

Beer: Global Beverage, Local Passion

A Food for Thought presentation by
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March 12, 2009

revised August 2009
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Outline

This is a slide-show version of a presentation I gave in March 2009, one of the “Food for Thought” lectures that are part of Santa Monica College’s continuing initiative in Global Citizenship. As part of that same initiative, I was fortunate enough to be among SMC’s team of Fellows attending the Salzburg Global Seminar in 2008. Much of this presentation is a product of that experience, and I wish to thank Santa Monica College, its Board of Trustees, and its President Dr. Chui L. Tsang for supporting my participation.

The structure of this presentation is as follows:

- › **Prelude:** the scales of globalization (2 slides)
- › **Beer:** what it is and how it’s made (4)
- › **Global:** beer as a world-wide tradition, multinational industry, and common mass-produced consumer good (12)
- › **Local:** neo-traditional renaissance of home and craft brewing (2)
- › **Glocal:** local roots of the global; global connections of the local (13)
- › **Coda:** beer in the homeland of wine (2)

Prelude: questions of scale

Globalization is fundamentally a geographic process—a deep-rooted-in-history coming together of peoples and places, cultures and environments, and societies and spaces, around the world. Like all geographic processes, globalization is multi-scalar. Indeed, globalization might even be defined in terms of scale, as sets of confrontations between the local and the global. But how do we best conceive of these scales? As discrete oppositions? As a continuum of variation? Or as a complex weaving together of local and global threads into a fabric that might best be described as “glocal”?

Discrete

Local

Global

Continuous

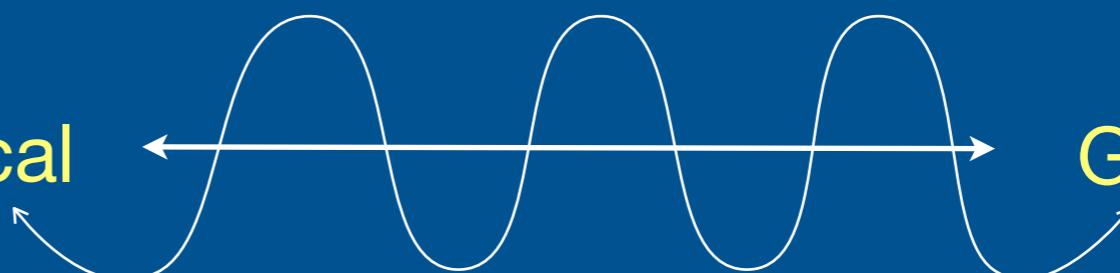
Local

Global

Interwoven

Local

Global



Prelude: an example

A hypothetical “local” homebrew

It’s not hard to imagine making an authentically local beer. Start with a barrel of collected rain water. Then add the requisite amounts of home-grown barley and hops per a unique personal recipe. Add a recycled “house” culture of yeast—or even better, let the local, wild yeasts run amok—and *voilà*, within a few weeks you would have a true *home-brew* in the most complete sense possible.

But still fundamentally a “global” creation

While this beer would warrant the labels “local” or “homemade” as powerfully as any human product, it would be irrevocably tied to peoples and places far beyond one’s own. Not only is the home water connected to a global hydrosphere of evaporation, circulation, and precipitation, but the barley, hops, and yeast are all part of a domesticated biosphere which has evolved under the influence of human beings located all around the planet for the last several millenia. And no matter how unique the recipe, this hypothetical homebrew inevitably would be influenced by the creative work of countless brewers that have come before. Indeed, the very idea of beer itself is a debt owed to human ancestors from long ago and far away.

Beer: what is it?

Broadly defined

While it formerly distinguished hopped malt beverages from unhopped “ales”, the word “beer” has become a generic term—a catch-all label for alcoholic drinks produced by fermentation of sugars derived from starchy foods. Beer is truly “liquid bread”, made from barley, wheat, oats, and other grains, or perhaps even tubers such as manioc and potato. Defined as such, beer is distinguished from both fermented wines (produced from sugary juice or honey) and distilled spirits.

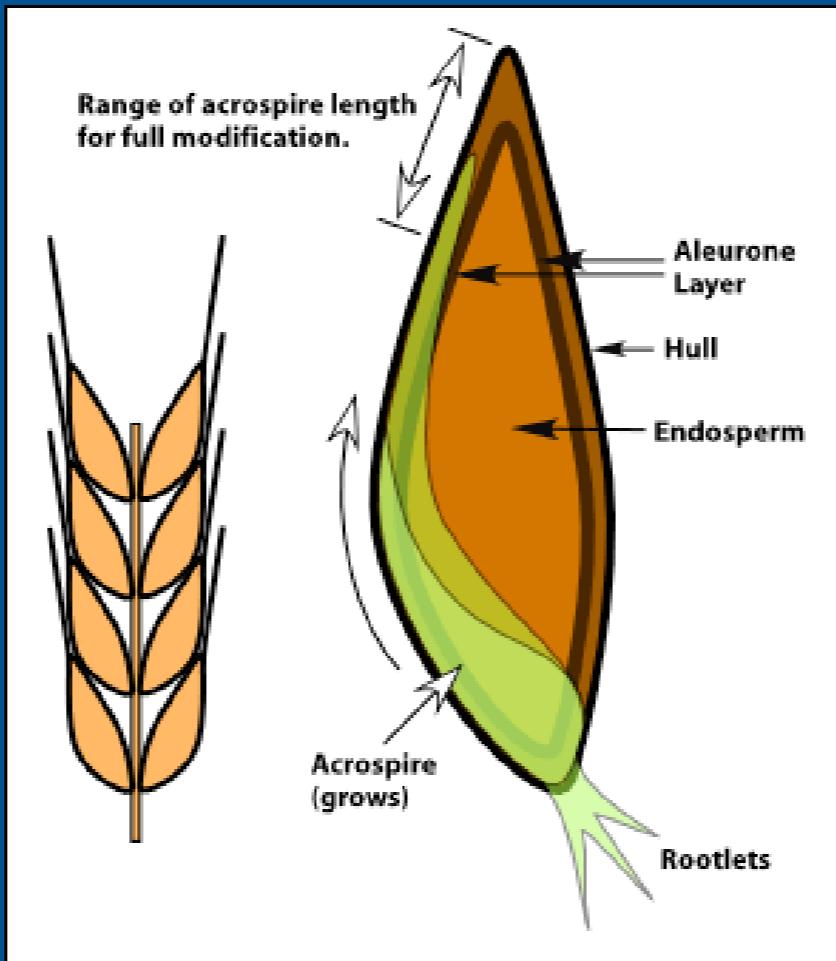
Narrowly defined

The story of beer’s globalization is also a story of its commodification. The word “beer” today overwhelmingly refers to a beverage made primarily from malted barley, spiced with hops, and fermented with one of two species of domesticated brewer’s yeast (genus *Saccharomyces*). There are variations: summer-oriented wheat beers, mass-produced pale lagers made with large amounts of adjunct corn sugar, African sorghum beers, Japanese rice saké. But for most of the world, beer means something very specifically generic: a pale, fizzy, global beverage with no more variety than, say, peanut butter.

Beer: how is it made?

Malting and mashing

These chemically complex processes use heat and water to convert the starch stored in the grain's endosperm into fermentable sugars, which are then run off in a sweet liquid that brewers call "wort".



Left to right: late-summer barley; diagram of a barley kernel; malting floor at Bowmore, Scotland.

Beer: how is it made?

Boiling hops in the kettle (the “copper”)

The wort is boiled for an hour or more, during which hops are added. Small hop cones, produced annually by climbing bines, contain oils and resins that add a balancing bitterness to the sweet malt, along with other distinctive flavors and aromas ranging from floral to spicy to fruity to piney to earthy.

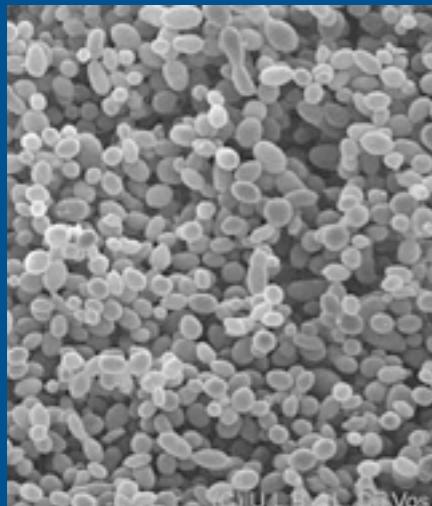


Left to right: Cascade hop cones; copper kettle in the brew house, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, Chico, Calif.

