubt that the use of wine could have a beneficial effect on health.

It is well known that Hippocratic medicine accorded great importance to people's life-style, both in sickness and health. Several works carefully describe the properties of foods and catalogue their use, either according to disease or, in the context of prevention, according to places, seasons or temperaments. Thus, wine is examined alongside other food and drinks; moreover, it has the advantage of great flexibility in application, since it can be used undiluted or mixed with other ingredients that weaken or modify its effects. "Wine and honey are wonderfully suited to man," says the Hippocratic author of *Affections*, "if, in health and disease, you administer them appropriately and in accordance with individual constitutions."⁷⁰ The theme of appropriate quantity of usage of wine had previously been expressed by the poet Theognis in the sixth century BC.:

Wine drunk excessively is harmful; but if it is drunk wisely, it is not harmful, but useful.⁷¹

The aim of the principal catalogues of the varieties of wine mentioned above was not only to warn against the dangers of wine, but above all to outline its beneficial effect and its use in the diet of those in sickness and good health. Wine is firstly considered by doctors as a food: "Drinking undiluted wine dispels hunger," we read in the *Aphorisms*.⁷² No Greek doctor doubts the nourishing ability of wine, even if not all of them use the word 'food'.⁷³

⁶⁹ Plutarch, *Precepts of Healthcare*, 19, 132 b; *Questions discussed at Dinner* 3, 1, 647 a.

⁷⁰ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 61, 6.270, 15–17 L.

⁷¹ Theognis, 211–212; cf. *Odyssey* 21, 294; see also Panyassis, frag. 2.

⁷² Hippocrates, *Aphorisms* 2.21, 4.476, 5 L. Thus, we cannot agree with P. Villard ("Bonnes et mauvaises ivresses dans l'Antiquité," in *Le vin des historiens*, Suze-La-Rousse, 1990, p. 16) that the alimentary role of wine was unknown to Greek medicine before Mnesitheus (fourth century BC).

⁷³ Galen, *The Properties of Foodstuffs* 3, ch. 40, 6.743, 1 ff. K.

It is a tonic: the Hippocratic treatise *Sterile Women*⁷⁴ gives advice, aimed at a man, on procreation, and affirms that a man who is going to sleep with a woman should not be intoxicated, but that he should nevertheless have drunk wine: “not white wine,” the author clarifies, “but undiluted and very strong wine”; this is clearly a reference to dark wine, whose power will guarantee the strength of the foetus! Full and dark wines are particularly strengthening.⁷⁵ Ever since Hippocrates, doctors have implicitly assumed that there is a relationship between wine and blood, the first making up for the insufficiency of the latter. For example, the author of *Epidemics* 6⁷⁶ recommends, in cases of heavy and frequent nosebleeds, giving the patient undiluted wine to drink if he turns pale; on the other hand, he prohibits the use of wine immediately after a bleeding.⁷⁷ A woman who does not have her period at the expected time is being prescribed wine.⁷⁸ Another who suffers a red discharge from the uterus should drink little, but drink dark wine as undiluted as possible.⁷⁹ Galen explicitly mentions the hematopoietic function of wine (αἱμάτωσις).⁸⁰ Red and thick wines, he argues, are the most useful for the formation of blood, since the change from wine into blood is, in this case, very easy.⁸¹ We also read in Latin authors that “wine improves men’s strength, blood and complexion.”⁸² Thus, it is not surprising to see doctors prescribe undiluted wine in certain illnesses. It is particularly recommended for ‘cardiac’ illnesses, where it is sometimes “the only means of health,” according to Aretaeus.⁸³ We also note a ‘homeopathic’ use of pure wine that treats like with like: “If, following intoxication, there is a headache, drink a cotyle (= 0,27 litres) of undiluted wine,” declares the Hippocratic author of *Epidemics* 2.⁸⁴

The use of wine as a pick-me-up during the second phase of the diet in order to strengthen the patient after subjecting him to a specific diet, remained a prescription of doctors throughout the history of Greek

⁷⁴ Hippocrates, *Sterile Women*, ch. 218, 8.422,18–20 L.

⁷⁵ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 40, 6.250,10 f. L.

