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THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT AND WINE FARMERS AT THE CAPE: COLLECTIVE ACTION, RACIAL DISCOURSE, AND LEGISLATIVE REFORM, C. 1890–1965

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THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT AND WINE
FARMERS AT THE CAPE: COLLECTIVE ACTION,
RACIAL DISCOURSE, AND LEGISLATIVE
REFORM, C. 1890–1965*

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ABSTRACT: This article addresses the struggle between the temperance and wine interests in South Africa during three phases: 1890–1920, 1920–48 and 1948–65. It argues that divergent outcomes were rooted in a combination of differential levels of internal cohesion and the configuration of the political arena within which the protagonists manoeuvred for advantage. Conflicting interests within the wine industry hindered collective action, whereas the temperance movement derived strength from its decentralized modes of operation and international connections. The latter pioneered mass action alongside the art of lobbying. After 1948, the wine industry turned the tables by cementing a special relationship with the National Party, while tapping into popular nationalism, youth culture, and emergent consumerism.

KEY WORDS: South Africa, alcohol, business, race, politics.

EMBEDDED in the politics of segregation and apartheid, but following a distinct trajectory, the liquor question was one of the issues that most animated South African politics in the first half of the twentieth century. It could reasonably be considered a subset of the ‘race question’, given that it was whites who sought to manage the intersecting domains of African residence, work, and leisure—in part through control over the supply of liquor—and blacks who defended their right to produce and consume on their own terms.¹ While whites may have worried about the impact of drink on their capacity to control Africans, the vested interests associated with alcohol always made prohibition an unlikely prospect. White municipalities bolstered their revenues through the construction of beerhalls that sold ‘kaffir beer’ manufactured by brewing monopolies.² This met temperance concerns

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¹ For key historical appraisals, see C. van Onselen, ‘Randlords and rotgut, 1886–1903’, *History Workshop*, 2: 1 (1976), 33–89; C. Ambler and J. Crush, ‘Alcohol in Southern African labor history’; J. Baker, ‘Prohibition and illicit liquor on the Witwatersand, 1902–1932’; P. Bonner, ‘Back to the fence: law, liquor and the search for social control in an East Rand town, 1929–1942’; and D. Moodie, ‘Alcohol and resistance on the South African gold mines’, all in J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens and Pietermaritzburg, 1992).

² P. La Hausse, *Brewers, Beerhalls and Boycotts: A History of Liquor in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1988); and ‘Drink and cultural innovation in Durban: the origins of the beerhall in South Africa, 1902–1916’, in Crush and Ambler, *Liquor and Labor*; I. Evans, *Bureaucracy and Race: Native Administration in South Africa* (Berkeley, 1997), 132.

halfway: black consumers were to be kept away from distilled liquor, and were encouraged to drink under forms of controlled sociability.

For good reasons, the existing literature on South Africa has concentrated on the attempt to manage African access to beer, including the product that the beerhalls dispensed and the bottled beer that came to be associated with shebeens.³ In this article, I focus on the products of the vine, namely wine and brandy, which offer a different insight into the politics of consumption. There are three things to be gained from such a focus. The first is that it sheds fresh light on the debates that circulated around alcohol, and the manner in which conflicting demands were mediated by the state. Although much has been written about the interests that impinged on state policy after 1910, there is surprisingly little on alcohol *per se*.⁴ Whereas the breweries had a relatively weak voice, and depended on consumer resistance to challenge restrictive legislation, the wine industry combined substantial numbers of farmers in the Western Cape as well as merchant-manufacturers who bought, bottled and sold the final product across South Africa. Their excise contribution to central government revenues and their parliamentary representation would be expected to give them influence.

Second, the story of wine is one that reveals an especially tangled relationship between race and consumption. Wine interests faced a greater challenge than brewers in securing a market for their product, given that very few blacks drank wine or brandy at the turn of the century. In the short term, the industry was bound to depend heavily on the Coloured population of the Western Cape, as well as white consumers who were also heavily concentrated there. The former were a captive market, but one that was very much concentrated at the cheap-and-nasty end. The debate about whether Coloureds were deserving of the same political and social privileges as whites was refracted through a wine bottle: the question that was repeatedly asked (from at least the 1890s) was whether the degraded state of the Coloured population through liquor revealed a flaw that made them inherently different to whites, or whether it merely demonstrated that liquor could reduce any user to an abject condition.⁵ But there was no necessary correspondence between attitudes to segregation and to temperance. Wine farmers were generally supportive of segregationism, but clearly had a vested interest in opening up the market to black consumers. Conversely, the temperance movement, some of whose members were inclined to reject segregationism, campaigned to prevent 'non-whites' from acquiring access

³ On the rise of bottled beer, see A. K. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington, 2010). On brewing in rural areas, see H. Bradford, "We women will show them": beer protests in the Natal countryside, 1929', in Crush and Ambler, *Liquor and Labor*; and P. McAllister, *Building the Homestead: Agriculture, Labour and Beer in South Africa's Transkei* (London, 2001).

⁴ In his class analysis of the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, Dan O'Meara pays some attention to wine producers, but their importance is viewed in terms of their contribution to capital formation. Neither he nor Deborah Posel is particularly interested in alcohol. D. O'Meara, *Volskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948* (Cambridge, 1983), 208; D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford, 1991).

⁵ M. Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Athens, 2005), 26, 197; fn. 95.

to liquor.⁶ Each side found ways of rationalising the apparent reversal of roles.

As for the white population, liquor interests routinely bemoaned the lack of a genuine wine drinking culture, especially amongst Afrikaners. But those who fretted about the social effects of alcohol also believed that poor whites were especially vulnerable to the lure of brandy – and were perhaps in even more need of protection than blacks who drank a beer that was relatively harmless and in a social setting. In this way, the discourse about the relationship between racial integrity and liquor consumption was inverted.⁷ Wine was so contentious, in part because it tended to blur the color lines.

Third, the existing literature on beer has focused on processes that were particular to South(ern) Africa, including the nexus between town and countryside, whereas a focus on the vine necessarily places liquor in a broader international context. South African historiography has remained rather at the margins of current trends in global and international history, partly because of its trajectory and sense of its own history.⁸ The topic of wine (like horses) is well-suited to reinserting South Africa back into global history as something other than a stock exception.⁹ The South African temperance campaign was part of an extremely well-networked movement – what I call the temperance international – which treated all alcohol as pernicious, but was especially exercised about distilled liquor. This posed a particular threat to the wine industry at the Cape, which converted its growing surplus into brandy. The wine industry countered the temperance argument by insisting that wine was a natural product: the arguments and the supporting evidence being derived from other parts of the wine-producing world, notably France.

In this article, I focus primarily upon the struggle between temperance and wine interests to shape legislative action. I compare the success of the protagonists during three periods – that is from 1890 to 1920, from 1920 to 1948, and from 1948 to 1965. Before 1920, the temperance movement held the upper hand, although it failed to achieve its goal of outright prohibition. In the second period, the liquor debate became somewhat fragmented, although temperance remained dominant overall. Finally, in the period after the victory of the National Party (NP) in 1948, the balance shifted decisively in favour of the wine lobby. In 1962, the liquor laws were deracialized and three years later many of the restrictions on the sale of wine were removed, an outcome that would have been unthinkable in the 1920s. An explanation is sought in the dynamic interaction between two sets of factors: the configuration of the political arena in which wine interests and temperance activism competed for attention; and the level of internal cohesion that characterized these interest- and issue-based movements respectively. The temperance movement benefited from being a broad coalition, and may be

⁶ The classic instance was Theophilus Schreiner who defended political rights for all, but campaigned for prohibition for Africans and Coloureds with special exceptions. V. Cohen, 'The public career of Theophilus Lyndall Schreiner: a study of the causes he espoused' (unpublished BA Hons. long essay in History, University of Cape Town, 1980).

⁷ 'Wine and Shebeens in Soweto', *Wynboer* (Oct. 1978).

⁸ An attempt at redressing the balance is I. Berger, *South Africa: A World History* (Oxford, 2009).

⁹ S. Swart, "'High horses' – horses, class and socio-economic change in South Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34:1 (2008), 193–213.

credited with having pioneered certain forms of mass action that crossed color lines. By contrast, the competing interests between wine farmers, and between farmers and merchants, proved a hindrance to collective action until the 1950s, when the Koöperatieve Wynbouwers Vereniging van Suid-Afrika (KWV), which both regulated the industry and represented the farmers, created a more unified and effective voice.