Beer: how is it made?

Fermentation

Domesticated brewers yeast consume the wort sugars over several days, leaving behind alcohol, carbon dioxide, and a wide variety of other flavorful and aromatic compounds. It takes about 10 million single-celled yeast to produce just one milliliter of high-quality beer. New brewers quickly learn that they make wort; yeast is what makes beer.



Left to right: brewer's yeast under the microscope; tops (center) and bottoms (right) of fermentation tanks, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, Chico, Calif.

Global: a universal tradition

Beer has deep roots in western civilization, perhaps even to the very beginnings of domestication itself. Beer or bread: what was the stimulus to the transition from foraging to farming? This question has received serious scholarly attention, but it's unlikely ever to be answered, so intertwined are those two food products of the granary.

What we do know is this: in both ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, early civilization produced beer alongside bread. Moreover, beer was celebrated in art and literature as a product of and pathway to the gods. Historians identify *Ninkasi* (ca. 5000 BP) as the Sumerian goddess of beer; a thousand years later, the tomb of Egypt's King Mentuhotep II (ca. 4000 BP) featured a model of a brewery-bakery used to make *bouza*—a traditional beer made from loaves of baked barley bread.



Left to right: drawing of Sumerian hieroglyph portraying ritual beer drinking through reed straws; model of brewery-bakery in Mentuhotep II's tomb, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Global: a universal tradition

The “Epic of Gilgamesh”

Beer also features prominently in the world’s oldest surviving work of literature. On Tablet 2 of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we meet the wild-man *Enkidu* as he encounters beer—and thus civilization—for the first time:

They placed food in front of him, they placed beer in front of him;
Enkidu knew nothing about eating bread for food,
and of drinking beer he had not been taught.

The harlot spoke to *Enkidu*, saying:

“Eat the food, *Enkidu*, it is the way one lives.

Drink the beer, as is the custom of the land.”

Enkidu ate the food until he was sated,
he drank the beer—seven jugs!—and became expansive and sang with joy!
He was elated and his face glowed.

He splashed his shaggy body with water, and rubbed himself with oil, and turned into a human.

Global: a world-wide tradition

Throughout **sub-Saharan Africa**, beers have been made from a variety of local grains, most commonly sorghum and millet. These “Bantu” beers go by a variety of local names—perhaps most recognizably the *kaffir* of South Africa—and they continue to be widely made on both a domestic and commercial level.

Latin America is another world region with a distinctive brewing tradition that survives into the present. Whether made from maize, manioc, or other staple American crop, the resulting *chicha* beer is so called because of the common practice of using human saliva to enzymatically convert the starches into fermentable sugars.

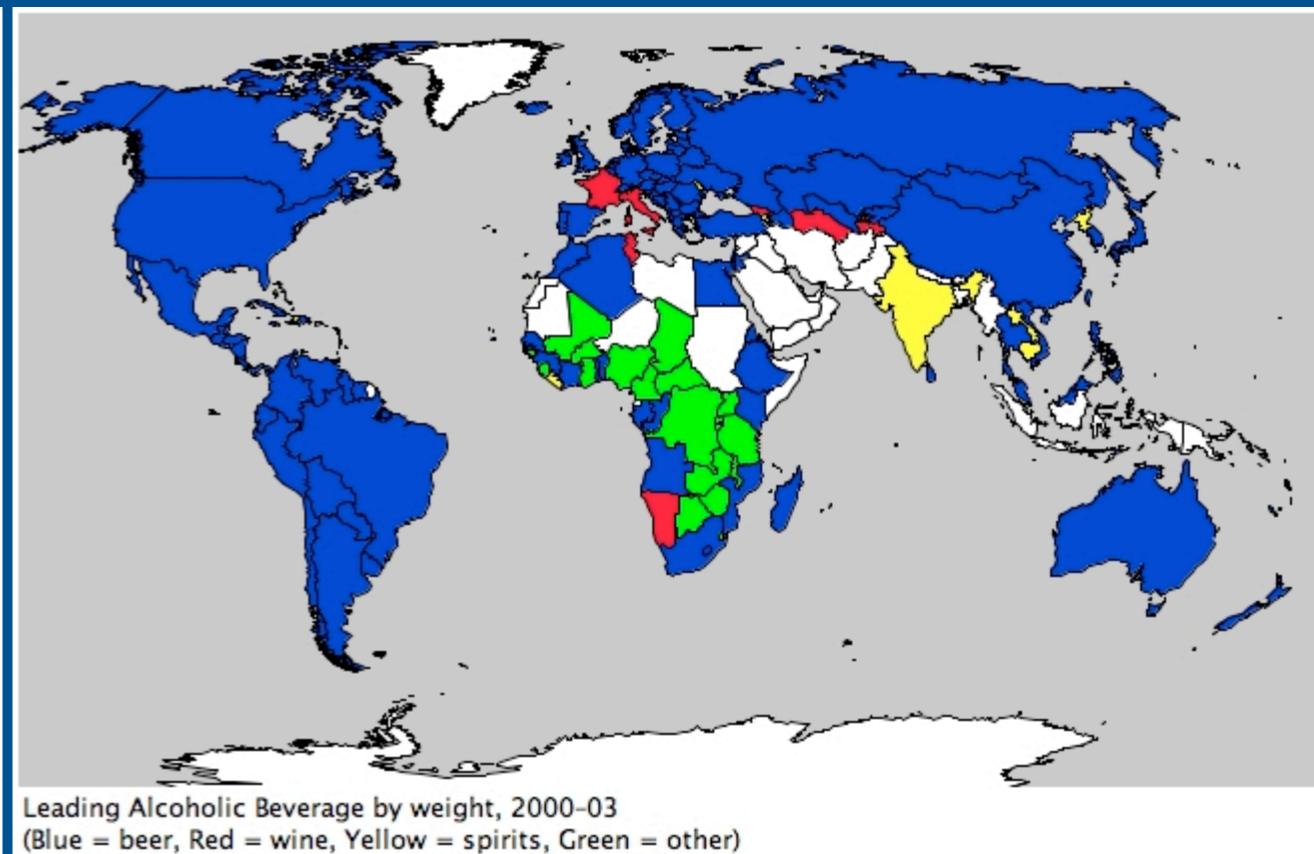
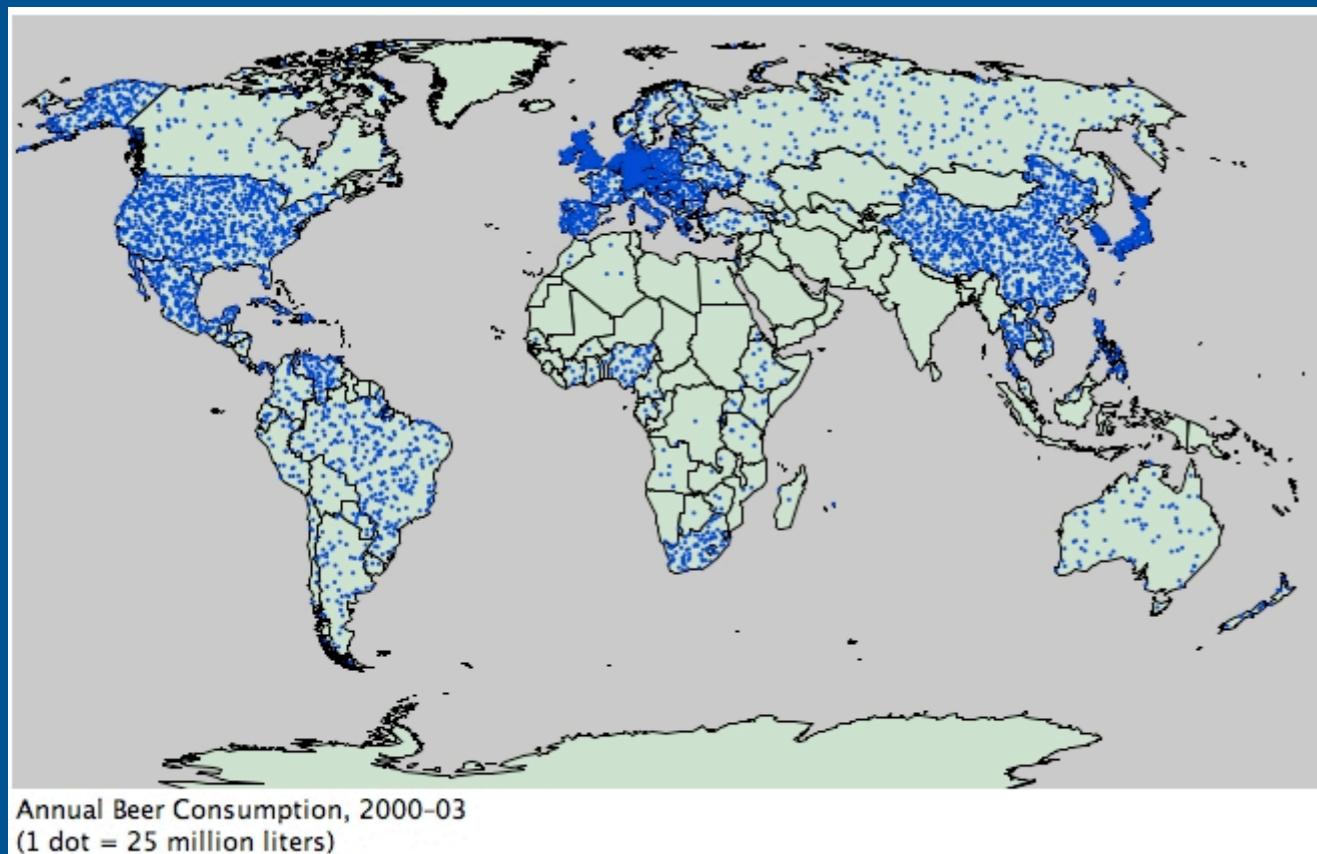
Southern and eastern Asia are home to their own traditional beers as well. Most famous is Japan’s saké—a “beer” because it’s made from grain (rice), even if it does have a wine-like alcoholic strength. In China, similar traditional beers made from rice or other grains (wheat, millet) are known as *huangjiu*; in Tibet and other Himalayan lands, these beers are known as *chhaang*.

