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‘A Bottle of good solid Edifying Port... (and) this plaguy *French* Claret’: investigating the political, economic, and social significance of wine drinking and intoxication in eighteenth-century English literature.

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1. Summary

This study investigates the depiction of wine drinking and intoxication in early eighteenth-century English literature, in selected works of Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, John Gay, and Bernard Mandeville.

A detailed reading of primary texts of these authors is combined with an extensive review of their contexts, from literary reception and criticism, to political, social, economic, and cultural histories, to assess how the rising culture of wine drinking and intoxication was represented in the authors' works, and the significance of such depictions.

The research illuminates a broad variety of attitudes towards wine drinking and intoxication. The selected works originated in a turbulent time of political factionalism, duplicitous diplomacy, and international warfare (encapsulated in the debates around the War of the Spanish Succession and the Methuen and Commercial Treaties). They arose in the midst of an emerging commercial and financial revolution, with continental and colonial trading bringing about improved living standards, the birth of an embryonic stock market and new forms of credit, all coalescing to establish new forms of wealth which fundamentally altered traditional societal structures and moral values. In these contexts, wine consumption choices and patterns became symbolic acts, from which political loyalties and one's moral position on economic and social change, could be inferred. The following paper reveals the variety of such positions on wine consumption in selected texts, ranging from anxious denunciation to celebratory exultation.

2. Introduction

In 1728, the first year of King George II's reign, 29,956 tuns of wine were imported into England, a figure which was not exceeded until the end of the century.¹ More wine was imported, and more was drunk, by an ever-widening constituency. That this phenomenon took place alongside the gin craze (the consumption of which exploded from half a million gallons in 1700 to five million in 1735), reiterates the intensely bibulous character of 1700-1750 in England.² With international trade bringing rising prosperity and (for some) economic emancipation, wine was one of many luxury imports (such as coffee, tea, china, tobacco, sugar, silk), which became democratised into middle-class consumption over this period.³

More than these other products, wine seemed uniquely able to manifest latent yet profound significance. In *The Spectator*, Richard Steele has 'Abraham Froth' declare:

Verily, Mr. *Spectator*, we are much offended at the Act for Importing *French Wines*. A Bottle or two of good Solid Edifying Port, at Honest *George's*, made a Night Cheerful, and threw off Reserve. But this plaguy *French Claret*, will not only cost us more Money, but do us less good.⁴

¹ Francis (1972, p143). See also Hori (2008). A note on measurement: tuns is a direct citation from the primary sources and measurement units prevalent in the day (old style, non-imperial liquid measurements), which were used until 1825 in England. In this system, a tun is equivalent to 2 pipes/butts, or 4 hogsheads, or 252 gallons, or 1008 quarts. More detail on conversions from contemporary measurement units can be found in Ludington (2013, xii-xiii).

² Clark (1983, p209-213) adds further context of the boom in the consumption of beer, noting one estimate that about 28% of annual per capita expenditure in England was devoted to ale and beer, that the range of beers and ales available multiplied rapidly, and also increased in strength. This arose even within the context of rising levels of cider production in Herefordshire, and a growing taste for distilled spirits, where from 1690s to 1740s, the average annual amount of British spirits paying excise rose almost nine-fold, from 843,300 gallons to 7,200,300 gallons.

³ As detailed variously by Brewer (1997); Ogilvie in Blanning (2000); McKendrick (1982), the last of which also gives the interesting example of the boom in the porcelain industry, in pp100-145.

⁴ Italics and capitalisation in original. *The Spectator* (19 April 1711), as quoted in Ludington (2013, p65). Note that George's Coffee House was a famous Whig literary haunt, *The Spectator* a renowned Whig periodical, written and published daily from March 1711-Dec 1712 by Richard Steele (1672-1729) and Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and their coterie of Whig literary associates.

This opinion encapsulates the view that one's choice of wine, where one drank it (and by implication, with whom), had become loaded signifiers in eighteenth-century England. In the eyes of Whiggish patriots like Steele/Froth, it hardly felt an exaggeration to argue that the fate of the nation itself hinged on one's choice of drink.

In a way, this is not surprising. Alcohol, as historian James Nicholls explains in his discussion of the politics of drink, 'has always existed both as an activity and as a set of questions: questions about the rights and wrongs of intoxication, about the role of government in regulating free trade, about the limits of personal freedom, about gender, class, taste, and health.'⁵ Alongside other imported products, wine became, in England, an issue fraught with implications for fiscal and commercial policy, subject to the capriciously shifting priorities of political allegiances. Alongside other alcoholic beverages, the act of wine drinking had social ramifications, and evinced a wide spectrum of moral reactions. As consumption levels escalated and drinking became more ubiquitous, such questions rose ever more insistently to the forefront of intellectual discourse. While certainly not the only product capable of so embodying the forces of change and modernity, the depiction of wine in contemporary literature, when contextualised by the debates that it stimulated, can become 'a barometer of the cultural anxieties and political attitudes' at work in the period.⁶

The following sections will delve into the relevant contexts in 1700-1750 England before reviewing the way in which the selected authors depicted the culture of drinking and intoxication, and then teasing out the meaning and significance of such depictions. 1750 was chosen as a cut-off point conveniently encompassing the death of Pope in 1744 and

⁵ Nicholls (2011, p2).

⁶ Nicholls (2011, p2).

Swift in 1745, and the fall of Prime Minister Robert Walpole in 1741, which heralded a new era after the decades of his dominance of English political and social life.

3. Methodology & Literature Review

The first task was to select the authors who offer the most fruitful commentary on their contemporary contexts. Satire (verse, prose or dramatic) was identified as the literary mode most intimately focused on a critical relationship to public life, while also counting the most celebrated authors of the period as practitioners.⁷ The selected authors espoused varied political beliefs and inhabited different social circles, providing a comprehensive view of contemporary attitudes.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744), Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), John Gay (1685-1732), and Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) were chosen as the preeminent satirists of their day, whose literary importance sits alongside their immersion in their contemporary schisms. Pope is widely regarded as the foremost poet of his age, for his inimitable translation of the *Illiad* and impeccably-poised mastery of the heroic couplet; Swift was a ruthless political pamphleteer and lacerating prose satirist of human hypocrisy, most notably in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726); while Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) was one of the most successful plays of the age, launching a new and much-imitated genre of the ballad opera.

In a letter to Gay in 1728, Swift specifically celebrates how their three *magna opera* (*Gulliver's*, *Beggar's*, and Pope's *Dunciad*) came out within eighteen months of each other,

⁷ Satire is, by definition, a commentary on, and a critique of, the writer's contemporary time, as opposed to a genre such as lyric, which is arguably often more personal and self-referential. The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in England have been seen as a 'Golden Age of Augustan Satire', from the landmark works of John Dryden (1631-1700), and culminating in the dazzling achievements of Pope, Swift and Gay. The widespread acceptance of the importance of this genre or mode in the period can be seen in the Oxford University Press' publication *The Oxford Handbook of Eighteenth-Century Satire*, and their recognition that this was 'the most important period of British satirical writing'. For other representative analyses of this genre, see Nokes (1987) which offers a classic study of eighteenth century satire through the prism of Horatian versus Juvenalian forms of 'Raillery and Rage'; Speck (1998) which notably pins this down more tightly into the social and political contexts; while Marshall (2013) attempts to excavate the broad hinterland of more minor satiric authors beyond the most celebrated works.

a triumphant sequence of satirical assaults on contemporary reality. Pope, Swift and Gay were, together with John Arbuthnot and Thomas Parnell, part of the 'Scriblerus Club', an informal literary association gathering to satirise what they perceived to be 'the abuse of learning' in the scientific, literary or political spheres. That Arbuthnot was Queen Anne's physician, and that the group's meetings were intermittently graced by the presence of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford and chief minister for the Queen (whom Swift worked closely with on government propaganda) only reiterates their proximity to the nexus of Tory power during 1710-1714.

In comparison, Dr Bernard Mandeville, Dutch émigré, suspected Whig, and practising doctor of hypochondriac disease, occupied less rarefied circles, but offers in his notorious *Fable of the Bees* (1714, 1723), a fascinating counterpoint to the Scriblerians.⁸ One of the most scandalous publishing sensations of the age, *Fable* horrified a broad spectrum of intellectual society and was famously decried as a public nuisance by the Grand Jury of Middlesex. In the midst of the (supposedly) immoral theories, Mandeville offered a searing take on the state of society, economy, and politics of his time. Mandeville may be less known today, but this should not obscure from his fame in his own day. In his entry on Mandeville in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Maurice Goldsmith notes that

⁸ The publication history of the *Fable* is complex. Mandeville's satirical poem *The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves turn'd Honest* was first published anonymously in 1705 to little fanfare. Almost a decade later in 1714, the poem would be reprinted (also anonymously) as part of *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, incorporating a commentary, *An Enquiry into the Origins of Moral Virtue*, and twenty digressive "Remarks", purportedly annotating (often in whimsical ways) lines in the original poem. It was the second edition of this work, in 1723, which also included two new parts, *An Enquiry on Charity and Charity-Schools* and *A Search into the Nature of Society*, that garnered the most notoriety, leading Mandeville to append a "Vindication" to subsequent editions from 1724 to 1732. "Part II" of *Fable*, comprising six Socratic dialogues, was published in 1729. Kaye's edition (Mandeville, 1924) is authoritative, and will be referenced here alongside Harth's (Mandeville, 1989).

