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Beans and Beer: Analyzing the Transition of English Coffeehouses and Taverns from the 17th to the 18th Century in Terms of Public Sphere

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BEANS AND BEER: ANALYZING THE TRANSITION OF ENGLISH COFFEEHOUSES AND TAVERNS FROM THE 17th TO THE 18th CENTURY IN TERMS OF PUBLIC SPHERE

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Abstract: This paper examines the transition of English coffeehouses and taverns from the 17th to the 18th century, focusing on their role within the public sphere. The 17th century witnessed a surge in social interaction and information exchange in Europe, particularly in England where the Glorious Revolution broadened the avenues for free expression. This period saw significant infrastructural improvements and economic growth in London, drawing a diverse populace engaged in various industries. Coffeehouses emerged during this era, inspired by traditional drinking establishments like alehouses, inns, and taverns, and soon became integral to metropolitan life. This study utilizes primary accounts from Samuel Pepys and Dr. Alexander Hamilton to explore how these venues served as crucial platforms for social interaction across different social strata, thus contributing to the development of the public sphere. The paper argues that while these establishments initially facilitated diverse social integration, the 18th century saw a shift towards more segmented interaction based on economic, professional, or social similarities, which diluted the robustness of the public sphere. This transition is analyzed through the contrasting dynamics in these establishments, as documented in Pepys' and Hamilton's writings, reflecting broader social and cultural shifts in England during the transition from a predominantly rural to a more urbanized society. The findings suggest that the evolution of coffeehouses and taverns from inclusive to more exclusive venues mirrors the changes in the English public sphere, highlighting a gradual decline in its inclusivity and representativeness.

The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe witnessed a dramatic shift in the magnitude of social interaction and information exchange as technological innovation and novel ideologies abounded. In England, for instance, the Glorious Revolution² culminated in social, political and economic enfranchisement that subsequently engendered wider avenues for free expression.³ While England was still a rural-majority country, its seventeenth-century infrastructural improvements and

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² The Glorious Revolution was a series of events from 1688–89 that led to the deposition of King James II and the empowerment of the English Parliament. Changes in Parliament were seen through the institution of the Bill of Rights that would grant the body rights such as the freedom of speech and the right to independently meet.

³ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Oliver Cromwell," by Maurice Ashley and John S. Morrill, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Oliver-Cromwell>.

rising employment opportunities enabled the exponential growth of London.⁴ With industries that required skills developed across the spectrum of educational backgrounds, London brought together a diverse population of people united under a common ambition to seize opportunity.⁵ Inspired by the hospitality of the alehouses, inns, and taverns that dominated the earlier two centuries, coffeehouses, once established, evolved into a staple of metropolitan life.⁶ Together, drinking-houses and coffeehouses acted as the loci of exchange.⁷ By contextualizing the origins and dynamics of these spaces through the lenses of Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) and Dr. Alexander Hamilton (1712 -1756), this paper seeks to understand how both environments contributed to the growing public sphere by bringing together men from various social positions. Commercial-recreational spaces were originally oriented to bridge the private lives of their patrons by establishing areas open to all. However, eighteenth-century spaces began to partition guests based on economic, professional, or social likeness. In effect, the strength of the public sphere decreased from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, as the constituents of the “public” became a misrepresentation of society’s population.⁸

In particular, the similarities and differences between coffeehouses and drinking-houses in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will be explored through selections from *Diaries of Samuel Pepys*, which covers experiences in London, and *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton*, which describes his travels in the American northeast. Having chronicled his time in both kinds of establishments, Samuel Pepys allows us to witness a primary interpretation of the social dynamics of drinking-houses and coffeehouses in the second half of the seventeenth century.⁹ A well-off man living in colonial British America, Dr. Alexander Hamilton wrote accounts of the culture of

⁴ Matthew White, “The Rise of Cities in the 18th Century” (British Library, 2009), <https://www.bl.uk/georgian-britain/articles/the-rise-of-cities-in-the-18th-century>.

⁵ White, “The Rise of Cities in the 18th Century.”