When all of these traditional beers are placed alongside the various wines, ciders, meads, *pulque*, *kumis*, etc., it becomes clear that the production and enjoyment of fermented beverages is one of our most universal human customs.

Global: beer's world-wide market

Modern barley beer, too, is a global beverage

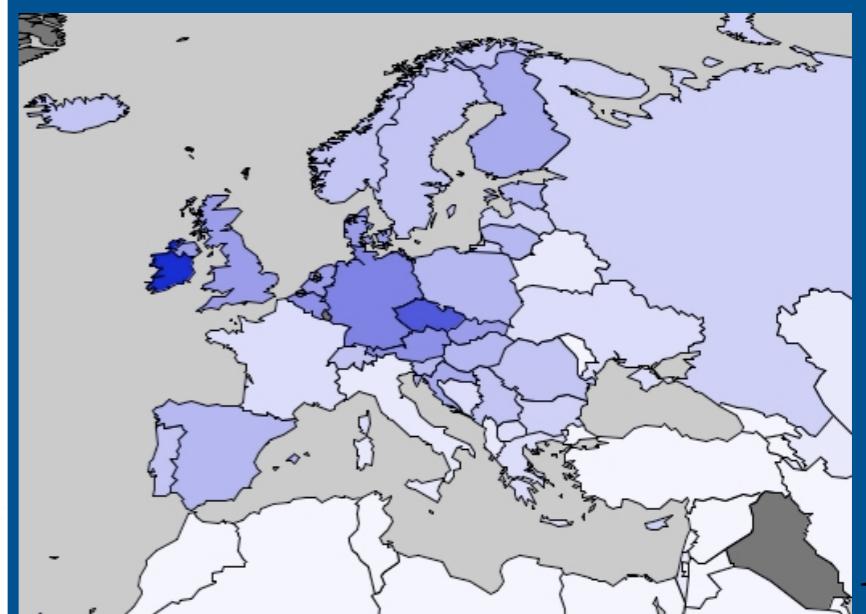
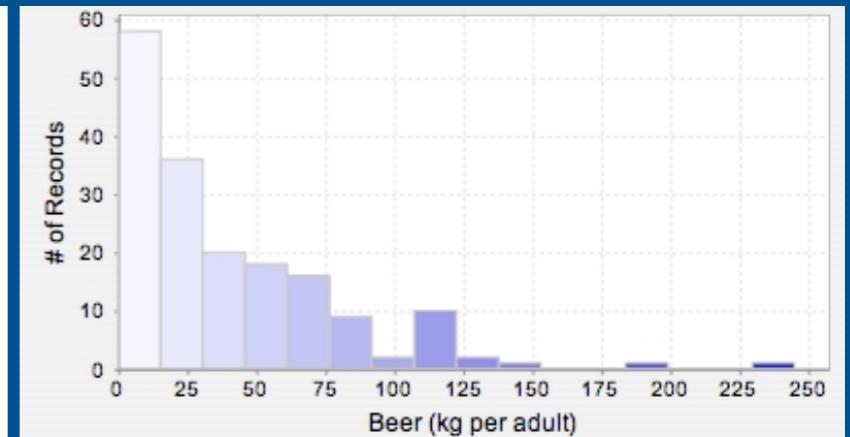
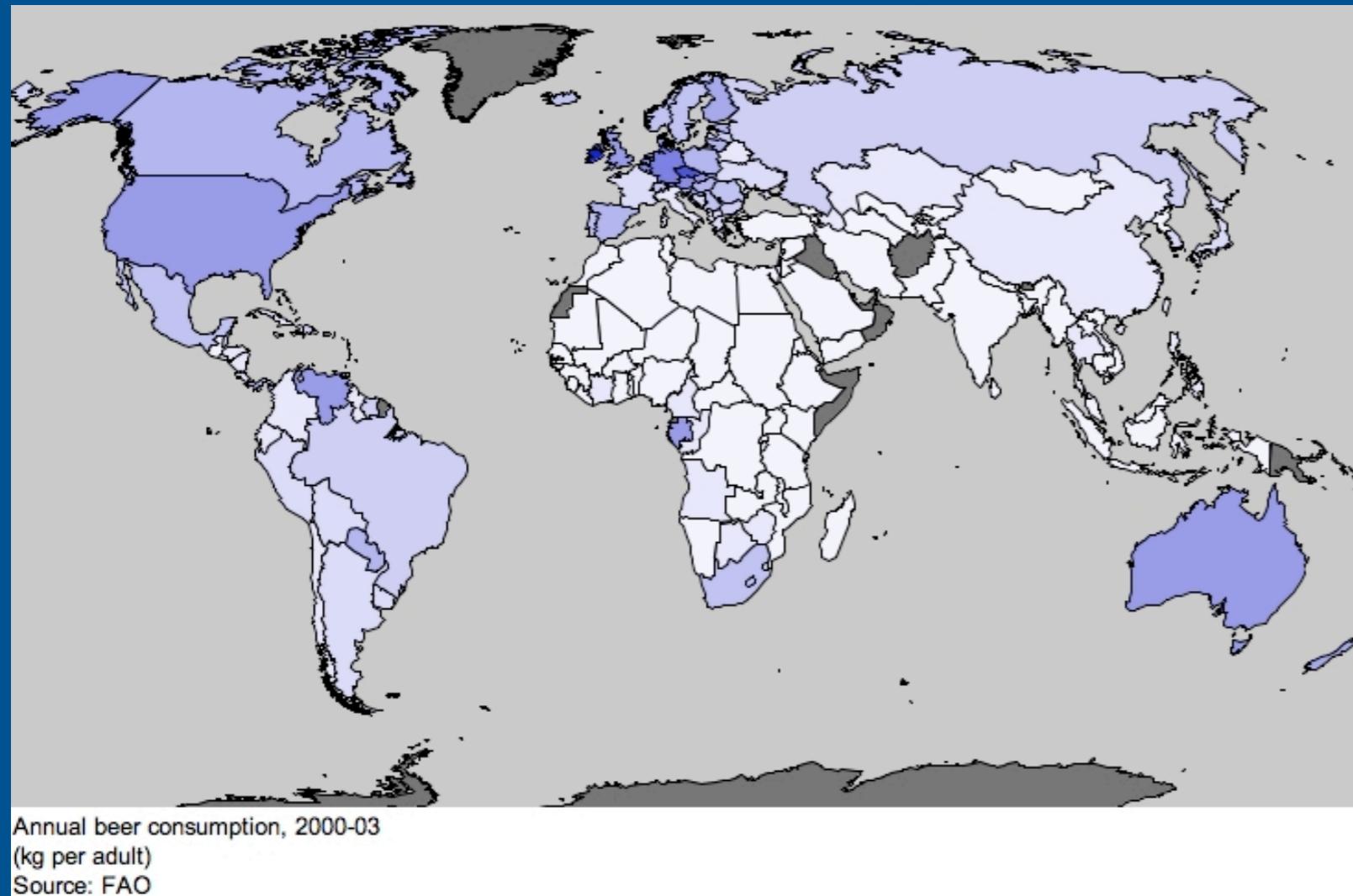
When measured by gross volume or weight, barley beer is the world's most popular beverage, accounting for two-thirds of all alcoholic drinks worldwide. Outside a handful of wine-centric countries (red) and much of Africa and South Asia, where Bantu beer (green) or distilled spirits (yellow) tend to be more popular, barley beer is the leading beverage category in most countries around the world.