'Mandeville's views were so widely known in the eighteenth century that there is scarcely any intellectual at the time who did not...mention them'.⁹

After selecting the authors, a literature review was conducted to digest the considerable volume of new research on the eighteenth century. Recent works by revisionist historians have brought about a re-examination of the politics and history of eighteenth-century England, banishing old simplifications in favour of fresh perspectives on what critic Richetti calls the 'difficult birth pangs of early modernity...and the slow shift from traditional landed forms of wealth and hierarchical social organisation, to a credit and consumer economy and a relatively fluid social order'.¹⁰

Historians like Barry, Brooks, and Porter have democratised our understanding of the transformational changes in this period by elevating the history of the 'middling people' beyond the accounts of the traditional elites. This has been enhanced by McKendrick's pioneering salvo in identifying a broad-based "consumer revolution" in the early eighteenth century, preceding the more frequently studied Industrial Revolution. McKendrick's work fuelled a new body of scholarship examining cultural and material history. Most relevant to

⁹ Goldsmith details as just the first wave of devotees that: "His conjectural history of society and language, emphasis on the role of the passions rather than reason, and claims that progress and commercial civilization were founded on necessary and beneficial vices set the terms for further moral, historical, and economic discussion in the Enlightenment. At the beginning of his *Treatise of Human Nature*, David Hume named Mandeville among significant moral philosophers, while denying in the *Enquiry into the Principles of Morals* as well as in the *Treatise* that moral distinctions were entirely the artifice of politicians... Adam Smith devoted a chapter of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* to rebutting Mandeville's moral theory but adopted some of his descriptions of commercial society in *The Wealth of Nations*. The defense of luxury by Voltaire in *Le mondain* and by Jean François Melon in his *Défense de 'Le mondain'* relied on Mandeville. In the *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* and the *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau accepted that material progress coincided with a shift in morality away from primitive simplicity, treating the change as moral decline..." (*Dictionary of National Biography*)

¹⁰ Richetti (2005, p5). Richetti's focus in his critical anthology is primarily on situating literary texts within the messy realities of their historical contexts, a path preceded by the work of Speck (1998). Broader historical studies consulted for this paper include Brewer (1997) on eighteenth century English culture; Colley (2003) on the birth of the English national state and identity after 1707; and the critical anthologies of Blanning (2000) and Langford (2002) on the history of eighteenth-century Europe and England respectively.

this paper are Francis, Ludington and Nicholls' studies on the history and politics of wine in Britain, and Clark's history of the English alehouse, which sit within the broader context of landmark works on the history and sociology of consumption from Mennell, McCracken, Miller, Weatherill, and Campbell.¹¹

Subsequently, concordances and e-text searches of the authors' works helped locate relevant references to wine. The most pertinent of these were selected for inclusion within this paper. Analysis of the texts was supported through reviewing biographies and criticism on each author.

Access to academic publications was gained through the physical stacks and e-collections at the London Library, the British Library and the Bodleian Libraries.

¹¹ All works listed in Bibliography. Barry (1994), Porter (1991), McKendrick (1982), Francis (1972), Ludington (2013), Nicholls (2011), Clark (1983), Mennell (1985), McCracken (1988), Miller (1996), Weatherill (1988), Campbell (1996).

4. Background Contexts

The period from post-Restoration to early Hanoverian England was one of constitutional upheaval, intense partisanship, and nervous anxiety about whether to safeguard the tentative gains of the Revolution (the primacy of parliament) or the Restoration (the return of the monarchy). The trauma of the Exclusion Crisis (1679-1681), where Parliament schemed futilely to remove the Catholic James II from the line of inheritance, his ascension in 1685 and deposition in the “Glorious Revolution” (1688) sweeping the Protestant William and Mary to power, and James into exile in France, begat decades of subversive Jacobite rebellions that were not comprehensively quelled until their defeat at the Battle of Culloden (1745). These weighty issues provoked a clash of opposing views in the country which were mirrored in polarised factions in parliament.

Whigs (broadly in support of constitutional monarchism, the Hanoverian dynasty, and the primacy of the Protestant Church of England) fought against Tories (champions of the exiled Stuarts, suspected sympathisers with Roman Catholics, defenders of the interests of the traditional landed nobility). So intense was this ‘rage of party’ in the decades following 1688, that the two sides contested eleven general elections in fourteen years. Frequent reversals in Parliament underscored the tentative nature of power: the early years of the eighteenth century saw the dominance of the Junto Whigs diluted by Queen Anne in favour of the moderate Godolphin and Marlborough Tory government, before shifting in 1710 to a more assertive but short-lived Tory ministry under Robert Harley, until the death of Anne (1714) ushered in the resurgent Whigs, who retained an iron grip on government until George III’s ascension in 1760.

This is the fraught political background within which one must understand the debates about wine imports and consumption. Wine was one of England's most important and costly imports, and thus a product where decisions around taxation and tariff structures presented opportunities in terms of fiscal and foreign policy, where political allies could gain trading leverage, and rivals suffer penalties.

Such preoccupations originated as early as 1663, when John Fortrey, in *England's Interest and Improvement*, avowed that importing French wine was itself a surrender to tyranny.¹² They were further exacerbated by the passage of the Methuen treaties in 1703-1704, which offered favourable terms to Portugal to export wine to England if they imported English cloth, attempting simultaneously to open up a new export market, and buttress the alliance against France.¹³ This provoked a backlash that culminated in the bitter parliamentary disputes around the Commercial Treaty bill (1713), where the Tories unsuccessfully attempted to decrease the punitive tariffs on French wine.¹⁴

While Ludington in his history of the politics of wine in Britain, has detailed that, 'contrary to popular wine lore', port replaced claret on the English market *before*, and not *because of*, the Methuen treaties, it remains that the consumption shift was driven by the political impetus of Parliament's imposition of a French wine embargos in 1679-1685, and again

¹² Francis (1972, p75).

¹³ The third treaty negotiated by John Methuen on behalf of England, the Anglo-Portuguese Commercial Treaty of 1703, stated Portugal would permit the importation of English woolen cloth, and in return 'her sacred Royal Majesty of Great Britain be obliged in her own Name, and in the Name of her Successors, at all times to admit into England, Wines gathered from the Vineyards belonging to the Portugal Dominions, as that at no time... any more shall be demanded for such wines.. than what shall, after deducting a third part of the Customs or Impost, be demanded from a like quantity of French Wine.'

¹⁴ The Commercial Treaty bill was proposed in 1713 by the Tory ministry under the Earl of Oxford and Viscount Bolingbroke, to soften the terms of trade with France. Despite Tory leadership in the House of Commons, 76 Tory MPs, under lobbying pressure from the local textile industries, ultimately abandoned Oxford and Bolingbroke to vote against the bill. All subsequent attempts to revive this failed.

from 1689-1697, as the Exclusion Crisis raged.¹⁵ When France became the exiled Stuarts' shelter, and the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14) broke out, this mood of grievance deepened, further underscoring the continued salience of France as a thorn in the side of the monarchs succeeding James II, and the potency of French wine as a symbol in the propaganda war between Whigs and Tories.¹⁶

Each side was vociferous in their positions. The Whig periodical *The British Merchant* insisted that port drinking to support the Portuguese trade was the patriotic duty of an Englishman, even if their own palates preferred other tastes. Such sentiments were encapsulated in an ironic ditty of Swift's:

Be sometimes to your country true,
Have once the public good in view:
Bravely despise champagne at court,
And choose to dine at home on port.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ludington (2013, p3). The outline of this trend can be seen in Ludington's figures for Bordeaux wine exports to Scotland, which stood at 1,050 tuns in 1699-1700, dropping to zero in 1701-1702, and 61 tuns in 1702-1703, when the embargo was in effect, before rising to 257 tuns in 1703-1704, as the Wine Act legalises indirect trade, and soaring to 1,028 tuns in 1706-1707, with the Act of Union brought Scotland together with England, making it more convenient to import claret to England via Scotland. Charles Davenant's 1713 Report to Parliament showed that over the war from 1702-1712, French wines shrunk to just 7% of England's total wine imports, compared to 58% for Portuguese, and 22% for Spanish. See also Francis (1972), who details the changing volumes of wine imports over this period. In 1703, early in the War of the Spanish Succession, only 345 tuns of Spanish wine was exported to London. This grew to 5,914 tuns in 1710, and 4,652 tuns in 1712. French wines, on the other hand, reached a comparative high of 2,551 tuns in 1713, the first year of the peace, and then declined steadily, to less than 1,000 tuns annually after 1728.

¹⁶ The War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) was the culmination of intense emotions of Anglo-French rivalry in this time. The war arose when King Carlos II of Spain died in late 1700 with no clear successor. Carlos wrote in his will his wish to be succeeded by the French King Louis XIV's grandson, Philippe, Duke of Anjou. However war broke out when King William of England and Stadtholder of the Dutch provinces, joined with the Holy Roman Emperor, the Duke of Savoy and the Aragonese Spanish, to support the more tenuous claim of the Archduke Charles of Austria, as a way of undermining and reducing the influence of the French Bourbon dynasty across Europe. The Whigs largely supported this war, while the Tories disputed its purpose and costs. See John Lynn's essay on 'International rivalry and warfare' in eighteenth-century Europe in Langford (2002, p192-196).

¹⁷ Jonathan Swift, 'On the Irish Club', as quoted in Francis (1988, p128). Rather than supporting these sentiments, Swift was in fact satirising the unthinking Irish support for English national policies that did not benefit Ireland, and mocking the exaggerated intensity of the sacrifice implied.

Patriots needed to drink port so that the Portuguese would continue buying English cloth, while the protectionist tyrannical French were undeserving of English money for wine, as they would not buy English goods, but funnel further investment into their army, making them harder to defeat on the battlefield – or so the Whig argument went.¹⁸

Against this, Tory noblemen deprived of their claret were spurred to declaim more loudly against the government. Cyrus Redding bewailed that because of the Methuen Treaty, ‘Englishmen were subsequently compelled to drink the fiery adulterations of an interested wine company...our taste for port wines was forced upon us by our rulers, really out of jealousy towards France. There was no necessity to search for any other reason why port wine was so generally drunk in England’.¹⁹ The Tory poet and diplomat Matthew Prior was hardly more upbeat, complaining, ‘it was a dismal thought that our warlike men might drink thick port for fine champagne’.²⁰

As Charles Petrie notes, ‘Changes of taste are mainly imposed from without, and are the results of legislation, taxation and wars; they are forced upon, rather than demanded by, the average palate’.²¹ Wine in the turbulent first half of the eighteenth century became firmly entwined with notions of national identity, while the role of government in promulgating drink choice was a hotly contested, and still unresolved, matter.

