

INTRODUCTION

## Introduction to Intoxicants and Early Modern European Globalization

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What did men and women choose to eat, drink, and smoke in the seventeenth century? The diary of Robert Hooke, the London ‘virtuoso’ and secretary of the Royal Society, gives us some answers and nicely introduces the main themes of this special issue.<sup>1</sup> Writing mostly during the 1670s, Hooke seems to have started his journal in order to record his experience of what physicians at the time called ‘non-naturals’ – the host of external factors like climate, environment, customs and habits, and food and drink that were thought substantively to effect a person’s bodily and mental health on a daily and cumulative basis.<sup>2</sup> While Hooke unsurprisingly proved unable to keep a systematic account of his dietetics (or regimen) for any length of time, he nevertheless recorded much of the minutiae of his daily life for around ten years after 1671. His meticulousness and self-scrutiny have proved invaluable for historians looking to reconstruct the public and intellectual life of Restoration London.<sup>3</sup> But the diary also offers useful insights into the alimentary consumption – and the practices, spaces, and materiality that informed that consumption – of Hooke and his milieu.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry W. Robinson and Walter Adams, eds., *The diary of Robert Hooke 1672–1680* (London, 1968); Felicity Henderson, ‘Unpublished material from the memorandum book of Robert Hooke, Guildhall Library MS’, *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 61 (2007), pp. 129–75.

<sup>2</sup> Steven Shapin, ‘Why was “custom a second nature” in early modern medicine?’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 93 (2019), pp. 1–26, at pp. 4–5; Lotte Mulligan, ‘Self-scrutiny and the study of nature: Robert Hooke’s diary as natural history author’, *Journal of British Studies*, 35 (1996), pp. 311–42.

<sup>3</sup> Steven Shapin, ‘Who was Robert Hooke?’, in Michael Hunter and Simon Schaffer, eds., *Robert Hooke: new studies* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 253–86; Robert Iliffe, ‘Material doubts: Hooke, artisan culture and the exchange of information in 1670s London’, *British Journal for the History of Science*, 28 (1995), pp. 285–318.

<sup>4</sup> Phil Withington, ‘Where was the coffee in early modern England?’, *Journal of Modern History*, 92 (2020), pp. 40–75.

What Hooke records is a remarkable transformation in the diets of affluent and curious Londoners. Over the course of the 1670s, he intermittently took laudanum and opium, until stories of people ‘killed by opium’ began to circulate; he developed a significant and lasting taste for first chocolate and then tea; he flirted with coffee, though quickly took against it, despite using sugar as a sweetener; he consumed quantities of tobacco; and he experimented with cannabis (or ‘bangué’).<sup>5</sup> These were consumables more or less new to England in the seventeenth century. If Hooke had kept his diary sixty years earlier – in the 1610s – he most definitely would not have encountered coffee, tea, or chocolate, but would have heard about (though perhaps not tasted) exotic luxuries like tobacco, sugar, and opiates.<sup>6</sup> Sixty years on – by the 1730s – all six comestibles were part of popular English consumption, having spread socially to the middling and lower sorts and geographically to provincial towns and their hinterlands.<sup>7</sup> They remain, for better or worse – and legally or illicitly – a fundamental and defining feature of modern diets and tastes.<sup>8</sup> But if Hooke and his milieu were in the vanguard of nothing less than a dietary revolution, his predilection for these new substances did not mean that he turned his back on more traditional intoxicants, in the form of alcohols. On the contrary, he not only continued to enjoy various wines and distilled spirits but also set about acquiring the connoisseurship requisite to his growing personal affluence and status.<sup>9</sup> In the meantime, he drank beers, ales, and ciders on a regular and not always medicinal basis.<sup>10</sup>

Contemporaries were aware of the unusual power and attractions of these comestibles, even if they were not always sure how to classify them. For taxation purposes, for example, early political economy placed tobacco and caffeine alongside alcohols (‘liquors’) and sugar and opium as groceries and

<sup>5</sup> For rumours about opium, see Robinson and Adams, *Diary of Robert Hooke*, p. 52. See also *ibid.*, pp. 8–9, 11, 19–20, 42, 135, 203, 220; Henderson, ‘Unpublished material’, pp. 136–7, 144, 146–51. For cannabis, see *Philosophical experiments and observations of the late eminent Dr Robert Hooke* (London, 1726), pp. 210–12. Thanks to Dr Vera Keller for the reference about bangué.