⁷⁶ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 6, 6th sect., ch. 7, 5.326,14–328,1 L.

⁷⁷ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases App.*, ch. 24, 2.508,7–9 L. (= CUF ed. July 93,15–17).

⁷⁸ Hippocrates, *Nature of Women*, ch. 59, 7.398,12 L.

⁷⁹ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 2, ch. 110, 8.238 L.

⁸⁰ Galen, *Good and Bad Juices*, ch. 11, 6.803,1 K.

⁸¹ Galen, *Properties of Foodstuffs* 3, ch. 40, 6.744,3–5 K.

⁸² Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.37.

⁸³ Aretaeus 6.3, 12, Hude² 128,23 f.; cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.50.

⁸⁴ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 2, 5th sect., ch. 30, 5.138,9 f. L.

medicine. We can look, for example, to the remarks that the Byzantine commentator Stephanus (sixth-seventh century AD) wrote on Galen's prescription to give wine to those who have aches:

Since he (sc. Galen) wishes to restore those who have aches, since their dynamic constitution is weak, he thinks of wine which can be very rapidly transformed into a humour in the stomach and be very rapidly transformed into blood in the liver and nourish the whole body. For the dosage of wine, we must account for all the constitutional elements and most of all for the dynamic constitution; indeed, if he is weak, we give him less wine; if he is strong, we give him more wine, the quantity that he can digest; but we must also take into account age; if he is old, he needs more wine; if it concerns the constitution of a person with the strength of age, he needs less wine; we must also take into account habit; if it concerns someone who drinks wine when they are healthy, we will give him more wine; if not, we will give him less; and less in summer, more in winter, and even more in Scythia, less in Ethiopia and so on.⁸⁵

Stephanus, like Galen, clearly affirms the hematopoietic function of wine. The dosage of wine prescribed depends on the state of the patient, their age, customs, the season and also the country.⁸⁶ Thus, the logic of prescription consists in maintaining a balance between the strength of the wine and that of the patient, and opposing the warm quality of the wine to the cold quality of the constitution (in the elderly) and the environment (season, country).

The twofold value of wine, which can be both a harmful or fortifying substance, leads doctors to subtly vary the diet. For example, we saw that Soranus condemns the use of wine amongst women who wish to conceive,⁸⁷ and although he also condemns its use in the first or second day after conception to avoid the violent diffusion of the wine in the body disturbing the seed, he does not wish the woman to continue abstaining from wine for too long, since her diet will be weakened.⁸⁸ Instead, a woman will change diet progressively so that, after the period of pica, she will drink wine according to her habit.⁸⁹ On the other hand, if she wishes to cause an abortion just after conception, she will drink some wine in order to facilitate

⁸⁵ Stephanus' *Commentary*, a philosopher and doctor, on Galen's *Therapeutics to Glaucon*; ed. Dietz I, 262.

⁸⁶ Compare what is said, *supra*, p. 181, on the degrees of wine's harmfulness according to ages and temperaments.

⁸⁷ See *supra*, p. 179 and footnote 43.

⁸⁸ Soranus, *Diseases of Women* 1.46 Ilberg (= CUF ed. Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas, ch. 16,38–47).

⁸⁹ Soranus, *Diseases of Women* 1.54 Ilberg (Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas, ch. 18,10 f.).

the loosening of the seed.⁹⁰ In the same spirit, Soranus regulates the diet of the wet nurse who should not drink wine at the beginning but will be on a diet of water during the first forty days, since the virtues of wine that pass through the milk are too powerful for the newborn, who risks having epileptic fits; she will then progressively drink some clear white wine so that the power of the wine passes from the milk and fortifies the infant. In Soranus' own words:

To begin, she will drink wine once from time to time, then every three days, then every two days, and finally every day, and not only once, but twice; she will finish drinking to quench her thirst. It is through this way that the newborn will be nourished without damage from milk that is made with wine, since before this he does not have the nature to support it without damage.⁹¹