FRAMING THE GREATER GOOD: TEMPERANCE AND THE
FARMERS, 1890–1920

While the temperance movement was highly internationalized, the wine farmers were almost parochial. The temperance international was a worthy successor to the anti-slavery movement of the mid-nineteenth century, and fits Akira Iriye's depiction of an emergent 'global community' concerned with the social uplifting of a common humanity.¹⁰ Temperance spawned a dense network of associations that spanned continents, linking the United States and Britain with colonies of white settlement, such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the Cape, and also encompassing India, British West Africa, South America, and East Asia.¹¹ The leading organization was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which had its origins in the 'women's crusade' in Ohio in 1874, but went global shortly after its formation.¹² The International Order of Good Templars (IOGT), founded in the 1850s, was less prolific, but also spread well beyond its origins in the United States. In the years after the First World War, a renewed international campaign was launched by the World League Against Alcoholism (WLAA), which agreed a platform for cooperation with the WCTU.¹³

The IOGT commenced operations at the Cape in 1873, and by the end of the 1890s it was reputed to have 10,000 members, with more than 12,000 additional members subscribing to the International Order of True Templars (IOTT), which had been created for a specifically 'non-white' membership.¹⁴ Even more important was the WCTU, whose arrival at the Cape dates from a visit by Mary Leavitt during her world tour in 1889.¹⁵ The first affiliates were established there, as well as in Natal and the Orange River Colony that year, followed by the Transvaal two years later.¹⁶ Following Union in 1910, these

¹⁰ Surprisingly, Iriye does not mention temperance. A. Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, 2002).

¹¹ B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England* (London, 1971), 101–4, 196–9.

¹² By the 1920s, the WCTU had affiliates in more than forty countries. It operated across the Empire, but also played a significant role in Japan. I. R. Tyrrell, *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 2; E. D. Lublin, *Reforming Japan: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the Meiji Period* (Vancouver, 2010).

¹³ I. Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton, 2010), 211.

¹⁴ Jennifer Pearce, 'The origins of the temperance movement in Cape Town in the 1880s' (BA Hons. Long Essay, History Department, University of Cape Town), 11.

¹⁵ On the significance of Leavitt's tour, see Tyrrell, *Woman's World*, 1.

¹⁶ Amanda Tiltman, 'The Woman's Christian Temperance Union' (unpublished BA Hons. dissertation in Economic History, University of Cape Town, 1988), 2–3.

chapters merged, although internal distinctions on the basis of color remained. The South African WCTU kept in close touch with the World WCTU through literature, visiting speakers, and participation in the regular cycle of conventions in the USA.¹⁷ It campaigned both for women's suffrage and against alcohol, which created complex permutations when race was factored in. The final body that deserves mention is the South African Temperance Alliance (SATA), formed in 1893. SATA positioned itself as an umbrella body seeking to coordinate the efforts of the IOGT/IOTT, the WCTU, and a multiplicity of church-based groupings—Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, and Presbyterian. The relationship between these bodies was intimate. The leading light in the IOGT, Theophilus Schreiner, was a vice-president of SATA, who as a member of parliament (MP) counted on the vocal support of the WCTU. All three bodies attempted to keep their members abreast of global developments. The list of invited visitors included William 'Pussyfoot' Johnson of the Anti-Saloon League who took time out from his international campaign on behalf of the WLAA to tour southern Africa in 1924.¹⁸ Another was Bishop Cannon of the WLAA who accepted an invitation from SATA to lend his weight to the campaign for Local Option.¹⁹

Very few wine farmers had any international experience.²⁰ Cape farmers had been involved in global trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, but the removal of imperial preferences, the devastation wrought by phylloxera and an unfavourable reputation for quality meant that the export market dried up in the late-nineteenth century. Farmers introduced new phylloxera-resistant rootstock from Europe, but they did not replant with cultivars that permitted a reconstruction of the industry on the basis of export quality. Moreover, while farmers made several attempts to unite in defence of their collective interests, the centrifugal forces proved insurmountable. The topography of the winelands, which are segmented by a chain of steep mountains north of Paarl, meant that the perspective of many farmers focused on a particular valley or district.²¹ Following the creation of the Afrikaner Bond in 1883, the interests of the wine farmers found a political outlet. But party structures were poorly institutionalized and MPs, who tended to be drawn from an urban elite, conducted themselves with patrician independence.²² The merchant-manufacturers, who bought wine from individual

¹⁷ Emilie Solomon, who served as president of the Cape WCTU and was national president from 1919 to 1925, was elected vice-president of the World WCTU from 1925 to 1931. Tyrrell, *Woman's World*, 72.

¹⁸ In company with Rev. A. J. Cook of SATA, Johnson was alleged to have travelled 7,000 miles and to have addressed 55,000 people. National Archives of South Africa, Cape Town (CA) A1696/98, 'A Brief History of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in South Africa' (Cape Town, 1925), 35; Tyrrell, *Reforming*, 217.

¹⁹ Tyrrell, *Reforming*, 215. Under local option, voters in a locality would receive the right to vote for a ban on liquor sales.

²⁰ They maintained an acquaintance with international events through the Afrikaans press. On the press and Afrikaner nationalism, see Hermann Giliomee, 'Western Cape wine farmers and the beginnings of Afrikaner nationalism, 1870–1915', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14:1 (1987), 60–1.

²¹ In 1878, a Wine Farmers Association had been established to oppose an excise tax on brandy, but it did not endure.

²² J. L. McCracken, *The Cape Parliament, 1854–1910* (Oxford, 1967), 50–1, 110–12.

farmers, and blended and bottled it, were almost entirely dependent upon the South African market. As dedicated urbanites, who owned hotels and liquor outlets in Cape Town, they had little empathy with the farmers from whom they purchased, typically bemoaning the deplorable quality.

While the temperance leadership tended to be urban, female, and English-speaking, the wine farmers comprised Afrikaner men who mostly adhered to the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). SATA purported to embrace an ecumenical vision—seeking to enlist both eminent Muslims and Jews in the cause. But while SATA listed Dr Abdullah Abdurahman as one of its vice-presidents, it was patently a vehicle for English-speaking Protestants.²³ Although a solid body of the DRC was opposed to alcohol, there was a lingering sensitivity about Anglophone domination of the movement. Moreover, the fact that WCTU campaigned for a qualified, but non-racial and gender-equal franchise, was not likely to endear it to many farmers.²⁴ But by far the greatest source of distemper was the campaign against the *dop stelsel* or tot system. Since the days of slavery, farmers had provided rations of alcohol to their slaves at intervals over the working day.²⁵ After the ending of slavery, the practice was deemed essential for the recruitment of farm workers in the context of endemic labour shortages.²⁶ Defending themselves against the charge that they encouraged alcohol dependency, the farmers maintained that they had always exercised a moral responsibility for the welfare of their Coloured wards, which included regulating access to liquor.

Around the turn of the century, the relationship between the temperance movement and the farmers was highly fractious. As a glut of cheap wine translated into ruinously low prices, the farmers were sensitive to anything that might further restrict the internal market. In the context of mounting complaints about public drunkenness in Cape Town, temperance activists sought to persuade the authorities to introduce stricter controls.²⁷ Their campaigns bore fruit in the Liquor Act of 1891 that included prison sentences for repeat convictions and the introduction of Local Option provisions. The law required that applications for new licences be supported by a majority of voters from the relevant district council, and that licensing courts reject applications for renewal where two-thirds of voters in a district, municipality, or ward objected.²⁸ In an amendment of 1898, licensing courts were empowered to impose additional conditions on the sale of liquor to ‘natives’,

²³ On Abdurahman, see V. Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875–1902* (Cambridge, 1995), 205, 213.

²⁴ J. McKinnon, ‘Women’s Christian Temperance Union: aspects of early feminism in the Cape, 1889 to 1930’ (unpublished MA thesis, UNISA, 1995), chap. 4.

²⁵ P. Scully, ‘Liquor and Labor in the Western Cape, 1870–1900’, in Crush and Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor*.

