

2. CONSUMPTION

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Introduction

Between 1850 and 1950 observers around the world described the growing intoxication they saw around them as the result of a shift from what was understood as ‘traditional’ drinking to a newer culture of consumption. However traditional drinking turns out to be something of a chimera. Many characteristics of this newer culture were in existence well before this period and, while consumption rose and fell in many places, this period was generally drier than the eighteenth century. Nevertheless it is worth considering the arguments that were made about this shift, as they have shaped the historiography of alcohol consumption in the age of industry and empire. After introducing these ideas, we will consider what is known about consumption, about drinkers and drinking occasions, and finally drinking places and practices.

‘Traditional’ drinking was associated with the rhythms of holidays and rites of passage, but between 1850 and 1950 drinking became much more regular in Europe, and perhaps elsewhere; distilled liquor became more available and affordable. Traditional drinking seemed strongest in the countryside, and weakest in urban centers. In Tsarist Russia, “in the village ... drinking was not centered around a specific site, and it did not separate people by age, gender, or income to the extent more modern drinking did” (Transchel 2006: 21). Evaluations of traditional drinking varied, however. On the one hand, in some places – particularly colonial Africa - it was thought to unite social groups, and newer customs were felt to bring disorder. In Southern Africa this idea informed ethnographies and histories of drink from the 1930s (Ambler and Crush 1992). In fact alcohol could

simultaneously support and threaten social order; in East Africa older men's "controlled, ritual" drinking co-existed with reports of the drunken violence of younger men (Willis 2002: 47). Similarly Paul Nugent suggests that "competing visions of modernity ... played themselves out in attitudes towards alcohol in West Africa and South Africa alike" (2014: 145).

On the other hand social historians of Britain saw traditional drinking as a source of disorder; industrial capitalism sought to tame an unruly popular culture, and employers supported temperance because drink was "the most dangerous agent of destruction of laboring power" (Gramsci 1971: 303). Industrial cities represented the front line of this struggle as capitalist discipline confronted a traditional festive culture and rural migrants were shaped into proletarians. When Welsh *Eisteddfods* became established in pubs they drew the attention of reformers for this reason (Pritchard 2012). From this perspective the rise and fall of alcohol consumption in Europe, North America, Russia, and elsewhere in this period represents the liberating and repressive consequences of capital. However drink historians have been slow to engage with newer ideas about the timing and consequences of both work-discipline and paid employment (Glennie and Thrift 2009; Zelizer 2011).

In many influential accounts distillation was the most important element of a new drinking culture. David Christian suggests that "distilled drinks were to fermented drinks what guns were to bows and arrows: instruments of a potency unimaginable in most traditional societies" (1990: 33); Wolfgang Schivelbusch agrees that "gin struck the typically beer-drinking English populace like a thunderbolt" (1993: 156). However while Schivelbusch argues that "the maximised effect, the acceleration, and the reduced price made liquor a true child of the Industrial Revolution" (1993: 153), distillation is an early modern technique, and the first European concerns over its use come before the period we are examining here. We should also be wary of the idea that these different drinking cultures reflected a tension between the rhythms of industrial and rural life. In England

and Wales both clock-time – a shared and public sense of time – and a preindustrial urban work time-discipline predated, and were not the result of, industrialization as E. P. Thompson (1967) had claimed (Harrison 1986; Glennie and Thrift 2009). Neither the still nor work discipline were industrial, then. Even in Britain few cities were genuinely industrial before the middle of the nineteenth century; industrial drinks arrived quite some way before ‘industrial drinking’ and in many places ‘traditional’ drinking co-existed with the new craze for distilled spirits for quite some time.

Colonial contact and imperial conquest heightened the novelty of new drinking substances and practices. By 1850 many cultures had long been producers of their own alcoholic beverages, from Africa to Central America (Pan 1975; Carey 2015), but a cash economy freed brewing and drinking from the rhythms of the seasons, as it did for Swazi women brewers (Crush 1992). In other places, like the Pacific, Europeans had introduced both fermented and distilled alcoholic drinks long before 1850 (Marshall and Marshall 1975) but these did not always become ordinary commodities. In Papua New Guinea drugs like betel and kava were well known before contact, but “alcohol was always treated as a substance apart” (Marshall 1982: 8). In Africa the threat of alien European ‘trade liquor’ persuaded the imperial powers that Africans needed to be protected from distilled drinks (Pan 1975; Willis 2001). However, in East Africa what Europeans saw as traditional ‘native’ drinking continued to evolve through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the availability of imported or local spirits was in fact only one of the three dynamics that shaped alcohol consumption in colonial Africa, alongside the growth of centralized states and the spread of money (Willis 2002: 23-40; 2003b).

Turning to the locations in which drink was consumed, while places devoted to drinking had of course existed for centuries, this period saw them becoming increasingly important, and perhaps increasingly specialized. By 1850 public drinking in Ireland had to be done within the

“confined and regulated space of the government-licensed drinkshop” (Malcolm 1998: 72). Similarly Justin Willis sees the East African bar, shaped by colonial regulation, as “a place to drink which was regulated and formalized and set aside; a place to drink, just as the hospital was a place to be ill and the court was a place to judge” (2002: 156). These drinking places may have become increasingly like the ‘third places’ described by Ray Oldenburg (1989). Neither home nor work, these inclusive ‘great good places’ offered respite in otherwise unfriendly cities, and were key locations for the formation of civil society and social capital. Nathan Booth shows that mid-nineteenth-century Cheshire pubs provided a comfortable, domestic sociability somewhere between the public and private, for example (2018). While not by any means new, between 1850 and 1950 these associations may well have been strengthened by the specialization of space brought about by increasing urban size and complexity, as well as restrictions on workplace drinking and the poor quality of home life. However, the relations between first, second, and third places still troubled critics who felt drinking places encouraged absenteeism and diverted time and money away from homes.

Having sketched out some of the key dimensions of changes to drinking in this period, it is time to consider the evidence for changing consumption rates.