As we saw, wine is not just a fortifier, but also a purgative. The doctor seeks to bring about evacuations of stools or urine by soft wine,⁹² even though soft wine is less diuretic than strong white wine.⁹³ It is this diuretic virtue of wine that explains the Hippocratic aphorism "undiluted wine removes strangury and dysuria."⁹⁴ Wine can equally facilitate evacuations from the upper part of the body. Soft wine is a more active expectorant than strong white wine.⁹⁵ Wine is also used as an emetic. If, for reasons of health, thin individuals wish to provoke vomits intended to purge moisture during winter months, they

⁹⁰ Soranus, *Diseases of Women* 1.64, Ilberg (Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas ch. 20, 112). This prescription was not included by the recent editors of Soranus, who state (p. 62, n. 308): "This prescription of wine might surprise us, since Soranus advises wine during pregnancy (cf. Ilb. 1.46, our chapter 16, p. 44)." In reality, as we saw, the diet of wine varies with the development of the pregnancy. Immediately after conception, when the seed is not yet well fixed, Soranus advises against wine if the foetus is to be preserved, since wine, spreading violently through the body, risks contributing to loosening the seed; conversely, Soranus advises wine after conception when the woman wishes to abort. Soranus' position is perfectly coherent. It is clear in Soranus that wine contributes to the detachment of the seed during the first days after conception. The conclusions on the abortive properties of wine drawn by M. Durry ("Les femmes et le vin," *REL*, 33, 1955, pp. 108–113) from Soranus and his translator, Caelius Aurelianus, are correct. The criticism of Durry by E. Nardi, *Procurato aborto nel mondo greco romano*, Milan, 1971, p. 19 and p. 340, n. 66, is not convincing, since she ignores the two passages where Soranus expressly says that wine (and not only bad wine) risks hindering or thwarting the fixing of the seed at the moment of conception or immediately after (1.38 Ilberg = CUF ed. Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas ch. 12, 95–100; 1.46 Ilberg = Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas 16, 38–44).

⁹¹ Soranus, *Diseases of Women* 2.26 Ilberg in fine (= CUF ed. Burguière, Gourevitch, Malinas ch. 10, 94–100).

⁹² Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 40, 6.250 L.

⁹³ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.332, 13–334, 3 L. = CUF ed. Joly 58, 6–7.

⁹⁴ Hippocrates, *Aphorisms* 7, 48, 4.590, 10 f. L.

⁹⁵ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.334, 2 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 58, 7 f.).

should ingest a complicated mix formed of wine: first a cotyle of undiluted wine after a warm bath; then, after ingesting various foods, a mix of three wines (full, soft and sharp), taken at first rather undiluted, and then rather mixed.⁹⁶ However, the properties of wine are so varied that they can have an opposite effect. Instead of being loosening, wine can be tightening. This effect is obtained by a hard light white wine, mixed with water,⁹⁷ or by a hard dark or straw wine.⁹⁸

Thus, the different varieties of wine are not prescribed indifferently. This subtle art of the doctor, who must choose by weighing up advantages and disadvantages, was unknown to the uninitiated,⁹⁹ who did not fail to emphasize that in their prescriptions, doctors were not always in agreement.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, their prescriptions vary according to diseases and patients, their constitution and their dietary habits. One Hippocratic author details most clearly the harmful effects of changes in the habitual diet of wine:

How different are the effects produced in a body which drinks wine or water, when either custom is suddenly exchanged for the other; or when, contrary to usage, diluted wine or undiluted wine is drunk (since one causes wetness in the upper cavity and wind in the lower, while the other causes throbbing of the arteries and heaviness of the head); and white and dark wine, although both strong wines, if exchanged contrary to usage, even if they are both strong, will produce numerous changes in the body; thus, if one is soft and the other strong, we find it no surprise that they do not produce the same effect when they are suddenly changed.¹⁰¹

However, sometimes pragmatism could lead to flexible prescriptions: "Let him drink hard dark wine, if it benefits the patient; if not, a hard white wine, mixed with water," declares the Hippocratic author of *Internal Affections* in a case of 'typhus',¹⁰² with regard to another 'typhus', he reverses the prescription according to the same principle: "Let the patient drink white wine, if it benefits him; if not, dark wine."¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Hippocrates, *Nature of Man*, ch. 20, CMG ed. Jouanna 212, 19 ff. = *Regimen in Health*, ch. 5, 6.80, 2 ff. L.

