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**Depictions of grapes, vines and wine in the work of four
seventeenth century English poets**

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1. Summary

The research paper studies how four important seventeenth century English poets - John Milton, Andrew Marvell, George Herbert and Richard Crashaw - use imagery of grapes, vines and wine in their poetry. These poets are leading seventeenth century figures in their respective poetic genres - epic, pastoral, Protestant devotional and Catholic devotional.

The paper identifies and analyses uses of wine imagery in the four poets' works, and shows how they use the language of wine in a huge diversity of ways, to illustrate romantic, political and religious subjects.

Each poet uses the language of wine in different ways and what emerges from the study is the sheer richness of wine imagery that makes it a poetic resource that the poets readily exploit. Not previously studied as a single subject, the paper makes contributions to the understanding of wine imagery in the work of the four poets and in seventeenth century poetry more generally; and to the field of wine and poetry.

2. Introduction

This research paper studies the appearances and uses of grapes, vines and wine (hereafter termed 'wine imagery') in the works of four seventeenth century English poets: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, George Herbert and Richard Crashaw. The purpose of the paper is to understand how these poets depict wine imagery; what the effects of wine imagery are within the poetry and how its use assists the poetic purposes of each poet. In order to achieve these ends, the research paper seeks to answer these two questions:

- How is wine imagery deployed by Milton, Marvell, Herbert and Crashaw?
- What conclusions may be drawn about the use of wine imagery in seventeenth century poetry?

All four of these poets have been studied extensively and there is a huge critical literature about them. However, this paper seeks to fill a gap in the research in which there is no single study devoted to wine imagery in the work of the four poets, or, indeed, in any seventeenth century poetry. Thematic studies such as this one are common in criticism of the four poets, but none has so far been carried out about wine imagery.¹ Furthermore, there is a general paucity of studies concerning wine and any poetry, so this paper also contributes to that field of research.

¹ For example of other thematic studies, see literature review below.

² The authors of each, in order, are: Karen Levenback, Stephen Dobranski, Karen

The form this paper takes is an academic study of the work of the four poets while hewing firmly to the theme of wine imagery. It builds on the work of prior critics of the poetry to apply their analysis to develop new conclusions related to the verses that contain wine imagery.

Of necessity, the paper has a limited scope. It cannot be a comprehensive survey of wine in poetry, or even of wine in seventeenth century English poetry. However, the paper tries to avoid arbitrariness in its choice of era and of poets through two specific ways.

Firstly, the paper shows that the seventeenth century was a period of increasing wealth generation which coincided with considerably increased demand for wine in England. The paper suggests that wine enjoyed a period of particularly widespread consumption in the seventeenth century - sufficient justification by itself to study its representation in the literature of the time.

Secondly, the paper attempts to avoid arbitrariness in selection of the poets by identifying four poets who are considered by critics to be leading exponents of four different poetic genres in use at the time. This attempts to ensure a broad enough survey of different styles and types of poetry to affirm that wine imagery was used, among the best poets of the era, repeatedly and across genres.

Any such study struggles to avoid some sense of randomness in its subject matter, but with that qualification in place, there remains a subject with limited prior critical research open to study. It is hoped this paper will identify the consistent presence and significance of wine imagery among the most important poets of seventeenth century England, and will stimulate further reflection on how wine language and imagery is used in poetry more broadly.

3. Literature Review

There are no existing studies focused solely on wine in all four poets under discussion. However, critics have undertaken similar thematic studies based on a single theme or image in the work of one of these poets. These include: in Milton, the elements, the shield, animals, the earth; in Marvell, grafting, the sword, the stork; in Herbert: clothing, architecture; in Crashaw, eating, wounds.²

Considerable academic research has discussed the poetry of the four poets. All are mainstays of English studies, and there is an ever-proliferating industry of scholarship surrounding them. This research appears in various forms. For any given poet: critical versions of a poet's work, book length studies and academic articles or book chapters. Amid this large amount of research, the following works and critics are particularly relevant for the purposes of this paper.

For John Milton, the studies of the vine in *Paradise Lost* by Peter Demetz, Stephen Dobranski, Todd Sammons and Mandy Green; and the more general approach of Christopher Ricks. For Andrew Marvell, there are no dedicated studies of wine imagery, but the works of Donald Friedman, A.J. Smith and Jim Swan are helpful for the subject matter of this paper.

² The authors of each, in order, are: Karen Levenback, Stephen Dobranski, Karen Edwards and Richard DuRocher; Nicholas Salerno, EE Duncan-Jones and Kitty Datta; Dale Randall and John David Walker; Kimberly Johnson and Vera Camden.

For George Herbert, Ivan Taylor's summary of wine appearances is vital. More generally, the works dedicated to Herbert's Eucharistic thought by Robert Whalen, R.V. Young and Jeanne Hunter are relevant.

For Richard Crashaw, while there are no dedicated studies of wine, critics have identified the presence and importance of fluids in his poetry: George Williams and Austin Warren, while Alexander Wong's discussion of drunkenness is valuable.

Finally, while there are huge amounts of scholarship available on seventeenth century England, for the purposes of the introductory historical context, it is necessary to focus more specifically on wine in that era. For that purpose, social historians who survey and analyse trends in wine imports and consumption are most relevant. These include W. B. Stephens, Phil Withington and Charles Ludington.

4. Methodology

The first task of the research project was to select the poets whose work is to be studied for wine references. Here, the purpose was to select poets who 1) cover a range of poetic genres, in order to demonstrate the ubiquity of wine imagery across different genres; 2) are widely critically recognised as being leading exponents of their respective genres. Combining these two points, the result should be to limit any sense of arbitrariness in the poets selected, on the basis that wine imagery is present across different poetic genres, and within those genres, the best poets (the most critically recognised) are using this imagery.

Four key seventeenth century poetic genres were selected: epic, pastoral, Protestant devotional and Catholic devotional. The obvious omission is purely romantic poetry; due to the scope of this project, this genre could not be included.³ Leading exponents of each of these four genres were then selected based on critical recognition and consensus, as described below.

John Milton is the only seventeenth century epic poet and the only poet of any kind to have an influential Norton Critical Edition dedicated to a single poem: *Paradise Lost* (Teskey, 2005). Indeed, Milton is generally considered England's greatest epic poet of any era (see, for instance, Eliot, 1921, or the many essays in Teskey, 2005). Furthermore, *Paradise Lost* is undoubtedly his most

³ The leading romantic poet of the seventeenth century is, incidentally, far less obvious than for the four genres finally selected.

celebrated epic, and one of the most influential of all poems in English (ibid.). Given the sheer dimension of the work (12 books and 10,500 lines of verse) and the richness of its poetic material, in the case of Milton, the decision was taken to focus solely on *Paradise Lost*.

Andrew Marvell is, even among his fellow poets, considered the seventeenth century master of the pastoral genre (Eliot, 1921; Larkin, 1979), a view confirmed by recent critics.⁴

George Herbert is one of many excellent Protestant poets of the era,⁵ but is generally considered the finest of the era by W.H. Auden (1978) and Herbert's editor, John Tobin (Herbert, 2004) among many others. Herbert has more poems (82) included in Norton's critically important *Seventeenth Century British Poetry* than any other poet, Protestant or not (Rumrich and Chaplin, 2006).

Finally, with very little competition in seventeenth century Protestant England, Richard Crashaw is the most critically celebrated Catholic poet of the era (Rambuss, 2013, although see below for discussions of his Catholicism).

With the poets selected, wine references in their poetry were identified. In the case of *Paradise Lost*, an e-text version of the poem was searched for the following terms: 'wine,' 'vine(s),' and 'grape(s).' Additional searches were carried

⁴ These include: Empson (2006), Summers (2006), Chaudhuri (1989).

⁵ Others include Henry Vaughan, Thomas Traherne and most obviously, John Donne. However, the latter was not a fully seventeenth century poet (1572-1631).

out for related terms such as 'drunk.' For the remaining three poets, concordances of their works were used to locate the same references.⁶

With wine references identified, the most important were selected for discussion. Those rejected were not used on the basis that their poetic value was lesser: the presence of wine imagery was simply ornamentation or a prop supporting some other argument, rather than being the poet's central concern at that moment. The references to be used were those which, simply put, had the richest poetic meaning.

In order to conduct an analysis of these wine references, relevant critical studies of the poetry were identified using key word searches on the JSTOR academic catalogue platform. This platform identifies relevant academic articles in almost all major academic journals. These articles were then read and importantly, their bibliography studied for book length studies that may also be relevant. In this way, relevant criticism in both books and articles was identified.

Using this criticism as a foundation to approach the poetic references to wine, analysis of the poetry was carried out, and new conclusions developed which had specific reference to wine imagery. Finally, the historical context section was developed through studying academic books and articles related specifically to

⁶ For Milton, Marvell, Herbert and Crashaw respectively: Milton (2018), Guffey (1974), di Cesare and Mignani (1977) and Cooper (1981).

wine in seventeenth century England, and analysing and summarising the findings.

