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## BEER IN ANTIQUITY, ANTIQUITY IN BEER? A FEW REMARKS ABOUT THE RECEPTION OF ANCIENT CULTURE IN MODERN BREWERY

**ABSTRACT:** Modern breweries taking inspiration from ancient cultures appear as a quite interesting phenomenon, because beer is absent from the current *imaginarium* about the ancient Greeks and Romans. Yet it was not unknown to them, as demonstrated by the survey of sources in the first part of the text. Actually, some brewers today are aware of the beverage's presence in ancient literature and use this knowledge in the naming of their products. Others decide on less direct references, to some historical or mythical characters. Some producers do not limit themselves to names of their brews, but also attempt to reconstruct the ancient drinks. In the second (main) part of the article several cases of each type are presented, together with an analysis of methods of the references' presentation and explanation to the consumer. Also, some observations are made about the reasons why breweries decide to use ancient themes at all.

**KEY WORDS:** beer, brewery, reception, reconstruction, ancient culture, ancient beverages, mythology, Greeks, Romans

Beer (in the typical meaning of that word, i.e., an alcoholic beverage, produced through fermentation of cereals and their derivatives<sup>1</sup>) is one of the oldest drinks known to humanity. Modern science has been able to detect residues of some mixed potion containing rice, grapes and hawthorn fruit at the site of Jiahu in north-central China, dating back to the

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<sup>1</sup> Lintner 1950: 1.

7<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C.<sup>2</sup> Yet today, people rather do not associate antiquity with beer. Wine entirely dominates our understanding of ancient beverages, and its role in the diet and culture (like in the Greek *symposion*) cannot be denied.<sup>3</sup> Beer appears (if it does), rather in the context of civilisations of the Middle East and Egypt, where a technology of its production was developed, together with a mass consumption. Archaeological findings from Godin Tepe (modern Iran) prove the presence of the beverage as early as about 3100-2900 B.C. Sumerian texts bring to us different names of various beer types, made both from barley and from wheat (or from their mix). The most famous references naturally come from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the *Hammurabi Codex*.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, a number of Egyptian texts mention beer production, distribution and consumption. The eldest known brewery was discovered there, at Hieraconpolis.<sup>5</sup>

In Europe, beer is associated mostly with the Middle Ages and later times.<sup>6</sup> Yet this drink was not completely alien to Greeks and Romans, already in the Archaic period. There are even some hypotheses about its consumption in the Minoan period, albeit they remain unproved due to our very limited knowledge of Linear A script. Later Mycenaean texts in Linear B do not contain any vocabulary that may be associated with beer.<sup>7</sup> A fragment of Archilochus, preserved in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists*, contains the oldest mention of beer in the classical literature: the comparison to Thrax or Phrygian sucking βρῦτος.<sup>8</sup> Athenaeus explains the meaning of the term as 'barley wine'. Similarly, in his *Suppliant Women*, Aeschylus speaks about men (not) drinking barley wine: οὐ πίνοντας ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ.<sup>9</sup> The scholiast comments this passage by

<sup>2</sup> McGovern 2009: 36–39; Gately 2011: 13; Rasmussen 2018: 36–38.

<sup>3</sup> About the role of wine see e.g. Grivetti, 1997: 6–14; Węcowski, 2011: 1–2, 40–55.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Gilg. XI 73; P100; CH 108-111. See Hornsey 1997: 104–108; Hornsey 2002: 135, 180–181.

<sup>5</sup> Gately 2011: 16–17. The Egyptian brewery is treated more broadly by Helck 1971; Samuel 2000; Ishida 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Helck 1973: 53–54, 64–65; Samuel 2000: 537; Rasmussen 2014: 36–46; Dryja 2018: 193.

<sup>7</sup> Nelson 2005: 14–15.