Global: not quite ubiquitous

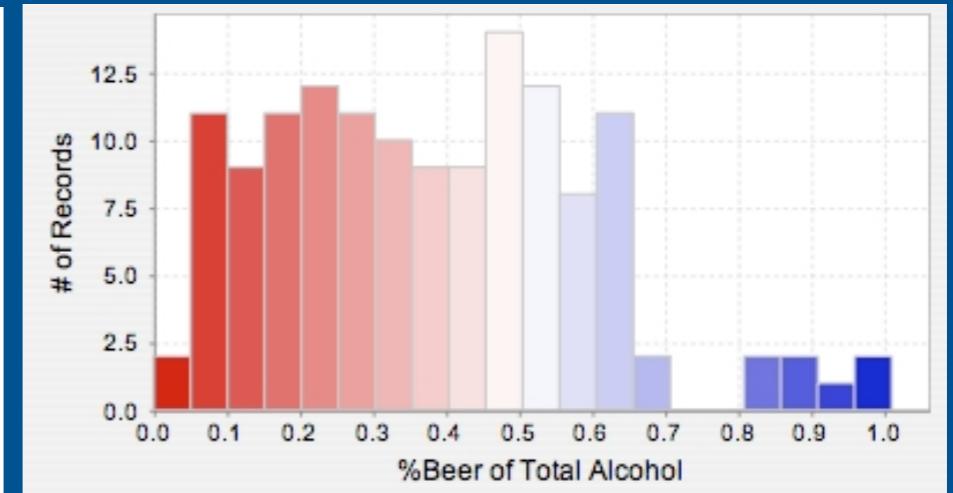
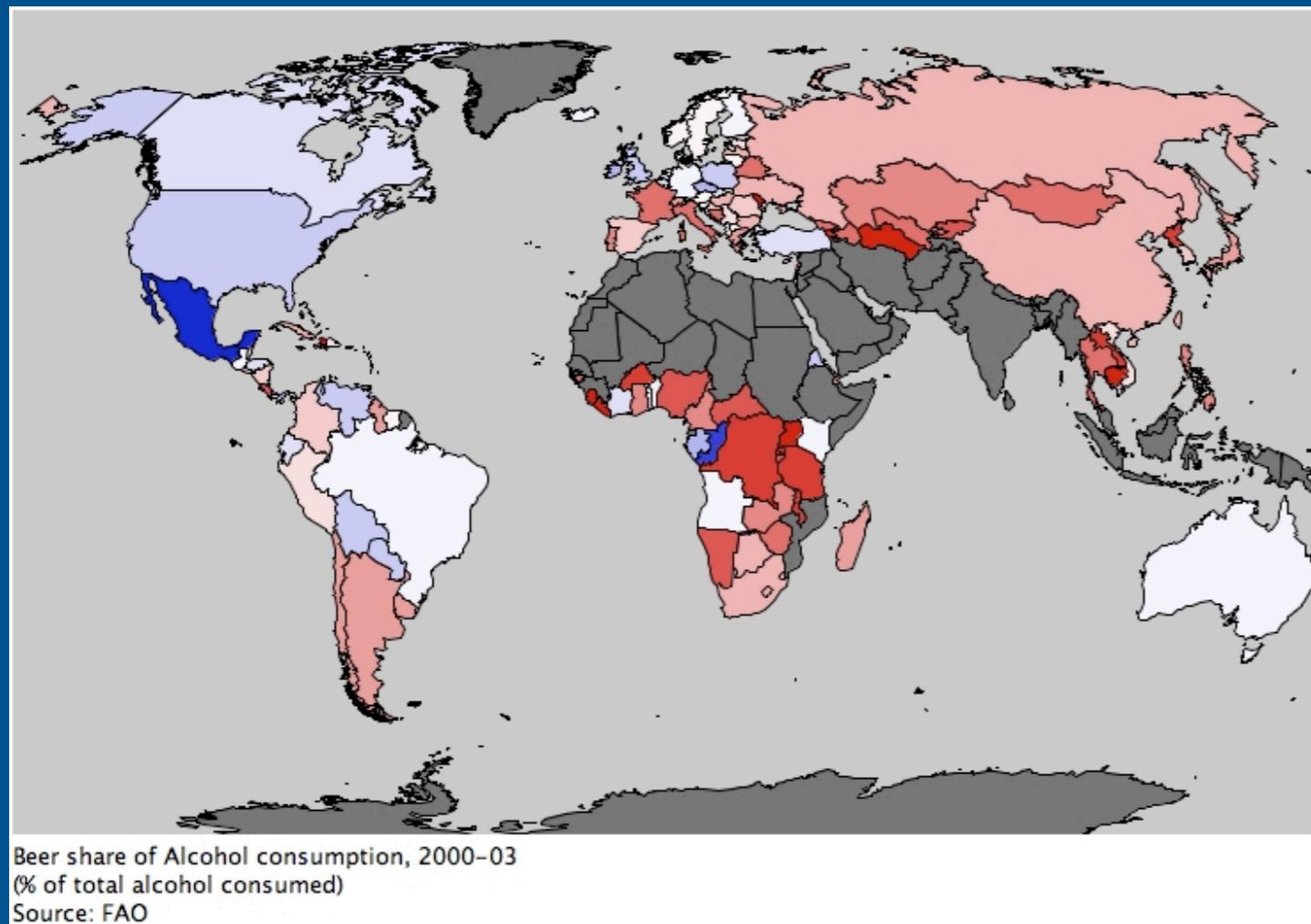
The core of modern barley beer consumption is Europe and northern America

Patterns of globalization are geographically lumpy. Beer is (virtually) everywhere, but in some places more than others. Ireland and the Czech Republic are the world's two biggest consumers per capita, by a considerable margin.



Global: barley beer is not alone

Beer has considerably less alcohol—typically 4 to 5 percent by volume—than either wine or distilled spirits. When only the amount of alcohol is counted, rather than the beverage's entire volume, barley beer's share of the world's drinks market no longer appears dominant. While barley beer accounts for about two-thirds of the total volume of the world's alcoholic drinks, it accounts for just two-fifths of all the alcohol; distilled spirits account for another two-fifths, while wine and others make up the rest.