The intensity of feeling around the trade treaties showcase not only the partisan symbolism wine acquired, but also the vitally important role of trade in the period. The marked increase

¹⁸ See Ludington (2013, p61-81) and Francis (1972, pp117-142) for detailed explication of these debates.

¹⁹ Redding was a wealthy journalist whose influential *History and Description of Modern Wines* was key in educating a wider public about the benefits of reducing the tariffs on French wines. Despite this position, he was in fact a staunch (if confidential) Whig supporter.

²⁰ Francis (1972, p103).

²¹ Petrie (1953, p454).

in continental and colonial trade volumes was a key driver of economic growth in England; as a French foreign office bureaucrat recognised sourly in 1736, 'Trade makes the wealth of England'.²² The importance of trade to the English economy, and the identification of national interest with high exports, focused minds on the question of balance of payments. Mercantilism, as this European economic orthodoxy of the time came to be known, believed that total demand was finite, and thus trade policy was a zero-sum game to establish the greatest balance of payment advantage over one's trading partners. The fact that most of the imports from France were luxury goods (e.g. wine, brandy, silk, lace), only raised the stakes further, provoking tortured deliberations about the nature of 'necessary', versus 'unnecessary', consumption.

The other consequence to the explosion of trade in this period was the associated development of public credit, in terms of financial innovations, such as new instruments of monetary policy (the Bank of England and the National Debt), and new forms of borrowing and lending (notably in the growth and bursting of the South Sea Bubble in 1720).²³ These novel forms of commercial transactions came to fundamentally transform the structure of the English economy. As economic analyses were still inescapably entwined with moral and cultural considerations, vociferous debates arose to query the extent to which commerce

²² Ogilvie (2000, p122).

²³ An overview of these developments is beyond the scope of this paper, but extensively discussed by Nicolson (1994), Ogilvie (2000), and Dipper (2000).

was a public good, or whether it could even be accommodated within traditional social orders and moral values.²⁴

While the Whigs, dominated as they were by upwardly-mobile tradesmen and merchants, were excited by the dynamism of this new commercial world, others were less sanguine. Against Addison's rhapsodic vision of 'Public Credit' as this 'beautiful Virgin seated on a Throne of Gold' (admittedly a rather extreme example of the Whig position),²⁵ should be considered the plaintive lament of the conservative German social theorist Justus Möser, 'Can one conceive of anything which the shopkeeper does not now trade in, either secretly or publicly? Does he not watch out for all opportunities and crazes, in order to introduce something new, wonderful and foreign?' Where Addison sees an inspiring and munificent deity, Möser recoils from the new forms of capitalism, seeing in the expansion of the market a serious threat to traditional institutions.²⁶

Reactionaries like Möser were waging a losing battle. As historian Christof Dipper argued, a combination of unprecedented population growth, the commercialisation of the commodity world and the advance of the cash economy, with the increasing value associated with capital, brought about a creeping devaluation of traditional ethics, culminating in the lapsing of the moral stigma attached to luxury by the 1770s.²⁷ Indeed McKendrick argues that as

²⁴ The readings compiled by Clark (2003) illuminates further the vibrancy of this discussion, and the positions taken by contemporary theorists on how the new exchanges were impacting on a traditional and hierarchical social order, whether commerce fostered civility and sociability, or loosened the ties of duty and morality between men; and how morally acceptable luxurious living was. Of particular relevance for this paper were Dudley North's "Discourses on Trade" (1691), one of the first economic writings to justify the value of luxury imports; the highly influential *Cato's Letters* (1720-1723), by disaffected Real Whigs John Trenchard & Thomas Gordon, which bewailed the pernicious decline in morality due to commerce; Daniel Defoe's countering patriotic celebration of "The Complete English Tradesman" (1726); and Montesquieu's keen distinction between the economy of necessity and the economy of luxury in his *Spirit of the Laws* (1748).

²⁵ *The Spectator*, No.3, 3 March 1711, 'Allegory of Public Credit', as quoted in Nokes (1995, p262).

²⁶ Ogilvie (2000, p129).

²⁷ Dipper (2000, p56).

consumption volumes, and the range of products consumed, saw a boom across a broader swathe of society, this caused a permanent shift in consumption behaviours and attitudes.²⁸

These changing attitudes are central to this paper's investigations, where they are considered in relation to the most basic of all sociological consumption activities: eating and drinking. As fundamentally sociable activities which unavoidably communicated signals around purchasing power, lifestyle choices and the infrastructure of sociability (e.g. coffeehouses, alehouses, taverns), drinking reflected the essence of the new economy replete with the commodities supplied by merchants and colonies and manifested in the lives of the elite and middle classes. 'The drinking house', declares historian Clark, 'was at the heart of the social world of pre-modern Europe', detailing the way in which alehouses, inns and taverns 'performed important victualling services [and] acted as the centre point of a galaxy of commercial, governmental, and leisure activities'.²⁹ Furthermore, the public imbibing that took place in these locations was marked by 'conspicuous expenditure, with a significant number of customers keen to follow the latest fashions in drinking taste'.³⁰

Wine was not just another imported commodity that seemed to embody the disintegration of traditional values through arriviste emulation; with its capacity for intoxication, it had an even more pernicious effect on morality, such that the nascent Society for the Reformation of Manners listed alcohol as high on its target of sins to be reformed.

In summary, the evidence in this period points towards a fraught time of transition, in society and in the structure of the economy, even while English citizens were struggling to

²⁸ McKendrick (1982, p15).

²⁹ Clark (1983, p14).

³⁰ Clark (1983, p215).

negotiate an intense factionalism in politics and a constitutional order that seemed always in flux or under threat. Against these contexts, one's attitude to the consumption of luxury became a lightning rod in revealing underlying beliefs. Pulled between opposing imperatives of indulgence and moral denunciation, the consumption of wine exposed fault-lines in an anxious and rapidly changing society. The following sections will explore how such concerns were refracted in each author's depictions of wine drinking and intoxication.

5. Analysis

5.1 John Gay

John Gay's early poem *Wine* (1708) celebrates wine first from a classical (albeit parodically so) stance, as a source of poetic inspiration and companionable pleasure, before shifting into an uneasy blend of mock-heroic and panegyric. Gay transposes the pastoral idiom of Bacchanalian indulgence into the seedy reality of a contemporary tavern where he toasts the notables of the day with his companions, drinks more, and then stumbles home drunk and satisfied.

Gay's use of the Horatian commonplace about wine-inspired poetry ("no poem can please long, or survive, which are written by drinkers of water") as his epigraph³¹ signals the surface conformity to the genre, as does the reference to Dionysus later in the poem:

Insensibly thus flow the *Unnumber'd* Hours,
Glass succeeds Glass, till the DIRCÆAN GOD
Shines in our Eyes, and with his Fulgent Rays
Enlightens our glad Looks with lovely Die;
All Blithe and Jolly that like *Arthurs* Knights
Of Rotund Table, Fam'd in Pristin Records,
Now most we seem'd, such is the Power of Wine.³²

The "Dircean God" is Dionysus, God of Wine, born at Thebes on the Dirce, who not just enhances companionship, but allows Gay and his friends to see themselves as Arthurian

³¹ *Nulla placere diu, nec vivere carmina possunt, | Quæ Scribuntur aquæ potoribus* from Horace's *Epistles* I. xix.2-3. Translation from Gay (1974), edited by Dearing and Beckwith. All subsequent quotes from Gay's poetry are from this edition.

³² Lines 255-261. All italics and capitalisation in this and subsequent quotations are from the original, as reproduced in Dearing's edition.

legends. These criss-crossed literary references are typical of the mode, and apparent from the opening quartet, where Gay launches into the eulogy:

Of happiness terrestrial, and the source
Whence human pleasures flow, sing heavenly muse,
Of sparkling juices, of th'enliv'ning grape
Whose quick'ning taste adds vigour to the soul.³³

Gay's parody of the famous opening of *Paradise Lost* transforms Milton's pain of sin into the fiery spirit of alcohol, sliding from the forbidden fruit of Eden into the fruit of the vine that brings pleasure to a post-lapsarian world. The imagery coyly adds sensual meaning to biblical adjectives of the Holy Spirit- 'sparkling, enlivening, quickening, vigour'. In his biography of Gay, Nokes highlights the residual influence of his strict Puritan upbringing, and argues that by so "teasingly decant[ing] spiritual causes into spirituous effects", Gay was making 'a cavalier gesture...pok[ing] fun at the sober pieties' of his past, through a poem of 'adolescent bravado [that] perverts sober Miltonic sentiments into bacchanalian pranks.'³⁴ The deployment of Milton's sonorous blank verse to this fast-paced depiction of exuberant intoxication only reiterates the incongruity.

This flippancy of approach would have been familiar: *Wine* takes its place within a trendy literary sub-genre of paeans to alcoholic beverages, set off by John Philips in *The Splendid Shilling* (1701), and *Cyder* (1708). Though neglected today, Philips was extraordinarily popular in his time, inspiring countless imitators, laureates each of gin, beer, ale and punch, to pen votaries on similar lines.³⁵ This genre of alcoholic paeans and rhapsodies on

³³ Lines 1-4.

³⁴ Nokes (1995, p55).