Known consumption rates, 1850-1950

Despite the fact that governments took a good deal of interest in drinking, our knowledge of consumption rates is partial and uncertain in this period. Consumption itself is rarely if ever recorded; state taxation records measure production, imports and exports, and sales, and these figures are often used as proxies for consumption, though illicit production could be an enormous problem for governments everywhere. There are also many problems with state records (Dingle 1972; Brennan 1989; Fahey 2003). Changing borders make it difficult to track national

consumption. Drinks were sold in different volumes and strengths; these can be converted into a standard measure (usually liters of pure alcohol) though some historians have calculated per capita figures based only on the drinking population, while others consider the total population. Perhaps most importantly, per capita consumption figures tell us nothing about how much individuals or groups drank, or how they drank it. Here we have to rely on even less reliable proxies like counts of drink-related crimes and nuisances, deaths associated with alcohol, or numbers of drink retailers.

For these reasons and others, some historians have been skeptical of the value of consumption data. For example Kate Transchel suggests “[Russian] figures are suspect because all published studies of alcohol consumption were designed for a political purpose” (2006: 28). Similarly, consumption data from Southern Africa reflected white assumptions (Ambler and Crush 1992). However all sources are inevitably shaped by their makers, and we might take heart from Brian Harrison’s observation that “historians do not usually allow themselves to be discouraged by lack of firm evidence. Some sort of general picture ... can be built up from scattered and incidental contemporary references” (1971: 22).

This section will attempt to construct just such a general picture, drawing on Rorabaugh’s collection of statistics for twelve American and European states from about 1830-1974 (1979: 237-9, see Table 2.1) as well as other studies and countries beyond this sample.

[TABLE 2.1 NEAR HERE]

In the United States annual per capita consumption had been 13.2 liters of absolute alcohol in 1800; this rose to a peak of 14.8 liters in 1830 but had fallen to 3.8 liters by 1850. It rose slightly after that but its highest point between 1850 and 1950 (6.4 liters, 1910) was less than half of the 1800 level. During Prohibition it was around 2.3 liters, though rates climbed after 1933, with the average

rate for those of drinking age reaching 5.3 liters in 1950. The proportion of this alcohol derived from beer rose throughout this period, and by 1890 the shares contributed by beer and whiskey were equal (Rorabaugh 1979: 232). Again, it seems likely that consumption was falling in Canada from the start of this period. By 1890 it was 3 liters of absolute alcohol per capita (Rorabaugh 1979: 239), though there was a good deal of regional variation: the Maritime provinces consumed far less than British Columbia in 1880 (Cafferky 2003a: 22). Prohibition, state controls, and Depression kept consumption low until the 1940s (Rorabaugh 1979: 239).

Consumption was also falling in Russia, where most of the alcohol consumed was in the form of vodka until beer became more popular after 1900. Between 1864 and 1879 the per capita rate was 4.3 liters of pure alcohol per annum. This then fell until the 1890s, when 2.4 liters of vodka per capita marked the lowest point of alcohol consumption in pre-revolutionary Russia, before rising slightly again before World War One. Wartime temperance, continued by the Bolsheviks, depressed drinking further, with per capita vodka consumption at 0.9 liters of pure alcohol in 1925, 1.0 liters in 1932, 1.9 liters in 1940, and 1.85 liters in 1950 (Krasnov 2003: 14-15). Before 1917 St Petersburg and Moscow recorded higher rates than the rest of the empire, but while the revolution brought changes to the habits of working-class drinkers in St Petersburg (Phillips 2000), older customs may have prevailed in Moscow, Kharkov, Saratov, and Tomsk (Transchel 2006).

The Scandinavian countries also sobered fairly rapidly, though Norway lagged behind. Swedish per capita consumption declined markedly after 1850 – from 14 to 5.3 liters of absolute alcohol between 1844-45 and 1861-70 – and this continued through the twentieth century, reaching 3.8 liters by 1950 (Rorabaugh 1979: 239). While the high point of Danish consumption came in the middle of the nineteenth century, this also declined rapidly, from 10.2 liters in 1881-90 to a low point of 2.3 liters in 1937, as the result of high taxation and beer's popularity at the expense of spirits (Rorabaugh 1979: 239; Eriksen 2003: 193-4). In Finland consumption fell from 3 liters of

pure alcohol per annum per capita in the 1870s to 1.9 liters in 1900, reaching 0.5 liters before Prohibition (1919), one of the lowest levels in Europe at that time. After Prohibition ended in 1932 per capita consumption was 1 liter (Rorabaugh 1979: 239; Österberg 2003: 240). In Norway, however, rates remained relatively high until the First World War. In 1851 per capita consumption for those aged 15 or more stood at 5.5 liters of absolute alcohol, and this rose and fell (nearly 7 liters in 1875, only 3.5 in 1887) until 1900 (Nordlund 2003: 460). Wartime controls and forms of prohibition between 1919 and 1926 may have had a longer-term influence, as consumption fluctuated between 1.1 and 3.1 liters per capita for those aged 15 or older between 1926 and 1950.

In Britain high levels of consumption in the eighteenth century gave way to more moderate drinking at the start of the nineteenth. The liberalization of the sale of spirits and beer in the 1820s and 1830s spurred small increases in consumption but the 1840s marked a low point. Consumption then rose, recording its highest levels in the 1870s and a second, lower, rise in the 1890s; from that point on it declined rapidly, as it had in other European countries (Wilson 1940). Government intervention encouraged extremely low levels during the First World War, but consumption was already falling steeply and continued to do so until the 1930s; at both of these low points per capita consumption was around 4 liters of absolute alcohol. Consumption rose again in the 1940s but after the Second World War it was again about 4 liters per capita.

Why did British drinking change after the 1870s? Anthony Dingle notes that while wages were rising at the start of this decade, especially for skilled workers, there was little to spend them on. The 1870s peak represented “a situation in which purchasing power had temporarily outstripped the supply of consumer goods available” (1972: 618). In the first half of the 1870s, real purchasing power came from higher wages, so drink remained good value; but from 1880 to 1895 purchasing power was derived from falling prices, and drink became relatively expensive compared to other commodities. Higher wages favored male workers while lower prices meant the householder had

more control over purchasing. After 1900 real wages stagnated, but families drank less alcohol to allow them to continue their new consumption habits.

Elsewhere in Europe wide variations were visible, both in terms of the amount consumed and in rates of change. The citizens of Belgium continued to drink heavily, for example; in 1900 this was 12.5 liters of pure alcohol per capita, with spirits contributing 4.7 liters of this total (Karlsson and Österberg 2003: 103). Their neighbors in the Netherlands consumed around 7 liters of pure alcohol per capita in 1880, 5.7 liters in 1901-5, and about 2 liters in 1950 (Rorabaugh 1979: 239; Garretsen, Bongers, and van de Goor 2003: 450). In Austria the consumption of spirits peaked at around 10 liters per capita in the middle of the nineteenth century, with beer becoming increasingly important after this, especially in Vienna. The high point of overall consumption came in the years between 1881 and 1910 when per capita consumption reached around 11 liters of pure alcohol; between the wars this figure was only 6 liters (Eisenbach-Stangl 2003: 79).