<sup>8</sup> Athen. X. 447b (= Arch. Fr. 42 West): ὥσπερ παρ' αὐτῷ βρῦτον ἢ Θρείξ ἀνήρ ἢ Φρῶξ ἔβρουζε: κύβδα δ' ἦν πονευμένη. About the identification of βρῦτος as beer in this passage see Nelson 2005: 16-17; Kokoszko, Jagusiak, Rzeźnicka 2014: 317.

<sup>9</sup> Aesch. *Suppl.* 953.

stating that Egyptians had invented this beverage before (grape) wine.<sup>10</sup> Similarly in Herodotus, we find a reference to Egyptians drinking wine produced from barley (according to him grapevine was not found in their country)<sup>11</sup>. All these passages strongly suggest that Greeks had some previous knowledge of wine, which they later compared with the foreign drink of beer. Naturally, ancient people did not understand the intoxicating properties of the unknown to them alcohol (ethanol). In such a situation, quite natural was the association of those features with wine as such, which later served as a point of reference to other beverages.

In Latin literature, we can find a similar tendency. Tacitus writes about Germanic people producing beer in a certain way similar to fermented wine.<sup>12</sup> Also in law texts, the beer is sometimes recognized as a cereal-derived form of wine, like in Ulpianus (preserved in the *Digest* of Justinianus) and in the Diocletianus' decree on maximal prices.<sup>13</sup> We find there the term *Zythum*, undoubtedly derived from the Greek ζῦθος, which appears in sources starting from the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.<sup>14</sup> Columella links it with Egyptian Pelusium.<sup>15</sup> Pliny the Elder, who provides us with other earliest mentions in Latin literature, also associates the beverage with this country. He enumerates different local names: *zythum* (in Egypt), *caelia* and *cerea* (in Spain), *cervesia* (in Gaul).<sup>16</sup> This last noun has become the main term for beer in Latin.<sup>17</sup> Pliny also mentions the positive effect of the foam (probably the yeast during fermentation)

<sup>10</sup> *Schol. Aesch. Suppl.* 953: πρὸ γὰρ τῆς εὐρέσεως τοῦ οἴνου τοῦτο ἐξεῦρον Αἰγύπτιοι. λέγεται δε μεθύσκειν

<sup>11</sup> *Hdt.* II. 77. 4: ἀρτοφαγέουσι δὲ ἐκ τῶν ὀλυρέων ποιεῦντες ἄρτους, τοὺς ἐκεῖνοι κυλλήστις ὀνομάζουσι. οἶνῳ δὲ ἐκ κριθέων πεποιημένῳ διαχρέονται: οὐ γὰρ σφι εἰσὶ ἐν τῇ χώρῃ ἄμπελοι. ἰχθύων δὲ τοὺς μὲν πρὸς ἥλιον αὐθιγάντες ὤμοις σιτέονται, τοὺς δὲ ἐξ ἄλμης τεταριχενμένους

<sup>12</sup> *Tac. Ger.* 23: *Potui humor ex hordeo aut frumento, in quondam similitudinem vini corruptus.*

<sup>13</sup> *Edict. Diocl.* 2, 11; *Iust. Digesta* 33. 6. 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Tepohrastus (De caus. Plant.* VI. 11. 2.) is the first available author to use this word, emphasizing the drink's Egyptian origin.

<sup>15</sup> *Colum. Re rustic.* X. 114–116.

<sup>16</sup> *Plin. Nat. hist.* XXII. 82: *ex iisdem fiunt et potus, zythum in Aegypto, caelia et cerea in Hispania, cervesia et plura genera in Gallia aliisque provinciis, quorum omnium spuma cutem feminarum in facie nutrit.*

<sup>17</sup> *Toussaint-Samat* 2002: 182.

on skin, and its usage by women as a cosmetic. The Vindolanda tablets present a complaint by certain decurion on the shortage of beer in his unit.<sup>18</sup> This demonstrates its consumption by the Roman army around the 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. The later Emperor Valens was probably the most famous ancient European beer lover.<sup>19</sup>