<sup>6</sup> Brian Cowan, *The social life of coffee: the emergence of the British coffeehouse* (New Haven, CT, 2005); Markman Ellis, *The coffee house: a cultural history* (London, 2004); Markman Ellis, Richard Coulton, and Matthew Mauger, *Empire of tea: the Asian leaf that conquered the world* (London, 2015); Nuala Zahedieh, *The capital and the colonies: London and the Atlantic economy 1660–1700* (Cambridge, 2010); Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history* (New York, NY, 1986); Alexander Taylor, ‘Tobacco retail licences and state formation in early modern England and Wales’, *Economic History Review*, 72 (2019), pp. 433–58, at pp. 440, 447; Patrick Wallis, ‘Exotic drugs and English medicine: England’s drug trade, c. 1550–1800’, *Journal of Social History*, 25 (2011), pp. 20–46, at pp. 21–6.

<sup>7</sup> S. D. Smith, ‘Accounting for taste: British coffee consumption in historical perspective’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 27 (1996), pp. 183–214; Woodruff D. Smith, ‘From coffeehouse to parlour: the consumption of coffee, tea and sugar in north-western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’, in Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Andrew Sherratt, eds., *Consuming habits: drugs in history and anthropology* (London, 1996), pp. 148–64; Jon Stobart, *Sugar and spice: grocers and groceries in provincial England, 1650–1830* (Oxford, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> David T. Courtwright, *Forces of habit: drugs and the making of the modern world* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), pp. 19–22.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Robinson and Adams, *Diary of Robert Hooke*, pp. 311–12, 329, 334, 341, 344.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 165, 215, 247, 265, 272.

drugs.<sup>11</sup> Like alcohols, all these new substances were marketed as medicines, while also being recognized as potentially pleasurable and desirable in their own right. They could be consumed usefully to balance and reorder the humours, vapours, and spirits of the early modern body; and they lubricated social interactions and stimulated transformations of consciousness. Viewed as ‘necessities’ to be taken moderately and appropriately, they also threatened excessive, dangerous, and possibly compulsive consumption. Their ‘addictive’ qualities have been highlighted subsequently, with the most authoritative recent accounts of their early modern and modern histories labelling them ‘drugs’.<sup>12</sup>

As a category of historical analysis, however, ‘drugs’ has problems. It carries an enormous amount of modern ideological baggage that obscures the range of functions and meanings ascribed to these substances before the twentieth century. Moreover, because it has also come to refer to a particular subset of substances that generally excludes, for example, alcohols and caffeine, it makes cross-commodity comparisons and analyses difficult. The term preferred here to describe the alcohols, tobacco, sugar, opiates, coffee, tea, and chocolate encountered by Hooke is ‘intoxicant’. This works as an umbrella term to capture the range of labels and names referring to substances possessing the immanent potential to ‘intoxicate’ (what early moderns understood to mean as ‘befuddle, make drunk’); but it does so without either diminishing the many and varied social and dietetic functions associated with these substances or automatically reproducing modern pejorative preconceptions.<sup>13</sup>

‘Intoxicant’ describes in the first instance fermented and distilled liquors of local, national, and European provenance: what might be styled (from an early modern European perspective like that of Hooke) ‘old’ intoxicants. This is not to suggest that this repertoire of beverages was in any sense static. Techniques of beer production were fully imported into England from the Low Countries during the sixteenth century, instigating a process of commercialization that was well advanced by the 1670s and continued apace thereafter.<sup>14</sup> The European wine trade underwent a massive economic upturn in the decades before 1640, and distilled alcohols, already an established feature of German drinking habits, became increasingly popular in England from the 1670s.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Phil Withington, ‘Intoxicants and the invention of consumption’, *Economic History Review*, 73 (2020), pp. 384–408.