⁹⁷ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 40, 6.250, 9 f. L.

⁹⁸ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 14, 2.334, 14–336, 5 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 58, 22–59, 4).

⁹⁹ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 2, 2.238, 3–7 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 38, 14–18).

¹⁰⁰ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.32.

¹⁰¹ Hippocrates, *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, ch. 10, 2.300, 9–302, 5 L. (= CUF ed. Joly 51, 13–22), transl. C.D. Adams.

¹⁰² Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 39, 7.262, 16–18 L.

¹⁰³ Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 41, 7.268, 20 L.

Of all the varieties of wine, the best is, according to Galen, watery wine (οἶνος ὕδατῶδης), i.e. wine that has the same appearance as water:

This wine is suitable to expel phlegm from the lung, since it strengthens and exercises a moderately dampening and incisive action on the humours. Administered to feverish patients, it is less dangerous than any other; for it is the only one that has the privilege of being exempt from both the inconveniences of water and wine. Since it never damages the head, this wine is often also advantageous because it stops small pains pertaining to the humours in the stomach ... and it is precisely this drawback and harmful effect of these humours that watery wine alleviates in patients, firstly through its immediate moderating action, and a little later because the stomach, being strengthened, reacts against that which has affected it.¹⁰⁴

What allows the doctor to adjust the effects of wine is, above all, its mixture. Mixing with water was normal in Greek civilisation, and in daily life it was typical to mix wine with water during the *symposium*.¹⁰⁵ However, Greek medicine was the first to prescribe infinite varieties of mixtures, alongside undiluted wine. In their advice on diet during good health, doctors vary the dosage of the mixture according to the seasons. The Hippocratic treatise *Nature of Man*¹⁰⁶ states that in winter wine must be drunk as undiluted as possible (to counter the effect of the wet and cold season); in summer, it should be mixed with water; and in spring and autumn it should be moderately mixed with water. In the same manner, the Hippocratic author of *Regimen*¹⁰⁷ explains that a dry, hard and warming diet is necessary in winter; consequently undiluted, dark wine should be drunk in small quantities; conversely in spring, drinks should be more watery and clearer; in summer they will be watery and clear, and dark and undiluted wine is to be avoided; in autumn, darker drinks will be returned to. In prescriptions relating to diseases, the dosage is not normally specified, and the doctor simply indicates the degree of mixture with the aid of comparatives or superlatives. However, sometimes the dosage is stated in terms of quantitative proportions, notably an 'equal' dosage (ἴσον ἴσῳ). We may quote as an example one of Hippocrates' rare aphorisms on wine: "Distress, yawning and

¹⁰⁴ Galen in Oribasius, *Coll. med.* 5.6,5–7 (ed. Raeder 1.122,5–19). These are extracts from two of Galen's treatises (*Commentary on Hippocrates' Regimen in Acute Diseases* and *Good and Bad Juices*).

¹⁰⁵ See the bibliography quoted in footnote 12.

¹⁰⁶ Hippocrates, *Nature of Man*, ch. 16, *CMG*, ed. Jouanna 206,3–208,8 = *Regimen in Health*, ch. 1, 6.72,5–74,13 L.

¹⁰⁷ Hippocrates, *Regimen*, ch. 68, 6.594,21 L.; 600,13f.; 602,5; 604,14 (= *CMG* ed. Joly 196,7; 198,18; 198,29; 200,19).

shivering are removed by drinking wine mixed with an equal part of water."¹⁰⁸ This is a strong proportion, since the usual mixture is one part wine and three¹⁰⁹ or two parts water.¹¹⁰ More rarely, the mixture is indicated by a fraction, as in *Diseases* 3, which proposes, amongst other 'cooling' recipes: "Old Thasian wine; give twenty-five parts water and one part wine."¹¹¹ It recalls the method in which Maroneus, a wine from Thrace famous from Homer onwards, should be drunk in a mix with twenty times its quantity of water.¹¹² This weak mixture is a sign of the strong power of the wine. Of course, when doctors dilute the wine they seek to weaken its properties or to help the appropriate effects to dampen or to purge.