In Germany alcohol consumption rose from a low point in the 1840s to a peak of 10.2 liters of pure alcohol per capita in the early 1870s, following rising real wages until industrial depression in that decade (Roberts 1984: 43-4). Real wages recovered in the mid 1890s, though alcohol consumption began a sustained decline falling from 9.1 liters in 1900 to 6.9 in 1913 – only a little more than the 1850 figure of 6.4 liters. As in many other northern European countries, beer's popularity had risen at the expense of spirits (Roberts 1984: 109).

In all the countries considered above the per capita consumption of alcohol declined over this period, reflecting changing habits, wider social developments, and the influence of temperance. The French case is rather different, with consumption remaining very high throughout this period, dipping only when depression or war interfered with the production and sale of drink. In 1848-50 each French adult consumed 26.8 liters of pure alcohol; in 1900-2 this was 34.7 liters; and in 1950-51 the “involuntary detoxification” of war and occupation had reduced this to 28.6 liters (Prestwich

1988: 24, 257). There were important regional differences, though; consumption was highest in the north and the Midi, associated with beer and wine production respectively, and in some urban or industrial areas. As per capita consumption rose between 1850 and 1900 it was more evenly divided across the population, as peasants caught up with urban workers (Brennan 1989). The French pattern was even more unusual after 1900, when consumption fell in many other Western European nations. However Italy seems to have followed a similar trajectory, recording high levels from 1881-90 as well as an increase in the first few years of the twentieth century, when most other European countries were turning away from alcohol. While consumption fell between the wars, and did not reach French levels, this pattern reminds us that not every European nation sobered up in the first half of the twentieth century.

Australia followed a similar path to Britain after the first years of colonization. Consumption then declined in both New South Wales and Victoria before rising to peak figures of 7.0 and 11.0 liters respectively in the 1850s (Lewis 1992: 9). After the 1850s consumption declined fairly steadily in both colonies, and while intercolonial variations were recorded from the 1880s, with Western Australia recording the highest rates (Dingle 1980: 233), by federation (1901) Australians were drinking less than the British. The lowest point was reached in the 1930s though by 1950 consumption had risen to around 6.0 liters per capita, more or less the rate recorded by New South Wales a century earlier. Other British colonies were certainly drinking less than the British by the 1890s, with the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand recording only 46.3 and 35.6 percent of the pure alcohol consumed per capita in Britain (Rowntree and Sherwell 1899: 436).

Published work on alcohol consumption elsewhere around the world is much patchier for this period, at least in Anglophone historical work. Justin Willis notes “We have absolutely no idea of how much alcohol was consumed in East Africa in the nineteenth century... There is just as little real information for most of the twentieth century” (2002: 4). There are no figures for Indian

alcohol consumption either, though numbers of licensed distilleries and liquor shops greatly increased between the 1870s and 1920s (Tyrrell 2003: 309).

These consumption rates tell us nothing about who actually consumed alcohol, when they drank, how or who with. The next sections aim to answer these questions, beginning with drinkers and then examining drinking occasions.

Drinkers

David Fahey's sketch of British drinking is a useful starting point: "Nobody challenges the broad outlines of the orthodox view: the working class drank more than other classes, men drank more than women, and thus working-class men drank the most" (2003: 16). However this was not always true everywhere, and we also need to remember that not everybody drank, even where there were no laws to forbid them doing so. The drinking of elites is also harder to track, especially masculine drinkers, as concerns over their consumption were less well-developed; however archaeological and material culture studies can provide some clues (Glanville and Lee 2007; Mosher and Wilkie 2010). We will consider issues of class, gender, and 'race' in turn, though some have been covered elsewhere in this volume.

[FIGURE 2.1 HERE]

Class was clearly important. One contemporary observer suggested that the British working class bought three-quarters of all beer and spirits, and a tenth of all wine sold in the 1880s; they accounted for between two-thirds and three-quarters of all drink spending (Dingle 1972: 612). We have some sense of the proportion of household budgets that was spent on drink – a peak of 14.5 percent in Germany in 1870-4, with British estimates ranging from a sixth to a

half (Dingle 1972: 610; Roberts 1984: 45) – but this was not evenly distributed. In France between 1890-1910 better-paid workers spent more of their income on alcohol, and men spent more on alcohol than women (Prestwich 1988: 86-7). In fact the better- *and* the worst-off workers may have consumed more than those on average wages. In Paris in the 1880s and 1890s some workers responded to economic uncertainty by privileging drink over food; at the same time café customers tended to be skilled, well-paid workers (Haine 1996: 94, 65). In Russia in the first decade of the twentieth century, the best- and worst-paid workers and peasants drank more than moderate earners (Krasnov 2003: 15).

The suggestion that better-paid workers drank more than others is supported by evidence from the US, Britain, and Russia. Thorstein Veblen suggested that the free drinking of journeyman printers reflected the character of their employment. Highly skilled and well paid, printers were in demand everywhere, and well informed about their prospects; more mobile than other workers, they were constantly thrown into new friendships in new workplaces. All of this encouraged public drinking, especially ‘treating’ or buying rounds, a form of conspicuous consumption that advertised the printer’s affluence (and therefore ability) as well as building social bonds (1915: 90). Thomas Wright claimed that English engineers (“*the trade of the day*”) had invented the custom of ‘Saint Monday’, missing work at the start of the week, with some having had “a drop too much at the suburban inn” the night before (1867: 114). We will consider Saint Monday (Reid 1976) in a moment, but it is possible that these workers used their extra income to offset the demands of the working week (Dingle 1972: 617). In industrial Wales employers complained that it was hard to find and keep skilled workers amid a general labor shortage; higher wages meant more drinking and drunkenness, but well-paid workers were harder to discipline (Lambert 1983: 36, 44). In Russia in the early 1930s skilled workers were rarely punished for drinking on the job or turning up drunk, even when this meant closing a

factory. Like their Welsh peers they were too valuable to sack or discipline (Transchel 2006: 132-5). At the end of our period a classic study of a West Yorkshire mining community suggested that when higher earners paid for the drinks of others this was a form of ‘capital destruction’ which narrowed the gap in income and status between different groups of men (Dennis *et al* 1956).