³⁵ See for example Christopher Smart, *Hop-Garden* (1752), about hop cultivation & beer making in Kent; Richard Ames, *In Search of Claret* (1691) and *A Farewell to Wine* (1693) about wine drinking in London; the anonymously published poem *Strip Me Naked, or Royal Gin Forever* (1751).

drinking offer insight into the vinous culture of the times. Like Phillips, Gay's poem utilises this burlesque of Milton's verse, to render the abstract (celebration of the spirit / inspiration from drinking) into the tangible, both as bathos and as celebration. By shifting the Bacchanalian pastoral into a modern city tavern, transforming the fair maiden into the tavern madame, the shepherd into the proprietor, Gay understands that the inherent tension in this genre of bathetic paeans works both ways. It simultaneously elevates the banality of everyday details into classical poise, while bringing the Ancients down from their pedestals and exposing the vulnerabilities behind uncritical imitation of classical forms of pastoral and georgic.

Despite the classical frame, once Gay enters into a more detailed depiction of wine, he cannot escape his own contemporary context. When the proprietor arrives:

We sit, when thus his Florid Speech begins:
Name, Sirs, the WINE that most invites your Tast,
Champaign or Burgundy, or Florence pure,
Or Hock Antique, or Lisbon New or Old,
Bourdeaux, or neat French Wine, or Alicant:
For Bourdeaux we with Voice Unanimous
Declare, (such Sympathy's in Boon Compeers).³⁶

As described, wine consumption reached heady heights in the eighteenth century. It was not just volumes which increased, but also the range of consumers, and breadth of styles available.³⁷ Wine drinking, initially an elite pursuit, rippled out to broader demographics:

Charles Davenant, Inspector General of Customs, declared in his 1711 report to parliament

³⁶ Lines 196-202.

³⁷ Burnett (1999, p144). Even these numbers are likely to understate the true extent of consumption, for official Custom statistics do not take into account smuggling and the illicit trade.

that the increased volumes of wine imported from novel origins 'had been found satisfactory, at least by the middle classes, who are now the greatest consumptioners'.³⁸ Indeed, it was during Queen Anne's reign (1702-1714) that wine first started to be advertised to the general public: Nicholls cites examples for Spanish wines (mountain, malaga, canary, palm-wine, Barcelona, Ribadavia, Galicia) in periodicals targeted at the middle classes. Elsewhere Portuguese wines are marketed in almost specialist detail: 'red and white port to Lisbon and red Barabar from the opposite bank of the Tagus, to Viana and the red Moncao, and also to Figueira and Anadias.'³⁹ These newer Iberian wines flowing into the English market varied the traditional diet of French and German as Gay, even as a new entrant into London society, recognised.

Even in a London replete with a wealth of options, claret nevertheless remained a prestigious commodity, while also bringing with it social and political overtones. The choice between claret and port, as discussed, functioned as coded signifiers of political allegiance, not just within Gay's poem, but also in other examples such as Ames' *The Search after Claret* (a sorrowful lament on the scarcity of claret in London after the Methuen agreement), and Addison's *Guardian* piece of 1713 (which recounts a lawsuit between Count Tariff and Goodman Fact whose battle is an allegory of the dispute between the Portuguese and French trades).⁴⁰

While writing *Wine*, Gay was establishing his literary credentials and cultivating patrons in London. In this aspirational mood, Gay takes pains to prove he is at one with his "Boon Compeers" and going along with claret is exactly the sort of 'emulative consumption' that

³⁸ Francis (1972, p128).

³⁹ Nicholls (2011, pp126-127).

⁴⁰ Addison, *The Late Tryal and Conviction of Count Tariff*, as quoted in Ludington (2013, p76).

McKendrick discusses. Furthermore, at the critical point when the wine is poured and they stand for a toast, the narrator is careful to demonstrate irreproachable patriotism by toasting a sequence of notables, starting with the Queen:

We strait t' our Arms repair, experienc't Chiefs;
Now Glasses clash with Glasses, (charming sound,)
And Glorious ANNA'S Health the first the best
Crowns the full Glass, at HER inspiring Name
The sprightly Wine Results, and seems to Smile...⁴¹

Followed by her consort Prince George, through to 'the Hero Malbro... Devonshire Illustrious... Prudent Godolphin... Faithful Sunderland.. and Halifax [in whom shine] the surest Judgement and the brightest Wit'. Unlike Addison, who was comfortably ensconced within the Whig establishment, or Ames within the Tories, Gay's anxiety about prematurely closing doors meant that his toasts generously salute Tory, Whig, renowned generals, and patrons of the art. *Wine* functioned to keep Gay's options open by 'walk[ing] a political tightrope... display[ing] a dexterity in political compliment without risking commitment to a clear party line'.⁴² Yet with Gay's habitual ambivalence and discomfort at being a petitioner to the great, what he offers in *Wine* is more complex than simple patriotism and tokenised respect, with sardonic cues lying uncomfortably alongside the tone of overt panegyric. As critic Downie notes, with Gay's unusual choice of adjectives, and within the context of a parodic *Paradise Lost*, 'it is far from clear whether [Gay's] is a list of faithful or fallen angels'.⁴³ Toasting Whig worthies with claret at the precise moment England was engaged in the Whig-promoted War of the Spanish Succession with France, and when French wines

⁴¹ Lines 210-214.

⁴² Nokes (1995, p58-59).

⁴³ Nokes (1995, p58-59).

were officially being embargoed, only sharpens Gay's insinuation of the hypocrisy that existed at the highest levels in society.

Ashley Marshall states that Gay 'has a disconcerting tendency to present unhappy social truths with merry exuberance. He is undoubtedly conscious of the social issues he raises... but the literary contexts in which he presents them are such, generically or tonally, to undercut them.'⁴⁴ Contra to Marshall however, the light-hearted exuberance of *Wine* and the warmth and camaraderie in which the rituals of drinking are detailed, stand out in Gay's work precisely because of the later shift towards a less carefree, darker, moralist's pose. In *The Birth of the Squire: An Eclogue in imitation of the Pollio of Virgil* (1720), Bacchus is invoked again, but this time to be chastised rather than honoured:

Assist me, Bacchus, and ye drunken Pow'rs
To sing his friendship and midnight hours!
Why dost thou glory in thy strength of beer,
Firm-cork'd, and mellow'd till the twentieth year...

Think on the mischiefs which from hence have sprung!
It arms with curses dire the wrathful tongue:
Foul scandal to the lying lip affords,
And prompts the mem'ry with injurious words.
O where is wisdom, when by this o'erpower'd?
The State is censure'd, and the maid deflower'd!
And wilt thou still, O Squire, brew ale so strong?
Hear then the dictates of prophetic song....

⁴⁴ Marshall (2013, p176).

Boldly he drinks, and like his glorious Sires,
In copious gulps of potent ale expires.⁴⁵

Gay's treatment of a provincial squire, from his humble birth, to banal life, and ignominious death from excessive drink, is in a similar vein to his use of stereotypical characters of vice in *Beggars' Opera*. The tolerant amusement is layered over with a recognition of human frailty and immorality, and more specifically in the poem above, into a condemnation of the pernicious effects of drink. Gay indicts the excessive consumption of alcohol as the cause of wide-ranging societal ills - mischief, slander, discord, rape, and national dishonour. The "expiration" of the Squire's life as he chokes in inebriation, is the dark side to the 'quickenning spirit' in *Wine*, just as the apostrophe to Bacchus here, instead of raising our bathetic existence to godly heights, merely reinforces the depths to which man has sunk.

⁴⁵ Lines 87-90, 93-100, 107-108.

5.2 Alexander Pope

Pope's *The Dunciad* (1728-1743), a grand mock-epic verse satire of London's literary scene, filled with eviscerating takedowns of his enemies and buttressed by satirical footnotes which shed further disparaging contexts on his allusive insults, was a landmark literary achievement of the period.⁴⁶ With elegant poise and impeccable style, Pope serves out vivid literary and scatological retribution to the objects of his scorn, with the mock-heroic frame of Augustan Rome rendering them even more petty and diminished in comparison. Pope, who considered himself an ultimate arbiter of aesthetic taste, weaponises drink choice here as a symbol of intellectual and literary depravity.

Of Leonard Welsted (1688-1747), who criticised the joint Scriblerian play *Three Hours after Marriage* (1717) and who produced anti-Jacobite propaganda for the Hanoverian regime, Pope writes:

Flow, Welsted, flow! like thine inspirer, Beer,
Tho 'stale, not ripe; tho 'thin, yet never clear
So sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull;
Heady, not strong; o'erflowing, tho 'not full.⁴⁷

While there is no evidence that Welsted over-indulged in alcohol,⁴⁸ he had alleged the necessity of wine to poetic inspiration in a poem to his patron lamenting his empty cellar. Pope suggests that Welsted's poetry arises instead from the cheaper inspiration of beer,

⁴⁶ The drafting and publishing history of *The Dunciad* is exceedingly complex. The original work (in three books, with Lewis Theobald as the king of the dunces) was first published 17 May 1728. This was later garnished with an extensive prose apparatus and reprinted as *The Dunciad Variorum* on 10 April 1729. A fourth book, added on 20 March 1742, was entitled *The New Dunciad*. Finally, the complete four book version, which replaced Theobald with Colley Cibber as the main protagonist, was published 29 October 1743. All references to *Dunciad* are to the final four book edition, as edited by Valerie Rumbold in (Pope, 1999)

⁴⁷ *Dunciad* Book III, lines 169-172.

⁴⁸ Pope (1999, p240), note to line 169.

hence its dismal muddy quality, represented by Pope in the dreary unvarying repetition of diction and monotonous rhythm of the lines above. Pope hammers this point home in his prose satire, *Peri Bathous*, an explanation of how to write badly, or as Pope calls it, “sink in poetry”, where he notes that ‘it is with the Bathos as with small Beer, which is indeed vapid and insipid, if left at large and let abroad; but being by our Rules confin’d and well stopt, nothing grows so frothy, pert and bouncing’.⁴⁹

Within *Dunciad*'s pages, Pope does not allow his poetic rivals to be successful enough to afford any style of wine. Only the classical scholar Richard Bentley, whom Pope regarded as a narrow professional who had lost sight of the true meaning of literary taste, and who promulgated objectionable Whig priorities as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, is permitted to have an extreme fondness for Port:

As many quit the streams that murm’ring fall,
To lull the sons of Marg’ret and Clare-hall,
Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
In troubled waters, but now sleeps in Port.⁵⁰

Pope’s note to this line, ‘But the learned *Scipio Maffei* understands it of a certain Wine called *Port*, from *Oporto* a city of Portugal, of which this Professor invited him to drink abundantly’ indicates Bentley’s taste for Port represents an arcane preference alongside his excessive scholarly zeal, and is as suspect as his motives for waging war on the Cambridge establishment.⁵¹ Ever the conservative, Pope presents (fine) wine in *Dunciad*

⁴⁹ Pope (2008, p200).