Access to JSTOR and to all academic articles and books identified for study was available at the New York Public Library, to which the author had full access.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Historical context

The historical period under discussion in this paper is framed by the lives of the four poets whose work is discussed below. Of these, the oldest is George Herbert (1593-1633) and the youngest, Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). The lives of John Milton (1608-1674) and Richard Crashaw (1612-1649) fit within the eighty year span from the birth of Herbert to the death of Marvell. The era, then, spans the bulk of the seventeenth century, from the ascent to the throne of James VI of Scotland (James I of England) in 1603 almost to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

This period is inarguably one of the most turbulent and fraught in English history. Particularly so after the largely peaceable reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), who, in spite of some international conflicts, largely ruled over a country at peace. The same could not be said of the subsequent century: the rise of the House of Stuart (from 1603), Civil War (1642-9), regicide (1649), the Commonwealth (1649-1660) and the Restoration (1660) before the deposition of James II (1688). It is from this strained and often violent time the work of the four poets emerged.

Amid these seismic changes, what was the place of wine in seventeenth century England? A key factor here are broader demographic changes in England and particularly in urban centres. From 1600 to 1750, the English population

estimated to live in towns rose from 8% to 21% (Overton et al., 2004). In London alone, population doubled to 400,000 between 1600 and 1650 (ibid.). In the second part of the period, after 1660, London 'dominated England and the English economy during our period as it had never done before and was never to do again' (Earle, 1989, p. 17). Workers in London could earn multiples of what their equivalents in the provinces would. 'London was the only real city in England, and London totally dominated English urban culture' (ibid., p. xi). This, then, is the context for wine consumption during this era: a rapidly growing and increasingly wealthy urban population, focused particularly on London. Three of the four poets worked in London in Parliament for a time (the exception being Crashaw).

Concurrent with this urbanisation and wealth generation is a conspicuous rise in wine imports at the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁷ W.B. Stephens has noted that wine was among the four 'chief commodities' imported into England during this period and specifically that 'the early seventeenth century was a period when the volume of wine imports was particularly large compared with preceding and succeeding periods.'⁸ He estimates that the average annual level of wine imports in the first half the preceding century (1500-1550) was around 10,000 tuns which, with some fluctuations, stayed relatively constant until the

⁷ For almost the entire twentieth century, André Simon (1909) was the authority on seventeenth century wine imports. However, W.B. Stephens notes Simon's almost certain use of unreliable data causing huge over-estimates in imports (1992). For that reason, Simon is not quoted here in spite of his inclusion in the approved research paper proposal (see appendix).

⁸ Stephens, 1992, p. 141. The other three commodities were textiles, timber and groceries, a list of essentials which serves to confirm wine's prominence at the time.

death of Elizabeth I in 1603.⁹ But the average import to the port of London alone in the 1620s and 1630s was almost 20,000 tuns, with at least 10,000 tuns arriving at other ports (*ibid.*).

Stephens is quick to emphasise, however, that the political peace of the 1620s and 1630s was an enabler of a relatively high level of wine imports. With the Civil War impending, imports dropped once more, and throughout the next twenty years until the Restoration.¹⁰ In the 1660s, the annual national import was around 20,000 tuns although was sometimes considerably less (Stephens, 1992). Stephens goes on to note that at no point in the eighteenth century were wine imports ever at the level of the 1620s and 1630s.¹¹ In this crucial two decade span when all four of the poets were alive, wine was being imported into England at a rate never before seen and not seen again for more than 150 years.

Meanwhile, wine was not the only stimulant penetrating the English market in the first half of the seventeenth century. In 1622, around 60,000 pounds of Virginia

⁹ A tun was a medieval measurement of liquid usually equivalent to 252 gallons (954 litres), although occasionally slightly more or less.

¹⁰ Figures for wine imports are hard to find for the Commonwealth era, but Ludington seems to speak for the consensus when he says 'the wine trade during the 1650s seems to have remained relatively small compared to previous decades' (2013, p. 20).

¹¹ Withington has developed Stephens' work, and points out that annual wine consumption rose from 3.8 litres *per capita* in 1623 to 8.6 litres in 1638 (2011); an increase he calls 'astonishing' (2013, p. 149). At Hull, for example, there were four notable wine shipments in 1609, comprising 378 tuns. In 1637, there were 32 shipments for a remarkable 2095 tuns. 'Not only was this a dramatic increase in imports over the previous three decades; it was significantly more wine than at the height of the medieval trade before the fifteenth-century slump, where an average of 1000 tuns per annum were imported into Hull' (*ibid.*, p. 150). But he also notes how much wine consumption fell off in the second half of the seventeenth century: 'aside from the later 1680s, when imports reached 38,700 tuns per annum, in the second half of the seventeenth century annual wine imports were less than half those of the 1630s' (2011, p. 149).

tobacco were imported; by 1638, this figure was 2,000,000 pounds (Withington, 2013). Both ale and beer also remained popular, and both Hori (2008) and Withington (2011) have made clear that these other stimulants were real competitors to wine, making wine's surge in these years all the more remarkable. Later in the century, wine also competed with chocolate, coffee, gin and tea.¹²

Who was drinking wine in seventeenth century England? As Ludington puts it, 'while wine was relatively expensive and therefore consumed only by those who could afford it, this did not relegate wine to the aristocracy alone; the middle rank of consumers also drank wine' (2013, p. 18). The middle classes included: merchants, 'successful artisans and shopkeepers,' manufacturers, bankers, tradesmen and those professionals in 'medicine, the law, university teaching, civil service, and lower ranking officers in the army or navy' (ibid., p. 6).¹³ In other words, a broad swathe of the population including, but far from limited to, the gentry and aristocracy, enjoyed access to wine.

But drinkers in mid seventeenth century England were also aware of the political overtones of wine consumption. During the Civil War and the subsequent exile of Charles II, wine was a royalist drink: 'drinking wine as opposed to the common pint of beer emphasised the aristocratic, courtly status of the Cavalier [...] drinking beer was often associated with the Roundheads' base behavior.'¹⁴

¹² Hori (2008) and Earle (1989).

¹³ Compare also the similar accounts from Withington (2011) and Earle (1989) and Hori's real life examples (2008).

¹⁴ Keblusek, 2004, pp. 56-57. See also Ludington (2013).

Leader of the new republic Oliver Cromwell's father had been a brewer, a fact which Royalist 'pamphleteers exploited to the fullest' (ibid., p. 57). Royalists in exile would raise toasts to the exiled king of 'claret "born of the royal vine"' (ibid.). On his return to London at the Restoration, Charles II caused the fountains to run with wine (Ludington, 2013).

Wine imports surged in the first thirty years of the seventeenth century, in spite of competition from other stimulants. The political uncertainties of 1640-1660, and perhaps the political connotations wine carried, reduced wine consumption during this period. But after the Restoration, while failing to regain its former level of imports, wine continued to be consumed by both middle and upper classes at home and in taverns, especially in urban areas - London above all.¹⁵

This, then, is the historical context within which to understand references to wine in the poetry of the era. The newly prosperous, urbanised middle classes ensured wine became an English staple in the seventeenth century in a way never previously witnessed. Wine drinkers drove a huge surge in imports before the Civil War, and while import levels reduced in the middle of the century, as a whole, seventeenth century drinkers consumed considerably more wine than in the centuries on either side. This newly important position for wine in English

¹⁵ Wine was also prominent in the university cities of Cambridge and Oxford, where all four poets were educated (Banks, 1997). While anecdotal, illustrating wine's continued large consumption post-1660 is Samuel Pepys, who maintained a 'huge personal wine cellar' in 1665 (Earle, 1989, p. 280).

society is justification for a study of wine references in the poetry of this era rather than any other.

5.2 John Milton

John Milton was a prolific writer in both English and Latin, of prose and poetry. A firm republican, Milton strongly advocated religious freedom and served the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell. He lost both his place in the political world and his sight around the time of the Restoration. While poems such as *Lycidas* and *Samson Agonistes* are widely appreciated, *Paradise Lost* is the reason for Milton's fame. *Paradise Lost* is among the most important and celebrated epic poems in English. It recounts the Fall of humankind in the Garden of Eden, from the creation of the world to Adam and Eve's exile from the garden having eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The first reference to wine in the poem appears in the first book, long before Adam and Eve appear on the scene. In a catalogue of devils in hell, the narrator finishes with Belial, 'than whom a spirit more lewd/fell not from Heaven [...] who filled/with lust and violence the house of God.'¹⁶ Belial:

¹⁶ Book I, lines 490-1, 495-6 (future citations will simply quote book number in roman numeral, followed by line numbers). All quotations taken from Milton (2005).