Medical and actuarial evidence suggested other links between employment and heavy drinking. In England and Wales inn or beershop keepers had the eighth worst mortality of all male professions, and their servants had the worst of all (General Register Office 1885: 24-5). Excessive drinking also played its part in the poor life expectancy of cabmen and commercial travellers (35-6, 65). At the turn of the century the six occupations with the highest rates of death from alcoholism were hotel servants, innkeepers, chimney sweeps, dock laborers, brewers, and costermongers (Smee 1901: 28). British and American life assurance companies worried about drinkers since their early deaths meant a loss for the firm. Their own mortality statistics confirmed the patterns noted above and firms began to price insurance accordingly; from the 1870s onwards many charged publicans extra, or refused to insure them at all (Kneale and French 2013, 2015). In France a similar group of occupations – hospitality workers, butchers – displayed significant alcohol-related mortality problems (Prestwich 1988: 84). There is much less evidence of this kind for middle-class and elite drinking, though insurance fraud cases often revealed hidden drinking in respectable circles.

While gender is considered in more depth elsewhere in this volume, it is worth making a few points about women consumers of alcohol here. They made up between a quarter and a third of pub drinkers in England at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century (Gutzke 1984) and on certain nights of the week some rooms or pubs might be dominated by women (Ross 1983; Gleiss 2009; Jennings 2007). Attitudes relaxed in some countries during

the World Wars, reflecting women's wider participation in work and public life (Gutzke 1994; Langhamer 2003; Moss 2008; Gutzke 2013), but even between the wars women made up between 12.5 and 41.5 percent of British patrons (Langhamer 2003: 426). Before the era of six o'clock closing Australian pubs were not, in general, as masculine as US saloons (Blainey 2003).

[FIGURE 2.2 HERE]

Other kinds of evidence reveal women's drinking. Records of arrests and convictions of women for drink-related offences suggest they took part in drinking in many places: Guatemala from the 1920s to 1944 (Carey 2014: 143); late nineteenth-century England and Wales (Rowntree and Sherwell 1899: 89); Ontario between 1881 and 1914, and Ottawa between 1893 and 1901 (Warsh 1993: 78). We have to be wary of these figures, of course, as they were shaped by ideas of appropriate feminine behavior (Gutzke 1984; Moss 2009; Beckingham 2010, 2012), but they do suggest that many ordinary women did drink. Similarly Catherine Gilbert Murdock provides a good deal of evidence for women's drinking in the US between 1870 and 1940 (1998) and Laura Phillips does the same for Russia before and after the revolution (2000).

Religious belief, culture, and ethnicity also guided drink consumption. Christian temperance organizations encouraged abstinence, moderation and alcohol control across the world. In Islamic countries traditions of elite drinking continued in private, though individual rulers varied in their attitudes and the drinking of non-Muslims was prohibited on occasion. In Iran during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah (1848-96) some members of the elite were enthusiastic private consumers, though most, particularly women and rural Iranians, did not drink (Matthee 2005). Increasing contact with Europeans seems to have coincided with the growing availability of

alcohol, especially distilled drink, in Iran in the later decades of the nineteenth century. The consumption of alcohol by Muslims was also proscribed within the Ottoman Empire, but again elite groups indulged in the private consumption of wine, beer, and raki, especially after European drinks became symbols of modernity in the reign of Sultan Abdulmecid (1839–61); by the twentieth century all classes of the Empire were drinking alcohol, especially in the port cities and other cosmopolitan areas of the Empire (Georgeon 2002; Fuhman 2014; Mathee 2014). Fonder suggests that British troops encouraged shifting consumption habits in Imperial Cairo from 1882 (2013). In Nigeria and North Africa Europeans observed some Muslim drinking in the first half of the twentieth century, especially of African drinks not proscribed by the Koran (Pan 1975: 25); similar arguments were employed to justify the use of *raki* in Turkey.

In Africa both aggressive imperialists like Cecil Rhodes and more sympathetic temperance campaigners agreed that Africans had to be kept away from strong drink (Pan 1975). Sales of European spirits to Africans were banned throughout most of Africa from 1919, but the general principle also informed local legislation (Parry 1992). Of course the sale of alcohol to African Americans was strictly controlled in the southern states of the US at the start of our period (Herd 1991), and sales to Native Americans were effectively prohibited from the start of the nineteenth century (Ishii 2008). In Canada questions of ‘race’ continued to trouble the post-Prohibition beer parlour and Aboriginal people were not allowed to drink in public until 1951 (Campbell 2001; Heron 2003; Malleck 2012, and this volume); in Australia Aboriginal drinking was controlled from the 1830s (Brady 2019).

Drinking occasions

In many places established drinking customs persisted alongside newer expectations of everyday drinking. In Wales this meant drinking was associated with festivals, the end of periods of communal working, rites of passage like weddings or funerals, secular events like auctions and elections, and the meetings of friendly and literary societies, or of political groups like the Chartists (Lambert 1983). Despite pressure from Methodist reformers these recreations clung on in the new industrial towns of south Wales.

In pre-revolutionary Russia alcohol had a central role in village life, taking the form of “‘ceremonial’ binge drinking associated with church festivals, rites of passage, family celebrations, and any special occasions in the life of the rural community” (Transchel 2006: 15). There were twelve main church festivals, each of which might require three to five days of drinking, as well as local festivals. Weddings required enormous amounts of vodka; elections and work parties (*pomochi*) were also opportunities for drinking. In contrast, regular individual drinking was rare and considered anti-social, and drinking on non-ceremonial days only became possible with the arrival of taverns and a cash economy. In 1911 one observer distinguished between the two worlds of ‘Mr. Harvest’ and ‘Mr. Capital’: sporadic peasant drinking and regular proletarian consumption (22). However, these worlds overlapped where households engaged in both farm and urban wage work, leading to a hybrid ‘third culture’ of drinking; in a tavern in Bogorodsk in 1859 the men met there most days, while women would only join them for communal holiday drinking.