<sup>12</sup> Courtwright, *Forces of habit*; Virginia Berridge, *Demons: our changing attitudes to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs* (Oxford, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Phil Withington, ‘Cultures of intoxication’, *Past & Present*, 222, suppl. 9 (2014), pp. 9–33, at pp. 12–14.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Philadelphia, PA, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> W. B. Stephens, ‘English wine imports c. 1603–1640, with special reference to the Devon ports’, in Audrey Erskine, Margery M. Rowe, and Todd Gray, eds., *Tudor and Stuart Devon: the common estate and government. Essays presented to Joyce Youings* (Exeter, 1992), pp. 141–72; Ann Tlusty, ‘Water of life, water of death: the controversy over brandy and gin in early modern Augsburg’, *Central European History*, 31 (1998), pp. 1–30; John Chartres, ‘No English Calvados? English distillers and the cider industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’, in John Chartres and David Hey, *English rural society 1500–1800: essays in honour of Joan Thirsk* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 313–43.

New markets in the American and Caribbean colonies, in South Asian and African trading forts, and in the shipping fleets connecting them to the metropolis presented further commercial opportunities. Second, these global markets for old intoxicants were only possible because of the European taste for 'new' groceries and drugs and a process of commodity expansion that ran parallel and was in part related to the introduction of new and 'exotic' medical drugs.<sup>16</sup> The tobacco, chocolate, and tea consumed by Hooke were American and Asian in origin – the products of colonial expansion by Europeans across the Atlantic and commercial activity in the Indian Ocean.<sup>17</sup> Sugar, coffee, and opium were products of the Mediterranean, Africa, and the Levant that, between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, were transplanted by Europeans for mass production in the Americas, the Caribbean, and South Asia.<sup>18</sup> Even before tobacco, sugar had become an original staple of the North Atlantic slave economy.<sup>19</sup>

In each instance, the transformation of European and British diets precipitated by new intoxicants was at the heart of a major geopolitical transition: the shift in Europe's centre of economic gravity from the trading centres of the Mediterranean and Levant (such as Genoa and Venice), via the ports of Spain and Portugal, to the metropolises, slave economies, and global companies of the northern Atlantic (such as Amsterdam and London).<sup>20</sup> At the same time, trading routes and systems of exchange within and across the Atlantic and Indian oceans were significantly impacted, and in some instances created, by European colonization and 'armed commerce'.<sup>21</sup> Emergent settlements like Boston, Bridgetown, and Kolkata came to serve both as hubs within local economic zones and as points of contact with European and African markets and producers.<sup>22</sup> The demand for intoxicants, along with other commodities, accordingly helped drive a new epoch of long-distance and trans-regional encounters, exchanges, mobility, expropriations, conflict, exploitation, and settlement that have had a profound influence on the world we live in today.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Wallis, 'Exotic drugs and English medicine'; Harold J. Cook, *Matters of exchange: commerce, medicine, and science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven, CT, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Zahedieh, *The capital and the colonies*, esp. ch. 5; Marcy Norton, *Sacred gifts, profane pleasures: a history of tobacco and chocolate in the Atlantic world* (Ithaca, NY, 2005); Ellis, Coulton, and Mauger, *Empire of tea*.

<sup>18</sup> Stuart B. Schwartz, ed., *Tropical Babels: sugar and the making of the Atlantic world, 1450–1680* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); Jonathan Morris, *Coffee: a global history* (London, 2019); Ben Breen, *The age of intoxication: origins of the global drug trade* (Philadelphia, PA, 2019).

<sup>19</sup> Russell Menard, 'Plantation empire: how sugar and tobacco planters built their industries and raised an empire', *Agricultural History*, 81 (2007), pp. 309–32.

<sup>20</sup> The story is told in Jan de Vries, *European urbanization, 1500–1800* (London, 1984).

<sup>21</sup> John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The economy of British America, 1607–1789* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991).

<sup>22</sup> See also the articles by Zahedieh, Peterson, Stern, and Burnard in this special issue.

<sup>23</sup> Anne E. C. McCants, 'Global history and the history of consumption: congruence and divergence', in Manuel Perez Garcia and Lucio De Sousa, eds., *Global approaches and new polycentric approaches: Europe, Asia and the Americas in a world network system* (Singapore, 2018), pp. 241–53; Julia Zinkina et al., *A big history of globalization: the emergence of a global world system* (Cham, 2019).