In courts and palaces [he] also reigns
And in luxurious cities where the noise
Of riot ascends [...]
And when night
Darkens the streets then wander forth the sons
Of Belial flown with insolence and wine (I.497-502)

The connection between wine, devilry, decadence and chaos is explicit here, and specifically, that between wine and a perverted sexuality: Belial is 'lewd' and 'filled with lust.' The point is confirmed when two notorious biblical episodes of rape are referenced: 'the streets of Sodom and that night/in Gibeah.'¹⁷ At the beginning of the poem, the narrator is setting up an explicit connection between wine and lust-driven violence. It is a point that will become relevant later in the poem.

In book IV, the description of Eden contains an important wine reference. Over 'umbrageous grots and caves,'

The mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape and gently creeps
Luxuriant (IV.257-260)

¹⁷ I.503-4, referring to Genesis 19.1-11 and Judges 19.

The purpose of the description is to illustrate the abundance and fertility of the garden; to show pre-lapsarian nature benign and generous. But Christopher Ricks (1963) has also noted the use of the term 'luxuriant' in connection with the vine. For it reminds the reader of the above quoted description of Belial, who reigns in '*luxurious* cities' (this writer's emphasis). Implicit in the 'luxuriant' vine is the potential for corruption so vividly instantiated in the person of Belial.

The next significant moment comes with the introduction of Adam and Eve. Critic Stephen Dobranski (2010) has noted how unusual the description of the couple is. Rather than describe their physical appearance, the narrator dwells on their hair. For Adam,

Hyacinthine locks

Round from his parted forelock manly hung

Clust'ring

Eve, meanwhile,

She as a veil down to the slender waist

Her unadorned golden tresses wore

Disheveled but in wanton ringlets waved

As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied

Subjection (IV.301-308)

The language of the vine is evident in both descriptions. Adam's hair 'clusters' like grapes, while Eve's 'wanton ringlets' seek support in the same way the tendrils of a vine do. The description of Eve's hair is notably oxymoronic: innocently, it is like a veil; it is unadorned. But it is also disheveled and wanton, in need of 'subjection,' just as a vine needs training (Sammons, 1986). The narrator complicates Eve's character the first moment the reader meets her: while beautiful, she, like the 'luxuriant' vine noted above, appears to have an inherent potential for corruption.¹⁸

Adam and Eve's task in paradise is to tend the garden; to maintain order and prevent unruliness. One plant in particular requires attention (V.215-219):

Or they led the vine
To wed her elm: she spoused about him twines
Her marriageable arms and with her brings
Her dow'r, th'adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves

Gordon Teskey notes, 'the ancient practice of winding grape vines around and up the trunks of elms was a commonplace in Roman literature' (2005, p. 112), symbolising 'the true union of husband and wife' (Demetz, 1958, p. 521). Significantly, tending the vine is among their very first tasks in the garden (ibid.), and as Mandy Green notes, 'the human couple are transformed emblematically

¹⁸ Ricks, 1963 and Sammons, 1986.

into the vine and the elm they are themselves tending' (1996, p. 304). With the emphases on marriage here: 'to wed', 'spoused', 'marriageable', the imagery of vine and elm confirms the nature of Adam and Eve's relationship.

The vine needs the elm just as Eve needs Adam: the description of the vine needing the support of the elm recalls Eve's tendril-like 'wanton ringlets' which need 'subjection.' But where that first description of the dependent Eve implies Adam's headship in the relationship, Adam in turn needs Eve's 'clusters, to adorn/his barren leaves.' Only the luxuriant vine can meet Adam's needs for fertility and health (Green, 1996). Where earlier the narrator establishes a hierarchical union, 'though both/not equal [...] he for God only, she for God in him' (IV.295-6, 299), here the Edenic understanding of marital union is more nuanced: mutual rather than unilateral support.¹⁹

With the narrator having established the relations between the married pair, they dutifully work in the garden throughout books IV and V. Wine and vines are recurrent sources of imagery, particularly when Eve comes to prepare feasts, both for Adam and for their guest, the angel Raphael. The first couple did,

¹⁹ See Green (1996). She also notes that in these lines, 'the vine easily overpowers the elm,' (p. 308) which could be read as indicating more than equality and in fact posing an existential, female threat. Sammons (1986) has argued at length that the 'wanton ringlets' take on the character of ivy, a plant identified in classical literature with extramarital sexuality. The ivy motif is the 'countertopos' to that of the elm and the vine, and underscores the potential for disaster inherent in the lovers. Mary Ruth Brown has argued that Eve is depicted as a branch of the vine, which is Adam (1986). However, this reading appears unlikely given the evident identification of Adam with elm and Eve with vine.

Not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between [courses] from milky stream,
Berry or grape (V.305-307)

And, 'for drink the grape/she crushes, inoffensive must' (V.344-345). In both instances, it is clear that the grape juice yields a safe, non-intoxicating liquor: 'inoffensive must,' in sharp contrast to the licentious wine of Belial. And as if to confirm the point, Eve serves this 'wine' naked (V.443-446, 448-450):

Meanwhile at table Eve
Ministered naked and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crowned. O innocence
Deserving Paradise! [...]
But in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reigned nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's Hell.

The effect here is twofold. On the one hand, where libidinous, hellish lust may be the expected result of wine consumption, there is conspicuously none present here. But moreover, in his description of heaven, Raphael also clarifies that wine is a gift in and of heaven itself:

Tables are set and on a sudden piled
With angels' food and rubied nectar flows [...]
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heav'n [...]
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy (secure
Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
Excess) before th'all-bounteous King (V.632-640)

By Raphael's description, wine is a measure of immortality (here the overtones of the Christian Eucharist are undeniable and confirmed by the word 'communion') and a gift displaying God's unlimited generosity. It is an explanation of how earthly wine, the 'inoffensive must' should be understood by Adam and Eve: a heavenly drink which always satisfies but never causes drunkenness.

Before the Fall, then, depictions of grapes, vines and wine occupy a tension. They mark the generosity and bounty of God, a crowning gift indicative of the goodness of God and of creation. But the vine may be 'disheveled' or 'wanton' if untrained. And wine is 'inoffensive' - but the narrator's use of this careful negative contains the seeds of downfall already. For wine risks *becoming* offensive, luxurious rather than luxuriant; lustful instead of unlibidinous. Before the fall, wine acts as a metaphor for the state of the couple themselves, containing all the seeds for the disaster that is to come.

Critics are agreed that the proximate cause of Eve's consumption of the forbidden fruit is her separation from Adam.²⁰ Arguing that they can tend the garden better if working separately,²¹ Eve, having attended to Adam's admonitions about the danger posed by Satan, sets out alone. Satan finds her propping up flowers (IX.431-433):

Mindless the while
Herself though fairest unsupported flow'r
From her best prop so far and storm so nigh.

In separating from Adam, Eve has 'fallen' back into the role of unsupported vine, away from her elm. Green has noted that this description recollects the first moments of Adam and Eve (1996). Where Adam is found standing (IV.477),²² Eve lies recumbent (IV.450 and 457) until led by God to Adam.²³ Now, separated from Adam, Eve is depicted once more as an unsupported, helpless flower. Weakened already, Eve succumbs to the temptations of Satan and eats the fruit - notably described by Satan as satisfying both hunger *and* thirst.²⁴

²⁰ E.g. Brown (1986), Green (1996), Sammons (1986).

²¹ IX.205-225. This is a hugely significant speech for the drama that will follow and not by accident does Eve use terms that readers know by now are particularly freighted: 'our labour grows/luxurious'; the plants experience 'wanton growth', the 'clasping ivy' needs training.

²² Eve's first sight of Adam is standing 'fair and tall' beneath a 'platan' (plane) tree. Green (1996) notes that the plane tree was symbol of sterility, confirming again Adam's need for the fruitful vine.

²³ See also Evans (1958, p. 253) who notes that Adam has to encourage Eve to love him rather than herself: 'Eve's untutored feelings, like the natural growth of the plants around her, do not grow in the right direction spontaneously' (see IV.481ff).

²⁴ IX.586. See further Appelbaum (2002).

His job complete, Satan sneaks away, unnoticed by Eve who is preoccupied with the fruit:

Greedily she engorged without restraint
And knew not eating death. Satiated at length
And heightened as with wine, jocund and boon (IX.791-793)

At the very moment of the fall, a wine reference appears. As Appelbaum puts it, 'the juice of the fruit exhilarates [...] its substance acts as it were the liquid product of fermentation' (2002, p. 233). Eve is as if drunk. Or more precisely, she is 'heightened' - a term whose valences are impossible to miss. No longer is Eve the recumbent, creeping vine which needs the support of the elm to be fruitful. She is now 'heightened,' upright, without Adam or God. She has denied her role as the vine which both needs support but also gives fruitfulness to Adam's 'barren leaves.' Where the narrator has continuously depicted Eve as a vine, she is now characterised as having surrendered herself to the product of the vine, wine.