²⁶ On the ambiguities surrounding emancipation, see P. Scully, *Liberating the Family? Gender and British Slave Emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823–1853* (Oxford, 1998); and W. Dooling, *Slavery, Emancipation and Colonial Rule in South Africa* (Scottsville, 2007).

²⁷ Pearce ‘Origins’, 14.

²⁸ Act to Amend the Law Relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Act 25 of 1891), published in P. T. Jones (ed.), *The Liquor Laws of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope With Notes of Cases Decided Thereon* (Cape Town, 1907), 89–91.

while fresh restrictions were placed on the brewing of 'kaffir beer' in the rural areas.²⁹ Throughout, temperance activists instigated mass petitions and lobbied MPs. Indeed, the movement can be credited with transforming politics into the legitimate concern of a wider populace, most of which was formally excluded from the franchise.³⁰

In 1905, SATA drew up a joint programme with eleven action points, which can be collapsed into four. The first, and most crucial, was to apply pressure upon the Cape government to introduce a consolidated liquor law that would bring about 'the prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquor to the native races' and to ban sales to whites at theatres, music halls, and circuses. The second was to exploit the provisions of existing legislation, by attending licensing courts *en masse* and challenging the rubber-stamping of applications. The third was the furtherance of public education, including temperance teaching in schools. The final aspect consisted of promoting 'counter-attractions' to the canteen.³¹ The WCTU sponsored tea-rooms, coffee houses, and outlets for the sale of fruit juices. The only concession to the embattled wine farmers was the contention that grapes could be used to produce healthy alternatives such as cordials, juices, and *moskonfyt* (grape-must jams).

This renewed activism coincided with lobbying by distressed wine farmers and merchants for government assistance. In 1907, a Colonial Wine-Farmers and Wine Merchant Association was formed. Its chairman was C. W. H. Kohler, a farmer from Drakenstein who had only recently left active party politics. C. F. Sedgwick, one of the principal wine merchants, was vice-chairman, underlining the extent to which the Depression was hurting farmers and merchants alike. The temperance campaign had managed to gradually reduce the supply of liquor over the previous decade; the wine lobby now attempted to reverse the situation. The association demanded a revision of laws inhibiting wine sales and the appointment of a select committee to enquire into the state of the industry.³² The following year, a private Light Wines Bill was brought to parliament. This was designed to assist the farmers by lengthening the hours of sale and permitting them to sell wine from the farm-gate.³³ The temperance movement mobilized all its resources to assist Schreiner in fighting the bill. The WCTU had previously enjoyed some success with written petitions, but now decided to embark on more direct action. Having collected signatures under its 'Women's 1907 Temperance Campaign', the WCTU marched on parliament where its leaders presented a petition, sparking an impromptu debate amongst

²⁹ The final Act defined a 'native' as 'any Kafir, Fingo, Basuto, Damara, Hottentot, Bushman or Koranna'. See Act to Amend the Law Relating to the Sale of Liquor (Act No. 28 of 1898), article 5, in Jones, *Liquor Laws*, 111.

³⁰ The WCTU submitted 28 petitions in support of the 1898 Act. McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 114. White women did not acquire the full franchise until the Women's Enfranchisement Act of 1930. A relatively small number of Coloured and African men who met the qualifications could vote.

³¹ The expression is borrowed from Harrison in relation to the pub. *Drink and the Victorians*, 297-8.

³² A. Joelson (ed.), *The Memoirs of Kohler of the K.W. V.: Politician, Traveller, Founder of the South African Wine Industry* (London, 1946), 75.

³³ The Liquor Laws Licensing Act of 1883 had permitted the sale of light wines from grocery stores. McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 120.

MPs about whether their actions underlined or undermined the case for the women's franchise.³⁴ The unprecedented demonstration stung the wine farmers into mounting their own 'anti-temperance crusade' in Wellington.³⁵

This was a rare occasion on which the farmers prevailed. The final iteration of the act permitted farmers and cooperatives to sell wine in volumes of not less than four gallons without a licence. Moreover, such sales could be made to Africans who were registered voters, as well as to Coloureds.³⁶ The sequel was that parliament commissioned a British wine expert, Lord Blyth, to investigate both the temperance claim that Cape 'light wines' were actually high in alcohol, and the problems that were holding the industry back.³⁷ Blyth's opinion was that Cape wines were indeed highly alcoholic, but the thrust of his report was far from comforting to the temperance cause. Blyth maintained that French success was built on nurturing an internal market for wine and that France provided clear evidence for the health benefits of wine even at over a hundred of bottles per head per year.³⁸

In 1908, John X. Merriman became prime minister in alliance with the Afrikaner Bond.³⁹ Although a wine farmer, Merriman was critical of the tendency of most producers to place volume ahead of quality.⁴⁰ Moreover, he was unyielding over the demand that the government remove the excise tax on wine. On 14 April 1909, Kohler led a demonstration of some 3,000 farmers onto the streets of Cape Town, culminating in a mass meeting in City Hall.⁴¹ The farmers demanded an audience with Merriman, which he granted only grudgingly.⁴² In heated exchanges, Kohler was scathing about Merriman's refusal to make a firm commitment to assisting the farmers, and insisted that the underlying problem was not over-production, but excessive regulation: 'If the same quantity of wine cannot be consumed to-day, it is clearly due to legislative enactments which have so restricted the dealings in your product that the consumption is less to-day than it was twenty-five years ago.'⁴³ The latter was an obvious allusion to the temperance campaign. In October 1909, the WCTU responded with a further march through Cape Town to express opposition to any dilution of the liquor laws.⁴⁴

Following this ill-tempered debate, the negotiations leading to Union brought about a temporary suspension of hostilities. Both sides needed some

³⁴ Schreiner argued that this action provided the fitness of women to receive the vote. McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 121-2.

³⁵ 'The wine farmers: anti-temperance crusade', *Cape Argus*, 9 Sept. 1907.

³⁶ Act to Provide for the Sale Without a Licence of Certain Liquors Made by Persons Engaged in Viticulture on their Own Property (Act No. 8 of 1907) article 2, in Jones, *Liquor Laws*, 127.

³⁷ McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 123.

³⁸ CA AGR 498 C.67 'Cape Wine Commission and Lord Blyth's report on Cape Wine Industry' (1909).

³⁹ The Bond had historically drawn support from the wine farmers. Giliomee, 'Western Cape', 44-8.

⁴⁰ Although McKinnon rightly observes that Merriman rejected the right of women to petition in chauvinistic terms, her claim that he treated the farmers preferentially is questionable. 'Women's Christian', 121-2.

⁴¹ The figure is cited in D. J. Van Zyl, *KWV 75 Jaar* (Paarl, 1993), 20.

⁴² 'Wine farmer's demonstration: a great gathering', *Cape Times*, 15 Apr. 1909.

⁴³ This quote from the *South African News* is reproduced in Joelson, *Memoirs*, 76.

⁴⁴ McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 125.

time to adjust to the enlargement of the political arena. The temperance movement had the most to gain – certainly Schreiner believed so – because it became that bit easier to coordinate campaign strategies. However, whereas English-speakers had dominated the Cape legislature, the Union parliament was certain to be controlled by Afrikaners.⁴⁵ Hence the WCTU/SATA needed to find a way of making a common cause rather than presuming to speak for them. This did not come naturally, as is reflected in the tardiness with which the WCTU adjusted to publication in Afrikaans.⁴⁶ As for the wine farmers, their MPs now represented a relatively small group within parliament, who could not necessarily count on government backing when other interests were competing for attention.

After 1910, much of the effort of the WCTU was directed towards offering alternatives to alcohol for servicemen and policing the extension of liquor licences.⁴⁷ Moreover, campaigners continued to draw attention to liquor abuse amongst the Cape Coloured population. This culminated in the creation of the (Baxter) Select Committee in 1918, at which Schreiner made a plea for bringing Coloureds under the restrictive provisions of the 1898 Act, with an exemption for 'respectable' elements.⁴⁸ Schreiner also attempted to pass a Direct Vote Bill that would have extended Local Option by transferring powers from licensing courts to communities.⁴⁹ As for the farmers, the lack of any functioning association impeded efforts to change the law. In 1912, Tielman Roos endeavoured to pass a bill permitting Africans freer access to 'kaffir beer' and light wines, allowing coffee shops and boarding houses to apply for licences, and extending the hours of sale.⁵⁰ The failure of this bill signalled a turning point because it led farmers' leaders to shift the emphasis away from an expansion of the market for wine towards seeking higher prices. This reduced some of the points of friction with the temperance lobby, while bringing latent tensions with the merchants to the fore.