Wine can also be prescribed mixed with honey¹¹³ or milk.¹¹⁴ It is also mixed with some semi-solid elements to form a sort of mushy liquid, the famous *kykeon*, similar to that which the goddess and sorceress Circe offered to Odysseus' companions (cheese, flour and honey with wine from Pramnos); although she added to it some φάρμακα λυγρά.¹¹⁵ Amongst doctors, *kykeon* is based on flour mixed with wine or water, to which are added other ingredients. We can compare Circe's *kykeon* to that of a Hippocratic doctor, whose recipe also comprises flour and cheese mixed with some wine:

Take a black grape, the inside of a sweet pomegranate, crush, and mix in dark wine, scrape in some goat's cheese, sprinkle with some flour from roasted wheat and, well mixed, give it to drink.

Through this remedy, the Hippocratic author of *Diseases of Women* 1 intends to treat postpartum diarrhoea.¹¹⁶

Finally, it is possible to prepare infusions of plants in wine; for example, a rue in some dark wine to remove the lochia;¹¹⁷ adiantum crushed into dark wine in a case of leucorrhoea following a course of treatment with milk.¹¹⁸ There are innumerable preparations of this type.

¹⁰⁸ Hippocrates, *Aphorisms* 7.56, 4.594,7 L. (= *Epidemics* 2, 6th sect., ch. 23, 5.136,18 f. L.).

¹⁰⁹ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 596.

¹¹⁰ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 23.51.

¹¹¹ Hippocrates, *Diseases* 3, ch. 17, 7.160,5 f. L. (= *CMG* ed. Potter 98,26 f.). On wine from Thasos, see the study by F. Salviat quoted in footnote 12.

¹¹² Homer, *Odyssey* 9.208.

¹¹³ Hippocrates, *Internal affections*, ch. 6, 7.182,6 L.

¹¹⁴ Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 7, ch. 101, 5.454,8 L. However, the mixture of wine and milk can provoke diarrhoea (Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 7, ch. 82, 5.438,5 L.).

¹¹⁵ Homer, *Odyssey* 10.234–236.

¹¹⁶ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 42, 8.100,17–19 L.

¹¹⁷ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 45, 8.104,8 L.

¹¹⁸ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 2, ch. 118, 8.256,13 L.

In addition, from the moment when medicine (in the Hellenistic period) becomes interested in antidotes (remedies for internal use against poisons or the venom of wild animals), wine is used for the preparation of such remedies. For example, Galen discusses at length the best wine to be used in the most famous and elaborated of these remedies, the theriac of the doctor Andromachus. The wine should be particularly stable, such as Falernian wine.¹¹⁹ Undiluted wine was itself considered as an antidote against hemlock or against stings or bites that kill through sudden cooling.¹²⁰

To finish this section on the internal usage of wine, we should point out that from Hippocrates, doctors used wines which were “a product of art and not of nature,” to use the expression of Pliny the Elder.¹²¹ This is the case for wine made from grape marc, which has a dampening and purgative property, but also causes flatulency,¹²² or that which is made from must which is reduced by roasting, the equivalent of Latin *sapa* and *defrutum*: it is the ἔψημα which has the property of warming, dampening and also being a laxative,¹²³ or the σίραιος οἶνος.¹²⁴ However, this last wine is mentioned by Hippocrates for its external use through injections into the uterus.

Wine is, of course, not only used as a drink. It also plays a large role in the doctor's pharmacy, particularly in surgery and gynaecology. Pliny the Elder makes a clear distinction between the properties of wine in internal and external usage: “Wine has the property of heating the parts of the body inside when it is drunk and of cooling them when poured on the outside.”¹²⁵

The Hippocratic treatise *Use of Liquids* devotes a whole chapter to discussing external uses of wine to treat wounds; the author uses soft or hard wine, white or dark: wine can exercise a cooling or hard action on a wound.¹²⁶ In fact, Hippocratic doctors frequently prescribe wine to wash a wound or lesion. The author of *Fractures* recommends bandages soaked in hard

¹¹⁹ Galen, *Antidotes* 1.3, 14.14–20 K.