⁵⁰ *Dunciad* Book IV, lines 199-202.

⁵¹ Ludington (2013, p125) calls Pope out for deprecating Bentley while at the same time expressing a similar fondness for port himself, in a letter to Humphrey Wanley in 1725, where Pope asks for ‘a Douzaine of quartes of goode and wholesome Port wine, such as yee drinke at the Genoa Arms.’ Ludington notes, ‘the taste for port... could easily transcend political and cultural arguments.. but the social connotations made it ripe for exploitation’.

not as typical of the emerging middle-class existence, but the domain of leisured elite taste, acquired through expensive foreign travel, such as that of young noblemen during a Grand

Tour:

Intrepid then, o'er seas and lands he flew:
Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too...
To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,
Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons....
To happy Convents, bosom'd deep in vines,
Where slumber Abbots, purple as their wines...
Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,
And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian ground...
Try'd all *hors-d'oeuvres*, all *liquors* defin'd
Judicious drank, and greatly-daring din'd...⁵²

The watery diction emerges here, not muddy as beer, or as soporific as the waters of port in which Bentley slumbers, but rushing, energetic, and bold. This is not wine for devout religious rites, as the sly sensuality of his depiction of the Abbots “bosom'd deep in vines” attests, but immersion in luxurious consumption, extravagant intoxication and caressing indulgences.

Wine was a core signifier of wealth and status. In Pope's later *Epistles on the Use of Riches*, he shifts from the flippant portraits of vice in *Dunciad*, to an extensive discussion about luxury and consumption, which at times verges on a ferocious attack on the misuse of wealth. Paradoxically (and provocatively), these are addressed to two of England's

⁵² *Dunciad* Book III, lines 293-294, 297-298, 301-302, 311-312, 317-318.

wealthiest men— Lords Burlington and Bathurst.⁵³ At dinner in the *Epistle to Burlington*

(1731) Pope notes:

But hark! The chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:
The rich buffet well-coloured serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face
Is this a dinner? This a genial room?
No, 'tis a temple, and a hecatomb,
...

Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet-wine, and 'God bless the King'.
In plenty starving, tantalized in state,
And complaisantly helped to all I hate,
Treated, caressed, and tired, I take my leave,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;⁵⁴

In this case of excessive consumption, Pope depicts himself satiated with the weight of slaughter, luxury, opulence, service. Though realising that it is through such conspicuous 'charitable vanity', that 'hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed', he argues that consumption for ostentatious demonstration of wealth is malign. It is not just about having money, but the productive purposes to which it should be put. In *Burlington's* final lines, Pope imagines what this productive approach to consumption would entail:

⁵³ Lord Allen Bathurst (1684-1775) was one of twelve peers created in 1712 to secure a Tory majority. His Park at Cirencester was landscaped with the advice of Pope. He was created an earl in 1772. Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington (1695-1753) was an architect and patron of the arts, promoter of Palladian movement, supporter of artists such as Handel and Gay. Biographical notes are derived from the Dictionary of National Biography and Pat Rogers biographical index in Pope (2008).

⁵⁴ Lines 151-156, 161-166. All subsequent references to the *Epistles* are from Pat Roger's OUP edition of Pope's major works (Pope, 2008)

Another age shall see the golden ear
Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
Deep harvests bury all his pride has planned,
And laughing Ceres reassume the land.⁵⁵

The planting over of fallow decorative land for wheat, passive pastoral replaced by productive nature, was a Georgic commonplace, as in Pope's thinking forward to a potential revival of the Golden Age, where 'use alone... sanctifies expense, | And splendour borrows all her rays from sense.'⁵⁶

The *Epistle to Bathurst* (1733) crystallises the notion that England's fallen state is due to the prevalence of the corrupt monied interest that has shaken the stability of the traditional land-based model of wealth. This new system of 'paper-credit', of ephemeral financial instruments such as stocks, lottery tickets, bills of exchange, letters of credit, are what 'lends corruption lighter wings to fly... can pocket Senates, can fetch or carry Kings' (ll 40, 42). While the City falls prey to the unregulated excesses of capitalist speculation, the Court is debauched by the pursuit of power and pecuniary greed, and society filled with flatterers and fools. In *Bathurst*, this decay of the land is almost literal: while the rich riot, the labourer starves. If not for the corrupting appeal of this new system, Pope asks:

Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,
With all their brandies or with all their wines?

The import of foreign alcohol is an insidious part of the rampant indulgence in luxurious living which signifies moral degradation, physical enfeeblement, and national decline:

Whole slaughtered hecatombs, and floods of wine,

⁵⁵ Lines 173-176.

⁵⁶ Lines 179-180.

Fill the capacious squire, and deep divine!...
'tis George and Liberty that crowns the cup,
And zeal for that great house which eats him up.⁵⁷

Pope's work is marked with trepidation that the new changes in economy and society have led to a negative transformation of his world. His only hope is that people will recover the sense of moderation, taste, and discernment, as espoused in Bathurst:

The sense to value riches, with the art
T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart,
Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursued,
Not sunk by sloth, not raised by servitude;
To balance fortune by a just expense,
Join with economy, magnificence;
With splendour, charity; with plenty, health;
Oh teach us, Bathurst! Yet unspoiled by wealth!⁵⁸

As the shifting placement of his finely-balanced caesurae within the metre in the above lines attests, this 'balance' is challenging, if not impossible, to consistently achieve. The belaboured neoclassicism of Pope's style itself signals his rueful understanding that this idealised past of his vision, where a harmonious social order of righteous moral individuals who live judiciously and consume with moderate, impeccable taste in a way that productively benefits society, was, for all his anguished exhortations, never more than an impossible dream.

⁵⁷ Lines 51-52, 203-204, 207-208.

⁵⁸ Lines 219-226.

5.3 Jonathan Swift

In contrast to Pope, Swift shows a different side to the grand homes of the nobility - the activity below-stairs. His *Directions to Servants* is a parodic take on the “conduct book” form initially directed at instructing women on virtuous behaviours but expanded out over the period into works with broader didactic intent. Swift’s narrator professes to instruct domestics through chapters directed at each member of the household. In “Chapters directed at Butlers”, the narrator declares:

“I come now to a most important Part of your Oeconomy, the bottling of a Hogshead of Wine, wherein I recommend three Virtues, Cleanliness, Frugality, and brotherly Love... As to your Bottles chuse the smallest you can find, which will increase the Number of Dozens, and please your Master; for a Bottle of Wine is always a Bottle of Wine, whether it holds more or less; and if your Master hath his proper Number of Dozens, he cannot complain...”⁵⁹

Even though wine in this period became more available to the middle classes, it was still a valuable commodity beyond the habitual reach of the working class, and thus an object of covetous appeal. As typical with Swiftian satire, its mention serves to expose the absurdities of social norms and the hypocrisy of human character, especially when applied to what Lance Bertelsen called that ‘simultaneously exploitative and exploitable’ situation, ‘the touchy dynamic of domestic service’.⁶⁰ The blandly reasonable directions to get the most out of the bottling process of a hogshead comically inverts our expectations by putting this towards maximum extraction for the Butler’s consumption.

⁵⁹ Swift (2013, p467). References to *Directions to Servants* are from Valerie Rumbold’s edition, as cited in bibliography.

⁶⁰ See Lance Bertelsen’s essay on ‘Popular Entertainment and instruction’, in Richetti (2005, p70).

Further in the chapter, Swift recommends that:

This is the Time that in Honour to your Master, you ought to shew your Kindness to your Fellow-Servants, and especially to the Cook; for what signifies a few Flagons out of a whole Hogshead? But make them drunk in your Presence, for fear they should be given to other Folk, and so your Master be wronged...⁶¹

Swift's narrator's voice is one that is hard to pin down; as Nokes argues, 'beneath all the assertions of solidarity is a strong undertone of contempt. The tone hovers between comic indulgence and horrified fascination at the revelation of such minutely-calculated anarchy, such precisely-graded levels of chaos.'⁶² While overtly speaking with tolerant amusement, and utilising the dignified idiom of honour, kindness, and beneficence, Swift's narrator applies this to expose fraud, drunkenness, and deceit. This transforms the domestic space into a miniaturised parody of the jealousies, schemes, and intrigues of the Court, with each player as insistent on their traditional rights, privileges and precedents, and as snobbish as the other in utilising etiquette as a cloak for greed.

Comparison of this with Swift's *Polite Conversations* is instructive, where Simon Wagstaff, another unreliable Swiftian narrator, purports to compile an instruction manual on the art of good conversation in genteel company. Wagstaff muses on one evening when:

“as I was dining in good Company of both Sexes, and watching...for new Materials, wherewith to fill my Pocket-Book, I succeeded well enough, until after Dinner, when the Ladies retired to their Tea, and left us over a Bottle of Wine. But, I found we were not able to furnish any more Materials...so in absolute Despair, I withdrew and went to attend the Ladies at their Tea. From whence, I did conclude, and still continue to

⁶¹ Swift (2013, p468).