There is also extensive evidence for the “near ubiquity of alcohol in rituals in nineteenth-century East African societies” (Willis 2002: 61). The rites of passage of Maasai men were associated with alcohol, while older men required alcohol for blessings. While alcohol was almost ubiquitous in Nyakyusa rituals, its use marked individual and domestic crises, household sickness or poor weather rather than moments of transition. In the Gold Coast palm wine played an

important role in organizing work parties, marking rites of passage, and establishing the patronage of older men (Akyeampong 1996).

In many industrializing societies the opportunity to drink was greatly extended by cash and new work rhythms. Alcohol consumption began to be understood as a 'right' or custom rather than an occasional 'treat'. In France drink was beginning to be thought of as "not simply a consolation, but part of an acceptable standard of living" by the 1890s (Prestwich 1988: 23). This attitude can also be detected in drink riots and 'strikes' (or boycotts) in several countries. State control of alcohol made drink a political issue everywhere but in these cases it was very clearly a question of custom. In Russia before emancipation, Western India in the 1880s and the North German *Bierkrieg* of 1909 drinkers swore oaths of sobriety and boycotted drinksellers to demand lower prices and defend their standard of living (Roberts 1984; Transchel 2006; Colvard 2013).

In France regular drinking was perhaps encouraged by the new habit of taking an *aperitif* before meals, made affordable because of the cheapness of spirits made with industrial alcohol (Prestwich 1988: 93). Across the Channel many of the rituals recorded by John Dunlop in 1839 may have developed in small workshops and artisan trades well before 1850, while others may have been much more recent; some were associated with rites of passage and others with labor or craft customs. Alcohol was also a central part of everyday life in Germany. Roberts' description of a typical 'drinking day' starts with spirits taken on the way to work; some workers would then drink through the day and most drank with the meals they took at work. Additional drinking might celebrate birthdays and holidays, specific craft traditions, or new workmates; the worker would then go home, often via taverns and bars (1984: 46-7). The drinking day could be long, though most of it involved small amounts. However, the appointment of a factory inspectorate from the 1870s, the availability of alternative beverages, and better conditions for workers encouraged many to stop or reduce on-the-job drinking, especially in the best-paid and most-unionized trades.

In Chicago the drinking day began with early morning ‘bracers’ for men on their way to work; at lunchtime, taverns served diners and growler rushers (children bringing pails in to be filled with beer); in the afternoon women or children bought drink to take home; business would be brisk from the later afternoon (Duis 1983). Saloons also played an important role in “the daily cycle of life on the skids” for bums and flophouse dwellers, from the dawn ‘eye opener’ to the free lunch (89). By the twentieth century the drinking day was much drier in many places; in Bolton, England in the 1930s most pubs were virtually empty during the middle of the day, except at weekends (Mass-Observation 1943).

Drinking rhythms were structured by payday, which offered short-lived prosperity. In Paris by 1870, however, there were more cases of public drunkenness on *saint-lundi* (‘Holy Monday’) than Saturday, which was payday for most workers (Haine 1996). This pattern may have reflected greater police tolerance on Saturdays, but Monday night café visits were still very popular with workers. The *pulquerías* of Mexico City were busy on ‘Saint Monday’, but María Áurea Toxqui Garay suggests that this marked the end of the weekend, not the most drunken day of the week (2008). Similarly, in nineteenth-century Russia ‘Blue Monday’ (absenteeism or ‘hair of the dog’ drinking at work) was common in the mining and metal industries, and as a result mines might remain closed after the weekend (Transchel 2006). In England this structured working week seems to have predated industrialization, at least in towns and cities, and ‘Saint Monday’ was well established before 1850 as “a fixed arrangement and not merely a by-product of weekend inebriation” (Harrison 1986: 167, 140).

[FIGURE 2.3 HERE]

Mass-Observation's study of Worktown (Bolton) drinking in the 1930s demonstrated that pubs were busiest on Saturday, the day after payday (1943). Patrons drank faster on Fridays and Saturdays, with the slowest drinking being recorded midweek. The last hour of the night and the last day of the week were the times for heaviest drinking. Similarly, the pub was the last place visited by Bolton workers leaving Blackpool at the end of their holidays. Many left drunk, laden with bottles for the journey so they could make the most of the last moments of their holiday (Cross 1990).

Of course, drinking rhythms were also shaped by regulations and licensing. Perhaps the most obvious example from this period is the 'six o'clock swill' of Australia and New Zealand, introduced as a result of temperance pressure and wartime patriotism in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania from 1915. Queensland and Western Australia allowed pubs to open until 8pm and 9pm respectively from 1916, and controls were relaxed in Tasmania in the 1920s and in New South Wales in the 1950s, but six o'clock closing remained in force in Victoria and South Australia until the 1960s and in New Zealand it lasted for half a century between 1917-67 (Blainey 2003). With only an hour between the end of work and closing time, everything that got in the way of drinking was removed and Australian pubs became mere drinking environments. This had been the reformers' intention, but consumption levels hardly changed, though drinkers "drank most of it between five and six o'clock in the evening and the rest from bottles they took home" (Phillips 1980: 251).

Elsewhere drink became more, not less, central to the workplace. The South African 'tot system', by which African agricultural workers received part of their pay in wine, dated from the eighteenth century. In the Western Cape at the end of the nineteenth century workers received up to two quarts each weekday, or a bottle a day at the weekend; "work time came to be marked by

the intervals between the pouring of the tot” (Scully 1992: 59) and drinking at work symbolized domination and repression.

Finally, it is worth remembering that the rhythms of local drinking cultures were affected by other temporalities beyond those of work. In late nineteenth-century Britain football drew crowds away from pubs on Saturday afternoons, making it a rival in terms of the weekly rhythms of masculine working-class life (Collins and Vamplew 2002: 15). In many places shifts in working-class spending meant that drinking customs had to co-exist with rival claims to the time of workers and their families.