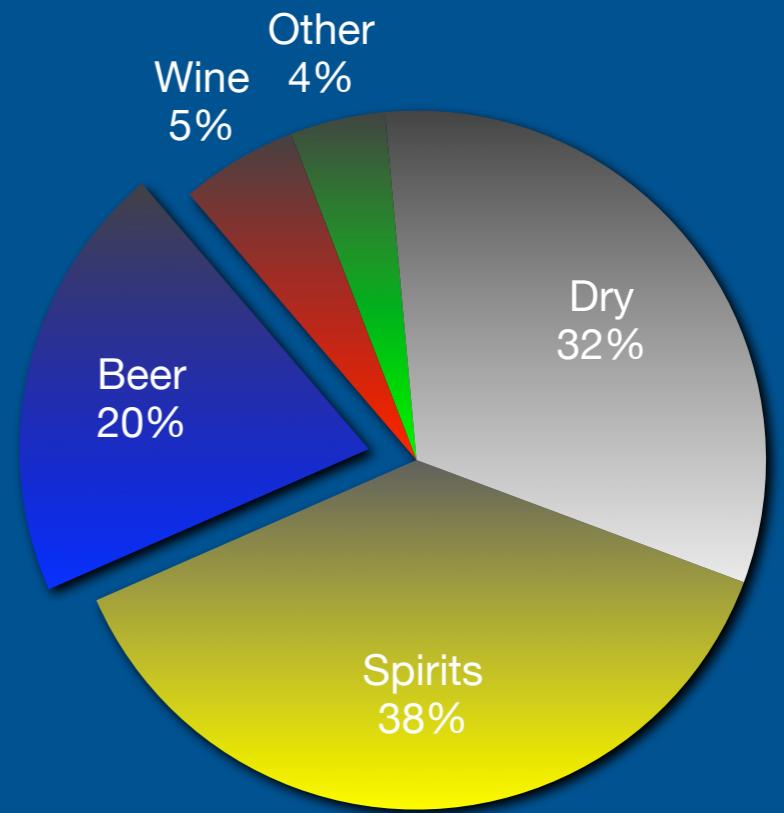
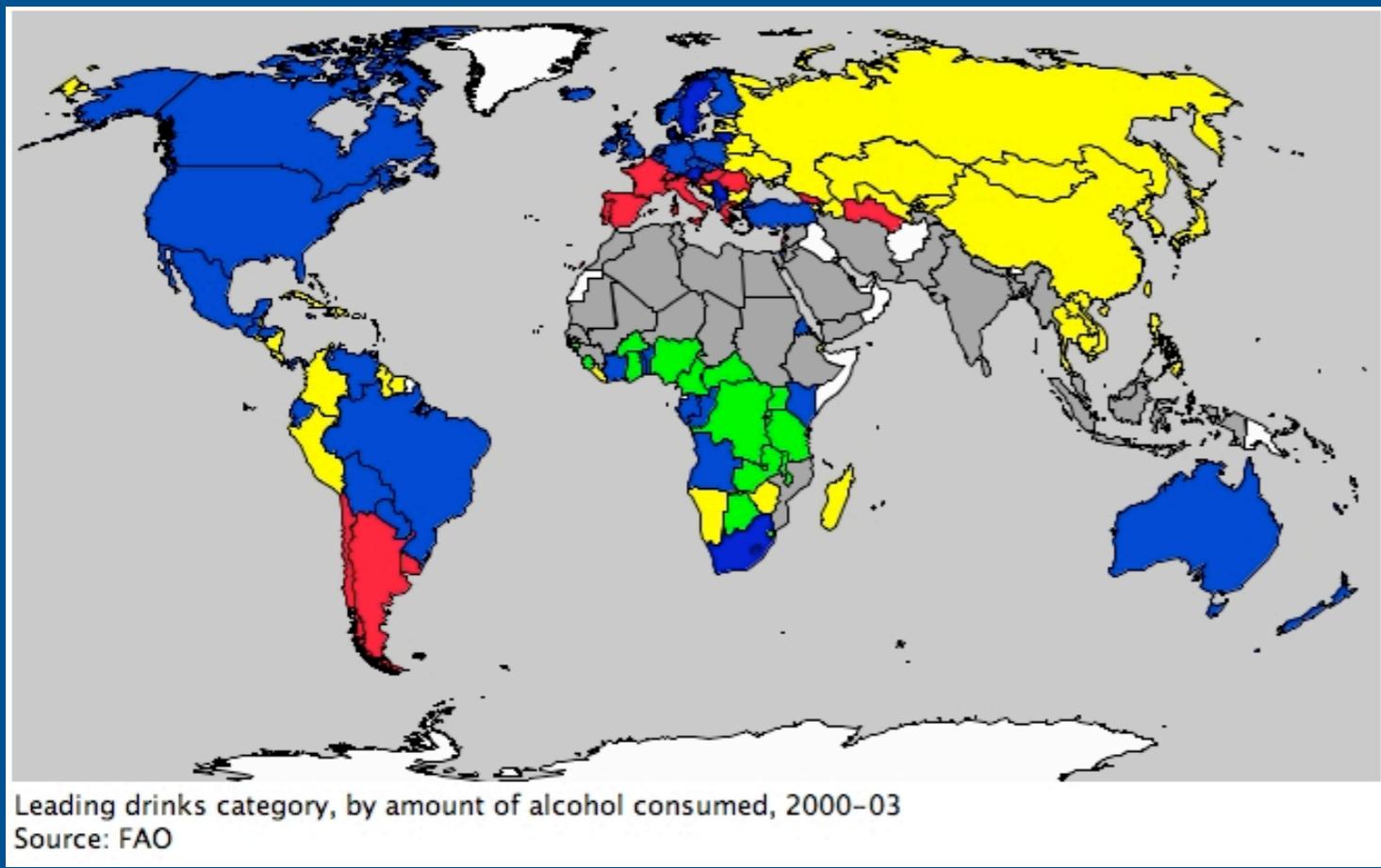


	volume	alcohol
Beer	69%	40%
Spirits	8%	38%
Wine	11%	15%
Other	11%	7%

Global: geographic convergence?

Summary: globalization of modern drinks in complicated

At first glance, beer appears to confirm the story of globalization as convergence—a traditional world of diverse fermented beverages becoming standardized around the ubiquitous modern barley beer. But true ubiquity is a long way off. Only 20% of the world’s adults live in countries where beer is the leading beverage. Nearly twice as many people live in countries where more alcohol is consumed, instead, in the form of distilled spirits, and fully one-third live in “dry” countries where alcohol consumption, in any form, is low.



Distribution of World Population by country's leading drinks category

Global: consolidation of production

Consolidation in the U.S. brewing industry, 1880 to 2008

One of globalization's hallmark features is the national and multi-national corporate consolidation of production. For well over a century, that certainly has been the pattern in the United States. What was once a fragmented collection of small local breweries became a national network of just a few dozen giant industrial operations. In 1880, there were more breweries in New York City (~120 for 2 million people) than there were in the entire country just a hundred years later (~100 for 225 million).

Year	Number of Breweries	Production (thousands of barrels)	Per brewery (barrels)	Per capita (gallons)
1880	2,741	13,350	4,869	8.2
1914	1,392	66,190	47,550	21.0
1935	766	45,230	59,046	10.3
1980	101	188,375	1,865,089	23.1
2008*	44	204,100	4,638,636	20.8

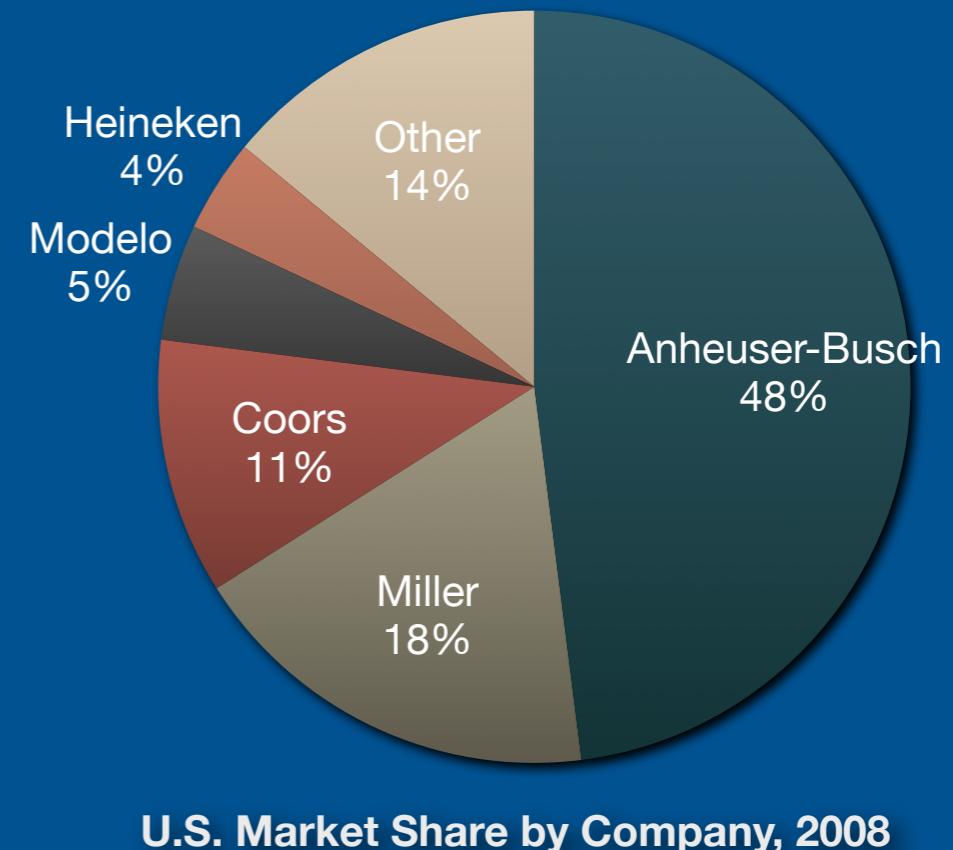
* excludes "craft brewers"

Global: consolidation of production

Fewer breweries and even fewer brewing companies

Corporate consolidation in U.S. brewing began in the late 1800s, but it was accelerated by the double blow of national Prohibition during the 1920s and economic Depression in the 1930s. While the U.S. brewing industry rebounded with the rest of the economy during the post-war decades, it did so in the hands of an ever-shrinking number of corporate giants. By the 1980s, the U.S. brewing scene was dominated by the “BMC” triumvirate of Bud, Miller, and Coors.

