

ALCOHOL

From Mesopotamia To Modern Iraq

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Alcohol in Ancient Mesopotamia



Sumerian tablet of beer
ingredients ~3000 BC

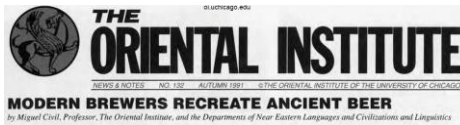


Babylonian tablet of erotic beer
drinking ~2000 BC



Sumerian tablet showing social drinking
from vase ~2600 BC

Ninkasi (Goddess) 1800 BCE



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A Hymn to Ninkasi

Born by the flowing water [...]
Tenderly cared for by Ninkasi,
Ninkasi, born by the flowing water [...]
Tenderly cared for by Ninkasi,
Having founded your town by the sacred lake,
She finished its great walls for you,
Ninkasi, having founded your town by the
sacred lake,
She finished its great walls for you.
Your father is Enki, the lord of Eridu,
Your mother is Ninkasi, the queen of the abzu.
Ninkasi, your father is Enki, the lord of Eridu,
Your mother is Ninkasi, the queen of the abzu.
You are the one who handles dough [...]
with a big shovel.
Mixing, in a pit, the happy with sweet aromatics,
Ninkasi, you are the one who handles dough
[and], with a big shovel.
Mixing, in a pit, the happy with dates/honey,
You are the one who bakes the happy in the
big oven,
Put in order the pile of hulled grain,
Ninkasi, you are the one who bakes the happy
in the big oven,
Put in order the pile of hulled grain,
You are the one who waters the malt set
on the ground.
The noble dogs keep away even the potentates,
Ninkasi, you are the one who waters the malt set
on the ground.
The noble dogs keep away even the potentates,
You are the one who soaks the malt in a jar,
The waves rise, the waves fall,
Ninkasi, you are the one who soaks the malt in a jar,
The waves rise, the waves fall,
You are the one who spreads the cooked mash on
large reed mats,
Gushes overflows,
Ninkasi, you are the one who spreads the cooked
mash on large reed mats,
Gushes overflows,
You are the one who holds with both hands
the great sweetwort,
Brewing [it] with honey [and] wine,
The fermenting vat, which makes a pleasant sound,
You place appropriately on [top of]
a large collector vat.
Ninkasi, the fermenting vat, which makes
a pleasant sound,
You place appropriately on [top of]
a large collector vat.

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ANCIENT BEER

Continued from page 2

When you pour out the filtered beer
of the collector vat,
It is [like] the onrush of the Tigris and the Euphrates.
Ninkasi, you are the one who pours out
the filtered beer of the collector vat,
It is [like] the onrush of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

The galkkal vat, the galkkal vat,
The galkkal vat, the lam-sá-re vat,
The galkkal vat, which makes the liver happy,
The lam-sá-re vat, which rejoices the heart,
The sa-gul jar, a fitting thing in the house,
The sa-gul jar, which is filled with beer,
The am-am jar, which carries the beer
of the lam-sá-re vat...

The beautiful vessels, are ready on [their] pot stands!
May the heart of your god be well
disposed towards you!

Let the eye of the galkkal vat be our eye,
Let the heart of the galkkal vat be our heart!
What makes your heart feel wonderful,
Makes [also] our heart feel wonderful.
Our liver is happy, our heart is joyful,
You poured a libation over the brick of destiny,
You placed the foundations in peace [and] prosperity,
May Ninkasi live together with you!
Let her pour for you beer [and] wine,
Let [the pouring] of the sweet liquor resound
pleasantly for you!

In the...reed buckets there is sweet beer,
I will make capbearers, boys, [and]
brewers stand by.

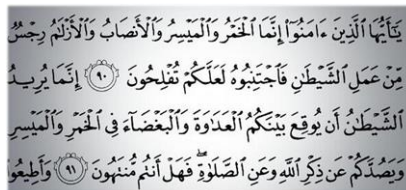
While I circle around the abundance of beer,
While I feel wonderful, I feel wonderful,
Drinking beer, in a blissful mood,
Drinking liquor, feeling exhilarated,
With joy in the heart [and] a happy liver—
While my heart full of joy,

[And] [say] happy liver I cover with a
garment fit for a queen!
The heart of Inanna is happy again,
The heart of heaven is happy again!

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Islam and Alcohol

“You who believe: intoxicants and gambling, idolatrous practices, and [divining] arrows are repugnant acts of Satan’s doing – shun them so that you may prosper. With intoxicants and gambling, Satan seeks only to incite enmity and hatred among you, and to stop you remembering God and prayer. Will you not give them up?”