The references mentioned above are only part of Greek and Roman testimonies about beer. The problem of its consumption and cultural impact has already become the subject of study by modern scholars in various disciplines: not only in the area of classical studies but also in the history of pharmacology and brewery.<sup>20</sup> The dominant position is that beer was considered by Greeks and Romans as a drink inferior to wine (what corresponds with beliefs dominating today).<sup>21</sup> Indeed, we encounter similar opinions in ancient sources, though we can also find positive ones (e.g. Diodorus Siculus considers the Egyptian ζῦθος only a little worse than wine).<sup>22</sup> Beer is also associated mostly with foreign, ‘barbarian’ peoples. It appears that Greek and Roman civilisations did not enjoy beer that much, but interestingly, certain modern producers refer to their heritage. The problem of contribution of ancient European culture to modern brewing appears poorly researched. The current article should be a contribution to the research in this field.

The references to antiquity may be found in names of products, above all. Perhaps it will be most suitable to start from referring to a couple of the most famous cases (among craft and home brewers, at least). *Pliny the Elder* and *Pliny the Younger* from *Russian River Brewery* in California for a long time have occupied the top places in Ratebeer internet ranking.<sup>23</sup> The similarity of the names corresponds to the similarity

<sup>18</sup> Tab. Vindol. III 638 col. 2, ll. 14–16.

<sup>19</sup> Kokoszko, Jagusiak, Rzeźnicka: 322–323.

<sup>20</sup> The most comprehensive study of beer’s history is Hornsey 1997. In the context of European antiquity, the problem is analysed by Nelson 2005. Rasmussen 2018 presents the early history of alcohol as such.

<sup>21</sup> Kolendo 2008: 133; Nelson 2005: 25–37; Kokoszko, Jagusiak, Rzeźnicka 2014: 339, 354, 367.

<sup>22</sup> Diod. I. 20. 3-4: εἰ δέ τις χώρα τὸ φυτὸν τῆς ἀμπέλου μὴ προσδέχοιτο, **διδάξαι τὸ ἐκ τῆς κριθῆς κατασκευαζόμενον πόμα, λειπόμενον οὐ πολὺ τῆς περὶ τὸν οἶνον εὐωδίας τε καὶ δυνάμεως ὃ καλοῦσι ζῦθος.**

<sup>23</sup> At the present [12 October 2021] *Pliny the Younger* has occupied 14<sup>th</sup> place in the ranking.

of styles: Double India Pale Ale (also known as Imperial Pale Ale) and Triple India Pale Ale, respectively. Thus *Pliny the Younger* is a stronger version of his older ‘brother’, more or less. In both cases we are dealing with rather heavy beers, with a strong malt basis and a decisive domination of aromatic hops in the taste.<sup>24</sup> According to common classification of beer styles, this second feature should determine the beverage’s attractiveness. The manufacturers declare, on their website, that it was also the determining factor in the names’ choice.<sup>25</sup> Pliny the Elder is considered to be the first European author who mentions hops, although in a different context.<sup>26</sup> Certain scholars remain sceptical about identification of *lupus salictarius* (mentioned by the Roman author) with the plant known today as *humulus lupulus* (in the system of Linnaeus), probably for good reasons.<sup>27</sup> We must also bear in mind that ancient beverages probably lacked hop’s taste. It’s usage as a flavouring in brewery is documented in written sources in the early medieval times only.<sup>28</sup>

What is interesting, the brewers from California are silent about the mentioned references to the beer itself, in the *Natural History*. They considerably strengthen their choice of name, in spite of problems with the presence of hop in the text. In the corpus of Pliny the Younger we don’t meet any beer references, so the choice of his person was motivated only by kinship that underlines the similar character of beverages. It is also worth noticing that producers explain their decision only on their website. The labels of the discussed beers lack any kind of explanatory

<sup>24</sup> Jackson 2007: 52.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.russianriverbrewing.com/pliny-the-elder/> [access 9 October 2021].