⁶² Nokes, (1987, p189).

believe, either that Wine doth not inspire Politeness, or that our Sex is not able to support it without the Company of Women.’⁶³

The coy ironic jibe aside, it is clear that wine and drink function for Swift as the grease to social discourse, no matter his ambivalent thoughts on the ultimate moral rectitude of drink. For Swift was himself a wine lover, and his choice of name for the narrator of *Gulliver’s Travels* may reflect this: ‘Lemuel’, which means ‘dedicated to God’ in Hebrew, was the biblical King who declared, ‘Give strong drink unto him who is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy heart’, and ‘Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more’ (Proverbs 31:6,7). Indeed, Swift’s approach to wine navigates between two opposing poles, of pleasure and delight in wine as antidote to the miserable reality of this world, and also a fear of wine as dangerous exposé of man’s moral failings.

Six years after his return to Ireland upon Queen Anne’s death, Swift produced *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacturers* (1720), the first in a series of economic pamphlets on Ireland’s problems. Swift questions English interference in Irish affairs, and urges greater Irish economic self-reliance through a boycott of English imports, voicing the spirited declaration that the Irish should burn everything from England “except their People and their Coals”.⁶⁴ Swift takes aim squarely at the import charges on wine in the associated *A Proposal that All the Ladies and Women of Ireland Should Appear Constantly in Irish Manufacturers* (1729):

As to the additional duty on wine... I declare [my opinion] to be positively against it.

⁶³ Swift (2013, p277).

⁶⁴ Swift (2008, p401).

First, Because there is no nation yet known, in either hemisphere, where the people of all conditions are more in want of some cordial, to keep up their spirits, than in this of ours. I am not in jest....

But the article of French wine is hardly tolerable, in any degree of plenty, to a middling fortune: and this it is, which by growing habitual, wholly turns the scale with those few landed men, disengaged from employments, who content themselves to live hospitably, with plenty of good wine in their own country, rather than in penury and obscurity in another, with bad, or with none at all.⁶⁵

Swift argues for lower taxation on French wine, to bring it within reach of 'those of middling fortune', as opposed to a narrow circle of the wealthiest landowners. Beginning from the first indignity of England's restriction of Ireland's trades through the Woollen Act of 1699, Swift expands his outrage to other forms of Ireland's enslavement and mistreatment by the English. While he cites the common view that imports of luxury fabrics (e.g. French silk) were enfeebling for the national interest, he separates this from his more tolerant approach to the import of French wine, which he preferred to view as a habitual necessity of polite society.

In the last book of *Travels*, the darker aspects of the wine trade come to the fore as Gulliver explains to his Master:

That *Wine* was not imported among us from foreign Countries, to supply the want of Water or other Drinks, but because it was a sort of Liquid which made us merry, by putting us out of our Senses; diverted all melancholic Thoughts, begat wild extravagant Imaginations in the Brain, raised our Hopes, and banished our Fears, suspended every Office of Reason for a Time, and deprived us of the Use of our

⁶⁵ Swift (2008, p407).

Limbs, until we fell into a profound Sleep; although it must be confessed, that we always awaked sick and dispirited; and that the Use of this Liquor filled us with Diseases, which made our Lives uncomfortable and short.⁶⁶

Swift the consumer was never far from Swift the moralist. Even as he recognises the impetus towards annihilating drunkenness and soothing oblivion, he came to see the trade which brought wine to the shores of England as a public calamity. As Gulliver bewails, 'in order to feed the luxury and intemperance of the males, and the vanity of the females, we sent away the greatest part of our necessary things to other countries, from whence in return we brought the materials of disease, folly and vice to spend among ourselves'.⁶⁷ The unbridled appetite for imports such as wine, luxury fabrics, and other superfluous niceties to gratify the prideful desires of humanity, is what opens the floodgates to vice in man.

For everyone who consumes, others will starve and die. The end point to this exploitative consumption is the searing *A Modest Proposal* (1729), where Swift's narrator offers up a vision of Ireland as so ravaged by England's colonialist policies that the Irish are forced to contemplate the systematic cannibalisation of their children to ease their starvation. Swift's Proposer's coolly calculating inhumanity conjures up with visceral effect a reality where the consumption urge is taken to excess, such that human beings turn into saleable, consumable, commodities.

Few satirists, before or since, have come close to rivalling Swift in range, subtlety and visceral power, as demonstrated across his varied writings over a long career. The examples above hardly do justice to this legacy, while furthermore the complexities of

⁶⁶ *Gulliver's Travels*, Part IV: 'A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms'. Swift (2003, p232).

⁶⁷ Swift (2003, p252-254).

Swift's multiple unstable narrative voices make it challenging to pin down his definitive views. Yet unmistakable in all his works is a savage rage at the incurably-debased state of society, and a pessimism that it will ever improve. Faced with such a bleak assessment, it is unsurprising that Swift's narrators vacillate between the desperate desire to drown their sorrows, and the fear that doing so will only damn them further.

5.4 Bernard Mandeville

Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* adopts an iconoclastically different stance to the Scriblerians' censure of wasteful consumption and vain pride, and the 'receiv'd Notion that Luxury is...destructive to the Wealth of the whole Body Politick'.⁶⁸ Mandeville actively celebrates that 'the variety of Work that is perform'd and the number of Hands employ'd to gratify the Fickleness and Luxury of Women', believing it is precisely this penchant for lavish consumption which stimulates economic growth, by creating the impetus to produce more English woollen cloth to be traded for foreign goods.⁶⁹ As he spells out, 'the consequences of luxury to a nation seem not so dreadful to me.... Those that cannot purchase true *Hermitage* or *Pontack*, will be glad of more ordinary *French* claret. Those that can't reach Wine, take up with worse Liquors... a Beggar may make himself as drunk with Stale-Beer or Malt-Spirits, as a Lord with *Burgundy*, *Champaign* or *Tockay*. The cheapest and most slovenly way of indulging our passions, does as much Mischief to a Man's Constitution, as the most elegant and expensive'.⁷⁰ Far from being a needless expense, or a sign of depravity, he suggests that the desire to consume alcohol was endemic (and intrinsic) to all levels of society, and it was merely the quality which varied according to each man's propensity to spend.

Indeed, Mandeville insistently returns to brewers and vintners, vines and wine, beer and gin, in his illustration of his theme of 'Private Vices, Publick Virtues'. In Remark T, he lodges a scathing exposé of religious hypocrisy in his Parable of Small Beer, describing a

⁶⁸ *Fable*, "Remark L", in Mandeville (1989, p138). All references to *Fable* are from this edition by Harth, unless otherwise stated.

⁶⁹ Remark T, p236.

⁷⁰ Remark L, p144. Also see 'For if none were to drink Wine but such only as stand in need of it, nor any Body more than his Health required, that Multitude of Wine-Merchants, Vintners, Coopers, &c, that make such a considerable Shew in this flourishing City, would be in a miserable Condition.'

'whimsical country', where the lust for drink and the act of satisfying one's thirst are seen as natural, and yet simultaneously viciously sinful, leading to theological contortions, such that 'He that took the least Drop of it to quench his Thirst, committed a heinous Crime, whilst others drank large Quantities without any Guilt, so they did it indifferently, and for no other Reason than to mend their Complexion'.⁷¹ The illogical justifications point to what Mandeville viewed as the sanctimony of moral critics, who refused to recognise that men were irredeemably creatures of passion.⁷²

In Remark G, he notes the pervasiveness of 'the infamous Liquor', gin. Like Swift, Mandeville acknowledges that alcohol was 'a Lethe of Oblivion, in which the wretch immers'd drowns his most pinching Cares, and with his Reason all anxious reflection on Brats that cry for Food, hard Winters Frosts and horrid Empty Home.'⁷³ Yet even here, he urges that if we can look further than the 'short-sighted Vulgar', we might see:

in a hundred Places... *Good* spring up, and pullulate from *Evil*, as naturally as Chickens do from Eggs... The Money that arises from the Duties upon Malt, is a considerable Part of the National Revenue... [and] consider the Rents that are received, the Ground that is till'd, the Tools that are made, the Cattle that are employ'd, and above all, the Multitude of Poor that are maintain'd, by the Variety of Labour, required in Husbandry, in Malting, in Carriage and Distillation, before we can have that Product of Malt, which we call *Low Wines*.

⁷¹ Remark T, p245.

⁷² Mandeville reserves special opprobrium for Anthony Ashley Cooper III, Lord Shaftesbury, author of the influential *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinion and Times* (1711), a prominent moral reformer who held optimistic views on the inherently altruistic nature of humanity.

⁷³ Remark G, p121.

Mandeville barely holds back his contempt for those unable to see that the most remarkable feature of modernity was this harnessing of energies fuelled by vice, greed, and intemperance, for the positive benefit of the country.⁷⁴

So integral are alcoholic vices to the national interest, that Mandeville characterises his consumption society itself as a punch: 'the body politick' can be made into 'a tolerable liquor', from a blend of avarice for 'the souring', and prodigality 'the sweetening', while 'the water I would call the ignorance, folly and credulity of the floating insipid multitude, while wisdom, honour, fortitude and the rest of the sublime qualities of men, which separated by art from the dregs of nature the fire of glory has exalted and refin'd into a spiritual essence, should be an equivalent to brandy'.⁷⁵ Mandeville's provocative conflation here recalls Gay's sly descent from the Holy Spirit to distilled spirit, reiterating that theoretical abstractions are inseparable from a debased gritty reality.

It is, however, in the final Moral to the 'Grumbling Hive', that Mandeville ends with a metaphor of the vine which critic Stumpf has described as 'Mandeville at his richest, most complex, and most allusive'.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ This forms an interesting contrast with the much stricter line that Hogarth would take on gin drinkers, in his famous 'Gin Lane' print, which indicted the deprived environmental conditions for bringing about moral and alcoholic depravity. See an interesting take in Speck (1998, p85), where he argues that Mandeville's approach to gin drinking was a reflection of a fundamentally pessimistic approach to the possibility of improving the intelligence of the masses (as in his screed against charity schools), and hence his indulgence of their proneness to immoral and licentious behaviour. While Hogarth 'had a more optimistic view, that the lower orders had a choice: to drink beer and be hale and hearty, or drink gin and be diseased and poverty-stricken'. This distinction between those who felt that the poor lacked the capacity to control their behaviour, and those who insisted that they could choose how to behave, can be discerned.