Today, the top four brands in the U.S.—Bud Light, Budweiser, Miller Lite, and Coors Light—together claim about 45% of the market. Compare this to Germany, where despite its own postwar consolidation, there remain ~1300 breweries and the large multinationals control only about 10% of the market.



Global: consolidation of production

Consolidation in brewing today is now global

Long the country's largest brewer, the St. Louis-based and family-controlled Anheuser-Busch, is now part of a Belgium-based conglomerate, **A-B InBev**, whose nearly 300 brands account for 25–30% of all the beer consumed worldwide.

ABIB's rise is a quintessential story of turn-of-the-millennium globalization. During the 1990s, the Belgian brewers of Stella Artois brought together several European brands, including Germany's Beck's, under a new name, Interbrew. A similar story was unfolding in South America, as the Brazilian makers of Brahma beer consolidated Argentina's Quilmes, among others, under the AmBev name. In 2004, a trans-Atlantic marriage was made to create InBev, and just four years later, this Belgium-based company with a high-profile Brazilian CEO acquired one of corporate America's greatest icons in Anheuser-Busch.

The other two brewing giants in the United States, Miller and Coors, also are now part of a sprawling global conglomerate. Specifically, the London-based **SAB Miller** today controls as much as 15% of the world beer market, following its recent partnership with the Canadian-American combo of Molson-Coors. It seems just a matter of time before additional brewing icons, such as Mexico's Modelo and FEMSA, Europe's Heineken and Carlsberg, and East Asia's Tsingtao and Sapporo, become absorbed by the global giants as well.

Global: convergence of consumption

Porter: the first industrial beer (London 1700s)

Global consolidation of production has been accompanied by global convergence in taste. Whether the product be music or sport, fashion or furniture, the modern consumer's world seems to be one characterized by dwindling geographic difference.

The first mass-produced beer style of the industrial era was a dark eighteenth-century ale known as “porter”. Bringing together qualities of different English ale traditions, the popular porters of London epitomized the industrial revolution—mass-produced in large batches from inexpensive brown malt. With lengthy post-fermentation storage in enormous wooden vessels, modern porter brewing required (and rewarded) large economies of scale.

Porter's popularity would fade in the 1800s, as new pale malts—more economically efficient for the brewer—facilitated a shift toward lighter-colored beers. But the new black “patent” malt of the nineteenth century helped London porter transform into the still-vibrant global phenomenon of Dublin stout.



Global: convergence of consumption

Pilsner: the global standard (Bohemia and Bavaria 1800s)

Like other trades, brewing was revolutionized during the 1800s by a combination of new science, new technology, and a new competitive economic environment in the wake of the traditional guilds' demise. British innovations, such as the new pale malts, rapidly diffused to Germanic central Europe. Combined with the local *lager* traditions of Bavaria and the soft waters of Bohemia, the result was a crisp, golden beer that would quickly take the world by storm. By the beginning of the twentieth century, German-trained brewers had established Pilsner as the dominant beer style all over the world. Today, more than 95% of all beer is a pale, pilsner-like lager—a standardized product of global convergence that defies its locally rooted name and story.



Local: neo-traditional brewing

A renaissance in traditional beer styles

A funny thing happened along the way to global convergence. While beer has become, for most people, virtually synonymous with pale golden lager, never before in human history have so many distinctive styles of beer been so widely available in so many different places as today.



Helping make sense of the revived traditional styles, as well as a growing roster of new 20th- and 21st-century styles, are a number of beer-enthusiast organizations, including the U.S.-based **Beer Judge Certification Program**. Founded in 1985, the BJCP has trained and registered more than 2,700 active judges for home-brewing competitions. Via guidelines which are updated every few years, the BJCP today recognizes 78 distinctive sub-styles of beer, ranging from Light American Lager (e.g., Bud Light) to dark Russian Imperial Stout (e.g., Deschutes "The Abyss"); from malty Doppelbock (e.g., Paulaner Salvator) to hoppy Imperial IPA (e.g., Russian River "Pliny the Elder"); and from spicy Witbier (e.g., Hoegaarden) to sour Flanders Red (e.g., Rodenbach). Rather than generically global, these styles typically derive from and celebrate a specific local or regional tradition, such as the unique Gold Rush-era warm fermentation of California Common lager (e.g., Anchor Steam).

Local: neo-traditional brewing

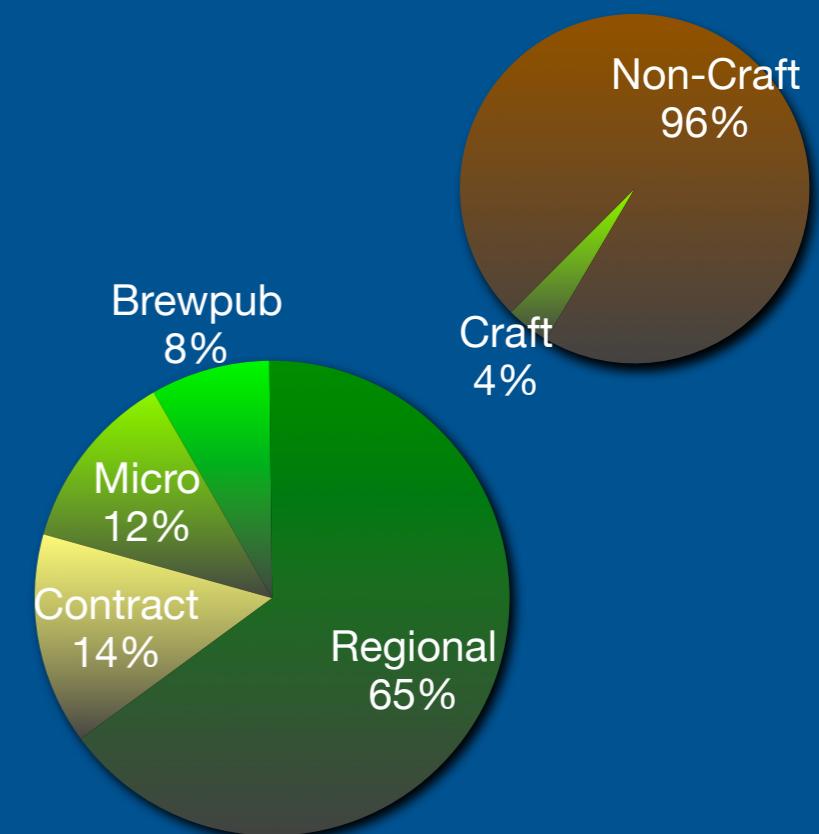
Who makes these beers?

A thousands-of-years-old tradition, **homebrewing** has expanded greatly during the last three decades. The pivotal year in the U.S. was 1978, when a Prohibition-era federal ban was lifted, and an enterprising Coloradan named Charlie Papazian founded the American Homebrewers Association. The AHA now boasts more than 17,000 members.

During the same time period, small, independent “craft” brewers—many coming from the ranks of homebrewing—have revolutionized commercial brewing. While the large “megabrewers” still account for 96% of all the beer sold in the United States, it is the **craft brewing** segment that accounts for nearly all the industry’s current growth. Today, there are nearly a thousand “brewpub” restaurants nationwide, plus another 500+ packaging craft breweries. Together they account for 97% of the nation’s breweries, and they annually produce nearly 9 million barrels of beer, generating more than \$6 billion of revenue.



Charlie Papazian, President of the
Brewers Association



U.S. Beer Production by Brewery Type
overall and within the craft segment

Glocal: the local roots of the global

Brewing in the 21st century is not simply a story of persistent and resilient local tradition holding steadfast against the onslaught of the modern, generic global. Upon closer inspection, the local and the global are often intricately intertwined with each other into something we might call the “glocal”.