Drinking places and practices

The consumption of alcohol is often closely related to the places in which it is consumed; in this way public and private drinking are practices as much as locations. Ray Oldenburg’s suggestion that drinking locations represent one kind of ‘third place’ between work and home (1989) echoes Perry Duis’ description of saloons as “semi-public city spaces” between the public and the private (1983: 3). For Oldenburg the German-American lager beer garden offers “the model, par excellence, of the third place” in our period (1989: 103). It was more inclusive than the saloon, with family-friendly amenities, though it could not compete with the saloon, which was cheaper to run and more profitable. Still, a late nineteenth-century American sociologist recognized that the saloon “unites the many ones into a common whole which we call society ... and intemperance is but its accident” (Moore 1897: 4) and historians have tended to agree that drinking places could be collective social spaces. In Tsarist Russia “the tavern took on some of the characteristics of the commune” (Transchel 2006: 28); the chapel and the pub were the ‘twin foci of most nineteenth-century Welsh communities’ (Lambert 1983: 13); and in Germany “the tavern was ... the locus of working-class social life” (Roberts 1984: 117). Surveying Bolton’s pubs in the 1930s, Mass-

Observation concluded that the pub was stronger than rival collective institutions like churches, political parties, and the cinema (1943). Drinking places could be ‘great good places’, then, though not everywhere; in the cities of the Ottoman Empire, coffeehouses were symbols of the public sphere, not the taverns operated by non-Muslims (Mathee 2014).

While these sentiments obviously reflected genuine feelings of commensality and belonging, this was not universal; women were only likely to join male regulars at the Russian tavern on weekends and feast days, for example (Transchel 2006). In fact drinking places made the stratification of societies highly visible, and this was sometimes seen to be a positive thing. What Willis calls “mixed drinking” – bringing together drinkers of different genders, age groups, classes, and ethnicities together – was a cause for concern beyond East Africa (2002: 10). In Victorian Britain dram and beershops were associated with working-class drinkers (Jennings 2007); and in France “the traditional *assommoir*, run by husband and wife, might count a few tables by the fire” while “elegant boulevards boasted of cafés that could serve several hundred people” (Prestwich 1988: 80). There were around 30,000 cafés in Belle Époque Paris, providing plenty of variety for every occupation, taste, and political affiliation (Haine 1996: 4).

We should also remember that these were commercial as well as communal sites (Powers 1998). The bar or counter, common to many drinking places around the world, was also found in other nineteenth-century retail spaces; its adoption may have been a pragmatic response to the problem of serving crowds of customers quickly (Gorham and Dunnett 1950; Girouard 1975). Premises with a bar but little or no seating characterized a ‘drink and go’ culture of ‘perpendicular drinking’, but this might reflect a mobile urban culture where drinkers circulated quickly between premises, or deliberate attempts to discourage lingering while improving surveillance of a single open space (Kneale 1999).

British pubs of this period have received a good deal of attention (Harrison 1973; Girouard 1975; Kenna and Mooney 1983). The best recent work is that of Paul Jennings (1995, 2007), supplemented by studies associated with English Heritage, now Historic England (Brandwood *et al* 2004; Fisher and Preston 2015), the work of Alistair Mutch (2003, 2004, 2006, 2008), David Beckingham's research on Liverpool and Glasgow (2017a, 2017b, 2017c), and studies of 'improved houses' (Greenaway 1998; Gutzke 2005; Fisher and Preston, 2019). British drinking places catered to many different types of drinkers. This can be seen in the differences between the pub and the beerhouse, introduced before this period in an attempt to liberalize drinking. In Wales the beerhouse was more like a cottage than a pub, and across England and Wales licensing authorities sought to either improve or close beerhouses (Lambert 1983; Jennings 2007). Mutch notes that where Manchester was dominated by beerhouses, Liverpool's pubs were larger and grander, due to the economic geography of the two cities, the attitudes of their magistrates, and the management of Liverpool's pubs (2003).

[FIGURE 2.4 HERE]

These differences could also be found within drinking places. Open plan rooms, associated with the 'gin palaces' of early nineteenth-century London, became less popular by 1850, as pubs divided into smaller compartments, snugs, and more comfortable lounges and saloons (Gorham and Dunnett 1950; Girouard 1975). In cities this was encouraged by "the ineradicable class-consciousness of the English", as "customers had to be segregated from each other" (Gorham and Dunnett 1950: 26). In Hackney in the 1890s G. H. Duckworth, one of Charles Booth's social investigators, noted that pub spaces reflected

“The separation of the classes. It is the object of the publican to separate his customers as far as possible into their social grades. That is why there are so many divisions ... different articles are sold at the saloon bar than are at the public bar & not the same thing at a higher price” (1897: 199).

For much of the twentieth century many British pubs offered ‘public’ and ‘lounge’ bars, respectively more working-class and masculine, and middle-class and feminine. While the lack of table service in many British pubs still puzzles international visitors, there is evidence for it, at least in lounges, in pubs in London, the Midlands, and northern England until the second half of the twentieth century (Gorham 1949; Brandwood *et al* 2004).

After 1900 temperance pressure encouraged a general reduction in the numbers of licenses, which tended to improve the quality of the surviving stock of British pubs. Many breweries played an active part in this process (Gutzke 2005). ‘Improved’ pubs were better-run, more hygienic, and easier to supervise, designed to appeal to women as well as to men. Seating was encouraged, and gardens, food and entertainment provided alternative attractions to drink (Fisher and Preston 2018, 2019), though these features could also be found in the altogether livelier ‘roadhouse’ (Gutzke and Law 2017; Law 2009). In Britain improvement culminated in the premises operated by the Central Control Board during the First World War, which will be considered in a moment.

Irish pubs resembled British ones, though gin palaces were rare outside Belfast and Dublin. However the absence of ‘ties’, the relationships by which brewers owned or managed pubs in return for the sale of their beer, meant that Irish pubs remained far more independent and local in character; many were converted homes or shops (Malcolm 1998). In France the liberalization of licensing from 1880 led to a great increase in the number of *debîts de boissons* (drinksellers, for consumption on and off the premises). “Urban, working-class, and dominated by the still”

(Prestwich 1988: 17), they sold brandy, absinthe, and other spirits made with industrial alcohol. These drinks, much cheaper than wine, became a staple of working-class French drinking (Prestwich 1988). Haine's excellent study of the Parisian café provides a detailed appraisal of its importance for the city's working class (1996). A similar picture prevailed in Germany, where liberal licensing laws encouraged taverns to open and forced them to become more attractive in competition with one another. At the same time the growth of an associational world of clubs, societies, and family entertainments within taverns and beer gardens "disciplined drinking behaviour by subordinating it to other goals and purposes" (Roberts 1984: 117). Russian taverns, state-owned as part of the Tsarist vodka monopoly, did not prosper until the spread of a cash economy in the nineteenth century, when they rapidly became important, and increasingly masculine, social spaces (Transchel 2006).