Temperance campaigners and wine farmers used very similar rhetoric when attacking what they regarded as noxious monopolies in the liquor trade. The former complained of an excess of canteens dispensing cheap (and mostly fortified) wine, coupled with a tendency on the part of liquor firms to cultivate tied-houses. The WCTU and SATA alleged that licensing courts deferred to vested interests and were rife with corruption. As for the farmers, a common complaint was that the merchants acquired wine at the lowest possible prices at the end of the season and sold it on to consumers at a premium.⁵¹ For temperance activists, wine was too cheaply available, while for farmers the price to the consumer was unjustifiably high. But both agreed that it was merchants who elevated profit above the greater good.

The war years brought renewed difficulties for farmers, as prices plummeted to between £2.10 to £3 per leaguer between 1915 and 1917, by

⁴⁵ In 1908, English-speakers still made up 54 per cent of MPs. McCracken, *Cape Parliament*, table 3, 53.

⁴⁶ Very little temperance material was translated into Afrikaans before the War. Ruby Adendorff, one of the leaders of the WCTU, eventually published *Alkohol – Wat Dit is en Wat Dit Doen* (Paarl, 1946).

⁴⁷ McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 92–4.

⁴⁸ The committee's official title was the Select Committee on Drunkenness in the Western Districts of the Cape Province. Cohen, 'Public career', 28. The Baxter report recommended regulation of the *dop*.

⁴⁹ Cohen, 'Public career', 29.

⁵⁰ McKinnon, 'Women's Christian', 129.

⁵¹ Joelson, *Memoirs*, 83.

comparison with prices of £5 to £7 a decade earlier.⁵² Kohler urged the formation of a cooperative society that could collectively negotiate with the merchants. After one stalled attempt, the details were hammered out in 1917, and the following year the KWV was formally registered – initially as a company (as there was no system for registering cooperatives) and then as a cooperative in 1923. Boasting a membership of 1,807 farmers by April 1918, the KWV was able to present itself as a serious player. In his memoirs, Kohler claimed that the merchants had been obstructive and had only been brought to the bargaining table by the threat of entering into distillation.⁵³ Attacking the sharp practices of the liquor firms – much like targeting the mining companies⁵⁴ – was guaranteed to secure a sympathetic audience. But in fact, the firms were not averse to dealing with a single farmers' association. In November 1917, the Board of Sedgwick passed a resolution approving the principle of fixing a 'reasonable minimum price', for disposing of the surplus, and for taking measures to prevent the sale of wine below the agreed price.⁵⁵ In addition, the firm decided not to enter into any fresh contracts with farmers pending the inauguration of the KWV. Furthermore, a number of the leading merchants (including Sedgwick) agreed to seek an arrangement with the KWV provided the latter could secure control over at least 80 per cent of total production, and the firms of E. K. Green and H. C. Collison's came on board.⁵⁶

In the first year, the merchants agreed to pay a minimum price of £4.15 s for distilling wine and £5.5 s for 'good' (drinking) wine.⁵⁷ The KWV passed this on to the farmers, less 10 s on each leaguer and a *pro rata* deduction for wine that was estimated to be surplus to the requirements of the trade. Under a so-called 'gentlemen's agreement', the KWV consented not to dispose of surpluses in competition with the firms south of the equator, including South Africa. However, in 1920, responding to rumours of a short vintage, W. C. Winshaw secretly signed contracts with as many farmers as possible, in effect undercutting the arrangement between the KWV and the larger firms. Winshaw announced that he controlled 60 per cent of the crop and invited the merchants to join him in a combine. The latter spurned the offer and some, like the Castle Wine and Brandy Co. (CWBC), competed, pushing prices to a level where farmers began turning every kind of grape into cheap wine.⁵⁸ The anticipated shortfall was transformed overnight into a veritable glut, and prices plummeted. A number of firms were bankrupted, including Winshaw, while others were bought out by rivals who weathered

⁵² One leaguer is the equivalent of 578 litres. Union of South Africa, *Report of the Wine Commission* (Pretoria, 1937) [U/G. No 25, 1937], 8; Van Zyl, *KWV*, 13.

⁵³ He made an exception of Mr Jooste of Jooste & Bryant who even made a loan to the KWV. Joelson, *Memoirs*, 88.

⁵⁴ Boonzaier's cartoon image of Hoggenheimer, representing a fictitious Jewish mining magnate, became a regular feature in *Die Burger*. H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (London, 2003), 331. The over-representation of Jews in the trade did not go unnoticed.

⁵⁵ Distell Archive, Stellenbosch, South Africa (DA), 'The House of Sedgwick' (unpublished typescript, 1951), 29.

⁵⁷ The major players signed up, notably E. K. Green, CWBC, Collison's, Sedgwick and Co., and the Van Ryn Wine and Brandy Co. Van Zyl, *KWV*, 26.

⁵⁸ The Wine Commission cites a figure of £30 per leaguer. *Wine Commission*, 9.

the storm.⁵⁹ This shakeout formed part of a long-range pattern of concentration in the industry.⁶⁰ By 1937, the wholesale trade was divided up between three players: CWBC/E. K. Green at 57.5 per cent, Sedgwick/Jooste & Bryant at 22.5 per cent, and Santhagens (plus 13 small firms) holding the remaining 22 per cent.⁶¹

TEMPERANCE AND STASIS, 1920–48

In the early 1920s, the triumph of prohibition in the United States brought liquor back to the forefront of public debate in South Africa. Although few imagined that the country would suddenly ‘go dry’, the temperance movement pursued modified Local Option as an interim measure. Although their campaign posed a threat to the wine farmers, the KWV was too preoccupied with its own survival to engage with the debate.

In the early 1920s, the temperance movement could point to evidence that it was winning over Afrikaner opinion. In 1915 the Synod of the Cape DRC had finally taken a stand against the *dop*, although it advocated regulation rather than abolition.⁶² In parliament, the movement also found an effective champion in Dr D. F. Malan, a theologian whose father actually owned a wine farm – which was inherited by his brother and fellow-politician S. F. Malan.⁶³ However, his Local Option Bill was opposed by many MPs as a slippery slope to prohibition and was narrowly defeated, as it was the following year. These near-misses underlined the importance of mobilizing public support to persuade wavering MPs to back legislation. At the end of 1923, the parliamentary campaign spilled over into a very public spat between the temperance movement and its opponents. On 5–6 December, SATA convened a congress in Cradock where Rev. A. J. Cook rather optimistically pronounced that South Africa ‘had caught the spirit of the age’ and was destined to become a global leader in the temperance cause.⁶⁴ A number of papers were read invoking international opinion supporting social, health, and theological reasons why liquor was a scourge. The WCTU president, Emilie Solomon, spoke on the effects of alcohol on the home and on infant mortality, and finished on a remarkable flourish concerning the effects upon racial vitality.⁶⁵ The congress concluded by passing a number of resolutions, one of which advocated better links with the DRC while another proposed sending a letter to farmers’ leaders urging cooperation around the production of non-alcoholic beverages.⁶⁶

⁵⁹ The CWBC acquired Collison’s, while Jooste & Bryant from Johannesburg acquired Sedgwick. DA, ‘House of Sedgwick’, 18.

⁶⁰ M. Fridjohn and A. Murray, *Conspiracy of Giants: The South African Liquor Industry* (Johannesburg, 1986).

⁶¹ *Wine Commission*, 25.

⁶² Union of South Africa, *Report of the Cape Coloured Commission of Enquiry* [U. G. 33/1945], 11.

⁶³ Interview with Danie Malan, Allesverloren, Riebeeck-Kasteel, 2 Nov. 2009. S. F. Malan became a longstanding KWV director.

⁶⁴ Rev. A. J. Cook, ‘The American experiment and its meaning for South Africa’, in *The Drink Problem in South Africa: Addresses and Papers Delivered at the Local Option Congress Held at Cradock on December 5th and 6th, 1923* (Cape Town, 1924), 99.

⁶⁵ Miss E. Solomon, ‘Alcohol and the home’, in *ibid.* 60.