¹²⁰ Dioscorides, *Mat. Med.* 5.6.10; cf. Pliny *Hist. Nat.* 14.58 (with the comment ad loc. by J. André), 23.43. From Plato, wine is considered as an antidote against hemlock (*Lysis* 219e).

¹²¹ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 14.80.

¹²² Hippocrates, *Regimen*, ch. 52, 6.556,10 f. L. (= CMG, ed. Joly 174,8f.).

¹²³ Hippocrates, *Regimen*, ch. 52, 6.556,8 L. (= CMG, ed. Joly 174,6 f.).

¹²⁴ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 66, 8.140,8 L.; *Diseases of Women* 2, ch. 181, *ibid.*, 364,1. Pliny *Hist. Nat.* 14.80, establishes equivalence between *hepsema* and *siraeum*; see the note by J. André ad loc.

¹²⁵ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 14.58.

¹²⁶ Hippocrates, *Use of Liquids*, ch. 5, 6.128,8 ff. L.

dark wine to be put on an open fracture;¹²⁷ the same doctor makes a similar recommendation for an open dislocation of the jaw.¹²⁸ However, head wounds are an exception: "A lesion in the head should not be moistened with anything, not even wine."¹²⁹ All uses of wine in cases of diseases of the head meet with such suspicion. Wine is also used following surgical procedures: the cauterisation of a tumour of the palate is cleaned with nitrate and lukewarm water, then with wine;¹³⁰ after the removal of genital warts, the wound is washed with a hard wine in which some gall nuts have been soaked.¹³¹ The Hippocratic author of *Diseases 2* goes so far as to recommend, following an intercostal incision allowing pus to escape which has formed in the chest cavity, to inject a cannula of wine and lukewarm oil to avoid the lung suddenly drying out.¹³² This external use of wine on wounds continued after Hippocrates: "Old and soft wines are good for wounds and inflammations, applied with greasy wool," says Dioscorides.¹³³ The efficacy of wine in wounds was due to its antiseptic properties, which have been confirmed by modern science.¹³⁴

The external usage of wine is frequent not only in surgery, but also in gynaecology. A prolapsed womb should be cleaned with dark wine, in which a pomegranate has been boiled, before being put back in place.¹³⁵ There are also numerous injections into the diseased uterus (ulcerations, discharges) where wine is used: in a list of thirty-five recipes for injections into the uterus, thirteen include wine.¹³⁶ Apart from injections, certain wine-based fumigations can be carried out. Thus, to put back into place a 'lifted' womb, vapour from wine-based fumigations is administered from below; moreover, if the uterus is deviated, some wild figs are placed in the wine. The vessel in which the wine is heated is covered with half a colocynth whose frayed end has been cut: "the odour, passing through the narrow gap, will arrive at the womb." Clearly, we have to assume that the woman sat down

¹²⁷ Hippocrates, *Fractures*, ch. 29, 3.516,4f. L.; cf. *ibid.* 514,12.

¹²⁸ Hippocrates, *Articulations*, ch. 63, 4.270,14f. L.; cf. *ibid.*, 272,2 and 5 and 10.

¹²⁹ Hippocrates, *Wounds in the Head*, ch. 13, 3.228,19f. L.

¹³⁰ Hippocrates, *Diseases 2*, ch. 32, 7.48,23 L. (= *CUF* ed. Jouanna 166,13).

¹³¹ Hippocrates, *Haemorrhoids*, ch. 4, 6.440,13 L.

¹³² Hippocrates, *Diseases 2*, ch. 47, 7.70,17 L. and ch. 60, *ibid.* 94,4 (= *CUF* ed. Jouanna 182,11 and 199,20).

¹³³ Dioscorides, *Mat. Med.* 5.6.11.

¹³⁴ G. Majno, *The Healing Hand. Man and Wound in the Ancient World*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1975, pp. 186–188.

¹³⁵ Hippocrates, *Nature of Women*, ch. 5, 7.318,4f. L.