[FIGURE 2.5 HERE]

There are rich histories of African drinking places during this century, largely because colonial states sought to suppress or to profit from them, and because developing cash economies dissolved restrictions on who could drink which drinks, making these sites of conflict and anxiety. In British East Africa, the Uganda Liquor Ordinance of 1917 controlled production, sale, and consumption of all alcohol, 'native' or otherwise, while in the Buganda kingdom *ebirabo* (clubs for the sale of local drinks) were banned (Willis 2002). This was reversed in the 1930s and *ebirabo* were encouraged as regulated outlets, as a source of income for local 'native' authorities. In Kenya privately-owned beerhalls were encouraged after Mombasa's prospered; in 1940 white Kenyan employers were allowed to establish beerhalls as long as profits were for the benefit of Africans (138). These specialized commercial urban sites quickly became important. "In 1940 most of the

alcohol consumed by Africans in East Africa was drunk at or near people's homes, and much of it was still being drunk without payment", but "by the late 1950s, much – probably most – drinking across the region took place in urban beerhalls or rural clubs" (141). This was driven by a shift from state monopolies to private clubs, benefiting both colonial states and local entrepreneurs.

In Gold Coast in the late 1920s, restrictive liquor laws – higher import duties, half as many licenses, shorter opening hours, and above all a crackdown on *akpeteshie* or local gin – had serious consequences for "a vibrant popular culture ... of drinking bars, popular music ('highlife') and comic opera (concert), that was emerging in urban Gold Coast" (Akyeampong 1996: 221-2). These bars were an integral part of an urbanizing, developing society, important for both the elite and the working class, and remained important after independence.

In Southern Africa drinking places were closely bound up with the labor migration, urbanization, and development that followed the mining boom of the 1870s and 1880s. Employers sought to maximize efficiency by licensing or prohibiting sources of alcohol, by establishing closed compounds (some 'dry', others provided with their own company beerhalls), or by adopting the 'tot' system (Van Onselen 1976). "Employers and local authorities in towns and cities combined not to destroy the liquor trade but to seize control of it, shape it to their needs, and profit from it" (Ambler & Crush 1992: 18). By the start of the early twentieth century the domestic production and consumption of 'native' drinks was limited to the countryside, and in towns only state-licensed or state-owned outlets could sell them.

We have excellent studies of drinking places in the US, Canada, and Central America for this period. The US saloon adapted to different political, social, and economic contexts. Both Boston and Chicago adopted a policy of 'high license' – making licenses expensive in order to reduce their number and drive out marginal proprietors – but this had different outcomes (Duis 1983). In Boston nearly three quarters of all licenses were for 'restaurants' by 1895, though many

offered limited food; these cheap ‘barroom-restaurants’ drove out grocery stores, especially in tenement areas, and this brought about a subtle but significant “transition from private to public drinking, from grocery store to common victualler” (30). Boston sought to limit the number of saloons, which meant that there was no incentive for their owners to improve their quality. Chicago adopted a more laissez-faire approach that encouraged competition for patrons; attractions like billiard tables flourished, but not in Boston, and the provision of lavish free lunches sometimes drove saloons into bankruptcy. The World’s Columbian Exposition (Chicago World’s Fair) of 1893 prompted a ‘beer war’ as 700 new saloons opened to meet the anticipated demand.

Canadian cities were well stocked with legal and illegal taverns by 1850 (Cafferky 2003b). ‘Joe Beef’s’, an infamous late nineteenth-century working-class tavern on Montreal’s waterfront, provided patrons with information, entertainment, public debates on topical matters, accommodation for up to 200 men, and emergency funds to help support regulars in trouble; the proprietor also actively campaigned for better medical and employment prospects for the city’s working class (DeLottinville 1981-82). However, liquor control would transform Canadian drinking places after the First World War, as we will see in a moment.

Pulque, a fermented drink made from the sap of the maguey plant, was popular in Mexico long before European contact. Studies of the *pulquerías* of Mexico City note that the liberal administrations of the second half of the nineteenth-century prohibited new businesses within middle-class areas, imposed strict regulations on *pulquerías*, and forced improvements on them (Toxqui Garay 2008; Toner 2011, 2015). The microgeographies of these places attracted a good deal of discussion and concern, as they did in Britain, and for part of this period the authorities were keen to discourage loitering by removing seats and tables and placing the bar counter just inside the doors to the street. Regulations forbade customers staying any longer than was necessary to finish their drinks and specified a minimum distance between *pulquerias* (Toxqui Garay 2008).

Comparing these premises with Mexico City's other drinking places – *vinaterías*, largely selling spirits, and *café*s, which were elite spaces – Deborah Toner concludes that “popular and elite drinking places operated as microcosms of the contests over Mexico City's social space in the nineteenth century” (2011: 27).

[FIGURE 2.6 HERE]

The regulation of drinking places was clearly significant in shaping drinking cultures (Valverde 2003b). From 1865 ‘Gothenburg’ or ‘disinterested management’ ideas spread from Scandinavia to Britain, to Britain's African colonies, and - after Prohibition – to North America, arguing that commercial motivations encouraged drinking. The first British outlets at the turn of the century were run for the benefit of investors (Gutzke 2003), inspiring the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) to borrow their ideas during the First World War. The Board purchased, improved and ran local pubs and built new ones, first near the Royal Small Arms Factory in North London, and then at Cromarty Firth, Carlisle, and Gretna Green (Nicholls 2009; Duncan 2013; White 2014). This brief wartime experiment was to prove influential in terms of ‘improved’ pub design.

A similar system had already been implemented in Southern Africa in 1909 when Durban's municipal government instituted a local monopoly on making and selling beer to fund municipal improvement, encouraging similar schemes in Southern Rhodesia and Johannesburg (La Hausse 1992; Parry 1992; Rogerson 1992) and municipal beerhalls in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Mombasa, and elsewhere (Willis 2002; 2003a). South African beerhalls were deliberately “bleak functional buildings with little character and no charm” (Ambler and Crush 1992: 25) and Johannesburg's beerhalls were not popular with drinkers (Rogerson 1992). In the 1930s, “in the clubs of Nairobi and Mombasa, with their brick and wire-mesh walls, turnstiles, and ‘stalwart attendants,’ the

cheerless colonial vision of urban drinking as a physiological function came closest to realization” (Willis 2002: 129). In their determination to provide the bare minimum beyond access to alcohol, African beerhalls resembled the ‘pure drinking environments’ of Britain, though the latter were shaped only by lightly-regulated market forces. In Canada after Prohibition, many provinces experimented with closely regulated privately-owned public ‘beer parlours’, designed to minimize the corrupting effect of alcohol and improve the conduct of their patrons (Malleck 2012; this volume). These resembled less appealing versions of the improved or state-controlled British pub.