⁶⁶ Resolutions in *ibid.* 176.

The Cradock congress galvanized the defenders of wine into holding a counter-meeting in Paarl in May 1924. The formal agenda was to promote temperance, and Professor A. I. Perold from Stellenbosch University – South Africa's pre-eminent viticultural expert⁶⁷ – used this theme to argue for the benefits of moderate consumption. He attacked Local Option as the thin end of the wedge:

Some opponents of drunkenness believe that the principle of moderation is not sufficiently effective to fight the abuse of liquor successfully; and therefore they plead for total prohibition, as it is now generally called. Their favourite means to this end is the fine-sounding term 'local option' which aims at the local total prohibition of the sale of liquor in order to make the whole country gradually dryer and dryer, until as a whole, it will be ripe for total prohibition. Everyone who is against total prohibition should therefore also oppose this local option, the more so as its supporters, as recently happened at the Cradock conference, no longer hide the fact that their final goal is prohibition.⁶⁸

W. C. Winshaw, who had previously worked with SATA to manufacture grape juice and *moskonfyt*, was the most vociferous of all. As an American, he presented an awful spectre of South Africa being turned into 'a nursery of fanatics ... with perhaps two and a half hypocrites to a family – one awful vast Kansas'.⁶⁹ Louis Leipoldt, a respected Afrikaner intellectual with a medical background, inserted a new line of argument that was later to be fully elaborated. He maintained that alcohol was an inherent part of human physiology and hence was the opposite of a 'poison'. Like Perold, he insisted that moderate consumption – especially light wines – was an aid to digestion and contained vital nutrients.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the KWV was fighting for its survival. Following the crisis of 1920, the declared surplus increased to as much as two thirds of production. While the merchants were paying £9 a leaguer to the KWV, the farmers only received £3 and had to surrender their surpluses for destruction, which produced some restiveness.⁷¹ The moment of reckoning came when the firms announced their intention to withdraw from the price agreement at the end of 1923. KWV directors realized that the game might be up unless they could secure legislation that would compel the merchants to comply while preventing free-riding by farmers. Charlie Heatlie, KWV director and South African Party (SAP) MP for Worcester approached Jan Smuts, the prime minister, with a proposal for devolving regulatory powers to the KWV.⁷² Smuts signalled that he was amenable provided such a step enjoyed the support of the majority of members and the NP did not turn it into a partisan affair. After leading figures within the KWV brokered discussions between SAP and NP politicians, Smuts agreed to personally bring a bill to parliament at the earliest opportunity. During the subsequent debate, the

⁶⁷ Perold moved to the KWV in 1928. R. U. Kenney, *Abraham Izak Perold: Wegwyser van ons Wingerdbou* (Cape Town, 1981).

⁶⁸ A. I. Perold, 'The social aspect of the liquor problem', in *Wine and Drunkenness: The Social Problem of the Day* (Cape Town, 1924), 162.

⁶⁹ W. C. Winshaw, 'The effect of prohibition in America', in *Wine and Drunkenness*, 10.

⁷⁰ Dr C. Louis Leipoldt, 'The medical aspect of the moderate consumption of alcohol', in *ibid.* 116–36.

⁷¹ Van Zyl, *KWV*, 36.

⁷² *Ibid.* 45–9.

Wine and Spirits Control Bill was vigorously attacked by MPs from both sides of the house. Smuts conceded that the farmers had been their own worst enemy by producing masses of wine 'only fit for the gutter' and conceded that many criticisms of the KWV were justified.⁷³ But he insisted that it was better to support the industry in putting its house in order rather than imposing state control.

Smuts received support from some MPs representing wine farming constituencies, but others expressed scepticism about the capacity of the KWV to deliver. The MP for Constantia accused the KWV of pandering to poorer farmers by paying high prices for 'absolute muck', while the makers of good wine were offered a price that did not reflect their much lower yields.⁷⁴ Another MP similarly observed that there was a clear division between the historic winelands and the irrigated districts to the north where farmers 'can simply let the wine flow'.⁷⁵ D. F. Malan was conspicuously silent,⁷⁶ and the only temperance MP who spoke actually supported the Bill on the grounds that a stronger farmers' association might be able to steer the industry in the direction of raisins and motor fuel.⁷⁷ Possibly, temperance MPs did not wish to alienate colleagues whose votes would be crucial to the passage of the latest iteration of the Local Option Bill that Leslie Blackwell introduced in February 1924. Smuts carried the day, although opponents succeeded in limiting KWV regulation to distilling wine and the 'gentlemen's agreement' was reconfirmed. By contrast, Blackwell's bill failed by a margin of two votes. His mistake was to express the hope that Local Option would lead eventually to outright prohibition. Roos was emphatic that winelands MPs could hardly vote for the bill, adding that it was especially anachronistic given that Smuts had only just introduced legislation to assist the farmers.⁷⁸

When parliament reconvened after the 1924 election, it was an alliance between the National and Labour Parties that commanded the majority. Within the Pact Government, Roos assumed the Justice portfolio. In 1925, a Local Option Bill was introduced for the fourth year in succession, but failed by a wider margin. It now fell to Roos to formulate legislation that would consolidate the liquor laws. Introducing his Liquor Bill in September 1926, Roos unwisely pinned his anti-temperance colors to the mast by openly criticizing 'self-appointed reformers'.⁷⁹ The bill conceded something to both wine interests and the temperance lobby, but at the risk of alienating both. On the one hand, Roos proposed an extension of the *dop* system to the Transvaal, on the basis that outright prohibition for Africans had proved a singular

⁷³ Jan Smuts moving second reading of the Wine and Spirits Control Bill, *Assembly Debates*, 6 Feb. 1924, column 106.

⁷⁴ Bisset (MP for South Peninsula), Union of South Africa, *Debates of the House of Assembly* (Pretoria), 8 Feb. 1924, column 145.

⁷⁵ Le Roux van Niekerk (MP for Waterberg), *Debates*, 6 Feb. 1924, column 121.

⁷⁶ Nathan (MP for Von Brandis), *Debates*, 7 Mar. 1924, column 708.

⁷⁷ W. H. Stuart (MP for Tembuland), *Debates*, 8 Feb. 1924, column 148. Will Stuart was the only son of Katie Stuart, who was active in the IOGT and SATA, following in the footsteps of her uncle Theophilus Schreiner. I am grateful to Liz Stanley for clarification.

⁷⁸ Tielman Roos (MP for Lichtenburg), *Debates*, 7 Feb. 1924, column 129.

⁷⁹ Tielman Roos (Minister of Justice), introducing second reading of Liquor Bill, *Debates*, 10 Feb. 1926, column 460.

failure and that it would help to stem the drift of labour to the cities. In addition, his bill envisaged government canteens through which liquor could be made available to 'non-whites' under controlled conditions. Part of the intention was to expand the market for light wines, which Roos considered a desirable outcome. The bill omitted a Local Option clause and went further by excluding teetotalers from serving on licensing boards. Finally, whites were to be permitted to purchase wine and beer from cafés and restaurants without complicated licensing restrictions. On the other hand, the bill intended to phase out licences for stand-up canteens over a five-year period. The bill would have permitted Coloureds in the Cape to drink in licensed canteens, but banned them from purchasing off-sales. Crucially, Africans at the Cape were to forfeit the right to consume any 'European alcohol', regardless of whether they were on the voters' register.

Roos had already pre-empted debate by announcing that the bill would be referred to a select committee. Over the next two years, the WCTU and SATA kept up sustained pressure through petitions and public meetings, targeting aspects of the 'Roos Bill' that they regarded as unacceptable. The document that returned to parliament in 1927 was shorn of its provisions for freer access. At a 'mass meeting' at City Hall, which was led by the archbishop of Cape Town, temperance speakers celebrated the withdrawal of 'two-thirds' of the offending articles from the bill. While SATA fought on, the KWV made almost no impact. Of the wine-farming MPs, Heatlie and J. H. H. De Waal made lengthy contributions to the debate, but given the latter's hostility to the KWV they struggled to find a unified voice. They did mount a spirited defence of the *dop*, but this was more about justifying established practice in the Cape than supporting an extension to the north.