If Hooke's diary is an inadvertent commentary on European globalization, then it also illuminates the range of factors that shaped his experience of intoxicants in the course of his everyday life. There was, for example, a clear spatial logic to his consumption. The relatively new institution of the London coffeehouse, the first of which had opened only as recently as 1651, dominated this topography. From his domestic rooms in Gresham College, Hooke visited Garaways and/or Jonathan's coffeehouses on Change Alley in Cornhill on a daily basis, often taking in other establishments as well. Perhaps counter-intuitively, his preferred intoxicant in coffeehouses was not coffee – which he never developed a taste for – but rather chocolate, alcohols, and tobacco, which he took as an accompaniment to other consumables. He also ate small meals here. The coffeehouse was supplemented by a second kind of space – local taverns and inns – where he attended large dinners and recorded drinking wines and sometimes beers and smoking tobacco. In the third instance, he consumed intoxicants at people's houses, and purchased alcohols, tobacco, chocolate, and, on one occasion, coffee powder to consume at home.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, intoxicants were always part of Hooke's domestic space: he began his diary taking opiates and ended it buying 5 lbs of tea for 45 s from a Mr Box.<sup>25</sup>

These spaces of consumption were also associated with certain practices that either centred on the intoxicant – in that consumption was the main or at least ostensible point of the practice – or involved intoxicants as part of the 'assemblage' of materials and know-how accompanying other activities. Hooke seemed to take opiates, for example, for their own sake and on his own: medicinally in the first instance, but perhaps also for the pleasures they elicited (though the closest he came to describing their effect was 'Took laudanum. Sweat till noon').<sup>26</sup> Liquors and tobacco, in contrast, lubricated different kinds of 'company', with the type of intoxicant reflecting the sociology and purpose of the interaction as well as its space and setting. To take just two (randomly selected) entries from the diary: for 18 January 1676, Hooke recorded:

To Coxes [the glass-maker], saw him polish an excellent 12 foot glass by changing place of the tool. Smoked with him 3 pipes ... Smoked with Sir Christopher [Wren]. Discoursed with him about Scarborough, about theory of sound and motion of air ... To Garaways. [Discoursed with] Mr Hill. Newbold. Rushton. Woodroof. Carver. Davys painter. Drank 3 [dishes of] chocolate.<sup>27</sup>

A year later, for Thursday 15 February 1677, 'Sir Christopher Wren and I to Westminster Hall. Man's coffeehouse, 4d. Dined at Story ... Oldenburg read Lewenhooke [Antonie van Leeuwenhoek] about water worms [at Royal

<sup>24</sup> Robinson and Adams, *Diary of Robert Hooke*, pp. 83, 103, 107, 129.

<sup>25</sup> Henderson, 'Unpublished material', pp. 136–7, 152.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>27</sup> Robinson and Adams, *Diary of Robert Hooke*, p. 212.

Society]. To Crown with Hill, Barrington, Grew. Abundance of wine and Confidence. Cheated of a shit. Slept ill.<sup>28</sup>

As these quite representative instances show, Hooke's roles as curator of the Royal Society and architectural surveyor for the City of London meant that his life required recurring sociability with diverse sorts of people – mostly men – structured by intoxicants. But the social utility of intoxicants was inextricable from their sensory effects ('of wine and Confidence') and their place within Hooke's broader dietetic regimen. Diary entries occasionally made this significance explicit. For Wednesday 19 August 1674, he recorded 'With Mr Wild [who supplied him with chocolate] and Aubery at Joes [coffeehouse] till [10.30 pm]. Drank strong water which heat me much but bettered my stomach next day.'<sup>29</sup> Two days later he 'Waited at Spanish coffeehouse on Booth. Had a great shivering like an ague. Drank 4d of Brandy at Spanish coffeehouse. Slept well, sweat disordered.'<sup>30</sup> As such, Hooke's consumption reflected, however implicitly, his medical and dietetic knowledge of intoxicants. This sat alongside his social knowledge of which intoxicants suited what situations and his practical skills in consuming intoxicants appropriately and well. All of this know-how needed to be learned on an ongoing basis; it was also rooted in the material culture of intoxicants and the practices around them. For Tuesday 8 February 1676, for example, Hooke recorded 'With Mr Crisp and Mr Hill and Croone at Fleece Tavern I drank 8 glasses of wine no harm. Took senna. It made me sleep well and paid for 2lb of chocolate 6 s.' Two days later his niece, Grace, 'Made chocolate but heat it too hot without water.'<sup>31</sup>