Today's global beer styles tied closely to local place

The story of today's beer styles—even the generic international pale lager—is deeply embedded in specific place. For example, the hop varieties that define different styles have very specific geographic origin; East Kent Goldings, point to their southern English provenance on Mr. Goldings' 18th-century farm, just like Bavaria's Hallertauer and Bohemia's Saaz state their respective localities of origin.

Local environmental conditions also gave beer styles distinctive character. The soft waters of Pilsen, for example, are chemically ideal for producing pale lagers, while the carbonate-rich waters of Dublin are similarly suited to the famed dark stout ales of Ireland. Likewise, it is no coincidence that the cool-fermentation, cold-storage lager tradition is rooted in the alpine foothills of Bavaria, where brewers could easily protect their beers from summer heat by going underground. This is also why lager beer made icy Milwaukee famous, not New Orleans.

Glocal: the global influence on the local

Non-local exchange has long been influential, too

Whether from Burton or Dortmund or other historic brewing locale, “Export” or “Imperial” beers were so called because of their production for trans- and inter-continental markets. Their higher levels of alcohol and often more intense flavors were originally linked to the beers’ lengthy voyages, but this same robust character has made them favorites in the most local of craft-brew markets as well. The premier example is India Pale Ale; brewed originally for the British colonial market in South Asia, IPA is today the hallmark style of craft brewing in the United States.

Modern brewing was built on long-distance information exchange, particularly the world-wide diffusion of German lager yeast and technique. But such exchange also characterized earlier brewing traditions. For example, the celebrated Munich “Bock” beer resulted from the infusion of brewing expertise from the Hanseatic North, when Bavarian Duke Maximilian recruited an Einbeck brewmaster to Munich back in 1612.

Even the ingredients themselves often carry an international pedigree. Northern Brewer hops were developed in Britain during the 1930s, from a Canterbury Golding mother plant and a father plant that itself was a cross between wild hops found growing in California and Manitoba.

Glocal: beer in Bavaria

Oktoberfest, a global celebration of beer

Munich is the world's unofficial beer capital. Not only have the pale lagers of Bavaria and neighboring Bohemia become virtually synonymous with beer, but Munich's annual Oktoberfest is an unrivaled world's fair of music, parades, carnival rides, and, of course, beer.

With countless imitators in far-flung places such as Torrance, Calif. (below right), the beer tents on Munich's kidney-shaped *Theresienwiese* are the center of the beer world for sixteen days every fall.



Glocal: a festival for the world

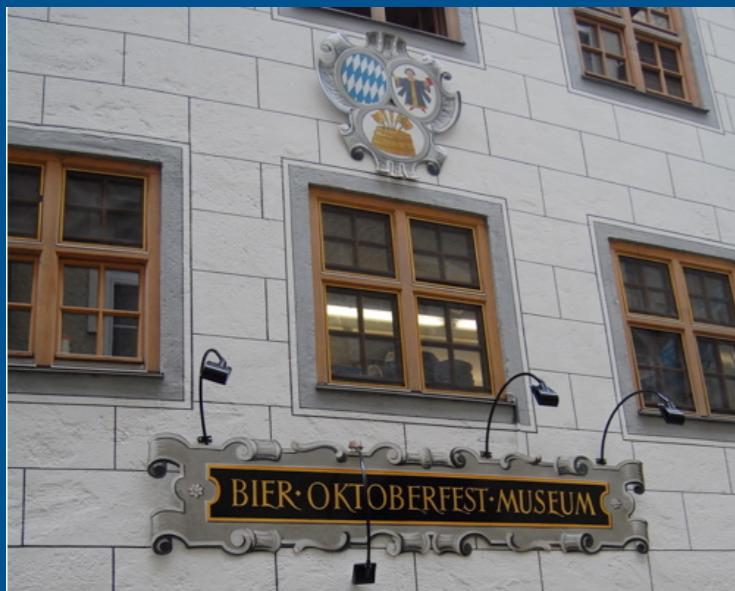
Munich's Oktoberfest attracts six million visitors each year, approximately one million of whom are from outside Germany. Much like its Irish St. Patrick's Day counterpart, Oktoberfest provides an opportunity to be momentarily "Bavarian", regardless of one's family tree. Indeed, there seem to be no limits to the possibility of commercializing *Gemütlichkeit*. Souvenir ceramic stein? Of course. Bavarian-flag cowboy hat? Why not?

One occasionally hears local voices grumbling about Oktoberfest's excessive globalization—*lederhosen* made in China, that can't be!—but it remains a celebrated *Volksfest* cherished by native Müncheners of all ages.



Glocal: a local Bavarian tradition

Global commodity that it has become, Munich's Oktoberfest nonetheless offers a profoundly authentic connection to local identity. Built around centuries-old traditions of urban brewing and rural harvest festivals, with special "Märzen" beers produced in March for fall consumption, Oktoberfest is the annual re-creation of the original party to celebrate Crown Prince Ludwig's marriage to Therese in October 1810—on the very grounds that today bears her name. Moreover, Oktoberfest provides an opportunity for diverse and specific local Bavarian identities—as opposed to the homogenized globalized one—to be literally paraded in the street in full costume.



Glocal: a local brewing tradition

Unlike events such as Denver's Great American Beer Festival or Montreal's Mondial de la Bière, Oktoberfest is not an occasion for beer enthusiasts to gather and sample offerings from breweries not usually found in their home markets. Instead, Oktoberfest is a celebration of the local brew. Not German beer. Not even Bavarian beer. But Munich beer.

Each year the six big Munich brewers, all of whom have local roots that trace back to at least the 1800s, use Oktoberfest as a chance to celebrate their collective heritage and to win the allegiance of local drinkers in what is, rather ironically, one of the world's most introverted beer markets.



Left: display of traditional ceramic steins celebrating the big traditional brewers in Munich at the Bier und Oktoberfest Museum: Augustiner, Hackerbräu, Hofbräu, Löwenbräu, Paulaner, Pschorrbräu, and Spaten. Hacker and Pschorr have merged to create today's Big Six.

Right: Paulaner display at Oktoberfest

Glocal: the historic Hofbräuhaus

Appropriately located across from the Hard Rock Cafe, the Hofbräuhaus in Munich's medieval center is a "must see" stop on every tourist's itinerary. For the fifty weeks each year when Oktoberfest is not in session, it's the one place in town where you're guaranteed to find a jovial crowd drinking beer while listening to a lederhosen-wearing brass band playing Bavarian folk music.

But this is no mere tourist trap, contrived like Disneyland out of an old orange grove. Founded in 1589 as the official court brew house of the Wittelsbach dynasty, this is arguably *the* home of the classic Munich beer styles—not the generic, pale *Helles* lager that most people drink today, but the brown Dunkel, bock, and hefeweizen beers that defined pre-industrial Bavarian brewing.



Glocal: beer-garden culture

Beyond Oktoberfest and the Hofbräuhaus

The potential threat of global tourism, and its identity-commodifying tendencies, is mitigated by the strong *biergarten* culture in everyday Bavaria. Whether in the far-flung suburbs, the city center, or somewhere in between—such as Munich’s Englischer Garten (below left)—many a summer afternoon or evening are spent enjoying a maß or two under the shade of the chestnut trees. When the weather turns cold, the same *gemütlichkeit* moves indoors, where young and old, loved ones and strangers, gather for friendly conversation and a respite from the daily grind. It’s a shared cultural practice that has its own traditions and history, such as the perennially reserved *stammtisch* and the fought-for right to bring in one’s own food to be enjoyed at any of the picnic-style tables not covered by tablecloth.



Glocal: beer-garden culture

There's a complicated mix of the local and the global at the suburban beer gardens around Munich. Here is my notebook entry on a mid-week summer evening:

"I think I've found heaven here at the 'Wa-Wi'—an old country house at the top of a now leafy suburban hill, turned into a small restaurant with a large adjacent beer garden. The Spaten Helles was only so-so, but the atmosphere was *sehr toll*. Another beautiful summer evening weather-wise certainly helps, but this place is even more special than advertised. Live jazz band. Diverse crowd of locals. Very family oriented, complete with a trampoline play area for the kids.