In 1928, the temperance movement claimed victory. Under the Liquor Act, all Africans were now excluded from the purchase of wine, beer, and spirits. This represented a significant change in the Cape—although permits of exemption could be applied for in exceptional circumstances.⁸⁰ For temperance campaigners, there were only three lingering sources of regret. The first was that they had failed to prevent the legalization of municipal beerhalls on the Witwatersrand. Second, the *dop* system remained in place in the Cape and the Orange Free State, albeit subject to formal regulation, while Coloureds in the Cape were permitted to purchase alcohol from canteens and off-licences. Third, they had failed to revive Local Option. But the hours of sale had been reduced, while the wine farmer's licence was restricted to large volumes consumed off-premises. Blackwell and the temperance lobby had forced Roos into a humiliating retreat through a skilful mixture of public campaigning—including public meetings and letters to the press—and the application of direct pressure to MPs. The wine farmers had been outmanoeuvred.

The 1928 debate was played out against the backdrop of a segregationist agenda set out by the Pact government. While WCTU campaigning against prostitution would suggest that the movement had always been committed to entrenching racial boundaries, things had never been clear-cut when it came

⁸⁰ The exemptions covered a period of 12 months. Act to Consolidate and Amend the Laws for the Control of the Supply of Intoxicating Liquor (Liquor Act) (No. 30 of 1928), section 101 (3).

to temperance.⁸¹ The movement had often spoken for Africans, but SATA had also encouraged African temperance advocates to articulate their own concerns as citizens – and as men. Given that white women did not enjoy the right to vote until 1930, the WCTU had its own reasons for being wary of paternalism. But, as Pamela Scully argues, the women's franchise campaign was constructed 'as a white narrative' in which black voters were marginal to the story and black women were all but forgotten.⁸² By the 1920s, the temperance movement had adopted the line of least resistance: from regarding 'respectable' Africans as valuable allies, white campaigners accepted that removing the African right to consume liquor might be coupled with the loss of voting rights in the Cape. The established association between these rights could therefore cut both ways. If gender trumped race at the expense of black voting rights,⁸³ temperance imperatives subsequently undermined the case for a common citizenship. In the case of the Coloured population, however, there was greater resistance to the segregationist position. As Jeremy Martens has noted, many MPs defended Coloured rights to consumption on the basis of non-racialism and the observation that they were every bit as sober and respectable as whites.⁸⁴ With respect to the franchise, some Afrikaner nationalists, most notably Hertzog, argued that Coloureds should be embraced. Crucially, however, those who demurred pointed to alcoholism as the critical defect proving that Coloureds were not fit to be partners in the political arena. The liquor and segregationist debates were closely intertwined.⁸⁵

The 1928 debate had gone badly for the wine farmers. To compound matters, production more than doubled from 95,211 leaguers in 1924 to 202,444 leaguers ten years later. The largest increases were recorded in the irrigable districts of Worcester, Montagu, and Robertson, which accounted for 50.4 per cent of total production in 1934.⁸⁶ Given that this additional output consisted almost entirely of distilling wine, the warnings of the Constantia MP in 1924 proved prescient. However, in the decade after 1928, debates about excessive liquor consumption and the overproduction of wine took place in distinct fora – which made a revisitation of the Liquor Act unlikely in the medium term.

This bifurcation of the liquor question is apparent from two enquiries that reported in 1937, the first of which was the Cape Coloured Commission.⁸⁷

⁸¹ K. Shear, "Not welfare or uplift work": white women, masculinity and policing in South Africa', *Gender and History*, 8:3 (1996), 393–415.

⁸² P. Scully, 'White maternity and black infancy: the rhetoric of race in the South African women's suffrage movement, 1895–1930', in I. C. Fletcher, P. Levine and L. R. N. Mayhall (eds.), *Women's Suffrage in the British Empire: Citizenship, Nation and Race* (London, 2000), 74.

⁸³ Scully, 'White maternity', 76.

⁸⁴ J. C. Martens, 'Conflicting views of "Coloured" people in the South African Liquor Bill debate of 1928', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 35: 2 (2001), 313–38. Major G. B. Van Zyl referred to a petition signed by 10,344 Coloured people, many of whom were temperance supporters, objecting to any distinction on the basis of color. Van Zyl (MP for Harbour), *Debates*, 20 Feb. 1928, column 1181–2.

⁸⁵ Cape Africans lost the qualified franchise in 1936, while Coloureds were taken off the common voters roll in 1956.

⁸⁶ *Wine Commission*, Table II, 12.

⁸⁷ Union of South Africa, *Commission of Enquiry Regarding Cape Coloured Population on the Union* (1937).

Although alcohol comprised only a small part of its remit, it was informed by the debate about whether the lack of social cohesion was due to some biological deficit, poverty or the destructive consequences of drink. The six-member commission included Dr Abdurahman who had long been associated with temperance.⁸⁸ The commissioners came to the conclusion that while Cape Malays (as Muslims) did not drink and that the artisanal classes were generally moderate in their consumption, many of the 'unskilled labouring type' were experiencing a reduction of their wage-earning capacity as a consequence of their 'physical and moral deterioration'. The commission was sceptical that abolishing the *dop* would resolve the problem, but nevertheless recommended it as part of a coordinated push to improve rural living conditions. Its pragmatism was also reflected in the balance struck between opposition to prohibition for Coloureds, which it considered un-enforceable, and advocacy of an end to bulk sales for off-site consumption and a tightening up of the hours of sale. In effect, the commission accepted some temperance arguments, whilst borrowing from critics who maintained that ill-chosen legislative intervention was doomed to failure. Reflecting the influence of Abdurahman, the commission rejected a racial reading of alcohol addiction and placed its faith in the leadership of 'the upper Coloured classes' in fostering a social stigma towards intemperance amongst the 'lower classes'. This defence of Coloured social cohesion also represented a coded rebuttal of segregationism and should be read in the context of the disenfranchisement of Cape Africans the previous year.

The second enquiry was the Wine Commission, which produced the most detailed report on the industry in the twentieth century. The enquiry was necessitated by the failure of the KWV either to curb production or to establish enough of an export market to dispose of the surplus.⁸⁹ The KWV directors sought to persuade the commission that the association could effectively regulate production and pursue quality, but only if it was given complete regulatory powers over both distilling and good wine. The KWV placed much of the blame at the doorstep of the liquor firms that had an interest in dividing the farmers.⁹⁰ By stark contrast, the firms opposed anything that would confer greater regulatory powers on the KWV, whereas the quality wine farmers repeated the complaint that the KWV was hostage to mass producers. Some witnesses sought to revisit the Liquor Act by arguing that the market for wine was artificially constrained by the ban on the sale of light wines to 'natives'. Although the commission declared this beyond its competence, it could not resist commenting on evidence that Africans were, in fact, acquiring access to drink and opined that it made better sense 'to see that facilities are provided for the supply of liquor, of moderate alcoholic

⁸⁸ *Red die Kleurling Volk!* (Cape Town, 1937), 6.

⁸⁹ Its members included Sidney Waterson who was an MP and a member of the Board of Sedgwick. DA, 'House of Sedgwick', 21. It also included Alfred Appleyard, the manager of Rhodes Fruit Farms.

⁹⁰ Kohler recalled that in 1924 the wine merchants had circulated pamphlets at a gathering of farmers in Worcester, which had been called to consider the proposals for regulation, in an effort to encourage members to break ranks. Unie Van Suid-Afrika, *Verslag Van die Gekose Komitee oor die Kontrole oor Wyn en Spiritualeë Wysigingswetsontwerp* (Cape Town, 1940), 38.

strength, to natives in reasonable quantities under adequate supervision and decent surroundings.⁹¹ These observations chipped away at the assumptions underpinning the Liquor Act.

In addition, the commission criticized other aspects of the legislation that were considered 'unnecessarily irksome'.⁹² It proposed that the prohibition on the sale of wine through cafés and restaurants be repealed and that special licences be provided that would be exempt from quotas imposed under the Liquor Act. It further recommended that the KWV and the merchants join forces in a publicity campaign to promote the drinking of light wines. Anticipating a horrified temperance response, the commission observed that 'the supply of natural dry wines, of low alcoholic strength in limited quantities with meals only' would educate 'young people in the proper use of alcoholic liquor'.⁹³ Although its observations received less publicity than the recommendation that regulatory powers over all wine be placed in the hands of the KWV, the commission interpolated a discourse about healthy lifestyles into the liquor debate.