And suddenly wine is no longer the 'inoffensive must' but instead risks becoming the hellish liquor of Belial. The first hint is Eve's worship of the tree (IX.835-838), which she perceives containing 'scintial sap derived/from nectar, drink of gods.' The vinous overtones are clear; Eve now idolatrously associates wine ('nectar') with 'gods' rather than with God. Wine gives knowledge ('scintial sap') but with

it the effects of drunkenness: 'heightened as with wine.'²⁵ The point is confirmed when Adam, too, falls:

As with new wine intoxicated both
They swim in mirth and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings [...]
Carnal desire inflaming. He on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes, she him
As wantonly repaid: in lust they burn (IX.1008-1015)

As with Eve's fall, two notable effects are experienced: drunkenness and idolatry. New this time is lust, paired throughout the poem with drunkenness and here experienced in full force. In but a short time, their sorry, fallen state is confirmed as they sober up: 'in mutual accusation spent/the fruitless hours' (IX.1187-1188). The fruit is gone ('fruitless') but the long hangover remains.

Before the Fall, wine does not intoxicate and the vine both gives and needs support. After eating the fruit, Eve and Adam are prone in lustful drunkenness, 'heightened as with wine,' and the vine divorces its elm in their bitter recriminations.

²⁵ After Adam too eats of the fruit, instead of being heightened, both are prone on the floor (Sammons, 1986, see X.850 and X.864) – thus the literal effects of the fall. Gigante (2005) perceptively notes that Milton here is playing on the Latin 'sapere,' a verb meaning both 'to taste' and 'to know.'

Throughout *Paradise Lost* wine imagery plays a governing role in mediating to the reader a correct apprehension of the nature of Adam and Eve's relationship, the character of pre-lapsarian life and of heaven, and finally, of the first couple's new, fallen reality. In Milton's hands, the language of wine is an infinitely pliable metaphor which he places at the very heart of his epic and which he exploits to rich poetic effect.

5.3 Andrew Marvell

Andrew Marvell was recommended by and worked with John Milton for the Cromwell Protectorate before settling into life as Member of Parliament for Hull from the Restoration until his death. Never married, a contemporary reported, “he kept bottles of wine at his lodging, and many times he would drink liberally by himself, to refresh himself and exult his muse.”²⁶ His poetry spans numerous genres: romantic, political, religious, pastoral, in both Latin and English.²⁷ His pastoral poetry, however, remains his most celebrated work.

The pastoral genre is an ancient one, with both Greek and Latin authors deploying the form. From the beginning, pastoral verse was committed to a standard set of subjects, including a search for rural simplicity, stock characters such as the shepherd (Marvell’s version is the mower) and an elegiac recollection of a lost paradise. In classical versions, this was when humanity and nature were at one; in Christian versions, it was pre-Fall Eden.²⁸

²⁶ Hill (1997, p. 311) and for a chronology of his life and works, Smith (2007).

²⁷ Not mentioned in the subsequent discussion is the wine reference in *The First Anniversary of the Government under His Highness the Lord Protector*, lines 283-292. The reason for the omission is that the analogy is really one comparing Cromwell’s adversaries to the sons of Noah, the first viticulturalist and so only tangentially touching wine. Noteworthy for this study, however, is the poet’s image of Cromwell, like Noah, in the role of vine planter: ‘And only didst for others plant the vine/Of liberty, not drunken with its wine’ (287-8). A similar thought will recur in *The First Anniversary of the Government* – see below.

²⁸ Salerno (1968). In the tradition of pastoral poetry, a number of critics have noted that Marvell occupies a paradoxical position: while taking the genre to some of its highest points in English, he also subtly subverts it, bringing into question whether he really belongs in the canon of true pastoral poets. See further on this Chaudhuri (1989) and Alpers (1983).

The Garden is usually thought of as Marvell's finest pastoral poem (Smith, 2007) and, along with *To His Coy Mistress*, probably his most quoted. The first four stanzas are typical pastoral: the speaker has retreated from society to a more simple and virtuous world. But then the tone changes entirely in stanza five, here quoted in full:

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.²⁹

Critic Jim Swan has argued that, 'the crucial passage [in the poem] has been stanza V, with its evocation of an aggressive vegetable world urging its fruits on the passive speaker' (1975, p. 297). What follows in the final four stanzas is the speaker's removal from this carnal world into that of the mind. Stanza five, then, acts as a pivot midway through the poem, upsetting the pastoral convention established in the first four stanzas, and creating the need for the speaker's subsequent withdrawal. It is the focal point of the poem and at its heart appears wine imagery.

²⁹ Lines 33-40. All quotations from Marvell (2001).

What, then, is happening in this most important stanza? It is an almost delirious scene of willful fruits pressing themselves on the helpless speaker, with comic effect. Critics have attempted every interpretation: religious, sexual, Freudian and so on.³⁰ But critics are also agreed that attempts to pinpoint precise metaphorical meanings are almost always elusive in Marvell: 'the quality of Marvell's verse is such that the reader cannot believe that it relates only to a garden, or a pastoral conceit [...] there must be something else' (Larkin, 1979, pp. 152-153).

The most convincing path here may be to avoid arguing for one hermeneutic approach to the exclusion of any other, but instead to focus on the mood or tone of the verse. For the luxuriant language and comic effect cannot but help impress themselves on the reader. They are achieved through the vivid contrast between bountiful nature and the bumbling, stumbling speaker. A.J. Smith has noted, 'Marvell's garden poetry never lets us forget the world outside the garden, or our own incapacity to sustain such a paradisaical life for more than a moment.'³¹ This tension between paradise and the speaker's tacit awareness of his unjustified - even absurd - presence within it is what creates the peculiar mood of the stanza.

³⁰ See for instance: Swan (1975), Empson (no date), McRae (2011), Cousins (2016), Lerner (1972).

³¹ Smith, 1978, p. 71. See also Friedman (1970) and Salerno (1968).

After that long prelude, it is now possible to examine why wine imagery appears at the heart of the most important stanza in Marvell's most important pastoral poem. The other fruits mentioned in the stanza are more relevant for their action and effects on the speaker: their presence tells the reader something about the garden, or the speaker, but not about themselves. The 'luscious clusters of the vine,' on the other hand, are a far more equivocal symbol. For the grapes are not just fruits as the others are, they are 'the promise of wine' (see below). Wine springs miraculously from them, free of human intervention. This unaided wine production is the most pointed reminder in the stanza of the other worldly nature of this strange paradise; a wine only available through the absurd situation in which the grapes, 'upon my mouth do crush their wine.'

What the wine imagery represents in embryo is the whole mood of the stanza: the tension between bountiful nature (the grapes, the wine) and the speaker's awareness of its inherent impossibility, as A.J. Smith identified. It is at once joyful but elegiac because impossible. Wine needs the work of human hands, but that is denied here. The message appears to be that man has no place in this paradise, even if he fleetingly enjoys its effects before (literally) falling. It is this inability to sustain a place in paradise - signaled most explicitly through the joyfully impossible wine production - that causes the poet to retreat into his own mind in the subsequent stanzas.

That such an interpretation holds weight may be confirmed by another use of wine imagery in another pastoral poem, *Upon Appleton House*. Returning to the

theme of man's interaction with nature and his attempts to recover an Edenic past (Smith, N., 2007), Marvell's speaker struggles to remain in the garden:

Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines,
Curl me about, ye gadding vines,
And, oh, so close your circles lace,
That I may never leave this place³²

Susan Snyder has asked, 'why is it necessary to tie him up in order to keep him purportedly where he wants to be?' (1998, p. 154). And this returns the reader to the tension of struggling to maintain what is already lost. Here, nature must quell human nature if the speaker is to be permitted to remain there. But in the very act of speaking these lines, the speaker reveals his irrepressible humanity and the impossibility of remaining. An additional metaphorical valence of the vines is confirmed at the end of the stanza, when the overtones of wine are confirmed by reference to the Eucharistic blood of Christ's sacrifice: 'do you, O brambles, chain me too,/And, courteous briars, nail me through' (615-616).

In these two stanzas from two pastoral poems, Marvell uses vine and wine imagery as an equivocal symbol which reflects the state of the speaker within paradise, but in being there, already melancholically aware of its elusiveness. The imagery serves both to buttress and create the mood of the poem.

³² *Upon Appleton House*, stanza 77, 609-612.

