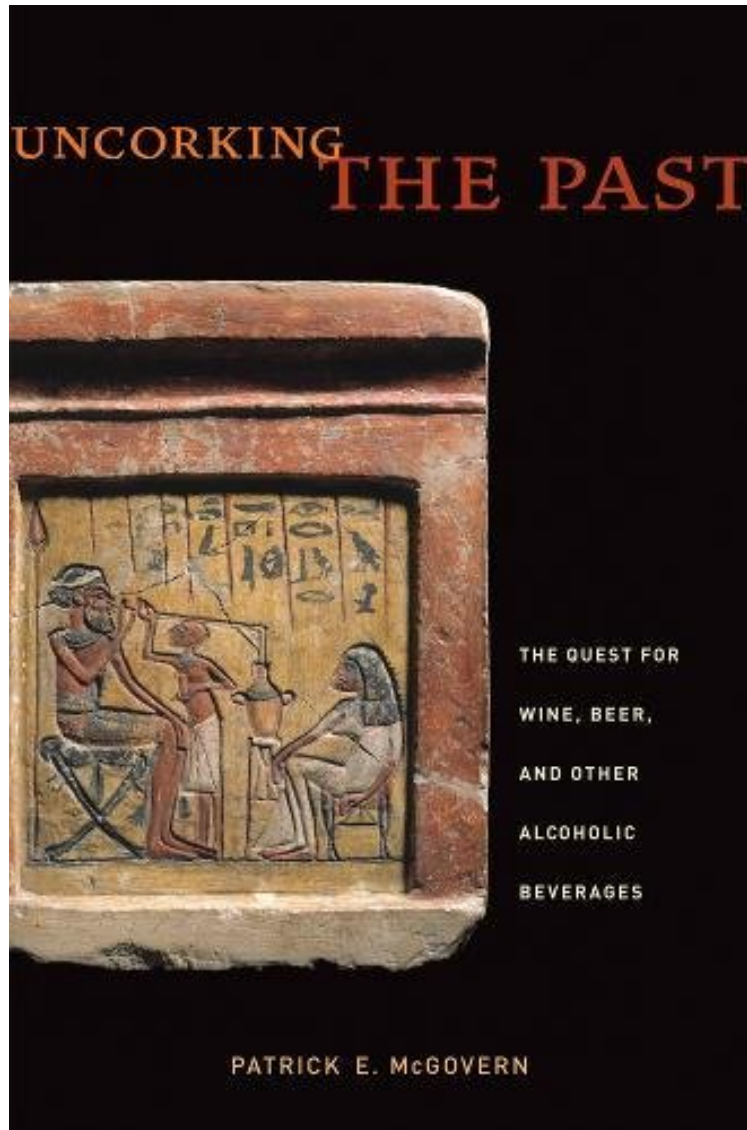


(Free pdf) *Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages*

# Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages

*Patrick E. McGovern*

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#156582 in Books McGovern Patrick E 2009-10-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .84 x 6.00l, 1.09 #File Name: 0520267982352 pages Uncorking the Past The Quest for Wine Beer and Other Alcoholic Beverages | File size: 75.Mb

**Patrick E. McGovern : Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages*:

29 of 29 people found the following review helpful. "Our world is awash in ethanol" By Chambolle So says Patrick

McGovern, and this book explains how it got that way. McGovern theorizes that organisms great and small, perhaps from the unicellular to non-human primates to humans, are hard wired to crave the products of sugar fermentation, particularly alcohol. This taste for fermented beverages has been a driving force in the evolution of human biology, agriculture, culture and religion, or so it would seem. McGovern documents this evolution through archeological findings from Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia, the Middle East -- anywhere and everywhere wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages have been made for many thousands of years, from grain, fruit, honey and whatever other raw material mankind could coax into creating intoxicating food and drink. We are, as McGovern has entitled his very first chapter, "Homo Imbibens." As the book concludes, summing up the theme, "our species' intimate relationship with fermented beverages over millions of years has, in large measure, made us what we are today." Being neither an archeologist nor a paleontologist, I found some of the copious detail presented in this book to be tough sledding. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating read and worth the effort. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. From the big picture to the tiniest detail By mrthinkndrink Simply an outstanding book of scholarship. McGovern is a scientist who speaks fluent vernacular, which for most of us is a blessing. This is a remarkably inclusive survey of worldwide alcoholic beverage production and consumption from the end of the last ice age through the age of the Greeks. Though much of the book deals with the beginnings and subsequent evolution of wine and beer, he touches on drinks, ceremonies and rituals involving fermentation of myriad fruits, honey and starch laden grains from South America to China to Africa. One can't help but be impressed by the widespread use of alcohol by almost every societal group on earth. The picture painted by the author is of an ancient world practically awash in mixed drinks (beer, wine, and honey mixed together being a common one) and a remarkable diversity of stand alone wine and beer styles, often infused with herbs and flavorings, many hallucinatory, to enable the priests and leaders of early societies to commune with their particular gods and goddesses. These drinks have not only been an integral part of human life for thousands of years but may well have been the impetus behind agricultural domestication, human migration and trade and the spread of dominant cultures. For any student of the human condition, of the development of ritual and religion, of the emergence of humanity from our earliest hominid ancestors - and certainly for any thoughtful devotee of wine or beer, I highly recommend *Uncorking The Past*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Good Read, Recommended By J. Willis Mitchell A good review, with interesting insights on the evolution of fermented beverages in early humanity. A lot of unexpected side observations on everything from the bible to the human psychology, as well.

In a lively tour around the world and through the millennia, *Uncorking the Past* tells the compelling story of humanity's ingenious, intoxicating quest for the perfect drink. Following a tantalizing trail of archaeological, chemical, artistic, and textual clues, Patrick E. McGovern, the leading authority on ancient alcoholic beverages, brings us up to date on what we now know about how humans created and enjoyed fermented beverages across cultures. Along the way, he explores a provocative hypothesis about the integral role such libations have played in human evolution. We discover, for example, that the cereal staples of the modern world were probably domesticated for their potential in making quantities of alcoholic beverages. These include the delectable rice wines of China and Japan, the corn beers of the Americas, and the millet and sorghum drinks of Africa. Humans also learned how to make mead from honey and wine from exotic fruits of all kinds—even from the sweet pulp of the cacao (chocolate) fruit in the New World. The perfect drink, it turns out—whether it be mind-altering, medicinal, a religious symbol, a social lubricant, or artistic inspiration—has not only been a profound force in history, but may be fundamental to the human condition itself.

“McGovern's delving, detailed in this fascinating book, leaves little doubt that humans are born drinkers.”