⁶ Alejandro Colás, “The Public Sphere: Eating and Drinking in Public” in *Food, Politics, and Society: Social Theory and the Modern Food System*, 1st ed., (University of California Press, 2018), 104.

⁷ Colás, “The Public Sphere,” 98.

⁸ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (The MIT Press, 2001), 1, 7.

⁹ Colás, “The Public Sphere,” 94.

patrons in drinking-houses and coffeehouses that illuminate the shift from between-group to within-group public association over time. While Pepys' and Hamilton's descriptions of coffeehouses and drinking-houses differ in that Pepys focuses on England whereas Hamilton discusses colonial British America, both accounts demonstrate how the social culture of each area was influenced by elite and non-elite hierarchies and the presence of urbanization. This overlap allows these two geographically disparate experiences to offer valid insight into the examination of English drinking-houses and coffeehouses from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰

In comparing how both kinds of establishments developed over time through a historical and anecdotal lens, this paper investigates how English drinking-houses and coffeehouses influenced the development of the public sphere. Imbued with their own particularities and styles, both institutions forged histories of service, hospitality, and commerce to provide a forum where public opinion thrived and, therefore, enriched the public sphere. The turn of the eighteenth century witnessed a reduction in social class mixture in English drinking-houses and coffeehouses that weakened the public sphere.¹¹

Samuel Pepys was born in 1633 near London as the fifth child to working-class parents. He channeled his humble beginnings as a source of inspiration to rise to prominence as a leader in governmental, academic, commercial, and, through his acclaimed *Diaries*, literary fields. Departing from the countryside for education, Pepys attended various preparatory schools in London, eventually matriculating to receive a Bachelor's (1653) and Master's degree (1660) from Magdalene College, in Cambridge, England. In December 1655, he married Elizabeth Marchant, the fifteen-year-old daughter of a French refugee. Through descriptions of his marital relationship, Pepys conveyed the turbulence and disloyalty of this union. In his professional life, Pepys shared a close relationship with Edward Montagu, a naval captain in good standing with Oliver Cromwell, who inducted him into powerful

¹⁰ Valérie Capdeville, "Transferring the British Club Model to the American Colonies: MAP," *Revue De La Société D'études Anglo-Américaines Des XVIIe Et XVIIIe Siècles* (Dec. 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4000/1718.867>.

¹¹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 7.

circles.¹² Because of his diligence and growing network, Pepys was promoted from a clerk to a treasurer in three years. After being sent to Africa to become the commissioner and eventually, treasurer of Tangier, Morocco, a former colony of the British Empire, Pepys sought a more enriching career. Pepys' desire to operationalize his attentiveness and serve the state led him to take a post that would strategize the expenses of the Royal Navy. He guided the English Navy through the trials of the 1665 Great Plague and the 1666 Great Fire of London. Pepys' deteriorating eyesight, as well as his increasingly busy professional life, led him to discontinue his diary in 1669. By then, his writings had covered nine years of his life. In cataloging his personal and work life amidst England's unstable mid-to-late-century political scene, Pepys' *Diaries* are revered by scholars for their encapsulation of everyday life. Pepys does not shy away from topics that might have been considered mundane or self-effacing, thus providing a genuine experience of a middle-aged adult in the burgeoning bourgeois community. Entries of the *Diaries* that feature trips to drinking-houses and coffeehouses allow readers to experience the nature of these communities. In 1673, Pepys' departed from his position to become the secretary to the new commission of the Admiralty. He then continued to rise through the ranks of naval power. Despite his dramatic entanglement in the 1678 murder of London Magistrate Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, for which his framed charges on the death were eventually dropped, Pepys is best remembered for his endeavor to strengthen the British Navy. He died on May 26, 1703, in London.¹³ The selected entries for this paper are his works from 1659 to 1663.