The creation of mood is central to Marvell's most extended meditation using wine imagery, which appears in a political poem, *A Poem upon the Death of his Late Highness the Lord Protector*.³³ Written as a public elegy on the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658, *A Poem* contains a particularly beautiful and resonant use of vine and wine imagery, worth quoting in full (lines 89-100):

So have I seen a vine, whose lasting age
Of many a winter hath survived the rage,
Under whose shady tent men every year
At its rich blood's expense their sorrow cheer,
If some dear branch where it extends its life
Chance to be pruned by an untimely knife,
The parent-tree unto the grief succeeds,
And through the wound its vital humour bleeds,
Trickling in watery drops, whose flowing shape
Weeps that it falls ere fixed into a grape.
So the dry stock, no more that spreading vine,
Frustrates the autumn and the hopes of wine.

Cromwell is the old vine whose wine cheers his supporters for so many years.

Now a 'dear branch' - Cromwell's daughter Eliza, who died of cancer a month before him - has been mis-pruned, the sap seeps out like tears, weeping for the

³³ Note Friedman's important observation: pastoral 'was thought of as a device to allow the poet to speak about political or literary problems from within a conventional disguise' (1970, p. 7) and see also McRae (2011).

death of the parent vine and the loss of its future wine. The metaphor is plain, and deals once more with loss.³⁴ In the garden poems, it is the felt loss of paradise; here there is a similar sense of a wasted Eden, but caused by the death of a specific person. Loss in the pastoral tradition is always about the loss of humanity's place in perfect communion with nature (Friedman, 1970); Cromwell's death carries the same overtones: the whole order of things has been upset.³⁵ The use of the vine imagery here is clear: it is a particularly potent image because a vine has a specific product, wine, which can, and has been, lost.

Marvell's deployment of vine and wine imagery is used for the creation of a mood peculiar to the pastoral genre: the sense of irrecoverable loss while remaining so close to, or even within, a natural paradise. For Marvell's speakers, the appearance of this imagery is a byword for an internal sense of displacement or a melancholy awareness of what might have been. While resisting fixed metaphorical meanings, Marvell's creation of a sense of mood with this imagery is a notable poetic achievement.

³⁴ See further on loss, Cousins (2016).

³⁵ Which is precisely what happened – within two years England's experiment with Republicanism was over, and Charles II was on the throne.

5.4 George Herbert

Herbert was from an aristocratic family and the benefits of his upbringing included a Cambridge education. He became university orator and for a short period a Member of Parliament, before abandoning worldly ambitions. For the remainder of his short life he served as a Church of England priest to the small parish of Bemerton.

Herbert's poetry, unlike that of Milton or Marvell, is exclusively religious. Elizabeth Clarke has made the point that amid the strongly Protestant church under James I,³⁶ there was a 'preoccupation' with poetic words diverting 'attention from the "kernel" of [divine] truth' (1997, p. 1). Herbert's response to this challenge seems to have been to write particularly plainly and openly; his verse is always pure and unornamented. But in his best poems, this clarity of expression belies a considerable complexity and profundity of thought.³⁷

Herbert's use of wine imagery is widespread. In a brief but valuable survey of wine references in Herbert's work, Ivan Taylor argues that Herbert's repeated use of this imagery is indicative of his wealthy, cavalier upbringing (1957).³⁸

³⁶ See Lewalski (1979) for further background on the ascendant Calvinism in the Church of England at this time.

³⁷ For general background on Protestant poetry in the seventeenth century, see Lewalski's influential study (1979). She emphasises that the distinctiveness of Protestant religious lyrics came from their authors' dependence on the Bible as source of imagery and narrative.

³⁸ See historical context above (pp. 16-17) for why wine was considered a cavalier (Royalist) drink.

Whether or not that is the origin, wine features prominently in Herbert's work.

This is largely because Herbert returns again and again to the central Christian sacrament of the Eucharist. As one critic puts it, the Eucharist is the "marrow of Herbert's sensibility."³⁹ In this context, 'wine, not surprisingly, is almost exclusively sacramental.'⁴⁰

One poem in which wine, in its role in the Eucharist, has a leading position is *The Banquet*. The speaker describes a feast in which 'sweetness from the bowl/fills my soul.'⁴¹ But the speaker realises that 'only God' can 'such a sweetness [to] impart' (lines 21-22); he 'took blood, and needs would be/Spilt with me,/And so found me on the ground' (lines 34-36). Christ assumed flesh in the incarnation, and his blood was 'spilt' in the crucifixion. And now Christ meets the speaker (37-48):

³⁹ C.A. Patrides, quoted by Whalen, 2001, p. 1274.

⁴⁰ Whalen 2000, p. 31. The central Christian ritual of the Eucharist was a very live controversy during Herbert's life. At stake was the fundamental question of whether, as Catholics had long believed, the bread and wine underwent transubstantiation to become the literal body and blood of Christ, or whether, as Protestants understood it, the change was more metaphorical. The governing document of the Church of England, the Book of Common Prayer - finalised under Elizabeth I the prior century - seems deliberately to have left the question open. But orthodoxy in Herbert's Church of England at the time was decidedly Protestant and favoured the metaphorical position. While there is little doubt that Herbert was a loyal Anglican, there are moments in his poetry which indicate a more Catholic interpretation of the Eucharist (see below, pp. 40-41 and fn. 43).

⁴¹ Lines 7-8. All quotations from Herbert (2004).

Having raised me to look up,
In a cup
Sweetly he doth meet my taste.
But I still being low and short,
Far from court,
Wine becomes a wing at last.

For with it alone I fly
To the sky:
Where I wipe mine eyes, and see
What I seek, for what I sue:
Him I view,
Who hath done so much for me.

Instead of looking up at the cross, the speaker is now looking up at the Eucharistic cup, which he receives on his knees. The wine within it is a 'wing' which flies the speaker to heaven, where his tears are wiped away, enabling a clear view of the deity.

While critics are strongly divided on Herbert's views of what occurred during the Eucharistic ceremony,⁴² Calvinist critic Jeanne Clayton Hunter notes uncontroversially, 'the frequent use [Herbert] makes of ascension. Poem after

⁴² For summaries of the diverse critical positions, see Clarke (1997) and Whalen (2001).

poem finds the poet surmounting the world on wings of faith and climbing up into heaven' (1982, p. 62). In this poem, the ascent is performed by means of the Eucharistic wine; wine is the vehicle moving the believer from altar rail to the heavenly places. Robert Whalen has discussed Herbert's, 'emphasis on reception rather than the externals of ritual' (2001, p. 1301). In these terms, the Eucharist is not ritualised or fetishised as an act in itself, but instead, the burden of its spiritual efficacy rests on its *reception*. In *The Banquet*, it is the reception of the wine that elevates the speaker from earthly to heavenly, from a material to a spiritual vision.

In *The Banquet* the notion of what constitutes a true feast is reset. In *The Invitation* - the preceding poem in Herbert's collection, *The Church* - there is another realigning of the reader's expectations (7-12):

Come ye hither all, whom wine
Doth define,
Naming you not to your good:
Weep what ye have drunk amiss,
And drink this,
Which before ye drink is blood.

For those 'whom wine doth define,' repentance in the form of weeping is mandated. The cure is more drinking, but shockingly, this wine is already blood. 'Herbert's devotional enthusiasm is cultivated [...] through a fully sacramental

apparatus,' notes Whalen (2001, p. 1274); here, penitence for drunkenness is available only through the Eucharistic wine. 'To the faithful, then, wine delivers Christ's "heavn'ly blood,"' as Hunter notes (1982, pp. 64-65); as in *The Banquet*, in *The Invitation*, the reception of wine represents the promise of redemption.⁴³

Critic Christopher Hill has convincingly argued that in poems like these, wine is far from just a symbol. 'God's goodness here is neither to be merely spiritualised nor deferred to heaven; it is tangible. The sweetness of God can, even should, be taken in and consumed' (2010, p. 242). It is the essence of Herbert's thought that God's goodness is available *as wine to be consumed*; it is absolutely physical: '*in a cup/Sweetly he doth meet my taste*' and '*Drink this/Which before ye drink is blood*' (*The Banquet*, 37-38 and *The Invitation*, 11-12, this writer's emphasis). The thought also appears in *The Agony* (13-16, this writer's emphasis):

Who knows not Love, let him assay
And *taste that juice*, which on the cross a pike
Did set again abroad; then let him say
If ever he did *taste the like*.

The 'juice' here is the Eucharistic blood from the side of Christ on the cross. And here this juice has a particular quality (17-18):

⁴³ Whalen (2001) notes that 'before ye drink is blood' is one of the most proximate statements to a full (Catholic) view of transubstantiation, but there is insufficient evidence in this compact line to generate a full theology of the sacrament from it.

Love is that liquor sweet and most divine,
Which my God feels as blood; but I, as wine.

In *The Banquet*, wine is a wing to heaven; in *The Invitation* it is the blood of Christ. Here, it is all these and more: in 'tast[ing] that juice,' the recipient is consuming love itself.