⁷⁵ Interestingly, punch is conversely used by the more idealistic Addison as proof of the benefits of trade. In the *Spectator* and the *Freeholder*, he has the Freeholder confound the Tory Foxhunter by pointing out that they could not even enjoy a sneaker of punch without trade, as every ingredient except water was imported. Merchants, far from being parasites, were essential middlemen. 'There are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of Nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the Rich, and magnificence to the Great'. [*The Spectator*, ed. D. F. Bond (5 vols, Oxford 1965), I,296.

⁷⁶ Stumpf (2000, p102ff).

*Then leave Complaints: Fools only strive
To make a Great an Honest Hive
...
Fraud, Luxury and Pride must live
Whilst we the Benefits receive.
Hunger's a dreadful Plague, no doubt,
Yet who digests or thrives without?
Do we not owe the Growth of Wine
To the dry shabby crooked Vine?
Which, whilst its Shutes neglected stood,
Choak'd other Plants, and ran to Wood;
But blest us with its Noble Fruit.
As soon as it was tied, and cut:
So Vice is beneficial found,
When it's by Justice lopt, and bound;⁷⁷*

The overtly simple declaration of the first two lines (that honesty would lead to a sparse and lowly hive) comes under scrutiny when followed by the stretched logic of his next passage – is hunger really necessary to digestion or prosperity? How does this notion of balance between private vices and public virtues map onto the metaphor of a visibly crooked vine and the reward of ‘Noble Fruit’ and wine? Would deliberately vicious acts (“choked other plants”, “ran to wood”), become positive just by being constrained? What does Justice mean, and what limits have been imposed, when vices are professed virtues?

⁷⁷ Mandeville (1989, p75-76).

Much of this complexity is left deliberately ambivalent, but Strumpf shows one way of interpreting this passage through explicating Mandeville's debt to Virgil's *Georgics*, where Virgil says that if it is labour which conquers the world, the perfect symbol for this is the vine: 'There is that other work of taking care of the vines, a task in which you can never fatigue yourself too much'.⁷⁸ The vine will bear nothing unless tied, cut, looped and bound. The Virgilian parallels go even deeper – playing the role of a farmer-poet, Virgil cites the beehive as the ideal of practical organization, while seeing in the bent vine, a living system that has experienced the full rigours of life (whether disease, weather, predators or decay), yet manages to renew itself and be productive.⁷⁹ This appreciation of a product which is fundamentally produced from affliction lines up with Mandeville's realistic approach to human passions, and belief that positive effects spring from negative events.

In the dialogue between Cleomenes (Mandeville's mouthpiece) and Horatio (his interlocuter), in Part II of *Fable*, Mandeville actively equates the creation of wine with the creation of civilised society itself:

Cleo: Nature had design'd Man for Society, as she has made Grapes for Wine.

Hor: To make Wine is an Invention of Man, as it is to press Oil from Olives and other Vegetables, and to make Ropes of Hemp.

Cleo: And so it is to form a Society of independent Multitudes; and there is nothing that requires greater Skill.

Hor: But is not the Sociableness of Man the Work of Nature, or rather of the Author of Nature, Divine Providence?

⁷⁸ "*Est etiam ille labor curandis vitibus alter, / cui numquam exhausti satis est*" (*Georgics* II, 397-399). As translated in Stumpf (2000, p104).

⁷⁹ See David Fairer's essay on "Pastoral and Georgic Poetry" in Richetti (2005, p281).

Cleo: Without doubt: But so is the innate Virtue and peculiar Aptitude of every thing; that Grapes are fit to make Wine, and Barley and Water to make other Liquors, is the work of Providence; but it is human Sagacity that finds out the Uses we make of them.

By splitting wine here into its components – grapes, which are the work of nature; and wine, which must originate from the innovation and effort of mankind, Mandeville takes the disappointment of our distance from his idealistic vision of a pre-lapsarian Golden Age, and transposes it into a positive vision, to communicate the ‘seductiveness, and energy, of a commercially vibrant, protean, and fertile culture suffused with lust and greed’.⁸⁰

Mandeville’s celebration of wealth generation and consumerism (partly Whiggish but also idiosyncratically his own), stands at odds with the Scriblerian valorisation of land-based traditional morality. His most controversial view, that “private vices” of rampant consumption and indulgence in luxury, correlated with ‘public benefits’ of economic expansion and prosperity, culminated in the argument that countries needed to choose between mutually incompatible goals of moral virtue and economic greatness. While this was seen in his time as beyond the moral pale, it nevertheless laid the foundation for Adam Smith to declare (uncontroversially) a mere 50 years later that ‘consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for providing that of the consumer. The maxim is... perfectly self-evident’.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Bermingham (1995, p49).

⁸¹ Adam Smith, *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776.

What Mandeville leaves us with, beyond an initiation into the positive appreciation of consumption's benefits, is a unique worldview which combines without a perception of incongruity, a deeply pessimistic psychology of human nature with an exuberantly optimistic theory of economics.

5.5 Differences and Commonalities in Authors

The dividing line in these authors' attitudes to wine consumption and intoxication lies in whether they are more concerned with the encouragement of virtue or commerce.

Underpinning the Scriblerians' satire was a fundamentally moral interpretation of social life and the perception of widespread corruption within society. As such, they interpreted luxury as the desire for selfish individual gain against the greater public good, and feared that unbridled consumerism would destroy the virtuous foundation of civic existence.⁸² Their passionate agenda to admonish society through satire manifested in the prevalence of mock-heroic frames in their writing, which nostalgically harked back to an idealised past, juxtaposed unflatteringly against their diminished present.

Against this traditional position, Mandeville's emancipation of economics from generally-received moral codes must have seemed even more alarming. His valorisation of the consumption instinct and economic egoism ultimately placed civic ethics at the service of merchant profitability. Against Pope's veneration of noble men of virtue and landed property such as Bathurst and Burlington, Mandeville argues that nobility of birth does not predicate virtue, for 'a most beautiful superstructure may be raised upon a rotten and despicable foundation'.⁸³

Despite these chasms, Mandeville was not ultimately so removed from his Scriblerian compatriots. Mandeville was as perceptive as Swift about the gap between the surface individuals present to society and the motivating realities of their passions. Mandeville only

⁸² Gay's paeon in praise of British trade in *Fable VIII*, that 'O Britain, chosen port of trade, | May lux'ry ne'er thy sons invade' encapsulates the essence of this view, of indulgence in luxury as enfeebling and weakening to a glorious nation.

⁸³ Mandeville (1924, p64).

made explicit what Pope decorously hints at: that the extravagant consumption needs of the rich were in a way a form of 'charitable vanity' that kept the poor in employment. Like Gay, Mandeville locates vice and hypocrisy as endemic from the bottom to the top of society, and even directly references Gay in the *Fable*, where he protests that his own writing cannot be responsible for creating vice, just as Gay is not responsible for the existence of highwaymen.⁸⁴

In addition, all authors were similarly seduced by the Georgic vision of the Golden Age. Critics Stumpf and Fairer have discussed how Virgil's *Georgics* carried a particular resonance in this period; Addison wrote an influential essay in 1697, where he praised Virgil for investing 'the meanest of his precepts with a kind of grandeur', in order to 'suffuse a poetic treatise on husbandry with a genuine patriotic and inspirational dignity'.⁸⁵ Eighteenth century writers likely saw parallels with Virgil, who lived during a turbulent time dominated by the founding of colonies, and the restoration of the constitution, and who expanded the settled formulae of the pastoral genre to include the noise and bustle of industry and recognition of the necessity of labour. In the satires of Gay, Pope, Swift and Mandeville, we see the earnestness (if often undercut by irony and alleviated with humour) with which they attempted to extract some certainty of moral stance from the shifting waves of change.

⁸⁴ Mandeville (1924) in the Preface to Part II of *Fables*. Some of Gay's more histrionic critics attempted to blame him for the crimes of highwaymen, after averring that the wild success of *The Beggar's Opera* and its charismatic lead character of Macheath, had legitimised their behaviour.

⁸⁵ Fairer, in Richetti (2005, p278), and Stumpf op cit.

6. Conclusion

Locating the consumption of wine within its material, literary and intellectual contexts has elucidated the potent symbolism of wine drinking in this period. The emergence of a fresh new genre of vinous panegyrics, of which Gay's *Wine* was a key example, points to the centrality of wine within the political and social landscape of its day. The depiction of wine drinking within the classical genre of pastoral, with its Bacchanalian heritage fused with religious symbolism, where wine was a product consumed for delight, pleasure, and poetic inspiration, continued to retain its resonance, even amidst subversion and parody. The variety of moral stereotypes of inebriation, dissolution, corruption and vice, indicates the persistent fear of the destabilising effect of alcohol consumption on the moral fibre of a nation, but also opened up possibilities where such behaviours could be recast in positive, productive, or beneficial ways to society.

Such fluid intermingling of moral, religious, political and economic attitudes to material consumption was the response to the shifting contours of the period, where in what McKendrick has called the 'consumer revolution', the privileges of the rich (as depicted by Pope in the noblemen of *Dunciad*, or the homes of Bathurst and Burlington), come within reach of the lived experiences and aspirations of more consumers (as in Gay's *Wine* and Swift's middling gentry and domestics). What might have been bought once for life, was now bought many times. Rare luxuries became occasional decencies and then frequent necessities.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ McKendrick is keen to emphasise that it is not the desire to consume which has changed, but rather the ability to do so, as new commercial and industrial wealth accelerated social mobility, and with it, an explosion of competitive and emulative consumption. Wine represents both the emulative consumption of the aspirational upwardly mobile consumer, and the differentiating consumption of those of high wealth looking to demarcate and reiterate elite status.