Dr. Alexander Hamilton's experience as a member of the academically and socially affluent class would inform his perception of eighteenth-century British colonial society in the Americas. Alexander Hamilton was born on September 26th, 1712, near Edinburgh, Scotland. Hamilton's

¹² Edward Montagu (1625-1672) was an English admiral who was responsible for bringing "Charles II to England at the Restoration in 1660" and "fought in the Second and Third Dutch Wars" (Morrill). ³ Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) was an English soldier, commander and public official who led the *parti forces* through the English Civil Wars and was named Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland throughout the republican Commonwealth (Ashely and Morrill)

¹³ Samuel Pepys, "Introduction, Entries from 1659-1663," in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A Selection* (Penguin Books: London, 2003).

father's academic prosperity gave Hamilton the opportunity to study and become a doctor. In 1738, Hamilton moved to Annapolis, Maryland, to open a medical practice.¹⁴ Six years later, Hamilton traveled from Maryland to York, Maine. Throughout this journey, Hamilton catalogs the particularities of various colonial American men and women, with a focus on manifestations of class. Through his honest accounts of interactions with others of various social classes, Hamilton reveals the conventional perception of genteel men in the public. Like Pepys' diary, the scholarly value of Hamilton's work is grounded in its authenticity.

Upon returning from Maine, Hamilton founded the Tuesday Society in 1745, a social club in Annapolis, Maryland that served men of wealth and power.¹⁵ Soon after, Hamilton married Margaret Dulany of the prominent Dulany family. Hamilton believed that the status he obtained through marriage made him a competitive candidate for political office. Accordingly, he occupied a seat on the Maryland Assembly from 1753 to 1754. On May 11th, 1756, Hamilton died at the age of 43.¹⁶

English coffeehouses and drinking-houses synthesized private enterprise and public space, and in effect, centralized public sentiment into a public sphere. As early as the thirteenth century, the emergence of trade-capitalism among city-states created cross-class dialogue through the exchange of goods and services. As the localities where trade thrived, cities blossomed into hubs of public knowledge. In effect, an additional commodity arose: news.¹⁷ At this juncture, "publicity" was reengineered to be defined by and serve the public.¹⁸ Wanting to capitalize on the industriousness of its people for its own gain, the state exercised regulation that deepened the tenuous dichotomy between the "nation" and the "people." In this, the forces of the "people" became known as the "public" and, in

¹⁴ Robert Micklus, "The Delightful Instruction of Dr Alexander Hamilton's Itinerarium," *American Literature* 60 (1988): 359.

¹⁵ Capdeville, "Transferring the British Club Model."

¹⁶ Alexander Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1948).

¹⁷ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 16, 20.

¹⁸ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 2.

their common association and opinion, the “public sphere.” While lacking the traditional physicality of other forms of power, the public authority’s strength manifested in its inclusivity, durability, and enormity.¹⁹ Though commerce engendered the idea of the public as an entity of power, the potential for the body to remain powerful required infrastructure to collect and preserve its interactions. Through drinking-houses and coffeehouses, the public was able to sustain its intangible yet potent power.²⁰

The origins of coffeehouses and drinking-houses reflected a popular desire to formulate connection across social groupings and experiences. English drinking-houses heavily influenced the culture of expression of the coffeehouse. Rooted in the tradition of public drinking established in the late Middle Ages, drinking-houses evolved from open private places scattered throughout the country to places that brought together individuals seeking to create wealth beyond the home as a result of the economic opportunity at the close of the Black Death.²¹ Drinking-houses can be separated into two categories: alehouses or taverns, and inns.²² Each type maintains a different social connotation.²³ By coalescing journeyman, day laborers, poor craftsmen, and domestic servants, alehouses garnered a reputation for fostering the unification of less economically enfranchised members of society.²⁴

While inns were reserved for mercantile or professional classes who stayed overnight during business travel, taverns and alehouses serviced people from all layers of the economic hierarchy, and, in consequence, facilitated conversational and commercial exchange between levels of economic status.²⁵ While in New York, for example, Hamilton traveled to an inn where the innkeeper desired him to “walk into a room where some Boston gentleman that would be company for me in my journey

¹⁹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 17-18, 28.

²⁰ Colás, “The Public Sphere,” 98.

²¹ James Van Horn Melton, “Drinking in Public: Taverns and Coffeehouses” in *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 226, 228.

²² Colás, “The Public Sphere,” 101.