This issue explores the relationship between intoxicants and European globalization during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its starting point is that the increased mobility of capital, goods, people, and culture instigated by early modern Europeans was driven in large part by a 'psychoactive revolution', whereby intoxicants became integral to everyday social practices and the basis of legal and illegal economies today worth trillions of pounds.<sup>32</sup> Taking England as its primary case study (though including articles on France and Iberia, too), it shows that, just as 'new' intoxicants were integral to the development of metropolitan and colonial societies, so 'old' intoxicants at once retained their local significance and delineated emergent colonial boundaries and identities. Although the uses and abuses of intoxicants among indigenous and non-European peoples is a hugely important subject – not least in the face of European intrusions and exchange – the focus here is primarily on metropolitan and colonial practices and identities.<sup>33</sup> The articles approach these issues through careful and geographically situated case studies that range from Boston in New England, to Barbados in the Caribbean, to

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>32</sup> Courtwright, *Forces of habit*; Breen, *Age of intoxication*.

<sup>33</sup> For discussions, see Peter C. Mancell, *Deadly medicine: Indians and alcohol in early America* (Ithaca, NY, 1995); Rebecca Earle, 'Indians and drunkenness in Spanish America', *Past & Present*, 222, suppl. 9 (2014), pp. 81–99, at pp. 81–6.

Kolkata in India, to London and Paris in north-western Europe. They do so in order to stimulate studies in other regions and periods and with the shared conviction that the related notions of space, social practice, and material culture are useful analytical tools for thinking about the production, traffic, consumption, regulation, and representation of intoxicants both synchronically and diachronically. However, by encouraging contributors to think in these terms, the issue is not looking to impose a single conceptual or methodological agenda. Rather, the articles are intended as an opportunity to develop discrete contributions to these broad fields of interpretation.

## I

Historians, of course, have long been interested in the spatial, practical, and material aspects of everyday life: just as the new social history of the post-war era was predicated on recovering lost and quotidian experiences in time and place, so economic history has always focused on the expropriation and manufacture of materials and the structures of exchange and value that develop around them.<sup>34</sup> Over the last few decades, these general concerns have enjoyed theoretical refinement and focus in the shape of various interpretative ‘turns’ – not least the ‘linguistic turn’, which raised questions about the relationship between the worlds of action and discourse, and the ‘material turn’, which extended the potential for meaning and agency to objects and artefacts. A problem with these ‘turns’ is that their most vocal proponents tend also to be the most reductionist in the claims they make for them: that it is language or objects or social and economic structures – for example – that ultimately determine all experience and meaning. It so happens that recent developments in praxeology, or the study of social practices, have been geared to understanding the *combination* of phenomena facilitating meaningful social action rather than establishing an implacable interpretative and explanatory hierarchy: that it is the intersection of socially derived skills, of materials and resources, and of variously ascribed meanings that enable people to do and say things – or not do and say things – on a recurring and normative basis.<sup>35</sup> It is with this appreciation of *complexity* that contributors have been asked to think about intoxicants and globalization in relation to spaces, practices, and material culture.

Ben Breen opens the issue with the fundamental question: why did certain non-European plants and crops establish themselves in European diets, tastes, and economies over the course of the early modern period and others fail to find purchase? Breen uses the early modern concept of ‘transplantation’ to answer the question, noting that transplantation involved not just the material

<sup>34</sup> For useful syntheses in an English context, see Keith Wrightson, *English society, 1580–1680* (London, 1982); idem., *Earthly necessities: economic lives in early modern Britain, 1470–1750* (New Haven, CT, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> For introductions, see Andreas Reckwitz, ‘Toward a theory of social practices: a development in culturalist theorizing’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (2002), pp. 243–63; Elizabeth Shove, Mika Pantzar, and Matt Watson, *The dynamics of social practice: everyday life and how it changes* (London, 2012).