<sup>26</sup> Plin. *Nat. hist.* XXI. 50: *in Italia paucissimas novimus, fraga, tannum, ruscum, batim marinam, batim hortensiam, quas aliqui asparagum gallicum vocant, praeter has pastinacam pratensem, lupum salictarium, eaque verius oblectamenta quam cibos.*

<sup>27</sup> Cornwell 2015: 163.

<sup>28</sup> The first literary mention of hop comes from 768 A.D., when Pepin the Short, the king of Franks, granted to Saint-Denis abbey the privilege *Humlonarias cum integritate*. The use of the plant in brewery is documented in 822 A.D., and its popularity increases from 14<sup>th</sup> c. The famous “Bavarian Law of Purity” (*Reinheitsgebot*) of 1516 banned the usage of other spices. See Hornsey, 1997: 304–309; Dryja 2018: 48–39. Yet the last archaeological findings point out to usage of hops in the brewery by Etruscans already (see *infra*). This is a single case, but it may suggest the need of modification of commonly accepted model.

commentary, as well as any kind of graphic elements that could be recognized as inspired by antiquity.

Another case of reference to an ancient author mentioning beer is a *Xenophons's Wine* from Flemish *De Struise Brouwers*. The drink represents the style known as Barley Wine, so one of the strongest types of beer. The contemporary name refers to high alcohol content which may reach level close to the grape wines.<sup>29</sup> It is easy to see here an analogy with the ancient οἶνος κριθῖνος referred to above. This term appears also in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, where the author describes the beverage that was served to Greek soldiers in Thrace.<sup>30</sup> Like Diodorus later, he notes the taste and strength of the drink, and its strength, which he describes as very high when not mixed with water.<sup>31</sup> The analogy then is similar to the modern naming in terms of intoxicating properties (*ergo*: alcohol content). At the same time, Xenophon describes the drink as quite remote from modern expectations about the beer. After pouring the liquid into goblets, the cereals were floating on the surface. The beer (or rather the prepared mash) must have been barely filtrated then, and a straw was necessary to drink it. Interestingly enough, the Flemish brewers are silent (both on the label and on the website) about the reasons of naming beer after Xenophon, but there cannot be any doubt.<sup>32</sup> Instead, the artwork on the label brings a reference to classical mythology. The central element there is a miniature reproduction of *Small Bacchus* – painting by Guido Marini (around 1622 A.D.), depicting the god as an infant, drinking wine from a pitcher.<sup>33</sup> The analogy is completely clear in the context of the beer's name and style.

<sup>29</sup> Jackson 2007: 52.

<sup>30</sup> Xen. *An.* IV. 5. 26: ἦσαν δὲ καὶ πυροὶ καὶ κριθαὶ καὶ ὄσπρια καὶ οἶνος κριθῖνος ἐν κρατῆρσιν. ἐνήσαν δὲ καὶ αὐταὶ αἱ κριθαὶ ἰσοχειλεῖς, καὶ κάλαμοι ἐνέκειντο, οἱ μὲν μείζους οἱ δὲ ἐλάττους, γόνατα οὐκ ἔχοντες· τούτους ἔδει ὅποτε τις διψῶν λαβόντα εἰς τὸ στόμα μύζειν. καὶ πάνυ ἄκρατος ἦν, εἰ μὴ τις ὕδωρ ἐπιχέοι· καὶ πάνυ ἡδὺ συμμαθόντι τὸ πῶμα ἦν.

<sup>31</sup> Xenophon was not isolated in his views about the strength of barley wine. See Kokoszko, Jagusiak, Rzeźnicka 2014: 318.

<sup>32</sup> The label – author's own collection; website: <https://struise.com/bottles/> [access 09 October 2021].