²³ Within this paper, taverns and alehouses will be used synonymously, as the primary and secondary literature incorporated into this paper also does so. This adjustment allows for a better comparison between institutions and eras.

²⁴ Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 230.

²⁵ Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 228-229.

there.”²⁶ As a traveler with status through his identity as a doctor, it is reasonable that Hamilton would be an encouraged patron of the inn. By the late-seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, taverns had become the epicenters for political discourse and allegiance formation.²⁷ By the mid-eighteenth century, there were eight thousand alehouses in London, and the value of tavern culture was firmly entrenched in the social fabric of England.

Modeled after the venues Europeans observed in the Ottoman Empire, European coffeehouses first emerged in Venice in 1645. Soon after, the first English coffeehouse was established in Oxford in 1650. London then gained its first establishments, where the same style of mercantilism that enabled the rise of the public sphere would also focus it by encouraging coffeehouse patronage through making coffee itself cheap and plentiful.²⁸ While hosting individual particularities, coffeehouses found common ground in their commitment to facilitating discourse, independent of social status and on material of “common concern.”²⁹ In creating spaces for individuals of all tiers of the period’s conventional social ladder, drinking-houses and coffeehouses facilitated the growth of the public sphere.³⁰

In the seventeenth century, the burgeoning economic and political change enabled the socially inclusive prosperity of English coffeehouses and drinking-houses. As a result of England’s political commitment to mercantilist policies that optimized the capital harvested from the colonies, the social prominence and parties of the market grew.³¹ Having established a space where the different stratas of English society could convene, both coffeehouses and taverns facilitated commercial enterprise. These endeavors, ranging from the exchange of goods to information on trade, reflected the sociological diversity of their patrons. Drinking-houses and coffeehouses were heralded as the locus for political

²⁶ Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 236.

²⁷ Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 232-233.

²⁸ Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 240.

²⁹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 36.

³⁰ Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 226.

³¹ Curtis P. Nettels, “British Mercantilism and the Economic Development of the Thirteen Colonies,” *The Journal of Economic History* 12, no. 2 (1952): 106-107.

organization, discourse, and expression.³² While coffeehouse meetings were known to generate political strategy of particularly anti-royalist parties, political parties frequented drinking-houses to bemoan loss and celebrate party victories or holidays.³³ In the midst of economic and political innovation, coffeehouses and drinking-houses, through their ability to host and incentivize togetherness, allowed for the spread of businesses and philosophies. By inspiring communities of private citizens to publicize and grow their enterprises, coffeehouses and drinking-houses strengthened the public sphere.³⁴

Moreover, the accessibility of printed information due to an increase of journalism in public affairs and the newly-minted ‘press conference’ allowed for the public flourishing of economics and politics.³⁵ Beginning in the early seventeenth-century, political journals were first published at weekly rates and quickly progressed to daily publication by the mid-century. Relying on the private reportage of citizens to generate a selective flow of information, the quasi-public realm of news gave way to mass print.³⁶ Comparing Pepys’ and Hamilton’s encounters with news allows us to analyze the growth of media over the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Pepys’ November 23rd, 1663, diary entry shows the coffeehouse’s ability to centralize news distribution. On this day, “he called at the Coffeehouse, and there by great accident heard that a letter came that our ship was safe to come to Newcastle.” In New York, on September 1st, 1744, Hamilton attended the Hungarian Club, where there was “a deal of news by Boston papers and some private letters, and among other news, that of the Dutch having declared War against the French.”³⁷ While both examples featured newsletters, the regional scope of affairs discussed and the size of circulation were more substantial by the eighteenth

³² Melton, “Drinking in Public,” 243.

³³ Vicki Hsueh, “Intoxicated Reasons, Rational Feelings: Rethinking the Early Modern English Public Sphere,” *The Review of Politics* 78, no. 1 (2016): 31.

³⁴ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 36.

³⁵ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 23.

³⁶ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 20.