The word *khamr* is also the root of *takhmeer* (fermentation), it has the root *kh-m-r* which is also the root of Arabic terms including: covering, clouding, hatred or enslaving.

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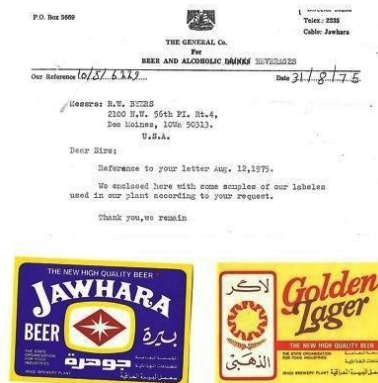
In Islamic Medicine

"To give wine to youths is like adding fire to a fire already prepared with matchwood. Young adults should take it in moderation. But elderly persons may take as much as they can tolerate."

-Ibn Sina (Avicenna)



Iraqi Breweries and Drinks

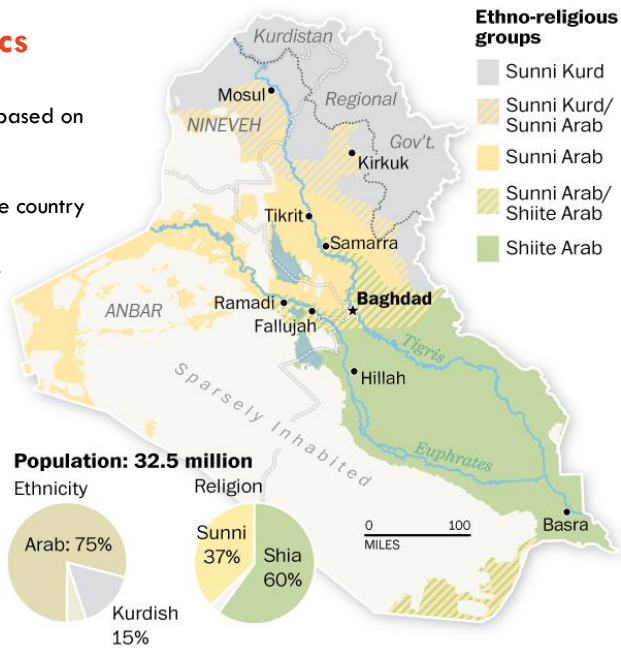


Demographics

All census data are based on estimates

Upper middle income country

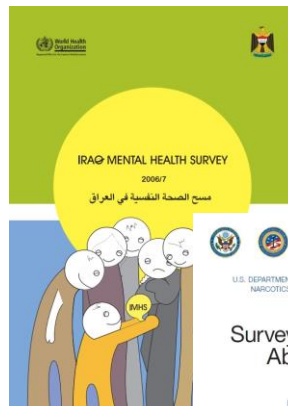
50%+ are under 24



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Existing studies about alcohol in Iraq



2006 – Iraqi Mental Health Survey

Lifetime alcohol use: 6.82% (male) 0.58% (female)
Current alcohol use: 2.93% (male) 0.41% (female)



Survey of Substance Abuse in Iraq

Final Report
June 2015

2015 – Survey of Substance Abuse in Iraq

Lifetime alcohol use: 16.7% (male) 0.6% (female)
Current alcohol use: 6.7% (male) 0.11% (female)

Award No. 5-R-021-02-0000

Prepared by U.S. Department of State/Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and administered by the Substance Abuse Group Program under Grant for Human Services, Award No. 5-R-021-02-0000

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Pricing and Availability in Iraq

Limit for import of alcohol into Iraq = 1 Litre (for Muslims + non-Muslims)

Pack of cigarettes = 50 cents

Can of Beer = \$2 (black market)



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Just in! Production, import & sale of alcohol banned!

"This article of the law goes against the constitution, which guarantees the freedoms of minorities...This law will put people out of jobs, drug consumption will rise, the economy will be affected"

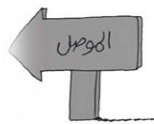
- Yonadam Kanna (Christian MP)

"The constitution says you cannot approve a law that goes against Islam...The effects of alcohol on society are great, and include depravation, terrorism and social problems...As for the people who will lose their jobs, new jobs can be found for them"

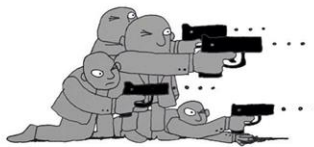
- Ammar Toma (Muslim MP)



Pluralist Secular Iraq vs Islamic Republic



Mosul (ISIS)



Araq (Alcohol)

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Policy Implications



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Thank you!

Questions?

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