Alcohol could of course be found in many other leisure places in this period. Some, like British singing or dancing saloons, or twentieth-century roadhouses (Law 2009) grew out of pubs. Others, like music halls or members’ clubs – both working-class and aristocratic – were effectively parallel institutions. While clubs, political organizations, and societies had met in drinking places around the world for centuries, not everyone wanted to drink. In Britain the Club and Institute Union was initially set up to support ‘dry’ clubs, though from 1865 it accepted that clubs could opt to sell beer to members (Tremlett 1987; Cherrington 2012). Club numbers grew slowly at first, picked up after 1900, and boomed after 1945. From 1872 they were exempt from licensing but after 1902 had to register with licensing authorities. Drink was cheap because clubs did not need to make a profit, but the attraction of most clubs seems to have been the entertainment and sociability they offered, rather than low prices. Women could only attend as guests until full membership was extended to them in 2007.

Gentlemen’s clubs were also sites for masculine homosociality, but drink played a much more important role than it did in working men’s clubs. However excessive intoxication was frowned upon as “a serious breach of gentlemanly status”, and members were forced to resign if matters got out of hand (Milne-Smith 2011: 79). Similarly homely yet masculine, the clubs of

British East Africa were often much less well-behaved, and many seem to have made the most of the looser regulations that surrounded them (Willis 2002).

Of course other kinds of retail site could be licensed for consumption of alcohol on the premises. The liberal licensing of Second Empire Paris encouraged shops of many kinds to offer drink to their customers, particularly women (Prestwich 1988). In Ireland the spirit grocer's Licence (1791 – 1910) allowed grocers to sell a limited amount of spirits for consumption off the premises; critics claimed it was widely abused, particularly by women, who stayed to drink in the shops (Kearns 1996). British women do seem to have been shop drinkers but as yet there is little published research on this topic.

As home brewing became increasingly rare in many places the sale of alcoholic drinks for consumption off the premises connected drinking places and homes. In Chicago 'rushing the growler' made the saloon an extension of the home (Duis 1983). In Britain a license for 'off' sales represented a major source of income for small grocers; in Leicester they defended their customers against teetotal criticism, arguing that it was better that they came to them than to the pubs and in doing so shopkeepers "assumed the role of stewards of working-class respectability" (Hosgood 1989: 453).

Of course an unknown amount of alcohol was drunk 'nowhere in particular', *i.e.* not in homes, workplaces, or specialized drinking places. In rapidly urbanizing societies the provision of drinking places fell behind population growth even where alcohol regulation was liberal. In Russia a brief ban on new establishments exacerbated this problem in the 1890s; street drinking increased near off-sale premises and canny entrepreneurs set up stands hiring out drinking glasses (Transchel 2006). The same reforms sought to separate drink from food by prohibiting the sale of food in drink stores, but were confounded by drinkers smuggling vodka into *traktirs* (cheap eating places)

(Herlihy 2002). Later prohibitions on public drinking in the USSR were ignored by workers who drank in parks, dining halls, cooperatives, and workers' clubs (Transchel 2006).

Of course there were many illicit drinking places too. In Boston in 1884 there were perhaps 1,300 unlicensed and 2,808 licensed places; in Chicago these figures were around 1,500 and 3,500 respectively (Duis 1983: 62-63). It seems likely that 'high license' fostered these illicit 'Blind Pigs', as did lax policing. Chicago's lakefront meant it was possible to operate bumboats - floating saloons - outside the territorial limit, and drinkers were also served by wagons selling bottles, some illegally. In Wales unlicensed premises were known as 'jerries' (Lambert 1983). In many other places - Ireland, Scotland, the US, and Africa (West, Southern and East) - unlicensed drink shops were more likely to be called 'shebeens', a word borrowed from the Irish. In Africa it was these shebeens that prompted prohibitions on African production and sale of drink, and ultimately state monopolies and municipal beerhalls.

Conclusions

We have considered evidence for how much alcohol was consumed, its drinkers, the occasions on which they drank, and the places in which they drank it between 1850 and 1950. While there may be some evidence for a shift away from 'traditional' drinking, it does appear that rhythms and practices that we associate with industrialization were in existence long before this period, and that elements of past custom survived throughout this century. The picture is complicated even further by imperialism and by the global exchange of drinks and drinking practices it fostered. It is possible that the spread of cash economies made it possible to make and drink alcohol more freely, and distilled spirits did become much cheaper. However despite this, it seems that average consumption fell in many countries in the twentieth century, due to a mix of changing habits and government

controls. It does also seem to be true that alcohol was chased out of workplaces, or at least urban ones, meaning that specialized drinking places became more important.

Given that past experiences of drinking are often drawn upon in discussions of contemporary alcohol policy, it is important that we recognize that consumption in this period was not, on the whole, shaped by powerful logics, and that countries took rather different paths – we might compare France and the Scandinavian nations, for example. A better sense of the reasons behind these outcomes would help us make better sense of contemporary debates about alcohol consumption.

Table 2.1: Alcohol Consumption, liters of absolute alcohol per capita, 1844-5 to 1954

<i>Country</i>	1844-45	1861-70	1881-90	1901-05	1919-22	1937	1954
USA	3.8	4.9	4.9	5.7	2.3	4.2	6.8
Canada			3.0		2.3	2.3	4.2
UK	4.2	9.8	10.6	11.0	6.1	4.2	6.4
Denmark			10.2	8.3	3.0	2.3	3.0
Finland				1.9	0.4	1.5	1.9
Norway			2.3	2.6	1.9	2.3	2.3
Sweden	14.0	5.3	4.5	4.9	3.0	3.4	3.8
Netherlands			6.4	5.7	3.0	1.5	1.9
Germany			8.7	9.8	2.6	4.2	3.8
France	14.8	14.4	16.3	21.6	17.8	21.6	20.1
Italy			13.2	15.5	13.6	9.8	12.9
Poland						1.1	3.0

(adapted from Rorabaugh, Table A2.4, 1979: 239)

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