³⁷ The Hungarian Club was a social club in New York City that had weak association to the country or culture of Hungary. Per the National Endowment for the Humanities, the club featured “Anglos pretending to be Hungarians” (Shields 2008)

century. While the magnitude of the media had grown, the place for discussion had not. In discovering their era's best form of information, Pepys' and Hamilton's show the strong connection between information distribution and commercial-recreational spaces.

Coalescing the expansion of economic, political, and print markets with the presence of the conventionally elite class, coffeehouses and drinking-houses enabled patrons of all backgrounds the opportunity to satiate their thirst for knowledge. Through providing access to individuals of higher economic or professional status, coffeehouses and drinking-houses engendered the bourgeois class.³⁸ Despite coming from different backgrounds, the bourgeois united under a common objective to thwart the traditional boundaries of class through merit.³⁹ While the bourgeois would frequent coffeehouses and drinking houses, the “buzz” of coffee against the toxicity of alcohol rendered the coffeehouse a more generative place to interact with the higher class.⁴⁰ Through these interactions, social customs of “politeness,” typically reserved for the elite, became mainstream. “Politeness” gave the “non-genteel a patina of gentility,” allowing middle-class and lower-class patrons to participate in traditionally exclusive spaces with respect from higher classes.⁴¹ While in Boston, Hamilton was frustrated when observing how the bourgeois attempted masquerading as the elite by employing verbose language absent value or meaning. Here, Hamilton remarks how he despised the “the middling sort of people” who “even in their common conversation in which their indirect and dubious answers to the plainest and fair questions,” and, instead, preferred guests who are “more polite, mannerly, and hospitable to strangers.”⁴² Because the diffusion of “politeness” encouraged all guests to ascribe to the same reserved conventions, differences of class were masked. This allowed conversations to become more focused on issues and ideas rather than superficial topics aimed at dissecting differences. Pairing

³⁸ Bourgeois can be defined as “the social order that is dominated by the so-called middle class... the term connotes a philistinism, materialism, and a striving concern for respectability” (Ryan)

³⁹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 23.

⁴⁰ Lawrence E. Klein, “Coffeehouse Civility, 1660-1714: An Aspect of Post-Courtly Culture in England,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (1996): 32.

⁴¹ Klein, “Coffeehouse Civility,” 35.

⁴² Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 285.

intellectual curiosity with civility, the bourgeois grew to power and influence, petitioning for themselves and others to have a seat at the political table.⁴³

Frequenting coffeehouses and drinking-houses as well as harnessing his intuition in order to break down barriers to entry in different fields and circles, Pepys' professional progress demonstrates an ideal progression of an individual of the bourgeois. In the November 2nd, 1663, entry in his diary, Pepys writes on how he "went abroad to the Coffeeshouse, and coming back went to Sir W. Pen and there sat with him and Captain Cocke till late at night." Here, Pepys is able to engage in casual conversation with higher ranked members of the Royal Navy, such as William Penn, who soon thereafter founded and presided over the province of Pennsylvania. In gathering with these men, Pepys illustrates the capacity for the bourgeois to capitalize on the liberal communication to become learned or involved in powerful affairs. Although Pepys was already a ranked member of the Royal Navy, his association with Penn by means of the coffeehouse contributed to his success. Likewise, in an earlier diary entry, Pepys' experience in an English tavern demonstrates how that institution similarly worked to build bridges over class. In an early entry from his diary from February 11th, 1659-1660, Pepys met with a friend to go to the "3 Tun tavern and drank half a pint of wine."⁴⁴ Not liking the wine, Pepys travels to an alehouse and later goes to the Guildhall Pub alone. There, he sees a Monk who had just met with the Mayor of London and an Alderman and heard "a shout [he had] never heard in all [of his] life" crying out, "God bless your Excellence." Though Pepys' actions in this example are motivated by the practice of drinking rather than the art of conversation, his small engagement with the higher class shows the mixed social environment of taverns. While Pepys himself might have only glanced in the direction of the mayor and an alderman, the fact that his companion was able to meet them shows the

⁴³ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 28.