<sup>33</sup> The author wants to thank dr Magdalena Garneczarska (Institute of the History of Art, Jagiellonian University) for help in identification of the painting, which now

The ancient references in modern brewery presented above have a concrete literary character. The producers, even if they don't stress it, are inspired by those authors who mentioned some kind of beer. But we also encounter cases that are much less clear. Such an example is *Caesar Augustus* from Scottish *Williams Bros Brewing*. The producers describe it as a hybrid of IPA (India Pale Ale) and Lager, that should be a "revolution in refreshment and flavour", but do not explain why they have taken the name from the *princeps*.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps they were referring to his role in the process of the evolution of the Roman state. The beverage would aspire to initiate changes in beer styles just like Augustus have changed the Roman Empire. Of course, it is impossible to say anything for certain, and the choice could have been motivated by the simple recognisability of the sovereign. The label contains only a simple graphic, without any ancient elements.

Polish *Olimp* [Olympus] brewery is a particularly interesting case. Not only the name itself refers to Greek mythology, but also nearly all its products have names of this particular origin. In its very motto: "we build the beer Pantheon" [*budujemy piwny panteon*], the brewery employs an analogy between mastery of their craft and the place reserved for gods.<sup>35</sup> The first beer (offered for sale in 2013) received the name of *Prometeusz* [Prometheus], and was quickly followed by other labels.<sup>36</sup> Today, the brewery has over 70 different beverages in their *portfolio*, produced with different regularity. It should be emphasized that nearly all their beers' labels contain short notes about the characters from whom they have their names taken. We can read e.g. "Clio – fame-proclaimer – the muse of history. One of nine muses of Olympus attending Apollo. She was said to be a daughter of Zeus and Tytanid Mnemosyne, she gave

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is located in the Dresden Gallery: <https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/Index/378280>.

<sup>34</sup> The label – author's own collection; website: <https://www.williamsbrosbrew.com/beer/caesar-augustus> [access 09 October 2021].

<sup>35</sup> <https://browarolimp.wordpress.com/o-browarze-olimp/> [access: 10 October 2021].

<sup>36</sup> The process of brewing is presented on the platform youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLqtxg4d7zI> [access: 12 October 2021].

life to Hyacinthus and Hymenus.”<sup>37</sup> We encounter here information of encyclopaedic, even educational character. However, the reasons for the choice of particular name for particular beer are unspecified in most of the cases.

Sometimes we can assume that the brewers have taken advantage of simple associations. Examples include *Hefaistos* [Hephaistos] (Smoked Stout, named after the god associated with darkness and smoke), *Bacchus* (Imperial Stout with addition of grape must), *Asclepius* (IPA with addition of geranium), *Hermafrodyta* [Hermaphrodite] (American Weizen – so a hybrid of classical German wheat beer with intensive hopping, characteristic for American brewery). In case of *Eris* (described as Belgian India Ale) the manufacturers declare “an attempt of reconciliation of two worlds: spicing effects of wort fermentation by Belgian yeast and hopping with American Simcoe”.<sup>38</sup> The reference to the goddess of discord evidently carries a shade of irony. In other cases (like mentioned *Klio*), it is very hard to find out what prompted the brewers to choose these particular names. It should be noted that they are referring to characters with positive connotations as well as to ones with rather ambivalent associations (like *Thanatos*) or even monsters like *Medusa* or *Hydra*. Perhaps they were driven by the desire to catch the attention of potential consumers and to refer to the power of mythical creatures. Apart from notes, the labels contain appropriate artworks, depicting particular character, kept in the comic book aesthetics.

For years, *Olimp* brewery has consequently built its image based on references to ancient mythology. It is hard to assess its efficiency, but the fact of surviving on the market through nearly a decade seems to prove the effectiveness of this strategy. At the same time, the enterprise appears to be quite unique, not only in Poland, but also abroad. It is hard to find another brewery that would made ancient references a key point of its marketing campaign.