The Agony is a poem dominated by wine imagery. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is depicted using traditional medieval imagery of Christ being crushed in a wine press;⁴⁴ his blood being the wine of salvation (7-12):

Who would know Sin, let him repair
Unto Mount Olivet; there shall he see
A man so wrung with pains, that all his hair,
His skin, his garments bloody be.
Sin is that press and vice, which forceth pain
To hunt his cruel food through ev'ry vein.

⁴⁴ See Walls (1998) for Biblical origins of the imagery (Isaiah 63.1-3 and Numbers 13) and Jones (2018) for medieval visual representations of Christ in the wine press. See Whalen (2001) for a detailed analysis of Herbert's use of the wine press imagery. Young (2000) notes the similarity of *The Agony* to a poem of another poetic contemporary, Henry Vaughan (1621-1695). In his poem *The Passion*, the following lines appear (15-20): 'Most blessed vine!/Whose juice so good/I feel as wine/But thy fair branches felt as blood,/How wert thou pressed/To be my feast!'

Whalen (2001, p. 1301) has called Herbert's handling of sin, 'undeniably material and somatic' rather than psychological. In this poem, the sheer physicality of Christ on the cross is underscored in the same way that the speaker 'feels' the love of Christ 'as wine.' Just as Christ redeemed the world through physical suffering, it is once more the physical act of consuming the wine that renders divine love efficacious for the believer: 'my God feels as blood; but I, as wine.'

The image of Christ and the wine press recurs in *The Bunch of Grapes*. The poem relies on typology, a form of Biblical reading which interprets stories from the Hebrew scriptures as types to be fulfilled in the New Testament stories of Christ.⁴⁵ But in this poem, it is the speaker rather than Christ who sees in the ancient stories a foreshadowing of his own experiences: 'have we too our guardian fires and clouds [...] we have our sands and serpents, tents and shrouds' (lines 15, 17). But, in spite of his Israelite-like sufferings, the speaker believes God has yet to fulfill in him the Promised Land achieved by the Jews: 'But where's the cluster? Where's the taste/of mine inheritance?'⁴⁶ But, to use Marvell's phrase, grapes are only 'the promise of wine.' The speaker quickly realises he already has the real thing, and more (22-28):

⁴⁵ For more on the rudiments of typology, see Lewalski (1979).

⁴⁶ Lines 19-20. 'The cluster' is a complex Biblical reference to a story in Numbers 13, in which Israelite spies bring back a cluster of grapes from Canaan, understood to show the bounty of the Promised Land. They bear the grapes on a pole, which in early Christian typological readings was understood to represent the cross of Christ, a reading Herbert develops in the next stanza. See Young (2000) on how Augustine's reading of this chapter became formative for the Christian tradition.

But can he want the grape, who hath the wine?
I have their fruit and more.
Blessèd be God, who prospered *Noah's* vine,
And much more him I must adore,
Who of the law's sour juice sweet wine did make,
Ev'n God himself, being pressed for my sake.

As R. V. Young (2000) has noted, the grapes from Canaan may only correctly be understood with reference to the sacrifice of Christ, the true vine, being 'pressed for my sake' on the cross. The speaker's desire for the antitype (the bunch of grapes) has been redirected towards the type itself, the 'sweet wine' of redemption offered by Christ: 'Christ's sacrifice affords him a less tangible but far more certain and all-embracing guarantee of spiritual joy' (Lewalski, 1979, p. 313).

The next poem in *The Church* is *Love Unknown*. Here, the speaker contrasts 'bare wine' with 'holy blood [...] taken inwardly, and most divine/To supple hardnesses' (lines 42, 44-45). The 'holy blood' here is the equivalent of the 'sweet wine' in *The Bunch of Grapes*. In both cases, the sheer physicality of the experience is emphasised: as Christ is physically crushed on the cross, the speaker experiences the taste of 'sweet wine,' which softens the 'hardnesses' of the believer. While a spiritual restorative, the blood of Christ experienced in the Eucharist meets 'an overwhelmingly physiological need' (Whalen, 2001, p. 1301).

Just as Christ's sufferings were experienced physically, so too the cure enabled by them is literally tasted by the believer.⁴⁷

In the hands of George Herbert, wine is more than a metaphor. Unpacking a complex series of Biblical and sacramental images, wine becomes, as the blood of Christ pressed on the cross, a spiritual cure experienced physically. When the believer receives it in the Eucharist, rather than simply being an image of divine love, wine is instead the vehicle - the wing - by which love is experienced, both the route to and the means of, salvation. In Herbert's heavily sacramental vision, the importance of wine in the spiritual life can scarcely be downplayed.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Hill (2010, p. 242): 'there is an overarching idea in Herbert's poetry best summed up in the famous passage from Psalm 34: "O taste and see that the Lord is good."'

⁴⁸ Not mentioned in this discussion due to space constraints are two other appearances of wine in Herbert's work. First, in *The Sacrifice*, Herbert's long poem in which Christ on the cross is the speaker. Christ here is the planter of the vineyard, but on the cross the harvest is his own blood (lines 161-164). And in *Love-joy*, a catechetical poem in which 'I saw a vine drop grapes with *J* and *C*/Annealed on every bunch' (lines 2-3). But here the bunches are props to the thrust of the poem rather than being its focus.

5.5 Richard Crashaw

Richard Crashaw studied at the University of Cambridge, remaining after his degree to become both a college fellow and curate in the Church of England. Inclined to high (Catholic) churchmanship, he was soon persecuted for his views and fled to Europe. There he formally converted to Roman Catholicism and died in Rome, only in his late thirties.⁴⁹ Although he wrote both secular and Latin poems, the focus here is on the English, religious poems for which he is most famous.⁵⁰

Crashaw's fame - or notoriety - as a poet is founded on his *baroque* sensibility.⁵¹ The hallmarks of his verse are abundance and excess; or as critic Douglas Bush puts it, 'its motto might be "Over-ripeness is all"' (1978, p. 270). According to Alexander Wong, Crashaw's verse is 'sumptuous in imagery, form, and mood.'⁵² Crashaw's baroque tendencies have occasioned an abundance of critical commentary simply because of its rarity in English seventeenth century verse. Where Milton, Marvell and particularly Herbert expressed a peculiarly Protestant and English precision and care in their verse, Crashaw is the conspicuous counterbalance. It is probably for this reason - his 'foreign' style - that Crashaw

⁴⁹ See Rambuss (2013) for a fuller biography.

⁵⁰ Containing less interesting wine references and not discussed below are the following poems: *Hope*, *Mr. Crashaw's Answer for Hope*, *The Tear*, *Out of Grotius His Tragedy of Christ's Sufferings*, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*.

⁵¹ Rambuss (2013), Lewalski (1979) and Bush (1978).

⁵² 2010, p. 358. But note Healy's (1986) dissent; the case for Crashaw's baroque has been overstated, he argues. But the critical consensus disagrees.

has conventionally been read as Catholic poet, in spite of the fact that his conversion came only after much of his verse had been written.⁵³

Crashaw's most critically discussed, and most controversial poem, is *The Weeper*. It is famous for its baroque image of Mary Magdalene's tears as cream, sipped by cherubs whose 'song/Tastes of this breakfast all day long.'⁵⁴ A number of critics have noted the abundance of fluids in Crashaw's poetry,⁵⁵ so it is no surprise that in the next stanza, the Magdalene's tears have turned from cream to another liquid (33-36):

[When] heaven will make a feast,
Angels with their bottles come;
And draw from these full eyes of thine,
Their master's water, their own wine.

Just as jolting as the thought of cherubs enjoying their breakfast is that of God ('their master') changing the Magdalene's tears to wine for a feast, ready to be bottled.⁵⁶ Liquids in Crashaw 'constantly mix[ing] in ways paradoxical or miraculous' (Warren, 1978, p. 281). While the wine here represents 'the happy

⁵³ Rambuss (2013). This paper reads him as a Catholic poet not only because he died in that religion, but because his subject matter is far more consistent with Catholic rather than Protestant devotion: the Virgin Mary, the saints, transubstantiation in the Eucharist etc. It is a common sense approach.

⁵⁴ Lines 29-30. All quotations taken from Crashaw (2013).

⁵⁵ E.g. Williams (1963), Warren (1978).

⁵⁶ The bottles are a good example of 'the deliberate injection of a homely word or circumstance amid lofty spiritual reflections' identified by Robert Adams (1955, p. 66) as typical of Crashaw.

token of acceptance and union' (ibid.), it still retains its elemental, fluid, nature. It is stubbornly earthly - needing bottling to be contained - rather than ephemeral.