"As tourist-focused as the Hofbräuhaus is, this place is on the opposite, authentic end of the spectrum. Few tourists here. But as so very Deutsch and Bayerische as this place is, what is the one sports-themed clothing I see? A Kevin Garnett Celtics jersey on a little kid. No Luca Toni, Franck Ribéry, Oliver Kahn, etc., to be found. (But to be fair, one teenager walking on the road here displayed some pretty nice skills with the soccer ball.) The Celtics and Dixieland jazz, rather than FC Bayern and Ooom-pah-pah polka; *that was at Hofbräuhaus.*"



Glocal: beer with the monks

While much of Munich's brewing history is linked to the aristocracy and the townsfolk, it's helpful to remember that the city is named after its original incarnation as a monastic center. Likewise, two of Munich's Big Six brewers today—Augustiner and Paulaner—bear names that reveal their origins with the monks.

Monastic brewing is alive and well throughout much of Europe, most famously among the Trappists of Belgium. Several monastery breweries remain active today outside of Munich, as well, including the Augustiner Bräustübl in nearby Salzburg. Well-known among the world's beer enthusiasts, Augustiner attracts numerous non-locals, but it does so in an entirely authentic way—an atmosphere that evokes both its centuries of history and the casual Germanic beer-garden culture of today.



Glocal: beer with the monks

Part of the authenticity at Augustiner is the traditional self-service practice of grabbing your own ceramic stein, rinsing it at the fountain, and then presenting it to the server for filling. When the sun is out, the beer garden is crowded with young and old and everyone in between.



Glocal: beer with the monks

Summer rain and winter cold moves the activity inside, where one can also purchase a variety of foods—mostly standard Germanic fare, but homesick Americans can also get a “Salzburger with cheese.”



Glocal: beer internet radio

The Brewing Network

While centuries of history are on display in the beer gardens of Europe, it is with an eye toward the future that a no-less-vibrant beer culture is now taking off in the United States.

Beer and brewing have found a home on the Internet. One of the more successful ventures is the Internet-radio broadcaster the Brewing Network. Founded in 2005, the “BN” cultivates a very local identity. Each show originates from brewcaster Justin’s “rat pad” in Pacheco, California, where he has successfully cultivated ties with the Bay Area’s most accomplished home and craft brewers: JZ, “Doc”, “Tasty”, and “Sully”, among others. Listening to a BN show feels like hanging out in Justin’s garage with him and his friends on a lazy Sunday evening.

As an Internet show, however, this community is as global as it is local. With time-zone and language being the primary constraints, listeners around the world can interact with the rest of the “BN Army” in real time via on-line chat and Skype. Thus it is that “Bugeater” from Nebraska and “Oz” from Australia are as “local” to the show as Justin’s own neighbors in Pacheco, the Schumans.



Coda: beer in Italy?

Summer 2008, Milan, Birrificio Lambrate

In both image and reality, wine, not beer, is king in Italy. Yet Italy is also home of the Slow Food movement which, despite its global presence, is a celebration of local food ways. Thus it is that craft brewing, *la birra artigianale*, has recently given Italy one of the world's most exciting up-and-coming beer scenes.



Following two weeks in Europe, which began with my visit to the beer-drinker's mecca of Munich, I made sure to spend my last evening at Milan's oldest brewpub, Birrificio Lambrate. The London-based blogger, "Stonch", had earlier described the setting:

"As we walked down the darkened Via Adelchi, the pub looked to be closed. Terror gripped me. No fear—a gaggle of smokers emerged, their staccato twittering providing relief and banishing dry thoughts. Inside, the bar was all dark wood, alcoves and rock music. Happy Hour was in full swing, and the place was packed. The other punters sported dreads, tattoos and piercings. That's to be expected—the beer scene in Italy is young and defiant of convention. Indeed, the wall-mounted tributes to Brothers Che and Fidel might upset conservatives."

Not far from the historic city center, Lambrate is part dive bar, part college-campus-adjacent hang-out, and it is well worth the visit for anyone who likes beer. In short, Lambrate is my kind of place.

Coda: beer in Italy?

Shortly upon returning home to the U.S., I recorded the following reflections on my evening at Lambrate and how it seemed to encapsulate some lessons about globalization that I had begun to absorb during the trip:

"The complexity of cultural movement in today's world was on full display my last night in Europe. I was in Milan, and I thought I'd stray off the well-beaten tourist path. (In other words, I was looking for some good beer.) I managed to find my way to a hole-in-the-wall place that advertises itself as Milan's oldest brewpub: the Birrificio Lambrate. And it was great. But here was my global moment: I was eating a very traditional 'Italian' panino with fresh mozzarella, tomato, prosciutto, and the like, while drinking an equally traditional cask-conditioned 'English' ale that was hand-pumped via a beer engine (on the heels of a traditional 'Belgian'-style abbey ale before that), while the bartender was having a grand time singing and dancing along to a CD of Tony Bennett covering 1990s grunge and other alt-rock songs—which followed an extremely Euro electronic dance mix and preceded some classic Patsy Cline. This was as 'global' a place as I've ever been, which, apart from the Italian language that everyone was speaking, easily could have been tucked away in a neighborhood of San Diego, Chicago, London, Tel Aviv, Sydney, Tokyo, Capetown, Sao Paulo, or just about any other decent-sized city on the planet. Yet, it wasn't global in the way that McDonalds or Disneyland or even the Piazza del Duomo and San Siro stadium in Milan are global. That is, Birrificio Lambrate isn't a world-famous landmark or gathering place for visitors from around the globe. It is, indeed, the epitome of the local hangout. But it is nonetheless oh-so-familiar to a non-local foreigner like myself."

Beer is a global beverage rooted in thousands of years of local traditions. The modern world has seen much of the local variety of the past yield to a homogenized, commodified present. But at the same time, the processes of long-distance connection—what we might call "globalization"—also work to preserve and create varied and meaningful cultural identity, even something we might term "local".

Additional Information

One book, in particular, has been an inspiration for this project: Franklin Foer's *How Soccer Explains the World* (2004) shows how close examination of a widely practiced piece of human culture offers lessons into the complicated processes and outcomes of globalization.

The following are more specific to the story of beer and brewing that I've attempted to tell here:

- Horst D. Dornbusch, *Prost! The Story of German Beer* (Boulder, Colo.: Brewers Publications, 1997)
- Terry Foster, *Porter* (Boulder, Colo.: Brewers Publications, 1992)
- Larry Hawthorne, *The Beer Drinker's Guide to Munich*, 6th ed. (Hemet, Calif.: Freizeit Publishers, 2008)
- Ian S. Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing* (Cambridge: Royal Society of Chemistry, 2003)
- Michael Jackson, *Michael Jackson's Beer Companion: The World's Great Beer Styles, Gastronomy, and Traditions*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1997)
- David Miller, *Continental Pilsener* (Boulder, Colo.: Brewers Publications, 1990)
- Randy Mosher, *Tasting Beer: An Insider's Guide to the World's Greatest Drink* (North Adams, Mass.: Storey Publishing, 2009)
- John J. Palmer, *How to Brew*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Brewers Publications, 2006)

Credits

All text and illustrations are the original work of the author, with the exception of the following:

- Slide #6: Diagram of a barley kernel from John Palmer, *How to Brew* (<http://www.howtobrew.com/section2/chapter12.html>); Malting floor by Gareth Harper (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/65271786@N00/1554221352/>)
- Slide #8: Brewer's yeast photo by Louis De Vos (<http://publications.nigms.nih.gov/findings/sept03/mix.html>)
- Slide #9: Sumerian hieroglyph from Monarch Beverage Co. (<http://www.monarch-beverage.com/Pages/Beer/Beer.aspx?PageId=175>); Metropolitan Museum of Art (http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/twah/ho_20.3.12.htm)
- Slide #10: Full translation of the Epic of Gilgamesh (<http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/>)
- Slide #19: Fuller's London Porter, from Evening Sun of Hanover, PA (http://blogs.eveningsun.com/troublebrewing/2007/11/beer_appreciation_101_week_19.html); Guinness & Co. (<http://www2.guinness.com/en-US/Pages/thebeerdraught.aspx>)
- Slide #20: Pilsner Urquell (<http://www.pilsnerurquell.com/in>)
- Slides #25–28: Assorted images from München Oktoberfest (<http://www.oktoberfest.de/>)
- Slide #36: Quote from 11 April 2008 blog posting by “Stonch” (<http://stonch.blogspot.com/2008/04/birrificio-lambrate-dreads-tattoos-and.html>)