

A History of the World in Six Glasses

When one is analyzing history, there are many different aspects to look at. Even the smallest things can have an astonishingly massive impact. For his book, Tom Standage chose to inspect how six different drinks changed history. While most people would believe that drinks are irrelevant to history, Standage proves that they were catalysts for global revolution, stimulants to political and intellectual enlightenment, and good motivators for work. So whenever someone takes a sip from one of these drinks (beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea, and Coca-Cola), they should know that every single drop contains history.

In the early beginnings of civilization, Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt were two of the largest nations in the known world. Before 10,000 BCE, their primary, and probably only, drink was water. Once beer was discovered in Mesopotamia, it was cemented as a step up from water. Water was prone to contamination, but beer was made with boiled water, leaving no unwanted viruses. It slowly made its way to Egypt, where it became just as popular. It even made its way into a story of Egyptian lore involving Ra, the Sun God. At the time, this could be seen as a global phenomenon. Another drink that follows this pattern is brandy. In the heyday of strong alcoholic, like brandy, there was a great market occurring called the Transatlantic Slave Trade. During this time, black slaves were being traded and shipped to America from Africa.