¹³⁶ Hippocrates, *Nature of Women*, ch. 33, 7.366,8–370,12 L.

on a seat pierced just above the orifice in question, and understand that the sweet vapours of wine and figs should attract the womb, understood implicitly as a living being, and put it back in its place.¹³⁷

Wine is also used for clysters. For example, *Internal Affections* prescribes, to purge phlegm, a clyster that he considers the most gentle for man, composed of nitrate mixed in a *cotyle* of soft wine, a half cotyle of oil and a half cotyle of honey;¹³⁸ the same author prescribes, in the case of dropsy, a clyster containing two *cotylai* of white wine with honey, oil and Egyptian nitrate and leaf sap from wild cucumber.¹³⁹

Wine is also used to make a poultice in surgery, as in gynaecology: if the necessary plants to apply to a wound are missing, the Hippocratic author of *Affections*¹⁴⁰ advises kneading together flour with water or wine and applying it. The author of *Wounds*¹⁴¹ suggests the use of a poultice of watercress mixed with wine and the grain of crushed flax, with a view to reconnecting the edges of the wound. In the case of 'hysterical attacks', a poultice composed of recently fermented dark wine, or one third herbs and spices and two thirds flour soaked in odorous white wine, should be placed on the stomach.¹⁴²

Finally, wine is used in the composition of ointments for diverse medical uses: for the eyes, of honey and soft old wine cooked together;¹⁴³ for the inflammation of the rectum, the following ointment is recommended: "boil eggs in fragrant dark wine and apply to the anus";¹⁴⁴ for tetanus, rub the affected wound with a warm preparation made with leaves soaked in white wine and oil.¹⁴⁵ Such ointments also have a cosmetic function: a depilatory cream is made with a base of wine.¹⁴⁶

Bathing is sometimes replaced with ointments and affusions of wine: "persons whom it does not benefit to wash, anoint with oil and warm wine," declares the Hippocratic author of *Affections*.¹⁴⁷

¹³⁷ Hippocrates, *Places in Man*, ch. 47 (6.346,7 and 11 L.).

¹³⁸ Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 20 (7.216,20–23 L.).

¹³⁹ Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 26 (7.236,3–7 L.).

¹⁴⁰ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 38 (6.248,8 L.).

¹⁴¹ Hippocrates, *Wounds*, ch. 11 (6.410,23 L.).

¹⁴² Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 7, ch. 64, 5.428,20 ff. L. To describe wine that has been recently fermented, the author uses the *hapax* ἐκγεγελευκισμένος, which literally means "out of a state of must"; cf. Galen, *Hippocratic Glossary*, s.v. 19.95,2 K.

¹⁴³ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 105, 8.228,11 f. L.

¹⁴⁴ Hippocrates, *Fistulas*, ch. 7, 6.454,16 L.

¹⁴⁵ Hippocrates, *Internal Affections*, ch. 52, 7.298,20 L.

¹⁴⁶ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* 1, ch. 106, 8.230,3 L.

¹⁴⁷ Hippocrates, *Affections*, ch. 42, 6.252,1 L.

By way of conclusion, I will quote the eulogy to wine attributed to the fourth-century BC Athenian doctor, Mnesitheus, preserved by Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophists* (2.36a–b). This text, slightly later than the majority of Hippocratic writings, contrasts, through the eulogy of Dionysus the doctor, with the rationalism of the Hippocratic doctor, which passes over in silence the relationship between wine and god. However, this eulogy has the merit of gathering together the principal themes of Greek thought on wine. In recalling the fundamental ambiguity of wine, the best or the worst of things according to the usage made of it, he highlights the usefulness of wine in the diet of people in good health, good for both the body and the soul, and its therapeutic virtues, either through drinking it, or through its external use:

Mnesitheus said that the gods revealed wine to mortals to be the greatest blessing for those who use it correctly, and, for those who use it unregulated, the opposite. For it gives nourishment to those who use it well, and strengthens the soul and the body. In medicine, it is a very useful thing. Indeed, it can be mixed with medicines in a potion, and it is beneficial for those who have wounds. In daily gatherings, for those who drink a moderated and mixed amount, it adds to their wellbeing. However, if it is drunk in excess, it leads to violence. If it is drunk in equal measure, it provokes madness; and if it is taken undiluted, it leads to paralysis of the body. This is why Dionysus is everywhere called doctor.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ Fragment 41 Bertier.