As a literary mode which yokes together opposing forces, and conflates the high and the low, satire was ideally placed to take on the critical representation of this protean new world. Each author found ways to articulate this fusing of high and low influences both at the level of form and of meaning. The bold formal experimentations encompassed Gay's blending of majestic Italian opera with the ballads of thieves, Pope's solemn Augustan epic deployed to chronicle the stews of London, Swift's pilfering of popular genres such as pamphlets, conduct books and travel writings to deliver profound moral messages, and Mandeville's self-proclaimed 'Rhapsody void of order', a poem spilling out into annotations, tracts, vindications and essays. In this, they were incorporating at the level of genre, those destabilising effects of modernity that they variously celebrated or decried. In the sweeping range of their writings, as they chronicled the positive delights, comforts and benefits of wine drinking, through to the misery and depravity of intoxication, the camaraderie of the tavern against the squalor of the gutter, they asserted their diverse views and attitudes to the contexts of wine drinking in this period and the symbolic meanings inherent to such acts of consumption.

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8 Appendix

8.1 Research Paper Proposal

IMW Research Paper Proposal Submission Form			
Student ID	25780	Date of submission	20 th February 2020
RPP Version No	5	Name of Advisor	Catherine Petrie / Nick Jackson
Note: RPPs must be submitted via your Advisor to the IMW			
Proposed Title			
'A Bottle of good solid Edifying Port... (and) this plaguy <i>French Claret</i> ': investigating the political, social, and economic significance of wine drinking and intoxication in eighteenth century English literature.			
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>Alcohol consumption in England escalated significantly in the eighteenth century, with rising volumes of traditional products such as claret, sherry, and ale, and introduction of newer products such as porter, gin, and port.¹ The loaded political implications of one's alcohol choice can be seen in the debates around the Methuen and Commercial Treaties, with Whigs and Tories arguing about the virtues of aligning with Portugal versus France, but also of drinking port versus claret. These debates took place within the dominant mercantilist theories about tariff structures, while giving rise to moralistic anxiety about intoxication, copious consumption and the corrosiveness of luxury imports.</p> <p>Such concerns are naturally reflected, queried, and responded to, in the contemporary literature. This paper will investigate the manifestation of such concerns in the works of Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, John Gay, and Bernard Mandeville. The authors have been chosen as the dominant personalities of their day, whose satiric writings not only set the literary agenda and spawned waves of imitators and detractors, but were also deeply embedded within their contemporary political schisms.</p> <p>Research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How did the contemporary literature represent the rising culture of drinking and intoxication, and consumption of specific wine styles?2. What is the significance of such depictions, in relation to their contemporary political, social, economic and literary contexts? <p>While a broad range of beverages are pertinent to this period, this paper will focus on wines, with others considered for context only.</p>			
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)			
Charles Ludington's study, <i>The Politics of Wine in Britain</i> , which explores the loaded political significance that certain wine styles carried in the eighteenth century, is representative of the burgeoning field of			

cultural histories, which posit the birth of a “consumer revolution”, preceding the Industrial Revolution, in the early eighteenth century.ⁱⁱ However, as Rosalind Williams notes, “along with economic, social and political history, intellectual and literary history are vitally necessary in understanding a consumer revolution”.ⁱⁱⁱ Eighteenth century English literature has been assessed in terms of formal and political significance, but less in its relation to this new material culture. The dominance of demotic forms of mock-epic and assertive satirical polemics, alongside emerging forms of the novel, ballad opera, and periodicals, can be read as anxious or jubilant responses to this shifting new landscape of material consumption, political upheaval, and economic transformation. Combining these threads of inquiry, to analyse literary productions through cultural histories, offers potential for illuminating both the human response to contemporary events, while enhancing our understanding of the contexts to literary productions.

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).

Primary texts of selected authors in critical editions, alongside information from the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and critical assessment in academic publications

Background context from:

- Other primary writing- contemporary sources, influences, reactions
- Social and political histories^{iv}
- Cultural and material histories, for context of a burgeoning consumer society, rising materialism, increased focus on consumption and luxurious living^v
- Histories of drinks, to understand alcohol consumption and import volumes, legislative contexts and trade structures^{vi}

Further research materials will be accessed through the British Library, Oxford Bodleian collections, the DNB, JSTOR and other online academic platforms.

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 underlying methodology involves locating (through the help of concordances), references to drinking, wine styles, and intoxication, within the writings of the selected authors, and then assessing the significance of such depictions in terms of their contexts. Some examples of specific texts analysed are referenced below.

The introduction will establish the pertinent context through four lenses:

1. *Political context* of post-Restoration to early Hanoverian times, riven by parliamentary factionalism, intermittent warfare, and ceaseless debates around taxation and tariffs
2. *Economic context* locating the tariff discussion within the broader mercantilist arguments around balance of payments, assessing the evidence for a credit revolution, and investigating changes in import levels of specific wine styles (eg claret, port, sack, Burgundy, Rhone, Rhenish, Madeira, Tokay) as a result in tariff changes^{vii}
3. *Social context* in the new materialistic culture and rising consumerism, and the tendency towards intensive intoxication in courts, taverns, coffee houses and clubs
4. *Literary context*- the rationale for selecting the chosen authors and texts, their critical importance in the period, and their relevance to the investigation, considering their political affiliation, social standing, and literary legacy.

As referenced above, the selected authors were central literary figures and immersed in critically significant ways in the dominant events of the period: the Scriblerus Club (Pope, Swift, Gay) were tightly linked with Robert Harley’s 1710-14 Tory ministry, which pushed for ratification of the Commercial Treaty, while Mandeville’s *Fable*, first published in 1705, satirizes the contemporary Tory arguments about the

Whig government's prosecution of the War of the Spanish Succession. Their writing thus offers a richly insightful point of view on contemporary life in all its facets, and as such, the main analysis of this paper will investigate how the texts illuminate:

- Social judgements based on choice of drink, as seen in Gay's "Wine", Swift's *Directions to Servants*, Pope's *The Dunciad*, amongst other writings
- Unpacking the political affiliation of claret vs port, how these points towards a broader anxiety about French lifestyles, influence and political power, but also assessing the political implications of other wine styles
- Exploring to what extent this reflects the economic context in terms of a new system of credit driving this shift from an aristocratic client economy to a bourgeois consumer society, and how the debates of the day (eg the overarching mercantilist arguments about luxury vs balance of payment, virtues of trade and commerce), are reflected in Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*.

The conclusion will assess what new insights this brings to the political, social, and economic history of the age, and how the contemporary literature gives us a vital window into the cultural history of wine consumption.

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)

A review of the existing studies on the social and cultural history of wine consumption, and the interaction of wine and literature, show that many scholars have covered periods both before and after the eighteenth century, but rarely during. In addition, the existing cultural histories of the eighteenth century have investigated wine consumption in society, but not through the intellectual and literary angles. As such this RP will be the first to offer an assessment of the major writers of this period in terms of the nuanced ways in which various wine styles, drinking and intoxication, are depicted in their works, and the literary, political, social and economic significance of such representation. This would be a new contribution to the field of consumption histories, wine and literature, as well as the social history of drinks.

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.

February – complete reading on political, economic and social/cultural contexts, write up introduction

Wednesday 26th February – deadline for RPP approval

March – complete reading on authors, and textual analyses

Monday 13th April – confirm submission of RP in June 2020

Thursday 23rd April - complete 1st draft

Sunday 3rd May– complete 2nd draft

Monday 4th May – Friday 8th May – compile bibliography, footnotes, appendices, references

Saturday 9th May – 12th May – revise RP draft, final amends

Wednesday 13th May 2020 – deadline for submission of final RP to advisors

Thursday 25th June – deadline for submission of final RP to Institute

ⁱ See Motoko Hori's study of the growth in wine consumption volumes of the aristocracy and gentry from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century, based on cellar and purchasing records, in "The Price and Quality of Wine and Conspicuous Consumption in England, 1646-1759," *English Historical Review*, cxxiii, 505 (December, 2008), 1457-69, as well as Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History*, (London, 2013), p189.

ⁱⁱ Ludington, op cit; and Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, J.H.Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1982)

ⁱⁱⁱ Rosalind Williams, Review of *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, by Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, J.H. Plumb, *Technology and Culture*, vol 25, No.2 (Apr 1984), pp337-339

^{iv} E.g. G.M.Trevelyan, *English Social History*, Vol. 3; Roy Porter, *English Society in the 18th Century*; Paul Langford, *The Eighteenth Century (Short Oxford History of the British Isles)*

^v E.g. Kendrick, Brewer & Plumb, op cit; John Brewer, Roy Porter eds, *Consumption and the World of Goods (Consumption & Culture in 17th & 18thC)*; Ann Bermingham, John Brewer eds, *The consumption of culture 1600-1800*; Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain 1660-1760*; Daniel Miller, *Acknowledging Consumption (Material Cultures); Mass Consumption and Material Culture*

^{vi} E.g. James Nicholls, *The Politics of Alcohol: A History of the Drink Question in England*; John Burnett, *Liquid Pleasures: A Social History of Drinks in Modern Britain*; G.B.Wilson, *Alcohol and the Nation* (1940), p34-5, 359-61

^{vii} Import figures taken from contemporary and later chroniclers, e.g. Charles Davenant (Inspector General of Customs from 1697-1713) and his report, "An Account shewing the Quantity of Wines imported in to London and the Out-ports of England, in Sixteen Years and one quarter, from Michaelmas 1696, to Christmas 1712", JHC, XVII, 363-5; Alexander Henderson, *The History of Ancient and Modern Wines* (London, 1824); and Cyrus Redding, *A History and Description of Modern Wines* (London, 1871). These are compared against Ludington, op cit, summary of the 1897 Parliamentary Report on the history of custom tariffs, which gives a set of figures for English wine imports from 1697-1785. It is worth noting that these statistics reflect only the legal import volumes; illicit trade is estimated to account for at least double, if not more, of that declared.