transfer of ‘stuff’ but also ‘the movement of a larger assemblage: of knowledge, of modes of spatial organization, and of societal norms’. The articles of Lauren Working and Emma Spary look at this process of transplantation from (so to speak) the other, European end. Working focuses on the material culture of tobacco pipes among the London milieu of Jacobean ‘wits’ and colonists who took to tobacco in the first years of the seventeenth century, examining the tensions between savagery and privileged masculinity articulated through practices of production and consumption pertaining to pipes. Spary focuses on Paris at the end of the same century, investigating how the ‘dangerous’ drug opium was domesticated – to lesser or greater degrees – by practices of experimentation and self-observation on the part of empirics and medical promoters. Taking a case study of auto-experimentation as her starting point, she enquires into the ways that drugs ‘showcase early modern preoccupations with the implications of otherness’, observing that the verb ‘to experiment’ was first used in French in the sense of ‘to trial the efficacy of drugs’.

These themes are picked up by Phil Withington, who approaches the ‘body’ as a space and emphasizes that an entity as ‘material’ as human corporeality was understood and treated (in this case by physicians) according to predominant belief systems and language. He argues that with the humoral body, everyday practices of consumption, described by contemporaries as ‘custom’, were known to become part of a person’s ‘second nature’, changing the body’s substantive and physiological processes. It was in this way that dependencies on intoxicants – in particular new intoxicants like tobacco, opiates, and strong spirits – were thought to develop: a process that by the end of the seventeenth century was beginning to be associated with the language of ‘addict’. Kathryn James extends the theme of transplantation to examine the specific function of alcohol as an agent of European scientific globalization. Turning to the emergent use of alcohol as ‘pickling spirit’ or preservation agent in the late seventeenth century, she takes the work of the London apothecary and scientific collector James Petiver as a case study in the trafficking and remediation of the scientific specimen. As a preservation agent, alcohol played a key role in practices dedicated to the preservation and demonstration of rare specimens and scientific displays, knowledge of which was dependent on the same pathways that made possible the import of new intoxicants, and species more generally.

Angela McShane uses praxeological theory to tease out the meaning and agency of tobacco boxes and snuffboxes in the transatlantic world. Drawing on the tobacco box as a site of practice by the ‘middling sorts’, she examines its role as a ‘socialized canvas’. Understanding social practice as the ongoing dialectic between materials (tobacco boxes), competencies (the skills and purposes of historical actors), and meanings (ascribed by different actors to particular practices), she shows how boxes played important roles in social relationships and the construction of identities on either side of the north Atlantic. One further article examines practices in relation to particular institutions and visual media: Cynthia Roman focuses on the representation of smoking in eighteenth-century visual satire. Noting the European genealogy of visualizing intoxicants, she unpacks the residual otherness still invoked



by tobacco, as well as its fundamental role in obstructing rather than facilitating constructive and rational public conversations.

Nuala Zahedieh shifts attention from practices of consumption to global production. Focusing on the copper-smithing workshop of William Forbes in London, she traces the practices surrounding a still (for distilling liquor), from its order by Caribbean planters like Joseph Foster Barham to its design, construction, delivery, and eventual use by enslaved people on Barham's plantation in West Jamaica. In so doing, she shows the early establishment of capitalist and industrial practices within the Atlantic slave economy and the importance of sugar and rum to those practices. Mark Peterson in turn draws on the work of the economic historian Jan de Vries, and the idea of the 'z-commodity' or 'consumption cluster', to examine the intersections of ideas of 'godliness' in early Boston, and the complex cultures surrounding intoxicants in a city defined economically by its involvement in the Atlantic trade. Peterson characterizes the city of Boston as overlapping sets of 'consumption clusters' – places where people consume 'bundles of things' – in which 'godliness' was as much a form of spatially organized consumerism and experience as more obvious kinds of consumption. Understood in this way, churches sat alongside places like taverns and inns 'as separate clusters of social experience' that people were able to visit, often sequentially