The same thought occurs in *Sancta Maria Dolorum*, Crashaw's reworking of the Catholic lamentation hymn of Mary by the cross, the *Stabat Mater*.⁵⁷

O let me suck the wine
So long of this chaste vine
Till drunk of the dear wounds, I be
A lost thing to the world, as it is to me.⁵⁸

Here, Christ is the 'chaste vine' dying of his 'dear wounds.' The wine is Christ's blood on the cross, but also the blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Eugene Cunnar argues that, 'the poet participates in the [...] Eucharist, through participation in the compassion' (1990, p. 125). But while that is true, it is slightly too abstract. The almost shocking verb - 'suck' - is profoundly - even scandalously - bodily, as is the reference to drunkenness. 'The concept and imagery of inebriation merge very easily with those of erotic love,' as one critic puts it;⁵⁹ the sexual overtones here are intentional. Chastity, drunkenness, sucking, wounds - the speaker's

⁵⁷ See further on the background to the poem, Cunnar (1990).

⁵⁸ Lines 101-104 (stanza 11).

⁵⁹ Williams, 1963, p. 94.

holy devotion to Christ on the cross expressed through wine imagery here assumes shocking, erotic form.⁶⁰

Crashaw's longest poetic excursus on wine appears in one of his most critically discussed works, *An Apology for the Foregoing Hymn*. The 'foregoing hymn' - the previous poem in the collection - was dedicated to the Catholic saint, Teresa. Crashaw apologises for taking a female, Catholic, Spanish saint as a spiritual guide for a male, English, Protestant poet.⁶¹ But his apology is really a justification for eulogising Teresa, who, in the first part of the poem is a paragon of Christian virtues, worthy for imitation by people of all nations because she embodies divine love: 'O 'tis not Spanish, but 'tis heav'n she speaks!' (line 23). This love becomes the speaker's focus in the final 17 lines of the poem.

The speaker is not critical of the Spanish for being Spanish: 'there are enow whose draughts (as deep as hell)/Drink up all Spain in sack' (29-30). By contrast to this worldly drunkenness, 'let my soul swell/With thee, strong wine of love!' the speaker pledges (31).

⁶⁰ This is an example of what critic Vera Camden (1983) calls Crashaw's 'grotesque mixing of metaphors [...] the poet then must suck the son [...] Christ was as much the virgin as his mother' (pp. 258, 270). See also Wong (2010).

⁶¹ This poem, like so many of his best known works, was written prior to his conversion. See further on the need for the 'apology,' Rambuss (2013), Perry (2006) and Parrish (1980).

Let others swim
In puddles; we will pledge this seraphim
Bowls full of richer blood than blush of grape
Was every guilty of [...]
Some drink from men to beasts, O then
Drink we till we prove more, not less, than men,
And turn not beasts, but angels (31-37).

The imagery here comes thick and fast; the words and ideas almost tumbling over each other: drunkenness both in subject and poetic form. These verses are an example of what Alexander Wong (2010, p. 351) calls, 'a frenzied, unstable, and fluid structure': men, beasts, more, less, men, beasts, angels and so on. The sheer *fluidity* of the wine is underscored both through this iterative poetic form and through its content: 'swim,' 'puddles,' 'bowls' needed to contain it.⁶² And perhaps more importantly, as Austin Warren (1978) has pointed out, this is drunkenness in *religious* form: as much divine ecstasy as inebriation.

But the speaker has only just begun to develop his theme of divine intoxication. 'The second half of the poem [...] grows in excitement as [...] the poet seeks a special kind of wine, a blood-wine, that transcends the wine of grapes, just as his divine inebriation far excels the drunken, and debilitating, state of ordinary men' (Parrish, 1980, p. 158).

⁶² Williams (1963, p. 84): the abundance of fluids in Crashaw's verse 'assists the fluid manner of the versification.'

Let the King

Me ever into these his cellars bring
Where flows such wine as we can have of none
But him who trod the winepress all alone (37-40).

Crashaw's imagery here comes from the Song of Songs (2:4) and from the medieval imagery of Christ in the winepress previously discussed with reference to Herbert's *The Agony*. George Williams has commented, 'Crashaw could not be content with one draught of superior wine; he must into the cellar. There the vast assortment of unsealed love invites him to take now one kind, now another' (1963, pp. 93-94). These different types of wine occupy the final verses of the poem:

Wine of youth, life, and the sweet depths of love;
Wine of immortal mixture; which can prove
Its tincture from the rosy nectar; wine
That can exalt weak earth; and so refine
Our dust, that at one draught, mortality
May drink itself up, and forget to die (41-46).

These climactic verses in the poem intend more than simply to present an image for the believer's consideration. The speaker's 'goal is not so much to signify as to transfuse the reader with divine blood, thereby incorporating him or her into

the body of Christ,' as Nandra Perry puts it (2006, p. 12). The purpose of Crashaw's radically physical, bodily presentation of wine now begins to emerge. In speaking so humanly, with such worldly concerns as spilling wine, the reader understands the verse on his or her own terms. But in so understanding it, the reader gets swept up too in the divine inebriation, in the fluidity of the wine and the verses. And once there, humanity is enveloped in God's immortality: 'at one draught, mortality/May drink itself up, and forget to die.'

Crashaw's baroque tendencies - his emphasis on excess - finds ready outlet in the language of wine and of drunkenness. His use of wine imagery is acutely *affective*. It is emotional, shocking, intoxicating; it sweeps the reader up in the divine ecstasy and inebriation, in order to land him safely in the divine embrace. Crashaw's fluid poetics mirror his subject matter; both form and content embody his vision of a divine, ecstatic inebriation.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Commonalities and Differences in the Use of Wine Imagery

It is evident that the four poets offer very different depictions of grapes, vines and wine. This difference is manifested both in terms of the subject matter of the poetry of each, and in their use of wine imagery metaphorically. The poets also diverge as they tend to emphasise *either* grapes and vines *or* wine itself.

Wine imagery fulfills a vital function for each of the poets, insofar as it goes to the very heart of each of their broader poetic projects in terms of *subject or thematic matter*. For Milton, grapes and wine come to embody notions of sin and the Fall; for Marvell, loss and regret. For George Herbert, the Eucharist is the heart of the Christian life, and wine mediates this sacrament to the believer. For Crashaw, wine and its intoxicating properties are respectively cause and effect of religious ecstasy, which, for Crashaw, is fundamental to Christian experience.

When using wine imagery metaphorically, for John Milton, vine and wine have specific and systematic metaphorical meanings: the vine is Eve, Adam's fertile helpmate. Wine is a symbol both of pre-lapsarian heavenly bounty and of potential and actual corruption after eating the fruit. Where prior to the Fall wine is not intoxicating, thereafter it induces drunkenness and hellish lust. Milton's use of wine imagery is organised and systematic.

By contrast, in keeping with his reputation as a poet of more than usually elusive meaning, Andrew Marvell's use of wine imagery hinges less on vine or wine having dedicated metaphorical values and instead on the creation of a mood or sensibility. In his hands, the imagery becomes central to the pastoral project of meditating on the loss of paradise and of a fundamental sense of internal dislocation among human beings.

George Herbert exploits a dense array of imagery and allusion in his deeply sacramental poetry. The Eucharist is the outworking of the sacrifice of Christ, 'pressed' on the cross, his blood becoming the wine of salvation. This 'sweet wine' is tasted physically in the Eucharist and acts as a spiritual restorative, becoming a 'wing' to heaven for the believer. For Herbert, wine transcends the category of metaphor because when understood correctly, the reception of wine in the Eucharist moves the believer beyond the realm of signs and of language, and to the heavenly places themselves. Wine is a means to the divine end. In this sense, it fulfills a similar function to Herbert's prayerful poetry itself, in which words and signs are intended ultimately to yield to wordless divine truth.

Finally, for Richard Crashaw, wine is far *less* metaphorical. His presentation is radically bodily and physical, the fluid nature of his verse emphasising the fluidity of wine. Wine needs containment and causes drunkenness. But this is a particularly equivocal view of wine: it is dangerous for all these reasons, but also represents the potential for union with the divine. Understood correctly, it is a

portal to heaven; the source of a divine, quasi-erotic inebriation which unites believer with God in a form of divine ecstasy.

Although all poets mention both vine/grapes *and* wine, it is noteworthy that Milton and Marvell tend to linger on grapes and vines, while Herbert and Crashaw more often dwell on their product, wine. As a pastoral poet, it is hardly surprising that Marvell should be inclined to the plant and its fruit; they are the subject matter of his meditations. In Milton's case, Adam and Eve are in a *garden*, so the same applies; but, after the Fall, wine seems to take on a newly significant role as the couple experience hangover-like symptoms. In both Herbert and Crashaw, the identification of Eucharistic wine with Christ's blood makes an irresistible poetic subject, but both are also aware that Christ is the 'true vine' and both exploit the medieval imagery of Christ in the wine press. But in general, for these religious poets, it is wine with all its sacramental overtones that is a particularly potent symbol of divine love.

