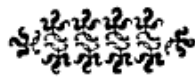


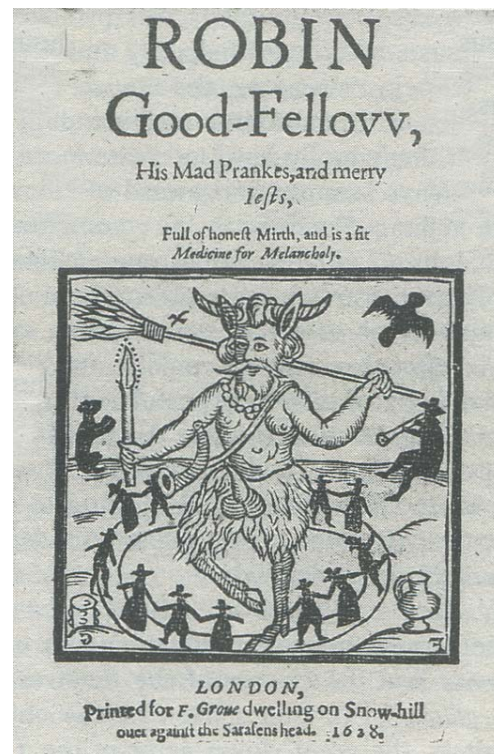
THE MOSTE
pleasaunte Arte of the In-
terpretacion of Dreames, whereun-
to is annexed sundry Problemes with
apte aunswares neare agreeing to the
matter, and very rare examples,
not the like extant in the En-
glish tongue.

GATHERED BY THE
former Au^rthour Thomas Hill
Londoner: and now newly
Imprinted.



Imprinted at London in
fleete streete neare to S. Dun-
stons Church by Thomas
Marsh.

ANNO 1576.



Dreams are 'looking glasses of the body
placed it might so behold and foreshow
matters imminent'.

Jan Kott, *Shakespeare our Contemporary* (1964)

this mechanical reversal of the objects of desire, and the interchangeability of lovers is not just the basis of the plot. The reduction of characters to love partners seems to me to be the most peculiar characteristic of this cruel dream, and perhaps its most modern quality. The partner is now nameless and faceless. He or she just happens to be the nearest

A Midsummer Night's Dream is the most erotic of Shakespeare's plays', and in no other tragedy or comedy of his, except *Troilus and Cressida*, is the eroticism expressed so brutally'

Thomas Nashe, *The Terrors of the Night* (1594)

Dreams are 'nothing else but a bubbling scum or froth of the fancy, which the day hath left undigested; or an after-feast made of the fragments of idle imaginations'

Of these things which are most known to us, some of us that have moist brains make to ourselves images of memory. On those images of memory whereon we build in the day,

comes some superfluous humour of ours, like a jackanapes, in the night, and erects a puppet stage or some such ridiculous idle childish invention

When all is said, melancholy is the mother of dreams, and of all terrors of the night whatsoever. Let it but affirm it hath seen a spirit, though it be but the moonshine on the wall, the best reason we have cannot infringe it.

No such figure as the first chaos whereout the world was extraught, as our dreams in the night. In them all states, all sexes, all places, are confounded and meet together

Reading List

Trevor Griffiths, *Shakespeare in Production: A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Peter Holland (ed.), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oxford; the best single-play edition, available online on Oxford Scholarly Editions Online)

Louis Montrose, "'Shaping Fantasies': Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture', *Representations* 1 (1983) – available on JSTOR.

The (imminent) edition of *Shakespeare Survey* (November, 2012) is a special issue on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. look out for it or search on *Cambridge Collections Online*.

Further Work

Look at *Dream* in formal terms – use of language, rhyme etc – alongside *Romeo and Juliet* or *Richard II* (Palfrey's *Doing Shakespeare* is helpful here), or with *Two Gentlemen* or *As You Like It* (woods/forests) or with *Two Noble Kinsmen* (use of Chaucer as source), or with *Winter's Tale* or *As You Like It* (doubling). The comparison of Puck/Ariel or magic here and in *The Tempest* is quite hard to do interestingly.