*Midas Touch* from the American brewery *Dogfish Head* refers to Greek mythology in an obvious way. This is probably the most specific

<sup>37</sup> The label: own collection of author, also available: <http://www.mojepiwo.com/index.php/polska/80-browar-olimp-polska-kolekcja-etykiet-piwnych-i-podstawek-pod-piwo-poland-collection-of-beer-labels-and-beer-coasters> [access: 12 October 2021].

<sup>38</sup> <https://browarolimp.wordpress.com/piwa-z-olimpu/eris/> [access: 23 October 2021].



beverage among the ones discussed in this article: the producers classify it as an ale, but also describe it as a hybrid of beer, wine and mead.<sup>39</sup> The label has two forms. In the first one, the artwork, apart from the logo of the brewery, contains depiction of grain, green grapes and honeycomb (so, the basic ingredients of the beverage). In the second, there is a representation of fingerprint, a reference to the myth about Midas. The description explains that the beer was inspired by real archaeological findings.

*Dogfish Head* has developed cooperation with professor Patrick McGovern from the University of Pennsylvania. For a long time, the scholars from there were conducting a research in central Turkey, where in 1957, an ancient tumulus was found in the ruins of ancient Gordium and named after half-mythical king. Presumably, Midas (or his father, Gordias) was buried inside.<sup>40</sup> The archaeologists came across the remains of food and drinks in the tomb. Their analysis, performed by McGovern, has shown the traces of sediments characteristic both for wine (tartaric acid), mead (wax), and beer (calcium oxalate). What is crucial, these traces have been found in all ancient vessels examined, in nearly similar proportions.<sup>41</sup> This strongly suggests that they were an effect of containment of single liquid, not several in a sequence. Guided by archaeological hints, the brewers have made a beverage based on similar mix of fermentable sugars, including barley malt, grape must and honey.

In the case of *Midas Touch*, we are dealing not with a simple reference to antiquity in the beer's name, but with an actual (successful) attempt to make a drink based on an ancient recipe. Certainly, modern products are used. The process of mashing and fermentation is also carried out (the brewery has continued the production since 1999) with the use of modern technology. Moreover, the beer is carbonised and filtrated to a certain extent, judging from the photos, revealing certain very limited clarity. The final product can be quite remote from the ancient original, but should give some concept of its taste. The producers unsurprisingly describe it as sweet with traceable notes of grape and honey.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.dogfish.com/brewery/beer/midas-touch> [access: 21 October 2021].

<sup>40</sup> Sams 2005: 17–20; McGovern 2009: 130–134. About Midas see Vassileva 1997.

<sup>41</sup> McGovern 2009: 134–135.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.dogfish.com/brewery/beer/midas-touch>.

*Dogfish Head* has much broader aspirations as regards historical reconstruction, as testified by the entire ‘Ancient Ales’ series. The cooperation with the abovementioned professor McGovern has played an important role here. The series draws from much more exotic (from the European point of view) inspirations like ancient China or Pre-Columbian America. No more Greek and Roman references can be found there, but in 2012 *Birra Etrusca* has become the fruit of Americans’ collaboration with Italian craft breweries *Birra Balladin* and *Birra del Borgo*.<sup>43</sup> The beverage claims to have been inspired by this Italian culture, mostly in terms of ingredients: malts from archaic (according to the brewers’ declaration) types of barley and wheat, hazelnut flour, pomegranate juice, honey raisins, and gentian radish. The last one is used for bitterness, because only a symbolic amount of hops is used. Interestingly, its traces were found in archaeological material coming from a grave in Pombia.<sup>44</sup> An analysis of the remains of beer in clay vessel that was put directly into urn has supplied valuable information about the ingredients used by Etruscans in the brewing process. The producers also have attempted to make the conditions of the fermentation a little bit close to the ancient ones. *Birra del Borgo* even went as far as to use clay amphorae, naturally of modern production.<sup>45</sup> This is important regarding the ability of liquid to ‘breathe’, due to the porous structure of such vessels. Moreover, the used yeast strain originates from the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., according to the brewers.