Temperance organizations played no part in the proceedings of the Wine Commission and do not seem to have reacted to its findings. Although they continued to push for prohibition for 'non-whites', changing demographic realities began to reconfigure the debate in the Cape. The issue had hitherto been excessive consumption by Coloureds, but a SATA pamphlet reflects a growing awareness of fresh challenges arising from the growing African population of the Western Cape.⁹⁴ This theme resonated strongly in the Cape Coloured Liquor Commission, whose report was published in 1945.⁹⁵ In many ways, it merely rehashed the Cape Coloured Commission in a less nuanced fashion, falling back on crude notions of innate biological dispositions derived from 'Hottentot blood'. The commission made two specific claims, one tendentious and the other more firmly grounded. The first was that Coloureds had become 'so enfeebled' through drink that they were no longer capable of performing heavy farm work, thereby opening the door to African labour.⁹⁶ The second was that because Africans could not legally acquire access to 'kaffir beer' in the Western Cape, they were tempted to purchase wine and brandy illegally with the assistance of Coloured middlemen.⁹⁷ Having drawn attention to the burgeoning illicit trade, the commission did not advocate an immediate change to the law. But it did recommend that government consider the 'native' liquor question in the Western Cape at the same time as it dealt with Coloured consumption.

THE BREAKTHROUGH OF WINE INTERESTS, 1948-65

In the decade that followed, the relatively stable balance between wine and temperance interests was disrupted. The first reason is that the manner in which interests were articulated was transformed by the victory of the NP in 1948. The WCTU and SATA had pioneered the art of mass action and

⁹¹ *Wine Commission*, 91.

⁹² *Ibid.* 90.

⁹³ *Ibid.* 100.

⁹⁴ *Red die Kleurling Volk*, 11.

⁹⁵ *Report of the Cape Coloured Liquor Commission of Inquiry*.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 2.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 18.

political lobbying. These strategies were effective at a time when there was relative parity between the parties and when MPs had to worry about the size of their majorities. But as the NP cemented its electoral grip, MPs became less susceptible to such pressure. There was a preference in the NP for internalizing debate and reaching a consensus behind closed doors, and those who sought to lobby government needed to find ways of penetrating the inner sanctums of the party, especially at the provincial level. Moreover, successive administrations were preoccupied with the elaboration of apartheid doctrine and practice during the 1950s. To some extent, evasion of the liquor laws could be addressed within the context of apartheid regulation – most notably through the Group Areas Act (1950) that aimed to erase zones of interracial contact. But police reports made it abundantly clear that this alone was insufficient.

A second reason was that the temperance movement lost much of its internal cohesion. Once white women had acquired the vote, the ability of campaigners to creatively couple and delink the franchise and temperance lapsed: it is striking that the temperance movement scored its greatest hits before white women's enfranchisement. The movement had relinquished its potentially important African support base well before 1930. Thereafter, defending prohibition for Africans was in tune with the language and logic of segregationism. Ironically, however, the racialization of a discourse of consumption made it difficult to sell temperance to a white electorate. The spectre of the degeneration of poor whites through drink became less convincing in light of the burgeoning consumer tastes of an ascendant Afrikaner middle class.⁹⁸ Moreover, while the national and provincial leadership of the WCTU continued to reproduce itself, it struggled to hold onto a younger generation of activists. An internal history suggests that the low conversion rate from the youth unions (the 'Ys') to full membership after the war was decisive.⁹⁹ Temperance ceased to hold much appeal for younger whites seduced by the consumer boom of the 1950s¹⁰⁰ – although the Coloured wing of the WCTU may have fared a little better. In 1957, the chairman of the Cape WCTU, M. E. Duguid, alluded to efforts to resuscitate moribund unions and to revive relations with SATA. She also hinted at some internal carping:

Some of us rather enjoy living in the past – getting 'a kick' out of recalling its past glories or moaning over its failures. Have we not all heard about the 'W.C.T. U. being on its last legs'? Do we listen? Do we believe it? Do we contradict it?¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ This is told through the debate over the imported American Saddleback in Swart, 'High horses'.

⁹⁹ *The Women's Christian Temperance Union in South Africa 1889–1989* (Cape Town, undated), 49.

¹⁰⁰ The war years had witnessed pressure on wages as well as consumer shortages. N. Nattrass, 'Economic growth and transformation in the 1940s', in S. Dubow and A. Jeeves (eds.), *South Africa's 1940s: Worlds of Possibilities* (Cape Town, 2005), 26–8, 33.

¹⁰¹ 'Chairman's Address at Cape Province Convention by Mrs M. E. Duguid', *White Ribbon*, 64:1, (Nov/Dec 1957).

In particular, she referred to the difficulties associated with preaching the doctrine of abstinence to youth who were seduced by the glamour of liquor advertising, singling out the current Miss South Africa as someone who frequented all too many drinks receptions.¹⁰² This was a cultural shift from which the temperance international suffered more generally in the 1950s, but amongst the Afrikaner population the changes were especially striking.¹⁰³

By contrast, the KWV grew in stature during the 1950s. Having secured powers to regulate pricing and production across the wine industry in 1940, the KWV pursued a dual strategy of boosting exports and encouraging farmers to embrace the shift to drinking wine. In 1960, the KWV finally introduced a quota system that limited how much each farm was permitted to produce. This helped to reduce the surplus and ushered in a period of prosperity. The enhanced credibility of the KWV mattered because the implication of its strategy was that there needed to be an expanded internal market for natural wine. The KWV now took up the argument about the health benefits of wine, which had been articulated by Leipoldt, and made it a central plank of its public information campaign.¹⁰⁴ By making a strong case for the fusion of wine and food, the KWV hoped to cut the ground from beneath the temperance discourse on health.

A significant breakthrough came with the adoption of cool fermentation in the late 1950s, making it possible to produce white wines that were both aromatic and consistent in quality. This innovation was actively encouraged by the firms who closely supervised every stage of the production process on the farms. The greater costs involved encouraged smaller producers to join a resurgent cooperative movement that could draw on credit from the Afrikaner banks to invest in state-of-the-art cellars. The cooperatives sold much of their wine to companies like the Stellenbosch Farmers' Winery (SFW) that, in turn, pioneered strong brands.¹⁰⁵ The SFW enjoyed the greatest success with Lieberstein, which became the world's largest selling brand in the early 1960s, building on an image of youthful sociability. While the triangle between the KWV, the cooperatives, and the merchant-manufacturers was never devoid of tension, all three now shared an interest in promoting the domestic market for natural wine.

After 1948, the KWV leadership nurtured a special relationship with the NP. Successive chairmen were members of the Broederbond, and several directors held parliamentary seats.¹⁰⁶ Crucially, the KWV was also able to fashion ways of tapping into public displays of Afrikaner nationalism that

¹⁰² The pages of *Die Wynboer* in the 1960s and 1970s regularly promoted wine through glamour, featuring successive Miss South Africas alongside fashion models. The WCTU fought back with its own advertising campaign, including an iconic poster that read 'You May Think Alcohol Puts Springs Under You But It Always Lets you Down', *Women's Christian*, 60.

¹⁰³ P. Pennock, "The number one social problem of our time": American Protestants and temperance politics in the 1950s', *Journal of Church and State*, 53: 4 (2011), 8.

¹⁰⁴ Van Zyl, *KWV*, 162–6.

¹⁰⁵ W. C. Winshaw founded SFW in 1924, but the company was relaunched in 1926.

¹⁰⁶ In the 1960s, André J. Du Toit, was a member of the Broederbond, as was Avril Malan.

were a feature of the postwar years.¹⁰⁷ The KWV took full advantage in 1952 of the tercentenary of the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck, promoting a National Vine Festival to commemorate his first planting of vines.¹⁰⁸ That year, the KWV also took a vine-leaf out of the Burgundian book and instigated annual festivals in the main towns in the winelands, which celebrated both Dutch heritage and the specific Huguenot contribution to viniculture.¹⁰⁹ These events typically included processions of floats—depicting giant bunches of grapes, vats, and period dress—led by drum majorettes. The dignitaries who were invited to speak at the exhibition grounds typically included local NP politicians, ministers, and KWV directors. The temperance movement had nothing to match this reappropriation of Afrikaner cultural politics in the service of wine, compounding their failure to make sense of an emergent youth culture. Although the DRC remained a significant ally, the temperance movement continued to appear as a predominantly English-speaking and Coloured affair.