Phil Stern turns our attention to alcohol's ability to act both as economic commodity and as mediating agent in social relations, looking particularly at its role in the trading forts and garrisons of the East India Company in India. He argues that practices and ideologies relating to European alcohol were at once essential to justifying colonial governance, authority, and masculinity, but also capable of undermining that authority through inappropriate or uncontrolled consumption. In this sense, alcohols held a deeply ambivalent status in colonial culture and power more generally, echoing their position in British society. Finally, and in contrast to the essential ambivalence of attitudes towards alcohol in colonial India, Trevor Burnard argues that intoxicants were fully implicated in the creation of new kinds of plantation persona in eighteenth-century Jamaica. Drawing on Thomas Thistlewood's diary accounts of alcohol and hospitality, he argues that Jamaica's plantation culture, with the inherent imbalances of wealth and power that were a function of slave economies, fostered a definition of male identity articulated through normative practices of excess, debauchery, and unrestrained hospitality. This 'modern' code of masculine conduct, while the antithesis of 'civility', was nevertheless fostered through practices of sociability and consumption as an appropriate and even normative mode of masculine behaviour.

## II

Taken in the round, the articles in this issue suggest that it is the heterogeneous and fluid identity of the intoxicant that make it so valuable as an object of historical analysis. As Peterson observes, intoxicants are epistemologically complicated, even when reduced to their role as consumables: 'in their nature as "things", they generally demand bundling for their consumption'. What

were understood as the primary or secondary characteristics of an intoxicant might also shift according to materiality, time, and place. For agents of the East India Company, alcohol was encountered as both gift commodity and object of Company legislation, the rules and protocols governing daily life. Just as Roman shows how smoke's obfuscation of genuine and meaningful discourse made tobacco consumption a critical feature of metropolitan political satire, so McShane carefully reconstructs how possession of decorated tobacco boxes articulated a host of emotional and political affinities for men and women on either side of the Atlantic. For Working, focusing on the first assimilation of tobacco into metropolitan culture, the complex meanings of the Anglo-American pipe nicely demonstrate that, 'Since objects are relational and operate differently according to their social contexts, their forms should not be taken for granted.' Or, as Spary puts it:

drugs yoke together their places of origin and consumption, prompting debate over the significance of one location for the other, over the relationship between bodies and geographical space, and thus over how proximate agency (the act of consumption) is either affected by or affects very distant parts of the world.

Intoxicants were also a force of mediation, transforming and imprinting everywhere they went. As trafficked commodities, Spary observes, they 'left traces of their passage in archives and often generated an autonomous material culture'. Intoxicants were the object of East India Company policy regulations (Stern); and they were the subject of medical receipts (Spary), visual satire (Roman), sermon (Peterson), newspaper advertisements (McShane), or simply the more familiar ebullient European print culture documenting the characteristics of 'exotics' (Breen). Physicians understood intoxicants to transform the humoral body, changing its very nature – its needs, desires, and physiological processes – through force of custom (Withington). But naturalists also knew alcohol to at once preserve exotic species in space and time and domesticate them for European gazes and systems of classification (James). Likewise, the multiple nature of intoxicants makes visible the intersections of space, practice, and material culture in a global economy. For Zahedieh, it is the essential copper of a rum still in Jamaica that illuminates the global network of relationships and practices framing a transatlantic economy. Burnard explores the flip side of this: how for the English and enslaved inhabitants of eighteenth-century Jamaica, alcohol-soaked sociability made behavioural protocols veer dramatically and autonomously from metropolitan expectations.

From rum and theriac to blood of Christ; from the material paraphernalia of tobacco to display cabinets to the humoral body; from Boston church to Company fort to Caribbean plantation: the articles in this issue demonstrate the ways in which the different categories of intoxicant shaped – and were constitutive of – early modern globalization. Intoxicants could be at once space, practice, and material, simultaneously and in intersecting chronologies; they could seem and mean different things to different observers. They did not

exist as a kind of Baconian entity, the natural result of the injunction at the foot of the title page to the *Novum organum*: ‘many will travel and knowledge will be increased’. Rather, as Hooke’s diary reminds us, it is the complexity of ‘intoxicant’ as ontological category that explains its peculiar historical and historiographical power – that, and the unlikelihood of ever reducing it to a set of component parts.

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