⁴⁴ The entry cites two dates due to how from the late 12th century to 1751, the historical and civil or legal year had different beginning states. While the historical year began on January 1st, the civil year began on March 25th. Thus, all dates between January 1st and March 25th possess two end year dates, to accommodate for the historical calendar and civil calendar, where the latter would have an earlier year date. (University of Nottingham)

ease of social interaction between levels of power and influence. Further, while coffeehouses maintained a reputation for sophistication, the casualness of taverns, and the effects of the beverages they served, made for more genuine connection between patrons.⁴⁵ While both establishments maintained diverse sets of social cultures, the unrestrained presence of a higher, more empowered class of individuals enabled information diffusion, the formation of alliances, and the standardization of civic practice that, when adopted by the bourgeois, would enable their individual and collective gain.

As the eighteenth century commenced, coffeehouses and drinking-houses, in beginning to partition their free spaces for specific associations of people, eroded the integrity of the public sphere.⁴⁶ Throughout the seventeenth century, the resurgent popularity of taverns and the emergence of coffeehouses in London engendered a culture of liberal participation and expression, untethered to socioeconomic status. While other venues restricted community participation based on wealth or status, such as universities, coffeehouses and taverns capitalized on a brewing popular sentiment for knowledge and class mobility to allow free exchange and enterprise.⁴⁷ Through enabling motivated members of society to gather through a shared interest in conversation, coffeehouses and drinking-house fostered companionship and allegiances between their patrons. These unions often evolved into formal ideological groups such as political parties, or organizations, such as the London Stock Exchange (1698) and Llyod's of London (1688), an insurance market. These groups were headquartered in John's Coffeehouse in Change Alley and Lloyd's Coffeehouse, respectively.⁴⁸ In his May 28, 1663, diary entry, Pepys goes to "the coffee-house in Exchange Alley" where he "bought a little book 'Counsell to Builders,' by Sir Balth Gerbier."⁴⁹ This excerpt demonstrates the culture of informal buying and selling present in commercial-recreational spaces. The fact that John's Coffeehouse did not have a reputation for the distribution of books or being a participant in the literary

⁴⁵ Melton, "Drinking in Public," 244.

⁴⁶ Melton, "Drinking in Public," 247.

⁴⁷ Melton, "Drinking in Public," 244, 248.

⁴⁸ Melton, "Drinking in Public," 245-246.

⁴⁹ Change Alley was formerly known as Exchange Alley (The City Gent 2019)

scene strengthens the notion that coffeehouses and drinking-houses provided opportunities for market practice, regardless of the type of exchange or whether the exchange adhered to the theme of the venue in question. Yet, as discipline-based associations solidified, a desire to make their communities independent and separate from the public spaces of commercial-recreational spaces grew. This aspiration was rationalized by the logic that creating standards to entry would increase the efficiency of co-operation.⁵⁰ For coffeehouses and tavern owners, annexing additional rooms, reserving pre-existing ones, or trading booths for open tables was a lucrative move as patrons would be attracted to the ability to reap the benefits of hospitality without sacrificing privacy. In New York on September 6th, Hamilton left dinner to go to Waghorn's, a tavern, where after "having sat some time in mixed company, Major Spratt came in" and they "retired into a room by themselves."⁵¹ Electing to remove themselves from "mixed company" to have a more intimate conversation, Hamilton and Major Spratt illustrated the eighteenth century's newfound desire to seek out privacy within a public domain. In the simple insertion of "into a room by ourselves," Hamilton communicates the commonplaceness and ease with which social isolation could be achieved.

Privatization of social gatherings is exhibited by Dr. Hamilton's visits to a Philadelphia coffeehouse and a Baltimore tavern. Coffeehouses, having already drawn a reputation for a particular kind of orderly conduct, more naturally moved towards social specialization and selectivity. Similar to how Johnathan's grew to almost exclusively service stockbrokers, British colonial America satisfied the trend of instituting private space in the coffeehouse.⁵² Upon reaching Philadelphia, Dr. Hamilton was introduced to the Governor's Club at a local coffeehouse by Dr. Phineas Bond.⁵³ The Governor's Club, he learned, was a "society of gentlemen that met at the tavern every night and

⁵⁰ Melton, "Drinking in Public," 248.