In the late 1950s, the proliferation of shebeens was a feature not just of the Transvaal, where they became a badge of African urban chic, but also of the Western Cape. In 1955, the Malan Commission was mandated ‘to inquire into and report on the general distribution of liquor and the selling prices thereof’. The most controversial question was whether ‘non-whites’ should be permitted access to ‘European liquor’ given an ‘illicit liquor trade which transcends the wildest flights of the imagination’.¹¹⁰ The commission reasoned that extending prohibition would only be effective if the ban on alcohol was extended to whites, which it considered impractical.¹¹¹ The *status quo* was not acceptable either, which left the option of reform. The commission concluded that the objective should be to encourage all groups to embrace the consumption of natural wine and malt beer alongside the intake of food. It suggested that light wine and beer be made available through municipal beerhalls in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, but that off-site consumption remain subject to a simplified version of the permit system. In the Cape and Natal, it recommended that existing ‘privileges’ be maintained, although it proposed that the hours of sale for Europeans and non-whites be harmonized.¹¹² When it came to whites, the commission found that the consumption of spirits was considerably higher than for ‘comparable’ countries in Europe and Australasia. It reasoned that the strategic objective should be one of shifting consumption away from ‘strong drink’.¹¹³ The proposal that special licences be introduced for the sale of

¹⁰⁷ L. Witz, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts* (Bloomington, 2003).

¹⁰⁸ Van Zyl, *KWV*, 54–5.

¹⁰⁹ The Burgundy festivals were a response to the crisis of the 1930s. P. Whalen, ‘“Insofar as the ruby wine seduces them”: cultural strategies for selling wine in inter-war Burgundy’, *Contemporary European History*, 18:1 (2009), 67–98. The Cape festivals were so similar that it is difficult to believe that they were not a direct copy.

¹¹⁰ This commission was chaired by Avril Malan, a former academic and MP. *Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the General Distribution and Selling Prices of Liquor, May 1960* [Malan Commission], unofficial translation by the Western Province Bottle Store Keepers Association, 10.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* 25.

¹¹² *Ibid.* 39.

¹¹³ Contrary to temperance claims, it considered that: ‘There is little proof that the consumption of natural types of drink alone can create alcoholics.’ *Ibid.* 48.

natural wines and beers in restaurants, cafés, and hotels was especially controversial because it threatened to reverse one of the victories claimed by the temperance movement in 1928. But the commission went even further and argued that because healthy drinking was to be linked to the consumption of food, it should logically be available for purchase in grocery stores.¹¹⁴

Remarkably, the government did not merely accept the diagnosis, but jettisoned gradualism altogether. Despite stiff opposition from many MPs, parliament approved an amendment in 1961 (effective in August 1962), which made all kinds of alcohol legally available to all races. This was a victory for the KWV and the liquor firms, who immediately embarked on advertising campaigns and promotions designed to bring wine and beer to the consciousness (and lips) of the African consumer.¹¹⁵ A further amendment in 1964/5 relaxed controls over distribution, making it possible to purchase wine through grocery stores and supermarkets. Vorster insisted that he was not acting under pressure from the wine farmers, although he went on to state that he would be happy enough if they benefited.¹¹⁶ He also praised the KWV for having assumed an advocacy role for the industry that went beyond its strict remit.¹¹⁷ Such a bold endorsement would have been inconceivable before the 1950s, and underlined the extent to which the temperance movement had lost ground.

Vorster reinforced the contention that the most sensible course of action was to promote a healthier drinking pattern through the integration of natural wine into the habits of everyday life. This had become a perpetual refrain in the speeches of the KWV chairman, Dr André du Toit. In 1961, Du Toit had used the editorial page of *Die Wynboer* to criticize legislation that retarded the development of a wine culture:

We speak so easily and so often about the upholding of Western civilisation . . . As I have learned to know such civilisation in Western countries, a general and healthy use of wine assumes an integral place in the lifestyle of Western people. In their hotels, in their cafés, in their restaurants and also in their homes wine assumes its rightful place as a foodstuff.¹¹⁸

Ironically, this invocation of a virtuous European drinking model came at precisely the juncture when it was under attack in France.¹¹⁹ But for all the heat generated, there was to be no reprise of 1926–28. Although Vorster

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 73.

¹¹⁵ This was achieved with remarkable speed in the case of beer, but wine sales increased only slowly. Mager, *Beer*.

¹¹⁶ Minister of Justice, John Vorster, introducing second reading of the Liquor Laws Amendment Act, in Unie Van Suid-Afrika, *Debatte van die Volksraad* (Pretoria), 10 June 1963, column 7912.

¹¹⁷ Vorster noted that the KWV was not permitted to sell wine inside South Africa under the 'gentleman's agreement'.

¹¹⁸ 'Algemene gesindheid teenoor wyn is nie reg nie', *Die Wynboer*, Mar. 1960, 3.

¹¹⁹ Bowker (MP for Albany), *Debatte*, 10 June 1963, column 7931. The French wine industry under pressure from a campaign against alcoholism that denied the specific virtues of wine. M. Demossier, *Wine Drinking Culture in France: A National Myth or a Modern Passion?* (Cardiff, 2010), 59.

insisted that MPs were free to vote with their consciences, he secured passage of the act with relatively minor concessions.¹²⁰

CONCLUSION

This article has focused on pressure for legislation, the reason being that both the temperance movement and wine interests depended on it: the first to curb access to liquor and the second to resolve the problems of collective action amongst farmers and merchants. At the same time, of course, their interests were diametrically opposed. Whereas conflicting interests within the wine industry created obstacles, the temperance movement derived strength from its decentralized structure. In the decades before 1920, the WCTU, IOGT/IOTT, and SATA converted temperance into a popular cause, at the same time as they pioneered mass action and perfected the art of political lobbying. The wine farmers borrowed some of these tactics, but after 1910 the relatively few MPs representing wine-farming constituencies had little influence. Weakly organized and at odds with the merchants, the wine farmers were in no position to press for revisions to the liquor laws that they desperately needed.

Between 1920 and 1948, successive governments endeavoured to steer a course between wine and temperance. In 1924, Smuts was prepared to devolve some regulatory powers upon the KWV to resolve the problems of collective action, but had no desire to antagonize temperance campaigners. The struggle to shape the Liquor Act of 1928 underlined the superior organizational capacity of WCTU/SATA. It also revealed the willingness of the temperance movement to sacrifice African political rights in the process, given the presumed link between liquor and the franchise. In the 1930s, a point of equilibrium was reached. However, the Wine Commission and two enquiries into Coloured affairs raised significant doubts about the viability of racially exclusive legislation. In the period after 1948, the KWV emerged as a powerful voice for the wine industry with close links to the ruling party. Moreover, while the social campaigning of the WCTU now seemed outmoded, the KWV skilfully exploited Afrikaner cultural nationalism, an emergent youth culture, and the consolidation of an Afrikaner middle class. The KWV repositioned wine as a respectable and wholesome commodity, while the firms used the association with food to present wine-drinking as a social lubricant and as appropriate for men as for women. The increase in consumption from 216,485 hectolitres in 1947 to 419,248 in 1955 (while brandy sales remained static) signalled a qualitative shift in white consumption patterns.¹²¹ The KWV subsequently lobbied successfully for the deracialization of the liquor laws, and in tandem with the manufacturers set out to create a nation of wine-drinkers.

The temperance movement always derived its strength from being a network that was simultaneously global and local. By contrast, the crisis of overproduction forced the wine industry into an acute localism. The

¹²⁰ The most significant was that grocers' licences would only be granted in magisterial districts where the sale of natural wine represented less than 40 per cent of sales. Vorster, *Debatte*, 10 June 1963, column 7917.

¹²¹ Van Zyl, *KWV*, 134.

transformation of its fortunes came at the point when the KWV was able to secure a strategic position within the Afrikaner nationalist front, while tapping into a discourse of consumption that was international by provenance. The supreme irony is that the advocacy of a European model, which was considered applicable to all racial groups, came just as the apartheid regime was insisting on innate differences between racial groups and reconciling itself to international isolation in the aftermath of Sharpeville.