6.2 Conclusion

On the basis of this study, in the seventeenth century wine appears to have a broad range of valences and connotations. These include those associated with the potential for corruption and evil through inebriation. But elsewhere, wine is not merely *not* dangerous, it is positively divine, understood both metaphorically and literally as fundamental to the spiritual life of the Christian believer.

It is also important to note that wine does not always sustain such weight of poetic meaning. Wine is the product of the annual autumn harvest, as Marvell reminds the reader; it must be bottled and stored in wine cellars (Crashaw). It is for consumption with food, as the example of Raphael's dinner with Eve and Adam shows, but if misused, will cause drunkenness (Milton, Herbert and Crashaw). Wine and its effects - because familiar to the reader - have a resonance which is readily exploited by the poets, to rich poetic effect. In doing so, the poets occupy a place in a tradition of English poetry dwelling on wine and its many meanings. This inheritance finds its next outpouring in another golden era of English poetry: the nineteenth century. Keats, Shelley and Tennyson all dwell on wine and its myriad properties.

Arguably the most understated of the four poets studied is Andrew Marvell. In his work, the multiple personalities wine can assume are mirrored by his allusive verse. Never content to settle on a single image or metaphor, the sands of

meaning are always shifting beneath the reader's feet when reading Marvell. And so too with wine among the poets studied: wine consistently resists straightforward or fixed meanings. And it is this quality which renders wine such an attractive poetic proposition for them.

This study has been limited to only four, albeit important, poets of the era. Potentially, a wider range of poets studied would have increased the likelihood of identifying consistency in the use of wine imagery. However, from the selected sample, it is possible to conclude that wine imagery in seventeenth century poetry is an almost limitless resource for the poet to exploit thanks to its remarkably broad tonal and metaphorical potential. It is a subject matter that can be put to rich use for dramatic, romantic, political and particularly religious purposes and represents a mainstay for these four poets to call on for their diverse poetic ends.

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8. Appendix

8.1 Approved Research Paper Proposal

IMW Research Paper Proposal Submission Form			
Student ID	24670	Date of submission	December 2018
RPP Version No	3	Name of Advisor	Vicky Burt MW
Note: RPPs must be submitted via your Advisor to the IMW			
Proposed Title			
Depictions of grapes, vines and wine in the work of four seventeenth century English poets			
Research Questions: Define the subject of your Research Paper and specify the specific research questions you plan to pursue. (No more than 200 words)			
<p>The research paper (RP) will study wine imagery in the work of four important seventeenth century English poets: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, George Herbert and Richard Crashaw.</p> <p>The seventeenth century in England was an era of particular turmoil after the relative stability of the Elizabethan era. But English society was prospering as never before and wine imports dramatically increased during this period as wine became a staple of the middle classes.</p> <p>Wine imagery appears frequently during the poetry of the era and assumes a variety of complex metaphorical meanings, including religious, political and romantic. The most important poets of the era all deploy wine imagery.</p> <p>The RP will assess the diverse meanings of wine imagery in the works of the four poets and discuss its presence in seventeenth century poetry.</p> <p>Research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How is wine imagery deployed by Milton, Marvell, Herbert and Crashaw?2. What conclusions may be drawn about the use of wine imagery in seventeenth century poetry?			
Background and Context: Explain what is currently known about the topic and address why this topic requires/offers opportunities for further research. (No more than 200 words)			

In spite of competition from a new range of products on the English market such as gin, tobacco and coffee, social and wine historians have consistently identified the beginning of the seventeenth century as a period of rapid growth in wine imports to England. It was also a period which saw changing patterns of wine consumption in which a broader class of people began to drink wine. It is a pivotal moment in the story of wine in England.

Meanwhile, literary critics have noted the presence and significance of wine imagery in poetry of the same era. However, analysis of it has been piecemeal rather than systematic, and there is no single study devoted to analysing wine imagery in seventeenth century poetry, or indeed, even in the work of a single one of the four poets discussed here.

By contrast, numerous other richly metaphorical themes have been identified by critics in these poets. For example: in Milton, the elements, the shield, animals, the earth; in Marvell, grafting, the sword, the stork; in Herbert: clothing, architecture; in Crashaw, eating, wounds.

Given how recurrent wine imagery is in these poets, its limited study represents a significant gap in the extant research.

Sources: Identify the nature of your source materials (official documents, books, articles, other studies, etc.) and give principle sources if appropriate. (No more than 150 words)

Background and context on the place of wine in seventeenth century England will be sourced from academic articles and books by wine historians such as André Simon and from social historians including Phil Withington and Marika Keblusek.

Background on the critical importance of the poets will come from Norton Critical Editions *Seventeenth Century Poetry, 1603-1660* and Norton Critical Editions *Paradise Lost*.

To answer the research questions, criticism on the individual poets will be sourced from a wide range of academic articles and books, including critical editions of the poetry of each, and academic articles dedicated to specific aspects of each poet. Critics include: Robert Appelbaum and Stephen Dobranski (Milton); Nicholas Salerno (Marvell); Kathryn Walls and Ivan Taylor (Herbert) and Alexander Wong and Robert Adams (Crashaw).

All academic articles and books used for research are available in the New York Public Library collections, to which the author has full access.

Research Methodology: Please detail how you will identify and gather the material or information necessary to answer the research question(s) and discuss what techniques you will use to analyse this information. (No more than 500 words)

The introduction will provide context by discussing seventeenth century England and the position of wine within English society of the time. It will refer to records of wine imports to England and social historical accounts of patterns of consumption during the period. This information will be compared to the previous century to demonstrate how patterns of consumption were changing. In both cases, a synthesis and analysis of the extant academic literature on the subjects will be carried out. The introduction will justify the study of wine imagery in the poetry of this era by demonstrating the newly prominent place of wine in seventeenth century England.

The two research questions assess the work of the four named poets. The RP will not attempt an exhaustive analysis of wine imagery in seventeenth century verse (a topic far beyond its scope), or even among the four poets. Instead it will identify and analyse the most poetically significant appearances of wine imagery. For example, if a poet mentions grapes among a list of other fruits in a garden, that is unlikely to merit discussion. If, however, grapes appear to have a strong metaphorical resonance, the RP will discuss it.

The four poets have been selected on the following basis:

1. Critical recognition and importance. Critics are agreed on the importance of the poetic contribution in seventeenth century England of all four poets; all four continue to be studied and taught today.
2. Among seventeenth century poets, each selected for the study must be considered a - if not *the* - leading exponent of their poetic genre by critics. These two points ensure the relevance and importance of the poets selected.
3. Within the range of poetic genres, four have been selected as being singularly important within the seventeenth century. These are, with the critically recognised leading exponent: epic (John Milton); pastoral (Andrew Marvell); Protestant devotional (George Herbert); Catholic devotional (Richard Crashaw).

To answer the research questions, the works of the four poets will be analysed for appearances of wine imagery. For Milton, only the very long poem *Paradise Lost* will be studied, since it is critically considered by far his most important work.

For the first research question, the richest poetic references will be identified and critically assessed with reference to prior academic research. Critical studies of the poets in academic articles and books will be used as a foundation for the analysis of the poetry, providing both explanations of poetic references and interpretation of the verses. Building on this research, the analysis will interpret the meanings and uses of wine imagery by each poet.

The second research question will build on the answers to the first question in order to discuss commonalities or differences in the treatment of wine imagery across the four poets, identify overarching themes and critically assess the diverse ways that the language of wine is put to use by these writers. It will also include a discussion of which types of imagery are most common in each poet and why.

Potential to Contribute to the Body of Knowledge on Wine: Explain how this Research Paper will add to the current body of knowledge on this subject. (No more than 150 words)

While being far from a comprehensive study, the RP will offer an overview and introduction to the topic of wine in seventeenth century poetry based on the four named poets. It will represent the first broad discussion of how the language of wine is taken up and used in seventeenth century English poetry. It will also offer a first dedicated analysis of this imagery by the four named poets.

More broadly, imagery of grapes, vines and wine offer particularly attractive opportunities for poets given their metaphorical associations, especially with reference to Christianity. Rather little wine research has been carried out on poetry in general, and this study offers a first step towards increasing knowledge on the subject.

Proposed Time Schedule/Programme: This section should layout the time schedule for the research, analysis and write-up of the Research Paper and should indicate approximate dates with key deliverables. *Dates of submission to both Advisors and the IMW must be those specified by the IMW.*

- **June-July 2018:** research historical context; write introduction
- **July-August 2018:** research critical literature on poetry and identify and analyse references to wine within poems
- **September-October 2018:** write central part of RP (research questions)
- **Friday 12 October 2018:** confirm to Institute will submit RP in December
- **October 2018:** write conclusion and bibliography
- **Friday 9 November 2018:** submit to RP advisor
- **November-December 2018:** make final amendments
- **Monday 17 December 2018:** submit to Institute