⁵¹ Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 310.

⁵² Melton, "Drinking in Public," 248-249.

⁵³ Dr. Phineas Bond (1717-1773) was the founder of the Philadelphia Pennsylvania Hospital and companion to Benjamin Franklin. (Penn University Archives and Record Center)

conversed on various subjects.”⁵⁴ When included among these gentlemen, Hamilton enthusiastically discusses English poems and foreign writers. This experience was a stark contrast to Hamilton’s time at Tradaway’s, a tavern in Baltimore, where the “drunken club was dismissing.” Observing their flippant manner, Hamilton goes on to satirically question “why our heads overloaded with liquor become too ponderous for our heels.”⁵⁵ Juxtaposing the behavioral and intellectual discrepancy of these encounters, it becomes evident that different social groups of the eighteenth century tended to frequent specific venues. Though some people regarded taverns more negatively for their attraction of lower-class guests and propensity for violence, the setting of the Governor's Club proves that taverns could host guests from across the socioeconomic spectrum, even if these groups didn’t amalgamate. While it is notable that the taverns of London going into the eighteenth-century became considered more refined due to a middle-to higher-class patronage, these visits were predicated on the ability to conduct private enterprise in a commercial location, not for the purpose of classless connection. In addition to separation based on professional identity, like at the Governor’s Club, selective organizations also catered to specific professions. In Boston, Hamilton goes to the “Physically Club at the Sun Tavern according to appointment, where we drank punch, smoked tobacco, and talked off sundry physical matters.”⁵⁶ Here “physically” is analogous to “physician.” In entering a tavern for a designated meeting time with a specific group in a common professional association, Hamilton's experience at the Sun Tavern exemplified the eighteenth-century desire to separate communities based on likeness. Overall, Hamilton’s time in taverns throughout British Colonial America demonstrates the eighteenth-century’s organic phenomena and planned practice of creating private dialogue within traditionally public social spaces.

While various organizations, originating from drinking-houses or coffeehouses, experienced success in the eighteenth century, the prosperity of an individual or collection of individuals is not

⁵⁴ Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 191.

⁵⁵ Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 180.

⁵⁶ Hamilton, *Gentleman's Progress*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh, 263.

congruent to the prosperity of the public. Though both continued to be relevant pieces of social infrastructure, the growth of drinking-houses or coffeehouses did not necessarily represent the vitality of the public sphere, even if the institutions are considered to symbolize it. Instead, a strong public sphere is an open public sphere, a culture where all can fairly participate. Size and bargaining power may be important, but liberal incorporation of classes into social communities is a prerequisite for the sphere itself. When places that sustain the public sphere through facilitating consistent between-group interaction adopt measures to encourage or enforce within-group interaction, the public sphere deteriorates.⁵⁷ By comparing Pepys and Hamilton, the transition from between-group to within-group socialization can be examined. Through his ability to navigate between all kinds of people at drinking-houses and coffeehouses, Pepys could formulate relationships that brought him access to opportunities that lasted throughout his professional career. On the other hand, Hamilton characterized these spaces through stereotypes, and participated in them on the basis of having shared attributes with his fellow patrons. In less clear descriptions, while Hamilton's reactions towards the customers of Baltimore may be hyperbolized, the fact that he was able to make generalizations communicates the environment's social homogeneity. Hamilton's entrance into private affiliations within establishments entrenches the postulate that the eighteenth-century moved towards favoring private interactions. The fact that Hamilton founded the Tuesday Club in 1745, a membership-based social club in Annapolis, Maryland directly after his travels expressed in the *Itinerarium* makes clear the increasing cultural relevance of exclusive communities in the eighteenth-century.⁵⁸ In experiencing the public sphere through such an angle, Hamilton was unable to embrace the potential for drinking-houses and coffeehouses to enrich his perspective through cross-class dialogue. Thus, through separating the landscape of space that facilitated open, recreational discussions and association through partial or total separation of groups or types of people, eighteenth-century Europe experienced a deterioration of the public sphere.

⁵⁷ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 37.

⁵⁸ Capdeville, "Transferring the British Club Model."

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