The cases described above are the first available brews inspired by ancient European beers. Naturally, we are dealing here with commercially produced and distributed beverages. Purely academic reconstruction attempts are also taking place, but due to their ephemeral nature, they are much harder to trace.<sup>46</sup> Thus, they remain outside the scope of the article. It is also necessary to mention that there had been some earlier attempts to reconstruct ancient beers, but the ones from the Middle East. The priority should be probably given to *Anchor Brewing*, which already in 1989 released *Ninkasi*, named after the Sumerian goddess – a patron

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.dogfish.com/blog/ancient-ales>.

<sup>44</sup> Whitehead 2014.

<sup>45</sup> <https://birradelborgo.it/lostandfound/etrusca/> [access: 21 October 2021].

<sup>46</sup> E.g. Gibbs 2019.

deity of the beverage.<sup>47</sup> A recorded hymn in her praise contains some information about the production process used by contemporary producers. Apparently, it was quite different from the modern methods. The malted grain (most often barley, but also wheat) was processed into *bappir* – a kind of bread or cake. It was only half-baked, so the yeast would survive inside. Fragmentised loaves were put into water, together with different additions, and the mixture fermented. Unfortunately, after two brews, the production was ceased. Seven years later, *Scottish Brewery* in collaboration with *Newcastle Brewery* made their attempt to reconstruct Egyptian beer, with the help of scholars from Cambridge University.<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, the producers provided them with funding for the research. Actually, from Egypt comes the oldest preserved recipe for beer, written in Greek. The alchemic treaty of Zosimus of Panopolis quotes it, although thought to be a later interpolation.<sup>49</sup> The described procedure involved baking a special bread, and appears quite similar to the described Sumerian method. In spite of this, the brewers, following the results of the analysis of the remains found in vessels, decided to prepare the beverage in a different way, by mixing cooked (in water) and uncooked malt.<sup>50</sup> This appears a little similar to the modern decoction technique of a beer.

To sum up, we see that references to antiquity are not common, but still present in modern craft brewery. Most frequently, beverages are named after some ancient character: an author writing about beer (or its ingredients), or some historical person lacking similar connotations, or even a mythical one. However, the producers are not very eager to explain to consumers their reasons for giving a particular name to a specific beverage. Sometimes breweries present the information about their motives on their websites. A question remains open why they decide to use ancient themes at all. Perhaps an important role is played here by the

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.anchorbrewing.com/blog/sumerian-beer-project/> [access: 22. X 2021].

<sup>48</sup> Civil 1989: 1–2 ; Katz, Maytag, Civil 1991.

<sup>49</sup> Ps.-Zosim. 372 (in: M. Bertholt, Ch. E. Ruelle, *Collection des anciens alchimistes grecs*, Paris 1887 vol. 2).

<sup>50</sup> Samuel 1996; Samuel 1997; Samuel 2000: 553–555. It is worth emphasizing that recent findings of Polish archaeologists in Tell-el-Farcha suggest a similar method of production. See Adamski, Rosińska-Bąk 2014: 27–28.

desire to attract attention of potential consumer through unconventional naming. More subtle and unobvious references (like in the case of *Xenophon's Wine*) may also be expected to enhance the perception of craft beverages as 'elite' merchandise, in opposition to mass-produced beers. Also, the association with old times can create an impression of production based on traditional patterns. Interestingly enough, the producers are more eager to use motifs from European antiquity than from the Middle East, where beer was much more popular. Ancient references may also be rather autotelic in character. These are the cases of products inspired by knowledge about ancient methods of brewing. Usually, appropriate names emphasize the 'primordial' lineage of these beers. Attempting the reconstruction of ancient beverages is undoubtedly a kind of challenge to brewers, an occasion to prove their own skills and break away from routine. The effects of their efforts are a curiosity for clients. It appears then that the knowledge about ancient world may be a valuable source of inspiration even in a theoretically remote discipline, like brewery.

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