



CHIEF ♦ EXECUTIVE ♦ BOARDS
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

Chief Executive Book Review # 32

A History of the World in Six Glasses

By: Tom Standage © 2005 Walker & Company ISBN 0-8027-1447-1

(See other Chief Executive Book Reviews for the history of other drinks)

The History of Wine

1. Because grapes were originally grown in mountainous regions, the cost of transportation made wine 10 times as expensive as beer
2. Wine consists of the fermented juice of crushed grapes. Natural yeasts, present on the grape skins, convert the juice into alcohol
3. Greeks were the first to produce wine on a large commercial scale. They devised improvements to the winemaking process and adopted the practice of growing vines in neat rows, on trellises and stakes
4. For the Greeks, wine drinking was synonymous with civilization and refinement. What kind of wine you drank, and its age indicated how cultured you were. Wine was preferred over beer. Fine wines were preferred over ordinary ones, and older wines over younger
5. The Greeks mixed wine with water. Drinking even a fine wine without first mixing it with water was considered barbaric
6. Adherence to the rules and rituals of wine drinking, and the use of the appropriate equipment, furniture and dress all served to emphasize the drinker's sophistication
7. Wine was used in symposia to do away with inhibitions and reveal what is hidden
8. The Romans adopted many of the Greek attitudes towards wine

9. The role of wine in Christianity:

- a. Christ's first miracle was to transform six jars of water into wine
- b. Christ likened himself to a vine " I am the vine, you are the branches"
- c. Wine symbolizes Christ's blood
- d. Wine was produced by vineyards on church land
- e. Benedictine monks received a daily ration of a half pint of wine
- f. Christians differ sharply from Muslims concerning alcohol, as Muslims believe Mohammad forbade alcohol

10. In modern Europe, beer is associated with northern European countries and wine is associated with southern European countries